



Part 2

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1 Introduction

Administration, within the context of the Kingdom of God and the church, is a spiritual gift. Whilst it shares some attributes with business administration the two should not be confused.

In **1 Cor 12**, Paul writes “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.....Now there are varieties of gift but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries and the same Lord. And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.....Now you are Christ’s body and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, **administrations**, various kinds of tongue” (NASB)

The word translated “administrations” in the New American Standard Version (NASB) is translated as “leadership” in the New Living Translation (NLT) and as “guidance” in the New International Version (NIV 2010).

The reason that such a range of words (administration, leadership and guidance, etc.) can be used in different translations becomes clear when we look at the actual Greek word that Paul uses – *Kubernesis*.

The term *kubernesis* would have been a familiar one to the readers of Paul’s letter and they would have automatically understood what it meant. It was a nautical term that described the steering of a ship; it meant to steer, guide or govern. The Greeks were a seafaring people. The quickest and most effective way of travelling around the Aegean and Mediterranean was by boat. However, this wasn’t without its problems which included:

- Bad weather
- Reefs, hidden rock formations and sand banks
- Tidal flows
- Pirates and hostile vessels
- Managing the crew!

An experienced helmsman was needed to steer a ship effectively to ensure that it arrived safely at its destination.

Another Greek seafaring word that is more familiar to us today is “apostle”. Apostle (*apostolos*) means “one who is sent forth”. It’s first found in seafaring language in reference to a fleet or to cargo ships being sent out. The term also came to apply to an individual who was “sent out” with a specific commission. Alexander the Great used the term apostle in this context when sending out emissaries for a specific purpose and with his express authority.

In the Gospels, the term apostle was used by Jesus when he personally commissioned the 12 disciples to proclaim the Good News to all the nations of the world. In commissioning them He:

- Sent them out
- Gave them His divine authority
- Commissioned them with a specific purpose – foremost of which was to build and establish the church.
- Designated them apostles so that they “might be with Him...” (**Mark 3:14**)

In other words, Jesus sent out the disciples in the same way that Alexander the Great would have sent out his “apostles”. The parallel doesn’t end there, though; when Alexander the Great sent out an apostle, he would typically be accompanied by a *kubernesis* whose task was to ensure that the apostle arrived at his destination. This would have been common knowledge to Paul’s readers; they would have understood that the apostle had been commissioned and sent by God for a specific purpose and that the *kubernesis* would work with the apostle to ensure the success of his commission.

In **Ephesians 4:11** Paul includes the apostolic gift as an equipping gift for the building up of the church. In **1 Cor 12**, Paul refers to apostles together with other ministry gifts including administration as necessary parts of the local church, required to ensure its health and maturity.

Paul expected the gift of administration (*kubernesis*) to be manifested in the local church. In this context, he used the word *kubernesis* to describe wise counsel and the knowledge and insight needed to order the affairs of the church. The gift of administration is required alongside the other gifts to provide planning, direction and leadership as part of a leadership team. The administrator must work in plurality with other leaders and ministries. The gift of administration helps others make things happen; it is a strategic gift that helps, equips and releases others into their callings. It entails planning, organising and supervision. However, it must be much more than this!

| 2 Kingdom Administration vs. Business Management

Good business administrators/managers exercise planning, organisation and supervisory skills. However, a good business manager won't necessarily make a good kingdom administrator, although a good kingdom administrator will always make a good business manager!

Understanding the reason why this is the case is crucially important if we are to avoid the mistake of assuming that business experience automatically qualifies a person for the role of *kubernesis*.

Business and Kingdom administration share many attributes. There is much that the church in general can learn from the world of business. However, business administration alone will never accomplish God's Kingdom purposes. The following are my 4 main reasons for this:

1. Kingdom administration requires divine anointing, not just learned skill or innate ability. A kingdom administrator is appointed by God, not by men (1 Cor 12:28)
2. Kingdom "success" is measured in a very different way to business success. The latter is defined in terms of the balance sheet, profit margins, market share and competitive advantage. The kingdom of God, however, is a "mustard seed" kingdom that is concerned with what people are and what they can become rather than what they do or achieve. By kingdom of the world standards, Jesus "lost" at Calvary: his small band of followers deserted Him, He left no organisation, no charitable foundation; He died in poverty, He didn't challenge and overturn the political authority of the Romans or the Jewish leaders; He hadn't even sealed a book deal! Instead, he willingly sacrificed Himself for the very people who put Him on the cross – **but** "Three days later, God vindicated His trust in the power of sacrificial love. He had carried out God's will and, by his sacrifice, defeated death and the forces of evil that hold this world in bondage"¹.

Businesses, in contrast, are driven by self-interest and are, by necessity, competitive. They are "kingdom of the world" entities and the kingdom of the world is characterised by its exercise of "power over" people. This is not to say that businesses are inherently bad; many are a force for good *within a kingdom of the world context*. The point is that business philosophies, methodologies and approaches will never, in and of themselves, get the job done when it comes to advancing the kingdom of God.

¹Boyd

3. Business administration is often associated with bureaucracy, particularly in the corporate environment. Corporate jargon, management fads and restructuring can mask a lack of actual delivery. The following are two examples of real corporate memos sent out to staff (i.e. these are not made up!):

“The Business Services Leadership Team will enhance the organisation in order to continue on the journey towards a Market Facing Organisation (MFO) model. To that end, we are consolidating the Object Management for Business Services into a cross strata team.”

“This change will allow us to better leverage our talent base in an area where developmental roles are under way and strategically focuses us toward the upcoming Business System transition where systems literacy and accuracy will be essential to maintain and to further improve service levels to our customer base going forward”²

Administration in the church should never result in bureaucracy. The objective of kingdom administration is not to perpetuate process or to provide people with employment; it should never stifle creativity or constrain ministry. Administration should add to ministry (**add-ministration**), enhancing the effectiveness and impact of the other spiritual gifts and ministries as they operate within the church.

4. A kingdom administrator must be like “the men of Issachar who understood the times and knew what Israel should do” (1 Chron 12:32).

An experienced sailor will be able to discern changes in the weather before they are apparent to others; in fact, an experienced sailor will always be looking to the future anticipating what will happen next. They will sense a new weather front coming in and will have made adjustments before the new weather actually arrives. In the church context, this requires wisdom, discernment and prophetic insight to understand the times and the promptings and leadings of the Holy Spirit. This can never be achieved through “good management” – only through prayerful and prophetic insight. There will be times of opportunity in the Spirit; these must be discerned and seized. The following quote from Shakespeare is apposite in this respect:

*There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.*

Julius Caesar, Act 4, Scene 3

² The Dilbert Principle; Scott Adams, Bantam Press

| 3 Jesus the Administrator

Jesus is the embodiment of administrative excellence. He does all things well. The following attributes are evident through Jesus' administration:

3.1. Delegation

In **Luke 9:10-17** we see Jesus administering a miracle with the feeding of five thousand men. Jesus didn't do it all himself – he practiced the art of delegation:

- By delegating, He helped the disciples to learn and stretch their faith. He presented the problem to the disciples rather than a solution and in so doing helped them to seek a solution themselves, involving them in the administration of a miracle
- He demonstrated to them that they could do it
- He showed them that he knew their hearts and understood them
- He communicated to them His heart and compassion for the people
- He saw opportunities that others would have missed. It would have been easy to overlook the boy with his loaves and fish. He saw the potential and applied faith and practical action together to provide a solution.

3.2. Planning Prophetically

In **Matthew 21:2-11** we see Jesus planning ahead – prophetically. He knew who He was, He knew scripture and He understood His destiny. He thought ahead to find a donkey and, again, used the disciples to procure one, thus involving them in the process rather than simply doing it Himself. Thinking and planning ahead in line with the prophetic vision that God has imparted to us is a key part of administration.

3.3. Seeing the small detail in the big picture

Jesus had the ability to see the significant, small detail in the big picture. This is apparent in **John 20: 1-10**. Peter and another disciple arrive at the tomb to find that Jesus' clothes have been folded up separately. The way that a person folded their clothes acted as their "signature". In a similar way, in Jewish culture the manner in which a napkin was folded at a table could indicate that the master was returning to the table or that he hadn't enjoyed his food – i.e. it conveyed meaning. In folding his own clothes in his distinctive manner, Jesus didn't overlook this small detail in the momentousness of the occasion. Small details are important!

3.4. The importance of relationship

Jesus frequently ate and drank with the disciples. In fact, he was accused of being a drunkard and a glutton by his detractors! He understood the importance of relationships and despite the demands upon Him He found time to spend with people. He understood the importance of eating with people and that when you do this you tend to engage at a deeper level.

He announced the baptism of the Holy Spirit over a meal table. After He rose from the grave, He appeared unexpectedly to the disciples on the shore of Galilee. They had been fishing all night and when they returned to shore they encountered Jesus ([John 21:1-4](#)). He had prepared a fire to cook breakfast and was waiting for them.

Administration is relational - ultimately, it's all about people. It's essential that we don't become consumed with tasks forgetting to make time for relationships.

3.5. Little things do make a difference

We need to be faithful with what we have today in order to see blessing tomorrow. God is a God of increase and He promises that if we are faithful in small matters He will give us more ([Luke 19:17](#)). We are called to be good stewards and the Administrator is a steward in the church. Good stewardship brings increase. The parable of the Talents ([Matt 25:14-30](#)) shows us that it's not the size of our gift or the responsibility given to us that's important - it's what we do with what we've been given. In the story, the first servant had been given twice as much as the second. However, the master says the same thing to both of them, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things." ([Matt 25:21-23](#)).

Attention to detail and the personal touch can make people feel valued and welcomed; it can set the tone for a meeting and can help facilitate an environment where the Holy Spirit can move more freely - i.e. it can enhance the effectiveness of the other ministry gifts.

3.6. Integrity

Jesus was a man of complete integrity. Even His detractors recognised this with some saying "teacher, we know you are a man of integrity" ([Mark 12:14](#)). Integrity must be at the heart of administration and should be evident in all that we do. Meeting the world's standards is an absolute minimum; we must go beyond this, demonstrating kingdom excellence in all things. This applies to all areas of church life. However, the two areas where churches are most susceptible to attack and accusation from the media and the world in general are finances and safeguarding. Transparency and accountability are extremely important in this regard. Paul notes in [2 Cor 8:20](#), following receipt of a generous offering, "We want to avoid any criticism in the way that we administer this liberal gift. We are

taking pains to do what is right not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of man”. It is not enough to know that God sees our hearts; we must act with transparency so that others can see the integrity of our actions.

| 4 Biblical examples of administrative excellence

There are a number of outstanding administrators within the Bible. Foremost amongst these are Joseph, Daniel, Nehemiah and, of course, Jesus.

In this section we will briefly look at some of the qualities and characteristics that set Joseph and Daniel apart as role models of administrative excellence.

4.1. Joseph

Joseph was a man:

1. Who was prepared to confront his peers and to be honest and forthright with people, despite criticism and personal attack ([Gen 37:2-4](#); [40:16-19](#))
2. Who received divine revelation and understanding ([Gen 37:7-9](#); [40:12-19](#); [41:21-32](#); [45:5-7](#))
3. Who was under authority ([Gen 37:13](#))
4. Who endured set-backs, adversity and harsh conditions with grace and faith ([Gen 37:23, 28 & 36](#))
5. Who was gifted and found favour with those in authority ([Gen 39:2-4](#); [20-23](#); [45:16-20](#))
6. Who maintained his integrity in the face of temptation and following personal loss and sustained suffering ([Gen 39:7-9](#); [41:52](#))
7. Who could be trusted to do the job in hand ([Gen 39:23](#))
8. Was bold and courageous ([Gen 41:14-16](#))
9. Who received wisdom and insight to know what should be done and how to accomplish it ([Gen 41:33-40](#))
10. Of action who was personally involved in overseeing and administering the work that needed to be done ([Gen 41: 46-49](#); [42:6](#))
11. Who controlled and managed his emotions ([Gen 42:24](#); [43:30-31](#))
12. Who was full of grace and mercy ([45:1-11](#))

4.2. Daniel

Daniel was a man:

1. Who was gifted and found favour with those in authority ([Dan 1:4, 9, 17-20](#); [2:46-49](#); [6:1-3, 14](#))

2. Who maintained his integrity at great risk and following personal loss and sustained suffering ([Dan 1:8-13](#))
3. Who received divine revelation and understanding ([Dan 1:17b](#); [2:19](#); [4:18](#); [7:1](#); [8:1, 19](#), [9:1-2](#), [21-22](#))
4. Who was full of wisdom, tact and diplomacy ([Dan 2:14-16](#), [36-38](#); [4:19b](#))
5. Who was bold and courageous ([Dan 2:16](#), [25-28](#); [4-19a](#), [27](#); [4:10](#))
6. Who persevered in prayer ([Dan 2:17-23](#); [9:2-3](#))
7. Who endured opposition, adversity and harsh conditions ([6:4-16](#))
8. Who identified himself with his people ([Dan 9:4-20](#))
9. Who was disciplined and determined ([Dan 10:2 & 12](#))
10. Who was consistent ([Dan 12:13](#))

4.3. Summing Up

Both Joseph and Daniel are excellent examples of kingdom administrators. Unsurprisingly, there are a number of parallels between their lives and ministries despite them living hundreds of years apart and in very different cultures. The following are some of the most notable parallels:

- Both men had an **anointing** that was evident to those in authority. In Daniel's case, it was notable that he not only survived a major regime change when the Persians conquered Babylon, but he thrived.
- Both were men who **heard from God**. In Daniel's case, it is clear that he was a man who spent much time in prayer and fasting, waiting on the Lord. We can reasonably surmise that the same was true of Joseph. What is certainly true is that both men received divine revelation, insight and wisdom; they saw beneath the surface of situations and were given wisdom to know how to respond.
- They were both **men of action** as well as men of prayer; they understood what needed to be done and demonstrated excellence in managing the work assigned to them. In Joseph's case this is evident through his management of the nation's grain supply during the seven years of plenty and the seven of famine; in Daniel's case, it is evident from the fact that he was appointed "chief satrap". The historian Tom Holland, in his book *Persian Fire*³, notes that a significant factor in the sustained success of the Persian Empire was the excellence of the administrative system that was established – a system managed by satraps. Daniel so distinguished himself through his "exceptional qualities that the king planned to set Daniel over the whole kingdom" ([Dan 6:3](#))
- Both men **faced opposition and hardship** over a sustained period. Joseph was in Egypt, the "land of his suffering" ([Gen 41:52](#)) for roughly 20 years before he was reunited with his family; Daniel experienced violent conquest

³ *Persian Fire*; Tom Holland, Doubleday

and exile at an early age. Their **faith, integrity and temperament** were proven in the face of adversity

- Despite opposition and hardship, both men also experienced **favour, blessing and increase**

Both were **bold and courageous** confronting difficult situations with candour, faith and grace.

5 Areas of administration

Before looking at areas of administration within the church, it's worth revisiting the biblical relationship between the administrator (*kubernesis*) and the apostle. As outlined earlier, an apostle is one commissioned and sent by God for a specific purpose and the *kubernesis* works with the apostle and other leaders and ministries to ensure the success of the commission.

In light of this, it's appropriate to look in more detail at the role and function of the apostle. Apostles are:

- Foundation builders (**Ephesians 2:20**).
- They initiate and coordinate the planting of local churches (**1 Corinthians 9:1-2**).
- They are spiritual fathers of spiritual fathers (**1 Corinthians 4:15**).

Ephesians 4:11-13 describes the function of an apostle (together with the prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) as:

- Equipping of God's people
- Edifying/ building-up the Church
- Bringing God's people into unity of the faith (note **Acts 2:42** – believers were devoted to the apostles' doctrine/teaching)
- Bringing God's people to maturity "attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ".

The apostolic role could be summarised as being that of an expert builder (**1 Corinthians 3:10**) and a caring parent (**1 Thessalonians 2:11-12**), being a spiritual father to church leaders.

Given the biblical relationship between the *kubernesis* (administrator) and the apostle, it is appropriate to expect that the administrator's priorities would reflect the apostle's commission – namely to build the church and to ensure spiritual oversight, doing this in conjunction with the leadership team (elders and ministries, etc. within the local church).

The following provides a brief overview of areas of administration within the local church. It's isn't an exhaustive list!

5.1. Facilities and resources

- **Finance** – ensuring planned and managed procurement, budget setting, appropriate financial management, reporting, control and transparency

- **Buildings and assets** - ensuring optimal investment and maintenance, etc. in order to best support church mission
- **Processes and procedures** - ensuring that the church can operate effectively with the minimum of bureaucracy whilst maintaining safety, security and appropriate control, etc.
- **Staff** - the management of staff to ensure clarity over roles and responsibilities, clear goals and objectives, effective performance, individual and team development and ongoing focus on mission.

5.2. Church Life

- **Envisioning** - ensuring that the church vision is clearly defined and imparted
- **Communication** - ensuring effective communication, engaging and involving people and maintaining relationships across the church family
- **Organisation** - ensuring that roles, responsibilities and requirements are clear and that those who serve do so motivated by love and passion rather than duty and obligation
- **Developing and equipping** - this includes facilitating the raising up of new leaders, providing the environment where gifts can be unlocked and where people are able to develop in their calling. It also entails facilitating the moving of the Holy Spirit.

5.3. Ministry and Kingdom advance

- **Enhancing ministry** - helping, equipping and releasing others to come into their calling
- **Communicating the apostle's doctrine** - ensuring unity of the faith established on the foundation of the apostles' doctrine (**Acts 2:42**)
- **Communicating the apostle's heart** - the administrator should also carry and convey the apostle's heart, representing the apostle and the leadership in word and action, communicating their passions and priorities
- **Developing and executing strategy** - The church exists to further the mission of the Kingdom. This requires Holy Spirit anointed strategic leadership
- **Planning for growth** - Ensuring that the church is prepared and geared up for growth ahead of time
- **Making things happen!** - turning vision into reality. Understanding not only what needs to be done but how to do it and making it happen. This will include galvanising others.

- **Maintaining right focus** – Jesus appointed apostles “that they might be with Him...” (**Mark 3:14**). The administrator should help the leadership team to do this, maintaining time spent in prayer and the word as a priority
- **“Tacking and Jibing”** – this is a sailing term that relates to the steering of a boat. The administrator, together with the church leadership team, should be attentive to the promptings of the Spirit and be adaptable and flexible in response.

| 6 Steering through storms and avoiding rocks!

A skilled *kubernesis* would anticipate and navigate through and around difficulties. The same must be true of a kingdom administrator as challenges will come.

6.1. Common Challenges

Various challenges will be encountered, some of which are common to all leaders. These challenges may include:

- Staying “in the Spirit” – fatigue, repetition, familiarity etc. can lead to the administrator becoming task orientated and working from their own strength rather than from a position of faith
- Godly handling of finances – we must be beyond reproach before God and men
- Dealing with opposition, criticism and attack
- Challenges arising from church growth – e.g. managing the transition from small church to large church culture
- Guarding the flock. This may on occasion require the exercise of discipline
- Leadership isolation and burn out.

6.2. Staying safe

- Ancient mariners navigated by the sun and stars. Prayer and the Word are our equivalent. Maintaining an intimate relationship with Jesus will in large measure determine the effectiveness of the administrator.
- The administrator must carry the heart of the apostle. Onesimus carried Paul’s heart, was regarded by Paul as a “son” and was useful to the kingdom. Previously he had, in Paul’s word’s, been useless! (**Philemon 10-12**)
- Labour with faith. “God’s work” (or corporate administration) is accomplished by faith (**1 Tim 1:4**)
- Plan prophetically. Like the original *kubernesis* at sea, the administrator must be aware of what’s happening “on deck” whilst also scanning the horizon, anticipating what’s to come and making provision for it – all under the guidance of the Holy Spirit
- Plan the use of finances. Budget, plan and prioritise the use of finance in accordance with the vision God has given. Ensure formal processes are in place with transparency and accountability.

Avoid isolation. Working in Godly submission as part of a team ensures accountability, protection and encouragement. The administrator must work in plurality.
