

3: LEADERSHIP

Life in a Different Kingdom

When Jesus returned to Heaven, He entrusted His followers to a small group of men with no formal qualifications to lead. From different backgrounds, it was Him whom they had in common, and from Him they had learned a model of leadership befitting God’s Kingdom which stood in stark contrast to that of the world around them.

ACTIVITY

How would you describe the different types of leaders we see today in the world?

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In this unit we shall consider the true character of leadership in God’s Kingdom.

BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

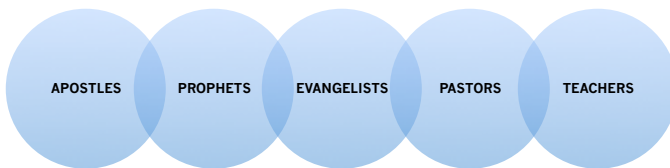
Let’s look at 5 Biblical requirements to lead God’s people.

- 1. Delegated** – All authority begins with the Father, which He gave to Jesus (Matt 28:18). Jesus delegated His authority to the apostles. They continued His ministry on earth by functioning in *His delegated authority*. They delegated aspects of this authority to the elders they appointed in the churches they established. Godly leadership functions in delegated authority.
- 2. Submitted** – Delegation of authority requires submission. Jesus Himself was a man under authority. He said that his Father was greater than he was (John 14:28) by which he meant that He was submitted to His Father (but not unequal to Him). He only did what he saw His Father doing (John 5:19). It was because of Jesus’ willing submission that His Father gave Him all authority (Matt 28:18). In order to lead in the delegated authority of Christ, leaders must be fully, and not selectively, submitted to Him.
- 3. Servants** – As well as being submitted to His Father, Jesus took on the *attitude* of a servant toward those He led. Jesus taught the apostles that in order to be great leaders they needed first to be great servants.

"You know that in this world kings are tyrants, and officials lord it over the people beneath them. But among you it should be quite different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must become your slave."
Matthew 20:25-27
- 4. Examples** – Jesus led by example in all things. He told the apostles to follow His example (John 13:13-17). Leadership in God’s Kingdom is modelled and not just taught! The apostle Paul urged Timothy to gain the respect of those in his care by first being an example to them (1 Tim 4:12). Paul himself was able to say ‘follow me as I follow Christ’ (1 Cor 11:1) to those he led.
- 5. Accountable** – Jesus sent out His apostles in pairs to preach the gospel. After Pentecost they continued this pattern of ministry, as well as appointing elders in plurality. Leaders must be accountable not only to God but to each other, which safeguards their integrity and enables them to function in variety of gifting and character.

ESSENTIAL MINISTRY TO THE CHURCH

The purpose of leadership is to 'present everyone fully mature in Christ Jesus' (Col 1:28). Upon His ascension Jesus gave 'ministry' gifts to His church whose purpose is to equip the church, *until* it reaches maturity, which is 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' Himself (Eph 4:8-13).



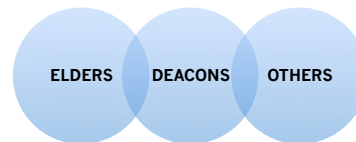
- **Foundational - Apostles & Prophets** are anointed with a revelation which uniquely enables them to build the foundations of the church (Eph 2:20, 3:5). This is God's pattern of leadership for the whole church - the Prophet speaking from a vision of God's heart for the church, functioning in partnership with the Apostle who like an architect oversees construction from this divine blueprint (1 Cor 3:10).

Throughout the NT we see God raising up further Apostles (Ac 14:14) and Prophets (Ac 11:27) to continue the work until the building is complete, when Jesus returns.

- **Equipping** - All of these ministry gifts are essential to the church because they prepare and equip all of us to be effective in our own ministry. The **Evangelists** helping us to reach out to the world, the **Pastors** showing us how to love and care for one another and the **Teachers** equipping us to feed ourselves from the Word of God and apply the Apostle's doctrine in our lives (2 Tim 2:2).

LOCAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Apostles are 'fathers' to local churches (1 Cor 4:15), entrusting the day to day care of each church to faithful men and women. Due to its governmental role Biblical eldership is undertaken by men (1 Tim 3:1ff).



Apostles appoint elders by the 'laying on of hands' conferring their authority to 'direct the affairs of the (local) church' (1 Tim 5:17) on their behalf.

Very soon after Pentecost the appointment of deacons (Acts 6:1-6) and recognition of other gifts and roles (Ro 12), was necessary to help the inevitable growth of a Spirit filled church.

Qualifications for both elders and deacons are based on both gift and character (1 Tim 3:1-13). The Apostle Paul describes in both his letters to the Thessalonians the ways leaders serve the church.

We are called to submit ourselves to Godly leadership to enable God's blessings to flow in our lives (Heb 13:17).



What types of leadership and ministry have you seen in action? How have they impacted your life and helped you to grow?

1 & 2 Thess

Praying

Modeling

Equipping

Defending

Loving

Labouring

Feeding

Encouraging

Comforting

Urging

Watching

Instructing

Warning

Teaching

Exhorting

Correcting

Confronting

Rescuing

LEADERSHIP – KEY POINTS

- The ascended Christ has sent ministries to build up the church and help bring it to maturity.
- Local church life is governed by elders, who work with other leaders to help oversee and care for the church family.
- Godly leaders help the Church experience and extend the goodness of God's Kingdom.
- We can submit to accountable servant leaders who have delegated authority over our lives.