



NEXT

DISCOVERING, DEVELOPING,
AND DEPLOYING FUTURE
LEADERS FOR GOD'S CHURCH

MATT ROGERS

Copyright © 2015 by the Send Network Team. All rights reserved.

Published by The Send Network

4200 North Point Parkway, Alpharetta, GA 30022

www.sendnetwork.com

Contents

Preface	4
1: Biblical Foundation	8
2: Discovering Future Leaders	14
3: Developing Future Leaders	23
4: Depolying Leaders	35
Conclusion	46
Bibliography	47

PREFACE

“You ought to be a pastor one day.”

These words, which we meant to be an encouragement, sounded quite strange. I certainly did not feel like a pastor. In fact, I felt like I had no clue what I was doing.

God saved me nine months before I was serving on my first church staff in Greenville, South Carolina. I had not experienced a clear call to ministry that I had heard so many others talk about. I had not even sought out this position at the church. All I knew at that point was that I loved Jesus, He loved His church, and therefore I wanted to give my life away in service to others. I was attending a church that needed someone to lead the student ministry and so I did. I was teaching the Bible three times a week, planning and leading events and trying to love and serve those God brought my way. In all honesty, I was not very good at any of that. I remember vividly sitting in my truck in the church parking lot and listening to a cassette tape of Tommy Nelson from Denton Bible Church teach the Bible. I would take notes on the sermon and run in and try to teach it to the students before I forgot what he said.

Over the next eight years I continued to serve on two church staffs. My responsibilities grew and in turn I learned many great lessons about ministry. I grew as a leader, a teacher and a pastor. It was an experience

of trial-by-fire—I had to mature or I would never survive in ministry. The problem was that during these years I was untethered from any type of intentional plan for discipleship as a minister and leader. As a result my growth was always stunted. I knew there were clear defects in my character, my teaching and my counsel to those in need. I wanted to grow, but I was largely figuring out what to do in isolation. Unfortunately, as the years went on I became more and more confident in my abilities and too proud to admit that I needed help.

This all changed in the summer of 2005 when I moved to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. I went to seminary to get an education, and, in God’s kindness, I fell in love with the local church. My family joined North Wake Church in Wake Forest, North Carolina, and for the first time I found a church with an intentional plan to take young leaders, develop them to maturity and send them into strategic ministry in the local church. I was hooked. Over the next two years I had mature leaders meet with me regularly, assess my character, watch me lead, listen to me teach, train me to think rightly about the church and give me meaningful feedback on my development. This season of development culminated with my pastors affirming my qualification for pastoral ministry and their assistance in finding a strategic ministry position that fit my giftedness and passions. These two years were, hands down, the most significant period of ministry formation I have ever experienced, and they paved the way for my current role as a pastor at The Church at Cherrydale in Greenville, SC.

These two seasons of my life exemplify the challenges faced by young leaders throughout North America. The passive, trial-by-fire, model of leadership development is, sadly, the most common model for those who since some type of call to ministry in the local church. They may express this desire to church leaders who encourage them to go to Bible college or seminary in order to train for church ministry. All the while they are often given positions of leadership in the church where they are expected to do pastoral ministry, most often in positions like student ministry. The demands on the church and the other pastors often

preclude meaningful investment in these young and developing leaders. There is simply too much to do – sermons to write, counseling to be done, and a staff to lead. As long as the young leader does not make a big mistake then all is well. And, after all, the leader is being developed for ministry through their classroom training at seminary, right?

Wrong.

The reality is that leaders are often not being developed well. They are learning valuable information in the classroom, but their growth is limited without a context for applying this information in the local church. They do not simply need hermeneutical principles, but they need to apply these principles to sermons they preach before their congregation and get strategic feedback from their pastors. They do not simply need to learn what the Bible has to say about divorce and remarriage but they need to apply this teaching to a counseling situation with a marriage in crisis. They do not simply need to learn apologetical truths for effective evangelism, but they need to apply these truths to equip others to live all of life on mission as well.

This can only happen if churches take the mantle of responsibility for discovering, developing and deploying future leaders in the church and for the church. Evangelical literature is replete with books that provide leadership principles for existing leaders. What these books often lack, however, is a thorough discussion on the process of finding new leaders, training them to maturity, and sending them to strategic mission in the church. The task of developing new leaders will not come easy, as the age and relative maturity of such individuals and the complexity of leadership in the church is often a toxic combination.

The task of this short book is to analyze the Pastoral Epistles (1, 2 Timothy and Titus) for evidence as to how Paul went about the task of developing new leaders, specifically in the lives of Timothy and Titus. The Pauline example will then be used to provide implications for the way in which new leaders can be trained and sent by churches today.

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

The task of leadership development and deployment is a vital catalyst in reaching the vast harvest set before the church. Jesus himself demonstrates the importance placed on leadership when, after lamenting over the brokenness of the city of Jerusalem, he exhorts his disciples to “pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into the harvest field (Matthew 9:37-38).”¹ Laborers were the essential means by which Jesus sought to minister to a sin-saturated world.

The modern church looks out over a similarly vast harvest field, and it may squander this stewardship without fervent prayers for God to raise up leaders and active engagement in the process of leadership development. Chuck Lawless notes that the lack of evangelistic fruitfulness of the modern church can be traced to a number of causes, but “at the core of most concerns is a singular pressing issue: a failure in leadership.”² This failure of leadership can be traced to the fact that many current leaders do not have an intentional plan for training future leaders. As a result the church is increasingly dependent on fewer and fewer leaders, without a clear process by which new leaders are sent into strategic ministry.

This lack of leadership is not only true in North America: around the

¹ All Scripture taken from the English Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.

² Charles Lawless, “Paul and Leadership Development” in *Paul’s Missionary Methods: In His Time and Ours* (eds. Robert L. Plummer and John Mark Terry; Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2012), 216.

world missionaries are noting a “critical shortage of Biblically trained leaders.”³ James Engel and William Dryness write that “leadership development is today’s greatest priority.”⁴ Addressing this priority will require great care and intentionality since the duties of leaders in the church “are so exacting and complex as to demand for their accomplishment men possessed of the highest qualities of mind and spirit, who also have received a technical training for their special work.”⁵ The void of leaders and the complexity of the task necessitates that the church must act. Benjamin Merkle, writing about the need for leadership development, argues that it is “perhaps the most neglected [task] and therefore one that must be emphasized in the local church.”⁶ Pastors should labor to do the hard work of equipping others to do the work of the ministry in order to cause the body to grow (Ephesians 4:11). Amidst the host of other matters that consume a pastor’s attention, it is easy to lose sight of the vital work that is involved in discipling future pastors. Merkle laments the reality that many pastors undertake vital kingdom work year after year “but, when all is said and done, they have effectively trained and equipped nobody to take their place. It is a sign of an unhealthy church if there is no one in the congregation who can step in the gap and fill the pulpit whenever the pastor is gone.”⁷

This task must drive the church to God’s authoritative word for timeless principles for leadership development rather than simply consulting a host of pragmatic tools designed towards this end. Other than Jesus himself, the apostle Paul serves as the exemplar of leadership development recorded in the Scriptures. As a towering figure in the Scriptures, his life provides the natural context for an analysis of the process of developing future leaders. While the entire Pauline

³ Paul McKaughan, Dellana O’Brien and William O’Brien, *Choosing a Future for U.S. Missions* (Monrovia: MARC, 1998), 65.

⁴ James F. Engel and William A. Dryness. *Changing the Mind of Missions: Where have we Gone Wrong?* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2000), 105.

⁵ Charles R. Erdman, *The Work of the Pastor* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1924), 4.

⁶ Benjamin Merkle, *40 Questions About Elders and Deacons* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008), 94.

⁷ Merkle, *40 Questions*, 93-94.

corpus provides evidence of his work of developing leaders, the Pastoral Epistles (PE) demonstrate a heightened focus on this task. They speak not only to the process of mentoring Christians in general, but more specifically to the task of mentoring future leaders for the church. Before considering the evidence found in the PE, one must first assess the life of the recipients and the occasion for the writing of these letters.

TIMOTHY

The PE were written to two of Paul's primary traveling companions: Timothy and Titus. Timothy was the son of a believing, Jewish mother and a Greek father. He came to faith at some point early in Paul's missionary travels, perhaps during his first missionary journey to Lystra, Iconium and Derbe (Acts 14:6-23). When Paul returned to the city on his second missionary journey, Timothy had developed a reputation among the church for his character and faithfulness, which motivated Paul to make the clear choice and take Timothy along on his future missionary ventures (Acts 16:1-3).

Paul and Timothy traveled together throughout Asia Minor beginning in A.D. 49. In an effort to more effectively engage in his mission labors, Paul had Timothy circumcised (1 Corinthians 9:19).⁸ Shortly thereafter, the traveling team faced opposition in Berea and Paul was forced out of town (Acts 17:14-15). This began what would become the prototypical way in which Paul would utilize young Timothy: he left Timothy and Silas behind to continue the ministry he had started in the city through the local church.

From there, the team assembled again and traveled together to Corinth (Acts 18:1-17), and Paul sent Timothy back to the church at Thessalonica to check on the church's health (1 Thessalonians 3:1-3). Timothy brought Paul an encouraging report (1 Thessalonians 3:6), which prompted the apostolic team to write two letters, which bear the names of "Paul, Silas, and Timothy" (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1). After leaving Corinth, Paul also sent Timothy back

⁸ Eckhard Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission* Vol. 2, (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004), 1119.

to serve the church there and addressed the problems that were evident among God's people (1 Corinthians 4:17). This process served as vital preparation for the work that would lie ahead in Ephesus as "Paul had once again sent Timothy into a difficult situation, to a church where sin was rampant and Paul's authority was under question, a situation similar to that which would develop in Ephesus."⁹ Years later, Paul would send Timothy to the church at Ephesus, where was serving when he received the letters known as 1 and 2 Timothy.

On his third mission journey, Paul traveled to Ephesus where he wrote the letter to the church at Rome along with Timothy (Romans 16:21). Paul left Ephesus and went to Macedonia to meet up with Titus, who brought him an encouraging report about the repentance of the Corinthian church (2 Corinthians 7:13-15). From there they all went together in an attempt to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost, stopping once again in Miletus, a port city in Ephesus (Acts 20:18-35). The stern warning and teary farewell to the Ephesian elders show "many similarities to the Ephesian situation that are evident years later when Paul writes the PE."¹⁰ Paul warns the leaders that they need to "pay careful attention" to the flock knowing that wolves are likely to invade from outside and inside the church. Shortly thereafter Paul is arrested and taken to Rome to await sentencing. Timothy was with Paul in Rome, likely imprisoned himself, and "Either before the trial or after the trial, Paul sent Timothy to Ephesus to deal with the Ephesian heresy, which by now was in full force."¹¹ Timothy served as an apostolic delegate over the churches in that region of Asia after Paul's re-arrest and was in this location that he received the PE from Paul.

TITUS

Titus was also a traveling companion and missionary partner of the apostle Paul. While his name is not stated in the book of Acts, he is mentioned in numerous places in Paul's letters (2 Corinthians 2:13;

⁹ William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 1.

¹⁰ Ibid., lii.

¹¹ Ibid., lxi.

7:6, 13, 14; 8:6, 16, 23; 12:18; Galatians 2:1, 3; 2 Timothy 4:10; Titus 1:4). He was evidently a Gentile convert who worked alongside Paul and Barnabus, beginning in Antioch in 45-47 A.D. He traveled with Paul to Jerusalem in 47 A.D. in an effort to provide famine relief for the church (Galatians 2:3) and continued to be active in missionary labors throughout Illyconium. Together with Timothy, he played a significant role in the development of the church in Corinth (2 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 1:19), and some even believe that Titus may have carried the second letter to the church (2 Corinthians 2:12-13; 7:6). It is in Corinth that Timothy and Titus likely met and served together.

Pinpointing Titus's arrival in Crete is more tenuous due to a lack of Biblical evidence for how this process happened. Most scholars conclude that Paul and Titus visited Crete following Paul's first Roman imprisonment (thus outside of the narrative of Acts) and established the church there.¹² After the founding of the church, Paul left Titus in Crete to "put in order" the developing church (Titus 1:5).

PASTORAL EPISTLES

Paul wrote three short letters, historically known together as the pastoral epistles, to his young protégés, Timothy and Titus. 1 Timothy and Titus were likely written after Paul's release from Roman imprisonment while he visited other churches in the area of Asia Minor. 1 Timothy was meant to be read by Timothy and the church since it was an "ad hoc document addressing specific issues."¹³ Through this letter, Paul publically transferred authority to Timothy in his leadership of the church and his conflict with those bringing harm to the church.¹⁴

These same themes, addressed in similar language, appear in the letter to Titus. The churches situations were different: one was an existing church fraught with conflict, and another was a young church seeking to establish itself.¹⁵ Titus, and the church at Crete, did not have

¹² Lea and Griffin, 1, 2 *Timothy, Titus*, 276.

¹³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, lviii.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, lix.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 386.

the same benefit of Paul's extended teaching ministry as did the church in Ephesus. The needs, however, were quite similar. Most believe the letters were written by Paul at virtually the same time.¹⁶

The second letter to Timothy was written due to the fact that Paul knows he is "already being poured out" (2 Timothy 4:6-7). He writes from prison and uses this letter as an opportunity to encourage and exhort young Timothy to faithfulness "in the face of his spiritual father's imminent death" (2 Timothy 1:8, 17; 2:9).¹⁷ Lawless notes that, "The apostle was ready to die, and he would not miss his opportunity to teach his mentee about living and dying."¹⁸ Together these three letters provide rare insight into the way in which Paul lead developing leaders in their care of God's church.

PASTORAL EPISTLES AS A MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

These three letters, due to their occasional and personal nature, present a series of overlapping themes regarding leadership development. Paul did not intend to build a holistic philosophy of leadership development in these letters. However, by piecing together the evidence of the letters, one can discern the way in which he went about this vital process, both before sending Timothy and Titus and once they were in Ephesus and Crete. In these letters Paul clearly and consistently delineates a number of refrains that are vital for developing leaders, which will be analyzed below.

¹⁶ Ibid., lxii.

¹⁷ Ibid., lxiii.

¹⁸ Lawless, *Development*, 230.

2

DISCOVERING FUTURE LEADERS

Future leaders do not simply appear, they are discovered. Consider the typical process by which the church is made aware of future leaders. A young man is a vital part of the youth group at his local church where he uses his gifts, passions and abilities to serve his peers. At summer camp during his junior year of college he responds to the invitation by indicating that he feels called to vocational ministry. The camp pastor prays with him and informs his youth pastor who in turn tells the church that his guy has been “called to vocational ministry”.

What does the church do then? All too often the answer is “not much”. The church has often been passive in the discovery process and they will continue to be passive in fanning into flame the calling and giftedness of this young leader. The pastor may meet with him and help him make a decision about which Bible college or seminary he should attend and then send him off with the blessing of the church – often to never see or hear from him again.

What if the church were far more active in the process? The church provides fertile soil for the discovery of future leaders, as evidenced by both Timothy and Titus. These leaders were forged in the context of the local church community, and from this body, were recognized as those who may lead the church in the future. Similarly, the church is the best context for discovering future leaders today. As Phil Newton argues, it is due time that churches take back the primary mantle of discovering

future leaders and investing in them throughout their maturation process.¹⁹

ACTIVE DISCOVERY

For this to happen, current leaders who, like Paul, are in a position of authority, must assume the responsibility for both recognizing and exhorting young leaders to the vital work of church leadership. The discovery of new leaders is not the passive byproduct of time and chance, but should be on the forefront of the agenda of all current pastors. Colin Marshall and Tony Payne write that “We shouldn’t sit back and wait for people to ‘feel called’ to gospel work, any more than we should sit back and wait for people to become disciples of Christ in the first place. We should be active in seeking, challenging and testing suitable people to be set apart for gospel work.”²⁰ They continue:

...if the current generation of pastors and ministers is responsible for calling, choosing, and setting apart the next generation, we need to be constantly on the lookout for the sort of people with the gifts and integrity to preach the word and pastor God’s people. And there is some incredible ministry talent in our churches—people with extraordinary gifts in leadership, communication and management; people with vision, energy, intelligence, and an entrepreneurial spirit; people who are good with people, and who can understand and articulate ideas persuasively. If these people are also godly servants of Christ who long for his kingdom, then why not headhunt them for a life of ‘recognized gospel ministry’?²¹

Like an athletic scout, pastors should serve as “talent scouts” seeking those who exemplify the fruit of God’s Spirit. This is essential work for

¹⁹ Phillip Newton, *Local Church Leadership Development: Its effects and Importance on Church Planting and Revitalization*, (PhD Dissertation, May 2013, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary), xvii.

²⁰ Marshall and Payne, *Trellis*, 134.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 141-42.

the future of the church in North America and must not be neglected due to the host of other demands that vie for a pastor's attention.²² But, if pastors are not seeking out leaders, then who will?

The process of discovering new leaders is a challenging process in and of itself. It is complicated by the fact that we are prone to look for the wrong things. Natural charisma, personal charm or an extroverted personality can immediately thrust a potential leader to the front of the pack. While these characteristics are not bad, they may blind us to the qualities that we should look for in future leaders.

LOOK FOR NEW BELIEVERS

The biblical evidence for the conversion of Timothy is sparse. We know that he was raised in a home where he was taught about God and his work in the world. This "sincere faith" that resided in Timothy's grandmother and mother was now found in Timothy himself (2 Timothy 1:5). The birth of this sincere faith is often linked to Paul's missionary work in Timothy's hometown and many note that the strong paternal language used by Paul throughout his letters would indicate that Timothy came to faith as the result of his ministry. Whatever the timing, the result is clear – Timothy trusted in Jesus and his life was radically changed such that he would relinquish all that he knew and travel with Paul's roaming band of missionaries.

This is often true of those whom God saves. They are hungry for the truth of the gospel, passionate to share their faith with others, and willing to give their lives away to the mission of God. Sadly it is often the case that the longer a person is a Christian the fewer relationships they have with those far from God and the less willing they are to make radical sacrifices for the mission of God. This means that pastors should seize the opportunity to challenge new believers to consider how God is calling them to steward their lives for the sake of his mission – which may include leadership in the church.²³ Like Timothy, new converts

²² Owen Strachan, "Pastoral Discipleship," *9Marks*, n.p. [cited 8 September 2012]. Online: <http://www.9marks.org/journal/pastoral-discipleship>

²³ J.D Payne, *Discovering Church Planting: An Introduction to the Whats, Whys, and Hows of*

are often those that demonstrate an insatiable hunger for the Word, an aptitude for leadership, and are still relationally connected to many of those who are far from Christ.

We must be careful that we do not make the concept of “calling to ministry” some type of second rung on the spiritual maturity ladder. We can subtly communicate that God saves all people but then calls the mature ones among us to vocational ministry and leaves all the rest to simply go to church. The reality is that all those whom God saves He also sends. While their may be varying roles and leadership responsibilities, we must communicate that all disciples are called to make disciples, which necessitates some level of leadership for all of God’s people.

New disciples are ripe for this type of appeal. We are given a unique opportunity to challenge them to consider leadership from the early days of their faith journey. Paul certainly reminded Timothy to not appoint new converts to leadership (1 Timothy 3:6) this need not mean that we should not challenge young believers to consider leadership at some point in the future. It also does not mean that we should have an expectation that new believers have to be a Christian for a decade, have taken 30 Bible study classes, have a master’s degree or have no recognized character defects before they are appointed to leadership. Young leaders can be deployed into strategic ministry far quicker through an intentional development process such as the one outlined below.

LOOK FOR GODLY CHARACTER

What we do know about the choice of Timothy for leadership in the church was that by the time Paul returned to Timothy’s hometown he was already well spoken of by the church there (Acts 16:1-3). This would indicate that Timothy at observable traits that caused him to stand out and made him a clear choice for the apostle Paul. Paul’s later instructions about the choice of elders/pastors for the church would

indicate that he placed a high value of discernable character in the life of a leader who should be “above reproach” in all things (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-7).

At an early stage, however, it is foolish to assume that a leader must be above reproach in all things prior to be invited into an intentional leadership development process. What would be the point of the development were that to be the case? Leaders need to have exemplary character prior to appointment as a leader in the church, but we should expect these future leaders to be a bit raw at the outset. We would expect this reality to be heightened if the person in question is a new convert. They are going to need time to understand the way in which the gospel exposes their sinful hearts and provides the power for them to overcome the sin that so easily entangles (Hebrews 12:1-2). The development process outlined in the next chapter would provide the Time necessary for the future leader to do just that.

So how would you recognize godly character at an early stage?

Change. Repentance. Growth.

These marks provided a metric for discerning the fruit of the gospel that one can expect to continue in the life of the leader. A person who is growing in understanding and applying the gospel to his/her life should be marked by “the fruit of repentance” (Matthew 3:8). Rather than perfection, we should observe a clear brokenness over sin, a trust in the gospel and a battle for holiness.

Here’s what I mean. Take Amy. She has recently come to faith in Christ and is known to passionately share the gospel with the mom’s who live in her neighborhood. But the reality is that she is a gossip. Before she met Christ she was a busybody who thrived on knowing all of the juicy rumors about her peers and being the first one to share that information with others. Since her conversion this process has continued. She genuinely loves her neighbors now and wants them to come to faith in Christ. But she is over-zealous and her passion bubbles over in sinful actions at times, including posting things on social media

about the sinful behaviors of her friends. Is Amy disqualified from leadership in the church?

No. At least not at the outset. If Amy were already appointed as a leader in the local body then we might conclude that her actions necessitated removing her from leadership. But, at the early stages, we need to give her time to grow in her application of the gospel and evangelistic witness. The raw material in Amy's life is compelling – she seems to love Jesus and genuinely love her neighbors and desire them to come to faith. We should honor and affirm these passions while mentoring her to apply the gospel to the way that she speaks of others. We would want to watch how he responds when she makes a mistake and speaks ill of her neighbors. Does she rationalize and defend these behaviors or does she respond in brokenness and repentance? Does she continue to require someone to point out these actions to her or does she grow to recognize her mistakes on her own? Does she have the maturity to go to those whom she has offended and repent and seek restoration?

If so, then we should expect that the longer she walks with Jesus the more her character would be refined. She may not be exemplary in her character now, but given an intentional development plan she could be before she is appointed as a leader.

LOOK FOR PROVEN FAITHFULNESS

The fact that Timothy was well spoken of by the church would also indicate that he was faithful in his service among the people of God through loving, caring, and serving. This type of active ministry would mark him as the type of leader that Paul would take with him as he embarked on mission to unreached peoples. Likewise, Paul's continued deployment of Timothy and Titus to care for difficult churches would indicate that these men had proven faithfulness in leadership among the people of God.

This type of proven faithfulness can only be observed over a period of time among the church. This is why an intentional development plan

in the church is so vital. Leaders are not leaders if no one is willing to follow them. Sheep recognize shepherds. They see them lead and want to follow.

How would you recognize this type of leadership at an early stage? You would look for people who naturally lead without the label. This will likely start with humble service to others. Future leaders will begin to enter into burden-bearing relationships with others inside and outside the church (Galatians 6:1-2). They will love, pray, listen and serve without being asked to do so. They care – and people begin to see that.

They also begin to find meaningful ways to use their gifts to serve the body. They see a need in the ministry of the church and do what they can to fill the gap. This will begin in small, almost unrecognizable ways. They won't be teaching or leading a small group, but they will be showing up early to greet guests on Sunday mornings, providing a ride to small group for someone new to the church, volunteering to serve at various big events that the church offers and things of this sort. When they hear of people struggling with sin or suffering, they will seek to find ways to serve them and meet tangible needs. At first, they may not know what to do to help, but they will do what they can. They may make mistakes or say the wrong things, but this is to be expected for young leaders. Intentional training to direct raw passion towards increasingly fruitful ministry and mission.

LOOK FOR PASSIONATE DESIRE

Which leads to the last trait you should be looking for in developing future leaders – passionate desire. The type of leader that would leave everything and follow the apostle Paul is one who is marked by an all-consuming passion for the mission of God. Anyone who would be willingly (or crazy enough) to lead among challenging church situations such as Corinth and Ephesus must be willing to trust God and take faith-fueled risks for His mission.

This means that future leaders will often have a desire for more.

Seeking out leaders does not mean leaders should not self-identify. Paul notes that men should aspire to the office of elder (1 Timothy 3:1). This is not necessarily a prideful posturing, but rather the outworking of a God-given passion in the heart of a young leader. They aspire to lead and serve.

For this reason, future leaders will often make their desires to lead known. They will call you with questions, send emails seeking counsel, or make suggestions on the way in which ministry could be improved. They may even come on too strong at times or volunteer to serve in ways that exceed their maturity at that time. This need not deter you from inviting them into a more formal development process. Their passion can be often be channeled into meaningful ministry with the proper mentorship and training. At this point what you are looking for are humble servants who are faithful (albeit not perfect) at the work God has put before them. Your job is to partner with them to see them developed into men and women who can lead among God's people.

New Believers...

Godly Character...

Proven Faithfulness...

Passionate Desire...

This is the recipe for a future leader. It is the responsibility of the pastors and leaders of the church to seek out men and women who meet these qualifications and call them out to greater levels of leadership. In many ways this simple acts is a beautiful gift of grace.

Years after I began in vocational ministry I remember sitting in my pastor's office one day and hearing him say something like "Matt, I can see that God has called you to serve him as a pastor. You have served us faithfully here but I believe it is time for you to go plant a church of your own. I believe in you and will fully support you in this process." These words were some of the most important, and meaningful, words I had ever heard. Here was a mature pastor validating my ministry. He

thought I should lead and this word of encouragement and exhortation provided the affirmation that I needed to take the next step.

As pastors and leaders we have the ability to speak words of affirmation into the lives of a host of potential leaders who may doubt their ability to lead God's people. They may easily loose heart or grow weary in serving. They may wonder if anyone even notices. Our invitation into an intentional development process may be the very thing they need to fan into flame the fire that the Lord has started in their hearts. We can say that we see, we notice, and we believe in them. Then we demonstrate this trust by taking the next step and developing the raw material in a leader's life into the type of man or woman who is ready to lead.

3

DEVELOPING FUTURE LEADERS

It was the worst day of football practice of my entire life. At some point during the grueling process of preseason two-a-days our varsity squad at played a friendly scrimmage with another school from across town. Apparently, as I was soon to learn first hand, the boys played a subpar game and got pummeled. The cause, according to the coaches, was that the team did not know how to tackle. Everyone was scared to hit anyone. We weren't tough enough (or so the story went).

I played offensive left guard. What? You don't know what that position is? Right. That's because no one knows what that position is or does. They block. That's all. They know the snap count, take a couple of steps in any direction, and attempt to prevent a 300-lb. lineman or blitzing linebacker from killing their quarterback. They never touch the ball. Never.

Now, of course, I wanted to touch the ball. Those guys were important. Plays were designed for them. Coaches encouraged them. The announcer called their names. They scored touchdowns. And the fans, and more importantly, the cheerleaders, took notice. I wanted to get the ball. I wanted to hear my name called. And I wanted everyone to notice.

And I got my wish that on that faithful day in practice. Because the team had been so poor in tackling the coaches decided to teach us a lesson. We would line up in two lines facing one another fifteen yards

apart. In the middle was a cone. The first person in one line, regardless of that person's position, got to carry the ball and run towards the cone. The first person in the opposing line was supposed to tackle them. This would be our assignment for the next two hours.

I learned a valuable lesson that day. I thought I wanted the ball in my hands but I realized very quickly that I was ill prepared to carry the ball. I was slow. I had no ability to juke a defender. I did not know how to take a hit and hold onto the ball. All I did was run, painfully slowly, to the cone and awaiting a crushing blow by my fellow teammates. After two hours I swore that I never wanted to carry the ball again.

Developing future leaders is much like my experience in high school. The discovery process may alert you to a number of future leaders in the church. They love Jesus and are passionate about the gospel. They love people and want to see many come to faith. They are discerning their spiritual gifting and are beginning to use that to cause the body of Christ to grow. They want to ball and they often think they have what it takes to lead effectively...until they get hit.

If we are not careful we can take passionate future leaders and throw them into the game without any process of development. At first they may thrive and grow. But over time the weight of leadership in the church will expose their weaknesses. They will get hit and many not get back up.

The answer is to develop leaders into those who can carry the ball day in and day out without being crushed under the weight of leadership among the people of God. The apostle Paul exemplified the process of leadership development throughout his work with Timothy and Titus and though his example we can discern a clear path for leadership development in our day as well.

TIME SPENT WITH A GODLY MENTOR

Leadership development is not simply inviting a future leader to learn certain information and skills, rather it is about inviting the leader into

a long-term relationship with a current leader. This relationship will prove as the primary context whereby the leader's life is transformed. The nature of this relationship should follow the Pauline paradigm by inviting future leaders to "follow me as I follow Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Paul's practice illustrates that the development of future leaders will require a close relationship with an existing leader in the church who can serve as a mentor in their development. Mentorship in the church must look different than teaching in the church. Mentorship, according to Elmer and Townes, happens when a more experienced pastor (mentor) works with a younger pastor (protégé) in areas of both public and private discipline and leadership.²⁴ Prime and Begg feel that "only a 'relational approach' to training can give trainees the accountability they need to best prepare for ministry."²⁵ It will require existing leaders to invite younger leaders into their lives, showing them the way in which the gospel shapes and informs all of life.²⁶

The result is that a development process for future leaders is going to take time. By the time Paul wrote the PE he had invested years of ministry in Timothy and Titus. There is simply no substitute for the cumulative effect of observation that happens over an extended period of time. Guinness notes that the development of other leaders takes time:

While they demand a seven-year apprenticeship, for the purpose of learning to make a shoe, or an axe, they suppose the system of Providence, together with the numerous, and frequently abstruse, doctrines and precepts, contained in the Scriptures, may all be comprehended without learning, labor,

²⁴ Duane Elmer and Lois McKinney, eds. *With an Eye on the Future: Development and Mission in the 21st Century - Essays in Honor of Ted Ward* (Monrovia: Marc, 1996), 210.

²⁵ Derek J. Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor: Understanding Our Calling and Work* (Chicago: Moody, 2004), 204.

²⁶ Robert Coleman's classic work *The Master Plan of Evangelism* is a useful catalyst for relational disciple-making. Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1963), 21.

or time.²⁷

Through “prolonged exposure” to the church and to the mentor, a future leader can be developed into a God-honoring servant of the church.²⁸

Current leaders should not think of leadership development has another task to place on their already crowded schedule. If so, leadership development will not happen. Instead leaders should seek out meaningful ways to involve developing leaders into the practices that you will have to do anyway. For example, pastors who desire to excel at developing young leaders should seek to take future leaders along on hospital visits and into pastoral counseling sessions. They should also seek to process decisions out loud with these future leaders. For example, they may spend time talking with the future leader about a critical decision the church is facing or about a challenging announcement that they are going to have to make in a future membership meeting. This is not so much for the benefit of the current pastors. He likely does not need the counsel of a 20-year-old intern. But the intern does need to here the process by which the pastor is making the decision so that he knows how to respond when he is faced with a similar situation at some point in the future.

EXEMPLARY MODEL OF A MATURE DISCIPLE

Such leadership entrustment was not done in isolation; rather it came on the heels of the lengthy investment of a host of mature disciples in the lives of Timothy and Titus. They each gave evidence of a “gospel saturated atmosphere of their home churches” and were the beneficiaries of Paul’s personal investment in their lives. Paul did not simply invite them into his life, but served as a faithful model of the grace of God demonstrated in the life transformation of a rebellious sinner. He recounts his story of grace noting

²⁷ Os Guinness, *Fit Bodies Fat Minds: Why Evangelicals Don't Think and What to Do about it*: (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 47.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 196.

...though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost (1 Timothy 1:13-15).

Mounce states, “Paul recites his spiritual legacy, not in a self-serving way but in a way that shows his perseverance as an encouragement to Timothy.”²⁹ For this reason, young developing leaders such as Timothy and Titus could “follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 1:13). Paul notes that they have done so, indicating that Timothy has followed his teaching, conduct, aim in life, faith, patience, love, steadfastness and even persecutions (2 Timothy 3:10-11). In this way, Paul served as a holistic model of Christ-likeness and specifically the virtue of faithfulness in the midst of suffering, a virtue Timothy and Titus would need to model. Van Gelder, Zschile, and Roxburgh note that this is the mark of “participatory leaders,” who make it a priority to set an example to the flock and to subsequent leaders (1 Peter 5:3).³⁰ Edmund Clowney demonstrates that this is a mark of effective leaders: they “walk on ahead” of their people and show them the way.³¹ Such modeling was a fundamental means of leadership development seen in the life of Paul.

Leadership development serves as a fundamental means of sanctification for existing pastors and leaders. The demands of ministry weigh heavy on all leaders. Without a steady investment in fruit bearing ministry we can all grow weary and overwhelmed. Unfortunately we can also grow complacent in our own spiritual formation. There is no greater catalyst for stirring our hearts from apathy than inviting

²⁹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 579.

³⁰ Craig Van Gelder, Dwight J. Zscheile, and Alan Roxburgh, *The Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011), 155-57.

³¹ Edmund Clowney, *The Message of 1 Peter: The Way of the Cross* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1988), 201.

others to follow us as we follow Christ. Pray as I pray. Love as I love. Serve as I serve. At its most basic level, this is the work of leadership development. It is the process of inviting a younger disciple into your life for an extended period of time and allow them to model your life and teaching.

REMINDERS OF THE GRACE OF GOD

These relationships were marked by the gospel of grace that characterized Paul's epistles. Paul's letters to his young protégées, Timothy and Titus, are filled with reminders of the grace of God and his mission in the world, through the church. These men have experienced firsthand the grace of the Lord Jesus and are now given a role of leadership among the people whom God has redeemed. God's mission is not abstract but personal: "For we ourselves were once foolish... But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy" (Titus 3:3-5). Paul reminds these young men that God has saved them (Paul, Timothy, and Titus) and this same grace is the motive for their current mission. God's desire to see all people saved motivated both his ministry and his focus on developing future leaders (Titus 2:11-15).

In his letters Paul often breaks into spontaneous doxology, extolling the wonder of God's redemptive work (see 1 Timothy 3:16). The redemptive work of God serves as the impetus for any leadership development in the church. The mission demanded it. Timothy had proven faithful in the mission, both by being circumcised to advance the gospel and by serving as a Pauline delegate in the churches. Now, in Ephesus, he was once again reminded of the glorious mercy of God demonstrated through Christ Jesus. Paul was demonstrating that the mission of God should drive the labors of Timothy and Titus and inform other facets of the life of the church, such as the need for elders to have the respect of outsiders so that God's mission might not be hindered (1 Timothy 5:14; 6:1; Titus 2:5, 8, 10). These leaders were reminded that

the mission of God was a “trustworthy word” which they were to declare and demonstrate throughout their work (Titus 1:9).³²

Paul’s model of leadership development reminds us that the main focus of this process should not be training in skills but saturating the leader in the good news of Jesus. Leadership development must focus on the gospel, training the future leader to understand, embrace and treasure the gospel. This will prove to be the foundation for their gospel ministry.

This is the most important aspect of leadership development. Be forewarned, however, it will not likely be the aspect of leadership development that the young leader will think they need. Leaders, of all people, are prone to seek out new techniques and skills rather than growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus, Christ (2 Peter 3:18). You, as a leader of leaders, must continue to force the leader to focus on the gospel. This can happen by reading portions of the Scriptures together and meditating on the sheer wonder of the gospel. It can also happen through extended prayer with the future leader where you join together to direct your affections to God. Or it can happen through reading books together that focus on the good news of the gospel. It is likely that each leader is going to have a number of books that God has used to shape his/her understanding of the gospel. You should keep number of these books on hand to give to developing leaders as you begin to invest in their lives. Consider older, devotional books that God has used to shape the lives of many; such as, *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers*; *The Gospel Primer for Christians: Learning to See The Glories of God’s Love*; *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*; or *Religious Affections*. Whatever your choice, find a book that focus the young leader on the wonders of the gospel and not simply on the practices of leadership.

³² Guthrie notes that the notion of a “trustworthy word” presupposes some objective and authoritative standard of doctrine that these leaders were meant to maintain. Donald Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), 186.

FOCUS ON CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

This plan should focus on developing the character of the leader and not simply on their external behaviors. Richard Baxter, in his classic *The Reformed Pastor*, laments the reality that many of those entrusted with pastoral leadership do not know God or demonstrate the fruit of godly living.³³ Discipleship for leadership must be an inside-out process whereby the future leader is challenged to have a soft heart to the things of God and not simply to acquire the skills of a professional pastor.³⁴

This means that leadership development should focus on questions such as: What is God doing in your life right now? What sin is the Spirit convicting you of? How are you applying the good news of Jesus work to your life this week? What impurity is being exposed as you serve as a leader in the church? Is your heart intent on loving Jesus? Where do you see passivity and apathy appearing in your heart? These questions serve as the “heavy lighting” of disciple-making.

Adept leadership developers will also call out heart issues in those they are mentoring. Rather than waiting for the developing leader to disclose sin patterns, you can be proactive in this process. It would be a gift of grace to a future leader to have a mature pastor or ministry leader say things like, “Did you know that you should really be proud when you say things like...?” “It seems like you talk yourself out of taking risks. Could it be that you have an unhealthy fear of man?” “Brother, you are running yourself ragged working on that upcoming sermon. If you do that week after week you are going to crush your family.” These diagnostic questions protect a leader from the shrapnel that may come to their lives and their families if they are not addressed earlier.

INTENTIONAL PLAN FOR DISCIPLESHIP

Mentorship and character development form the foundation of

³³ Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1656), 56.

³⁴ See John Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry*, Updated and Expanded Edition (Nashville: B&H, 2013).

leadership development. There is also a vital cognitive component that one would hope a leader is exposed to over the course of a formation process. Intellectual training alone is insufficient but it must not be neglected or outsourced. It is not enough to hope that a seminary will provide the type of theological training that a leader needs. Rather, church leaders should map out an intentional path that they would hope a leader moves through during their formation process. This plan helps a leader avoid simply pulling books of the shelf or sending helpful articles via email. These readings may be helpful but they cannot replace an intentional plan that allows us to ensure that we have covered critical aspects of leadership formation. It also provides the leader with a helpful tool for replicating the process in the life of another leader at some point in the future.

I developed such a plan over the first two years of pastoral ministry in Greenville, South Carolina. A young, youth pastor came to me frustrated about his lack of growth and development. He got a job at a local Starbucks and asked me to take the next two years to invest in his life and train him for future pastoral ministry. This forced me to map out a plan. In many ways I was building an airplane in the air – doodling ideas on a dinner napkin as I went along. The end result was *Aspire: Developing and Deploying Disciples in the Church and For the Church*.³⁵ In it I map out six topical sections (roughly three months per section) covering the gospel, spiritual transformation, mission, proclamation, leadership and pastoral ministry. Each section is written as a workbook, designed to provide a weekly journal for developing leaders to reflect on the Scriptures and apply them to their maturation. This plan allows a pastor or leader to have a strategic model for leadership formation and provides the developing leader with a replicable model that he/she can use in the future.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIFT UTILIZATION

³⁵ For such a plan see Matt Rogers, *Aspire: Developing and Deploying Leaders in the Church and for the Church* (Timmonsville, SC: Seed Publishing Group, 2014).

Any development plan must allow future leaders to discern their unique gifting and calling to the church. Merkle summarizes that “Paul’s experience provides a strong argument for the need for church planters to gain active experience and exposure to churches and ministry opportunities as they prepare to plant churches.”³⁶ Leaders often emerge from seminary with cumulative years of theological knowledge but without knowledge that has been tested and refined in a church community and lived out in meaningful mission to the world. This results in leaders who lack both the theological precision to be academics or the ministry experiences to lead a congregation.³⁷ In contrast, local church based development can make it possible for future leaders to gain vital experience in both theological acumen and ministry praxis. The current church leaders can help train the future leaders to more effectively utilize their spiritual gifting for the building up of the body of God. “Consequently, before a man is appointed as an elder,” Merkle notes, “he will have been serving the church in some capacity, thereby proving himself in leadership.”³⁸

The church should provide a safe context for the leader to “try out” ministry. We should create environments for future leaders to use their gifts and receive feedback after the fact. They should be allowed to teach while current pastors listen and evaluate their teaching. They should be tasked with the administering a major church project. They should be given the responsibility for the care of a marriage in crisis. They should be given oversight of a small group of church members and asked to provide ongoing spiritual care. They should be sent out on evangelistic mission and learn how to develop friendships with those far from God.

These experiences will serve as a primary context for the church to observe the giftedness of the developing leader and deploy them to a ministry context that best suits their spiritual gifting. It also allows

³⁶ Benjamin Merkle, “Paul’s Ecclesiology,” pg. 56-73 in *Paul’s Missionary Methods: In His Time and Ours* (Robert L. Plummer and John Mark Terry, eds.: Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2012), 70.

³⁷ Leith Anderson, *A Church for the 21st Century* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1992), 71.

³⁸ Merkle, *40 Questions*, 200.

the developing leader to learn how they are gifted to serve the church. Sadly, many leaders have never had the glorious privilege of failing in the local church and hearing a loving mentor say, “friend, you are not very good at that.” They have also not heard a friend say, “You may not know it, but you are really good at that.” These experiences will provide a context for the developing leader to cut his teeth on the work of ministry by allowing him to apply his theology to the real life of the church.

CONSISTENT CALLS FOR GROWTH A DEVELOPMENT

Young leaders, like Timothy and Titus, need a steady reminder that they had much left to learn. The fact that they are leaders does not make them “exempt from the same temptation that led Paul’s opponents to defile their integrity.”³⁹ Paul reminds them to “practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress” (1 Timothy 5:1-2). Timothy was encouraged to watch his life and his doctrine, which were both essential for saving himself and his hearers from harm (1 Timothy 4:16). Titus was likewise to demonstrate himself “to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity” (Titus 1:7).

The overarching phrase used to describe the character expected of an elder – “above reproach” – should be emblematic of the life of all leaders.⁴⁰ In Titus, Paul writes that leaders should be blameless, showing themselves to be pure and holy in their actions. Such holiness does not simply happen; it is developed through consistent training in gospel living. Due to Paul’s close relational proximity to these leaders, he was able to address specific areas where they were in need of growth: youthful passions (2 Timothy 2:22), timidity (2 Timothy 1:7), and fear leading to frequent stomach problems (1 Timothy 5:23). The result of such growth and development would allow Timothy and Titus to “set an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy

³⁹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 66.

⁴⁰ Lea and Griffin, 1, 2 *Timothy*, *Titus*, 109.

4:12).

Personal mentors are in the best position to make these appeals to future leaders. They know where the leader is prone to sin. They know the aspects of their character, which need the most refinement. They also have the trust of these future leaders, which should provide a fertile soil for these exhortations to take root.

LOVING ENCOURAGEMENT OF A PERSONAL FRIEND

Paul was not a disconnected mentor, but was a spiritual father and person friend. The PE are filled with emotive language that demonstrates the deep love Paul had for these men. He calls Timothy his “child” (1 Timothy 1:18; 2 Timothy 2:1), “true child in the faith” (1 Timothy 1:2), and his “beloved child” (1 Timothy 2:2). In his letter to the church at Philippi, Paul comments that he has “no one like him [Timothy]” (Philippians 2:19-23). This paternal language leads some to believe that Paul was vitally instrumental in Timothy coming to faith in Christ (1 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Timothy 1:2).⁴¹ Paul also notes that he prays for Timothy “constantly” both “night and day” (2 Timothy 1:3) and six of Paul’s other letters contain a mention of Timothy (such as 1 Thessalonians 3:2 and Philemon 1:1). Paul’s most intimate and personal letter, 2 Timothy, is written to his dear son in the faith.⁴²

This paternal love is also true of Paul’s relationship with Titus. The letter opens, “To Titus, my true child in a common faith” (Titus 1:4). Paul demonstrates his love for Timothy and Titus in that he is willing to trust his most precious treasure, the churches he has planted, to their care. This deep affection demonstrates that the development of future leaders is not “a barren, educational exercise” but that “it’s deeply and inescapably relational.”⁴³

An intentional plan matched with an ongoing relationship is the basis of leadership development. It provides a safe environment for leaders

⁴¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Xlviii.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 463.

⁴³ Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift that Changes Everything* (Sydney, New South Wales: Mathias Media, 2009), 71-72.

to grow and mature. It also builds the trust of the church and its pastors to move into the final act of building the next generation of leaders – deploying them into a lifetime of fruitful ministry.

DEPLOYING FUTURE LEADERS

My wife and I have three kids and a fourth child on the way. At the time of writing this chapter they are 8, 5, and 4 years old. Until recently, our work of parenting was largely blue-collar in nature. Runny noses, dirty diapers, and hungry bellies were order of the day. It seemed like that's all we did.

Things have changed. Around 3:15 each afternoon the neighborhood kids come over and ring the doorbell asking if our children can come out and play. They then spend the afternoon until dinner running through the backyard, laughing and playing with their friends. This process is somewhat painful, to be honest. I can't hear everything they are saying anymore. I don't get to supervise all of their decisions. Sometimes I'm not even there when they get hurt.

I have to continue to remind myself that this is part of growing up. I did not raise them to keep them at home in diapers for the rest of their lives. The goal of my parenting is to release mature worshippers of God who will leave my home and honor Christ wherever God sends them. The same is true for the work of investing in future leaders. We spend the time to discover and develop these leaders in the hope that we would release them from our care into meaningful ministry around the world.

Paul's work with Timothy and Titus provides helpful strategies for the deployment of future leaders as well.

STRATEGIC PLACEMENT OF LEADERS IN THE CHURCH

Not only is God on mission, but Timothy and Titus also have a personal role to play in that mission. Paul repeatedly reminds Timothy and Titus that they “are appointed personally by Paul to achieve a particular mission.”⁴⁴ Timothy was in Ephesus at Paul’s urging “so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:3). Paul did not merely suggest options for Timothy, but urged him to go to Ephesus and stay there in the midst of persecution.⁴⁵ The word “urge” denotes the seriousness of the situation in Ephesus and the vital role Timothy had to play in the mission. The same is true of Titus, who was left by Paul in Crete to put the developing church in order (Titus 1:5). This was not some haphazard notion by an over-zealous leader, but the intentional plan of a leader to place a younger leader in a strategic role.

These tasks included leading and teaching in the churches, often shortly after the leaders conversion. Timothy, for example, was given a role in the leadership of the church in Thessalonica within three years of his conversion. In so doing, the leaders would “guard the good deposit entrusted to them” (1 Timothy 6:20). This “deposit” was “valuable property entrusted to a person for safe keeping.”⁴⁶ The deposit of gifts and responsibility given to Timothy and Titus was strategically used in God’s mission through the church.

This sending should be strategic, as evidenced by the sending of Timothy and Titus. Paul has made a personal investment in the lives of the young leaders and personally sent them to a church context that was in need of their care. While we do not know what promoted the placement of these men in their location exactly, it could rightly be surmised that Paul, as a skilled leader, sent them into a context that would fit their gifting and ability. Current pastors should also strive to place future leaders in a ministry that will effectively leverage

⁴⁴ Derek Tidball, *Ministry by the Book: New Testament Patterns for Pastoral Leadership* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2008), 150.

⁴⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 15.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 371

their Spirit-gifting for the betterment of the body of Christ. This may mean they serve in full-time, vocational ministry, or it may mean the leader will serve as a Bible study teacher or lay elder. Either way, the deployment of leaders must be specific to aid in the strategic health of the church and the retention of pastors over time.⁴⁷

In a similar fashion, we must work to ensure that we send future leaders into ministry roles that fit the needs of the church and the giftedness of the leader. The time spent in developing the leader should provide you with a helpful understanding of how that leader is gifted by the Spirit and equipped to serve the church. Pastors and ministry leaders can work alongside of future leaders to help them discern God's leading amongst a host of options or they may determine that it is best for the future leader to start a new work themselves. They can also help the leader discern the geographical locations that best suit the leader; such as, urban or rural, or Southern or Western. This help can protect the leader for the arduous process of trial-and-error that typically defines leaders in the early years of their ministry.

EMPOWERING COMMISSION OF THE CHURCH

Throughout the PE, Paul alludes to the commissioning of Timothy and Titus for their work. In 1 Timothy 4:14 he writes, "Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you" (1 Timothy 4:14). At this commissioning, Timothy (and presumably others) made a "good confession" regarding their conversion and calling to ministry (1 Timothy 6:12). As a result, Paul exhorts Timothy to "fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands" (2 Timothy 1:4-7). Paul consistently brings this confession to the mind of Timothy to remind him of his call to ministry in the church.

This good confession was based on the faithful heritage that has been given to him by members of his own family. Paul reminds Timothy of

⁴⁷ Conrad Mbewe. *Foundations for the Flock: Truths about the Church for All the Saints*, (Hannibal, MS: Granted Ministries Press, 2011), 135.

the “faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well (2 Timothy 1:5).” His spiritual heritage allowed him to be “acquainted with the sacred writings” from childhood (2 Timothy 3:15).⁴⁸ This spiritual heritage, coupled with his appointment by Godly leaders, was a motive for faithful ministry, even in the face of suffering. Paul reminded these young leaders of this fact repeatedly.

External validating is a vital tool in the deployment of a leader. We are often prone to placing far too much emphasis on the internal calling of a leader: Does he feel called to ministry? Does he feel gifted to serve the church? This type of calling is important, but it should be paired with the external validation of the church: Does the church feel that he is called? Does the church see that he is gifted to serve the church? Does the church observe the type of character that is vital for a ministry leader? An effective process of development then positions the church to deploy Christ-honoring leaders into strategic ministry settings. The fact that a future leader feels called to ministry is helpful, but far more important is the external call that comes through the validation of the church (Mk. 3:14; John 15:16; Acts 1:22; 10:41; 13:48; 14:23; 16:4; 17:31; Rom. 13:1; 1 Corinthians 2:7; 7:17; 9:14; Gal. 3:19; 1 Timothy 2:7; Titus 1:5; Hebrews 5:1; 8:3; 9:6).

If so, then the church should seek to create a meaningful time of commissioning prior to sending the leader to a place of strategic service. While churches often perform ordination and commissioning services, it seems their value is often minimized. However, if the future leader has been developing in the context of the local church and under the care of a pastoral mentor, then the sending of that leader should be rich with joy and conviction. Whether the leader is being sent to seminary, to an existing church pastorate, or to the international mission field, it is vital that the church commission and send them well. This time should involve significant time of prayer and words of exhortation and encouragement from those who have invested in

⁴⁸ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 468.

the leader up to this time. These experiences will be the moments that a leader will look back on years later and will remind him of the affirmation of his church.

ASSISTANCE IN THE FACE OF CONFLICT

Once the church sends the leader, their work is not done. They should continue to provide ongoing care for the young leader. Paul's warning in Acts 20 that wolves, from within and without, would attempt to harm the church proved true. The church in Ephesus was in crisis due to disunity caused by false teachers (1 Timothy 6:20).

Likewise young leaders need assistance in making the wise and necessary decisions that will serve to protect the bride of Christ from heresy or harm.⁴⁹ These leaders do not have the benefit of cumulative years of ministry where they have learned how to handle the complex situations that they will confront on a daily basis. They will need to rely on seasoned pastors and ministry leaders to offer insight on how to handle conflict with humble, sternness. This type of confidence can be bolstered by knowing how other leaders would handle similar situations themselves. This type of instruction should take place through formal times where the pastor makes himself available to the new leader and answers any questions that he may be confronting. However, it will primarily take place in the moment- when the leader is confronted with a challenging situation - via phone, email, or text messages.

APPOINTMENT OF FUTURE LEADERS

It was vital that both Timothy and Titus appoint godly leaders for the church in order to combat the onslaught of false teaching since Timothy and Titus were only temporary ambassadors to the churches.⁵⁰ This was a significant motive for Paul leaving Titus in Crete: so that he could appoint elders in every town in the way in which Paul had directed him (Titus 1:5). This office, a singular office referring to the group of men

⁴⁹ Peter Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, *New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 178.

⁵⁰ Lea and Griffin, 1, 2 *Timothy*, *Titus*, 294.

entrusted with the spiritual leadership of the church, is vital for the long-term mission of the church.⁵¹

In both 1 Timothy and Titus, Paul gives explicit instructions for the type of leaders who should be appointed for the church. These marks stand in stark contrast to the unrighteous character and false teaching of the dissenters.⁵² Paul warns that a leader must not be a recent convert (1 Timothy 3:6), lest he become “puffed up” by pride as a result of the elevated office. He takes the appointment of leaders to this office very carefully, as evidenced by his caution against prematurely commissioning a new elder (1 Timothy 5:22).

The essential mark of a future leader was the observable fruit of the Spirit’s work in that person’s life. Schreiner notes that “virtually all of the attention is devoted to the character of the appointed.”⁵³ 1 Timothy 3:1-7 contains a list of 11 qualifications for the office of elder, only one of which is a skill (teaching). Titus also contains a list outlining the marks of a future leader. The slight differences in the traits listed likely reflects “different but genuine historic situations.”⁵⁴ This list is then followed by a brief, though no less heart-focused, qualification list for deacons. These qualifications were not simply meant to provide a guide for Timothy and Titus, but also for the churches who would be left after the delegates’ departure and, in turn, all future leaders in the church.⁵⁵ Paul and Timothy were then to entrust these words to faithful men who would be able to teach others also and thus continue the process of leadership development (2 Timothy 2:2).

Often these decisions are the most critical ones that a new leader will face in his early years of ministry leadership. Who will be given leadership of the host of significant ministries in the church? Who

⁵¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 168-69; 234; Schreiner, Thomas R, 2 Peter, Jude, *The New American Commentary* Vol. 371, (Nashville: B&H, 2003); David Mappes, “The ‘elder’ in the Old and New Testaments,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 154 (January-March 1997): 80-92.

⁵² Compare the marks of the false teachers mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:10-16 with the marks of an elder in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. George W. Knight, III, *The Pastoral Epistles: Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992).

⁵³ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ* (Downers Grove, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 2001), 389.

⁵⁴ Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles*, 184.

⁵⁵ Knight, *Commentary*, 288.

will he appoint as an elder, a deacon, or a committee leader. If these choices are not made well, they can lead to years of frustration, pain, and missionary ineffectiveness. For this reason it may be wise for the sending church to oversee or at least advise in the appointment of the first leaders in the church. Particularly, if the new leader is walking into a church planting work, the sending church can even provide a context for elder evaluation.

GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICAL DECISION-MAKING

The task of leadership in the church is fraught with complexity. Leaders, particularly pastors, are assigned the tasks of praying, evangelizing, equipping, defending, loving, laboring, modeling, leading, feeding, watching, warning, teaching, exhorting, encouraging, correcting, confronting, and rescuing.⁵⁶ These responsibilities can be overwhelming to young, inexperienced leaders like Timothy and Titus.

The PE demonstrate that Paul was faithful to provide counsel to Timothy and Titus on a host of practical matters. Even the best training, however, cannot adequately prepare a future leader for the questions they will face once they begin leading in the church.

Paul summarizes his goal with these instructions in 1 Timothy 3:14-15, where he writes, “I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:14-15). To aid the church in learning how to function properly, Paul addressed specific needs they were facing: the payment for elders (1 Timothy 5:17), the process for handling an accusation against an elder (1 Timothy 5:19-20), women’s roles (1 Timothy 2:11); and caring for widows (1 Timothy 5:3-16). In both 1 Timothy 5 and Titus 2, Paul outlines how Timothy and Titus should lead different age and gender demographics in the church. He reminds these young leaders to be careful in their care for young

⁵⁶ Richard L. Mayhue, “Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry” 29-47, in Richard L. Mayhue and Robert L. Thomas eds. *The Master’s Perspective on Pastoral Ministry*, vol. 3, (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 29-47.

women, recognizing the danger inherent in this ministry. This practical counsel was surely valuable to assisting younger pastors faced with challenging work.

Seasoned pastors can provide this type of practical guidance to future leaders in areas such as: the weekly worship gathering, missionary strategy, gender roles, membership guidelines, church discipline, staffing issues and the like. Hopefully the sending church has modeled these matters well during the time of the leaders development. The sending church should have instilled in the future leader a healthy DNA that he would seek to replicate in his new context. However, no situation is alike. This means that the new leader will have to apply the ministry philosophy to a new environment, which can present a wide array of new challenges. They also need guidance in connecting their leadership of the church to their gospel understanding. In his book *Center Church*, Timothy Keller details the connection between a persons' doctrinal foundation, theological vision, and ministry practice. This vital work will require that existing leaders aid in pointing out blind spots or discrepancies between the leaders' understanding of the gospel and their leading of the church.⁵⁷ Over time the leader should develop a plurality of trustworthy leaders in his church with whom he can make these decisions, but in the short run it will be invaluable to have the support of his sending church in these matters.

HOPEFUL REMINDERS TO PERSEVERE

The final way in which Paul seeks to develop young leaders through the PE is through clear calls to persevere in the face of suffering. Paul knows that leadership in the church is going to be filled with pain, so he says, "I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Timothy

⁵⁷ Tim Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 20.

6:13-14). In 1 Timothy 4:12, Timothy is told to “fight the good fight,” and in 2 Timothy Paul invites Timothy to “share in the suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:3). Three metaphors – an athlete, a farmer, and a soldier – are used by Paul to demonstrate the type of steady perseverance that is needed to lead in the church.

Paul serves as a personal exemplar of the fight of faith and the trials that surely wait Timothy as well. In contrast to the false teachers, Timothy is to “be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry (2 Timothy 4:1-5). This exhortation need not imply that Timothy was weak, but simply that he, like all subsequent leaders, would grow weary.⁵⁸ Mounce comments that “even someone who bears the title ‘man of God’ needs encouragement, to be called to persevere.”⁵⁹ Titus may have been older, more mature, and therefore less prone to depression and the need for encouragement than was Timothy.

Perseverance in the face of suffering will require great faith, which is why Paul mentions faith 33 times in the letters.⁶⁰ The reminder of eternal rewards is the motive that compels one to remain faithful. Others strive for a crown that will not last, but godly leaders strive for a crown that will last forever (1 Corinthians 9:25). David Peters notes, “They may be despised on earth, but they will be honored in heaven. And that is something well worth working and suffering for.”

Leaders who are deployed into effective gospel ministry will need the continued reminder of the beauty of the gospel, the cause of Christ, and the hope of salvation that extends to all people. They will need people to remind them, as Paul does, of the beauty of their salvation, the investment of the church, and their good confession to Christ and his people. At the end of the day, this gospel hope both sends and sustains future leaders. They will need to be reminded of the value of long-term perseverance, in the face of opposition, as God does the work

⁵⁸ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 262.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 363.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, cxxx.

of building the church. This is one mantra that cannot be repeated too often.

CONCLUSION

Church multiplication necessitates leadership multiplication. Next has been written in an effort to demonstrate the way in which Paul developed future leaders, as evidenced by his writings to Timothy and Titus. Paul's paradigm for leadership development provides the essential foundation on which current churches can grow in intentionality in this worthy task. The author of Hebrews sounds a stark reminder that pastors will stand before God and give an account for those entrusted to their care. This is not only true of the congregation as a whole, but also of the host of future leaders who attend evangelical churches and are waiting to be discovered, developed and deployed.⁶¹ We will give an answer for the men and women who have been entrusted to our care and sit in our churches week after week without any intentional plan to train them for fruitful ministry in the church. The next generation of leaders has been entrusted to our care, and the next generation of church depends on our faithfulness.

⁶¹ Mark Dever notes, "Future pastors aren't built in a day. They're not necessarily identified correctly at first; once you do identify them correctly all the fruit's not there. There are some people who you don't think will go anywhere who do; others who you think will, don't. But you have to slowly but surely, patiently and encouragingly, push along. And you'll find that you can't literally 'make' pastors; only the Lord will give growth. I'm not always right about who will and won't be a good pastor. Nevertheless, the Lord allows me to pour in as I can. So I push ahead and the Lord blesses." Mark Dever, "Raising Up Pastors is the Church's Work," *9Marks*, n.p. [cited 7 August 2014]. Online: <http://www.9marks.org/journal/raising-pastors-churchs-work>.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, Leith. *A Church for the 21st Century*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1992.

Ascol, Thomas K. Dear Timothy. *Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press*, 2004.

Baxter, Richard. *The Reformed Pastor*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1656.

Bartholomew, Craig, Robin Parry, and Andrew West, eds. *The Futures of Evangelicalism: Issues and Perspectives*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003.

Bauer, Walter and Frederick William Danker, eds. “Elder” in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BDAG) 3rd ed., 861-62. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Beyer, Hermann. “episkopas” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (TDNT), ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, 609-19. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.

Blanchard, Ken and Phil Hodges. *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005.

Carson, D.A. *The Cross and Christian Ministry: Leadership Lesson*

from 1 Corinthians. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993.

Clowney, Edmund. *The Message of 1 Peter: The Way of the Cross*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1988.

Cockerill, Gareth Lee. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012.

Coleman, Robert E. *The Master Plan of Evangelism*. Old Tappan: Revell, 1963.

Collins, Jim. *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't*. New York: Harper Collins, 2001.

Dauids, Peter. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The First Epistle of Peter*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Dever, Mark. *The Church: The Gospel Make Visible*. Nashville: B&H Publishers, 2012.

Dever, Mark. "Raising Up Pastors is the Church's Work," *9Marks*, n.p. [cited 7 August 2014]. Online: <http://www.9marks.org/journal/raising-pastors-churchs-work>.

Dickson, David. *The Elder and His Work*. Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2004.

Elmer, Duane and Lois McKinney, eds. *With an Eye on the Future: Development and Mission into the 21st Century Essays in Honor of Ted Ward*. Monrovia: Marc, 1996.

Engel, James F. and William A. Dryness. *Changing the Mind of Missions: Where Have We Gone Wrong?* Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2000.

Erdman, Charles R. *The Work of The Pastor*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1924.

Guthrie, Donald. *The Pastoral Epistles: An Introduction and Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957.

Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Leicester: IVP, 2000.

Grundmann, Walter. "Blameless." *In Theological Dictionary of the*

New Testament (TDNT), ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, 356-57. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.

Guder, Darrell, ed. *The Missional Church: A Visions for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

Hendrickson, William. *New Testament Commentary Exposition of I and II Timothy*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1957.

Hunter III, George G. *Leadership and Managing a Growing Church*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2000.

Hybels, Bill. *Courageous Leadership*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002.

Lea, Thomas and Hayne P. Griffin. *1, 2 Timothy, Titus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*. New American Commentary. Nashville: B&H, 1992.

Lenski, R.C.H. *Commentary on the New Testament: The Interpretations of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon*. Hendrickson Publishers, 1937.

Keller, Timothy. *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.

Knight, George W. III. *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.

Köstenberger, Andreas. "Hermeneutical and Exegetical Challenges in Interpreting the Pastoral Epistles," pages 1-8 in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul's Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Terry L. Wilder, eds.; Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010.

Lea, Thomas D. and Hayne P. Griffen, Jr. *The New American Commentary: 1, 2 Timothy, Titus*. Vol. 34. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992.

Lawless, Charles. "Paul and Leadership Development." Pages

216-34 In *Paul's Missionary Methods: In His Time and Ours*. Robert L. Plummer and John Mark Terry, eds. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2012.

Lawson, A.B. *John Wesley and the Christian Minister*. London: SPCK, 1963.

Luther, Martin. *Luther's Works. Lectures on Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews. Vol. 29*. Jaroslav Pelikan, ed. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968.

Malphrus, Aubrey. *The Dynamics of Church Leadership*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

Mancini, Will. *Church Unique: How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture and Create Movement*. San Francisco: Jossey-Banks, 2008.

Mappes, David. "The 'elder' in the Old and New Testaments." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 154 (January-March 1997): 80-92.

Marshall, Colin and Tony Payne. *The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift that Changes Everything*. Mathias Media, 2009.

Maxwell, John. *Leadership 101*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002.

Mayhue, Richard L. "Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry" 29-47, in Richard L. Mayhue and Robert L. Thomas eds. *The Master's Perspective on Pastoral Ministry*, vol. 3. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002.

McKaughan, Paul, Dellana O'Brien and William O'Brien, *Choosing a Future for U.S. Missions*. Monrovia: MARC, 1998.

Mbewe, Conrad. *Foundations for the Flock: Truths about the Church for All the Saints*. Hannibal, MS: Granted Ministries Press, 2011.

McNeal, Reggie. *Revolution in Leadership: Training Apostles for Tomorrow's Church*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.

Merkle, Benjamin. *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008.

_____. "Paul's Ecclesiology," pg. 56-73 in *Paul's Missionary Methods: In His Time and Ours*. Robert L. Plummer and John Mark Terry, eds.: Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2012.

Mounce, William D. *Word Biblical Commentary*. Vol. 46. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000.

Neste, Ray Van. "Cohesion and Structure in the Pastoral Epistles." JSNTSup280. Mark Goodacre, ed. London: T&T Clark International, 2004.

Newton, Philip. *Local Church Leadership Development: Its effects and Importance on Church Planting and Revitalization*. PhD Dissertation, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, May 2013.

O'Brien, Peter T. *The Letters to the Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.

Payne, J.D. *Discovering Church Planting*. Carlisle, U.K. Paternoster, 2009.

Piper, John. *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry, Updated and Expanded Edition*. Nashville: B&H, 2013.

Plummer, Robert L. and John Mark Terry. *Paul's Missionary Methods: In His Time and Ours*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2012.

Rogers, Matt. *Aspire: Developing and Deploying Leaders in the Church and for the Church*. Timmonsville, SC: Seed Publishing Group, 2014.

Schnabel, Eckhard. *Early Christian Mission vol. 2*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2004.

_____. *Paul the Missionary: Realities, Strategies, and Methods*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2008.

Schreiner, Thomas R. *Paul: Apostle of God's Glory in Christ*. Downers Grove, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 2001.

_____. *The New American Commentary 2 Peter, Jude*. Nashville:

B&H, 2003.

Stott, John R.W. *Guard the Truth: The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 1996.

Tidball, Derek. *Ministry by the Book: New Testament Patterns for Pastoral Leadership*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2008.

Towner, Philip. *The Letters to Timothy and Titus, New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eedrmans, 2006.

Stanley, Andy. *Next Generation Leader: 5 Essentials for Those Who Will Shape the Future*. Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2003.

Stott, John. *Basic Christian Leadership*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2002.

Strachan, Owen. "Pastoral Discipleship," 9Marks, n.p. [cited 8 September 2012]. Online: <http://www.9marks.org/journal/pastoral-discipleship>.

Van Gelder, Craig, Dwight J. Zscheile and Alan Roxburgh. *The Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.