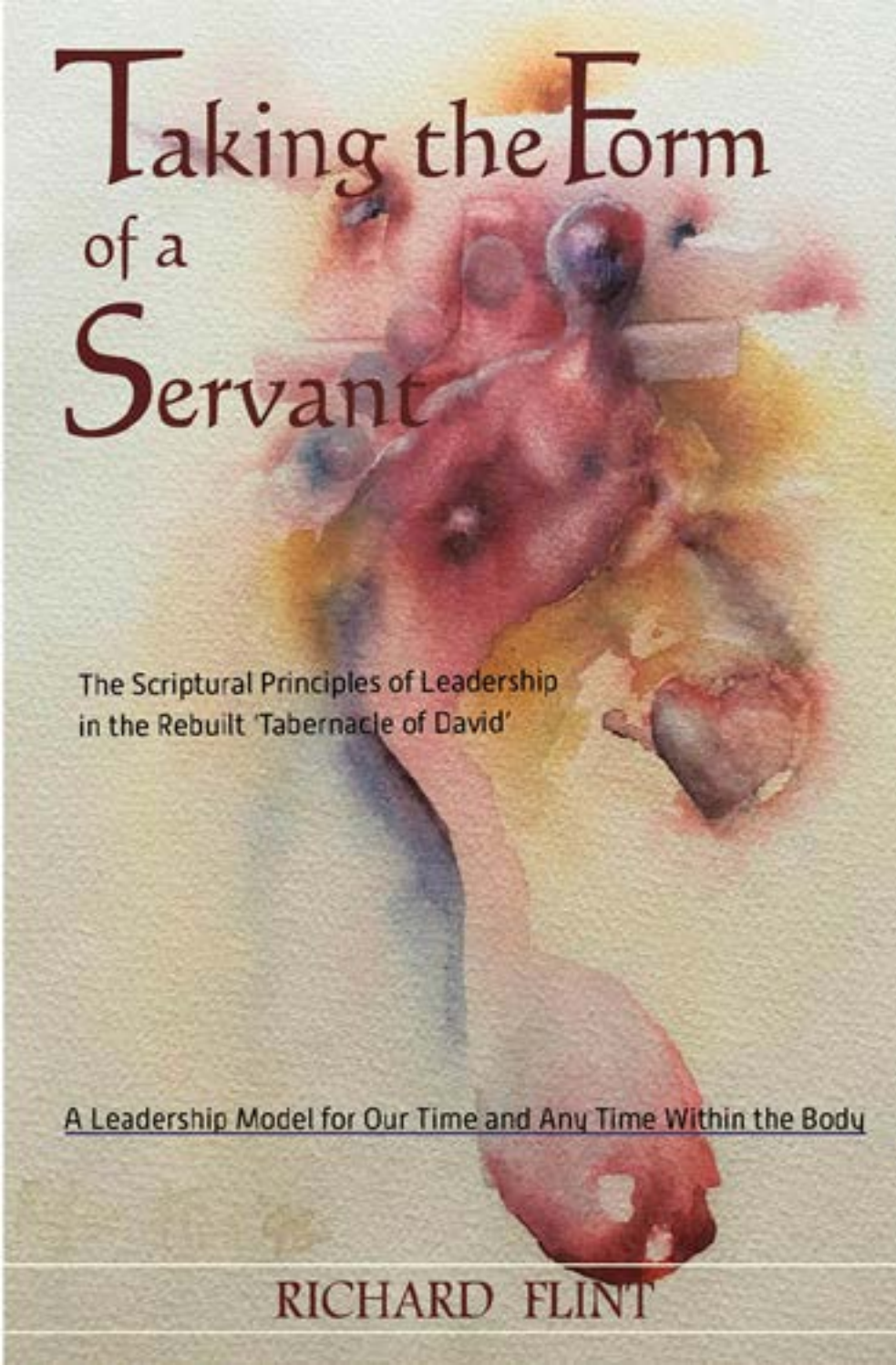
Taking the Form of a Servant



The Scriptural Principles of Leadership
in the Rebuilt 'Tabernacle of David'

A Leadership Model for Our Time and Any Time Within the Body

RICHARD FLINT

Taking The Form of a Servant

The Scriptural Principles of Leadership in the Rebuilt 'Tabernacle of David' A Leadership Model for Our Time and Any Time Within the Body of Christ

Taking the Form of a Servant
Richard Flint

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Introduction

We are beginning a journey into scripture within which we desire to establish an understanding of what leadership looks like seen through the lens of scripture. This study is to be read alongside, 'Back to the Future, the Rebuilding of the Tabernacle of David'. This study and the previous one have been written to help us recognise that we are potentially standing on the thresh hold of a significant move of God. Indeed, such a move that will challenge the prevailing Church paradigm that has dominated ever since the fourth century when the emperor Constantine established the religious, political system we call the church. We believe that Jesus is making preparations for His return and, therefore, He is looking to make His church ready and prepared for this. The bridegroom desires to return to claim His bride. Therefore, the body of Christ is in need of restoration as the network of relationally connected clusters of the love of God it once was and which we see captured within narrative of the New Testament, that is if you know where and how to look.

> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
> John 14: 3

> …even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
> (Ephesians 5: 25b-27)

In this study, we will be focusing on the crucial issue of the need for a restoration of the leadership model, indeed, one that is able that is able to function effectively and fruitfully within this restored body. We need to move away from the models of leadership that are prevalent today. Models, such as, the professional class of enrobed clergy and the increasingly burned out reality of the one-man band minister; and to discover whether scripture might offer us an alternative.

What we do need to recognise is that as the Lord is building a new model for the body this new body also requires a new model of leadership. What we will also find is that this new model of leadership is actually not new at all but is in fact the same one that we can identify in the early church. Therefore, what we also need to understand is that it is only as we rediscover this original model of Body life that the model of leadership that we find within scripture will makes sense and offer us a way forward.

Perhaps, it will be helpful to ask whether anyone has tried to define church leadership recently, here is a one such attempt.

> If you ask ten church members their definition of what a church leader is, you'll get ten different definitions. More frustrating is that

> if you ask ten different church leaders their definition of church leadership, you'll get ten different answers. So we must begin by defining what we mean by church leadership. [1]

The quotation above does raise some real and relevant questions, however, within the article itself from which this is taken the one place it fails to look for an answer to them is within scripture. The article, however, does provide a definition of church leadership,

> ...church leadership can be defined as the process of influencing other people to work together to accomplish a desired purpose.[2]

Surely we can do better than this. The question we must ask is to what extent this a true and full understanding of church leadership? Indeed, it might represent a leadership model that works within a secular context, however, should not a church leadership model offer us something other than this? Indeed, does the church need to borrow from the world? Let us remind ourselves of this challenge from the apostle John.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.
(1 John 2: 15-17)

Indeed, the definition above does seem vague and the terms used such as 'process' or 'influencing other people' and a 'desired purpose' do need unpacking. What is the process that people need to be lead through in the church? How are people influenced by the leadership and how is this achieved? And whose desired purpose are we being led by or lead towards? These are important questions that we will need to be answered as we make progress through this study.

Our purpose here is to revisit church leadership, and not from where we are today. For our contention is that the religious church system that we now have be it Roman Catholic, extreme charismatic Pentecostalism and all stops in between have developed a leadership model that is fundamentally man made and in serious need of reconsideration in the light of scripture. To this end, we will be endeavouring to explore afresh the scriptures that relate specifically to leadership and to find for ourselves a model that will be more true to scripture and which might provide for us a new model for our own time that functions within a new expression of the body of

Christ that is truly fit for His purpose. Indeed, we believe that the Lord is once more building His church.

Further, our contention here is that the Lord has provided for us a model of leadership in scripture and that it is a relatively clear one. Simply said, this is an assertion we can make because the Lord's provision through His word is absolutely sufficient to guide us in all things, which by definition will surely include a model for leadership within the body of Christ.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for

instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
2 Timothy 3: 16

Moreover, we have been given the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth, which surely must include truth concerning a leadership model within the body of Christ.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.
John 16: 13-15

Our overall aim for this book is to provide a model for leadership that will be the fruit of rightly divided scripture. Through which we will discover a model of leadership that can be employed within an expression of the end time church that we a have described as the rebuilt tabernacle of David in our previous book. Indeed, chapter one we will provide us with an understanding of this underpinning scriptural rationale. To this end, we will be taking a whistle stop tour of the salient points from the previous study and that need to be understood and brought to bear on what is found here. Indeed, both studies have been written in response to what we believe to be the leading of the Lord and to what we recognise as a timely readjustment from what is to what needs to be for the end time church to bear the fruit the Lord

desires it to bear. It is nothing short of a response to a call from the Lord for a gathering of true disciples; individuals who have an understanding of the times in which they are living and who are willing to pay the price to be used of the Lord in His end time purposes to prepare a bride which is made ready for His return.

We will begin a new journey through scripture, identifying examples and principles of leadership as we go, before moving on to explore teaching on leadership as it specifically relates to the church in the New Testament. Finally, we will develop a model of church leadership which we believe will be fit for purpose as we walk with the Lord in this fresh revelation of body life that is to be found within the rebuilt tabernacle of David.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
(Philippians 2: 5-8)

1. A quotation from http://cotammission.blogspot.co.uk/2011/11/definition-of-church-leadership.html?_sm_au_=iVVVFF3WkZ35qVQH accessed 09/05/15
2 ibid

Chapter 1

The Tabernacle of David in 2 Samuel 6

This chapter is largely a synopsis of the author's previous work, 'Back to the Future; the rebuilding of the Tabernacle of David'. It is provided as a means by which the reader might be able understand the larger picture here of which this book is an important practical part as we move forward into the lived out realities of the 'church' that we believe the Lord is building today. Indeed, a larger picture within we believe that the Tabernacle of David motif within scripture provides us with an important spiritually symbolic picture of this building work that we might be catching a glimpse of at the moment as we look for the single rain cloud on the horizon with eyes of faith filled expectation. There are three key passages of scripture that are being drawn upon here, each supporting the next. We begin in the book of Amos where in chapter 9 we find the following prophecy:

> In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.
> Amos 9: 11, 12

We next turn to Acts 15 where we find this prophecy from Amos applied directly to rapidly expanding early church:

> And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.
> Acts 15: 15-18

What we learn here is that the apostle James verifies the prophecy in Amos as being fulfilled through the ministry of Paul and Barnabus. Jesus' brother and leader in the church in Jerusalem, states categorically that the church that was mushrooming through the fruitful impact of the gospel was the Tabernacle of David. Moreover, he is actually making a definitive statement here that within scripture, indeed within Jewish scripture, there is a prophecy that applies directly to what is being built by the Lord God in these days. What he is saying is that, there was always going to be a spiritual house for the redeemed of the Gentiles. The Lord God was not

going to leave them homeless. He had a tabernacle for them, indeed, their very own sukkah, the Tabernacle of David. Indeed, this is the olive tree into which the wild olive branches of the Gentile church will be engrafted and, indeed, as will the redeemed of the House of Israel on coming to faith in Jesus Christ. Jew and Gentiles have a shared dwelling place in Christ, the tabernacle of David.2

We recognise, as well, that the original prophecy in Amos can be understood to have an end of end times application since it is given within the context of the Day of the Lord end of time judgement motif when it begins by using the 'In that day' rubric. Footnote 1&2

Therefore, we recognise that the Tabernacle of the Lord can be confidently understood as a prophetic scriptural metaphor for the universal 'church' and we can also recognise that there might also be more than one time in which this would be fulfilled, given that the Hebrew understanding of prophetic fulfilment is a cyclical one.

Moreover, guided by the 'In that day' rubric of the original prophecy in Amos our contention is that we can expect an end of end time process by which the Lord, prior to His return, will rebuild His 'church'. This said, we have then asked the question what might this look like and for this we have been lead to the passage of scripture in 2 Samuel 6. Here, we find described the process by which the moving of the presence of the Lord God within the Ark of the Covenant into the newly erected Tabernacle in Jerusalem is described and also the ongoing activities that occurred within it. As we have studied this we have been able to identify key elements in the journey itself. As well as the those that will be important in the rebuilt spiritual structure that we believe the Lord

is desirous to build at this time. Indeed, elements that we have been able to also recognise more broadly within the teaching of Jesus and the apostles, and also that can be clearly seen practised within the early church which was as James declares in Acts the first flowering of this spiritual house. We shall therefore take a brief tour through what we have discovered so far before beginning to move onto looking at the leadership model that we will be looking for the Lord to establish to oversee His work, purposes and plans.

To understand the picture we see painted here of the Tabernacle of David, we need to return to tenth century BC Israel and the original Tabernacle of David that we find 2 Samuel 6:17-193.

> And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to everyone a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed everyone to his house.
> 2 Samuel 6:17-19

Essentially, we believe this story to be a metaphor for the return of the living presence of God into the heart of the church's life and worship in our own day, and indeed, back into the heart of the believer as the Lord takes His place on the throne of our lives. The Ark of the Covenant, which

contains the very presence of the living God, has had a long and difficult journey that has cost the life of one man, but it has finally reached its true home. In a similar way we can recognise that the three year journey of the presence of God carried by the Lord Jesus Himself was a difficult one for Him and cost Him His own life as well. How can it be any different for us? David completes the journey and delivers the presence of the living God contained within the Ark of the Covenant into the tabernacle he has built for it in Jerusalem and once there he has it placed in its true place, the one and only place that is fit for the presence at the heart of the tabernacle and at the heart of the nation. This speaks to us today, that we might truly find again a place fit for the living presence of God today, at the heart of a people and thereby at the heart of His body, the church. [Footnote 3]

We do need to recognise that the journey of the Ark, the container for God's presence, is redolent of the journey we are each called to make. A journey we each make carrying within our own Ark, which is our heart, the indwelt presence of the Lord. A journey from the flesh to the spirit. As Jesus describes it, it is the journey along the narrow way,

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. (Matthew 7: 14)

This parable is much misunderstood, because Jesus isn't referring here to the narrow way of salvation but to the narrow way of true discipleship. Indeed, as we follow the progress of David we are able to recognise the process of learning and refining that he was taken through, and that, by association, we are, each one of us, also required to walk if we truly want God's best for our lives both here and beyond.

The crucial event of this journey occurred at the threshing floor of Nachon, where an oxen, that was pulling the cart on

which the Ark was travelling, slipped, and one of the drovers put out his hand to steady the cart. He was immediately struck down dead by God. A chilling story and a turning point for David and for his understanding of the presence of the Lord and for his understanding of the Lord God Himself.

We go into much detail concerning the various lessons that can be learned from this story in our previous book, however, the central lesson is that the journey into true discipleship is a journey of dying to self, ultimately in each and every area of our dominating self-life. So that by walking before the Lord faithfully carrying His presence through the issues of our lives we truly can discover who we are in Christ and find out how to walk in obedience and fear before our God. As with David and the Ark this is a journey that leads us to take the presence of the living God within us into its place at the heart of the gathered body of Christ of which we are a part.

The important revelation we received came when we discovered that the name of the poor drover who lost his life at the threshing floor of Nachon, was Uzzah, which means in Hebrew 'strength'. The picture, therefore, is that when we attempt to support the work of God in our own strength there will be a death. This is because the Lord is looking for a people who have come to the end of themselves and who have learned this priceless lesson of walking in obedience and in the fear of the Lord and thereby walking in faith fuelled and faith filled dependency. This is the walk of a true disciple. And this is the same call to discipleship that we see in the teaching of Jesus.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.
Matthew 16: 24

We also discovered that the call to true discipleship is intrinsically linked to the preparatory work the Father desires to do in the individual to make them ready for the Bridegroom, His son. For, in all generations, He is looking a representation of His body which he can recognise as being:

> …a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
> Ephesians 5: 27

This is particularly true in our own day as the time of His return seems to be close.

As we move on to consider the story of the installation of the Ark of the Covenant in the original tabernacle of David, it is important that we identify with this story and to recognise it as our own story. For as we choose to pay the price in response to the loving beckoning of the Lord.

> Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.
> Matthew 11: 28-30

The process of yoking is an important one for us; it is the process by which we are connected to others in the body. The Lord provides the yoke, He is the yoke through His Spirit and this process is best captured by the Greek term koinonia, which carries the meaning of an active partnership in something. Indeed, the idea of being added to the church

as an individual is achieved through the spiritual relationships the Lord desires to establish us in and establish in us. In this way we share the burdens the Lord places on us and in us. He wants us to come to Him and to walk with him yoked with others in the church, which is His Body. It is here that we can continue this walk of discipleship and it is here that we will be constantly learning of Him as we learn from others through the positive experiences and the not so positive experiences. This will also be an important aspect of corporate life moving forwards within the Tabernacle of David.

Another metaphor in the writings of Paul is that the church is also likened to a Temple. Another form of tabernacle, providing for us a picture of another type of spiritual repository or vessel for the same presence of the living God. A reality that was actually experienced within the Mosaic and the Solomonic temple. Paul applies this metaphor both corporately and individually.[Footnote 4] Indeed, the picture that is painted in 2 Samuel 6 speaks to us concerning the Lord's desire to have His presence returned to its rightful place both in the heart of the church in general, but more importantly, this will only happen when and if, it is returned to the heart of the individual. So that it once again might be the wellspring of life for us and, therefore, for the body of Christ itself, as a consequence of the Spirit filled presence of those gathered together.

We have also recognised that the two types of sacrifice mentioned in 2 Samuel 6:17 are significant spiritual metaphors for us as well. Indeed, these do provide effective spiritual pictures to guide us as to how to shape the church as a reflection of the tabernacle of David for our own time. Briefly stated, the burnt offerings, which were the principle sacrificial offering within the Temple worship involved the

consumption of the whole carcase of the animal in the flames on the altar and it challenges us concerning the depth and quality of our own sacrificial discipleship, a challenge that we also find in the writings of Paul, [Footnote 4]

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service
Romans 12:1

We would also want to make reference to two particular scriptural references, from either end of the Bible we are able to recognise that we can make a spiritual connection between the physical sacrifice within the temple and the spiritual sacrifice of intercession to which we believe the body of Christ is being called in our own day. Tellingly, we do this as we recognise that the prayer of the saints in Revelation is likened to the sweet savour of the burnt offering that the Lord God found acceptable in earlier in scripture.

And thou shalt burn the whole ram upon the altar: it is a burnt offering unto the LORD: it is a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD.
Exodus 29: 18

And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.
Revelation 8:4

Indeed, we believe that intercession is a crucial ministry for the church in these days, because we also believe that there

is a call for the church to take on the mantle of the spirit of Elijah.5 Our expectation there will be a John the Baptist generation; an expectation that there will be a gathering of like-minded disciples who respond to the time in which we are living and to the state of the church, who will:

…go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.
Luke 1:17

And this will be achieved through their standing in the gap in intercession, and thereby will be part of the Lord's purposes to prepare His Bride.

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
Ephesians 5:27

Indeed, walking in the intercessory purposes of Father, such that we pray through the things which are on His heart, and to carry the burden of the bridegroom for His bride for our generation will be a significant function of the rebuilt tabernacle of David.

We also believe that, the peace offerings, the second type of sacrifice offered by David, is a significant metaphor that prophetically symbolises important elements that will also be functions of the rebuilt tabernacle of David. Peace is a very valuable commodity in these turbulent times. [Footnote 5] Moreover, within the context of providing shape for the church in our

own day the peace offering provides us with another symbolic picture for the call to true discipleship. The peace offering was always the final sacrifice of the day, and as such it carried the idea of completion and the sense of celebrating the restored relationship with God and the fact that their offerings had been accepted. This was usually marked by a communal meal, which was an opportunity for the children of Israel to gather together to celebrate these spiritual realities.

In the same way we can celebrate the reality that when Jesus said on the cross that 'it is finished', the once and for all sacrifice of the Son of God made for the sins of each one of us was complete. And this leads us back significantly to Jesus' teaching and specifically to the beatitudes. The beatitudes can be understood as Jesus' manifesto for being truly blessed. And with each beatitude we taken through the steps required for an individual to develop a transformed new nature in Christ. Indeed, a nature that is pleasing and acceptable to Father as He increasingly can recognise the nature of His Son in us. A process which finds its finished work expressed in the seventh beatitude.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
Matthew 5: 9

Ultimately we are heading to be increasingly recognisable as peacemakers, and we need to understand that the peace described here by the Lord is the Hebrew 'shalom'. This peace is best understood as Godly order, such that as we allow Father to transform our hearts and to change our essential nature the end result will be the establishment of Godly order in our lives. Moreover, from such a position we will then be able to impact those around us such that we will be

able enable others to find this Godly order for themselves. At which point we will begin to bear wonderful fruit in the world and in the body. However, at the same time we can also expect problems as the final two beatitudes do clearly indicate.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
Matthew 5:10-11

As we gather together this vibrant aspect of the worship of the early church, the agape love feast, can also be revisited by us as we mark this wonderful spiritual reality by our own communal meal. Indeed, an event that seems to have been a significant event in the life of the early church. [Footnote 6] A time to gather socially and to share their lives, stories and the goodness of God. This would also be a wonderful opportunity to open our doors, lives and food with the community around us. We would also place the communion sacrament within this communal meal where it would have been in the early church. The peace offering would also be expressed through evangelism as we reach out to the world with the Gospel as peacemakers. (6 See 1 Corinthians 11.)

The final element of the original tabernacle of David that informs the development of the church in our own day is King David's gift giving to every member of the nation, men and women. We can recognise this as a picture of a type of gathering in which our own King, Jesus, would be able to gift His people through His Spirit. However, the gifts and Holy Spirit the giver of the gifts need to be understood within

the context within which they have been given according to scripture. This context, that is clearly inferred from the language that Jesus uses on the night that He was betrayed was, is one of first century Hebraic betrothal.

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
John 14:2-3

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.
John 14:16-17

The giver of the gift is the Father of the bridegroom and the gift, the Holy Spirit, is what is known within this culture as the mattan, a betrothal gift that is given to prepare the bride for the marital union. Essentially the true 'church' to which we are added is a place of preparation; to prepare a people made ready for His return.

Indeed, each type of gift that we find in the scriptural narrative is significant. The cake of bread, rather than being a reference to the bread within the communion, is a reference to bread being the basic food of humanity. We take this from its first mention in Genesis 3:19, in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread. It, therefore, represents the gift of the Spirit which is shared from person to person within the context of

the worship experience within a gathering, or at some other time as the Lord leads. The good piece of flesh is a picture of the word ministry, for we read in Hebrews 5.

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.
Hebrews 5:14

And finally, we have the flagon of wine, which represents two important elements, the flagon or clay pot represents us, our human shaped vessel of clay.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.
2 Corinthians 4:7

Moreover, the treasure represents two aspects of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 1:18 encourages us to understand that we have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and that this a guarantee of our eternal connection with God. And the second aspect is, as Ephesians 5:18b encourages us …be filled with the Spirit, each of us needs to maintain our level of the Holy Spirit. The context in which this phrase is given is public worship and, therefore, when we gather let us use it as an opportunity to strengthen our Godly connection by receiving afresh from the Lord through His Holy Spirit, and be filled.

The passage in 2 Samuel moves on to inform us that the people left the tabernacle of David making their way home carrying their gifts. What a wonderful picture of people leaving a meeting, encouraged, comforted, equipped and

prepared. However, what the Lord is calling for is more than a series of meetings, He desires at this time to re-establish the reality of His presence in the heart of a people who might then rediscover what it is to be connected heart to heart and life to life. An expression of nothing less than the Body of Christ itself and church for our time, for all time. Footnote 7

However, what will this look like? An important prophetic scriptural picture that potentially provides an answer to this is found in the writings of Isaiah.

Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.
Isaiah 65: 8

A cluster of relationally connected individuals fed by the life giving sap of the true vine.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.
John 15: 1

This will be a work of the Spirit that will require Godly leadership. Indeed, leaders who are walking the walk of true discipleship and who are fully trained in the things of God and who called and equipped to lead. As we move on we will begin to identify what scripture has to say about the very qualities that are required for anyone to take on a calling to lead in the body of Christ. We will begin our search right at the beginning in the Garden of Eden where we will learn valuable lessons from the life of Adam and the leadership of God.

Footnotes

1. 1 Kings 18: 44
2. See Ephesians 2, Galatians 3 and Appendix 1: The Ecclesia and Israel

3. For a more extensive study of this subject see Back to the Future; The Rebuilding of the Tabernacle of David, by the same author.

4. 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 ,6: 19

5. In our previous book, 'Back to the Future: the Tabernacle of David', we explore in some depth what this might look like

6. See 1 Corinthians 11

7. Again a more in depth presentation of these ideas can be found in the book 'Back to the Future; the Rebuilding of the Tabernacle of David' by the same author.

Chapter 2:

The Principles of Church Leadership in Genesis 2

The first example of leadership that we find in scripture establishes some important principles for us to follow within the rest of our studies. We will be exploring the leadership model that is found in the relationship between Father God and the pinnacle of His creation, Adam, the first man. As we will see this is an example of leadership that is a process of supportive, developmental mentoring. This is what we find in the relationship that we witness being developed between God and man within the first tabernacle or dwelling place between man and God, which is the Garden of Eden.

Godly Leadership supports the man forming purposes of Father God

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.
Genesis 2: 7

The first principle of leadership in the church is expressed here and it is that any true Godly leadership will be focused on the building work of God within the individual believer. The focus will need to be on the work that God is doing and not the work that man or denominations are doing, there is a difference.

Father God is a builder of men and the builder of the body

Moreover, the work that God is doing is to build the man. Perhaps a distinction does need to be made here. Father God has the responsibility within the Godhead to transform the heart and therefore the lives of the individual believers. This is a process that is largely conducted on a 1:1 basis with the individual within the closet.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.
Matthew 6: 6

This first man fell and since then Father God has been working out His plan and purpose to have once again an opportunity to walk in relationship with man and to be able to begin to build again. The Father God is still motivated by

a strong love for His creation, such a love that He gave His son, Jesus, to die on the cross for each one of us. This was because He still wants an opportunity to complete His work on earth and to be able to form a man in His image on earth once more.

Indeed, the Hebrew word here that is translated 'formed' is actually a term used in pottery to describe the forming and fashioning of pots by the potter. This brings to mind a passage in 2 Corinthians 4 where we read the following:

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.
2 Corinthians 4:6-7

And as Isaiah also attests,

But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter;and we all are the work of thy hand
Isaiah 64:8

Therefore, what is this work of His hands that Father desires to do in each one of us, beyond salvation? We have it described by Paul, where we read:

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.
Ephesians 2:10

We are his workmanship, literally, we are a work of creation, created in Christ Jesus, and literally, we are being made habitable, like the earth when it was without form and void in the beginning, and was prepared to receive life and to be an expression of this life. Like the earth we are also being made habitable for the very life of God. Here, Paul is making an intentional connection between the creative work of the Lord in the original creation and the work he desires to do in the true disciple.

All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men
John 1:3-4

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new 2
Corinthians 5:17

Indeed, all things were made by Him and all things in us still do need to be re-made by Him, so that we are truly habitable for Father by His Spirit. We are his workmanship and we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works as the Father wills. Any true leadership would be understanding of this for themselves and their own walk, and also to be actively engaged to support this process in the individuals whom they are leading. True leadership starts with leading through relationship one at a time. We shouldn't get so lost in the big picture that we miss the individual, small masterpieces that the Father, through the Son and by the Spirit, is creating. And it is only as the individuals within the body are built up that

the whole body will be built, take shape and be the expression of the Lord that Father desires to see. This is clearly taught by Paul.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ
Ephesians 4:11-14

What Paul is saying here is that the leadership of the body, represented here by those who function in the ministry gifts, are actually a gift through which every true believer will supported to be brought through to maturity in Christ. To be formed in the likeness of the Lord by the effective working of these leadership functions. The word translated here as perfect carries a meaning of maturity or to be fully formed.

Moreover, as the individuals within the body are supported to come through to their own level of maturity so will the body of whom they are a part. As we are built up and grow up so will the body. For the Father through this process is also building the corporate body. He desires to build the nature of Christ in us and out of this and with this He also desires to build the body of Christ on the earth. This is how Paul describes this particular work of Father God.

For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.
1 Corinthians 3:9

As we will see with the way Father works with Adam, the building work is designed to be a partnership as Father shares the work with us. However, the church is first and foremost Father God's building. It is ultimately designed to be a beautiful bride fit for His Son, Jesus Christ the soon and coming bridegroom.

Therefore, the first leadership principle that we can recognise is that leadership is a gift from Father to the body to give to the body what the body, and the individuals within it, truly need. Indeed, whatever is needed for the body, and the individuals within it, to come through to maturity, which is the stature and fullness of Christ.

> Leadership is a gift to the body to serve the purposes of God and to serve those it leads to grow in the purposes of God and the purposes of God are to become like His Son

- Godly Leadership is Spiritual

The second principle of true Godly leadership which we can identify in the garden narrative is that it should always work with and facilitate the breath of God, the Holy Spirit.

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.
Genesis 2: 7

Father God still desires to breathe into His disciples and his body His breath, such that they can truly become alive to Him and alive in Him. As we explored in the previous book

there are two out workings of the Holy Spirit in the life of the disciple.

We, first of all, need to understand that we are all just clay pots, such as you can use to fill with wine. This is quite literally true, perhaps not the filling with wine aspect, because we were originally created as Genesis 2 tells us out of clay and it is also interesting to note that the first man was called Adam and the word for clay in Hebrew is adama. Scientifically it can also be shown that the basic chemical constituent parts that make up you and me, are the same that produce clay. So we are quite literally living, breathing clay pots.

However, what transforms us from the ordinary is that with which we are filled, and this because God wants us to be filled with a treasure, the most important thing He has, which is Himself. In the Olivet discourse in John's gospel there is a very strong focus on what would happen to the disciples once Jesus had left them, and the key element is the sending of a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, and the impact this would make on the disciples for the ongoing work of the Lord.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.
John 14: 16-18

What do we learn here about the Comforter?

- He comes from the Father in answer to a prayer from Jesus

- He is described as another Comforter and the Greek word here means another just like the last Comforter, i.e. Jesus.

- He is characterised by truth, as is Jesus

- He is not available to the world

- The world is blind to Him both cognitively and spiritually

- He dwells with and in disciples of Jesus Christ

- He comes to us as Jesus

In Ephesians 1:13c we are also described as being sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, i.e. a seal such as you would have on an official document traditionally made from wax, and the Holy Spirit Himself is then described as:

The earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession
Ephesians 1: 14a

What does this mean? Paul is explaining that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit we have seen prophesied by Jesus in John is an earnest, which is an old fashioned word, meaning a guarantee or a down payment, for a greater reality of the Holy Spirit in the future. Therefore, what we have now is merely a taster for a wonderful banquet which is to come during the Millennium and beyond.

In Jeremiah 32, we read something similar and, here, both the contents of the clay pot and the clay pot itself are brought together and given significant meaning for us.

> Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days.
> Jeremiah 32:14

Indeed, applying this scripture to ourselves, the Holy Spirit is the evidence that we have been purchased, and purchased for a very high price, the shed blood of the lamb. And for us the evidence that we have been purchased is that which we have our earthen vessel, clay pot or flagon, indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Further, from what we read in Jeremiah there are two aspects or out workings of this evidence, one is sealed and one is open. What is sealed is untouchable, safe and secure. The kind of inner sealed evidence we find described in Romans 8, our individual experience of the Spirit of adoption.

> For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.
> Romans 8:15-17a

From a profoundly deep place we now know that we belong to a new spiritual family, we have a secure eternity

and we have an unshakeable foundation in life who is Jesus. This our sealed reality, our guarantee, but as Paul goes on to describe it will only get better:

> …if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.
> Romans 8:17b-19

There will be a new day, when the Lord returns where we will come into a fullness of this glorious reality. This is our inner, sealed reality of the Spirit, our identity in Him.

Wonderful, unfathomable realities such as are expressed by Jesus in Revelation 2 will also be ours one day.

> To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.
> Revelation 2: 17

Therefore, as a leader we have to provide security to those we are leading. The security that you as their leader will always point them to the truth of the word and to encourage them to walk in a security you cannot give them which is only found in their individual relationship with their Father God, through the Son and by the Spirit.

The security that you provide is the security that you are a living reality of the words you speak. That your own life is

marked by integrity and fruitfulness in God. Qualities that will only be present if you have the walk of a true disciple yourself. There are no short cuts to this, however, sadly too many believe there are; too often the equation seems to be that because someone is a good communicator they will automatically be a good leader. Too often there is the sound of a clanging gong echoing through the 'church'.

Security is also provided by a sound knowledge of the word of God, indeed, Paul's challenge to Timothy must apply to any who would aspire to leadership within the body of Christ,

> Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
> 2 Timothy 2: 15

As we reflect on the verse above, to whom do we show ourselves? Clearly those whom we are leading. What are those looking for in their leaders? Clearly again, as we look to our leaders nothing will give us a greater sense of security; that we are in safe hands, than to be able to see that they are approved of God. In addition, this scripture informs all leadership that the way to show that you are indeed approved of God is that you have the capability to rightly divide the word of truth, and that this is a direct consequence of the time and effort a leader spends studying the word. Again there are no short cuts for a leader.

Indeed, the Greek word translated here as 'study' is the same word that we find in Ephesians 4:3, where we it translated as 'endeavouring', endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This demonstrates

that original Greek word carries a sense of someone applying a degree of positive energy and focus to a task.

Therefore, what Paul seems to be saying is that one of our driving motivations as a leader is to be recognised as approved of God through the extent to which we have a knowledge of the word of God and an ability to understand and teach it.

The second aspect or out working of the indwelling is an open one which is related to our ongoing dynamic relationship with the Father through the Spirit. There is a need to maintain our earthen vessel, clay pot or flagon and keep it topped up, this is expressed in Ephesians 5 where we read these words of Paul written within an exhortation about public worship.

> And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit
> (Ephesians 5:18)

Here being drunk or full of wine is directly juxtaposed with an exhortation to be filled with the Spirit. For as Jesus says in John 7, using a slightly different drinking metaphor.

> If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.
> John 7:38-39

Father desires that we have an overflow of Himself such that we can bring refreshment to those around us, merely

by our presence. He dwells with us and in us so that He can reach out through us and connect to the world. Therefore, the more there is of Him the less there is of us. Therefore, as a leader it is imperative that we are filled with the Spirit ourselves, which carries a responsibility to maintain our own spiritual discipline of secret life of prayer, fasting and alms doing. Moreover, to encourage and support others to maintain their own level of spiritual discipline and therefore their level of spiritual imbuement as well. Footnote 1

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.
Genesis 2: 7

Further Genesis 2 describes the first man, Adam, as also becoming, through the indwelt breath of life, a living soul. This scripture is used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, where we read:

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.
1 Corinthians 15: 45

Therefore, for us under the new covenant we can recognise from this verse that in Christ, the second Adam, our spirits have been enlivened in the same way that the first Adam's soul came alive. We, therefore, as Paul goes on to teach, have a new spiritual identity which is now connected to our eternal destiny in Christ. This in turn means that we now have the capacity to function in a new realm, which is the realm of the spirit. A realm described again by Paul in Romans.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.
Romans 8: 1-2

…that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.
Romans 7:6b

Indeed, Paul teaches in 2 Corinthians 5, that as members of His body we are required to change the way we view one another. No longer to judge first and ask questions later, but rather to see each other our words, our actions, and our motives through the prism of Christ; not in the flesh, but in the spirit.

Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh
2 Corinthians 5:16a

And it is in this context that Paul also challenges church leaders to recognise and walk in the reality that they have been prepared to function in this realm of the spirit and as such they are truly representing the essence of the new covenant,

Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.
2 Corinthians 3:6

The phrase used here, giveth life, is the same Greek word that is used in 1 Corinthians 15:45 and we are therefore

called as leaders to facilitate the work of the life giving spirit of Christ at work in those we are leading. A work which is described in 2 Corinthians 3: 18 as transforming or metamorphosing into the image of Christ, one step at a time from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Therefore, to be a leader in any capacity in the church is unlike any other form of leadership in the world, it is a leadership that is focused on supporting the ongoing work of God in the lives of those that are being lead and it is to function primarily within the realm of God, which is in the spirit.

After all, when all things are considered, what is the purpose of the church? To provide a gathering place in which the saints can be perfected. And secondly, what is the purpose of the leadership of the church? To provide whatever service or ministry that facilitates the perfecting of the saints. It needs to be stressed here that it is Father God, through His Son and by His Spirit that does the perfecting or maturing of the disciples, but the church and its leadership provide the context through which this can occur.

This leads us onto the next scripture in Genesis 2 from which we can again glean an important principle for Church leadership.

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.
Genesis 2: 8

Just as it was the Lord God's creation, and it was His garden, it is His Church. Further, just as He placed the first man, Adam, where he wanted him in the garden, likewise, it is the function of Father God to place who He wants where

He wants in the church. Therefore, as leaders we must be so cognisant of this and tread very carefully as to how we build.

But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.
1 Corinthians 3:14a

The church is God's building, this is the body of Christ, and Jesus says 'I will build My church'. However, the building work starts with the building work He needs to do in us. This will be His perfect will for us and therefore by association for the church as well. This is because this process will insure that the Lord is only building with the best quality bricks.

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
1 Peter 2:4-5 nkjv

As leaders, how often do we ask Father to make decisions that actually determine who does what in the church? This is particularly serious when we consider the fact that we will be judged as leaders according to the decisions we have made which have effected both our life and especially the lives of those who have been given into our care, and the decisions we have made as part of God's building purposes during our life.

Ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But

let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
1 Corinthians 3:3-13

Is anyone truly taking heed of how the church is being built? Is anyone truly taking heed of who is doing what and why? What is the decision making process? How can anyone stand before the Lord to have our work judged, if we have never even begun to do the work that He had planned for them to do in the first place?

Let us reflect upon Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 12.

But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.
1 Corinthians 12: 8

Can we be confident this is happening? Has God truly set every member in the place He wants? Has He set you and me? The importance of this is seen in the phrase'as it hath pleased him' which is understating the seriousness of this process because in the Greek it is clear that the actual will of God is involved here. In the rebuilt tabernacle of David God would have his place and therefore hopefully everyone else would have theirs as well. For as leaders we certainly do need to take heed as to how we build, in fact we are not called to build the church but to merely to support the building work of God

both in the church and in the individual. Indeed, we do need to take some time here to labour this point a little further.

For when we were exploring the scriptural account of the journey of the Ark of the Covenant to its new home in the tabernacle of David in Jerusalem, we noticed one particular key phrase in.2 Samuel.

And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it
2 Samuel 6:17

The key phrase being, and set it in his place. David has brought the Ark of the Covenant, which is described as He whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims. [Footnote 2] The Ark contained the presence on earth of Almighty God and when it arrived in Jerusalem it was placed in the midst of the tabernacle that David had purposefully pitched for it, and here we are told it was set it in his place. The container of the very presence of the living God was set in his place, it was set in the place, the one and only place that was right for it, his place, the place God has chosen for it, for God had designed the tabernacle by and through His will. [Footnote 3]

In the same way, leaders take note that each of us are a container for the very presence of the living God. Moreover, we are, each of us, to be set in the place, the one and only place that was right for it, his place, and the place he or God has chosen for it in His tabernacle by and through His will, for this is God's building. This has two implications for us. Firstly, as individuals we need to know that the Lord wills that His presence is at the heart of our being so that we are truly living under His Lordship through the active indwelling of his Holy Spirit.

Secondly, this being done, we can then trust Him to place us where he desires us to be within His Body. The process here is too important to get wrong. We, as leaders, do need to take time to be lead of the Spirit in these decisions and for extra insurance, once you have an idea, seek wise counsel and use your leadership team. Father will be communicating to each individual concerned but there is a considerable burden on the leader here as he will have to give an account before the Lord for His decisions.

It is also important that the leader does not act out of some misplaced domineering spirit and act harshly in the flesh, this is not about being strong or decisive, but being humble and obedient to the will of God. The decision does need to come out of relationship of love and within which the lines of communication are kept to be kept open all the time. Moreover, the decision when it comes will be one in which all parties will find peace.

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.
1 Peter 5:2-3

So let us, even now, no matter how long you have been doing what you have been doing in the body, let us be brave enough to reflect on what we are doing and why we are doing it and turning to Father and asking if it is the place He wants for us, whilst we still have time. And leaders let us repent for usurping the position of God in these matters for too long and determine to humble ourselves before Father God and

to begin to walk closely with Him in our leadership function from here on, through the Son and by the Spirit.

Moving on in Genesis 2 we come to verse 15 where we read the following:

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.
Genesis 2:15

Here, we are given the two fundamental functions of church leadership. Just as Adam is charged with two overarching responsibilities in the garden, so is anyone who seeks a leadership function in the church. Adam, we are told, was put in the garden to dress it and keep it. The two Hebrew words that are used here have been translated into two horticultural terms, to dress the plants and make sure the crop is good and to keep the plants in good order. The work and the place of the work belong to Father God. We have been placed into this place of work by Him, He is in control of where we each work and what we each are called to do. In everything we do here, whether it be in leadership or not, we are serving Father, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit.

The actual words used here actually carry a meaning of serving and of guarding, two terms we can indeed recognise as fundamental leadership functions within the church. The Hebrew here is using language from the context of priestly service within the Mosaic tabernacle. The word translated here 'to tend' can also carry the meaning of service and the word translated 'to keep' can also mean to guard, both of these words are found in Numbers 3, where they are used in this way.

And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of the congregation, to do the service of the tabernacle.
Numbers 3:7

Therefore, we are called to keep and do service within our own individual tabernacle, and as leaders we are called to keep or do service within the corporate tabernacle which is the church. As leaders we are also called to guard and serve the body of believers.

Therefore, what does this mean for leadership within the body? The leadership are called to guard or keep the flock over which they have been given oversight. Another way for us to understand this type of leadership is as a shepherd, being mindful of the recent abuses of heavy shepherding within the church, [Footnote 4] at all times we do need to realise that we are only ever serving the one and truly good shepherd, who is Jesus Christ. The sheep we care for are His sheep, not ours and He is both the shepherd and the door to the sheepfold. It will be helpful to spend some time unpacking Jesus' teaching on this area of church life in order that we might understand more clearly the responsibility of leadership to carry the heart of the Shepherd and to be able to protect and care for their flock.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.
John 10:1

A leader who is called to lead a flock will enter by the door. Jesus is the door. Therefore, a leader who is called to

lead a flock will only ever enter this calling to be a shepherd through Jesus. Just like we see with the second call of Peter on the banks of Lake Galilee in John 21 there will have been a conversation in the Spirit by which Jesus as the good shepherd would have asked any individual who aspires to shepherd the flock of God to feed His lambs. However, as with Peter the issue at the heart of this is the heart, 'do you love me enough to sacrificially give your whole self for my flock?' This question is vital and it requires an honest answer. Sadly, however, if this has not happened then that individual will have entered over the wall and will prove to be down the line a thief and a robber, and they will be nothing more than a hireling. [Footnote 4]

To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.
John 10:3

Within this teaching, the Lord chooses to mention that even though He is the door to the sheepfold there is a porter or doorkeeper who has the task to control who comes in and out of the sheepfold. We are told that the door will be opened for the individual who is proven to be the true shepherd, we can infer, therefore, that this doorkeeper will not allow the door to be opened for the thief, robber or hireling. Within the symbolism of this teaching who do we understand the doorkeeper to be? If the sheepfold is symbolic of the church what or who is the doorkeeper? There are two possibilities it is either a particular ministry within the church, i.e. an aspect a church's protective leadership, or it is a function of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps,

scripture itself can help us to answer this question? In Mark's gospel we find this same term used.

> Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore…
> Mark 13:33-35

Here we have the porter or door keeper again, but this time it is within a protective intercessory context. Perhaps we can identify here a particular role within the church for a level of spiritual protection and discernment that is provided by those called to pray and intercession within the body? Isn't this exactly what we see in the church in Antioch in Acts 13?

> As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed…
> Acts 13:2-3a

Therefore, in answering the question as to who is the doorkeeper of the sheepfold it is the Holy Spirit working through the leadership and intercessors in the body to make sure we get these crucial decisions right.

As we return to Jesus' teaching in John we can also identify that the shepherd will be in relationship with the sheep. He will speak their language and be able to communicate

effectively to them. In effect, he will be a conduit through which the good shepherd is able to communicate to the flock. However, the important voice here is not the physical voice of the individual who is acting as a shepherd but that the voice of the good shepherd is heard in and through his words. The words of Jesus are being carried by the Holy Spirit, who places them within the spirit of the shepherd and they are then sown into the spirit of those for whom the word was intended.

> For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.
> Isaiah 55:10-11

Jesus also recognises that the true God given shepherd will know the sheep by name. This is important and instructive. We are reminded here of the task that Father gave Adam to find names for living things in the garden. In scripture, an individual's name captures something about their character or nature, therefore, for a shepherd this means more than they will have a good memory for what someone is called. The responsibility for a shepherd under Christ is to carry His care and His heart for each person so that they develop such a relationship with them that they profoundly know who they are. To care for and carry not just their name but their character and nature as well

in order that they can truly feed them as they are provided with the right spiritual food to help them grow in the things of God and to help them to move inexorably on towards their goal of maturity in Christ. Moreover, in this way, it is as the voice of the good shepherd is heard through the life and words of the shepherd that he is then able to lead the whole flock and to move them all on into the things of God.

And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.
John 10: 4

The last application here, is the need for the true shepherd under Christ to always go before the flock. For you can only lead people where you have already been. A Godly leader will be able to lead them on their individual journey through the beatitudes; a journey that he is taking himself. There is no place for hypocritical game playing here and the sheep will hopefully see through the hirelings who are where they are largely due to the force of their personality and an ability to communicate like an angel, sadly it is too often an angel of light. The tragedy is that on the whole, as is found with natural sheep, we are not the most discerning of creatures as the flock mentality can lead us into all sorts of trouble as we too often follow behind blindly, not questioning where we are all heading and who is leading us.

The main danger for a flock of sheep at the time of Jesus was from a wolf. However, spiritually speaking what is the danger that the Lord is specifically referring to here? Jesus answers this question himself in Matthew 7.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.
Matthew 7:15

The main danger for the church is for it to be infiltrated by the deception of false teaching, teaching that is delivered by someone who might look like a sheep or a shepherd on the surface, however, within they are ravenous wolves. The protective responsibility for the leadership is to make sure that the teaching within the church is the truth. We can recognise, therefore, why it is very important for the leaders in the church to have a sound grasp of scripture and the skill to rightly divide it. We can also understand why Paul himself spends much of his time developing scriptural truth and sound doctrine within his letters. The wolves were already huffing and puffing looking to see which church they could blow down in the first century church. Issues such as Gnosticism and Judaising had already begun to pose a threat, such that they receive Paul's attention in his letters. [Footnote 5] Indeed, Paul himself can see the potential for problems in the future when he writes to Timothy.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears
2 Timothy 4:3

Paul was a good example of protective leadership because he did not see the approaching wolves and run away, he took them on, as he encourages Titus to do likewise, But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine. [Footnote 6] And

within the same letter an important credential of a bishop or elder is given as:

Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught,
that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort
and to convince the gainsayers.
Titus 1:9

Ultimately, following the example of his Lord, Paul himself gave His life for the sheep as a good shepherd. The true leader guards the church because he leads self sacrificially, he is no hireling and just in it for the money, authority and prestige.

Moreover, as the Lord challenges us all to carry our cross and to die daily, the true leader leads by example. He will never run away and leave the flock, he will protect them from the wolves and prevent the sheep being caught and scattered. He does this because he cares for the sheep, he identifies with them, and he knows them because he is one of them. After all, Jesus is the true good shepherd, the church is His flock, and we can only ever be His stewards.

The sad reality is that there are too many hirelings leading churches today through the distorting effect of the one man band leadership denominational structure that is the norm wherever we look. This in turn has meant that many wolves have been able to infiltrate the flock and many sheep are caught and many are scattered. Such that the voice of the Good Shepherd is rarely heard through His word within His church today. However, there is always a new day in the Lord and let us embrace His prophetic word here, and believe that this a new day for a flock of sheep to once again hear the shepherds voice and that there will be one fold and one truly

good shepherd. This we believe can also be understood as the rebuilt tabernacle of David.

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am
known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so
know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.
John 10:14

Here is a leader's bottom line, like David will they be prepared to face the roaring lion and to put their life on the line for the flock? And like the Lord to actually pay the ultimate price for them as many have throughout the history of the church?

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as
I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this,
that a man lay down his life for his friends.
John 15:12-13

Do you love enough to lead the flock of the good shepherd?

Another area of interest for us is the insight this narrative from the garden provides us of Father God's tutoring or discipling of Adam. In Genesis 2, we read the following:

And out of the ground the LORD God formed every
beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought
them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and
whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that
was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all
cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of

the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.
Genesis 2:19-20

What we need to notice here is the way Adam is being tutored. God is bringing man increasingly into a place where he can take over the responsibility for overseeing the creative order, a process of discipleship and lessons learned which begins in the Garden before moving out into the rest of the earth. In the same way this is how the Lord will work with each of us. He will start with the garden of our heart before using us to influence the wider world. This is because the world does not want or need to see you or me, but it does need to see the character and nature of Jesus in us. ,Therefore, for anyone who is called to lead they will need to have come through this process in order that they might be able to come alongside others and to mentor them in this process.

In this as in all its aspects Church leadership must always be marked by a servant's heart, and as we have already seen our service is primarily to the Father, through the Son and by the Spirit. We serve the whole Godhead through our service. And also, we have already seen, we serve the Godhead to fulfil their purposes in those we lead; the primary purpose being the forming of Christ within the man or woman. However, we can not stress this enough, it is all about our motivation. Why are we leading?. For we need to follow the example of our Lord in this.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:
Who…made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant
Philippians 2:5-7a

Although this exhortation from Paul applies to each one of us, it has a particular resonance for anyone with aspirations to take a leadership position in the church. The Lord's own example of servant hearted leadership is given its most powerful demonstration that was set by the Lord on the night He was betrayed.

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.
John 13: 14-16

However, just as the disciples were led by an example of loving selfless service, so should we. If this is a hierarchy then the hierarchical pyramid has been inverted, for the leadership has been placed in the body, specifically by the Lord to serve the body. In addition, in whatever capacity we are called to serve it is crucial that it emanates from the right place, the spirit and not the flesh.

But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.
Romans 7:6

As we return to Genesis 2 we find another important principle for church leadership.

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.
Genesis 2: 18

We do not believe that the Lord ever intended leadership in His body to be a solitary role. His intention, as we see with His choice of twelve disciples and then with His focus upon three within the twelve, was always to create a supportive team to bear the weight of this responsibility of leadership. Therefore, leadership within the body of Christ needs to be expressed within a team. We will explore this more as we study the various leadership functions identified in the New Testament. However, the scripture we are using in support of this assertion comes from the Old Testament.

In Exodus 18 we find Moses receiving some timely advice from Jethro, his father in law. Jethro questions the way his son in law is leading the children of Israel.

> And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?
> Exodus 18:14

And here the issue for Jethro is that Moses is leading on his own, why sittest thou thyself alone. However, he is recognising here a more profound problem than merely that it was too much work and responsibility for just one person. As he goes on to clearly and wisely explain to his son in law,.

> The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee
> Exodus 18:17b-18a

Jethro gives it straight to Moses, and by association to us as well. This is not a good model of leadership, the burden

is not sustainable for just one man, no matter how gifted or anointed to lead. Indeed, when one considers all that Moses does achieve here as a leader, as he carefully guides this huge group of not particularly cooperative people through the desert for forty years, there cannot be many who have been as an effective a leader as he.

The problem with this model is twofold, both the leader and the people who are being lead this way will burn out under it; Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee. The Hebrew word translated as 'wear away' here actually carries a root meaning of a leaf or flower when it has faded through lack of water. For the leader and the people under his leadership this model is unsustainable and dangerous. Indeed, there is the potential for both to wither and to die under it. And yet, what do we find to be the model of choice within the church?

Jethro's solution is delegation. This would not undermine Moses' leadership, but it would enhance it. For as we read in Exodus Moses key leadership function of teaching and guidance would remain, however, the more minor issues would be shared out.

> Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: and let them judge the people at all seasons
> Exodus 18:21-22a

Notice, however, that the level of calling for the other levels of leadership were still very high; God fearing, men

of truth, men who hated covetousness. The last moral credential mentioned here would sadly be a hurdle too high for many in church leadership today. The last words that we hear from Jethro to Moses on this matter do carry the weight of prophetic authority and speak down the centuries to us.

> If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.
> Exodus 18:23

If we, today as leaders, might respond positively to these words from Moses' father in law, then we too would be far more fruitful, effective and our people who we lead might also be sustained in the Lord's peace for their lives and their own walk under our leadership as well. Paul's teaching in Romans is also clear on this matter for every function in the body there is given the right measure of faith and for every gift there is grace enough for it, therefore, let us keep within our capabilities and faith, so that we can stay in the spirit and not operate out of the flesh of our own strength. [Footnote 7] For when we do there is only one consequence for us as poor Uzzah discovered at Nachon's threshing floor on the way to Jerusalem. [Footnote 8]

> And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.
> Genesis 2:18

In returning to Genesis 2:18 and to consider it in its original context, the provision of a life or for us a marital partner for Adam, we might also recognise that this can

speak to a man with leadership aspirations. Although, we do recognise that the single man can legitimately and fruitfully fulfil a leadership function in the church, as we see exemplified by Paul himself. We do need to also say that for a man of God to have the loving partnership of a Godly wife is an immeasurable blessing. Indeed, in Paul's teaching a marriage partnership such as we have described is likened to, and even provides an analogy for the very relationship that is found between the Lord and His church.

> For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.
> Ephesians 5:22-23

The final leadership principle we will be exploring in Genesis 2 is found in verse 19, where we read:

> And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.
> Genesis 2:19

As a leader under God, the Lord will be training us on the job. The relationship between Father God and a leader will be a mentoring one. As we have described above, we do have the example of Jesus here to follow who did nothing unless He first saw that the Father had gone before Him. We, therefore, do need to develop the kind of relationship with Father

through which we recognise His voice and can see His hand at work. We see this described here, in the task of naming God's creation. We are told that the Father actually brought the task to Adam and then He stepped back allowing Adam to complete the task. We believe this to be normative. This is how Father desires to work with us today. Father initiates and we follow through.

This means that in all situations, and therefore not always the positive ones, we need to recognise the hand of God at work. What is He doing, saying or teaching us or others in and through all circumstances? This will require a prayerful and reflective approach from us as leaders. To not always jump at the obvious, easy solution or reasoning, but to take time to ask Father what are you doing here and what would you have me do? This particular verse in Ephesians 2 does feature quite often, however, its application here for leaders we believe is an important one.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.
Ephesians 2:10

As leaders we are His workmanship, Father desires to develop a mentoring relationship with us. Our own journey of discipleship continues and through this ongoing relationship with Father we are still maturing and growing more Christ like. Moreover, as we move on in Him, Father will be bringing situations and people across our path for us to deal with and depending on how this goes will determine both to ourselves and to Him where we are in Him. In all this, our fear should always be of the Lord and not of man,

for it is to Him we will have to give an account as leaders of his church.

In conclusion, therefore, we have identified in Father God's dealing with Adam within the primal tabernacle or relational dwelling place that was the garden certain leadership principles that we can take to heart and apply within the leadership function of the rebuilt tabernacle of David in these last days. We have learned that we lead under the leadership of the Lord, He is building His church, and therefore, effective leadership in the body will be leadership that knows how to be lead of the Lord themselves. We have also learned that the motivation for leadership within the rebuilt tabernacle of David needs to be characterised by a heart to serve and a will to protect. And the third principle of leadership is the importance of a supportive team with whom the burden of leadership can be shared. The final principle is that effective leadership will both relational and mentoring as we all strive to fulfil the Lord's ultimate purpose for His body.

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ
Ephesians 4:11-13

Footnotes

1. A full teaching on the secret life of a true disciple can be found in the Body Life in the Tabernacle, Chapters 11-13.

2. 2 Samuel 6:2

3. Exodus 26:30

4. This was an unhelpful development in Church leadership, that at times and in some places still persists, whereby the words of Jesus that the sheep hear the shepherds voice have been misapplied such that some church leaders decided that they have a God given authority to control the lives of their congregations even to the extent to tell them who they should or should not marry, or what car or house to buy or what job to go for. This seems to have started in the USA through the Fort Lauderdale Four (Bob Mumford, Derek Prince, Charles Simpson, and Don Basham) and quickly spread to parts of the house church movement in Great Britain in the 1970s and 80s. It has since been discredited and the individuals involved, such as Derek Prince, have publicly repented of their involvement.

5. Gnosticism is dealt with in Paul's letters to Corinth and his letter to the church in Galatia addresses the problem posed by the Judaisers of the circumcision party.

6. Titus 2:1

7 Romans 12:3

8 2 Samuel 6, see chapter 1

Chapter 3.

The Principles of Church Leadership

Gleaned from the Elders of the Community of Israel

The leadership role of elders within the community of ancient Israel is well attested to in scripture, particularly during the Exodus journey under the leadership of Moses. Within this scriptural narrative we find eldership developing as the scriptural model of community leadership. Indeed, community eldership seems to have been first formulated in Egypt. The fact that the children of Israel were led by community elders whilst they were held in captivity in Egypt is spiritually significant. Egypt in scripture is symbolic of the world. Therefore, for us, the church, as we dwell within our own God ordained community we are looking forward to our own emancipation from the kingdom of this world and to be released fully into the kingdom of God. Should we not also be led by our own community elders. After all, how does

the Apostle Paul describe the importance of the Old covenant historical narrative for us making our way within the new? In 1 Corinthians 10:6a he declares that, Now these things were our examples. Our conjecture is that we have lost sight of the importance of this function of leadership within the church today. Therefore, here we will explore the role that the elders of Israel did play in the life of this community and drawing from their experience some leadership principles which we believe are applicable to us within the church and moving forward will be normative within the rebuilt tabernacle of David.

We will begin our study by the first direct mention of the elders of Israel in scripture and we find this in Exodus 3, where we read the following:

> And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations. Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt: And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and

the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt
Exodus 3:16-18a

What is interesting here is that the Lord God Himself instructs Moses to include the elders of Israel as part of the team bearing the message to the Pharaoh. Moreover, as part of this He also shares the prophetic purpose of their liberation and subsequent journey.

Why did He do this? We might surmise that it was because the elders were already seen as a representative body within the people, and as such, they were the voice of authority in the community. As such they also were required to understand and own the God given vision. Today, it needs to be the same for us, we have a greater prophet that Moses as our shepherd, and the Lord desires that we are represented by a team of elders who will carry a voice of authority within our own spiritual community, that is the ekklesia. Moreover, they in turn, need to be fully cognisant of and actively engaged in the Shepherds calling for His people.

1. Guarding the Flock

Perhaps, we also need to reflect on the task at hand here. Moses, Aaron and the elders were being prepared to stand up to the ultimate power and authority in the land, the Pharaoh. In type, the Pharaoh is the devil. Therefore, we can understand that in spiritual terms the task of confronting the Pharaoh is for us a calling to intercessory prayer. Let

us remind ourselves how the Apostle Paul describes this important spiritual calling.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.
Ephesians 6:12, 13, 18

Indeed, Paul does beseech the elders of the church in Ephesus to take their role of guarding the flock seriously when addressing them at the time of his departure.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.
Acts 20:28-31

In addition, the typology here suggests just as the elders of the church walk obediently under the leadership of Jesus,

and the for us the voice of whom is the Holy Spirit. Here, in Exodus we have a similar trinity in the elders, Moses and, his voice, Aaron.

Moving on in scripture, we find them the elders exercising their authority. As we saw with Adam in the Garden, the elders have a guarding, keeping or protective function within the community. This is demonstrated as they are assigned the task of sacrificing the lambs and to smear their blood on the door posts and lintels of the houses of the people, for whom they had responsibility.

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.
Exodus 12:21-22

This is helpful and instructive, because it symbolically shows us that the elders today also have authority that is related to the shed blood of Christ. Likewise, today our elders will also be required to have a profound understanding of the importance of the cross and will always be redirecting the attention of those for whom they have responsibility to take it all to the cross and to apply the blood of the Lamb of God onto their own issues of life and death. Indeed, life and death issues that will be both temporal and spiritual for the flock as they work out their salvation with fear and trembling. Footnote 1 Elders will also be required to live sacrificially and to apply the blood in and through their own lives, and to not

stand aloof but to get their hands dirty, so to speak, as they are actively engaged in and with the lives of those they are leading. For the whole community gathered within the rebuilt tabernacle of David, the applied blood of the Lamb will be central to our walk as overcomers. Footnote 2

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.
Revelation 12:11

2. Delegated Authority

On the other side of the Red Sea, in Exodus 18, we find that Moses, in response to the wise counsel of Jethro, his father in law, has realised for his own wellbeing that he had to share the weight of his responsibilities to lead the children of Israel. As a result of which the function of the elders was enhanced and more formally recognised, as we see described here.

And let them (the elders) judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.
Exodus 18: 22, 23

This enhanced role was significant as the elders were now to carry the delegated authority of Moses and to act as judges within their communities. In the same way, we need

to understand that the authority that the elders within the rebuilt tabernacle of David will also carry delegated authority. However, this authority comes from a greater prophet than Moses; Christ Jesus the risen head of His body,the church. A spiritual reality that is clearly described here by Paul.

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.
Ephesians 1: 17-23

Just as the early church needed fresh revelation of the spiritual realities that Paul is describing here, how much more do we need such revelation in the church today?

Jesus is the head of the body!

If this is true, then this has profound consequences with regards to the authority structure with the church. If Jesus is

the head then the authority that is exercised within the body is His authority alone. It is not for sharing. Indeed, this is His hard-won authority. It took Him to the cross and beyond in order that His Father might lift him on high. It is all about Him, every blessing, whether it be the hope of his calling, the riches of the glory of his inheritance, or the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward come from the working of his mighty power. It is all about Him. It is not about us. Therefore, we desperately need fresh revelation of this so that it begins to impact the church once more as it once did. And particularly to impact the authority structures within it that pass today for leadership. Sadly, a leadership that all too often is self-called, self-interested and self-powered.

Jesus is the head in need of a body!

Jesus has been placed there by His Father and He is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. A position from which Father has put all things under his feet and a position from which Father has given him to be the head over all things to the church. Do we really know this? If we do then there will be need for significant adjustments as to how the church is lead because:

Jesus is the head of the church, which is His body!

Jesus is not just our wonderful means to salvation and eternal life, He is now the head of the church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. We are merely a worthless clay pot but our contents transform us into something truly wonderful as Paul describes here:

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.
2 Corinthians 4:6-7

This authority or power that has been invested in the church cannot continue to be hijacked by us and our man-made management or religious clerical systems.

We need to find again a means by which Jesus, the head of the body, is the decision maker and that His Father's will finds a way to be distilled and effectively communicated into the heart of His body.

For it is the Father's good, acceptable and perfect will that we need to find at all times and in all situations. To this end, therefore, as we see with the example of Moses, the delegated authority of Jesus will be need to be given to a group of elders within the body and they will then exercise this authority on behalf and through communication with the Father through the Lord and by the Spirit. Later on, we will see an example this form of delegated leadership in action in the church at Antioch.

3. Relational leadership: both vertical and horizontal

Another opportunity to glean some insight of the importance of eldership can be found in Numbers 11. Here, we find Moses at a particularly low ebb as the people are once again complaining about their lack of food and are harking back to their time in Egypt. This brings them once again

under the wrath of God and they come under a judgement of fire. In desperation, caught in the middle of sharing the frustration of God and feeling the pain of the people Moses finally exclaims:

I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.
Numbers 11:14

Again, we can recognise here the foolishness of the prevailing leadership model in the church where so many of leaders are reaching out to God with the same prayer, 'this is too hard for me to do alone'. Quelle surprise!. A leader is not meant to function alone. The Lord God at this point provides the answer for Moses and indeed an answer for all leaders who feel overwhelmed by the weight of their responsibilities.

Share the Load

And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.
Number 11:16-17

Elders have to be a friend of Jesus.
Relationship is key!

Therefore, the response to Moses' distress is to provide him with friends, seventy elders would be chosen, and these would be specifically chosen because Moses had a good relationship with them, such they could be trusted with this responsibility. The key phrase here is whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people.

The same is true for us today, Moses is a type of Christ, the good shepherd, and he desires to gather together a group of leaders or elders with whom He has a good relationship, i.e. they are truly walking the walk and have through to a certain level of maturity in Christ. Those who He can trust with the responsibilities of bearing the burden with Him. Here, we are reminded of Jesus' words to the first leadership team, the eleven disciples, on the night that He was betrayed.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.
John 15:14-15

Jesus is looking to form friendships at the heart of leadership and so should we!

This will an important aspect of the building work of the Lord within the rebuilt tabernacle of David in our own time. A gathering together such there is coming together in these days into a place of unity and where the bond of peace prevails for a called-out team of leaders. Who might then, as did the seventy with Moses, stand together as they stand with the Lord. This best found amongst those who have strong loving relationships with each other, otherwise known as friendships.

Elders need to be friends.
Relationship is key!

4. Leadership is spelled 'TEAM'

What happens next is wonderful for Father says that He will personally come down and talk with Moses in the tabernacle and to impart to the seventy elders the same spirit as Moses. Thereby, equipping them to share the burden with Moses. For us, this also provides an exciting picture of what the Lord is encouraging us to reach out for expectantly in these days as He rebuilds and sets in place His chosen leadership team. There will be functioning out of unity and functioning in the Spirit.

A leadership team that carries the same heart and the same spirit as our own shepherd, Jesus.

Therefore, we do need to consider what burden bearing might mean for this team of elders within the tabernacle.

An essential element of this will be that the team of elders is a team.

A team can be defined as,

A group of people with a full set of complementary skills required to complete a task, job, or project.

Team members (1) operate with a high degree of interdependence,

(2) share authority and responsibility for self-management,

(3) are accountable for the collective performance, and

(4) work toward a common goal and shared rewards.

A team becomes more than just a collection of people when a strong sense of mutual commitment creates synergy, thus generating performance greater than the sum of the performance of its individual members. [Footnote 3] We will be looking in detail at the key scriptural criteria for eldership within the body as we study the teaching of Paul on this matter in a later chapter, however, using this secular definition, what qualities can we expect to see within a team of elders?

- a full set of complementary skills
- interdependence
- shared authority
- responsibility
- accountability
- a common goal
- shared rewards

There is one passage of scripture which clearly demonstrates that the God given leadership team within the body of Christ will tick each of these boxes.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers [Footnote 4] for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ
Ephesians 4:11-13

Moreover, when we add the following crucial elements to this.

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me
John 15: 26

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.
John 15: 12-14

We have both the focus and the glue, which would hold this all together.

5. Intercessional Leadership

We can also make a profound connection with the important element of the tabernacle that we have previously explored when studying the tabernacle which David established for the return of the Ark of the Covenant in 2 Samuel 6, the sacrifice of the burnt offering which we understood to represent the crucial underpinning ministry of intercession. The seventy elders here are being imbued with the same spirit for standing in the gap for the children of Israel, to help carry this significant burden with Moses. Just as Moses was recognised by God as the meekest man on earth, [Footnote 5] likewise these handpicked leaders were seen to be of the same sought by God and were now equally spiritually anointed as they shared the spirit of Moses.

Indeed, the intercessory role of the elders is demonstrated under the next leader, Joshua, when there is sin in the camp and they are struggling to defeat the stronghold of Ai.

And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.
Joshua 7:6

The elders can be seen here sharing the burden of Joshua and join him in his intercession before the Lord God. This is the same calling we have recognised to be carried within the rebuilt Tabernacle of David for our own time. For the Lord is looking for a people who might stand with Him in his intercessory role. Indeed, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, even now making intercession for the saints [Footnote 6.] That we might play our part and share his burden to make a people made ready for Him. His Bride, waiting expectantly for His return as the Bridegroom.

6. Prophetic Leadership

Another important aspect of leadership that we can identify in the passage we have been exploring in Numbers 11 is that of prophetic guidance, such that there is a prophetic dynamic that can be recognised within the leadership of the elders. Indeed, within the rebuilt tabernacle of David we can also expect to witness a restoration of the important position for the prophetic, that it might become once more a truly prophetic voice for the nations.

And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle. And the LORD came down in a cloud, and

spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.
Numbers 11:24-25

7. Looking for the City that is to come

The final passage that we will explore concerning the elders of the children of Israel and their role during the Exodus under the leadership of Moses, is a remarkable passage in Exodus 24

Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.
Exodus 24:9-11

The elders are given here an especial privilege to see God face to face, to see an aspect of heaven and to even eat and drink with Him, and then to live to tell the tale. This is a wonderful precursor to that time when the elders and the rest of the bride will be caught up in the air to meet their bridegroom and to sit with Him and His Father in the marriage feast of the Lamb. There will also be another time when we will be walking on this same paved work of a sapphire stone as the New Jerusalem comes down onto the new earth to be our eternal habitation.

And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.
Revelation 21:-23

Moreover, it is to the New Testament that we now turn to explore the leadership function as we find it in the teaching of Jesus within the Gospel narrative, before turning to the teaching of the apostles Paul and Peter.

Footnotes

1. Philippians 2: 12

2. See chapter 5, The Onward Journey; Overcoming in Christ, in Back to the Future; The Rebuilt Tabernacle of David, by the same author for a full teaching on overcoming in Christ.

3. Taken from: http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/team.html accessed on 2/8/2017

4. Strictly speaking these are the ministry gifts within the Body of Christ being described here and we will be looking at how these function within the body in a later chapter. However, as we will see the is a cross over as those who would function in a ministry gift for the wider body would probably also be an elder of a local gathering.

5. Numbers 12:3

6. Hebrews 7: 25

Chapter 4.

Leadership Principles Gleaned from the Life and Teaching of Jesus

Jesus was, and still is, the archetypal leader of men. An important, but often missed, aspect of Jesus'teaching was to provide the principles by which the ongoing work of God would continue to be lead after His time with us on earth was completed. This is a model of leadership that, as we will see, is built upon a secure foundation of self-less love and service. Indeed, it does provide us with a significant challenge to today's self-fulfilling man-made leadership models and methods that we see too often in operation in the church. Indeed,, as we are looking for the Lord to rebuild a spiritual tabernacle for our own day, Godly leadership as taught by the Lord himself is a crucial area that is in serious need of attention. As we will see there are significant events in the life and teaching of Jesus that are recorded in the gospels which

will resonate with the same principles of leadership that we have already recognised above.

1. Know where your authority lies

The first event that we will be exploring can be found in Luke 7 where we read the following:

> Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue. Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And they that were sent,

returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.
Luke 7: 1-10

Here we have a gentile, a Roman soldier, who seems to be setting an example for us all to follow, 'When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.'

However, before we do move on to consider how this informs our understanding of leadership, we do need to notice Jesus' reaction here. We are told 'he marvelled at him', what a strong reaction to what, on the face of it, was just this individual expressing a statement of the facts as he saw them. Indeed, how little is required from us to thrill the Lord. For He is ever looking for a glimpse of His kingdom and its values evidenced by us. Therefore, as we actively seek to walk the challenging walk of true discipleship in these days, particularly in leadership, how thrilled do you think He is with you? Can you imagine Him marvelling over some of the stuff we occasionally get right?

However, this was no ordinary Roman soldier, for what we have here is a centurion, one who leads a hundred men. We are told he loved Israel and, as described by Jesus in Luke 22, he was also a benefactor, presumably having even built the synagogue in which this event was taking place. This Roman soldier also seems to have understood and respected the culture within which he was living and working as he spared Jesus the difficulty for Him as a Jew of entering the house of a gentile.

For our purposes, as we are exploring this scripture to gain a greater understanding of leadership principles, the important aspect for us in this story is the principle

of authority and how it functions in relationship with the spiritual dynamic of faith.

As with all military structures there is always a clear chain of command, and this centurion was positioned roughly two thirds along the Roman military pecking order, there were three positions above and five below him as a centurion. However, the key factor for us and for Jesus here is that within this interaction we are shown precisely how faith works. Faith is defined in Hebrews 11:1 as, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. We, therefore, have faith when we believe in something to be the case, and then crucially to act upon this belief without any concrete physical evidence that this belief is actually justified. However, at these times what we do have is our own concrete evidence within us and this is faith. Concrete evidence that is provided for us, it is a gift [Footnote 1]. A vital provision which enables us to do something that ordinarily is beyond our capacity, because in this we are not drawing on our strength, ability or confidence. At this time faith is either there or it is not. And, in these moments of need we know where we are in our own chain of command and we have received our orders from our own commander. Faith is therefore underpinned by the certain knowledge that we have someone in authority over us who can and will bring to pass this thing for which we have the concrete evidence of our faith.

This place or position of faith is precisely where this centurion found himself and by his statement he is expressing that he has faith, concrete evidence within him, that this man who is standing before him has the authority and therefore the wherewithal to bring to pass the healing of his servant. [Footnote 1] The word of authority from Jesus was enough for him, and it was. Although, we are not told that Jesus actually said anything other than for him to go home.

So, what do we learn about leadership here? Spiritually and practically speaking as leaders in the body of Christ we need to understand that we are in effect middle managers. We stand functionally and relationally, but not hierarchically as the Catholic Church would suggest, between the Godhead and the body of Christ. As we saw in the last chapter leaders in the body of Christ need to exercise their authority with a clear understanding that it is a God given gift that we have received, and it needs to be exercised in love within the faith realm. Again, as we saw above, leaders need to have revelation of where their authority truly comes and to stand humbly before Him in fear and trembling at all times.

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.
1 Peter 5:2-4

Paul, in Ephesians 1, reveals his heart for the body of Christ and states that his fervent prayer is that the church has more revelation of who it is in Christ and more revelation of all that Christ has done for it. His prayerful thoughts culminate in the following crescendo:

And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.
Ephesians 1:22-23

For anyone who leads within the body of Christ this must be understood and known by them in their hearts. Jesus is the head of the church and all things in the universe lie beneath His feet. A leader, like the centurion in the story, needs to know their authority and crucially with whom their authority emanates. They too need to just see Jesus, their head and the fount of all their authority, and know that if he says it then it will happen. Therefore, there are two requisites here, firstly there needs to be faith filled knowledge or revelation of where the authority lies and then there needs to be spiritual ears to hear when Jesus speaks. For centurion he had both and his servant received the blessing.

Leadership as such is not and cannot be instantaneous, it must be a part of the journey of true discipleship. It is not for nothing that the key leadership function within the church is called an elder, not a 'younger' as we too often have it today. The Centurion himself would have had quite a journey to have arrived at the rank of Centurion and along the way he would have learnt to implicitly trust in the authority of the Emperor and his empire of which he now was a middle ranking officer. In Jesus he recognised authority of a different order, but he understood how authority structures function and as such he had the required faith that thrilled the Lord. We too need to learn similar lessons. For we can only safely exercise authority over others when we understand that we are under authority ourselves and are therefore motivated by the fear of God that this must engender. Any other way and the church becomes a scary place and the sheep are abused, mistreated and sometimes eternally damaged. It will be good to reflect upon the Lord's chilling statement in Mark 9:42 at this point,

And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

Chilling words indeed! Therefore, for any of us who do aspire to leadership, do not be in a hurry. Let the Lord truly be your leader, learn to walk with Him in the daily realities, and learn how to hear His voice with clarity for yourself.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me
John 10:27

Let Jesus be your shepherd before you ever try to shepherd others.

2. True leadership is spelled 'selfless service'

The next passage we are going to look is Matthew 20.

Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them

for whom it is prepared of my Father. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.
Matthew 20:20-28:

We have a contrast here between leadership in the world and that which we should be looking for in the body of Christ, the two leadership models are juxtaposed. On the one side 'Apprentice' style self-promotion and on the other disciple style dying to self.

Leadership in the body is to be built upon servanthood

…whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant'

Anyone with aspirations for leadership in the body of Christ must first and foremost be a servant and as such they will be required to carry the same mind as the Lord, who, we are told by Paul in Philippians 2:7b, 'took on the form of a servant' as His modus operandi for His ministry on Earth. However, this must not be misunderstood. Jesus was not the servant of mankind here. His devoted and obedient service was to His Father.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth…
John 5:19-20a

Indeed, in leadership our love motivated focus will always be required to look heavenward before being exercised on earth.

If there is a calling for leadership, it will be governed by this individual's God given measure of faith and their level of grace. We learn this from Paul's teaching in Romans 12 where leadership is described as one of the grace attributes in the body.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. … he that ruleth, with diligence. [Footnote 2]
Romans 12:3,8c

However, the most important factor that will affect the quality of any leader will be the quality of the individual's heart and it is this, and this alone, that this will determine their capacity to truly be a servant to the body. In this story above, we can identify that the motivation, at least of James and John's mother, is questionable as she seems to be trying to promote her son's leadership credentials above those of the other disciples. There is not very much of the servant heart to be evidenced here.

However, Jesus' response to the request from the mother is very revealing. For the actual content of the mother's request is not actually challenged by the Lord. This is because in the Millennial kingdom there will be opportunities for individuals to actually sit alongside Jesus as He sits on the throne of David in the millennial tabernacle of David as is attested by scripture. In Isaiah 16, for example, we have a prophetic description of the Lord sitting on this throne in the Millennium Kingdom, where we read:

And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.
Isaiah 16:5

And then in Revelation 3, as overcomers, we are prophetically encouraged to expect a place even in His throne, where we read:

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.
Revelation 3:21

Therefore, the mother of James and John having selfish ambition for her boys, did at least demonstrate some prophetic insight and understanding. Sadly, this is more than can be said by the leader today who has been poisoned by the distortion of Kingdom Now theology. Indeed, there is a kingdom to come, the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, when He will rule the kingdoms of the world from the Tabernacle

of David in Jerusalem. And it is also true, as we have been exploring throughout this teaching on the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David, that there is a wonderful reason why we have to walk the narrow way now and to allow Father God to transform our nature into that of His son, and this is to prepare us for what is to come. And what is to come, is that Jesus desires to return for His bride which has been prepared and made ready to rule and reign with Him in the millennial Kingdom, as we read in Revelation 5:

> And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.
> Revelation 5:9-10

This said, however, Jesus does caution us against presumption. The final decision in all things is the Father's to make. Significantly in this narrative, Jesus places the whole discussion concerning leadership in the kingdom of God within a deeper reality; the reality that true God-fearing leadership will be marked by suffering and at times paying the ultimate price for their service. There may indeed be a place for us in the very throne room of Jesus in His Millennial Kingdom, but He then asks a crucial question; are we, able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

Indeed, both James and John do answer in the affirmative here and Jesus does take them at their word. Moreover, the record does show that James does indeed drink the same cup

as His Lord and is baptised with the same baptism, for in Acts 12 he is martyred by Herod and therefore is the first of the original disciples to be martyred. In fact, all the original disciples paid the ultimate price for their faith.

Therefore, what about us? Is this a price we feel able to pay? Can we answer Jesus in the affirmative and offer to drink the same cup as Him and to be baptised by the same baptism? There may come a time quite soon, even in Britain, where to be a disciple of Jesus Christ might cost us all we have. It will be then that the Lord might start to pose this particular question in the west. However, in the Middle East, in the Far East and in Africa He has already been asking this question of His leaders for some time and they have been responding to Him in the affirmative, because they do understand that there is a powerful spiritual dynamic between the price that is paid and the fruit that is produced.

> Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.
> John 12:24

When the rest of the disciples respond with indignation to the selfish ambition seemingly demonstrated by the mother of sons of thunder Jesus delivers a clear piece of teaching on the principles that underpin leadership in His kingdom, … whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant

Here, Jesus is making His point by juxtaposing the two leadership models, thereby challenging the worldly ambition demonstrated here by stating what is the actual Godly

requirement. If you want to be great, whatever this means, you will need to literally be an errand runner first. This is what the Greek literally means here, as Jesus is using the term diakonos form which we get the term deacon; a term and function that we will be looking at in detail below. And if we want to be chief or literally 'numero uno' then we will have to become a slave. Jesus completes His teaching here by reflecting on His own ministry and destiny as a fulfilment of this model of leadership; one that is first and foremost a model of love, service and self-sacrifice. Is it a model we would still want to sign up to?

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto,
but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.
Matthew 20:28

3. Leadership requires vulnerability and transparency

The third passage we will be exploring in scripture is John 13:3-17, picks up a similar theme. And again, this passage will be helpful for us as we endeavour to understand the principles which lie behind leadership in the kingdom of God and which are required for those who would aspire to take on a role of leadership within the body of Christ. From which we then hope to discover afresh a model of leadership that will be a crucial aspect of the rebuilding work necessary for us to have an expression of the tabernacle of David. Indeed, crucial in order that we might see an expression of the body of Christ that is fit for purpose in our day and that will be an effective vessel for the preparation of a people who are being made ready for the return of the bridegroom.

Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.
John 13:3-17

The first point we would want to make here is a reflection on Jesus' initial act as he prepared himself to serve His disciples in the upper room on the night before he went to

the cross. We are told that he removed His garments, which in reality meant that He, the incarnate son of God, was naked before his disciples, a state which would have carried with it a vulnerability and a total disclosure of Himself before His disciples.

Is there a principle here for us to learn from? We are not saying that all leadership meetings should be conducted au naturel. However, what we are saying is that a leader does need to be able to make themselves vulnerable to others, and that their lives should be transparent with nothing to hide. There obviously needs to be wisdom here and there will be varying levels of self-exposure, the most profound level should occur within the leadership team itself. For as we saw in Genesis 2, Father's judgement is that it is not good for a man to be alone in his service. Therefore, there does need to be provision made for accountability such that a leader can be vulnerable and to find support and help in a time of need. We need to know that even leaders can make a mistake, without immediately calling for the spiritual firing squad. There is too much hidden today, for the prevailing fear is not the healthy fear of God but the unhealthy fear of man; the unhealthy driver we recognised as we explored the journey of the Ark of the covenant in our previous book. [Footnote 3] There is also too much self-pride whereby leaders are unable to or unwilling to share their issues or vulnerability for fear of being judged. Therefore, we need the team leadership of a group of elders to provide a support ministry such that burdens can be shared and together we can help each other carry them to Jesus.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.
Matthew 11:27

Such that our labour of leadership is not so burdensome that we burn out under the weight of it. Moreover, we need to find others with whom we can find solace and support. Then, to be metaphorically naked before people, to bare all that is in our hearts and lives. To be able to move together in love on our leadership journey with those we trust and who trust us. A supportive relationship that is exemplified by Paul here:

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.
Galatians 6:1-2

The fundamental point that Jesus is making as He obediently acts out before His disciples the duty of a common bond slave by this act foot washing is the same as we saw in the passage in Matthew 20. Here, however, Jesus is showing us that it this needs to go beyond nice platitudes, to just say the right thing and hopefully people will believe you.

Leadership is slavery in action!

Are we ready for this? And Jesus' rationale is very clear and unambiguous here:

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.
John 13:14-15

If I Then U

The equation says it all, if I then U, what could be plainer? If the Lord of all creation demonstrates that leadership in his kingdom is all about getting up close and dirty with great unwashed how dare we who aspire to take our place within the leadership in His kingdom attempt to practice it in any other way?

Jesus describes the required slave mentality in a parable in Luke 17: 7-10,

> But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.
> Luke 17:7-10

How far we are from this mode of service in the church today, we rather act as though it is the Lord who is at our disposal. Hopefully, as we walk the walk of true discipleship and spend time in the refining presence of Father in our secret place, we, who aspire to lead in His kingdom, will be trained to be servants of the calibre we find in this parable. And, therefore, to become less and less so that He can become more and more and those we lead will feel the benefit.

4. Every leader needs to come through the desert and its temptations

We will now explore the Jesus' temptation narrative in Luke in order that we might come to a fuller understanding of how important and sustaining a foundation this was for His earthly ministry going forwards and to see whether it might be potentially illustrate principles that are paradigmatic for leadership more generally within His body.

> And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any

time thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee
Luke 4:1-14a

Jesus is tempted by the devil three times; each episode of temptation is a challenge to an important foundational aspect of His ministry. Indeed, His ministry is challenged even before it has truly begun. There is a truth here that we do need understand for ourselves as leaders or potential leaders, particularly when we are on the verge of stepping out in to the faith realm and in to a God birthed vision. On the one hand we need to realise that this is a time of great vulnerability and to be prepared for the enemy to try to undermine and defeat us at this early stage.

However, on other we also need to understand that Father is allowing this to happen. In fact, whenever we are tempted we need to know that Father is allowing it to happen, after all He is God. He is allowing us to be tempted so that He can prove to us something about the actual reality of our heart and whether or not we are ready to follow Him in this area. To show us whether or not more work is required. However, the reality is that we will never fully arrived there is always much more work to be done for us to walk consistently in the Spirit and as the new man we have been called to be in Christ. Even Paul demonstrates this truth as he comments on his own spiritual journey.

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may

apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3:12-14

As we turn to Jesus' first temptation, we can immediately recognise that the temptation here is the same as that which was faced by the children of Israel as they made their own way through the wilderness.

And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
Matthew 4:3-4

Why do we say this? Jesus' response is the clue, because His scriptural repost to the devil is drawn from Deuteronomy 8.

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.
Deuteronomy 8:3

The issue here is that the wilderness experience with all its hardships and deprivations would have had the effect of writing on the hearts of the children of Israel a significant truth that they would be able to take with them into the Promised Land. The truth being that Father and His word can be trusted and that He is faithful and dependable to look after His own in all circumstances, no matter how hard the journey.

It is not the food that they had to eat in the wilderness but the source of this food that is important. This is such an important lesson to learn for any one aspiring to function in any level of leadership in the church. We need to really know who the source of all things is, it is not us, it is not our amazing abilities to preach, teach or play the guitar, it is not 'our anointing' to heal, it is all about Him. He is the alpha and the omega and the beginning and the end. He is the author and perfecter or finisher of our faith journey. Even as a leader this reality does not change. Indeed, this truth needs to be a truth established and written in capitals in our inward parts on our hearts. For as David had to learn for himself in the midst of his sin and confusion over Bathsheba he writes:

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.
Psalm 51:6

How about us? How secure are we in our identity? Insecurity is another major stumbling block for leaders in the church today and leads leaders to use heavy shepherding techniques to control the people under their leadership. As is perfectionism or self-pride, which would dictate that they

would have to have their fingers in every pie, so to speak, otherwise it just will not be done right. Much pain is caused, and people are not able to grow and mature under this kind of leadership regime. This is because for whatever reason they struggle to let go and let God be Lord by His Holy Spirit over the lives of the people with whom they are living and working. They may feel compelled to operate in their own strength and to keep everything under control, their control. However, let us remind ourselves of the experience of another leader at this point, Uzzah the leader of the oxen pulling the new cart on which the Ark of the Covenant was being pulled from Gibeah to Jerusalem.[Footnote 4] In Hebrew the name Uzzah carries the meaning of strength and the picture this provides us with is that if we try and to support the anointing of the Almighty in our own strength there will be a death.

Why, when we become leaders in whatever capacity, is it so easy to begin to trust ourselves and think that we suddenly have all the answers? For Jesus there was a central truth to His ministry that was all important. In all things His Father could be trusted, but this had to be tested to make sure that this truth was where it needed to be, safe within the hidden inward part of His heart. This is because it would need to be His foundation and security from which He would be able to face all that the world would be throwing at Him. For he would need to depend on Father for all things, at all times, and to not look to His own finite resources but rest in the Father's infinite resources. For Jesus chose to walk in obedience to His Father, as He…took upon… the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.[Footnote 5] Can a leader in Christ walk any other path? We, too, are required to take the form of a servant.

If I Then U is a dictum a leader needs to follow

This, Jesus total dependency on and obedience to His Father is the truth that we hear expressed by the Lord in this verse in John's gospel,.

> Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.
> John 5:19

Indeed, for us this is part of the work that we explored the Father doing on the journey from Gibeah to Jerusalem, as the Ark was taken through the death experience of Uzzah and David could be seen learning about the importance of walking in fear and obedience. [Footnote 6] Indeed, as we established in our previous work this scriptural picture provides an example for us all to follow, even those who lead.

> For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.
> John 5:20

> Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.
> John 14:12

It is all about walking before the Father, and as Abraham experienced we are never too old to walk this walk.

> And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.
> Genesis 17:1

Therefore, Jesus' first temptation whilst He fasted in the wilderness was a challenge to His dependency upon His Father, as He was tempted to meet His physical needs in His own strength. A lesson that is so crucial to anyone who would aspire to function as a leader within the body of Christ and this will be a lesson that Father will want to take each one of us through for our good and for the good of His body. His second temptation at the hands of the devil is also a challenge to the foundations of His precious relationship with His Father.

> Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.
> Matthew 4:5-7

The question that does require an answer here is; where does the temptation really lie? Anyone standing on the top of a high rise, whether they had been taken there by the devil or not, unless they were suicidal, would not normally countenance stepping off the edge of the building into thin air. The one and only way that this would have been tempting to the Lord would have been if he had had doubts about His own identity and His Father's ability to be there for Him. Therefore, the

temptation would have to been to put the trustworthiness and faithfulness of His Father to the test, and to jump. After all, if Jesus was going to walk before His Father He had to know that He would definitely be there for Him in all circumstances, didn't He? However, Jesus knew only too well that His Father was both trustworthy and faithful. In fact, Jesus goes further by declaring that, I and my Father are one. (John 10:31) The issue here therefore that seems to be being challenged is whether of not the Lord had an understanding of the difference between faith and presumption.

As we saw above Jesus states clearly that:

> The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.
> John 5:19

This is a statement of faith. The writer to the Hebrews helpfully defines faith as, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Hebrews 11: 1) Faith is something that is tangible; it has substance or weight. As we saw above with the example of the Centurion, true faith has weight to it, a sense of God given certainty that He stands with us in something and will provide the wherewithal to bring this situation to fruition in Him and in His purposes. The same writer goes on to tell us the following as well.

> But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
> Hebrews 11:6

Therefore, from this we learn that it is only through operating out of or in faith that we can please God. He is pleased in this because by operating out of faith we are only doing, or saying something because we see Him in it, He has gone before us and we are joining Him in whatever it is that we are doing or saying. Just like Adam in the garden we are being mentored by our Father as He helps to bring something to fruition in the garden of our heart and as a leader to bring something to fruition in the garden that is His body.

> So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.
> 1 Corinthians 3:7-9

Therefore, for those willing to be in faith, to wait on the Lord and look for what Father is doing they will be rewarded. They will be rewarded by Father working with them and causing them to be fruitful in whatever He has lead them to do in Him and, therefore, to be doing it in faith. However, for those stepping out in their own strength and therefore in presumption they may be heading for a fall.

Today, sadly too often faith is confused with presumption and this is a common fallacy which verges on heresy as it is expressed within the word of faith teaching. As we have seen faith is a total reliance on God for His provision. He puts the desire there in the first place, He then gives us the faith to believe it is possible in Him and then He provides

where withal to achieve it. For those who follow the word of faith teaching the confusion comes at the first stage. They teach that we are in usually in control of this first stage, such that whatever we ask for in 'faith' then God is duty bound to provide it. Moreover, if the thing we have been praying for doesn't materialise then the problem is with our level of 'faith'. Therefore, this teaching distorts the essential balance at the heart of our relationship with God, ostensibly placing us in control of God, as if he is merely there to meet our, often materialistic, demands. Teaching which is creating huge problems in poverty stricken nations in the third world as it distorts the true message of the cross. As aspiring leaders, we will do well to take note of Paul's words of warning in Romans 12.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.
Romans 12:3

We must all guard against the sin of presumption and never move beyond simple childlike trust as we walk before our God. Jesus' scriptural response comes from Deuteronomy 6 and it is a reference to a particularly important event that the children of Israel experienced on their way through the wilderness.

Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.
Deuteronomy 6:16

What happened at Massah? The issue was a lack of water. As the children of Israel travelled through the wilderness of Sin, this would have been a serious life-threatening situation. However, they had just had the experience of God providing them with manna, the food of Angels, and yet they still did not understand that their God could be trusted. Here, in the wilderness they are accused of tempting their God by asking Him to prove Himself to them one more time and to produce a miraculous supply of water. They were pushing God to prove himself. Once again, they wanted a concrete sign that God was both trustworthy and faithful to His word of covenant with them. Indeed, such a wonderful covenant that is described earlier in Exodus.

And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.
Exodus 3:7-8

He has heard their cry, He has set them free and now He is leading them faithfully into His covenantal blessing. He can do nothing else, His very nature is one of faithfulness and truth. Indeed, even from the mouth of Balaam, a prophet with issues, we are given a very clear declaration of this very same truth in Numbers 23.

God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?
Numbers 23:19

Back to Jesus and we see that He himself had just received the Spirit from His Father and he had just heard these wonderful words, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'.

Why would He have any doubt in His Father's full and faithful providential care? Why would He want to tempt His Father Him to prove anything to Him? Surely He was secure in this relationship which would sustain Him through the challenges of the next three or so years? Or did He?

Could Father be trusted? Or did the hand of God need to be forced in order that this trust could be demonstrably proven. Even Jesus' could be tempted in this area of how secure He was in His trust of the Father. Leaders will always be tempted in this area as they feel a constant pressure to set a clear path for others to follow, but this path has to be the path that has been set for us by Father and not one that seems right in our own eyes. Faith can so easily be little more than presumption if we have not actually heard the Lord speak.

Leaders must first learn to be lead of the Lord.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.
Ephesians 2:10

The third temptation is an attempt by the devil to draw Him away to another very real source of spiritual authority; the devil's own.

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.
Matthew 4:8-10

It is interesting to note that the first two temptations carry the prefix 'If thou be the Son of God', this is missing here. It has been suggested that up until this point the devil is not sure who he is dealing with and, therefore, this is a genuine enquiry as to Jesus' true identity. Another way of looking at this, however, is that the first two temptations were actually a real challenge to Jesus' identity. The devil is actually taunting Jesus to prove Himself and His Son of God credentials to him. To show His true identity through a misplaced use of His super natural power and His supernatural support structure. A taunt that might have proven successful had the Lord not been secure in His own identity, and secure in His relationship with His Father. For Jesus His identity, during these thirty or so years He walked among us, was a wonderful blend of humanity and deity. After all His chosen titles were both the Son of God and the Son of Man. Within what appears to be an early Christian hymn describing the humanity of Christ cited by Paul in Philippians 2 we can see the process by which the

Lord in meekness obediently chose His human identity, where we read:

> Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
> Philippians 2:6-8

Indeed, whereas the scope of the first two temptations lay within Jesus' heavenly authority, the challenge being that Jesus would use this out of time, the scope of the third temptation lay very much within the devil's gift. The devil was offering the Lord something that was his to give, all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. This is quite an offer and Jesus does not dismiss it out of hand, for He takes the offer totally seriously. The actual offer is for the Lord to be given that which the devil actually had authority over, in Greek it is the word kosmos, which means the world's social, political and religious system. We see him described in scripture as the god of this world.

> In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not. [Footnote 7]
> 2 Corinthians 4:4

We also see him described as the prince of the power of the air.

> Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the

> power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience
> Ephesians 2:2

Scripture, therefore, is clear concerning the authority that the devil actually does exercise at the moment over the kosmos, which is the world's social, political and religious system. A system clearly at odds with the kingdom of God and this system, which in scripture is described as Babylon, is the political, religious system through which the Antichrist will eventually emerge. Therefore, for the devil to enlist the true Christ would have been quite a coup. However, as Paul goes on to describe in Philippians, Jesus already had his true reward waiting for Him.

> Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
> Philippians 2:9-11

What the devil is actually offering to Jesus is the pretence of glorification without suffering. The instant gratification of a reward that isn't earned, where He would become instead Jesus the Superstar. However, there would be something missing, He would never be the Christ. There would be no Cross. He would never be saviour of the world. Indeed, the world would remain as hopelessly condemned as Jesus would now have become, since He, the Son of God, would now be joining the devil and the whole of humanity in the lake of

fire at the end of time. How could this ever really have been a temptation for the Lord who had taken upon him the form of a servant, He was only ever going to serve and worship the one true God, and that was his Father. Indeed, this is the wonderful worship expressed from a devoted Son to His Father which is captured here by Matthew.

At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth…
Matthew 11:25a

Sadly, is this not, the pretence of glorification without suffering, also a temptation that the church is falling for, as it increasingly buys into the distortions of the prosperity gospel, with its get rich quick confusion. In addition, it is also being damaged by the theological misunderstandings inherent within the 'Kingdom Now' dominionist triumphalism? Footnote [8] Scripture makes it clear that the path of true discipleship is a narrow way and that at times it is a hard and challenging journey, where there is, for all of us, a clear connection between suffering and true fruitfulness. Indeed, where is the message of sanctification and true discipleship found today in the pulpits of the religious system that is the church? After all what does Paul consistently say?

But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.
1 Peter 4:13

Where is the message of self-denial, the mortification of the flesh and bearing our cross on a daily basis? If a leader

has not travelled this path, then which kingdom are they truly serving? The devil is still offering us the world, how many of us are rejecting this for the true kingdom?

5) A leader carries the heart of the Shepherd.

The final passage which teaches us about leadership principles from the ministry of Jesus can be found in John 10, where we are introduced to Jesus the Good Shepherd.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.
John 10:1-5

The good news for us is that Jesus didn't leave the disciples confused as to the meaning of this parable, He goes on to explain it to them. Therefore, to us as well revealing for us important leadership principles for us to grasp and run with. However, before we look at the interpretation of this parable let us first explore the scriptural teaching of the leadership qualities of a shepherd more generally.

The image of the shepherd is one that speaks to us of a type of Godly leadership that is reflected throughout scripture, such as in Genesis 49 where we read:

…and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel) Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb.
Genesis 49:24-25

Here, we see expressed within a description of the character of Joseph, a symbolic representation of leadership. Indeed, we have here the two foundational functions of leadership, that we noticed in Genesis 2 in Chapter 2 above. First of all, the function of service as represented by the shepherd and then of protection or guarding as represented by the rock. Indeed, these are two metaphors which capture the essence of Jesus as the Good Shepherd from whom flow the promised blessings. Therefore, surely this is a model of shepherd leadership for anyone who would desire to follow in His footsteps. A shepherd to serve, to protect and to bring blessing to those under their leadership

In Psalm 23 we also have a description of leadership under the Good Shepherd, a psalm which comes right out of David's own shepherd's heart.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest

a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.
Psalm 23

Once again, the picture here is one of service, protection and blessing, such that the individual under this shepherd is ultimately able confront even their enemies as a source for personal spiritual nourishment. Indeed, it is important to notice the way that the shepherd leads us here in the psalm is actually through the valley of death; is there any other path that the narrow way would ever lead us? For this is the path of righteousness, for it is through our death that we will find His life within us, His life of righteousness and true holiness.

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? … but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.
Hebrews 12:6-7, 10b, 11

This is very profound truth here which expresses what we have seen elsewhere that within the kingdom of God suffering and fruitfulness walk side by side. In addition, it is within this spiritual dynamic that the true anointing of the

Lord is received by us and expressed through us. Moreover, this is the way the shepherd leads the sheep of is pasture.

Therefore, as we return to Jesus' teaching in John 10 what do we learn concerning leadership?

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.
John 10:9-11

As shepherds of the flock functioning as leaders under the Good Shepherd, Jesus,

The leaders should also be a door.

This means that anyone who chooses to come into the church over which we have responsibility they must come through us. What does this mean? It means that we make it our business to come alongside this person and establish a relationship with them as soon as we can. In this way, we will be able to provide some initial spiritual discernment as to what the spiritual, psychological and physical qualities of the individual might be and thereby provide a level of protection for the body. This will also provide the individual with an introduction to the body which is a strong and clear one as we will be able to represent the church's vision and values clearly to them, and to begin to support them in whatever way they require on their own journey to perfection.

In this way, as we will see we are fulfilling the ancient Jewish eldership function of sitting at the gate of the city. This is why the rebuilt Tabernacle of David will comprise small relational groupings meeting from house to house over which such oversight would be possible.

Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster
Isaiah 65:8

From the outset the leadership will have provided a point of relational connection and then be guided as to where they might find their place of pasture, a wider group of relationships, within they will be able to feed and grow and ultimately to be able to feed others.

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.
John 10:14-16

It is important that as people choose to come into the church that they can hear the voice of the Good Shepherd expressed through the shepherds. Moreover, that the voice of the Lord is not just expressed through the words we use but also in the way we use them and in their actions which follow. Leaders carry a heavy responsibility before the Lord, but in Him the burden is light as we share it with others and as we do not make the mistake of carrying burdens that are not

ours to carry. We do need to trust that church building in and through the body is the work of the Father, through the Son and by the Holy Spirit. We are merely there to facilitate His work. The hope is that under the Good Shepherd the flock will find abundant life and to learn that the key to it all which is to walk under and within the Lord's new commandment.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.
John 13: 34

In conclusion, therefore, from what we have learned so far we can recognise that the leadership model we presently enjoy is some distance from that which was first envisaged in the Word. A clear distinction also does need to be made between the model of leadership that we need to re-establish in the church and the model of leadership that is found in the world. For too often this distinction is either not clear enough or even not there at all. Hopefully, these studies have been helpful in laying down for us a foundation of scriptural principles of leadership on which we can now begin to build as we look at Paul and Peter's teaching on leadership within the body of Christ.

Footnotes

1. See Romans 12: 3

2. See Chapter 16 of Back to the Future; the Rebuilding of the Tabernacle of David by the same author for a full exploration of Paul's teaching here.

3. See Chapter 3; 2 Samuel 6: 1-14: The Journey into Death: the Death of Self, in 'Back to the Future: the Rebuilt Tabernacle of David.' By the same author.

4. 2 Samuel 6

5 Philippians 2:7b

6. See Chapter 2. A Journey into Death: the death of self in the Rebuilding of the Tabernacle of David by the same author

7. The Greek term for 'world' here is eon, which relates to the limited timescale in which the devil will be exercising this authority.

8. Kingdom Now theology teaches that we are already in the millennial reign of Christ and that the church will one day so dominate the whole world that they will simply be handing over a Christianised world to the Lord as He returns to take us to glory.

Chapter 5

Paul and Peter's Teaching on Leadership

From this point on in our study we will be exploring how Paul and Peter within their epistles are able to describe and delineate the role of the key leadership function within the body of Christ, which is for them, and therefore needs to be once again for us, eldership, with the addition of the role of deacon. It is so easy to forget that the apostles' words are contained within real letters sent to real people. Indeed, letters, which the Holy Spirit has inspired to be written, and which then to find their place in the canon of scripture. Therefore, they are writing to actual expressions of the early church and, in the case of the specific Pauline writing that we will be exploring here, communicating directly to a second-generation leader, Timothy. Therefore, this give us clear insight into what was the orthodox and accepted the leadership function within the early church. For this

they seemed to have been, as we will see, building upon the foundational principles that we have explored above. Indeed, the very same principles we have outlined as we have journeyed through scripture from the Garden, through the lessons learned with the elders of the children of Israel as they made their way towards the Promised Land and through the principles highlighted within the life and ministry of the Lord Himself. We will be predominantly focusing on Paul's teaching here, however, at the end we will spend some time exploring how Peter adds to our understanding as well.

Paul's teaching on leadership needs to be divided into two overlapping streams. A local church leadership function which is expressed within the two roles of bishop/elder and deacon and an itinerant ministry leadership function which are five/four specific roles of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher described in his letter to the church at Ephesus. [Footnote 1] We say overlap because the elders and deacons would have had spiritual gifting and perhaps ministry gifting as well, Peter, an apostle also describes himself as an elder. [Footnote 2] We will begin by clarifying whether or not a distinction is required to be made between the two terms, bishop and elder, both of which are used of the primary local leadership function in the early church in scripture.

1) The Bishop/Elder Question

The term 'bishop' does occur in four passages in scripture, however, is a 'bishop' actually a distinct function within church leadership in its own right in the early church? Indeed, by the use of the term 'bishop' in scripture we do need to realise that what we seem to have here is the

hand of the original translators of the King James Bible in the sixteen or seventeenth centuries. These translators were operating within a particular historical context, and they were working within the extreme religious turmoil of the Reformation, and no doubt working under considerable pressure from the presiding powers of the time to give legitimacy to the status quo of the then church hierarchy. Therefore, they adopted the term of 'bishop' as their accepted translation for this particular Greek word. The word in question is 'episkope' which would be better translated as overseer; a term which is of itself no more than a description of the actual leadership role of elder and not per se a distinct function of leadership in its own right.

Indeed, today we still have the church in some denominations ruled at a high level within the hierarchy by those who carry the title of bishop. Therefore, there does seem to be a wider issue here. In the fourth century AD the Roman Emperor Constantine established the church as the official religious institution within the Roman empire and at this time the church leadership structure was already an hierarchical one. Indeed, a system within which a religious priesthood of the few had developed, instead of the spiritual priesthood of all that was originally intended. Therefore, from this time those holding such a position were viewed as a special class of 'Christian'. The Roman Catholic Church developed a hierarchical authority structure that sought to imitate the authority structure that prevailed in the secular world. However, instead of a king it had a pope who exercised the ultimate and, as it developed, absolute authority over the rest of the church. An authority that at the local church level was and still is carried by God's special men or priest and who are there

to lord it over the laity over whom they carry this God given authority.

Within the historical process of developing this hierarchical religious system there seems to have also been a drive to complete the process of breaking the links of the church with its Judaical roots; the Jews being parodied through the church's prevailing anti-Semitic mind-set as the killers of Christ. The Sabbath had already been lost and the role of the Good Shepherd was misappropriated by the bishop of Rome, the pope. It is from this time also that we seem to no longer have any place for elders, as the true and ancient expression of scriptural community leadership, and in its place a disconnected, and hierarchical professional ruling body was instituted. A leadership model that was expressed at one level by the term bishop and at another by a priesthood. Indeed, the term bishop itself comes from the old English word 'bisceop', which possibly also has its roots in the priesthood of the druids and the wicca.

Indeed, the same linguistic challenge can also be made concerning the term 'church', as it is the translation of the Greek term ekklesia, which literally means 'the called-out ones'. Again, this also seems to be a means by which legitimacy can be given to the prevailing name used for the Sunday gathering and the building in which this is housed at the time that the Authorised Version of the Bible was translated. Indeed, it does need to be understood that before the time of Constantine there do not seem to have been church buildings. [Footnote 3]

With reference specifically to the term 'bishop,' in terms of its use in scripture what meaning can we deduce for it? From its use at the beginning of Paul's letter to the church in Philippi the word 'episkope' is clearly used by Paul as merely another

way of describing the actual church leadership function of the elder as an overseer such as here where we read the following:

Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons
Philippians 1:1

We know that Paul appointed elders and deacons as his leadership model within the churches that he planted [Footnote 4] and so the use of the translated term bishop here, should really be translated as overseers and deacons. Paul is merely using another term, which describes their fundamental leadership role; that of an elder. Therefore, we believe that in reality there are only two local church leadership roles and these are elders and deacons, the elders provided the oversight and the deacons provided the practical support for the elders and the body generally. Therefore, when we read the word bishop we need to realise that it is referring to an elder, except in 1 Peter 2, where it is clearly referring to the Lord Himself.

For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.
1 Peter 2:25

Here, however, it should also be translated as 'overseer' as well, for ultimately Jesus alone is the Good Shepherd and therefore the one and only overseer of our souls.

This point is proved decisively in Acts 20, where we find Paul addressing the elders from the church in Ephesus, where we read:

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
Acts 20:28

Therefore, with this erroneous distinction clarified we will move on to consider the actual role of the elder as found in scripture, within which we will be incorporating the teaching concerning the role or function of the bishop. For this we will be exploring the teaching of Paul and more specifically his teaching concerning the credentials for the overseeing elder in his first pastoral letter to his young protégé Timothy. [Footnote 5]

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop [Footnote 6], he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;.Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.
1 Timothy 3:1-7

It will prove helpful if we take some time here to unpick this passage and to analyse it phrase by phrase.

i) This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

From the Greek here it is clear that Paul is under no illusion as to how complex and demanding the role of elder might be. In this verse we have the verb 'to desire' used twice in the English, however, in the Greek these are two different words. The first term carries a meaning to strenuously stretch forth for something you value strongly, the word actually has a root word meaning a mountain. In mountaineering there is a condition in which a climber is so focused on reaching the top of the mountain that they are oblivious to anything else around them. Taken literally this clearly would not be helpful in a leader, this is attitude that Paul seems to recognise in Himself with regards to his own calling.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3: 13, 14

The second word translated 'desire' in this verse is the verb to strongly desire or to lust after something, and its application here is determined by its context. The strong desire in the context of the verse is for a 'good work'. The word translated as 'good' here does not do the Greek full justice either as it comes closer to meaning the absolute best. Indeed, it is the word used in the Septuagint to describe the creator's response to his work in Genesis 1.[Footnote 7]

Therefore, with these two terms for 'desire' used here we have, described by Paul, both the intrinsic motivation that is required by anyone who would want to become an elder in the church and also its active outworking in terms of the energy and effort this will require in order that it is a function that is be done well.

ii) A bishop then must be blameless

If this were the particulars for an advertised job this quality would be an essential requirement for the role. The Greek phrase translated 'then must be' is a very strong phrase. The 'then' means 'therefore' and the 'must' is an absolute necessity. The root word is to be bound to something. Therefore, the role or function of the overseer or elder in the body of Christ and this moral quality of blamelessness within the individual who would aspire to be an elder are intrinsically bound together. However, what is it to be 'blameless'?

First of all, it is a term used uniquely in this particular letter, Paul uses it nowhere else. Moreover, in this letter it is used on three separate occasions. [Footnote 8] So, what does it mean? The Greek term means to be morally irreproachable. Having, therefore, no secret vices and nothing lurking, skeleton like in any cupboard, that might trip us up if found out and destroy the witness of not just us but the whole body.

As we have seen it is so important that only those who have been taken through the discipling process by Father and who walk in His discipline of fear and obedience should ever be set in the body and to take on this good work of eldership and oversight. They need to be individuals like who have experienced the stumbling oxen and have put out their hands to steady the things of God in their own strength and who have

truly experienced death to their self-life. Individuals whose secret life in Christ shines out from them and their other secret life has been dealt enough fatal blows to render it ineffective. Indeed, those who consistently have learned how to put on and walk in the new of life of the new man; who is Christ within them. Sadly, how far this is from the current practice to promote on the basis of charisma rather than character. There are too many Sauls and not enough Davids in leadership today.

Paul helpfully brings some clarity to the qualities that would be the hallmark of this recommended state of blamelessness for any prospective leader, we find this in his final use of this Greek word, translated here as unrebukeable, in 1 Timothy 6.

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ
1 Timothy 6: 10-14.

Paul is addressing his protégé Timothy directly here as an overseer elder whom he has placed in a leadership position in Ephesus. There are two elements to this pastoral exhortation, to flee what is wrong and to follow after what is right. Perhaps

we do need to interrogate what it means here to flee and to follow after?

The two Greek words here both carry a meaning of fleeing. The first is the verb to flee away from something, such as to a place of safety and the second, translated here as to follow after, carries a meaning to flee towards something or someone in order to catch up with them. As we read in Hebrews we all do have a race to run.

…let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith
Hebrews 12:1b-2a

And for the leader in the body of Christ it is important that they are indeed running their race as we read in chapter 3 of 1 Timothy with a righteous passion to be a vessel truly fit for the master's use in this capacity of overseeing elder. So that as we read here they have a good profession before many witnesses and who lead without spot, and who are unrebukeable. [Footnote 9] Demonstrating a character that is rich in the fruit of the Spirit and who are therefore Godly in nature. An individual who also has an understanding of and can move in the spiritual currency of the kingdom, which is faith, and who has a specific calling from God to be in this function in the body. For it is crucial that God is given room to fulfil His purposes in the ekklesia.

But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.
1 Corinthians 12:18

We do have to question to what extent this happens now within our over systemic, equality and diversity infected church-based recruitment processes.

Moving on to the next phrase in the passage in 1 Timothy 3: 2 we are entering a modern day moral relativistic minefield. However, in addressing these issues, as best I can, I will be doing so on the basis of what I believe scripture has to say on the subject. I say moral relativism because the cultural values and the moral compass inherent within our society in the West have changed radically even within my own life time. The question we are facing is whether or not the values of the Christian community move with this or do we try and hold on to what we believe our moral compass, the word of God, has always said on certain issues? After all, ultimately who are we answerable to?

iii)…the husband of one wife

This small phrase, only containing five words, seems to suggest that the function of an overseeing elder in the body of Christ can only be held by someone who is:

- Male
- Married
- Monogamous
- Heterosexual

To avoid being challenged on the grounds that the Bible is only a book of its time. To also avoid being corrected that issues around gender roles and function have to be understood within the culture and society within which the Bible was written.

Dismissed merely as applying to an ancient Bronze Age Middle Eastern culture or society when looking at the Old Testament or when reading the to the New Testament the culture and society of first century Palestine that was dominated by Greek thinking and Roman rule. Both of which are deemed to be irredeemably patriarchal and male dominated in thought and structure. Making the Bible at best questionable and at worst irrelevant in terms of speaking into today's culture and society on issues such as these.

To avoid these challenges as best I can I am using as my scriptural point of reference the account of the creation of first human couple and for this I am guided by the principle of first mention [Footnote 10]. And whether you regard this account as literal or merely metaphorical we still have to respond to it as being the inspired word of God. As such, it still provides for us the foundational understanding of the essential building block of human society as it was, is and will be until the eternal Kingdom is established on the new earth. Indeed, perhaps this picture of pre-fall perfection will provide for us a helpful indicator of what we might expect to see restored and redeemed in the new creation on earth as gathered within the rebuilt Tabernacle of David, which is the body and bride of Christ.

However, the first point that does need to be made before we begin to explore the original account of creation is that the marriage relationship that we now have is some distance from what it was originally meant to be. We do need to understand that what we now have in terms of the relationship between male and female, husband and wife, has been severely affected, essentially damaged through the curse of the Fall. As we read in Genesis:

Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.
Genesis 3:16

From this chilling Scripture there clearly have been significant consequences for the union between man and woman and also for their capacity to bear fruit physically.

Pain would be a feature of both child bearing and child rearing and the dynamics of the relationship between the man and woman would also be distorted. The other two areas that are affected are the sexual desire between man and woman and the actual relational balance between them. The area of desire, with reference to Genesis 4:7, now has a sinful element that finds its expression within pornography and increasingly of late the LGBT transgender confusion of our own day.

Moreover, in terms of the relational balance we find the phrase, and he shall rule over thee, what does this infer? Significantly, the same phrase is also used in Genesis 4:7. Footnote 10

If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

I believe this captures the reality that on the other side of the Fall the first couple and subsequently all who were to follow had to adjust to a significant change in their circumstances. Essentially, their lives would now be in the flesh and not, as they were, in the spirit. They were now to be dominated by the consequences of having taken the fruit

from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in every aspect of their lives.

And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil…
Genesis 3:22a

Therefore, prior to the Fall the dealings between the man and the woman would have been facilitated by their walk of obedience in the Spirit with Father God, now they were alone and man would have to step up and take a ruling position over the woman. However, through Christ and through being in Christ and walking again in the Spirit there is a way for us to journey back towards the garden and perhaps to rediscover something of what the first couple enjoyed in our own day? For Jesus has done a complete work.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God…
2 Corinthians 5:17-18a

The 'all things' here includes potentially all things that relate to marriage and the marital union, particularly and significantly because this the one area of human to human interaction which characterises the relationship between Jesus and the church. Footnote 11

Remarkably within the account of the creation of human kind in Genesis 1 we are shown that there was a wonderful level of equality between the first man and the first woman. Moses expresses this in Genesis, where we read the following:

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion.
Genesis 1:27-28a

Here we are being shown that mankind was created at the end of the creative week and that mankind as the pinnacle of this creation found it's full and complete expression in both the male and the female form. [Footnote 12] Indeed, we are told that God's blessing was upon both male and female and that both male and female are encouraged to be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion… Therefore, we can recognise that there is an equality between man and woman at the heart of the creative order. This is an essential truth that is established here right at the outset of humanity's time on earth. Man and woman stand equal before God and in His purposes.

However, this does not tell the whole story because in order for them to fulfil God's purposes they will have to work together, and both have been created to bring something different to this relationship to enable this to happen. Each has been specifically imbued with something that is special to them to share with their partner. Such that they are only able to be fruitful, multiply and replenish the earth if they share themselves with each other. This relationship was a clear and true expression of equality through diversity.

This crucial aspect of this relationship is actually captured within the Hebrew terms translated here as male and female. The word translated 'male' has a root meaning

of 'memory' and this idea is best understood as the simple physiological sense that the male carries the seed. The seed or sperm within which the genetic information from the male line is carried, and this also has a spiritual application as the consequence of sin is also carried down the male line, for example with regards to the consequences of idolatry and sexual sin within the Law.13 This had its most telling consequence through Adam for significantly we are told that Eve was deceived but it was Adam who sinned, [Footnote 14] simply stated:

For as in Adam all die… [Footnote 15]

In this way, we start to see that the function of the two sides of the created humanity, male and female, do differ and, as we move on to explore the Hebrew word for female, we see that they are truly complimentary The Hebrew term translated female here carries the root meaning of to pierce, perforate, or bore. This can clearly be seen in physiological terms as being potentially descriptive of the female sexual organ. However, it needs also to be understood as a place of receptivity for the male seed. Indeed, a place where the two genetic codes of DNA come together to produce their fruit. Therefore, in simple, physical and logical terms for the male to fulfil his calling to be fruitful and to multiply he needs the female. Moreover, they can only be fruitful by their physical coming together. This is the same point that is made in the following chapter where this union is described.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.
Genesis 2:24

And they shall become one flesh what a powerful description of the fundamental unity and equality that lies at the heart of God's created order for male and female.

Therefore, developing this thought might we be able to make a more general assertion here that the female has been created to be receptive to the things which emanate from the male and to have the capacity to bring them through to fruition?

Therefore, the female can be seen as the seed carrier. And not just any seed but the seed who would right the wrong of the Fall.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

(Genesis 3: 15)

This is a prophetic foretelling of what was ultimately fulfilled through a young woman called Mary about four thousand years later. A young Hebrew woman who received not just the seed of a man but the seed of God through the Holy Spirit coming upon her. However, perhaps we can dig a little deeper here because the female has been so created to bring to the union more than a physiologically receptive organ, indeed, as we will see below in Christ her receptivity goes further than merely the physical realm. The female has also been so created that she provides a side of humanity that is missing in the male. This is the truth that lies behind the account of the forming of the woman from the body of the man that we find in Genesis 2.

> And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib,

> which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.
> Genesis 2:21-22

Literally translated the word rib can also mean side:[Footnote 16] the woman therefore brings a completion. This idea receives its clearest expression both here in Genesis 2:24 and is reiterated significantly by Jesus in the Gospel record as well.

> But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.
> Mark 10:8

What we have here is an ordinance for all mankind. We say this because it is prior to the fall and the giving of the law to the children of Israel. Indeed, this an ordinance which Jesus Himself endorses here. Therefore, significantly, this means that it still applies, even to us who are on the other side of both the Fall and of Gentile stock. The context for Jesus here is to bring some clarification with regards to issue of divorce within the Jewish rabbinic culture of his time. But for us does it not also speak to us in our own day concerning the importance of the marriage union between a man and a woman and specifically for its importance within the body of Christ? Indeed, the words of Jesus imply that the one flesh union goes beyond the mere physical union. The actual coming together of the male and female in marriage is here described as being first and foremost an act of God, he is said

by Jesus to actually be the match maker. Indeed, the empathic words of Father God still resound down through the ages. Footnote 16 The word is only used to denote a rib here in Genesis 2, elsewhere it is translated most commonly as 'side', 19 times.

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.
Genesis 2:18

The union between a man and a woman is a profound union that we misunderstand and misuse at our peril.

Therefore, this said it is significant that it is a prerequisite for both an elder and a deacon to be a male and married. Therefore, it is also clear that in all things through their one flesh relationship with their spouse, their spouse will be, by definition, an active part of their ministry. For only by this will he be able to provide the balanced and complete capacity to fulfil the role and to be truly fruitful in this role. And here we are referring back to original calling in Genesis 1, which hasn't changed and in terms of the body of Christ and the call to be fruitful.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain…
John 15:16

However, for the elders and the deacons they are required to be married precisely so that the fruit of their ministry and in their lives will be facilitated through the one flesh union they have with their wives. A wife who will bring to them and to their ministry that which will be missing without them, the side only they can provide. We do need to understand that

though the man is recognised as the elder or deacon he cannot fully function without the active support of his wife. There is, therefore, a wonderful level of equality of function here, because by definition an elder or a deacon has to be part of a husband and wife team.

We do have to recognise, however, that a distinction does need to be made here. It is the man who carries the position of elder and with this it does need to be recognised that it is he who, before the Lord, carries the authority and responsibility for this office. This is a necessary aspect of the Godly order for both the marital union, the family and then also leadership in the body of Christ. We are told in Genesis 2 that Adam was given clear instructions to take responsibility to guard everything in the garden, and this first and foremost would have included his wife. Footnote 17 He was created to protect the precious things of God and he was given the authority to protect the precious things of God. He was to be a watchman and the first thing Father God told him to watch over was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Indeed, it was precisely because this protection was missing that lead to his wife being deceived.

Therefore, for a husband in a marriage and father in a family it is important that they fulfil this covering role, and to provide the security both their wife and children need. This protection will obviously be physical, but they also need to provide spiritual protection as well. And as part of this role guarding their family Christian fathers should make sure that they are actively involved in the spiritual nurturing and development if their children.

As an elder or deacon this is obviously an important aspect as we have seen in chapter 2 above, this is also why in 1 Timothy 3 the eldership function is actually described as an over seer. And we can clearly understand why it is a requirement for this

function that they are both a husband and father, as such they will have already demonstrated that they have been able to perform this oversight function at home in the family and in their marriage as well. As Paul comments later in this passage specifically concerning the importance of this for anyone who desires this good work, an elder should be:

> One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)
> 1 Timothy 3:4-5

So where are we in our understanding of why an elder in the body of Christ is required to fulfil these gender specific criteria? As we have seen the distinction between male and female is one of function and spiritual authority within the Godly order of His creation and not one of equality. The marital union does provide the elder with the essential support of, as we say in the vernacular, his other half. Moreover, the experience that a marriage and family provide him with will also prove invaluable for the task of leading in the body of Christ. There are still two criteria that still need to be addressed, an elder should be both heterosexual and monogamous. Both of these can be dealt with simply by a restatement of this five-word phrase from Paul, the husband of one wife.

iv) A bishop then must be … vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

We have gathered these particular criteria together because we believe that they have a similar root within the character

and nature of an individual. As we have explored and argued exhaustively throughout this teaching the secret spiritual life and the time spent in the closet, the journey from flesh to the spirit and our shared life in the body are the essential elements of the true disciples' walk that will allow Father God to transform our hearts and lives. This is the narrow way along which Jesus encourages us to walk, and as we walk this path in fear of the Lord and obedience to His purposes there will be a denying and dying of our self-life as we encounter, like Uzzah before us, our own times when the oxen will stumble. The transformative consequence of which is that we will be developing our new nature, the nature and character of Christ and increasingly leaving our old nature behind where it belongs. This is the point made by Paul in the companion teaching on eldership in Titus where we read:

> For a bishop must be…not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;
> Titus 1:7

The key for each of us, elder or not, is the wonderful finished and complete work of the grace and love of God that is expressed in the finished work of the cross. His work of salvation, His work of the washing of regeneration and His work of renewal by the Holy Spirit. Indeed, it by this work, His work that we are justified by His grace. This the blood of the new wine which bursts out of the old wine skins and requires a new vessel fit for His use. [Footnote 18]

If we have allowed Father to have done His work in our hearts then we will be able to demonstrate a spiritual fruitfulness in whatever area of character weakness we may have had in the world. There is no excuse. Sadly, however, there seems to be a

sad lack of understanding and fundamental ignorance of these matters within the church today. And sadly, we do have elders and leaders in the church who still have a propensity to drink, who might resort to violence or who are driven by greed for financial gain? Why because they are trying to live out of their own strength in the old man. Sadly, just as Paul encountered such individuals so do we, nothing has changed.

We next focus on three of the more positive attributes of an effective and fruitful elder.

i) A bishop then must be …given to hospitality

What does it mean to be given to something? It means that this individual has a propensity to do this thing; this something they are very good at. This is because it is something they do because it is who they are. This, however, might not be who they are in the natural, for Father can turn weakness into a strength so that the glory always stays with Him.

Importantly, what Paul is saying here is that an elder must be an hospitable person, someone with an open house and who is willing to share his home and his life with others. As we noted in the previous chapter when making a connection with role of a shepherd with that of the Good Shepherd we recognised that a leader should function as a relational door into the church. They will need to be a spiritual and relational filter through which everyone will need to pass.

This brings to mind the individual who Jesus encouraged the seventy to look for when he sent them out in Luke 10.

And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it…
Luke 10:6a, b

At this point it is helpful if we try to envisage what the rebuilt Tabernacle of David might look like as it is expressed within this new church paradigm that we are exploring here. We are expecting the church to be expressed as small relationally orientated gatherings who are meeting house to house. As such, therefore, we can imagine that the head of each household where gatherings occur would potentially be an elder who would oversee gatherings in their home. Is not a 'son of peace' a wonderful way to describe this individual who is so placed to open his home for the body to gather? Someone who has been taken through the process of heart transformation that are the beatitudes and is now well placed as a peacemaker to establish a new work of the Lord in His community and to actually open his home to the body so that the Father can gather others to Jesus visibly incarnate in the son of peace.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children (literally, son) of God.
Matthew 5:9

This is a new day and we are looking for a new way to be church!

There are two other scriptures which help us to develop our understanding of this leadership attribute. In 1 Peter 4 we read:

And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging.
1 Peter 4: 8-9

This informs us that hospitality is the means through which fervent charity is to be exercised and demonstrated.

The Greek word translated here as fervent carries a meaning of both unceasing as well as to be stretched in every direction, and it will, therefore, touch everyone and everything. Moreover, the important activity that is to be both unceasing and stretched out is charity, agape love, which is best defined as love in action. The quality of hospitality is described here as not being grudging, but in Titus 1:8a, the essential attribute of the elder is described as even being 'a lover of hospitality'.

The elder is clearly expected to model a level of agape love that should then pervade the life of the body, after all, what is our essential calling?

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

And as we saw with the example set for us by Jesus removing His clothes in order that he could wash the disciple's feet. We are also called to open, vulnerable and transparent living, which demonstrates to everyone who encounters this life and those living it that it is the loving reality of that which lies within the hearts of these people, namely the love of Christ. A love which is beautifully described by the following scripture from the writings of Peter and which is a call to the whole body and not just to the leadership.

Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently
1 Peter 1:22

Moving on to the next positive attribute for an elder in the body of Christ, Paul states the following:

v) A bishop then must be …apt to teach

In the list of the ministry gifts [Footnote 19] that we find in Paul's letter to the Ephesians we notice that the last two ministries can be understood as being linked in terms of their function and can be read as working together.

'And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ'
Ephesians 4:11-12

Although the term pastor does differ from bishop or elder, we believe the function of all three is similar. In 1 Peter Jesus is described by the apostle as both the Great shepherd or pastor and bishop of our souls, [Footnote 20] thereby making for us a clear connection between the role of pastor and elder. Therefore, the term pastor or shepherd is also one which can be understood as being descriptive of a similar function within the body to that of elder, which is oversight and pastoral care for the gathered flock. Here in Ephesians 4 we see this function of oversight and care also linked together with the function of teaching. As we return to the passage in 1 Timothy 3 we can now understand more clearly why Paul stipulates that for anyone to desire to function in the role of an elder they would also have to have an aptitude to teach as the roles are linked.

Paul is again helpful here because in 1 Corinthians 2: 9-14 he provides for us a profound description of what this teaching within the body might look like. Let us explore this passage verse by verse.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
1 Corinthians 2:9

A revelation of God's plans and purposes for His children that is not worked out or accessible in the physical sensory realm.

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.
1 Corinthians 2:10

True teaching in the body of Christ is a profound exchange in the spiritual realm from the Spirit of God to the spirit of man. This is spiritual fruit which is picked from the tree of life and not from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, given that it might nourish the heart of man. This is an exchange through which we are exposed to and are able to understand the deep things that God desires to do in and through us.

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.
1 Corinthians 2:11

This teaching communicates Spirit to spirit concerning the things of God.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.
1 Corinthians 2:12

We can only understand and access this teaching because we have the capacity to do so because we have spirits which are alive to God, because we, in Christ, are indwelt by the very presence of God through His Holy Spirit.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
1 Corinthians 2:13

Anyone who aspires to teach the body of Christ must have the aptitude to receive revelation directly from the Holy Spirit, to be able to work within the spiritual realm and to deliver teaching that the Holy Spirit has given to them to share with those in their care, both individually and as a gathered group.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
1 Corinthians 2:14

This teaching is only accessible to those who have spirits that are alive to God, the natural man is deaf and blind to it.

Therefore, teaching is truly a high calling let us all only ever go there with great trepidation. However, for those so called there are rewards.

> Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.
> 1 Timothy 5:17

As we will see later Peter is the prime example of an elder who also ministered as a teacher in the body. A calling he received directly from the Lord.

> Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.
> John 21:17e

vi) A bishop then must be …One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

We have already touched upon the importance of the quality of the elder's family life and the importance of role of spiritual leadership in the home when exploring Paul's teaching in this passage above and here we have it clearly described for us.

This next attribute is easy to understand, eldership, as it says on the tin, is related to age which is usually related to experience and hopefully therefore also to wisdom.

vii) A bishop then must be … Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

There are no short cuts to sanctification and for Father to achieve what he desires to achieve in the heart of a man, such that he is free of the world and free in Christ. It will take time. Time in order that the self-life is truly dealt with and he is safe to be used in leadership in the body.

viii) A bishop then must be … must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

And finally, If all this in place then the witness of the individual and of the body he oversees will be a positive one,

We will conclude our exploration of the role and function of the elder or bishop by turning to Peter's teaching on the subject in 1 Peter 5.

> The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.
> 1 Peter 5: 1-4

The first point to be made here is that Peter considered himself to be an elder, I do not believe the same could be said of Paul. As such he clearly was obediently still following the calling he received first hand from the Lord himself.

He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.
John 21:17

There is a wonderful spiritual equation being described here. The love that he has for Jesus is not demonstrated in fluffy feelings or emotionalism, but is demonstrated by an active response to this love, which for Peter is take responsibility for the embryonic flock and to function as an elder/shepherd and to feed the Lord's sheep. Any calling we might consider we have in the Lord can have only one driver that is our love for Him, and if we consider that we have any love for the Lord then it will be demonstrated in an active response from us in the things for which we have been called.

Peter has been faithful to his calling and here he is passing on this responsibility that he has carried to others who would follow him into the function of an elder/shepherd in the body of Christ. Indeed, he is using here very similar language to that was used by Jesus in the conversation they shared by the lake. An elder primarily is there to feed the flock of God. The word for feeding here carries a wider meaning than just providing spiritual food, it covers the whole sense of care, keeping, guarding and leading or ruling. Therefore, we again have echoes of Adam's responsibility in the garden and the priestly function in the temple that we have explored above. It also involves oversight which always has to come from the right motivation. There are two words to describe this motivation the first is for the elder to be voluntarily giving

himself to the task and the second is to do this with alacrity or with a positive energy.

As Peter continues he touches on an issue which too often in today's church causes problems; spiritually abusive leadership who use control and emotional blackmail to maintain their control over the church. What a wonderful antidote to this is provided by Peter here. Do not lead by control or constraint, do not lord it over the flock. Do not be just a hireling who is only interested in the money. Do you not realise you are dealing with God's heritage, the bride of His Son, Jesus? Instead be a Godly and loving example, someone who they aspire to be conformed to as you in turn are conformed to the image of Jesus, the chief Shepherd.

Lead out of love and lead in love.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
Acts 20: 28

2. The Deacon

Paul writing to the church at Philippi provides for us the only time the two functions of leadership in the early church, the elders [Footnote 21] and deacons, are clearly delineated.

Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons
Philippians 1:1

We can, therefore, state with confidence that the leadership structure in terms of the day to day care and oversight of the local expression of the body in the early church was a duality of elders and deacons. The roots of the role of deacon in scripture seem to be derived from a decision the apostles made in Acts 6. A decision to delegate certain responsibilities in order to meet a pressing issue in the church in which some individuals, namely the Greeks, who were murmuring against the Hebrews concerning the perceived plight of their widows who were not receiving adequate practical support. Therefore, it was decided that whilst the apostles could concentrate on the more spiritual duties such as teaching, the more practical tasks could be given to a new group of handpicked men.

Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.
Acts 6:3

Although these men as such were not actually described here as deacons it does seem clear that this was their function. The function of which can be defined as a servant of the body who in the early church was one who, by virtue of the office assigned to him by the body, cared for the poor and had charge of and distributed the money collected for the needy. Therefore, per se it was not in a strict sense a leadership function, however, it was still a role which demanded a Godly character for as we read in Acts they were to be 'men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom'. Indeed, it will be profitable to identify, as we did for the elder, what are the important attributes required for a deacon as described by Paul again in his letter to Timothy.

Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.
1 Timothy 3:8-13

The attributes for a deacon are similar to those that we have already considered when looking at the attributes for the elder. They are to be of a good and Godly character, free of the influence of wine, not given to lying or deception and not motivated by financial greed. They are to be male, married and an effective leader in the home. However, there are some interesting distinguishing aspects that Paul mentions here.

i) the deacons… must… be grave

The actual meaning of this term picks up the original description of the essential attributes for a deacon that we read in Acts 6 'men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom', the Greek word carries a meaning of venerable. And for someone to be described as venerable they would have been accorded a great deal of respect, especially because of their age, wisdom, and character. This clearly is a function of some distinction. And significantly the same is expected of their wives as well. Therefore, there is a possibility here

is that the role of a deacon will to some extent involve their wives as well.

ii) Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

The expectation is that the deacon must have a clear understanding of the tenets of the faith, as Paul describes such a mystery later in this chapter.

> …great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.
> 1 Timothy 3:16

iii) And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

Therefore, for anyone to be chosen to be a deacon, Paul is suggesting here that they will have been already tested and found blameless. The proving process described here is that of a touch stone which are used to verify whether precious metals are genuine or not.

To conclude, therefore, the day to day leadership function is carried by two teams, the eldership and the diaconate. And these work as a conduit for the true leadership of Jesus who is the chief Shepherd and the head of the body.

> Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or

> principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell
> Colossians 1:15-19)

As we reflect on the work of rebuilding the Tabernacle of David in our own day and as we look to understand how scripture might guide us as to how this might be expressed. We would want to see a leadership structure along these lines develop with Godly elders and deacons in place, as the true body begins to be formed. Indeed, our hope and expectation will be that this is an expression of the body that would be a reality of the fullness of Him that filleth all in all [Footnote 22] and which is being prepared and made ready for His return.

We will now continue our study to consider where and how the ministry gifts fit into the model of church leadership that we find in the early church and how this might be restored in our own day, context and gatherings.

Footnotes

1. There are two other lists of ministry gifting in Romans 12 and in 1 Corinthians 12, however, there is not a clear distinction between the gifts and ministry gifts in these two passages, therefore we will be using the list in Ephesians as a normative one.

2. See 1 Peter 5: 1

3. In the fourth century AD the earliest recorded Christian buildings are monasteries.

4. See Titus 1:5

5. See also Paul's teaching in Titus 1: 6-9

6. The term used here is bishop however as discussed above we understand this as merely another term for elder

7. In everyday use in koine Greek the term agathos is used for 'good' , here it is the term kalos meaning beautiful.

8. 1 Timothy 3:2, 5:7 & 6:14

9. This is the same Greek word that is translated 'blameless' in 1 Timothy 3: 2

10. The principle of first mention in scripture is that the first mention of theme or motif in scripture will provide a foundational understanding for its use and understanding throughout scripture.

11. See Ephesians 5: 22ff

12. The personal pronouns, him and them, found in the text are absent in the Hebrew

13. See Exodus 20:5, 34: 7, Numbers 14: 18 for the curse affecting to the third and fourth generations, and Deuteronomy

5:9, and 23:2, 3 the tenth generation.

14. 1 Timothy 2:14

15. 1 Corinthians 15:2a

16, The word is only used to denote a rib here in Genesis 2, elsewhere it is translated most commonly as 'side', 19 times.

17, Genesis 2:15

18. Matthew 6: 28, Mark 14: 24, Matthew 9:17, Mark 2:22

19. We will be focusing specifically on the ministry gifts as a leadership function in the next chapter.

20. 1 Peter 2: 25

21. The term 'bishop' is actually used here, but as we have argued above the two terms of elder and bishop are interchangeable.

22. Ephesians 1: 23

Chapter 6

The Role of the Ministry Gifts

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:
Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.
Ephesians 4:11-16

To understand the ministry gifts and, moving on, how they might impact the rebuilt Tabernacle of David in our own day we will need to understand the role that they played in the early church. Indeed, today there is much confusion as to how and where these ministries fit into the life of the religious church system with its existing man-made hierarchical structures. The established position within the evangelical/charismatic church seems to be that every church should aspire to develop the 'fivefold' gifting within their own ranks, but is this what scripture actually teaches? Moreover, within the rest of church world there is a denial that the ministry gifts have any relevance today at all.

However, the description of early church life and particularly the role played by the ministry gifts in this life in scripture, as we will see, tells its own tale if you know where to look. What seems to be being described are house churches planted across the Roman Empire and beyond, which are overseen by a team of elders in each locality, who in turn are supported by deacons. These churches seemed to have formed a network and connecting them together, as we see in the ministry of Paul and others, are those who carried the ministry gifting. These would have been individuals who would have travelled from church to church providing whatever support that was needed and staying for a season until it was time to move on. Therefore, the ministry gifts would have operated through itinerant ministers who would carry the purposes of God expressed in the passage above.

Before exploring in the next chapter what the scriptural narrative reveals concerning how the individuals who carried ministry gifting actually functioned with the first century church, we will first of all establish in general terms what the underlying the purposes for the ministry gifts. For this, we will be studying the Paul's teaching in Ephesians 4. Here, we will

unpack what these purposes of God were, indeed, purposes that can be identified as the following:

- The fruit of the effective working of the ministry gifts is that the saints will be perfected.

Stated simply, this the fundamental purpose for these ministry gifts and indeed this is the fundamental over riding purpose for the body of Christ itself; that every true disciple within it might come through to perfected maturity in Christ. Perfection in scripture is the mark of the man of God. The Hebrew word translated as perfect in the Old Testament carries the root meaning to be the finished product, the best that you can be. To become perfect, therefore, is a relative statement and it will mean something slightly different for each of us, but for every one of us it will involve a walk of fear and obedience before the Lord God. A walk for which we all will need His grace, His mercy and His training. In Genesis we see that Noah was described in this way,:

These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.
Genesis 6:9

And the expectation that was laid on Abraham was the same, even at ninety.

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.
Genesis 17:1

We notice here that there does seem to be a connection between this spiritual condition of perfection and the fact that both Noah and Abraham are described as walking with God. Perfection is clearly connected to the quality of the journey and how closely we are making the journey with God. And we also need to realise that perfection was also the expectation for the children of Israel as a whole, therefore it is potentially within the grasp of anyone and everyone.

Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God.
Deuteronomy 18:13

The Hebrew word that is consistently translated as perfect in scripture also carries a meaning of complete, whole, entire, sound or without blemish. Indeed this is the term used to describe the requirement for all animals offered for sacrifice in the temple.

And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish.
Leviticus 4:32

Perhaps we can make a connection here with Paul's teaching in Romans 12?

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.
Romans 12:1-2

What Paul is teaching here is that if we want to know the perfect will of God, and what it means to become perfect in Him, then we will have to lay all that we are on the altar of sacrifice and to work with God; to leave the worldly mind-set behind, and increasingly developing the mind of Christ. To become an offering without blemish as we take on the nature and character of the true paschal lamb, Jesus Christ. To become fit for purpose, fit for use and fit for His return.

Perfection in the New Testament is a translation of a Greek word which carries a similar meaning to that of the Hebrew; referring to something that is brought to its destination, to its completion or is finished. Such as we find it used in Hebrews 12.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith…
Hebrews 12:1-2a

What we have here in Ephesians 4 is nothing short of a mandate that would have been carried by those serving the body Christ with the ministry gifts. Indeed, a mandate to support each and every member of the body of Christ to be prepared to run their own particular race and to focus their eyes on the Lord, recognising that He is the beginning and the end, the alpha and omega and for each of us the author and finisher or perfecter of our faith journey. Even for Paul there was still work to be done.

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3:12

- The ministry of Christ is encapsulated in these ministry gifts and therefore it is His ministry that would be continuing through them.

These ministry gifts are a gift from the Lord, this is part of the bounty of His victory.

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.
Ephesians 4: 8

As we see in the introduction to his letter to the church in Rome, Paul clearly understood his calling and from whom it was derived.

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God
Romans 1:1

He was a servant of Jesus and as such he had been called to be an apostle, therefore, it is the ministry of Jesus as the supreme church builder that would be exercised through this faithful man of God.

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and

another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 3:10-11

- The body of Christ is edified or built up by the ministry gifts

As we have seen, Paul had been equipped by God through His grace to be a foundation layer and the foundation he laid, wherever he was called to go, was Jesus Christ. Paul was an apostle, and as we shall see later, the ministry of the apostle was foundation laying; founding a new expression of the body, spending time establishing it in the truth, building a leadership team of elders and deacons and moving on [Footnote 1]. However, others would also have been involved in this process.

Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.
1 Corinthians 3: 5-6

Here we have another individual, Apollos, who operated in the pastoral teaching ministry gift, who, as we will see, moved from one local expression of the body to the next as the Lord directed. He is described by Paul as someone, using the figurative language of producing an agricultural crop, who was able to water that which Paul had already planted. So we can see that once Paul had laid a foundation, returning to the metaphor of a building, others, such as Apollos, would then come and provide the next layer to the work. To support the

growth and development of the work and to enable God the give the increase and for the Lord to build His church. By watering we can imagine that Apollos came with a teaching and pastoral ministry that would build the flock up and to establish them in the truth.

As the Lord rebuilds the church we can expect to see a return to this model. We will see the Lord establishing small relational groups or clusters, meeting from house to house there will once again be a need for encouragement, support and teaching. The Lord will once again plant through His appointed apostles and prophets, and the evangelists and pastor teachers will build up and water and the Father will give the increase. All of which will be done in the Holy Spirit.

- The ministry gifts support the body to maintain the unity of the faith, and to provide greater clarity concerning the knowledge of the Son and the path to perfection or maturity in Christ

The regular input of those carrying the ministry gifts would have provided the individual fellowships spread across Roman Empire with a spiritual glue which would have helped them to be connected and unified with the wider body. The epistles or letters written by apostles such as Paul, Peter and John in the New Testament clearly seem to have played this role, by keeping lines of communication open and by sharing news and words of encouragement across the body. They also carry wonderful truth concerning the narrow but blessed way of a true disciple. Paul's [Footnote 1] prayer in his letter to the church at Ephesus is a clear example of this truth which he is desperate for the believers in this church and for that matter all churches to apprehend.

I…(c)ease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ…
Ephesians 1:16-20a

The actual purpose for those carrying the ministry gifts is captured and expressed here, which is to enable Father to give the required level of understanding and fresh revelation of who we are and what our potential truly is in Him. However, how much more as we reflect upon our own situation, and as we look with hope and expectation for the Lord to do a new work of rebuilding, can we identify how important the function and support of the ministry gifts would be for us. Therefore, for those of us who have escaped the religious system that is the church, and who are looking to find a reality of body life outside of the Sunday religious club, having the blessing of individuals raised up by the Lord and called to minister to us in our disparate groupings spread at large in the world will be once more essential, as it was for the early church. They will provide a sense of continuity and relational connection and they will support us to find a unity of faith and to keep in the truth.

- The ministry gifts protect the body from deception

…children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

Has there ever been a sentence written that so accurately describes the condition of the church today? How we need men of God who can counter this deception and bring truth. The issue or problem that is described here is not only the deception itself but the fact that because we are little more than spiritual children we have no protection from the effects of the deception. To understand this we need to add the part of the sentence that is missing, 'That we henceforth be no more children…' Like the three children in the Simpsons the church seems to be stuck in a perpetual state of childishness, we are not growing up into the things of God. A reality that is clearly expressed by the writer to the Hebrews.

…seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.
Hebrews 5:11b-13

We are vulnerable because we are too immature in our walk and our understanding of the word to be able to counter the alluring distortions, the sleight of their hands as in a card trick or in their cunning craftiness. We also need to understand that it is also because of the immaturity of the walk and the lack of understanding of the word that these deceivers have been used to develop these deceptive ideas and ministries. We say

used because this is the work of the deceiver, the devil, as we read in the explanation of parable of the sower given by Jesus.

> The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil…
> Matthew 13: 38-39a

Ultimately we can be confident that the devil's fate is sealed.

> And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.
> Revelation 20:10

However, look at his prime purpose, to deceive, which is to bring lies, deception and discord to the church, and for this he will, sadly, be using those who claim to be ministers within it.

There is a story in the book of Acts which does demonstrate how deception might occur and how the body at Ephesus was protected by the effective intervention of those with the truth.

> And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue…
> Acts 18: 24-26a

We have Apollos here a prominent minister of the word in the early church, however, he had a gap in his level of revelation, he was still in need of perfecting even as an apostle. He seems to have only had an understanding the baptism of John which was a preparatory baptism that was to pave the way for the nation of Israel to be receptive to the coming Messiah.

> And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire
> Luke 3:15-16

Therefore, we might be able to recognise how a deception might occur, an individual, such as Apollos, is on their way to be used by God to minister to the body in teaching and before he is fully ready he decides to step into his calling. No doubt, because he does have a calling and the gifting and anointing that goes with it, the body is blessed and receives of the revelation that he does have. However, he will not be able to get beyond that which is missing and as he teaches that which he does have revelation will become mixed up with that for which he does not. The result will be that those who are on the receiving end of his ministry will take on board both the revealed truth as well as the deception, at which point the deception is taken to be truth. This will then be passed on and the deception becomes ingrained within the body and draws those effected away since, too often, one deception leads to others.

For Apollos there does not seem to anything wilful here, he was ministering within his level of revelation. This is often the case, those today teaching deceptions such as the word of faith heresy, or the prosperity gospel are largely sincere in what they teach, sadly they are sincerely wrong and the body and the truth of the word is damaged accordingly. The wilfulness within the process of deception at least initially lies with the Devil, the father of lies. However, what Apollos needed was someone to step into his world and to provide him with the missing element of truth, and the Lord provided for him two faithful co-workers of Paul, Aquila and Priscilla.

…whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.
Acts 18:26b

It seems as though Apollos had a humble heart and was still teachable, and he did receive correction. It is important that we notice the phrase, they took him unto them. They heard for themselves that he was missing an element of truth and they did not grumble about the word with others over a cup of coffee after the service, and they did not take notes to report back in judgement to Paul later. This phrase expresses that they were motivated by love as they took him unto themselves, without anyone else noticing and then in love they provided him with a more full revelation of baptism. We can see in this story how the early church operated out of a profound level of agape love in action as Paul encourages the church in Galatia.

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness;

considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.
Galatians 6:1-2

The two crucial Godly qualities held by the individuals concerned here are that the hearts of Aquila and his wife were merciful and pure, and Apollos' heart was meek and humble. How important the way of the beatitudes is! The sad reality is that too often we listen to others with hard judgemental hearts and those to whom we listen are unreachable because they in turn have proud and unteachable hearts. So the deceptions continue.

As we read on Apollos was able to continue and to grow in his ministry, even with the recommendation of the believers in Ephesus, which would have no doubt included Aquila and Priscilla.

And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.
Acts 18: 27-28

The solution for the small group of believers gathered together in Ephesus came through the ministry gift of an apostle exercised by Paul.

And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them,

Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve
Acts 19:1-7

When The Lord moves He always does a complete work, such that everyone, if they are receptive, can move on in terms of their level of understanding and revelation and the ongoing building work of the Lord continues as well. What we have witnessed here in this narrative is an example of spiritual warfare in its true sense; where truth has triumphed over deception as love has had its way.

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ
2 Corinthians 10:3-5

And as the writer to the Hebrews highlights we should all aim to arrive at the same place of perfected maturity.

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection…
Hebrews 5:14-6:1

- The ministry gifts enable the body to grow towards corporate maturity and they facilitate and encourage the effective and dynamic working of the body as a body.

We do need to break free from the mentality that is prevalent in the church today that we turn up on Sunday morning to be part of an audience, to be entertained and to have our ears tickled by smooth and comforting words. The reality in the early church was quite different, as is inferred by Paul when teaching on public worship.

How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.
1 Corinthians 14:26

People in the early church turned up to the public worship gatherings fully prepared to be actively involved. As we saw with our analogous understanding the tabernacle of David in 2 Samuel 6 it is important for each of us to understand that each of us are carrying His presence in the ark of our hearts into the meetings.

And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.
2 Samuel 6:17

Within the gathered body, the tabernacle, we are to release His presence in us into and under His Lordship, to set it in His place. And that when we gather we also come to share this reality of Him in us with our brothers and sisters as we each bring this presence, His presence, in the midst of the tabernacle. To make ourselves fully available first and foremost to the Lord, and then to be fully available to each other. To offer ourselves fully, consumed by Him and fully at peace in Him, with Him and with each other, to offer ourselves before the Lord as a burnt and peace offering.

And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to everyone a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.
2 Samuel 6:19a

We also then saw how we would be able to enjoy the three gifts from the king, a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. We were able identify the gift of the cake of bread as the spiritual gifts that would be shared one to another as the Holy spirit gives us the unction, gifts such as we see listed in 1 Corinthians 12. The gift of the good piece of meat we were able to recognise as the word of the Lord that would come through the variety of the elements of the public worship and not only in terms of delivered address.

And the gift of the flagon of wine would be a refilling of our spirits with His Spirit such that we could walk out of the meeting once more full of Him, carrying His presence out into the world.2 And although we do receive these gifts within the public worship, The Lord does desire to actively use us to deliver the gifts and therefore prior to the meetings, and within the closet why not [Footnote 2] ask Him what He would have you bring to be obedient to Him and to bless and edify the body.

We do need to find again true body ministry and the ministry gifts would be able to support the body to develop in this way. Everyone is vital, everyone has something to bring to the whole that is important for the benefit and growth of the whole. For its health and well-being the body of Christ does require the effectual working in the measure of every part. We have been sold a false prospectus of passivity for far too long. The true body of Christ is living and spiritually organic and dynamic.

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.
Ephesians 4:15-16

The ministry gifts would be able to guide and encourage individuals to recognise what is their measure of faith according to the grace that is given them. [Footnote 3] They would be able to equip and train the body in their particular area of ministry such as in prophecy, evangelism or teaching. So

that over time others will be able to move from just having a consistent gifting that edifies their local gathering to being promoted to having a ministry gift through which they would then be able to build up the wider body as well. Nothing is static in the body of Christ it is always a place of growth and a place of love in action.

We will now look at examples from scripture of individuals exercising the ministry gifts within the early life of the body and view these as an example and paradigm for what the Father desires to build again through the Lord within His Body,

> That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory…hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Ephesians 1:17a, 22, 23)

Footnotes

1. A clear example of this process can be seen in the account in Acts of Paul's planting the church in Ephesus, see Acts 18-20.

2. A clear example of this process can be seen in the account in Acts of Paul's planting the church in Ephesus, see Acts 18-20.

3. See Romans 12

Chapter 7

The Function of Ministry Gifts

The question that now lies before us is this, how did the ministry gifts function within the early church? The answer to which, will then be helpful for us to understand how the ministry gifts will function within the restored and rebuilt Tabernacle of David, the spiritual house that Jesus is building in our own day.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers
Ephesians 4:11

The list given here does differ slightly from a similar list in 1 Corinthians 12, but in terms of the order or hierarchy of importance of their function the two lists do follow the same pattern. For our purposes, we will be concentrating on the list of ministry gifts given in Ephesians 4. There does seem

to be a hierarchy within the ministry gifts which is related to the importance of their function within the body of Christ and the two ministry gifts which Paul designates as being foundational are the apostles and prophets. This distinction is stated earlier in Paul's letter to the Ephesian church.

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.
Ephesians 2:19-22

Such a distinction, no doubt, strikes us in today's church world as difficult to understand because there is little evidence of these two ministry gifts operating at all at the moment. Some do call themselves an apostle or a prophet, but whether or not this is in reality the case is questionable. Whereas, the all-pervading ministry within the church at the moment seems to be the pastor who also does some teaching. The pastor is the catchall title for the one-man band leadership model that we have today within the evangelical/charismatic church. Our contention is that as the Lord begins to rebuild the Tabernacle of David we might see the re-emergence of the ministry gifts as they once more come into their own as their role is clearly recognisable and essential to ongoing work of the Lord. This something that we identified in the previous chapter, as the rebuilt restored body looks to those who might support it to find perfected maturity in Christ. Indeed, we can surely

expect that the rebuilt tabernacle of David will be built upon a foundation of apostles and prophets and that the other ministry gifts will also once more play their full part in the building purposes of the Lord. A building process that is all about the bride being prepared and made ready for the return of the bridegroom. An end time expression of the church that we find described by Paul in the following way:

> That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
> Ephesians 5:27

Let us move on, therefore, to explore how scripture indicates that each of the ministry gifts functioned in the early and to glean from this how we might expect them to function moving forward into the building of the body of Christ in our own day, starting with the apostle.

Apostle

Apostle is a Greek word that has been transliterated in the English versions of the Bible. It has been universally taken as the foremost office and function within the early church and then on into the systemic church hierarchy from Constantine onwards.

As a Greek word it carries the meaning of one sent forth with orders, a sent one or even a messenger. However, the root word has a derivative connection with the English word for a market stall, so interestingly the term apostle might be understood as someone who goes somewhere to set their stall out. To go into the market place and to offer their wares

for the purchase and consumption of those within this community.

Therefore, as we consider these ideas that lie behind the term we can say the following, the function of an apostle is to be a pioneer within the body of Christ. An apostle breaks new ground for the gospel and for the establishment of a new expression of the body of Christ within a given location. It is also important to recognise that they are sent, they are not loners with a vision. They are sent by others to do a specific task. Jesus, himself, is described as an apostle and He was sent out by God to clearly do something quite special. [Footnote 1]

Acts 13 provides us with a clear example of these two facets of the role and function of an apostle.

> Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost
> Acts 13:1-4

Paul and Barnabas are sent out from the church at Antioch by laying on of hands and by an active sending event, notice that they were sent out by both the body and by the Holy Spirit. The sending process was not just man's good idea, but was and always needs to start and finish with the purposes of God and to be motivated by the need to be

obedient to the Lord and to operate out of a healthy fear of God. As we saw with carrying of the Ark of the Covenant from Gibeah to Jerusalem the Lord God always has His way of doing things. To discover the Lord God's way in Antioch those present had fasted and they prayed until they had heard the voice of God in this matter.

…the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

God spoke by His Holy Spirit and it is important to notice what He says. The sending of an apostle involves a separation, and you cannot be separated unless you have first been joined and to be joined is relational. Therefore, the ministry gifts are relationally embedded to the body in order for them to then be sent out to feed and support the wider body of whom they are a part. Again it does need to be said that ministry is not a refuge for loners with attachment issues.

They are to be separated for the work whereunto I have called them. This sending out starts with a call from the Lord, a call which will be His plan and His purpose, for He is building His church. Paul received this call originally at his conversion through the ministry of a faithful and no doubt fearful prophet called Ananias many years earlier.

Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him

how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.
Acts 9:13-18

Paul received his calling 'to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel' shortly after his conversion but it would be many years before he would be standing with Barnabas before the leaders in Antioch. A calling does not change, but for us we cannot simply anoint our flesh life. As we have seen the strength of our flesh has to die in order that in our weakness we might know the all sufficiency of the Father's grace, through the Son and in the Spirit. For Paul, it is clear from his letters that the Lord had to take him away into the deserts of Arabia for several years.

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.
Galatians 1:15- 17

Therefore, why did Paul need to be taken to one side by God? Paul gives us the answer very clearly here, to reveal his

Son in me. We have to be made ready and prepared for the work of the kingdom in any capacity.

> This is a work that must have its way in us before it can have its ways through us. There are no short cuts to a sanctified life.

That ye may be(come) blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world
Philippians 2:15

That we may be ready, that we may be prepared, that we may be a vessel fit for the master's voice, so that when he calls and says it is time we are who we need to be and where we need to be.

The issue that was at stake in Antioch was not that there was a God given calling here to be fulfilled, but that there was a God given timing for its fulfilment. Was this the Kairos time? Was this the moment for which Paul and Barnabas had been prepared, had the Father had the time and opportunity to do what He needed to make them ready? The answer here was in the affirmative. However, this is a very serious issue, it is so important that we get the timing right. God has set chronological time ticking at the creation, but the clock we need to be checking is his Kairos [Footnote 2] time.

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.
Romans 5:6

Just as there was a due time for Jesus to come and to die for us, so there is a due time for every move and act of God.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time
1 Peter 5:6

Therefore, from the scripture in Acts 13 we can identify that an apostle is called, and is sent out to do a specific task for which they have been prepared and for which the Kairos alarm clock is ringing. Moreover, from the primary example of the apostle Paul we can identify that this calling preoccupied him for the remainder of his life. Once again, from the example of Paul we can indeed recognise that the function of an apostle is as a church planting pioneer, breaking new ground for the Gospel which for Paul was right across the Roman Empire of the first century world. And from his letters, particularly the introductions, it is clear that Paul had a strong sense of his calling, such as we see demonstrated here in these two verses.

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God
Romans 1:1

For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office
Romans 11:13

In terms of the specific function of the apostolic ministry gifting we have to make inferences from the information that

we have available in scripture. Therefore, to begin with, for Paul to have made the impact that he did make it seems to be that he was very familiar with moving in the supernatural and that he understood that this was part of the apostolic gifting in general.

Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.
2 Corinthians 12:12

He also makes a distinction between the apostolic gifting and the other ministry gifts such as evangelism and teaching.

Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.
1 Timothy 2:7

And again.

Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.
2 Timothy 1:1

Perhaps we find the simplest definition of the function of the apostle in a verse we have already looked at in 1 Corinthians 3.

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed

how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 3:10-11

Therefore, in conclusion what we can say is that an apostle lays a foundation of Jesus Christ in a gathered group of believers in a particular place and others can then build upon this foundation to continue to build up these lives and the gathering. We will now move on to look at the other ministry gifts that would visit these embryonic gatherings and support the building work of the Lord.

The Prophet

The word 'prophet', like apostle, is a transliteration of the Greek term 'prophets'. This is an important spiritual function that we find in both the Old and New Testaments. The first question that does require an answer is whether or not the role and function of the prophetic gifting within the body of Christ is different from the role and function of the prophet that we find within the Old Testament? On the face of it, it would seem so. The prophetic writings, comprising about half of the content of the

Old Testament, speak directly into the spiritual condition of the nation of Israel, condemning the sin, foretelling the approaching judgements and offering the ultimate hope that God will be faithful to His chosen people. As well as this, within these writings we have clearly foretold the first and second coming of the Messiah and we also can find clear references to His Millennial reign beyond this. However, there is one thing for which no reference can be found anywhere within these prophetic writings and that is the

church. This why Paul describes the church or ekklesia as a mystery. Footnote 3

In the New Testament, however, the prophetic gifting seems to be part of the spiritual gifting dynamic within the life of the gathered body. The role of which is described by the apostle Paul in the following terms:

But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.
1 Corinthians 14:3

Indeed, etymologically, the words used for this spiritual activity in the original Hebrew and Greek also differ in their root meanings. The root word translated as prophet or prophecy in Hebrew carries a meaning to bubble up and to pour forth with passion and ardour. The word in Greek carries a root meaning to reveal the thoughts of someone beforehand. However, within the function of the prophet can we identify a common link or function between the Old and the New Testaments?

With reference again to its use in the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 18 provides us with a clear picture of how the prophetic was to function within the spiritual life of the children of Israel and it will be useful to explore this further here.

For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.
Deuteronomy 18:14

The fist point that needs to be noted is that the prophetic ministry in the Old Testament or Tanakh is different from

the way the world attempts to foretell the future using occultic activities. Indeed, God will provide for them their own prophetic calendar for all that would transpire that will affect them as God's chosen people from here to the end of time; as God's Kairos clock moves on to unfold His purposes for them, both judgemental and salvific. The next verse is very helpful for us in terms of making a connection between the two covenants.

The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken (v.15)

Essentially, this tells us that the whole of the prophetic witness of the Old Testament is focused on the salvific and redemptive purposes of the Lord God, as He repairs the breach of the fall through His grace and mercy. At the heart of this prophetic hope was and is Jesus. He is the Prophet who was to come and He is the final and greatest prophetic voice. A Prophet who came out of the midst of His people, the children of Israel, with a message for the whole world and a life offered on the cross for the whole world.

It may seem as though we are reading too much into this particular verse which merely informs us that a very significant individual would be coming at some stage in the future. There is nothing here to indicate what this individual would be sent to do, say or achieve. The key to this comes from what we read a few verses earlier, where we read the following:

Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God
Deuteronomy 18:13

The purposes of the Lord God, like his character, are unchangeable and consistent within the whole of the record

of scripture. He is looking for perfection on earth, and to achieve this He will send perfection as our guide.

Jesus is the last Prophet

In John's gospel this perfection is described in the following way:

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God…He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.
> John 1:1, 11-14

The true prophetic voice in the Body is the voice of Jesus, the living Word

Jesus is the Prophet who Moses prophesied was to come. In this way Jesus came as last prophetic voice to come out of the Old covenant and he then provides the bridge that enables us all to literally CROSS into His New Covenant. Therefore, henceforth, the prophetic voice that would be heard in the body is the voice of Jesus. This is the exalted son of God communicating from the right hand of the Father, through His Spirit within the spirits of His disciples, and into their to their minds. From here, it can then be given in whatever form

is required to those who need to hear what Jesus has to say. Jesus, himself, encourages His disciples to expect this reality when teaching them on the night He was betrayed.

> Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.
> John 16:13-15

When understood within the context of Jesus' teaching on the night He was betrayed, prophecy in the Spirit is part of a wonderful betrothal gift. Indeed, the role of the Holy Spirit as the mattan or betrothal gift who has been given to prepare the bride and to make her ready for the coming of the bridegroom. This is the language and the context for the conversation the Lord has with His disciples on their last night together.

> Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
> John 14:1-3

Therefore, we can now understand more clearly how the prophetic gift works within the gathered body. A true

prophecy given to the body will, by definition, come out of the heart of God, it will be His thoughts that are being openly declared. This is why an individual will often feel an inner bubbling or unction that they cannot contain. The prophecy and the prophet will be God raised and it will come out of the midst of the brethren. As we saw when exploring the tabernacle of David what comes out into the gathered body in terms of the gifts of the Spirit will largely be dependent upon what we are carrying within us in terms of His presence. The quality of the experience of the Spirit for ourselves and for others will be determined by the quality of how we have carried it during the week and how we are carrying this precious cargo within the Ark of our hearts as we bring it into the tabernacle.

> And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it…
> 2 Samuel 6:17a

As we come into the midst, prepared to bring ourselves and our spirit actively into the gathering then God will raise us up when he desires to deliver something of His thoughts to the whole or to an individual through a word of prophecy, thereby edifying, exhorting or comforting whoever the Father desires to edify, exhort or comfort. And if it is the Lord then he will also anoint the ears of those for whom it is given, unto him ye shall hearken.

> For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways

> higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.
> Isaiah 55:8-11

As we have seen, again from our exploration of events around the setting up of the tabernacle of David in 2 Samuel 6, a word of prophecy shared from brother to brother is to be likened to the cake of bread coming from the King, however, ours come through His Spirit directly from the King of Kings. [Footnote 4]

However, there is a warning in this scripture from Deuteronomy 18.

> And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.
> Deuteronomy 18:19-20

Does this still apply today? I would say not, as we are under grace and Paul does seem to provide us with a note of reality when he writes in 1 Corinthians 13:12a the following:

For now we see through a glass, darkly…

Perhaps from this we might understand that there is rarely a word of prophecy that does not contain elements of the flesh or presumption, the important aspect of any word or action is that it has to come from the right place and that place is love.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.
1 Corinthians 13:2

The final point to be made from our study of Deuteronomy 18 is that, put very simply, the one and only way to judge if a prophecy comes from God is whether or not it comes true. The same is true today.

And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.
Deuteronomy 18:21, 22

How does scripture define the function of prophecy in the life of the body of Christ and more specifically how would we expect prophecy to function as a ministry gifting?

1. Helpfully when Jesus defines the prophetic role of promised Holy Spirit in John's Gospel He also provides us with a working definition of the ministry of a prophet within the Body.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.
John 16:13-15

Therefore, someone functioning in the ministry gift of a prophet within the Body of Christ is an individual who has been given the grace and gifting to serve the Body with the revealed word of the Lord. Indeed, such an individual is a conduit for the Spirit of truth and therefore through whom they will, as we have read, the following job description.

- they will guide you into all truth

What they say will be underpinned by scripture

- they shall not speak of themselves

They will not be using their gift for self-profiling

- whatsoever they shall hear, that shall they speak

They will have developed the capacity to hear from the Lord

They will be obedient and faithful to what they have received

They will be marked by a fear of the Lord and not swayed by a fear of man.

They will not speak to flatter.

- they will shew you things to come.
- they shall glorify me
- they shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

2. Paul also gives us, in 1 Corinthians 14, a concise definition of what the voice of the living Word will sound like as it is heard within the Body spoken by His prophets.

But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.
1 Corinthians 14 3

From this verse, therefore, there are four distinct elements to this definition:

Prophecy:

- is a communication from God to men and the prophet is the conduit
- edifies
- exhorts
- comforts

We will look at each of these elements in turn to understand their meaning. However, if these four elements do provide us with the scriptural definition of the function of prophecy within the body of Christ then they also give us the definition of the function of the ministry gift of prophecy within it, as well. Therefore, as we explore these

elements we will also be establishing how the ministry gift of the prophet will be experienced within the body in our own day within the rebuilt Tabernacle of David.

- Prophecy is a communication from God to men and the prophet is the conduit

Prophecy is a communication from God to the body of Christ through a human agency. Therefore, the clarity of this communication will be effected by the human filter it comes through.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith
Romans 12:6

It is a gift that will require development within an individual, and along the way mistakes will have to be made and in love, mercy and grace these will need to be accommodated in the body as an individual grows in their faith and gifting. With regards to someone who is recognised as carrying the ministry of a prophet no such accommodation should be given nor required as a higher expectation of veracity would apply here.

Prophecy, as we have seen above, is also a means through which an important aspect of the role and function of the Holy Spirit, our betrothal gift, is fulfilled.

He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.
John 16:14

Significantly, for those who actively dwell in the two sukkot of the closet and the tabernacle, the prophetic word, we will be receiving from Jesus, will be the reward given openly for the time spent secretly with Father in our closet. This word, by definition, will be a helpful, edifying, exhorting or comforting word. Indeed, a word that takes us one step further towards our goal of becoming more like Him, as we allow the Father to work on our heart and to bring about His wonderful work of character transformation within each one of us. A word to be received humbly and then acted upon in faith.

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
Hebrews 11:6

- Prophecy edifies

The word translated here as 'edifies' is a term used in house building and from which we get the word 'edifice' to describe a built structure. Essentially, every prophecy will promote our growth in Christ when received and acted upon in faith. It will be a word that enables growth and development in a particular area, such as focusing on an area of weakness and thereby providing revelation for a way for strength to be found here.

Edification does seem to be an important theme for Paul, he uses it consistently as an essential quality that should underpin all that goes on between individuals within the life of the body. Significantly, this includes the use and practise of the spiritual gifts.

Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.
1 Corinthians 14:12

Moreover, as we look towards the Lord who is even now rebuilding the Tabernacle of David, His body, for our own time and according to the pattern we have been extensively exploring. Then, we must all actively allow Father to enable each of us to grow in love such that we can be lively stones and effectively part of this building process.

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.
Ephesians 2:20-22

- Prophecy exhorts

We turn now to explore the next element within Paul's definition of what characteristics we should expect to see when a prophet prophecies. The Greek term translated 'exhortation' is the same word that is used to describe the role and function of the Holy Spirit by Jesus in the upper room on the night He was betrayed.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot

receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you
John 14:16-18

The Holy Spirit is described here as the paraclete, the Spirit of Christ who is sent to dwell within the believer and to stand with them in the manner of a judicial advocate. Therefore, likewise, as we saw above, the voice we will be hearing in and through the gift of this self-same Spirit will be the voice of Jesus delivered by His advocate, the Holy Spirit.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.
John 14:16-18

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.
John 14:26

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.
John 16:7

Prophetic teaching will be one aspect of this, as the Spirit brings revelation to the body on an aspect of scriptural truth. We are also told that the Holy Spirit will bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. This relates specifically to Jesus' audience here who had been with Him for the last three years night and day, and helping us to understand how we now do have a faithful record of the life of Jesus through the four Gospels. However, it can also help us to understand that an important aspect of the way the Holy Spirit will be speaking into the midst of His gathered people through prophecy. The Holy Spirit will actively use what the Lord has already invested in the hearts and minds of those called to the ministry of prophecy. He does this by bringing His word to the mind of an individual, who is in the spirit, encouraging him to share it in the here and now. To speak into the midst thereby bringing an exhortation.

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me
John 15:26

The bottom-line for all such words will be that they bring glory to the Lord.

Exhortation can also be understood as being descriptive of a communication between Father and His children, thereby carrying an element of correction and discipline.

…and ye have forgotten the exhortation that doth speak fully with you as with sons, 'My son, be not despising chastening of the Lord, nor be faint, being

reproved by Him for whom the Lord doth love He doth chasten, and He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth;'
Hebrews 12:5-6

This type of corrective word is also to be understood as being edifying for the individual in the long term.

For they (our natural fathers) verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he (Father God) for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.
Hebrews 12:10-11

As an aspect of prophecy, we must be careful, however, how such words are delivered as they must be shared out of love and not self-righteous judgement, revenge or points scoring.

- Prophecy comforts

The fourth and final element of the Pauline definition of prophecy is comfort. This is a translation of a Greek term that is given its one and only use in scripture by Paul here. According to Thayer's Greek lexicon, it is a term that can have one of three different meanings within general usage in Greek literature. It can be an address delivered for the purpose of persuasion, to stimulate or arouse an emotional response or alternatively it is delivered to bring some level of consolation or calming. The last definition would seem to be

applicable here. Therefore, when a word of prophecy is given it can have the capacity to bring consolation or comfort. We are seemingly back with the Beatitudes here and the journey of transformation into Christ likeness that they represent for the disciple who will walk their path.
Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
Matthew 5:4

The prophetic word meets the individual where they are on their journey and helps them understand that as they are learning the difficult lessons that are part of the walk of fear and obedience, denying themselves and carrying their cross on a daily basis, they are not alone. Indeed, there are those around them who can help them carry their load. The Father will bring solace, comfort and consolation through the prophetic words that He has for us within this context. This is evocative of the intimacy of true Body life and how the body looks after its own. An intimacy within which the prophet and the prophetic word has an important part to play.

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.
Galatians 6:1-2

- The word of the prophet builds Christ in us
- The word of the prophet challenges us to be built in Christ
- The word of the prophet soothes the pain of Christ being built in us

The Prophet in Action

As already stated above, our contention here is that those who carried ministry gifting within the early Body of Christ; the apostle, prophet, evangelist, teacher and pastor, would have been itinerant in their ministry. Although, at the same time they would have also been a part of and actively involved in a local expression of the body of Christ as well. Footnote 5 These ministries would have been an essential team supporting the building of the Body. In each place they would have over time maintained and sustained the ongoing work of Father, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Footnote 6

The scriptural evidence for the itinerant ministry of the prophets in the early church can be found in the book of Acts.

> And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.
> Acts 11:27-30

Here we can see that the prophets travelled from Jerusalem to Antioch, we are not told how many there were. One of them named Agabus gives a prophecy that there would be a drought as the rains would fail. His mode of delivery is interesting as we are told that he merely signified by the Spirit, but we are not told how. Luke, the author of Acts, is quick to inform us that this was true prophecy because the event that

was foretold did actually come true. This is an historical fact confirmed by Josephus who records that such a famine did occur, probably in 45-46 AD. Footnote 7

However, the important aspect of this for us is that this was not just the foretelling of a future event to demonstrate how effective Agabus might have been as a prophet. It was given so that the body might be protected, because as the old adage goes to be forewarned is to be forearmed, and the body in one region was able to prepare to support the body in another, through this prophetic warning. The church in Antioch and Asia Minor would be prepared so that it could support and bless the body in Jerusalem and in the rest of Judea. Indeed, might this also be the continuing relief effort that Paul is exhorting the church in Corinth to join in with and to actively support?

> But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.
> 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

In Acts 15 we have another example of the itinerant prophets in action.

> We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things. And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.
> Acts 15: 27,28,32

Following the significant events that had just taken place at the council of Jerusalem, in which the fruitful ministry of Paul and Barnabus amongst the Gentiles had been legitimised and the Gentile believers were officially released from the obligations of the Law of Moses with regards to circumcision, two prophets, Judas and Silas, were tasked to deliver this news to the churches in Asia Minor. Here we see that their ministry was one of exhortation, one of the defining terms related to the ministry of a prophet. We also notice that they also delivered many words of prophecy and also supported the believers to receive and apply them to their hearts and lives.

In Acts 21 we again encounter Agabus in his calling as an itinerant prophet.

> And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.
> Acts 21:10-11

Here his role is slightly different as he has been sent to minister the word of God to a single individual. To give Paul a warning concerning what would happen if he was to go to Jerusalem. The prophet's method of delivery was interesting as he gave a prophetic physical demonstration of the potential consequences of Paul's visit to the Holy City. Once again, scripture verifies that this is exactly what did happen. From Paul was free to make is own choice here having been made

aware of the consequences for him, and we are told that he went ahead with his visit any way. Moreover, this prophecy was not delivered to tell Paul what to do or not do, but make him aware of what was to follow depending on the choice he made. The Spirit through the prophet was helping him to understand what was to come so that he could prepare for it.

Therefore, through these three examples we can see that the office and ministry of a prophet, like that of the apostle, clearly did have an itinerant function to bring the word of the Lord, to edify, exhort and comfort, wherever it was required within the body of Christ at this time, and as we have seen it was delivered either to the gathered body or to an individual within it. We would argue that this is normative and will be the modus operandi of the ministry gifts once again within the rebuilt Tabernacle of David in our own day. As we discover once more the essential value of their role and function and the value of those who carry these ministries.

The Evangelist

The third ministry gift is the office of evangelist. As we have done with the previous two functions, we will explore from the evidence of scripture how the evangelist functioned within the early church as a dynamic itinerant ministry. To help us we will be making reference to and exploring the calling and journey of discipleship of the apostle Philip and learn spiritual lessons concerning the development of an evangelistic calling or ministry. We will then turn our attention to account of the ministry of Philip the evangelist in the book of Acts to identify the key elements of the role and function of the office of an evangelist. Some do suggest that they are one and the same person, however, this is unlikely. However,

in exploring the calling of Philip the apostle we can identify important principles within his development as an evangelist under the mentoring of Jesus and when we turn to look at the ministry of Philip the evangelist we will be able to identify an individual who is operating as a mature minister of this gifting as an evangelist.

1. Philip the Apostle (evangelist)

The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.
John 1:43

Uniquely we are told that Jesus found Philip. What meaning, therefore, does the word 'found' convey here? Are we just talking about a chance meeting or was Jesus actively looking for him. If this was a chance meeting Philip does respond to the call from Jesus rather quickly, in reality, as we will see, he actually does seem to be already looking for the Messiah. For the call of Philip is part of an interesting vignette.

Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.
John 1:45-46

For just as Jesus found Philip, so Philip finds Nathanael. Did Philip merely come across Nathanael by accident or

having encountered Jesus did he go to find him to tell him the good news? The probability is that Philip was purposely looking for Nathanael, a friend or acquaintance, who seems to have shared his interest in looking for the coming one. In saying this can we identify in both encounters an element of preordination? Indeed, from the point of view of Philip he believes it is he who has truly done the finding as he exclaims to his friend, We have found him!

The simple, yet truly profound, purpose of the incarnation of the Son of God finds its articulation here.

And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men
Matthew 4:19

How quickly Philip had learned this very lesson. For no sooner had he responded to the call from Jesus to follow Him than he had successfully 'thrown out a net' and caught his friend Nathanael. He did this by going from Jesus, finding someone who had ears to hear and simply bringing them to Jesus with the words, Come and see. By doing this Philip becomes the first evangelist.

Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.
John 1:47-49

However, what is the key to his success?

- Jesus had gone before him.
- He was working with the Lord
- this enabled Jesus to achieve His purposes.

This is all about Jesus; His plan and His timing. Without realising it, this was the plan and the timing, Kairos timing, that Philip was working to as he went and found Nathanael and shared simply with him what he had found and brought him back to meet Jesus for himself.

- He went from the presence of the Lord,
- he found the person the Lord had prepared for him to meet and
- he introduced him to the Lord.
- Simples. This is evangelism.

Moving on in Philip's journey, we find ourselves on the day after Palm Sunday and so we are in the final week of Jesus' earthly life.

And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:
John 12:21

Here, there is an unusual and interesting account of individuals who are merely described as certain Greeks who are among the Jewish worshippers gathering in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover. The assumption must be that these people would have been Greek proselytes, i.e. Greek people who have converted to Judaism.

The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.
John 12:22

We are then told that these same Greek proselytes approached Philip and the text says that they even desired him, which actually meant that he was the person they wanted to talk to and to whom they wanted to make their request. Why might that have been? Might it have been that he could speak Greek? At the very least we would need to recognise that for some reason the Greek proselytes were drawn specifically to Philip as the means through which they felt they could gain access to Jesus. Perhaps, this is role or ministry that Philip had developed within the disciples as a door keeper to the Lord?

Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.
John 12:21-24

The question we would want to ask is why at this moment does Jesus make this declaration that the hour is come? Is there a particular trigger here? If we were to look at the prophetic witness in scripture are there any Messianic prophecies that might help us here?

I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One
Isaiah 49:6b-7a

Isaiah prophesies here that the Messiah, the Lord's Holy One, will be a light to the Gentiles and then in Isaiah 60 we read:

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. or, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see.
Isaiah 60:1-3

Isaiah prophesies here that the Gentiles, like a moth drawn to a flame, will come to this Messianic light shining in the darkness. Therefore, perhaps we do have here the reason why Jesus suddenly realises that His prophetic destiny was close to being fulfilled as He saw that a group of Greek gentiles who were seeking after the truth were seeking after Him. That they were being drawn to His light that was shining brightly against the darkness of the world and the darkness of religion. Perhaps a light that had begun to be reflected within Philip and therefore he was the way through which the true light might be found for these Hellenistic enquirers? For at this significant moment we do also need to notice that it is Philip who is again the conduit through which these people passed in order to find Jesus. An Evangelist is equipped with the grace to be the bridge between a dying world and Jesus the source of true life.

And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.
Numbers 16:48

As we have explored Philip the apostle's journey we have identified that from the outset he was marked out to follow a distinctive path and this path is given a place of some prominence in the Gospel record, particularly as we have seen in John's Gospel. It is interesting to note that beyond the three apostles who seem to have had a special relationship with Jesus, Peter, James and John, of all the rest of the twelve, apart from Judas for other reasons, Philip and his journey is given an especial focus. Indeed, can we identify within the narrative of the gospel a representation of a calling into ministry and specifically a calling into the ministry of an evangelist? Indeed, what we have identified in the call of Philip the apostle does provide for us a paradigm for understanding the essential elements of true and effective evangelism. An evangelist's starting point is having met the Lord themselves in a situation, they are in the moment and in the spirit, and it is in the presence of the Lord that they move out to find the person the Lord has prepared for them to meet and to then interact and communicate with them in such a way as to effectively introduce this person to the Lord themselves.

2. Philip the evangelist

Moving on to explore scriptural record for the second Philip, the Evangelist, we will be looking for principles we have already identified bearing fruit and for this we find ourselves in the book of Acts.

And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.
Acts 21:8

This verse identifies Philip as an evangelist, therefore he is identified as someone prepared and made ready to carry the office or ministry of an evangelist. [Footnote 8] However, it is in Acts 8 that we do find Philip the evangelist in full ministerial flow.

Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.
Acts 8:5

First of all, we notice that there was movement. Philip is described as making a journey in the Spirit to Samaria. Therefore, this ministry of evangelism is an itinerant one and it is also crucially a Spirit lead and Spirit facilitated one. The Lord had work to be done in Samaria and he called Philip to go there to meet this need.

It is interesting to note that by doing this Philip was not preaching to the people of Samaria something that was unfamiliar to them. Had not Jesus already spent time with them following His conversation with the woman at the well, we are told that he actually spent two days with them. [Footnote 9] At this time Jesus also said something to His disciples that, through the ministry of Philip, does have prophetic resonance here.

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

Jesus' work was finished on the cross, however, the work here in Samaria did require further attention?

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your

eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.
John 4:35

He was challenging His disciples, including Philip, to lift their eyes to recognise that there was a harvest to be reaped even here in the religiously discredited region that was Samaria.

And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.
John 4:34-38

Perhaps, Philip was now reaping the harvest that has resulted from the seeds that Jesus sowed in Samaria when he had met the woman at the well? Perhaps, he was now receiving his spiritual wages and gathering his eternal fruit, such that both he and Jesus would now be rejoicing? Perhaps, Philip was now entering into the previous labours of the Lord and this is why the fruit seems to have fallen easily from the tree?

And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that

were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.
Acts 8:6-8, 12

We, therefore, can recognise here the same elements of evangelism that we saw with calling of Philip and Nathanael. The evangelism here in Samaria was fundamentally a work of Jesus, a work that began with the Lord and the seeds He had sown previously, the evangelist was responding to a call from Jesus to go to this specific place, and here he was able through preaching the Gospel to introduce them to Jesus and His cross. And it was in the Spirit and it was fruitful.

For Philip this was a job well done, but he could not rest on his laurels as:

… the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went…
Acts 8: 6, 37a

He was being called to move on by the Lord. This time an angel of the Lord was the message carrier, therefore, this mission must be of particular significance. And yet, having travelled some distance down into the Negev desert, what or who does he find?

…and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians,

who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.
Acts 8:37b-38

This must have been quite a sight, this Ethiopian court official and all his retinue with him travelling through the desert returning home from worshipping in Jerusalem. It is clear that this man was Jewish as he had been to Jerusalem to worship and he was no doubt the fruit of the religious and historical connection between Ethiopia and Israel that had its roots in the story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Even today there is a Jewish community in Ethiopia that shares these same roots.

The key here is that the eunuch is searching, he is hungry for truth and is at this very moment reading Isaiah and the passage he is reading is chapter 53, which is the Messianic prophecy that carries the most clarity concerning Jesus as its fulfilment within the Old Testament. The key here is the timing. Indeed, the lesson we need to learn is that effective and fruitful evangelism requires certain irreplaceable elements. Evangelism needs to be in the Spirit and then it will be in the Lord and in time. The time here is His kairos time, the right time in terms of the Lord's plans and purposes for the salvation to occur. For anyone to be born again, just like in the natural, the timing is crucial, such that it will even determine whether the newly born will survive or not. [Footnote 10]

Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said,

Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.
Acts 8:29-31

Philip arrived just at the right time, just as this man, the Ethiopian eunuch, was reading about Jesus. Through the guidance and initiative of the Spirit, Philip was in the right place at the right time, to say the right thing, because he was the right person from whom the Ethiopian eunuch would receive what he was looking for.

Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.
Acts 8:35

- At the right time Philip introduced the Ethiopian eunuch to Jesus.

And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.
Acts 8:36-38

- At the right time the Ethiopian eunuch was saved and baptised.

And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.
Acts 8:39

- At the right time Philip was moved on by the Spirit, literally, his work as an evangelist having been completed here.

Church tradition tells us that the Ethiopian eunuch returned to Ethiopia and was used to evangelise the nation.
Footnote 11

But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.
Acts 8:40

- And then at the right time, in the right place Philip's ministry moved on.

There is an interesting spiritual blend that can be identified between the two lives of the two Philips in scripture. A blend in which it is clear that for anyone to develop the quality of ministry that we have seen within the scriptural record of Philip the evangelist, they would have, by necessity, to have walked a developmental path of discipleship with Jesus that we witnessed in the life of Philip the apostle. A ministry that, as we have seen, can either impact with the Gospel a whole community or just an individual, who will then potentially go on to impact a nation, the elements for effective and fruitful evangelism remain the same; moving in the Spirit, finding someone

seeking after the truth, introducing them to Jesus, and all achieved within the timing of the Lord.

Before we do move on, in the scriptural account of Philip's success amongst the Samaritans there is an interesting post script when it describes the necessity for the apostles Peter and John to travel to Samaria to seemingly complete the work.

> Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost
> Acts 8:14, 15

This seems to suggest that the ministerial roles were clearly delineated and that for those who had responded positively to the Gospel message delivered by Philip still required the ministry of the apostles to seal the deal so to speak, to take them through spiritual baptism and for an apostolic foundation to be laid in order that an expression of the Body of Christ might develop here. As we see later the church in Samaria is described in the following positive terms.

> Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.
> Acts 9:31

It is important that we notice the important elements that are highlighted here as the signs of an effective and normative expression of a church:

- They were edified and comforted in the Holy Spirit, therefore, the Prophets had been doing their work
- They were walking in the fear of the Lord therefore, as we will see, the Pastor/Teachers had been doing their work
- They were growing numerically very fast therefore the Evangelists had been doing their work
- All in all Jesus had been doing His work in building His Body, rather well.

Pastor and Teacher

> And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers
> Ephesians 4:11

To begin with, the question we will need to address is whether or not we are dealing with the one ministry of a pastor/teacher or two separate ministries of a pastor and a teacher. The Greek is confusing because there is change in the conjunctive that is used between the two words for pastors and teachers, which would suggest a change in the way the connection between these two words is to be understood. This is represented in the English translation by the loss of the term 'some' before the word 'teachers'. Therefore, what do we make of this linguistic anomaly? How does this effect our understanding of this verse?

There is a rule of Greek Grammar that might inform our understanding here called the Granville Sharp rule:

> When the copulative kai connects two nouns of the same case, if the article ho, or any of its cases, precedes

> the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle ...[Footnote 12]

Therefore, using this rule this might help us to decide that the two words here, pastors and teachers, are actually an amalgam of just one role, a pastor/teacher. However, Greek scholarship also determines that this rule never applies, in New Testament Greek, to plural nouns. So what do we make of this?

We believe that some response does need to be made to this anomaly, as the Greek does communicate to us that these two ministries do need to be treated differently from those that have preceded them. So far, we have tried to establish, through scripture, how the ministry gifts or offices listed in the passage in Ephesians 4 do need to be understood within the context of their function within the early church. We are also making a further point here, that in terms of the work of the Lord that we believe He desires to do in our own day, to rebuild his body along the lines that we are exploring, then it is important that we understand as best we can how these ministries will function in this new context as well. So far, in the previous chapter, we have already identified their overall role, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. And finally, we would also want to suggest that their function to achieve this would have been an itinerant and transient one, as they moved between individual gatherings of the body in the Spirit, maintaining and sustaining the work and thereby fulfilling the purposes of Christ. So that the church could be established and grow healthily such as we have read in Acts 9,

> Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.
> Acts 9:31

Therefore, it is in this context that we believe these final ministry giftings of the pastor and teacher would have played an important part. We have already identified that an aptitude to teach was an essential skill that would be required of anyone who would aspire to the role of elder within the body.[Footnote 13] Therefore, by extension, we might be able to see the importance of an office in which essential teaching would be provided to build up the brethren and this was delivered from an individual who carried the heart of a shepherd moving between the different churches. And not just any shepherd but the one and only Good Shepherd, who is Jesus Christ, and not just any heart but the servant heart of the very same Jesus. Indeed, the term translated 'pastor' here is actually the Greek word for a shepherd. Therefore, we do think there is a case to be made to recognise that the ministry of teaching should always go hand in hand with that of a pastor or shepherd of the flock.

In the New Testament it is Jesus who is describes himself as the good shepherd.

> I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.
> John 10:14-16

As the church grew and the sheep from the other fold, the Gentiles, were increasingly brought into the fold, the body needed to maintain its unity as one fold having one shepherd, who is Jesus. Therefore, we can recognise how important it would have been to have the itinerant ministries building relational bridges between the churches across the Roman Empire and beyond. Moreover, it is into this context that we can place the last ministry gift. Someone who would move from flock to flock feeding the sheep by teaching the truth in love.

At this point, it will be helpful for us to remember the restorative calling the Lord gave to Peter on the beach after his resurrection.

Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.
Scripture

This beautiful story of the restoration of relationship and calling, establishes love as the essential motivation that is a prerequisite at the heart of everything that Peter would henceforth go on to do. Too often teaching in the church lacks a loving, relational connection with heart of the Shepherd; the love He has for His sheep. This has to be a prerequisite for the ministry of a teacher within the Body, therefore, in this way the two ministries of Teacher and Pastor have to operate together. You cannot have one without the other. After all what is being taught in the Body?

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine
John 16:13-15a

- All teaching comes from the Father
- All teaching is to be delivered through and by the Holy Spirit
- All teaching will glorify Jesus
- All teaching will glorify Jesus in the hearts and lives of those who receive it.

In spiritual terms and in the context of the life of the body how are we fed? Here we are back in the tabernacle of David and the symbolism of the good piece of flesh. [Footnote 14] A symbolism which we understood to be consistent with what we find in Hebrews where we read:

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.
Hebrews 5:12

The ministry of teaching is the ministry through which the body of Christ is fed and it is also here that we can recognize that the two roles of pastor and teacher become one. As the teachers edify the body with scriptural truth, the great Shepherd, Jesus Christ, is taking this, His food,

and, He is feeding His flock. The sheep hear His voice. As the teacher shares the Shepherd's truth, he also needs to share the love of the shepherd for the flock for which He gave His life.

> Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.
> 1 Peter 2:24-25

The Pastor/Teacher in Action

> Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers…
> Acts 13:1

There were teachers who had gathered to seek the Lord in Antioch, as there were prophets, therefore, we can presume like the prophets their ministry would have been an itinerant one. However, to find an example of an itinerant teacher it will be helpful to explore the ministry of Apollos. We have already encountered him in a slightly negative way when exploring the apostolic function, but he was not all bad.

> And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord…
> Acts 18: 24-25

Here we have Apollos an itinerant teacher, moving around the body and feeding the flock with truth concerning the way and things of the Lord. He clearly had all the credentials, he was eloquent, mighty in the scriptures, was fervent in the spirit and who taught diligently. Indeed, this description of the ministry of Apollos will prove helpful for us to identify the key attributes for anyone aspiring to carry the office or ministry of a pastor teacher within the body of Christ.

- instructed in the way of the Lord

The root from which the word translated instructed is drawn is the word 'echo'. Therefore, a teacher will be a faithful echo of that which he has received. There are no short cuts in the Lord. Moreover, as we have seen the path of instruction in the Lord is a narrow and at times painful one.

> Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.
> Hebrews 12:11

Indeed, the concept of the way of the Lord takes us back to Abraham.

> For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.
> Genesis 18:19

The way of the Lord is not knowledge about the Lord but knowledge of the Lord. A teacher will be passing on not just knowledge about the Lord but revelation of the Lord.

He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.
Psalm 103:7

We are told that John the Baptist is the embodiment and fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy that there would be a preparatory forerunner for the coming Messiah to make straight the way of the Lord. [Footnote 15] Perhaps this is another way of understanding the role of a teacher as well to make this way of the Lord accessible, a straight way and unhindered way, for both lamb and sheep to feed on the Lord's rich pasture.

- eloquent

This is the only time this form of the verb 'to speak' is used in scripture and it carries the meaning of being skilled in speech and of having a good grounding in study, a man of the word.

- mighty in the scriptures

The Greek word translated as 'mighty' is the word from which we get the word dynamic, which itself can be defined in its noun form as a force for change, progress and growth.

- fervent in the spirit

The literal meaning is to boil hot for something, there is a positive zeal at work here in the spirit, and this is not soulish emotionalism or hype

- taught diligently the things of the Lord

Against any danger of the zeal taking over, he also teaches with accuracy according to his revelation he has of the things of the Lord at any particular time, because as we saw before, the teacher, no matter who they might be, must remain humble, teachable and open to new revelation. And like Paul recognize that we are always just a work in progress-we never arrive.

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3:12

When corrected we saw that Apollos also had a soft and teachable heart, he was still open to learn from others.

And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.
Acts 18:26

And having fulfilled the Lord's purposes Apollos moved on to feed others, no doubt now with fresh revelation.

And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him:

who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

Acts 18: 27-28

At times as you read the account of the spread of the faith in the book of Acts it is possible to identify a real sense of teamwork and of the dynamic flow of the Spirit as they moved between the churches. In this verse it seems like a choreographed ministerial dance.

And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus…
Acts 19:1

Finally, it will be helpful to make reference to verses in Paul's letters that demonstrate a close synergy in the working relationship between Paul and Apollos. Indeed, this is a scripture which also supports our contention that the office or ministry of a pastor teacher was both one of pastoral provision as well as didactic support and that it was an itinerant one.

I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.
1 Corinthians 3:6

Paul, as the apostle, has laid a foundation of Jesus in Corinth. An expression of the body of Christ has been securely established, with elders and deacons in place.

Then at the right time, Apollos, as the pastor teacher, arrives and nourishes the flock with his teaching. And in and through it all it is God is at work in the lives and in the community, fulfilling His purposes, through His Son and by the Holy Spirit.

As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time
1 Corinthians 16:12

This verse indicates that Apollos was an itinerant pastor teacher and that he would regularly visit the churches. However, the key element, as described by Paul here, is the timing. To continue to be fruitful and effective any visit would have to be in the Lord and in His Kairos timing and therefore in the spirit. We are told that Apollos' will was not to come at this time. Even though Paul was keen for this to happen the time had to be convenient, it had to be Kairos time. [Footnote 16]

Conclusion

As we followed our chosen examples of the four office holders of the ministry gifts; Paul, Agabus, Philip and Apollos, who were in turn an apostle, prophet, evangelist and pastor teacher, we have been able to ascertain that each were itinerant in function. Moreover, as we saw in the case of Peter, John and Philip, and also with the way Apollos and Paul, working effectively together they would, over time, build on the work of the others. In this way they were able to fulfil their calling and to support the Body building purposes

of God. The evangelists would preach the word with signs following and people would get saved. The apostle would then mold this group into an expression of the body and establishing teams of elders and deacons, encouraging the flow of body and setting a example for them to follow. The prophet would provide vision both individual and corporate. The pastor teacher would provide the spiritual food required for growth in Christ and in the truth. And as we look to see the Lord continue His work in our own day of rebuilding the Tabernacle of David, His Body, that is fallen and in a ruinous state we can look forward to a new-found reality of these ministries once again. Functioning wonderfully together as we see below:

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.
Ephesians 4:11-16

However, this was, is and will only ever be a work of the Lord. A work through which He will make ready and prepare a people who He might recognize as His bride and for whom He will return in due time, His Kairos time.

Footnotes

1. See Hebrews 3:1

2. Kairos is the Greek word which carries a range of time related meanings such as an opportune or seasonable time, the right time or a limited period of time

3, See Ephesians 3

4. See Chapter 14, 'A place for the King's Gifts' in 'Back to the Future: Rebuilding the Tabernacle of David' by the same author.

5. Such as Peter who describes himself as an elder in 1 Peter 5: 1

6. Ephesians 4: 12

7. Josephus (Ant. XX. 2. 5 and 5. 2)

8. However, it also identifies him as one of the seven, i.e. the seven deacons of Acts 6, and therefore a different individual that Philip the apostle.

9. See John 4: 43

10. See 1 Kings 10: 1-13

11. St. Irenaeus of Lyon, Adversus Haereses (180 AD)

12. Sharp, Granville (1798). Remarks on the Uses of the Definitive Article in the Greek Text of the New Testament, Containing Many New Proofs of the Divinity of Christ, from Passages Which Are Wrongly Translated in the Common English Version (PDF). London. p. 8.

13. See 1 Timothy 3: 2

14. See 2 Samuel 6: 19

15. See Matthew 3: 3, Mark 1: 3, Luke 3: 4 and John 1: 23

16. The Greek word translated as convenient time is a combination of kairos and eu, which in Greek is a prefix meaning good or right, therefore, carrying a meaning of the good or right time for something to happen.

Chapter 8:

Decision Making in the Body of Christ;

How Do Leaders Lead?

How do leaders lead? This is a vitally important question. Leadership essentially can be synthesised into the process of choice making. Therefore, what is the process by which choices within the body of Christ are made? Decisions have to be made, however, in the body of Christ, how are they to be made and by whom? After all, we, both individually and corporately, are the sum of all the choices we have ever made, both good and bad. Therefore, how does scripture inform us concerning this crucial element of life in the body of Christ? How are the choices that relate to the forward guidance and governance within the body to be made? Who makes them, an individual or a team? Is the leadership in the body determined by democratic or autocratic principles? Or do we find in scripture a different way for leaders to lead and a different way for the decisions and, therefore, choices to be made?

To begin with, we need to understand that the world and its systems that we inhabit today are a direct result of the fall of man. The essential effect of the fall was that mankind from that moment on was drawing its wisdom from the wrong place. Up until this moment the primal pair, Adam and Eve, only had one place to look to for their moral guidance and one person from whom they would receive guidance and one motivation for any decisions they might make. They, for as long as it lasted, walked in the Garden of Eden in perfect obedience to God. They were essentially spiritual entities, by which we mean that their spirits were the dominant element of their tripartite being and, therefore, their souls and bodies were subservient to their spirits.

At the Fall, this changed as their spirits died to God and they were, from this moment on, reliant upon their body and souls for their moral compass and their decision making processes. This moment is captured dramatically in scripture.

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked…
Genesis 3:7a

Suddenly their eyes were opened and they knew they were naked. It is at this moment that mankind became self-aware and this consequence of the Fall has cursed mankind ever since. Let us remind ourselves how the apostle John describes this curse in his first epistle.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father

is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.
1 John 2:15-16

It was to their body and soul to which they were now obedient. In short, mankind was now being sustained from the wrong tree, the tree of the knowledge of both good and evil, and we have been ever since. How does this impact decision making in the church? What do we need to be aware of- self or Father in our choice making? Do we once again need to rediscover what it is to once again walk before our God in such a way that we might have our decision and choice making restored to what it would have been prior to the fall? Indeed, is there within the Body of Christ a different way for leaders to lead and for their decisions to be made?

Scripture is very clear. Jesus Christ is the head of the body. Let us remind ourselves how this dynamic is described by Paul.

And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.
Ephesians 1:22-23

We are His body and He is our head. Therefore, since the head is the seat of the brain and the brain is organ through which the whole of the body is governed then surely all decision making within the body has to come from the head? And therefore, surely for us, likewise, all decision making within the Body of Christ has to come from the head of the Body, who is Jesus? We could even take this metaphor further

and recognise that four of the five sensory organs are also situated in the head and therefore spiritually speaking the body must also seek to see the world through Jesus' eyes and hear its pain with His ears. Indeed scripture also encourages to exercise our spiritual tongues.

O taste and see that the LORD is good…
Psalm 34:8a

Therefore, perhaps we do need to reassess how we as the body allow the head to inform more directly the decisions that are made on behalf of the body. To find an example of decision making in the Body in scripture we can turn to Acts 13 and explore the mechanism by which Paul and Barnabas were chosen to be sent out from the church at Antioch to minister the Gospel to the Gentile world, decisions do not get much bigger than this.

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed…
Acts 13:1-3a

The first thing to notice here is the active element of the Godhead here is the Holy Spirit. For as we read in

John's Gospel we, the Body of Christ, have been left with the very Spirit of God, who dwells not just with us but actually in us, and who, as such, is now the vehicle from and through whom all communication is to be made between the Godhead and the Body of Christ. Staying with the body metaphor, perhaps, we can identify him physiologically as the central nervous system through which all the messages are sent from the head to the rest of the body.

Indeed, perhaps, truth is our life-blood, for as we see in John's gospel, a function of the indwelt Spirit of God is described as the Spirit of truth and as such we are told:

> And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.
> John 14:16-18

The Holy Spirit is another, in the Greek just like the other. He is another form of the same Jesus who walked among us and now He lives within us by His Spirit. It is Jesus who indwells the believer and He is given to us as a direct result of a request to the Father from the Son. The Holy Spirit is of such a form that the unregenerate world cannot access Him in terms of receiving, seeing or knowing. For us, however, we can receive Him into our lives, see Him at work in our lives, know Him in relationship, because lives with us and is in us. And He is the very presence of Jesus in our lives.

> But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness…
> John 15:26, 27a

Moreover, we notice that the Holy Spirit comes from the Father and is here described as the Comforter, which in the Greek carries the meaning of an advocate or someone who stands with us and who will make representation for us to a higher court. The communicative function of the Holy Spirit is described here. We are told that the Holy Spirit will testify or bear witness [Footnote 1] of Jesus and as a result we will then, in turn, be able to bear witness of Jesus. There is a clear line of communication described here. The Father communicates to Jesus, who in turn passes this on to the Holy Spirit and then the Holy Spirit communicates this to us and then we are in a position to know what Godhead desires to say or to do. The head is communicating to the body and for this the head uses the Holy Spirit as his conduit of communication.

> I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.
> John 16:12-15

Jesus still has much to communicate to His body. How will He do this? He will communicate to His body through the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth. Moreover, we can clearly identify His role as the conduit of communication between the head and the body in these verses. This role as described here is clear, strong and definitive. First of all, it is the Holy Spirit that will guide the body of Christ into all truth. Therefore, since every decision is either true or false, wrong or right, how can we make any progress without finding an effective way to actively involve the Holy Spirit in all decision-making situations with regards to leading the church? How can we ignore our guide? Perhaps this why we are quite so lost today?

The Holy Spirit is the very voice of Jesus, as He hears Jesus speak He desires to relay this directly to us, but are we listening? Have we the capacity to hear His voice? As Jesus often challenged his audience, do we have ears to hear? Do we and do our leaders have unblocked, spiritually tuned ears so that we can hear the voice of the good shepherd in our midst?

All glory has to go to Him. Therefore, where is our selfish ambition and our 'if we build it they will come' mentality when put against this? He will not give His glory to another. Indeed, it is His voice, expressed in and through His Holy Spirit, that we need to hear in the midst of the tabernacle of David. So that when we make a decision it is the decision of the King. Indeed, this does seem to be the decision-making process that we can identify in Antioch.

Moreover, we also need to recognise that this decision to send Saul and Barnabas out was initiated by the Holy Spirit.

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said…

At this point we are not told that there was a specific agenda attached to their ministering to the Lord and fasting. It seems that the leaders of the church had gathered to seek the Lord as perhaps was their normal practice. Here, we are told that they ministered to the Lord and they fasted. Perhaps we need to ascertain at this point what ministering to the Lord means and what it possibly involved?

The actual term used here to minister is a Greek word which has a compound structure that literally means to serve or work for the people. Capturing for us the principle that to lead is to serve as we acquire the leadership model of Jesus who goes before us. This expression, to minister to the Lord, is redolent of the priestly service that we find in the Temple in Jerusalem in the Old Testament. Indeed, this is the same word that is used in Hebrews.

And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins
Hebrews 10:11

In the Old Testament we find this same priestly ministry,

For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD: So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations.
Exodus 30:19-2

In a similar vein, therefore, the leadership team in Antioch were gathered here, they too had entered the tabernacle of congregation, now the church, here they met together in one place in a unity of Spirit. They were clean through the work of the cross and the work of the word in their lives. They had come into the midst of this tabernacle, to minister in and out of their altar, the cross of Jesus Christ and they had come to make a sacrificial offering as they had fasted in preparation. Here we are clearly reminded of the inauguration of the Davidic tabernacle in 2 Samuel 6 where we read:

> And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.
> 2 Samuel 6:17

The prophets and the teacher that were brought together at this time in Antioch, a group of at least five comprising Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen and Saul, were each carrying the Ark of His presence into the midst of the gathering. For each of them were actively indwelt by the presence of the Holy Spirit and actively available to the Lord and to each other. They were in the moment. The Lord was set in His place and those present were set in their place.

What followed in Antioch is that the King, Jesus Christ, gave out a good gift through His Holy Spirit to them as directed by the Father. He spoke his word into the midst.

> Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

Jesus can be seen here through the Holy Spirit both guiding the disciples in Antioch as to what to do and thereby preparing them for the things which were to come. We have no indication that they were expecting this. Did Saul and Barnabas already have their suitcases packed in the hall way? It does not read like this. We do know that Saul had a calling to the Gentile world that was given to him at his conversion through the prophecy of Ananias, [Footnote 2] but this was several years prior to this. So it does seem that this might have been a surprise to all concerned, particularly the putting together of the Saul with Barnabas. A team which does not seem to have survived for too long.

> And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to everyone a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed everyone to his house.
> 2 Samuel 6:19

However, this was a good piece of meat, as Saul and Barnabus, took it and began to feed the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. They had also, through this event, been given a significant flagon of wine as the Holy Spirit impacted those to whom the word was preached.

Therefore, in its purest sense all decision making lies with Jesus, He is the way, the truth and the life. We, as a leadership team, therefore, have to present ourselves to Him, to minister first and foremost to him, to sacrificially fast, pray and wait, and His word will come. Such a process will take both faith and patience, and an underlying fear of the Lord, because we must not walk in the presumption of

the flesh particularly as we carry a responsibility for leading the flock, His flock.

Is this model for decision making normative, and applicable in all circumstances? Clearly the specific circumstances will vary, but there are underlying principles here which we would be wise to adhere to whenever we require to hear from the Lord concerning His guidance with regards to important decisions in the life of the body. The body has to hear from the head. Principles such as coming before the Lord as a unified team to minister to Him first, fasting, praying and waiting should always apply. It is important that we are not blind leaders and the only way we can truly see the way forward is to wait for Jesus, the eyes and ears of the body, who will bring His revelation in due time, His Kairos time.

A Prayer for All Those Who Would Lead.

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to

the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.
Ephesians 1:17-23

Footnotes

1. The Greek word here is the same word that is translated 'bear witness' in the next verse

2. See Acts 9

Conclusion

To pull together all that we have studied so far let us try and develop for ourselves a working scriptural model of leadership within a body of Christ that desires to become,

…a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
Ephesians 5:27

Indeed, an expression of His body which is being made ready and a people and a bride who are progressively being prepared for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, the bridegroom. [Footnote 1] Our model begins with an unfamiliar verse from Isaiah.

Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.
Isaiah 65:8

This verse comes within an end time context and seems to be suggesting that there will be a day of small things [Footnote 2], in which, metaphorically speaking, the new wine of the Spirit of God will be found within small fruitful expressions of the vine. [Footnote 3]

Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.
Matthew 9:17

Indeed, how the new wine is in serious need of being preserved today; the new wine of His effervescent life, love and power. A life, love and power that does need to find a new vessel in which it can be effectively contained and released to a hurting and dying world. A vessel, we believe, that does find its metaphorical expression and, hopefully, also its spiritual and physical reality in the cluster.

A cluster of ripe grapes fit to burst with the blood of the grape [Footnote 4] within them and which are held together, bunched, and suspended from the true vine itself. This is a symbolic picture which is, we believe, very relevant for what is happening today. Small groups of believers, hungry for reality and truth, are beginning to gather. They have decided, for a variety of reasons, to leave the system that is the church and to start to cluster together and to together find a new, yet old, way to be the body of Christ. A cluster of grapes within which the new wine might be found.

An interesting aside to this is that in Hebrew the word for cluster is eshcol and it was in the valley of Eshcol in the promised land that the twelve spies found the huge bunch of

grapes that they brought back to Moses and the children of Israel carried on a pole between them . The spiritual truth that we can glean from this for ourselves is that our experience of the cluster should also be a taste of the Promised Land that we all long for. A truth captured by Paul in his letter to the Ephesian cluster.

> That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.
> Ephesians 1:12-14

Indeed, it is through the new wine of the Spirit within us that we too have the taste of the land of promise, which is the Millennial Kingdom!

We would also identify that the gathering into clusters, is an important aspect of the rebuilding purposes of the Lord in our day. His desire to build again an expression of His body that we have recognised as being characterised metaphorically and symbolically by the Tabernacle of David. [Footnote 5] As such, we also would want to identify what the Lord desires to build today to be closely modelled on what He originally did build, the church that we see in the New Testament, and the principles of love, servanthood and shared lives on which this was built. Indeed, a vessel that is fit for purpose, the purpose being to produce a holy, perfectly mature, sanctified people-the Bride.

Therefore, in terms of leadership and finally answering the questions posed in the introduction. What type of leadership

should we look for within these individual clusters and beyond them to the potential grouping of these clusters into an expression of a wider more universal body? From what we have seen in scripture we clearly do have a leadership model for both. Indeed, as in the early church, what potentially might develop today is a network of homogenous clusters who are held together to the vine by a team of gifted ministers who would work between the clusters. The spiritual scene is surely set for a return to this model, the model we have clearly demonstrated in this study?

Locally, a cluster should look to establish a leadership team of elders comprising those who are deemed to be called by God and who do carry the appropriate attributes that we have explored above. Likewise, others, again specifically attributed for the task, should be chosen to function as deacons. However, this leadership must not be conducted from an authoritarian or hierarchical position, or indeed be motivated as a hireling, after all we are all sheep together under the oversight of the one Good Shepherd, who is Jesus.

> The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.
> 1 Peter 5:1-4

Further, as this rebuilding process develops we should begin to recognise those called to step up to the ministries or offices of apostle, prophet, evangelist and teaching pastor. These would then take on the inspired building work of the Lord and move between the network of clusters edifying, equipping and enabling the discipling process to progress through to maturity in Christ for both the individual believers and the corporate body as a whole.

We would expect to see true apostles being raised up again to break new ground and to begin to establish new expressions of the body, working in dynamic relationship with the other ministry gifts. True prophets who would bring words that come from the very heart of God for his people. Evangelists who carry the cutting-edge conviction of the Holy Spirit and who move in the super natural as the signs do follow their words and the teaching pastors who truly bring food from the Good Shepherd Himself, to build, nourish and sustain His flock in love. So that we might once again be able to say this for our own time and for our own community.

Then had the churches rest throughout all (add the name of your community here) and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.
Acts 9: 31

Amen

Footnotes

1. See Luke 1:17. The call of John the Baptist covers both the first and second coming of Christ (see Luke 3:17), and in our day we believe that this call once again does resonate throughout the world for those with ears to hear.

2. Zechariah 4: 10

3. We are drawing on Jesus' own metaphorical language here (see Matthew 9:17, Mark 2: 22, Luke 5 38 and John 15) and applying it to this verse.

4. See Deuteronomy 32: 14 for a scriptural reference for this

5. See Acts 15: 13-18, Amos 9: 12. 13 and 2 Samuel 6: 1-18 imagery.