

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

**An Examination of the Necessity for Servant Leadership in the Pastoral Role:
Biblical Principles will be Explored**

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by

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Dedication

This project is dedicated to Dr. Charles Davidson.
He has been a faithful Christian, professor, and mentor to many.

ABSTRACT

AN EXAMINATION OF THE NECESSITY FOR SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN THE PASTORAL ROLE: BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES WILL BE EXPLORED

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In this paper, a detailed analysis of servant leadership in the evangelical church is explored. Realizing that there is much diversity regarding leadership patterns, an examination of servant leadership is essential for impacting the lost and bringing about spiritual change in the church. It is paramount to consider servant leadership as clearly exemplified by Jesus Himself. This document addresses the necessity of servant leadership in the pastoral role as demonstrated by Jesus. This type of leadership needs to be restored to the church. In order for the church to be productive, it is imperative for senior pastors to adopt the role of servanthood. The approach toward research focuses on scholarly and secondary works, with two 10-question surveys involving pastors and church members. The exploration of this topic will result in a renewed passion for ministry and church leadership through the implementation of biblical theology.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This paper investigates whether or not servant leadership is referenced in Scripture and the purpose of such references. This document addresses the importance of servant leadership in relation to the pastoral role within the evangelical church. The church is in desperate need of servant leaders who will emulate the heart and life of Jesus. There is a great need today for pastors to reevaluate their motivations when leading God's people. Leading people with a servant's heart is clearly substantiated in Scripture. Jesus stated, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve."¹ The centrality of this paper focuses on servant leadership and how it impacts various aspects of church life and function.

A large number of pastors in the United States have lost their fervor to lead God's people with a heart of compassion. Throughout this document, various key elements are addressed in terms of leadership and growth in the life of a pastor, which will result in a healthy church. The author of this paper argues that servant leadership is superior and paramount because it directly addresses the way Jesus led people, especially the way He related to His disciples. From the outset of this paper, several definitions for servant leadership are provided. In addition, this paper presents a diagnosis and a solution to the problem. Relevant works and scholarly journals have been used to substantiate the subject matter. Various characteristics of servant leadership are included, as well as an examination of the importance of servanthood and biblical theology. A large part of this document includes servant leadership and a strategic plan for the purpose of implementing the Great Commission. Finally, two anonymous surveys are addressed and examined. One was provided for church members, and the second survey of questions was

¹ Matthew 20:28. Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the New American Standard Bible (Anaheim: Lockman Foundation, 1998).

provided for pastors. The results of these surveys are reported in this document.

Statement of Problem

The church is in a spiritual decline due to the lack of spiritual leadership. The principle of leadership encompasses the church as well as secular establishments. For some years, the concept of servant leadership in the pastoral role has been ignored, while Jesus manifests true servanthood as referenced in Scripture.

The problem addressed in this treatise is the need to return to the principle of servant leadership. It could be that some evangelical pastors are more concerned with money and attendance, versus love, compassion, and people. Blanchard noted, “In all kinds of organizations and institutions, the rewards of money, recognition, and power increase as you move up the hierarchy. Self-promotion (pride) and self-protection (fear) are reigning motivations that dominate the ‘leadership’ landscape.”² Unfortunately, some leaders are more focused on building their own kingdom than advancing the kingdom of God. The problem that this writer observes is the lack of servant leaders for God’s people. Servant leadership is imperative within the church because of the present condition of the body of Christ, which is in a state of spiritual decline. The church has lost its way from a biblical and spiritual standpoint while not considering the final words of Jesus seriously.

This writer has discovered that servant leadership has far-reaching results because it influences people of the church in fulfilling the Great Commission. The influence of a leader is a necessity for the purpose of impacting others in relation to the mandate of Jesus. Regarding the

² Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of all Times* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 3.

the subject of influence, Herodotus noted, “The most hateful human misfortune is for a wise man to have no influence.”³ Leadership must always focus on the importance of influence. It is imperative to discover and recognize the type of leadership that works effectively. Servant leadership is the type of leadership that Jesus expressed in His public ministry. Understanding that the church is suffering from a spiritual declension, it is imperative that the church and the pastoral role reinstitute servant leadership for the benefit and advancement of the body of Christ. Numerous types of leadership have been implemented throughout the years, but the church is still in a state of spiritual decline. Now is the time to institute the leadership principles of Jesus. Wilkes noted, “If you desire to lead as Jesus led, you must desire first to follow Jesus; this is how leadership training among God’s people begins.”⁴ God’s people, as well as pastors, must recognize that servant leadership is the remedy for the spiritual condition of the church of Jesus Christ.

Statement of Limitations

It is important to recognize that there are innumerable works on the subject of leadership. But yet, it is impossible for this writer to completely justify the topic of servant leadership in relation to the pastoral role. It is with some clarity that several pastors will challenge this type of leadership due to the fact of their own personal success in ministry. Throughout this document, it is not the intention of this writer to respond to every question regarding the subject of servant leadership. For example, concerning Jesus, the apostle John declared, “Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself

³ Mel Lawrenz, *Spiritual Influence: The Hidden Power Behind Leadership*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 25.

⁴ C. Gene Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998), 23.

could not contain the books that would be written.”⁵ It is important to understand and grasp the heart of servant leadership and its relationship to the church, especially the pastoral role and the responsibilities that come with the position of a pastor.

Another area of limitation focuses specifically on the minimal number of books written on the subject of servant leadership. But yet, Scripture provides a plethora of references that address the importance of being a servant leader. This paper can never satisfy every biblical passage that makes reference to the principle of being a servant leader. One must note that Jesus expressed the importance of being a servant to the people He led, especially the disciples. This writer has no intention of judging any pastor or leader in ministry who rejects the argument for true servant leadership. Today, pastors are mandated by Jesus Christ throughout Scripture to lead people with a servant’s heart for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission.

Theoretical Basis

The foundation for the study of servant leadership is based on the words of Jesus and other recorded writings throughout the New Testament. The gospel of Mark clearly states, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve.”⁶ True servanthood is the foundation for effective leadership, church health, and church development, which always results in fulfilling the mandate of Jesus, known to be the “Great Commission.”⁷ This paper argues for servant leadership versus any other kind of leadership because of its biblical foundation and its direct effects on the church.

While considering the leadership role of pastors, it would be true to say that numerous

⁵ John 21:25 (ESV).

⁶ Mark 10:45 (ESV).

⁷ Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15.

pastors have limited leadership skills and possibly no skills at all in the pastoral position when leading people. When addressing servant leadership, there is a distinction between “the role of a servant or a servant leadership style.”⁸ Before a pastor can implement servant leadership, it is imperative that a leader must be a true servant of the people. A leader must assume the heart of a servant as revealed in the life of Jesus. One cannot function or adopt servant leadership if a leader is not a servant within the context of the life of Jesus. The very life of Jesus Christ clearly reveals what a servant is within the context of Scripture. The determination and purpose of servants include clearly providing a spiritual influence to those they lead. Lawrenz unambiguously stated, “Spiritual influence and leadership are about helping people shape their basic values according to what God values.”⁹ A true biblical servant always underscores and substantiates the significance of effective leadership for the purpose of leading God’s people in fulfilling the Great Commission. A true servant always focuses on the significance of the mandate of Jesus regarding the fulfillment of the Great Commission as recorded in Mark 16:15 and other passages of Scripture, which is alluded to later in this document.

Though there are various models of leadership, Jesus emphasized the importance of being a servant in relation to greatness. Jesus said, “You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But, it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become ‘great’ among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your servant.”¹⁰ Jesus presented a position that is contrary to pastoral leadership in this time period. While some pastors seek for power and

⁸ Ted Engstrom & Paul Cedar, *Compassionate Leadership: Rediscovering Jesus’ Radical Leadership Style* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006), 24.

⁹ Lawrenz, *Spiritual Influence*, 32.

¹⁰ Mark 10:42–44.

money, Jesus underscored the importance of true servanthood. Roach wrote, “When James and John argued over positions of authority and power in Matthew 20, Jesus challenged them to adopt a different attitude. They were to be servants to those they were to lead.”¹¹ In spite of the various leadership types, the Lord continues to draw pastors to lead like Jesus.

Statement of Methodology

The methodology of this study consists of utilizing primary and secondary works, scholarly journals, and two surveys consisting of 10 questions each. One survey focuses on pastors, and the second survey caters to church members. The various questions focus on leadership, specifically servant-based leadership. Without any reservation, the pastoral role needs to once again embrace servant leadership. When answering the how question, it is necessary that significant works be utilized for the purpose of substantiating the position set forth in this document, as well as answering the question.

The second chapter of this work focuses on the definition of being a servant leader and what is involved regarding people’s personal definitions. An explanation alluded by Greenleaf and others is provided. It is imperative to provide a concrete definition of servant leadership and its implications for the purpose of substantiating an argument for servanthood. This chapter also includes the discipline of spiritual maturity as related to being a servant and the necessity of providing change. Finally, this chapter provides the direct results of servant leadership and its effectiveness within the pastoral role.

The third chapter addresses the importance of being a servant to God’s people, and it highlights the most significant characteristics that stem from servant leadership. The elements of servant leadership, such as love for people, compassion, serving, integrity, and encouragement,

¹¹ Dale Roach, *The Servant-Leadership Style of Jesus: A Biblical Strategy for Leadership* (Bloomington, IL: WestBow Press, 2016), 4.

are examined in detail. The disciplines that have been stated so far form the heart of the third chapter. Other aspects of servant leadership are also addressed.

The fourth chapter covers some very important concepts. In developing this document, the first part of this chapter examines the heart of true servant leadership. In other words, what motivates a leader to be a true servant? In addition, a comparison is made between a servant and a shepherd. The Bible makes a distinction between the two roles, but there is a close correlation between them from a biblical perspective. Servant and shepherd leaders provide the same results and basically share the same characteristics.

Jesus as a servant leader is examined, especially in relation to how He related and influenced His disciples. Jesus provided the foundation of servant leadership. Roach stated, “Jesus’ goal in modeling this type of leadership was to prepare His disciples to be able to propel God’s kingdom on earth when He was no longer with them.”¹² Roach further asserted, “Jesus established the foundation of servant leadership, which according to Jesus, brings with developing a healthy heart,”¹³ according to Matthew 5:1–11.

In addition, Chapter 4 also provides key biblical references that speak to the subject of servant leadership. These passages address and substantiate the authenticity of being a servant leader. Biblical theology is the cornerstone of the argument for the position of true servant-type leadership. Finally, this chapter includes five key leaders as referenced in Scripture.

Chapter 5 focuses on various disciplines and the usage of biblical theology in developing a workable strategy for implementing the mandate of Jesus: the Great Commission. It is imperative that a strategic plan be developed and presented in order to give the church a clear

¹² Roach, *The Servant-Leadership Style of Jesus*, 5.

¹³ Ibid.

direction. It begins with the words of King Solomon, who said, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.”¹⁴ A strategic plan for church growth is essential in fulfilling the Great Commission while emphasizing the importance of servant leadership. Chapter 6 contains the conclusion and a summary of this document.

Review of the Literature

This part of the document examines some of the sources used. Primary and secondary books were utilized to substantiate and answer the question while addressing the subject matter. Scholarly journals were also be reviewed better understand the topic of servant leadership. The writer of this paper has sought out the best sources available on the subject.

Books: Primary and Secondary Works

The book entitled *Servant Leadership: Jesus & Paul*, by Efrain Agosto, is a well-written work. This book addresses the two different models of leadership. However, there is a close correlation between Jesus and Paul being faithful leaders in their time. Both Jesus and Paul were true servant leaders while distinguishing their purposes within the time they lived. The leadership of Jesus and Paul make up a good part of the New Testament, demonstrating the significance of discipleship and mission. The author made reference to the leadership and ministry of Jesus while under the dominion of the Roman Empire; Paul pressed forward in his ministry by utilizing other believers in accomplishing the mission set before him. Agosto also presented his argument that Jesus and Paul were true faithful servants to the people whom they led.

The text penned by George Barna, *The Power of Vision: How You Can Capture and Apply God’s Vision for Your Ministry*, is paramount in nature. Barna noted, “Vision for ministry

¹⁴ Proverbs 29:18 (KJV).

is a reflection of what God wants to accomplish through you to build His kingdom.”¹⁵ This text focuses on the importance of vision and how it impacts the life of leaders, which results in lasting effects for the kingdom of God. Barna provided a clear understanding of God’s nature, resulting in an impact on the advancement of God’s kingdom. Without a God-oriented vision, ministry will become stagnated without any long-lasting fruit.

Henry and Richard Blackaby wrote an excellent text entitled *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda*. This book is key to this project because it addresses the heart of spirituality in the life of leaders. This text focuses on the importance of aligning with the heartbeat of God. For leaders, in order to fulfill God’s mandate, it is imperative to give sufficient time to God through prayer as advocated by Blackaby,¹⁶ who stated, “Leaders pray because God is all-powerful, and God reveals His agenda through prayer.”¹⁷ This work by Blackaby is significant because it addresses key disciplines, which focus on what God desires to do in the lives of leaders. God’s agenda is paramount because that is what God desires in the life of every leader. This book was key in the development of this treatise.

The book entitled *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time*, by Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, is a noteworthy text. Some of the contents of this text contributed greatly to the development of this document regarding servant leadership. One of the key concepts of this text addresses the importance of “The Heart of a Servant Leader.”¹⁸ This book balances out the negative with the positive when leading people. For example,

¹⁵ George Barna, *The Power of Vision: How You Can and Apply God’s Vision for Your Ministry* (Ventura: CA: Regal Books, 1992), 28.

¹⁶ Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 183–185.

¹⁷ Ibid., 185.

¹⁸ Blanchard and Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus*, 39.

Blanchard argued, “The most persistent barrier to leading like Jesus is a heart motivated by self-interest.”¹⁹ On the other hand, a leader ought to “exalt God only.”²⁰ Both Blanchard and Hodges advocated the idea that true leadership begins with worship, which is the heart of leading like Jesus. This work also includes biblical principles, such as prayer, Scripture, and developing relationships. The book *Compassionate Leadership: Rediscovering Jesus’ Radical Leadership Style*, by Ted Engstrom & Paul Cedar, is a notable text because it touches on the heart and motivation of Jesus’ approach to people and ministry. This work was advantageous for this project because it addresses the compassion and love of Jesus. The author provided the driving motivation of the book by saying, “The radical difference is that the servant leads totally for the good of other people. The people he leads are his ultimate goal.”²¹ This work also focuses directly on the biblical principles of a servant. In other words, before people can lead others, they must be servants. The foundation of this text encompasses the importance of being a servant.

The text entitled *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power & Greatness*, by Robert K. Greenleaf, is unique in nature and perspective. The author of this book provided useful insight because he focused on the very heart of people while asserting the importance of people whom he leads. Though Greenleaf rejected various aspects of theology, he did express a concern and passion for people. Greenleaf made a challenging statement: “I regret for the most part that churches do not seem to be serving well. They can be helped to do much better.”²² This text added to this project because Greenleaf challenged leaders to be servants of

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 63.

²¹ Engstrom & Cedar, *Compassionate Leadership*, 24.

the people.

Bill Hull wrote a noteworthy text entitled *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ*. For numerous seminary students, this book has been a great help in studying and researching the subject of discipleship. This book contributed greatly to this project by relating the various aspects of making followers of Jesus. There is a close correlation between being a true servant and making disciples as Jesus taught (Matthew 28:19, 20).

Being a true servant leader always results in discipleship because a true biblical servant focuses on the spiritual concerns and needs of the people. Hull provided a plethora of biblical principles regarding the subject of discipleship, highlighting the important principle that discipleship is “God’s primary work.”²³ This work added a great deal to this project because it addresses the spiritual needs of young believers.

The subject of discipleship is a high priority to God because it addresses the spiritual maturity of the believer, which leads to the fulfillment of the Great Commission. Hull stated, “Discipleship ranks as God’s top priority because Jesus practiced it and commanded us to do it, and His followers continued it.”²⁴ Realizing that the centrality of this document focuses on servant leadership, it is then imperative to train believers to be true followers of Jesus, as referenced in Hull’s text. The author argues that making disciples is a life-long commitment.

Finally, Hull provided a noteworthy definition of discipleship and answered the question of why it is important to make disciples of Jesus. The author painted a beautiful picture, making references to the fact that Jesus provided the model for making disciples. This book served as an

²² Robert K. Greenleaf, *A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1977), 231.

²³ Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), 25.

²⁴ Ibid.

excellent source when addressing the subject of servant leadership and discipleship. It also added great value to this project in terms of addressing biblical discipleship.

Timothy Keller wrote a notable work entitled *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*. The subject of prayer plays a significant role in this paper. The author highlighted the important concepts of prayer regarding leaders in ministry. Keller let his readers know that prayer is a necessity in order to have an encounter with God. The author developed his position concerning prayer as a requirement in order to be effective within the scope of God's calling. Keller's work addresses numerous elements of prayer. He clearly articulated that prayer is a necessity and a privilege, and he provided clear evidence in Scripture that God responds to those who pray. The author also indicated that the discipline of prayer is prevalent throughout the Bible. Keller noted, "The Bible is all about God, and that is why the practice of prayer is so pervasive throughout its pages."²⁵ The author further stated, "The Scripture is one long testimony to this truth."²⁶ As shown in Keller's text, there is a plethora of individuals both in the Old and New Testament who were committed to the practice of prayer. If Jesus, Paul, and many others prayed, it is imperative that leaders of God's church pray and seek the face of God. The current document shows the importance of prayer in relation to servant leadership.

The book *Spiritual Influence: The Hidden Power Behind Leadership*, by Mel Lawrenz, is significant in terms of people being servant leaders. Lawrenz clearly presented his position in relation to leadership and influence, arguing that they are inseparable.²⁷ Leadership and influence must have a basis that speaks to the subject of spirituality. Lawrenz asserted, "Leaders abound

²⁵ Timothy Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2016), 26.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Lawrenz, *Spiritual Influence*, 29.

today, but there is a desperate need for leadership that has spiritual substance.”²⁸ Though this book addresses the importance of leadership, the author interjected the necessity of God’s Spirit and the need for spiritual transformation. The text *Spiritual Influence* also focuses on the necessity of values, priorities, time, and character. But the most important goal is about people. This treatise places a strong emphasis on people and the need to impact individuals from a spiritual perspective.

The work entitled *Evangelism Handbook*, by Alvin Reid, is noteworthy because the author addressed essential and important elements of evangelism. Realizing that there are innumerable books written on evangelism, Reid did a superior job of connecting key concepts with Scripture. This text served as a workable aid in addressing the heart of evangelism in correlation to servant leadership.

According to Reid, Acts 1:8 is the key verse, as referenced in the book of Acts, in addressing evangelism. Reid noted, “Acts 1:8 lays the foundation for the entire book. Luke’s narrative describes how the early believers, through the Holy Spirit’s power witnessed in expanding areas.”²⁹ Throughout Reid’s text, he underscored numerous aspects relating to evangelism but highlighted the importance of the Holy Spirit and prayer in terms of impacting people with the good news of Jesus Christ. Reid quoted from Delos Miles, stating, “Evangelism without the Holy Spirit is like a body without a soul.”³⁰ Reid placed great emphasis on the necessity of the Holy Spirit in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Reid focused on the need for prayer relating to the mandate of the Great Commission

²⁸ Ibid., 27.

²⁹ Alvin Reid, *Evangelism Handbook: Biblical, Spiritual, Intentional, and Missional* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2009), 76.

³⁰ Ibid., 151.

(Matthew 28:19, 20) pointing out that “one of the greatest hindrances to evangelism in our day is a lack of biblical prayer for evangelistic purposes.”³¹ Reid also provided a clear argument regarding the necessity of prayer in relation to evangelism. Prayer stands at the center when addressing the magnitude of evangelism. The thrust of evangelism cannot be accomplished unless people pray and seek the Lord as recorded in Matthew 9:38. In addition, Reid took a strong position concerning prayer and the Holy Spirit, which is essential.

The text entitled *The Servant–Leadership Style of Jesus: A Biblical Strategy for Leadership Development*, by Dale Roach, is a notable work. This book underscores the leadership approach of Jesus as servant leader. The author made it clear that Jesus is described as leading people with the heart of a servant. This book added significantly to this document because he focused directly on the theology and significance of servant leadership.

The author of this work summarized the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:1–12 for the purpose of substantiating the nature of a servant leader. The key word in the Beatitudes is “blessed.” Roach stated, “Those who are ‘blessed’ have private lives aligned with the Lord. The type of leadership Jesus was introducing was one based on serving others . . . These lessons spoken to a large group of people on a hillside set the foundation for what a true servant-leader looks like.”³² Many people can derive much from the teachings of the Beatitudes taught by Jesus, which addresses servant leadership. The author provided a solid foundation for servant leadership while stipulating various elements that constitute the importance of servanthood.

Joseph M. Stowell wrote *Redefining Leadership: Character-Driven Habits of Effective Leaders*. The author focused his writing on the importance of character and its relationship to

³¹ Ibid., 167–68.

³² Roach, *The Servant–Leadership Style of Jesus*, 6.

leadership. Stowell emphasized the discipline of character and how it impacts how one is to lead people. Stowell asserted, “Character drives the process of successful leadership.”³³ It is impossible to lead people effectively unless one is motivated by character, as advocated by Stowell. It is clear that Stowell argued for character-driven leadership. The most effective leader is the one who is motivated by character, as alluded to by Stowell. Stowell provided a clear presentation regarding the importance of a leader who is motivated by God-given character.

The book *Be a People Person: Effective Leadership Through Effective Relationships*, by John C. Maxwell, is a notable accomplishment. In order to be effective in ministry, it is essential that a leader be relational with all kinds of people. Maxwell addressed the subject of leadership in relation to developing solid relationships. Maxwell proposed a significant question: “What’s the key to relating to others?”³⁴ Maxwell contended, “It’s putting yourself in someone else’s place instead of putting them in their place.”³⁵ When developing relationships with others, it is essential to put others first and be an attentive listener. In order for people to follow a leader, it is imperative that certain qualities be implemented, such as generosity, problem solving, communication, the ability to meet a challenge, and the act of consistency.³⁶ Maxwell developed an overall analysis of being a leader who is oriented toward people.

The book *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer*, by Oswald Sanders, is a noteworthy text. Sanders outlined numerous principles while developing his argument concerning the heart and application of spiritual leadership. The centrality of the

³³ Joseph M. Stowell, *Redefining Leadership: Character-Driven Habits of Effective Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 28.

³⁴ John C. Maxwell, *Be a People Person: Effective Leadership Through Effective Relationships* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2007), 13.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 69–78.

author's work on leadership focuses on "the spirit of servanthood."³⁷ This concept addresses the spiritual motive of the leader and one's intention while pursuing God. The author also advocated the importance of spiritual growth. Sanders argued, "Spiritual maturity is indispensable to good leadership."³⁸ One of the key points of this document focuses on the significance of spiritual growth within the life of a leader. Sanders' text contributed a great deal to this project.

William Oakes composed a noteworthy text entitled *Christlike Leadership: Leadership That Starts With An Attitude*. Oakes developed and focused his work on the words of the apostle Paul and stated, "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this 'attitude' in yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus."³⁹ The author placed great emphasis on the importance of a leader in expressing an attitude that emulates Jesus when leading people. The author provided key principles in authenticating his position in becoming a servant leader. Oakes suggested, "Will your attitude 'be to become' a Servant-Leader?"⁴⁰ The author also advocated the importance of teamwork in relation to unity. The two key words in the author's text are humility and unity, which characterize a true and effective servant leader.

The book entitled *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership*, by Gene Wilkes, is an excellent work because it focuses on the leadership of Jesus and the impact He had on his followers. Wilkes noted, "Leaders who follow the example and teachings of Jesus

³⁷ Oswald J. Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007), 24.

³⁸ Ibid., 44.

³⁹ Philippians 2:3-5.

⁴⁰ William C. Oakes, *Christlike Leadership: Leadership That Starts with an Attitude* (Middletown, DE: EageWing Publishers, 2003), 42.

will lead first as servants.”⁴¹ The author placed a great deal of emphasis on the significance of the term “servant.” Wilkes provided a workable definition of servant leadership. He argued, “A servant leader—serves the mission and leads by serving those on mission with him.”⁴² This book provides clarity regarding the importance and application of servant leadership in relation to team unity. The author referenced Jesus in relation to servanthood in teaching His disciples.

Scholarly Journals

The journal article “The Great Commission Revisited: The Role of God’s Reign in Disciple Making,” by Paul Hertig, was instrumental in substantiating the mandate of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 28:19, 20. This journal article contributed a great deal to the current document because the author provided an analysis of the words of Jesus referenced in Matthew 28. The author clearly noted that “we now come to the heart of Jesus’ mission mandate”⁴³ and that we should “go and make disciples.”⁴⁴ The term discipleship is a paramount and central theme recorded throughout the book of Matthew.

The three-fold mission as recorded by Jesus to His disciples can be summed up in three words: “going,” “baptizing,” and “teaching.”⁴⁵ Hertig also provided a definition for the term disciple and related it to the character of God’s reign on earth, which is universal in nature.

Larry C. Spears wrote a noteworthy journal article entitled “The Understanding and

⁴¹ Wilkes C. Gene, *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998), 17.

⁴² Ibid., 18.

⁴³ Paul Hertig, “The Great Commission Revisited: The Role of God’s Reign in Disciple Making,” *Missiology: An International Review* 29, no. 3 (2001), 346.

⁴⁴ Matthew 28:19.

⁴⁵ Hertig, “The Great Commission Revisited: The Role of God’s Reign in Disciple Making,” 346.

Practice of Servant–Leadership.” This journal article contributed significantly to this project because it focuses directly on servant leadership and its definition. According to Spears, “True leadership emerges from those whose primary motivation is a deep desire to help others.”⁴⁶ It is important to note that before one can be an effective leader, it is essential that one be a servant, as alluded to by the author. Spears also included the characteristics of servant leadership that will contribute to this current project on being a servant leader. Though this journal article focuses on leadership, the author also addressed the importance of personal growth and change. Finally, the author made a distinction between leadership and what constitutes true servanthood.

The journal article entitled “A Study of Peter as a Model for Servant Leadership,” by Kevin Leahy, provides noteworthy insight. Leahy developed an excellent overview of Peter’s servant leadership. The author substantiated his position by utilizing various principles from Scripture. This article contributed a great deal to this document by examining Peter’s leadership as seen through the lens of various passages in Scripture and through distinct types of leadership. Leahy wrote, “Peter emerges with renewed conviction as the leader of thousands of new followers in the book of Acts.”⁴⁷ The author further stated that “[Peter’s] effectiveness as a leader is evident in his charismatic style, his conviction for his beliefs, and the resulting conversion of thousands during his earthly ministry.”⁴⁸ The leadership style of Peter resulted in many people coming to Jesus Christ, as substantiated by the author.

The journal article “Servant Leader: Its Origin, Development, and Application in Organizations,” by Sen Sendjaya and James C. Sarros, is an insightful work. The authors made it

⁴⁶ Larry C. Spears, “The Understanding and Practice of Servant–Leadership.” *School of Leadership Studies: Regent University* (2005), 2.

⁴⁷ Kevin Leahy, “A Study of Peter for Servant Leadership.” *Inner Resources for Leaders* 2, no. 4 (2010), 1.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

clear that “servant leaders are leaders who put other people’s needs, aspirations above their own. The servant leader’s deliberate choice is to serve others.”⁴⁹ Sendjaya and Sarros argued that servant leadership focuses on the concerns of others. The heart of the article first addresses the importance of being a servant before implementing servant leadership. Sendjaya argued, “The servant leader is a servant *first*.”⁵⁰ This journal contributed to this paper greatly because the authors focused primarily on the importance and function of a true servant.

Thomas Resane wrote an article entitled “Leadership for the Church: The Shepherd Model” that is significant in terms of servant leadership. There is a close correlation between shepherd and servant leadership because both models identify with the disciplines of “caring, courage, and guidance.”⁵¹ These disciplines and many more are the result of these two types of leadership. These leadership models always address the needs and spiritual concerns of people.

Both the servant leader and the shepherd leader always focus on the cares of people. True leadership is about being people oriented, and that is what this article focuses on. It is important to note that the principle of kindness is essential in leading God’s people. Resane stated, “Kindness is a key to leading people effectively.”⁵² In addition, both love and compassion are key requirements if one is to be an effective leader of people.

The primary evidence of this article comes from the use of biblical references. Resane used Scripture to substantiate his position concerning shepherd/servant leadership. Though many passages were used for this article, it is imperative for one to fully understand the function and

⁴⁹ Sendjaya, Sen and James C. Sarros, “Servant Leadership: Its Origin, Development, and Application in Organizations.” *Journal of Leadership and Organizations* 9, no. 2 (2002), 57.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 58.

⁵¹ Thomas Resane, “Leadership for the Church: The Shepherd Model.” *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 70, no. 1 (2014), 1.

⁵² Ibid., 6.

purpose of servant leadership. It is clearly evident that people are the prime focus in this work, which considers several spiritual disciplines. This journal article addresses significant principles for developing a clear understanding for the purpose of grasping the real need for clear, focused leadership. The author addressed the real need for sacrifice in relation to leading people.

The thesis of this journal focuses around the need to implement servant/shepherd leadership in order for God's people to reach their full potential in the Lord. Jesus is always positioned at the core of leadership, as referenced in this article. This journal served the purpose of grasping the full intent when leading God's people.

Scriptures

This part of the project documents key passages used to develop a solid basis for the purpose and function of servant leadership. The following biblical references serve to develop a workable foundation for people striving toward God's mandate. Pertinent passages of Scripture are essential to establish a theological and biblical argument for servant leadership and to develop a strategic plan to establish and implement the Great Commission.

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." It is imperative to understand the importance and necessity of developing and implementing God's vision for His church. A vision gives direction and shows the people where the church is headed. When there is no vision, the church minimizes its sense of purpose and direction, and people ultimately lose their way. Barna contended, "Unless God's people have a clear understanding of where they are headed, the probability of a successful journey is severely limited."⁵³ This passage clearly provides a basis

⁵³ Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 10.

regarding the importance of the term vision.

Mark 10:45 (KJV)

“For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” The words recorded in this passage focus on the selfless nature of Jesus. This reference addresses the primary purpose of His ministry. The Lord focused directly on the needs and concerns of people while not giving any thought of himself. A true servant focuses on others. Jesus came to minister to the hurting, ultimately giving His life for lost people. Jesus came with a purpose and message, which was to minister to those in need.

Matthew 20:26, 27

“It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.” In this passage, Jesus made the distinction between greatness and servanthood. Jesus presented the importance of being a servant, which results in becoming great. This text emphasizes the necessity and importance of true servanthood. This passage also focuses on the necessity of humility, which is a requirement to become a servant leader.

Philippians 2:5–8

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, ‘and took upon him the form of a servant,’ and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” The heart of this passage addresses the importance of Jesus taking on the form of a servant. The three key disciplines recorded in this passage consist of servanthood, humility, and obedience. All three principles are necessary to be an effective servant leader. This passage played a significant

role in developing what a servant leader ought to be in context of Scripture.

Mark 6:34 (NKJV)

“And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.” As revealed in this passage, Jesus was gripped with compassion when he saw the multitude being scattered. This verse highlights two important principles: compassion and shepherding. The discipline of compassion contributed greatly to the function of servanthood.

Psalm 85:6 (KJV)

“Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?” The centrality of this reference focuses on the importance of the need for revival in the evangelical church. This passage implies that the people have lost their sense of joy, so the psalmist challenged the people to pursue the Lord in order to be revived to experience a fresh encounter with God, which will result in their new-found faith. This passage was utilized in this document to address the necessity for a sovereign revival within the local church.

Matthew 16:24 (KJV)

Then, Jesus said to his disciples, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” Jesus clearly taught that self-denial is a prerequisite to be a disciple of the Lord. To be a true servant leader, it is imperative to reject one’s desires and pursuits while fulfilling the will of God. It is necessary to forsake all and to follow Jesus no matter the cost. A spirit of sacrifice and obedience must be applied to follow Jesus.

Mark 12:30

“And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and

with all your mind, and with all your strength.” Jesus presented a clear command to love God completely. This is an all-inclusive command given by the Master. True followers of Jesus are to love God with their whole being. This passage is the heart of every servant leader.

1 Corinthians 11:1 (KJV)

“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” The apostle Paul provided a clear command to follow Jesus, as he followed the Lord. Paul encouraged the church to follow Jesus as he set the example before the church. Paul took the initiative when following Jesus.

2 Peter 3:18

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” The apostle Peter challenged his readers to grow and mature in the grace of Jesus Christ. This verse places great emphasis on the word “grow.” To grow in the Lord is not an option but a command to continue to advance in God. This passage suggests a continual action, which is an ongoing process. It is a process of becoming more like the Savior. This verse addresses the importance of spiritual formation: a spiritual challenge to continue to mature in the Lord.

2 Chronicles 7:14 (ESV)

“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” This text focuses on the prayer of King Solomon. The first application of this verse is to the people of Israel. This verse clearly indicates that God responds and answers prayers, and He always responds to the repentant heart. This text contributed to this document in terms of the subject of prayer and its results.

Luke 11:1

“It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.” As referenced in this text, the disciples observed the prayer life of Jesus. The disciples made a humble request, “Lord, teach us to pray.” It was quite evident that some of the disciples heard Jesus praying to His Father. The disciples probably heard the intimacy of His communion as He was engaged in prayer. This passage of Scripture helped to substantiate the discipline of prayer. Once again, church leaders need to return to the practice of prayer.

Psalm 26:1 (ESV)

“Of David. Vindicate me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering.” The psalmist David prayed and asked the Lord to justify and defend him against his enemies. Here, David was praying for protection. The psalmist was asking for help because he had walked according to his integrity and had walked upright while trusting in God completely. This portion of Scripture served this project because the writer substantiated the need for integrity.

Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” This text is one of the key verses throughout the book of Acts. The beginning of the text addresses the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to being a witness for Jesus Christ throughout the world. In this text, Jesus presented His mission to His disciples.

Mark 16:15

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." As recorded in this passage, Jesus gave a mandate to the disciples to take the message of the gospel to the whole world. This is one of the most important commands Jesus ever gave to His disciples because He is making the gospel available to every person. Jesus indicated that all people should hear a clear presentation of the "good news" of the gospel. From one generation to the next, it then becomes the responsibility of every evangelical church to take the gospel to the entire world. Every pastor and church leader ought to take the words of Jesus seriously because this command addresses the importance of "all creation." In this text, Jesus was asking for obedience.

Matthew 28:19, 20

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." This verse is categorized as the Great Commission. This verse reveals the heartbeat of God for lost people. Earley stated, "God's heart is and has always been pounding for all peoples of all nations."⁵⁴ Earley further noted, "If we have the heart of God, we will yearn to take His message to every single person without limit."⁵⁵ The centrality of this verse focuses on making disciples of all people. This is the greatest mandate of Jesus when it comes to the lostness of humanity, and this Scripture contributes a great deal to this document because it addresses the very heart of God. The words of Jesus in this verse reveal the passion and love that Jesus has for those searching for truth. The spirit of this text is disclosed and examined regarding the real purpose of the words of Jesus. The message recorded in Matthew 28:19, 20 is examined in light of biblical evangelism and its meaning.

⁵⁴ Dave Earley and David Wheeler, *Evangelism Is...How to Share Jesus With Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 19).

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Summary

A study of Chapter 1 was presented while considering key elements that substantiate the authenticity of servant leadership as depicted in Scripture. The problem and research question were presented for the purpose of examination. Realizing that the evangelical church is in decline, it is necessary to address the significance and operation of servant leadership as referenced by Jesus in the gospels. The leadership of servanthood in the pastor role must be reexamined and introduced again for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission.

Various methodologies were presented in order to authenticate the importance of servant leadership. Numerous books, journals, and biblical verses relating to the subject were utilized. Key passages of Scripture were examined, and they assisted in proving the importance of servant leadership. Just as Jesus led people with a heart of a servant, it is imperative that church leaders return to the application of true servanthood. The importance of servant leadership cannot be overstated because one can observe Jesus in Scripture leading people with the heart of a servant. Scripture clearly documents the message and meaning of servant leadership. The author of this paper argues that authentic servant leadership will aid in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Finally, a strategic plan for implementing the Great Commission⁵⁶ will be a direct result by executing servant leadership. The passages used in this chapter clearly reveal the importance of applying servant leadership while pursuing the Great Commission. A strategic plan was developed in order to fulfill the mandate of Jesus Christ.

⁵⁶ Matthew 28:19, 20. The Great Commission is examined in detail because these words are the very burden and passion of Jesus.

CHAPTER TWO

SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

Chapter Introduction

This part of the study addresses some significant areas relating to servant leadership and its development. It is essential to understand that the role of servant leadership is essential in order to fulfill God's plan and purpose. It is also necessary to recognize that being a servant leader means always changing and becoming more like Jesus in order to be sensitive to the needs and spiritual challenges of people.

From the outset of this chapter, a clear definition of servant leadership is provided in relation to the pastoral role. It is necessary to provide a thorough definition of servant leadership in order to develop a foundation to build upon. Developing a biblical and theological definition is paramount for the purpose of constructing a workable plan in order to pursue the next level in the study of servant leadership. The writer's audience must have a clear understanding of what is meant by the biblical term "servant leadership."

When one studies the life and ministry of Jesus, it is quite obvious that Jesus exemplified a spirit of true servanthood. The necessity of servant leadership results in focusing on people as well as fulfilling the Great Commission as Jesus commanded, as referenced in Matthew 28:29, 20 and Mark 16:15. A pastor who exemplifies servant leadership always recognizes the need for ongoing spiritual maturity. The discipline of change is always essential in the life of a servant. In order to reach and impact a lost world, it is essential that a leader be open and develop a clear perspective toward God and people. Finally, it is necessary that a leader be a servant who embraces biblical disciplines, which will cause a servant to lead effectively, just like Jesus. Servant leadership focuses on one's spirit and attitude.

Defining Servant Leadership

Though there are numerous definitions regarding servant leaders, Aubrey asserted that “to get the full picture of a New Testament leader, we would need to combine and embrace all the biblical metaphors used for leaders and leadership.”⁵⁷ When considering all the figurative language in Scripture concerning leadership, the Bible places great emphasis on the concept of servanthood. Aubrey added, “A biblical image that is the most common and dominant for leaders is that of a servant.”⁵⁸ Scripture references a plethora of characters who expressed true servanthood.

A servant leader is one who shows love and compassion toward others. A person cannot be a servant leader without first examining the discipline of being a servant, as noted in the writings of Jesus and the apostle Paul. Servant leaders always look for opportunities to minister to those in need and strive to give others the opportunity to pursue their full potential. Spears argued that “servant leadership seeks to involve others in decision making, is strongly based in ethical and caring behavior, and enhances the growth of workers while improving the caring and quality of organizational life.”⁵⁹ Servant leaders always focus on the needs and concerns of others. According to Agosto, “The ‘servant-leader’ strives to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served.”⁶⁰ The motivation of a true servant is always focused on people. For servants, people become their priority while seeking to fulfill their needs and

⁵⁷ Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 33.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Larry C. Spears, “Character and Servant Leadership: Ten Characteristics of Effective, Caring Leaders.” *The Journal of Virtues & Leadership* 1, no. 1 (2010), 26.

⁶⁰ Efrain Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus & Paul* (Atlanta, GA: Chalice Press, 2005), 6.

pursuing their full potential. Servants seek out not their own interests but the interests of others. Servant leaders strive to emulate the lifestyle of Jesus.

Greenleaf's Definition

In 1970, Robert Greenleaf was recognized for stressing the importance of servant leadership. In the same year, Greenleaf became the “founder of the Modern Servant Leadership movement and the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership,”⁶¹ which impacted the business world of his day. He also had a minimal influence on the leadership of the church regarding the principle of servanthood. Though Jesus is the original author of servant leadership as referenced in Scripture (Matthew 20:26, 28; Galatians 5:13), it is essential to highlight the various definitions of true servanthood alluded to by Greenleaf.

The biblical principle of servanthood must first be examined before one can understand and implement servant leadership when leading others. The thesis statement of Greenleaf's text “portrays the servant-leader as someone who naturally ‘serves first’ and then makes a conscious choice to aspire to lead.”⁶² Greenleaf substantiated his position by utilizing Scripture. Jesus said, “If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”⁶³ A biblical servant always places the needs of others first and then considers his or her needs last. Therefore, according to Flaniken, “A leader, then, must put the needs of those under his or her authority above personal needs.”⁶⁴ A servant of Jesus always focuses on the needs of others. The apostle Paul stated, “Do

⁶¹ Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 369–70.

⁶² Forrest Flaniken, “Is the Bible Relevant to Servant-Leadership?” *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 1, no. 1 (2006), 32.

⁶³ Mark 9:35.

⁶⁴ Flaniken, “*Is the Bible Relevant to Servant-Leadership?*” 33.

not merely look out for your personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”⁶⁵ The principle of servanthood always focuses on the needs of people. Servants always center on the welfare of others.

The centrality of the writing of Robert Greenleaf addresses the importance of caring and serving people. He argued, “Caring for persons, the more able and the less able serving each other, is the rock upon which a good society is built.”⁶⁶ When people serve others with a caring and loving heart, the fiber of families, church, and society are strengthened. Greenleaf further argued, “If a better society is to be built, one that is more just and more loving, one that provides greater creative opportunity for its people, then the most open course is to raise the capacity to serve.”⁶⁷ In this way, Greenleaf underscored the significance of being a true servant through the nature and expression of servanthood. A servant leader always focus on the interests of others.

Throughout Greenleaf’s writings, there are references to Scripture in relation to servant leadership. Scripture has much to say concerning the principle of being a servant to those who lead others. Greenleaf did not omit Scripture, but he used portions of the Bible to endorse servant leadership and provide a workable definition. Though Greenleaf’s religion is basically non-theological, he does possess a clear motivation to serve society.⁶⁸ It is important to note that Greenleaf’s philosophy of servant leadership focuses upon the words, “serve” and “service.”⁶⁹ The discipline of serving as advocated by Greenleaf is central to his thinking. He suggested that

⁶⁵ Philippians 2:4

⁶⁶ Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 62.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 231.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

churches are required to serve if wholeness of one's life is to be achieved.⁷⁰ From a general perspective, Greenleaf endorsed the words of Jesus as recorded in Mark 10:45 regarding the importance of serving others, rather than to be served. Serving people is central to Greenleaf.

The Need for Servant Leaders

As previously noted, there is a great need for servant leaders in the church of Jesus Christ. It is quite evident that the church is facing unprecedented spiritual challenges, but there is still hope. The spiritual prognosis and prescription for the church and leaders is for servant leadership to be implemented in the pastoral role. Pastors need to refocus and evaluate their motivation and purpose. The call for servant leaders today is essential because of the state of the church, and pastors must focus their attention on the interests and needs of people.

A pastor focused on church programs rather than people will ultimately fail in the pastoral position. But, people-oriented pastors will flourish in their ministry because people become the central focus. Far too long, the church has been program oriented, rather than people oriented. When pastors focus on people, then the church will experience health and growth.

There is a great need for pastors to be focused on people. The highest priority is to develop a relationship with Jesus, which will result in leaders becoming servants to all people. In order to be a servant leader, it is essential that pastors be people oriented. To be successful in the role of a servant involves relating to people effectively. Maxwell suggested the following idea: "What's the key to relating to others? It's putting yourself in someone else's place instead of putting them in their place."⁷¹ It is important to accentuate the words of Jesus. He noted, "In

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Maxwell, *Be a People Person*, 13.

everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you.”⁷² A servant leader is a person who treats others with respect and honor. Luke stated, “And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”⁷³ This passage describes the communion Jesus had with His heavenly Father and the relational spirit He had with people in need. To be an effective servant leader, it is essential to build relationships with people and to express a spirit of love and compassion as one leads people. According to Maxwell, “People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care.”⁷⁴ The act of caring is a necessary quality today, which is exemplified by servant leaders. Jesus is the perfect example of caring for people who are in need. The apostle Peter stated, “Casting all your care upon him; for the careth for you.”⁷⁵ A caring and loving heart of a servant is imperative when ministering to people.

When examining the life and ministry of Jesus, the four gospels of the New Testament clearly reveal His focus on people. People then become the centrality of a servant leader. Servant leaders are needed because leadership has drifted away from the reality and effectiveness of biblical ministry. Servant leaders seek out the best in people. They strive to help people reach their full potential. Malphurs added that, “church leaders are servants with credibility and capabilities, who are able to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction.”⁷⁶ The necessity of servant leaders is imperative if the church is to fulfill the Great Commission and make disciples, as referenced in Matthew 28:19, 20. There is a great need for

⁷² Matthew 7:12.

⁷³ Luke 2:52.

⁷⁴ John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1993), 121.

⁷⁵ 1 Peter 5:7 (KJV).

⁷⁶ Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 33.

leaders to return to the simplicity of servant leadership and follow the example of Jesus Christ. Jesus being a servant leader resulted in making an impact on people.

The necessity of servant leaders is great because of the spiritual condition of the church. Pastoral leadership needs to return to the simplicity of leadership where people are at the center of their ministry. As Jesus focused on the needs of people, it is vital that pastors do the same.

Spiritual Maturity of the Servant Leader

The need for spiritual growth regarding any type of leader in ministry is imperative because it is essential that every leader be effective and successful when leading God's people. A leader must always be advancing toward necessary growth that will benefit the leader as well as the people being led. Spiritual growth and change are always essential for the servant leader in order to impact people for their good and spiritual well-being. Change and spiritual growth must be ongoing processes in the life of a leader. The concept of spiritual maturity or spiritual formation is imperative in the life of every leader. Spiritual growth stems directly from the heart and spirit. As indicated by Nouwen, "Spiritual formation requires taking an inward journey to the heart. Although this journey takes place in community and leads to service, the first task is to look within, reflect on our daily life, and seek God and God's activity right there."⁷⁷ Biblical maturity must take place on a daily basis in order for true effectiveness in ministry to take place.

The apostle Peter clearly emphasized the need for spiritual maturity in the life of believers and Christian leaders. Peter stated, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen."⁷⁸ The apostle Peter challenged his readers to grow and develop in their relationship with Jesus. Spiritual change and

⁷⁷ Henri Nouwen, *Spiritual Formation: Following the Movements of the Spirit* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2010), XIX.

⁷⁸ 2 Peter 3:18 (KJV).

development must always be part of the spiritual process. If a leader ceases to grow, then a state of spiritual stagnation will eventually result. Every Christian leader must pursue spiritual formation and development for the sake of the people being led. As a leader “grows up” (Ephesians 4:15) in Christ, the leader will then become more effective in his or her ministry, leading and directing people toward Jesus.

Spiritual Disciplines and the Process of Spiritual Maturity

God uses various means to develop leaders toward maturity and development. The Bible presents various disciplines that will aid in the growth of a servant leader. A wise leader examines and applies key elements of Scripture to aid in the process of growth in the life of a leader. It is essential that a ministerial leader continue to pursue growth, which results in overall effectiveness and success as one leads people. This section makes reference to five key disciplines that aid in the life and ministry of a leader and result in spiritual success.

Dynamics of Prayer

The principle of prayer is one of the most important disciplines recorded in Scripture. Jesus provided the example for all to develop a lifestyle of prayer. Unfortunately, there are some pastors who believe that prayer is insignificant. They feel that they have no time to pray or give precious time to God. This author of this paper has attempted to develop an argument for prayer.

There are many works that advocate the necessity and importance of prayer. Concerning prayer, Keller asserted, “The Bible is all about God, and that is why the practice of prayer is so pervasive throughout its pages. The greatness of prayer is nothing but an extension of the greatness and glory of God in our lives. The Bible is one long testimony to this truth.”⁷⁹ Based

⁷⁹ Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*, 26.

on this statement, the Word of God substantiates the fact regarding God and one's relationship to Him through the means of prayer. Boa provided a paramount statement, saying, "Begin to cultivate the skill of praying in every situation, and you will discover that prayer spiritualizes all aspects of your life."⁸⁰ Boa made it clear that the lifestyle of prayer is advantageous as God develops the leader for a God-given responsibility.

The principle of prayer has always been the most important practice, as recorded in Scripture in relation to one's communion with God and in terms of spiritual maturity. It is impossible for a leader to grow without developing a lifestyle of prayer. According to Roach, "A growing servant-leader is a praying person."⁸¹ Roach further stated, "Prayer is a healthy and powerful tool for all leaders. Jesus taught His disciples not only how to pray with His teaching but by His actions. Jesus prayed every day."⁸² It is imperative that leaders follow the example of Jesus when developing a daily prayer life.

The dynamics of prayer are directly correlated to spiritual growth. Prayer never becomes an option for a servant leader. As put forth by E. M. Bounds, "Prayer, in the preacher's life, in the preacher's study, must be a conspicuous and an all-impregnating force and an all-coloring ingredient."⁸³ Prayer must govern the whole of a spiritual servant leader. Bounds further argued, "Prayer is one of the eminent characteristics of strong spiritual leadership,"⁸⁴ and it is impossible for a leader to grow and develop without the aid and practice of prayer. As a leader schedules

⁸⁰ Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 216.

⁸¹ Roach, *The Servant-Leadership Style of Jesus*, 98.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 102.

⁸³ E. M. Bounds, *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds* (Radford, VA: Wilder Publications, 2008), 16.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.

and gives time for prayer, spiritual growth becomes the result. It is significant to note that prayer is essential because it impacts the spiritual aspect of one's life, which results in one's ability to lead people. Sanders asserted that "to move people, the leader must be able to move God, for God has made it clear that He moves people in response to prayer."⁸⁵ For a leader to experience ongoing spiritual maturity, it is imperative to pray and seek the Lord for clear direction.

Biblical Truth

The second element that contributes to spiritual growth in a leader is the process and application of God's Word. The principles of Scripture play an important role in the development of a leader. The principles of God's Word provide key insights regarding the training and the development of a servant leader. For the leader, God's Word is paramount because it contains key elements that aid in the process toward spiritual growth.

It is important to note that it is impossible to separate the discipline of prayer from God's Word. Throughout the growth process, both practices are intertwined, and it is impossible to divide the Christian practices of prayer and Scripture. As Bounds pointed out, "The God of the Bible and the God of prayer are one. God speaks to man in the Bible, and man speaks to God in prayer."⁸⁶ The Bible is the main source for developing spiritual growth among Christians and ministerial leaders. Bounds further noted, "Bible-reading and praying are the distinguishing traits of those who strive *to know* and please God."⁸⁷ The teachings of the Word of God are integral in the process of spiritual maturity in the life of a leader.

There are various aspects of spirituality in Scripture that result in one's spiritual growth

⁸⁵ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 90.

⁸⁶ Bounds, *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds*, 236.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

as a leader. According to Boa, “Devotional spirituality revels in the glorious attributes of God and aspires to lay hold of God’s aspiration for us.”⁸⁸ Understanding God’s love for leaders and church laity, one can realize that God’s love drives the leader to draw closer to Him. As a leader develops His relationship with God through the study and meditation of God’s Word, the leader becomes more effective in ministering and leading people.

Biblical Passages and Spiritual Maturity

Throughout Scripture, there are numerous passages that address the importance and necessity of spiritual growth in the life of a leader and a Christian. It is significant to underscore key verses that focus on the need for spiritual development. It is of the utmost importance to recognize the need for ongoing spiritual maturity. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament focus on the value and need for daily and consistent growth in the life of a leader. A servant leader cannot be effective when leading people without a continual spiritual process.

There are three biblical references that are worth highlighting regarding the importance of ongoing spiritual maturity. The apostle Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus, “But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ.”⁸⁹ Every leader that serves in the church ought to be motivated by love while proclaiming the truth of God’s Word. Paul challenged the church concerning the principle of love. The biblical concept of love is a key discipline regarding the implementation of servant leadership. It is impossible to be an effective leader unless you are motivated by the love of God, which is God’s most

⁸⁸ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 154.

⁸⁹ Ephesians 4:15.

important attribute. Love must govern the life and ministry of a leader for the purpose of change and spiritual growth. Paul exhorted the church “to grow up”⁹⁰ in Christ.

This passage implores the audience to pursue and grow up in Jesus Christ. A leader must continue to grow and strive to be more Christ-like in one’s actions and behavior. As a leader speaks God’s Word in love, believers and leaders mature into the likeness of the Son of God. A servant leader must never underestimate the necessity of God’s Word when considering the significance of spiritual growth. A leader must continue to advance spiritually for success.

The second passage relating to spiritual growth and leadership focuses on the words of the apostle Paul, who stated, “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.”⁹¹ Paul was informing the Philippian church and their leadership to know that selfish desire is not acceptable, and humility is honorable. In order for a servant leader to mature in God, it is imperative that a leader reject all the elements of selfish desire and embrace “lowliness of mind,”⁹² which addresses the need for humility. The Lord always looks favorable on those who express a spirit of humility when ministering to people, and there can be no spiritual growth without the discipline of humility.

Once a leader establishes the principle of humility for one’s life and leadership, then and only then will the leader be able to pursue spiritual maturity while leading people. Malphurs declared that “servant leaders lead with humility.”⁹³ Furthermore, Malphurs stated, “Humility describes our manner of leadership or how we lead. Service is the very essence of our leadership,

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Philippians 2:3 (NKJV).

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 34.

from which other people benefit. We humbly serve others based on our love for them.”⁹⁴

Because of the discipline of humility as exemplified by Jesus, a leader always puts people first, focusing on their needs and interests. A servant leader is called to nurture and meet the needs of others.

When leading people, humility is the motivating discipline in one’s personal life. As a leader continues to cultivate humility, the leader becomes more effective in leading others. It is essential that the Holy Spirit assist a servant leader in developing the discipline of humility in relation to spiritual growth.

The final passage that addresses spiritual growth is recorded in the epistle of Peter. “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”⁹⁵ Peter encouraged his readers to pursue God in grace and knowledge in Jesus Christ. The emphasis of this text is on the disciplines of grace and knowledge. This verse focuses on one’s continued pursuit toward God for the purpose of spiritual growth and maturity. Peter wrote in the progressive tense with the purpose of pressing forward toward God. It is imperative that God be central in the life of a leader because of one’s responsibility in leading people. A servant leader recognizes the need and importance of ongoing spiritual maturity. Leadership effectiveness is determined by ongoing spiritual maturity.

Growing in the grace of God is an imperative discipline when addressing the necessity of leadership effectiveness. The apostle Peter suggested that Christians and leaders develop a closer and more intimate relationship with Jesus. The key discipline of grace is essential when serving people. According to Chappell, “Preparation for service always involves growth in the discipline

⁹⁴ Ibid., 21.

⁹⁵ 2 Peter 3:18.

of grace, which can be defined as a disposition created by the Holy Spirit of God in the life of a believer.”⁹⁶ Chappell further stated, “Servant leaders are lifetime disciples—lifetime learners. By the grace of God, they learn to lead with a godly disposition that is created by the Holy Spirit.”⁹⁷

A servant leader always strives to become closer and more intimate with Jesus through the vehicle of grace. Through the attribute of grace, one’s ministry is established and able to impact all people for the advancement of the kingdom of God. It is essential to allow the Holy Spirit to manifest God’s grace when ministering to people.

Servant Leadership and the Holy Spirit

The person of the Holy Spirit is essential in the development of a servant leader. Without the help of the Holy Spirit, it is impossible for a leader to grow and mature in the Lord. For leaders to reach their full potential, they must depend solely on the enablement of the Holy Spirit. Boa asserted, “The inward work of the Spirit produces Christlike character and spiritual maturity.”⁹⁸ The Holy Spirit is willing to participate in the life of a servant leader for the purpose of spiritual maturity that will result in leadership effectiveness.

It has been stated that the Holy Spirit is essential for spiritual growth in the life of a leader, and it is effective in the life and ministry of a servant leader. As Sanders argued, “Spiritual leadership requires Spirit-filled people. Other qualities are important; to be Spirit-filled is indispensable.”⁹⁹ The book of Acts places the Holy Spirit in high regard as leaders become effective in their calling and lead people. Sanders further stated, “The book of Acts clearly

⁹⁶ Paul Chappell, *Guided by Grace: Servant Leadership for the Local Church* (Murfreesboro, TN: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 2000), 16.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 299.

⁹⁹ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 77.

demonstrates that leaders who significantly influenced the Christian movement were Spirit-filled. These early leaders of the church were sensitive to the leading of the Spirit. Because they had surrendered their own wills to the Spirit's control."¹⁰⁰ A servant leader must consistently depend on the Holy Spirit for direction and spiritual growth.

The apostle Paul addressed the Philippian church concerning spiritual maturity and said, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."¹⁰¹ The Spirit of God is always working in the life of Christians and spiritual leaders in fulfilling God's will.

Necessity for Change

The concept of change is a necessity in the life of a servant leader. Barna highlighted that, "change is a common word in the Bible."¹⁰² Scripture encourages Christians as well as leaders to be open to change. The principle of change causes a leader to pursue the process of excellence and always be conscious of meeting the needs and interests of others. Maxwell presented this idea as follows: "Change the leader, change the organization (church)."¹⁰³ This writer is convinced that the greater the change, the greater the influence. As people notice the change in a leader, individuals will be open to change in their personal lives. Leaders should never forget that the Lord is always available to assist in the area of change.

When considering the life of leaders, it is important to recognize that change can be very challenging for some because it causes people to move from the status quo to spiritual freedom

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 77.

¹⁰¹ Philippians 2:13, KJV

¹⁰² George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership: Wisdom, Advice and Encouragement on the Art of Leading God's People* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997), 199.

¹⁰³ Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You*, 67.

in Christ. Wiseman pointed out that “progress requires change.”¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, Wiseman added that, “change is not always progress, but no progress is possible without change.”¹⁰⁵ A leader must be open to change because it results in a greater measure of success and influence.

The life of a servant leader is always focused on the principle of change, which is part of the process of character development. A true biblical leader recognizes the necessity for change because it addresses the importance of one’s character and integrity. A leader who lacks character becomes ineffective in caring for the needs of people. Change must always be part of the process toward spiritual and servant leadership.

Biblical Focus of a Servant Leader

The Bible speaks volumes concerning the significance of servant leadership. It is essential to examine various passages of Scripture in order to substantiate the real need for servant leadership within the church today. The Word of God keeps the leader focused on the Person of Jesus Christ and also on the needs of others. Scripture helps leaders maintain a clear focus to pursue God and fulfill God’s purpose in their lives. A true servant leader strives to see God’s will fulfilled in others.

Philippians 3:14 (KJV)

The apostle Paul exhorted the Philippian church, saying, “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” This text shows that the apostle Paul provided clear focus as he pursued toward his God-given objective. According to Knight, “Paul is pursuing the prize in Christ with the same singleness of purpose, freedom from encumbering

¹⁰⁴ H. B. London & Neil B. Wiseman, *They Call Me Pastor: How to Love the Ones You Lead* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000), 94.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

weights, and ceaseless exertion, with which he had earlier pursued the church.”¹⁰⁶ This passage clearly reveals Paul’s earnest desire as he advanced toward his ultimate goal. Nothing could divert Paul from his determined destiny. Knight added, “He (Paul) will not run off on side issues as a dog that jumps every trail and holds to none; he will not encumber his spiritual progress by the load of legalism and external rites; he will not allow himself to become complacent by thinking himself to have attained final perfection.”¹⁰⁷ This Scripture clearly shows Paul’s clarity of vision. It is imperative that a leader continues to pursue the goal with a fervent anticipation in running the race. Paul never thought of giving up or diverting from the journey. May leaders today follow the example of the apostle Paul in spirit and application.

Luke 9:62 (NIV)

As recorded in Luke 9:62, “Jesus said, ‘No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God’” In this passage, Jesus provided clarity in relation to those who are disciples of Jesus Christ. It is imperative that church leaders continue to focus their hearts and mind on Christ as they lead God’s people. Leaders must consistently focus on the goal that is set before them for the purpose of being true servants to people. As Jesus was a servant to people, too, pastors and church leaders must emulate the example of Christ as portrayed throughout His ministry.

This passage clearly reveals two different positions. First, Jesus was advocating pressing forward, and second, Jesus was drawing people’s attention to those who focus on the past. It is essential to continue to press forward for the sake of people and the advancement of the kingdom

¹⁰⁶ John A. Knight, *Beacon Bible Commentary: Galatians–Philemon*, vol. 9 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1965), 339.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

of God. Naturally, some people, including leaders, tend to focus on the past. But, according to Jesus, servant leaders should focus forward for the sake of God and others.

Servant leaders must focus continually on Jesus, as referenced in Hebrews 12. The writer to the Hebrews emphasized this: “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.”¹⁰⁸ A servant leader is compelled to keep a sharp focus on the Master and follow His lead.

Romans 12:10, 11

For a servant leader, it is essential to manifest diligence and dedication when serving others. The apostle Paul addressed the Romans, proclaiming “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” The apostle Paul was providing two key disciplines, focusing on the needs and concerns of others. Serving God always involves serving people.

This passage also helps to provide necessary focus for the leader. A servant leader is always focused on God (Heb. 12:2), which helps in serving and providing for the needs of people. If leaders take their eyes off of God, then their focus will become clouded. The centrality of servant leadership is based on the words of the apostle Paul: “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.”¹⁰⁹ The principle of love is one of the major expressions of servant leadership. Serving people is motivated by the love of God. It is impossible to serve people effectively unless the God’s love is indwelt in one’s spirit.

As a leader applies the two disciplines of “diligence” and “fervency,” as referenced in Romans 12:11, the leader is focused on a God-given goal as he or she pursues the interests and

¹⁰⁸ Hebrews 12:2 (KJV).

¹⁰⁹ Romans 12:10.

needs of people. This leader believes that a servant leader must possess a clear and biblical focus. Biblical theology helps a leader consistently maintain a clear focus.

Effects of Servant Leadership

There is a great diversity of results that stem from applying the principles of servant leadership. There are three major effects that take place among people as they take on the role of being servant leaders. A leader who assumes the role of servanthood provides an opportunity for people to reach their full potential in God. The three effects of servant leadership are as follows:

Spiritual Development

Spiritual development of a Christian is an integral process for the Christian journey. Spiritual maturity is a direct result of servant leadership because every servant leader should be concerned and focused on spiritual growth concerning those whom God has placed in one's care. Spiritual growth is a direct outcome of servant leadership.

For a servant leader, spiritual formation is one of the major results of effective pastoral leadership. Leaders always challenge their people to move toward spiritual growth. Without spiritual development, it would be impossible for the laity of a church to be effective in impacting people toward the Person of Jesus Christ. Spiritual growth is a necessity for the purpose of pleasing God and being obedient to His perfect will. As Malphurs stated, "The goal of every believer is spiritual maturity."¹¹⁰ Malphurs encouraged every Christian to pursue and focus on spiritual maturity.

Consistent Prayer Life

The principle and practice of prayer is imperative for a servant leader. It is impossible to

¹¹⁰ Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 115.

be a servant to people without applying the principle of prayer. Jesus set the prime example for leaders to follow. Luke noted, “It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.”¹¹¹ Jesus provided the greatest example of prayer in the gospels. This author of this paper is convinced that every pastor and ministerial leader ought to follow the example of Jesus regarding the subject of prayer.

It is the responsibility of all servant leaders to teach and be examples to those they lead. Followers always learn by example as they observe the integrity of their leaders. Being an example of prayer always tends to increase the prayer life of those being led. As argued by Wilkes, “No servant leader should stand to lead until he kneels to pray with those he serves.”¹¹² A consistent prayer life should be central to the lives of servant leaders, which will impact those they lead. Servant leaders understand the importance of prayer, and they set the example of prayer, allowing others to observe and catch the vision of the ministry of prayer and what it can produce.

Biblical Compassion

When examining the ministry of Jesus throughout the gospels, one can quickly recognize that Jesus ministered to people with a spirit of compassion. The gospel of Matthew gives readers a little glimpse concerning the compassion of Jesus. As Matthew reported, “But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved (*gripped*) with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.”¹¹³ Jesus, as the greatest leader, was focused on the multitude, and He expressed love and compassion to the masses of people.

¹¹¹ Luke 6:12.

¹¹² Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 199.

¹¹³ Matthew 9:36 (KJV).

The principle of compassion is a key element that results from the application of servant leadership. There is a close correlation between God's love and the concept of compassion. Compassion is expressed through a servant leader because of the love that servants have for their Master. Engstrom reflected on this as follows: "Regardless of our station in life, God calls all of us to give our best to the Master as compassionate, loving leaders."¹¹⁴ Love is the foundation that causes the discipline of compassion to express itself in the lives of others.

The biblical expression of compassion is essential in ministering to others as a servant leader. Yeaw expressed it this way: "Central to compassion is the process of identifying with others and bringing people closer. Compassion requires knowledge of another's suffering and moves us to act. Compassion can strengthen emotional connections and boost one's ability to function as a productive ministry."¹¹⁵ As a servant applies the principles of leadership, compassion then becomes instrumental in ministering to those in need. Compassion is an outcome of servant leadership, which causes a servant to become very effective in ministry.

¹¹⁴ Ted Engstrom & Paul Cedar, *Compassionate Leadership*, 24.

¹¹⁵ James R. D. Yeaw and Jill R. Campbell, *Effective Ministry Leadership: A New Thought Perspective* (Cleveland, OH: Unity Spiritual Center, 2014), 19.

Summary

Chapter 2 has provided an analysis of the importance of “servant leadership and development.” From the outset of this chapter, a clear definition of servant leadership was provided. It is significant to note that there are several definitions for servant leadership. For example, Agosto stated, “The ‘servant-leader’ strives to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served.”¹¹⁶ The author Robert Greenleaf focused strictly on the definition of being a servant first before applying it to leadership.

Understanding that the church is experiencing a spiritual decline, it is essential that God raise up servant leaders in this generation. In addition, a servant leader must recognize the ongoing need for spiritual maturity. There are three disciplines that contribute to spiritual growth, starting with the dynamics and need for prayer. The discipline of prayer is imperative in order for the servant leader to grow spiritually. The second is the need for biblical truth. According to Bounds, “Bible-reading and praying are the distinguishing traits of those who strive *to know* and please God.”¹¹⁷ The final discipline is the great need for the help of the Holy Spirit.

Another important concept addressed in this chapter was the significance of change. The principle of change is not an option, but a necessity for the sake of progress. As leaders grow and change, then the church will move forward spiritually, reaping the fruit of such labor. The author of this paper also focused on the importance of keeping a clear biblical focus. The Bible clearly references this concept throughout its entirety. It is essential that a servant leader always maintain a clear focus on Jesus, as referenced in Hebrews 12:2. Finally, the results of applied servant leadership were listed in the latter part of this chapter.

¹¹⁶ Agosto, *Servant Leadership*, 60.

¹¹⁷ Bounds, *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds*, 236.

CHAPTER THREE

CHARACTERISTICS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Chapter Introduction

This chapter consists of certain characteristics that comprise servant leadership. Servant leadership stems from the heart of being a servant. All the elements addressed emanate from the hearts of those who are servants of Jesus Christ. It is essential to define what is meant from the biblical term “servant” in order to substantiate the authentic elements of being a servant leader. Throughout Scripture, the principle of the servant is recorded numerous times, and this principle suggests how one relates and ministers to the needs of others.

A thorough definition of the term servant is provided, along with an explanation of how it relates to the key elements of servant leadership. This section also addresses key disciplines and how they apply to a servant leader. The following attributes are addressed: love, caring, compassion, listening, serving, influence, honesty, integrity, and encouragement. These concepts are addressed in detail along with their relationship to being a servant leader.

It is imperative that church leaders today understand the significance regarding the meaning of a biblical servant. A detailed examination of the term “servant” is considered while addressing some key characteristics that are interwoven throughout the application of servanthood. Scripture provides ample passages regarding true servanthood. Jesus addressed His disciples, saying, “If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.”¹¹⁸ Jesus put into perspective the principle of servant by meeting the needs of others first. Jesus was addressing the concept of self-denial, which is a precondition of following the Lord. It is essential that a clear and thorough definition of a servant be provided.

¹¹⁸ Mark 9:35 (KJV).

Definition of a Servant

A thorough definition of servants will be provided, which will also furnish a foundation from which to build. For a servant leader, God is completely focused on the development of the person. God's desire is that servants will be spiritually healthy so they will be able to perform and fulfill His calling and to lead the people that He has placed in their care.

What is the meaning and implication of the term servant? Spears provided the following insights.

It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. The conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant—first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test is: Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived?¹¹⁹

A servant focuses strictly on people with a strong desire to serve. Serving people is the heartbeat of biblical servants, as referenced in Scripture. Jesus said, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."¹²⁰ This passage clearly states the importance of being a servant. A biblical servant always has people in mind and takes the time to invest in the lives of others. Spears added that "true leadership emerges from those whose primary motivation is a deep desire to help others."¹²¹ Throughout the gospels, one can observe the primary desire and driving spirit of Jesus' ministry, which was to reach out to hurting people and to meet their needs. A true servant always focuses on the needs and interests

¹¹⁹ Larry C. Spears, "The Understanding and Practice of Servant-Leadership." *School of Leadership Studies: Regent University*, (2005), 2.

¹²⁰ Mark 10:45.

¹²¹ Spears, "The Understanding and Practice of Servant-Leadership," 2.

of people. Servants consistently pour their lives into the lives of others. True servanthood involves people while meeting the needs of others.

The author of this paper has discovered that servant leadership is paramount, but one's focus must be on the servant, the person, before considering and applying the principles of leadership, as stated by Spears. There must be an ongoing development in the life of a servant in order to be effective when ministering to the needs and concerns of people.

Survey Results

Out of one hundred pastors that were surveyed in relation to the definition of servant leadership, this writer incorporated the responses of only ten pastors, which reveals an array of definitions. All one hundred pastors responded to the question.

Q1. As a pastor, how would you define servant leadership from a biblical perspective?

- A. Servant leadership models Jesus as in the Bible.
- B. Focusing upon people is servant leadership.
- C. As a pastor, it is my responsibility to be an example to my congregation.
- D. Being a servant leader focuses on people.
- E. Servant leadership is following the example of Jesus.
- F. As Jesus was a servant, we are to follow His example.
- G. A servant leader shares the love of Christ.
- H. Servant leadership is following Jesus.
- I. Being a servant means to set an example for people to follow.
- J. Servant leadership means to love people.

All ten pastors provided a valuable distinction in defining servant and servant leadership. Their varying definitions provided an insightful perspective regarding Jesus and people.

Servant versus Shepherd

When considering the two concepts of servants and shepherds, there is a close correlation between their nature and operation. Both servants and shepherd focus clearly on people while tending to their needs. Both concepts are almost identical in nature. When researching servanthood, Wilkes clearly states, “For Jesus the model of leadership was servanthood.”¹²² Wilkes further notes, “Jesus was never self-serving. He first led as servant to His Father in heaven, who gave Him his mission. If we take a high-level look at Jesus’ life, we see that everything he did was in service to this mission. His personal mission was to serve not His own will but the will of His Father.”¹²³ Jesus came to implement the heartbeat of His Father, for the purpose of fulfilling the necessary mandate He was called to accomplish.

The term shepherd is a paramount concept that is recorded throughout the whole of Scripture. The Bible provides a plethora of passages that address the significance of shepherd. Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”¹²⁴ As recorded in this passage, the focus remains on the heart of the shepherd in relation to those being led. This text addresses the necessity and significance of self-sacrifice. A shepherd leader will lay down his or her life for the sheep, which is clearly documented in Scripture.

As already stated, there is a close relationship between servant and shepherd leaders, especially in terms of addressing their characteristics. Psalm 23 is the best-known song in Hebrew literature relating to shepherd leadership and its varying attributes. King David stated,

¹²² Wilkes, *Jesus On Leadership*, 10.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ John 10:11

“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.”¹²⁵ By this, David was saying that God is his complete sufficiency, and lacks nothing. The Psalmist further added, “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”¹²⁶ Verses two through four address some of the characteristics of a shepherd leader. A shepherd leader demonstrates the following characteristics: nourishment, peace, spiritual restoration, God’s presence, and comfort. All of these attributes and more characterize a shepherd leader.

While considering servant leadership, the focus must first be on the leader as recorded in Scripture and also referenced by Greenleaf, while also addressing the elements of a shepherd leader, as previously indicated in Psalm 23. It would be correct to say that there is a close correlation between servant and shepherd leadership in relation to their attributes.

The concept of servant leadership is the most prominent type of leadership recorded in God’s Word. Young noted, “The best leaders are servants— of God and servant of the people.”¹²⁷ The author of this paper is convinced that it is essential that servant leadership be introduced to the church once again with a heart of determination. Applying the principle of servanthood opens the door to spiritual renewal and discipleship once again.

Loving God and People

One of the key characteristics of servant leadership is expressing love for God, as well as

¹²⁵ Psalm 23:1 (KJV).

¹²⁶ Psalm 23:2–4 (KJV).

¹²⁷ David S. Young, *Servant Leadership for Church Renewal: Shepherds by the Living Springs* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1999), 32.

loving people. Love is a powerful expression of the heart. Jesus clearly stated, “For God so loved the world.”¹²⁸ Jesus proved His love (*agape*) by giving His life for all humanity. It is important to recognize that servant leadership begins by loving God and developing a close relationship with the Lord. Jesus said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”¹²⁹ It is impossible to be a servant leader unless one develops and nurtures a relationship with Jesus Christ. Establishing a relationship with God is the basis for becoming an effective servant leader.

A true servant of God must first recognize the importance of growing in one’s relationship with God. Oswald Chambers declared, “It is a joy to Jesus when a person takes time to walk more intimately with Him. The bearing of fruit is always shown in Scripture to be a visible result of an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.”¹³⁰ To be effective in loving and leading God’s people, it is essential for the leader to develop an intimate relationship with the Lord. Jesus made it clear when He said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!”¹³¹ One of the greatest needs for a servant leader is the necessity to nurture a close relationship with Jesus Christ. As recorded in Matthew 23:37, Jesus presented a strong invitation to draw closer to the Master.

Loving People

Nothing is more significant to a leader than too exemplify an example by expressing

¹²⁸ John 3:16 (KJV).

¹²⁹ Matthew 22:37 (ESV)

¹³⁰ Lilliet Garrison, *How to Develop an Intimate Relationship with God* (Williamsburg, VA: Wisdom Brings Freedom Ministries Publishing, 2015), 7.

¹³¹ Matthew 23:37 (ESV).

love and compassion to people. Loving others is the centrality of true servant leadership. The principle of love stands alone and is one of the most paramount disciplines of servant leadership. It is completely impossible to be a servant leader unless one expresses love for others. Jesus commanded in Scripture that leaders ought to love one another (John 13:35; 15:12).

The biblical principle of love is the central point of servant leadership, which also includes compassion, giving, loyalty, empathy, and kindness. These disciplines must be evident in the life of a servant. It is also important to underscore the words of the Master. Jesus said, “A new commandment I give you; Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.”¹³² Jesus instructed His disciples to manifest love toward one another. Servant leaders are depicted in Scripture as people that are motivated by love as they lead others in order to attain their potential.

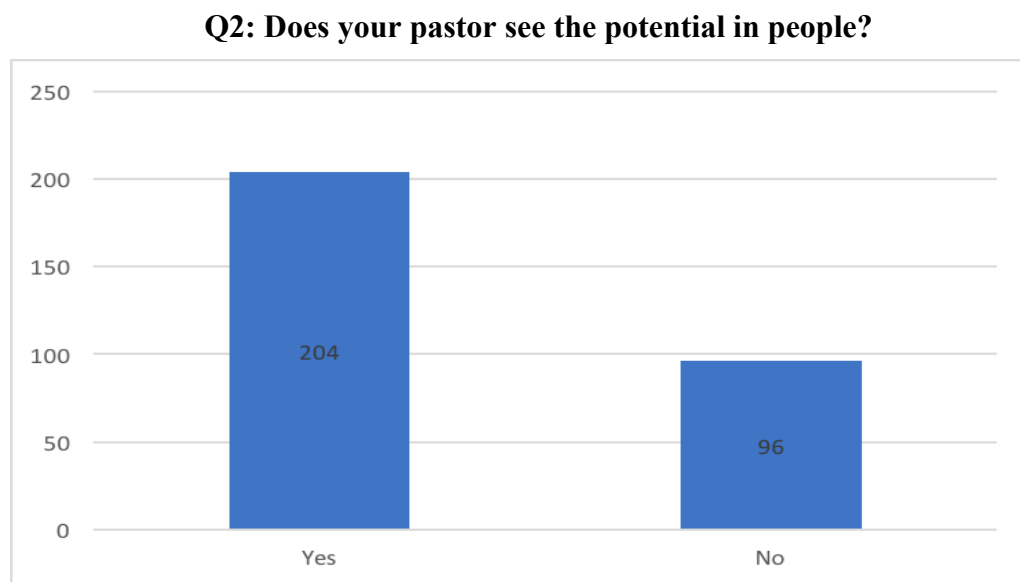


Figure 1.2. Among those surveyed, 96 out of 300 members reported that their pastor did not see the potential of the church’s members.

¹³² John 13:34–35.

London challenged his readers by saying, “Some modern pastors seem willing to abandon the common touch with people. But it’s a mistake to give up cultivating relationships by not loving people, caring for them or knowing them.”¹³³ When reading and studying the Gospels, it was apparent that Jesus loved people and met them at their point of need. He loved them and expressed a caring heart to them. Love was at the center of Jesus’ ministry. It is impossible to be an effective servant leader without expressing love to people. The greatest need in the church is a lack of love, and may church leaders be motivated by the Holy Spirit in expressing God’s love.

Compassion

The biblical disciplines of caring and compassion are key elements to servant leadership. It is impossible to be a servant to God and people without applying the principles of caring and compassion when leading others. According to Yeaw, “Central to compassion is the process of identifying with others and bringing people closer. Compassion has three components: empathy, caring for the other person, and willingness to act in response to that person’s feelings. Compassion requires knowledge of another’s suffering and moves us to act.”¹³⁴ Servant leadership strictly focuses on the needs and spiritual aspects of people. Servant leaders take their focus off themselves and place it on others.

When addressing the subject of leadership, one must always focus on the necessity of compassion because it plays an essential role when ministering to people. People must know that a leader cares about them. When Jesus ministered, He always looked at people through the eyes of compassion. Engstrom stated, “The entire concept of serving as a leader in Christ’s kingdom

¹³³ H. B. London & Neil B. Wiseman, *They Call Me Pastor: How to Love the Ones You Lead* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000), 65.

¹³⁴ James R. D. Yeaw and Jill R. Campbell, *Effective Ministry Leadership: A New Thought Perspective* (Cleveland, OH: Unity Spiritual Center), 19.

relates to *people* more than to *tasks*.¹³⁵ As Engstrom further pointed out, “The apostle Peter himself struggled with the challenging call to be a leader who serves. But Peter had the advantage of observing compassionate servant leadership, as it was modeled by Jesus as they lived and ministered together.”¹³⁶ As revealed in the gospels, one can clearly observe that Jesus ministered with a heart of compassion. To be effective in ministering to people as a servant leader, it is imperative that a spirit of compassion be evident in one’s heart and life. A leader can accomplish much in the lives of others through caring and compassion.



Figure 1.3. Out of 300 church members from evangelical churches surveyed 229 members believed that their pastor was a compassionate leader, while 71 members observed that their pastor did not exhibit compassion.

¹³⁵ Engstrom & Cedar, *Compassionate Leadership*, 30.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

Listening

The principle of listening is essential for a servant leader in order to understand and to know how a leader ought to respond to the needs of others. When ministering to individuals, it is imperative to listen well and talk less. Today, pastors need to learn this important lesson on listening because it will cause leaders to be more effective when ministering to people. As Maxwell asserted, “A person of influence listens to people.”¹³⁷ A leader must learn to listen in order to hear what people are saying, so a leader can be influential and lead others with a sense of excellence.

It is imperative that a leader listens well when people communicate because everyone has a story to tell. In order to be effective in leading others, servants must be good listeners because this may involve their struggles, future, and goals. Maxwell added, “The whole listening process begins with giving the other person your undivided attention. Set aside the time to focus only on the other person.”¹³⁸ A leader must take the time and have patience to listen in order understand what the other person is saying. Unfortunately, some leaders are selective when listening to others, but servant leaders focus on the person when listening to another’s story.

Listening is imperative for the servant leader, and it has great value when relating to people, which results in three important areas. Listening develops good relationships, shows respect for people, and also builds loyalty and dedication.¹³⁹ The apostle James put it this way: “Know this, my beloved brothers: Let every person be quick to hear and slow to speak.”¹⁴⁰ A leader understands people and their needs when listening to others.

¹³⁷ John C. Maxwell, *How to Influence People: Make a Difference in Your World* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2013), 59.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 62, 65.

Serving

The concept of serving originates from the writings of Scripture, and it is especially referenced in the words of Jesus and the apostle Paul (Matt. 23:11; Rom. 7:6; 1 Pet. 4:10). Simply stated, leaders are called to serve God and people. To be effective in serving people, it is essential to serve God and develop a close relationship with the Lord. Intimacy and a relationship with God are essential before considering being a leader and ministering to people as a servant.

Serving God through Relationship

The first step in serving people must begin by serving God and taking time with the Lord through personal prayer, devotion, and communion. The apostle Paul was a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, as revealed in his writings. Howell declared, “Though his heart has been liberated from the yoke of the law and released from the grip of sin, the apostle Paul delighted to call himself the ‘servant of Christ’ (Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:10; Phil. 1:1) and ‘servant of God’” (Tit. 1:1).¹⁴¹ As depicted in the writings of the apostle Paul, it is clearly noted that he was a servant of God by developing a relationship with the Lord. He nurtured that relationship on a daily basis.

It is essential and significant to note that serving God addresses one’s relationship and communion with Jesus. The author of this paper is convinced that a leader will not be effective in serving others spiritually without a close relationship with God. The foundation of one’s leadership ability is based on a relationship with Jesus. As the disciples spent time with their Master, they soon learned about servant leadership skills and how to relate to people effectively. It is imperative to emulate and follow the example of Jesus and the principles He taught in the

¹⁴⁰ James 1:19.

¹⁴¹ Don N. Howell, Jr. *Servants of the Servant: A Biblical Theology of Leadership* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 15.

gospels. A relationship with the Lord is a necessity when focusing on people and their spiritual development. Serving God through the means of communion is essential for today's leaders.

Q 4: Does your pastor have the heart of a servant when leading people?

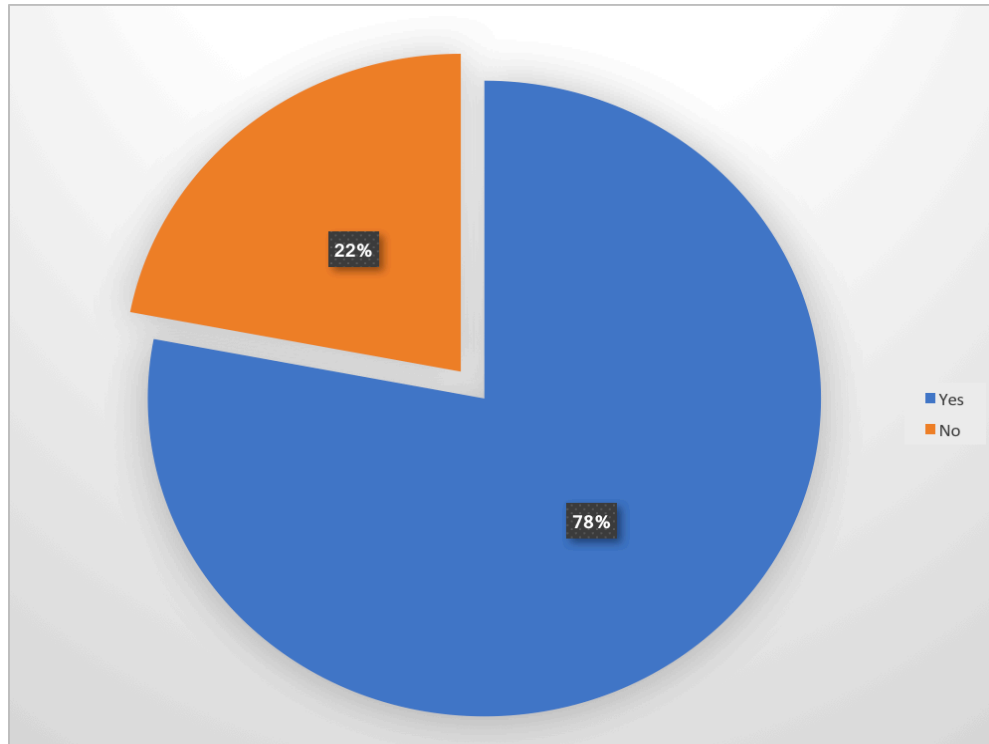


Figure 1.4. Out of 300 church members surveyed, 234 people believed that their pastor had the heart of a servant when leading people. However, 66 members believed that their pastor did not lead the congregation with the spirit of a servant.

Establishing a relationship with Jesus is paramount in relation to one's spiritual maturity, for the purpose of ministering to people. It is quite evident that one's relationship with God is imperative in order to be an effective servant leader when ministering to others. It is impossible for others to grow in the Lord if a leader has become stagnated in his relationship with God. A problem arises when one's priority and time management is in question. What do leaders value the most? The apostle Peter exhorted the church to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our

Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.”¹⁴² Peter challenged the Christian community and leaders to pursue God toward spiritual growth. The subject of spiritual maturity is held in high regard in the New Testament record.

Centrality of Love and Relationship

In developing a relationship with God, it is essential to address the principle of love. Jesus said, “And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.”¹⁴³ In order to be an effectual leader, it is imperative to develop a relationship with Jesus that involves love and intimacy. According to Boa, “To know God is to love Him, because the more we grasp—not merely in our minds but also in our experience—who He is and what He has done for us, the more our hearts will respond in love and gratitude.”¹⁴⁴ Boa added, “Since God is a relational being, we who are created in His image are also called to right relationships, first with Him and each other.”¹⁴⁵ One can observe that it is imperative to love and serve God sincerely before ministering to others.

God’s Love for People

It is imperative to develop a biblical position and perspective regarding God’s love for humankind. In order to love and minister to people successfully, it is essential to recognize God’s love for others as recorded in Scripture. Boa mentioned that “only in the book of Scripture does God reveal His limitless love . . . God’s loyal love for us is causeless (Rom. 5:6),

¹⁴² 2 Peter 3:18 (KJV).

¹⁴³ Mark 12:30 (KJV).

¹⁴⁴ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 32.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

measureless (5:7–8), and ceaseless (5:9–11).”¹⁴⁶ Boa further write that “God’s love is spontaneous and unending—He loved us because He chose to love us, and if we have responded to Christ’s offer of forgiveness and *relationship with Him*, nothing can separate us from that love or diminish it (8:35–39).”¹⁴⁷ Boa presented God’s love in context with the whole of biblical Creation, especially when addressing the magnitude of space and the heavens.

Scripture provides a plethora of passages concerning God’s love for humanity. The apostle Paul noted, “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love *with which he loved us*, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.”¹⁴⁸ God has chosen to love people because it is within His nature. God keeps on loving regardless of the spiritual state of people.

The prophet Jeremiah stated, “The Lord hath appeared unto me, saying, ‘Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: and with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.’”¹⁴⁹ God continues to love and desires to draw people to Himself. Throughout the study of Scripture, God continues to pursue His creation with His everlasting love.

Principle of Serving Others

It is essential to underscore the principle that Jesus loves people, as observed throughout the gospels and the writings of the apostle Paul. It then becomes the responsibility of servant leaders to express God’s love for others, especially to those they are leading. The centrality of this section focuses on meeting and serving the needs of others. For a servant leader, people

¹⁴⁶ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 30.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ephesians 2:4–5 (ESV).

¹⁴⁹ Jeremiah 31:3 (KJV).

become the main focus of their leadership. The apostle Paul challenged the Galatian church and stated, “For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”¹⁵⁰ The apostle exhorted the church to serve one another by expressing love. As Jesus served people during His earthly ministry, leaders are to emulate and follow His example in word and deed.

Q5: Does your pastor set a godly example for others to follow?

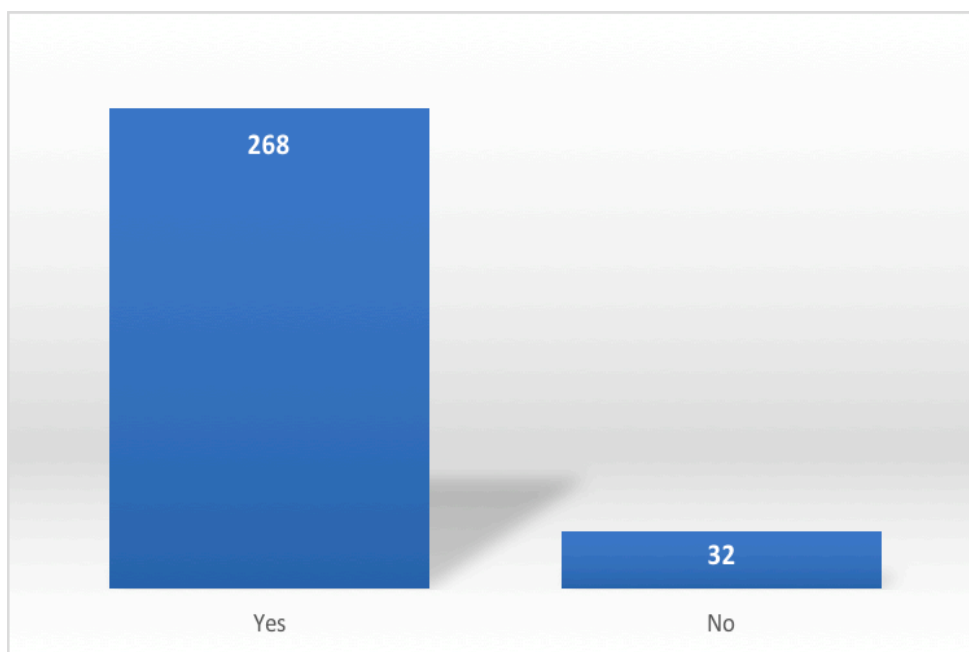


Figure 1.5. Almost 100% of members reported that their pastor set a godly example for the congregation

As leaders, we lead by serving others. Wilkes indicated that “leaders who follow the example and teachings of Jesus will lead first as servants.”¹⁵¹ It is necessary to recognize that servant leadership involves meeting the needs of others while also considering the mission of Jesus and the mission God has planned for your life. Wilkes stated, “Submission to God and to

¹⁵⁰ Galatians 5:13.

¹⁵¹ Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 17.

the divine mission for your life is the first step to servant leadership. Your mission and purpose in life spring from the relationship you have with God.”¹⁵² Wilkes added, “Knowing and living that life mission begin in a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.”¹⁵³ A servant leader must always recognize the importance of serving others and the correlation of the mission. The basis of servanthood and mission stems from one’s relationship with God.

Influence

The concept of influence plays an important role when leading people. Every adult has the power to influence people whether for the good or the bad. A seasoned leader will influence people toward God and encourage others along the way. The discipline of influence is a key element for effective leadership. According to Maxwell, “Leadership really does make a difference. One person with a lot of influence can make a huge positive impact upon society.”¹⁵⁴ The principle of influence is vital for the purpose of leadership. Maxwell went further, saying, “If you want to make an impact, then work on your influence. If you want to add value to others, help them work on theirs.”¹⁵⁵ Maxwell’s aim was to challenge his readers to implement influence for the sake of bringing about fulfillment in the lives of others.

It is the responsibility of leaders to impact other leaders in order to influence people to reach their full potential. In order to influence leaders or followers, one must realize that influence is based upon one’s character, and it is impossible to separate influence from character.

¹⁵² Ibid., 22.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ John C. Maxwell, *Leadership Gold: Lessons I’ve Learned from a Lifetime of Leading* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008), 193.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 194.

Stowell stated that “character drives the process of successful leadership.”¹⁵⁶ To lead others with effectiveness, it is essential to allow character to motivate one’s influence for the purpose of impacting others while pursuing their ministerial goals. Again, Maxwell wrote, “A person of influence connects with people.”¹⁵⁷ The discipline of influence is the key to effective servant leadership while attempting to connect and be relational to people, while also training others to be a leader. A leader must be influential with others in order to train future leaders. The principle of influence is also vital in being effective while leading others in pursuing their goals and dreams. It is imperative to influence and encourage people to be leaders in today’s church.

Q6: Does your pastor encourage and train others to be potential leaders?

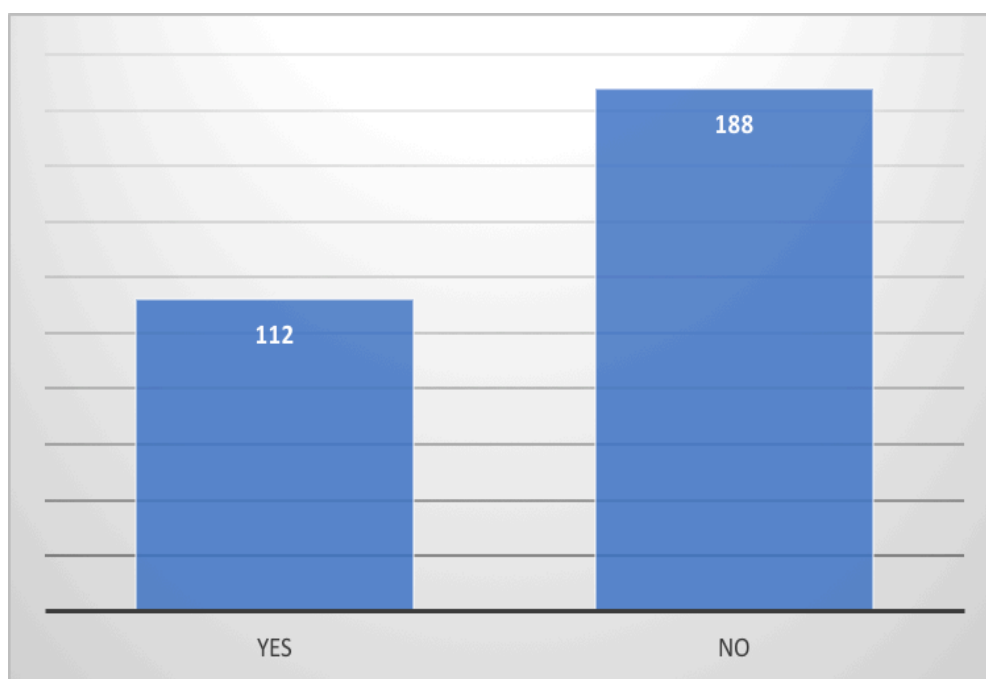


Figure 1.6. Almost 200 members did not believe that their pastor encouraged or trained others to be leaders.

¹⁵⁶ Stowell, *Redefining Leadership*, 28.

¹⁵⁷ Maxwell, *How to Influence People*, 131.

Influence and God

The influence of a servant leader is based on one's relationship with God. As a leader develops a solid relationship with the Lord, one's influence on people becomes more pronounced. It is essential to view people through the eyes of Jesus, and then a leader will have a greater impact on people through the means of influence as they pursue their ministerial and personal goals. The application of influence is vital for those being led.

Servant leadership addresses two important things: "results and relationships."¹⁵⁸ By developing relationships with people and applying the discipline of influence, one can expect long-lasting results. Blanchard pointed out that "it is how we influence others to accomplish a specific mission, vision, and goal, whether grand and glorious or humble and mundane."¹⁵⁹ Blanchard furthered this, arguing that "leading like Jesus is infusing harmony in our influence on other people with God's plan for their lives and ours."¹⁶⁰ In order to see people impacted in the direction of the kingdom of God, it is imperative that every leader recognize the importance of influence. In addition, leaders must continue to pursue and seek God in their relationships.

It is essential to underscore the words of Matthew: "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."¹⁶¹ An influential leader will focus completely on the King and His kingdom. Servant leaders must implement the principles of Jesus and His kingdom in order to see people motivated and changed for the purpose of spiritual growth and advancement. The principle of influence is not an option but a necessity.

¹⁵⁸ Blanchard and Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus*, 193.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Matthew 6:33.

Integrity

The biblical concept of integrity is essential for the purpose of impacting people and achieving ministerial effectiveness. For far too long, the evangelical church has placed too much emphasis on the outcome of one's ministry, as opposed to the spiritual and emotional elements of the leader. A large part of leadership must be placed on the person versus the performance of a leader. Instead of placing a large percentage of the focus on church growth and development, it is imperative to focus on the spiritual, physical, and emotional health of the minister. How can leaders serve and lead people effectively if the leaders themselves are struggling with a particular issue? God desires that leaders be completely whole in their physical bodies, emotions, and spirits.

Before addressing the subject of integrity, it is important to recognize the challenges and pressures that pastors are facing today, either physically, emotionally, or spiritually. The author of this paper would argue that integrity is possibly related directly to one of three elements. If pastors are struggling with their emotions, then the discipline of integrity can be in question. It is important and necessary to strengthen all three elements within the life of a leader. God desires that all three areas that make up the fiber of a minister be strengthened on a daily basis.

An Examination of Integrity

The principle of integrity is necessary and significant in the life of a leader. A servant leader cannot serve people effectively unless integrity has been implemented in the life of the servant as one continues to lead people in fulfilling their goals and dreams. The discipline of integrity is imperative because it keeps the leader honest and without hypocrisy. A leader must lead with a spirit of meekness and humility, which is a result of integrity and one's relationship

with God. As a leader continues to draw close to Jesus, the results of integrity will be manifested in the life of a leader. Integrity is not an option but a necessity in the life of a servant.

What is meant by integrity? Smith stated, “Integrity is based in character,”¹⁶³ adding, “I am convinced that God is much more interested in our character than He is in our intelligence, for character is of the heart.”¹⁶⁴ King Solomon wrote, “Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.”¹⁶⁵ A servant leader cannot lead people in fulfilling their goals and dreams without applying the principle of integrity. The concept of integrity ought to be the centrality of leadership.

It is essential to further expand on the definition of integrity for the purpose of underscoring the importance and application of this principle in the life of a leader. It is impossible to lead people successfully unless integrity is implemented in the life and spirit of a leader. Wiersbe provided a definition and an interpretation as follows: “The *Oxford English Dictionary* says that the word (integrity) comes from the Latin *integritas*, which means ‘wholeness,’ ‘entireness,’ ‘completeness.’ The root word *integer*, which means ‘untouched,’ ‘intact,’ ‘entire.’ Integrity is to personal or corporate character what health is to the body or 20/20 vision is to the eyes. People with integrity have nothing to hide and nothing to fear. Their lives are open books.”¹⁶⁶ Wiersbe further noted, “Jesus made it clear that integrity involves the whole of the inner person: the heart, the mind, and the will.”¹⁶⁷ The concept of integrity is

¹⁶³ Fred Smith Jr., *Leading with Integrity: Competence with Christian Character* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 199), 21–2.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Proverbs 4:23 (NLT).

¹⁶⁶ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Integrity Crisis* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 21.

imperative in the life of a leader because it keeps the leader focused on what is important. The principle of integrity aids in contributing and placing confidence in the life of the leader.

Integrity is not what you do but who you are.

Q7: Is integrity necessary in order to be a servant leader?

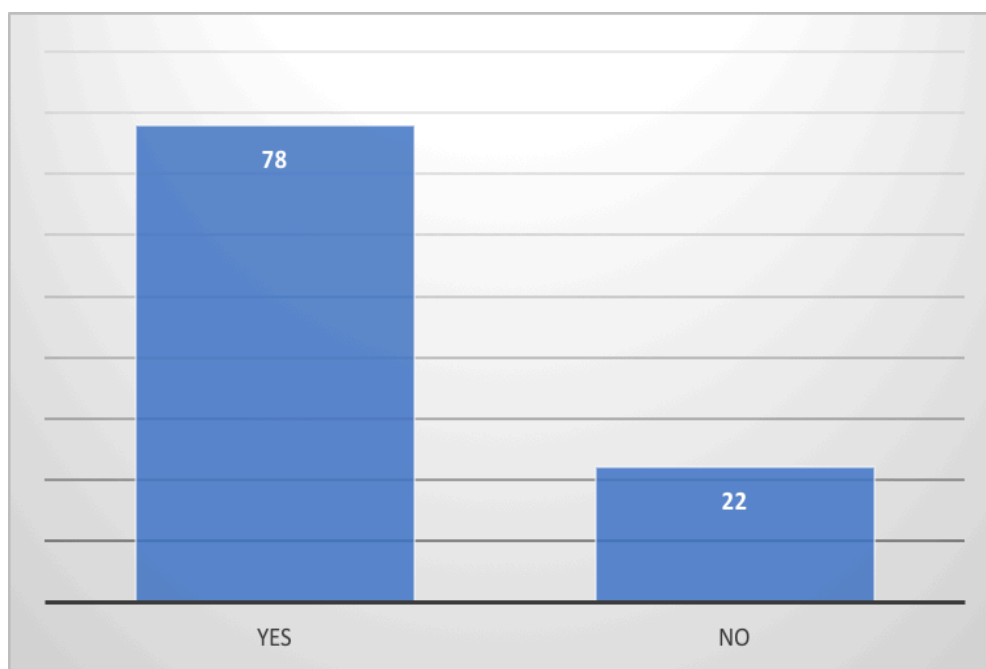


Figure 1.7. From 100 pastors surveyed, 78 agreed that integrity is necessary to be a servant leader.

Integrity and Scripture

Throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament, the concept of integrity is underscored many times in the lives of the Old Testament patriarchs. The person of Joseph, in particular, is known for his integrity in the face of temptation. The life of Joseph is recorded in Genesis 37–50. As one reads and studies the life of Joseph, one can soon come to a quick observation of his unprecedented opposition, rejection, and temptation, but Joseph consistently retains his integrity.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

One of the main areas of temptation for Joseph was when he was tempted by Potiphar's wife. The writer of Genesis noted, "Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. And after a period of time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, 'Lie with me.' But he refused."¹⁶⁸ The narrative continues in Genesis 39: "But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, she caught him by his garment, saying, 'Lie with me.' But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house."¹⁶⁹ The text clearly indicates that Joseph stood by his conviction and integrity. Joseph clearly communicated his conviction, saying, "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"¹⁷⁰ This passage clearly addresses the integrity of Joseph, who refused to allow himself to compromise with sin. Joseph refused to give in to temptation, and may God equip all Christian leaders to follow the example of Joseph by exemplifying a spirit of integrity.

God blessed and gave favor to Joseph because he refused to compromise. Joseph clearly rejected the seductive ways of Potiphar's wife because of his strong loyalty to God and the intimacy he had with the Lord. Joseph could stand strong because of his love for his God.

Encouragement

The discipline of encouragement plays a significant role in leading people as they pursue their goals. A servant leader focuses on the need of encouragement, which helps in keeping others insistent in their pursuit of God and the implementation of the Great Commission. As one reads through the gospels, it is evident that Jesus was an encourager to His disciples. According to Roach, "Jesus knew the hearts of His disciples and that they needed encouragement to press

¹⁶⁸ Genesis 39:6–8 (ESV).

¹⁶⁹ Genesis 39:11–12 (ESV).

¹⁷⁰ Genesis 39:9 (ESV).

on with the commission He had left them with.”¹⁷¹ The disciples received much comfort and encouragement from the words of Jesus as they pushed forward in fulfilling the Great Commission. Jesus said, “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”¹⁷² This passage provides ample encouragement to those who will obey the mandate of Jesus as referenced in Matthew 28:19, 20 and Mark 16:15.

Scripture alludes to the concept of encouragement in relation to the Christian community. The apostle Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica and stated, “Therefore, encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.”¹⁷³ Paul commended the church for their love and support of each other in applying the principle of encouragement. A pastor is responsible for building and supporting his followers as they pursue God’s purpose in their lives. Encouragement is essential when leading others because it provides emotional energy and revives the spirit. It is interesting to note that the word “encourage” is translated as “comfort” in other translations of the Bible. So then, it is imperative that pastors encourage and comfort one another in the faith. Servant leaders are consistently encouraging those they lead.

¹⁷¹ Roach, *The Servant-Leadership Style of Jesus*, 61.

¹⁷² Matthew 28:20b (ESV).

¹⁷³ 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

Summary

The concept of servant leadership was examined in relation to the various elements that cause leadership to be effective when leading people. From the outset of this section, the discipline of servant was assessed in relation to the words of Jesus as recorded in the gospels. Jesus said, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”¹⁷⁴ It was clearly stated that servant leadership focuses on people and their interests. Before a person can lead, it is essential to adopt the principle of servanthood. As Wilkes pointed out, “For Jesus, the model of leadership was servanthood.”¹⁷⁵ Jesus came to earth to serve people and met them at the point of need.

Being a servant of Jesus, the natural outflow is loving God and people. In order to be an effective servant to others, a leader must then develop a close relationship with Jesus Christ. As one draws near to God, servant leadership becomes more effective. When ministering to people as a servant, the principle of compassion is applied.

When ministering to others, it is necessary that a leader be a good listener. Without listening, it would be impossible to understand and minister to the needs of people. The apostle James stated, “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear and slow to speak.”¹⁷⁶ As leaders, it is essential to listen as people express their hearts.

As documented in this treatise, it has been stated that God loves people. And as leaders, it is the responsibility of pastors and ministerial leadership to love God and others. Servant leadership always focuses on people. May leaders look at people through the eyes of Jesus.

¹⁷⁴ Mark 10:45.

¹⁷⁵ Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 10.

¹⁷⁶ James 1:19.

The principle of influence was also addressed in this document. It was also stated that a seasoned leader will influence people toward God and encourage others along the way. Strong effective leadership is needed today to lead God's people in order for them to reach their full potential. According to Maxwell, "Leadership really does make a difference. One person with a lot of influence can make a huge positive impact upon society."¹⁷⁷ It is important to never underestimate the power of influence. While influence is necessary, one should never examine influence without taking into consideration the principle of character because character is the driving force behind influence. Stowell noted that "character drives the process of successful leadership."¹⁷⁸ It would be true to say that influence and character are inseparable in nature. Both disciplines are closely related in relation to servant leadership. One cannot lead successfully unless the principle of character is implemented in the heart of a servant.

The concept of integrity was also addressed in relation to servant and leadership. Integrity must be applied because it keeps the leader honest and without hypocrisy. It has been argued that God is more concerned with the person than with what a leader can accomplish. King Solomon declared, "Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life."¹⁷⁹ Wiersbe also addressed the subject of integrity, stating, "Jesus made it clear that integrity involves the whole of the inner person: the heart, the mind, and the will."¹⁸⁰ Integrity is important because it keeps a leader focused on what is essential. Finally, encouragement was also referenced because it aids in keeping followers inspired as they pursue toward God-appointed dreams.

¹⁷⁷ Maxwell, *Leadership Gold: Lessons I've Learned from a Lifetime of Leading*, 193.

¹⁷⁸ Stowell, *Redefining Leadership*, 28.

¹⁷⁹ Proverbs 4:23 (NLT).

¹⁸⁰ Wiersbe, *The Integrity Crisis*, 21.

CHAPTER FOUR

SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

Chapter Introduction

Throughout Scripture, the Bible provides a plethora of passages that reference the principles of being a servant and servant leadership. The word “servant” is recorded in numerous books of the Bible in relation to God and people. This section focuses on the heart of servant leadership. This treatise addresses three major principles that result in making servant leadership effective while leading people as they pursue their God-given objectives.

From a biblical perspective, a comparison of servant and shepherd leadership is examined and shows the correlation and characteristics between the two styles of leadership. Though there are various styles of leadership, servant and shepherd leadership are closely related in nature and application. The author of this paper argues for the necessity of servant leadership in the evangelical church and demonstrates its significance in today’s church.

The greatest servant leader, as recorded in the gospels, is Jesus Christ. He stands alone as the most influential leader that ever existed. The leadership principles of Jesus are examined according to the gospel writers. Ample principles of Jesus’ leadership are provided. Wilkes contended that “true greatness (Mark 10:43, 44), true leadership, is achieved not by reducing men to one’s service but in giving oneself in selfless service to them.”¹⁸¹ Jesus provided the greatest example of leadership. Finally, the following biblical leaders are examined in detail: Joseph, Moses, Nehemiah, the apostle Paul, and the apostle John. Each of these leaders are evaluated in relation to their individual style of servant leadership. This chapter focuses on servant leadership among key leaders pertaining to biblical theology.

¹⁸¹ Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership*, 32.

Heart of Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is the most notable type of leadership because it is clearly referenced in Scripture and focuses directly on people. As seen in the gospels, Jesus always focused on people and their specific needs. When studying the ministry of Jesus as revealed in the gospels, He is seen as ministering to people on a one-to-one basis. The Bible also provides a plethora of examples to substantiate this truth. The heart of a servant leader combines three significant disciplines: love, caring, and compassion. A servant leader is always focused on people.

The heart of a servant leader always understands the significance of people. As Blanchard declared, “If you do not really love Jesus, then you will not truly love the people you lead. However, Christ’s kind of love will make your work easier, and it will encourage those you lead wholeheartedly.”¹⁸² Jesus loved people by expressing a spirit of love and compassion toward those He led. As servant leaders emulate the example of Jesus as recorded in the gospels, they will recognize their effectiveness and influence on the people they lead.

When reading through the gospels, it becomes apparent that each writer “reveals that Jesus practiced—even embodied—what is known today as servant leadership.”¹⁸³ When examining the ministry of Jesus as referenced in the gospels, one can conclude that Jesus was truly a servant leader and expressed a spirit of compassion (Matt. 9:36; Mk. 6:34; Lk. 7:13). The driving principles of a servant leader are love and compassion. These two principles are inseparable in nature. Servant leaders see people through the eyes of Jesus (Heb. 12:2) while applying love and compassion to those they lead. To be effective in leadership, it is imperative that the love of God and the compassion of Jesus be active in the life of a servant leader.

¹⁸² Blanchard, *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of all Time*, 178.

¹⁸³ Skip Bell, *Servants & Friends: A Biblical Theology of Leadership* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2014), 278.

Within the context of pastoral ministry, it is imperative that servant leaders recognize the importance of the biblical principles of love and compassion. Engstrom and Cedar wrote, “I believe an exciting model for leading with *love* is found in Paul’s marvelous teaching in 1 Corinthians 13. In this passage, we find a graphic picture of how *love* is to look and behave in all of life—and especially in servant leadership. In fact, it is not inappropriate for our purposes here to substitute the words ‘servant leader’ whenever the word ‘love’ and ‘character’ is found in 1 Corinthians 13.”¹⁸⁴ Recorded in 1 Corinthians 13:4–7, this details the characteristics of love in relation to servant leadership. Engstrom and Cedar detailed this in the following passage:

A servant leader is patient and kind. A servant leader doesn’t envy others or boast. A servant leader is not proud or rude, does not insist on having his or her own way. A servant leader does not become easily angered, doesn’t hold grudges or keep a list of people’s past mistakes. A servant leader is never happy with any form of evil but is always searching for truth. A servant leader always protects others, trust others, and always hopes for the very best. A servant leader never gives up.¹⁸⁵

As referenced in 1 Corinthians 13, the principle of love is evidenced as the driving motivation pertaining to servant leadership and its application.

The second principle and the heart of servant leadership is biblical compassion. Every person Jesus ministered to was through the means of compassion. May church leaders today recognize the significance of compassion and also the value of people. Servant leaders view people through the eyes of Jesus and also through the element of compassion. It is impossible to impact people without implementing the concept of compassion because this important principle tells the story that people are truly loved and accepted by God and also by servant leaders. May

¹⁸⁴ Ted & Paul Engstrom, *Compassionate Leadership*, 149.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

there be a revitalization of the importance and necessity of biblical compassion when leading people.

Servant and Shepherd Leaders

There is a close correlation between the characteristics of servant and shepherd leaders. Both styles of leadership are necessary in the church today because both leadership types focus on people. Whatever style of leadership is applied, people are the focus of that leadership. When Jesus ministered in Israel, His focus was solely on people while meeting their needs and desires. The Bible provides a plethora of passages that reference Jesus as both servant and shepherd.

Jesus addressed His audience in Matthew concerning the necessity of servant leadership, and provided context and perspective, saying, “Yet, it shall not be so among you: but whoever desires to be great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave.”¹⁸⁶ The secular business world strives to reach the pinnacle of success even at the expense of others, while Jesus provides an opposite view in relation to greatness. If you want to be great, you must be a servant to all people, especially to those you minister to and lead.

For servant leaders, people are the centrality of their focus and ministry. As indicated by Sanders, “Jesus knew that the idea of leader as ‘loving servant of all’ would not appeal to most people. Securing our own creature comforts is a much more common mission. But ‘servant’ is His requirement for those who want to lead in His kingdom.”¹⁸⁷ The problem that is set before many pastors and leaders is that they are not relational to people, which makes them ineffective

¹⁸⁶ Matthew 20:26, 27 (NKJV).

¹⁸⁷ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer*, 22.

when addressing the importance of ministry and leadership. It is essential that leaders emulate the person of Jesus in word and deed for the advancement of God's kingdom.

The author of this paper is convinced that servant leadership is paramount and substantiated clearly in God's Word. Jesus, the apostle Paul, and other writers referenced the significance of servanthood throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament and provided arguments for the need of servant leadership in today's church. How can a leader be effective and impact others without applying servant or shepherd leadership, especially since these two types of leadership are primary in Scripture? The Bible places more emphasis on servant and shepherd leadership than on any other style recorded in the Word of God. One can state that Jesus leads His people like a shepherd. The prophet Isaiah stated, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."¹⁸⁸ The passion of Jesus was to lead His people as a gentle shepherd.

In addressing leadership, Towns declared, "A servant leader is one who recognizes the real secret of leadership is found in identifying the needs of others and ministering to them. This leader believes people will follow if their needs are being met by their leader."¹⁸⁹ A servant leader must always be attentive to the needs of others, an idea that was implemented through the ministry of Jesus and the apostle Paul. Towns elaborated on this: "Servant leaders are the pastors who define their life as an opportunity to meet the needs of others."¹⁹⁰ It is imperative that

¹⁸⁸ Isaiah 40:11 (KJV).

¹⁸⁹ Elmer Towns, *Biblical Models for Leadership: Liberty University* (Mason, OH: Cengage Learning, 2007), 139.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

pastors and church leaders embrace the leadership style of Jesus for the purpose of impacting others and for ongoing spiritual growth and transformation.

As Jesus ministered to individual people, He focused mostly on the needs of the person. In short, He applied both servant and shepherd leadership styles.

Shepherd Leadership

The concept of shepherd leadership is referenced both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. According to *The Strong's Expanded Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, by James Strong, the word shepherd is recorded 114 times in the Bible. Jesus is referenced as a shepherd in the New Testament in particular, most directly in the gospels. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."¹⁹¹ The usage of the title shepherd can be recognized as a metaphorical expression. This passage depicts Jesus as a "good shepherd"¹⁹² who will lay down His life down for the sheep, which refers directly to lost souls.

A shepherd leader focuses on the spiritual welfare of lost people and the spiritual condition of sheep in God's church. Today, there is a great need for shepherd leadership because a shepherd focuses on key elements: feeding, nurturing, caring, leading people to water, and protection, as referenced in Psalm 23. This psalm is one of the most popular pieces of literature ever written. It is even recognized by people of the unsaved community.

Shepherd leadership and servant leadership are almost the same in nature and function, and there is a great need for shepherd leaders and true servants who will completely focus on the needs and concerns of God's people and others. Resane stated, "The call is for leaders in the ecclesiastical community to emulate the shepherd-leader model for the advancement and the

¹⁹¹ John 10:11.

¹⁹² Ibid.

effectiveness of the mission of Christ in the world. The Great Commission is a continuous mandate as given by Jesus Christ Himself.”¹⁹³ The need for shepherd leadership is essential in fulfilling the Great Commission referenced in Matthew 28:19, 20.

Jesus: The Great Servant Leader

Jesus Christ was known to be the greatest leader who ever lived because of the impact He had on the lives of people and the principles that governed His leadership. As one reads the gospels, the leadership of Jesus and His relationship to people quickly become evident. The primary principle of the ministry and leadership of Jesus is recorded in the book of Mark. Jesus said, “Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all.”¹⁹⁴ This passage is paramount because it gives guidance to those in ministry as they minister to people. The author of this paper is convinced that pastors and other ministers of the gospel should be servants to people because it will cause their ministry to be effective while expanding the kingdom of God.

There is a big distinction between the words “leader” and “servant.” As Sanders noted, “The *King James Bible* uses ‘leader’ only six times. Much more frequently, the role is called *servant*.”¹⁹⁵ Sanders added, “We do not read about ‘Moses my leader,’ but ‘Moses, my servant.’ And this is exactly what Jesus taught.”¹⁹⁶ The foundation of the ministry of Jesus focused primarily on the biblical concept of servant leadership. Jesus manifested a spirit of servanthood

¹⁹³ Resane, *Leadership for the Church: The Shepherd Model*, 6.

¹⁹⁴ Mark 10:43, 44 (NKJV).

¹⁹⁵ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer*, 21.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

to the people He physically and spiritually touched. In addition, Sanders argued, “Christ taught that the kingdom of God was a community where each member served the others. He defined His ultimate purpose using the term in Mark 10:45.”¹⁹⁷ The principle of servant leader cannot be overstated because people were the main focus of Jesus’ ministry.

Jesus was a great servant leader because He understood people and their needs. Jesus recognized the significance of and need for God’s Spirit. Jesus said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.”¹⁹⁸ It is impossible to be effective in ministry unless the Holy Spirit is central in one’s ministry. Sanders explained this idea further: “Spiritual leadership requires Spirit-filled people. Other qualities are important; to be Spirit-filled is indispensable.”¹⁹⁹ Nothing can substitute the person and power of the Holy Spirit. It is imperative that leaders embrace the leadership of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of leading and impacting people. According to Sanders, “The book of Acts clearly demonstrates that leaders who significantly influenced the Christian movement were Spirit-filled.”²⁰⁰ It is impossible to accomplish anything for God and His kingdom apart from the Holy Spirit.

Realizing that Jesus was a great and effective leader, one must recognize that He was a great spiritual leader. Most of the ministry of Jesus focused on the spiritual needs of people. Throughout the record of the gospels, the focal point of His ministry addressed the spiritual condition of those to whom he ministered. Today, it is essential that leaders be filled with the Spirit for the purpose of effectiveness within their calling. God is calling leaders to impact their

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 21, 22.

¹⁹⁸ Luke 4:18.

¹⁹⁹ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer*, 77.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 78.

respective generations with the message of the gospel. The apostle Luke told his readers that Jesus depended on the Spirit of God: “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good...for God was with Him.”²⁰¹ Jesus was effective as a servant leader because of His dependence on the anointing of the Spirit.

Matthew 20:26–28

This passage addresses the necessity and the heart of servant leadership. Matthew recorded the words of Jesus because He set an example for leaders to follow and defined servanthood and how to relate to people. Matthew reported, “But whoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.”²⁰² The servant leader recognizes and applies the principle of humility, as illustrated by Morris: “The person who wants eminence in the kingdom is to take the path of lowliness and humility.”²⁰³ A servant leader is always motivated by humility when leading people.

Also, according to Morris, “In the ancient world there was no one lower than a slave; the slave’s whole life is lived in service for which he can claim neither credit nor reward. It is in lowly service that Christians find their true fulfillment. They follow a Master who took the form of a servant and lived all his earthly days in humble obscurity.”²⁰⁴ The biblical position of Morris concerning servant leadership ought to be adopted by many leaders today. Finally, Morris concluded, “Those who take the lead among them (followers of Christ) are to be humble, people

²⁰¹ Acts 10:38 (ESV).

²⁰² Matthew 20:26.

²⁰³ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing 1992), 512.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

seeking not personal success but the opportunity of doing lowly service.”²⁰⁵ It is imperative that leaders follow the lead of Jesus as they lead God’s people in pursuing their goals and objectives.

This passage provides clarity regarding the significance of servant leadership. Jesus provided perspective in relation to the context of true servanthood. Leaders should look to Jesus as the greatest example to emulate when leading and ministering to people.

Mark 10:45

This text provides clarity concerning the purpose and meaning regarding the servant leadership of Jesus, who gave of His life and provided salvation for millions. This passage focuses on the selfless nature of Jesus as a servant, for Jesus said, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”²⁰⁶ This text places a great deal of emphasis on the servant heart of Jesus and His willingness to give His life’s blood for the souls of all humanity. Jesus came to be a servant to people, just as leaders today ought to follow His example. Lane wrote, “The reversal of all human ideas of greatness and rank was achieved when Jesus came, not to be served, but to serve.”²⁰⁷ In this passage, Jesus was addressing the necessity of servanthood, which is much needed among leaders today.

The concept of servant leadership was central to the ministry of Jesus. The principle of servanthood is clearly revealed in this text, especially by referencing the following words: “. . . but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”²⁰⁸ As Lane pointed out, “The ransom metaphor sums up the purpose for which Jesus gave His life and defines the complete expression

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Mark 10:45.

²⁰⁷ William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1974), 383.

²⁰⁸ Mark 10:45b.

of His service.”²⁰⁹ There is no other person in history who exemplified such love and servanthood as Jesus Christ. Lane added, “The service in which the royal will of the Son of Man is displayed is fulfilled in His giving of Himself.”²¹⁰ The giving up of one’s life in the service of people is the highest act of servant leadership.

Philippians 2:7

The apostle Paul addressed the Philippi church and wrote, “But [Jesus] made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”²¹¹ The centrality of this passage focuses on the words, “...and took upon him the form of a servant...” Jesus took upon Himself the form of a human for the purpose of being a servant to many people. The first part of this passage states, “But made himself of no reputation.”²¹² This phrase means that Jesus “emptied Himself” or “poured Himself out,”²¹³ but still retained His role as the Son of God, as recorded in John 1:1.

The *Amplified Bible* (AMP) provides ample clarity concerning the passage from Philippians 2:7. “But emptied Himself [without renouncing or diminishing His deity, but only temporarily giving up the outward expression of divine equality and His rightful dignity] by assuming the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men [He became completely human but was without sin, being fully God and fully man].” Jesus was clothed in humanity in order to become a servant as He ministered to people during His earthly ministry.

²⁰⁹ Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 383.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Philippians 2:7 (KJV).

²¹² Philippians 2:7a.

²¹³ Gordon D. Fee, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995), 210.

Knowing that Jesus was a servant to many, it is then imperative that leaders follow the same example of Jesus. It is necessary that leaders capture the Spirit of Jesus as He led and ministered to those while applying the heart of a servant. As pastors and leaders emulate servant leadership, it is essential that they assist their followers as they aim to fulfill their God-given goals and dreams.

The author of this paper believes that servant leaders are a rare breed in today's church. May God raise up leaders to be servants to God's people. Jesus was truly a servant to all.

Biblical Examples of Servant Leaders

There is a great need for servant leadership in the church today. It is necessary that leaders examine the Word of God and draw upon various principles, which have caused them to become effective leaders. This section of the treatise addresses the importance of the following leaders: Joseph, Moses, Nehemiah, the apostle Paul, and the apostle John. The author draws upon the strengths of their leadership for this exposition.

Joseph: Principle of Integrity

The narrative of the life of Joseph is recorded in Genesis 37–50. Reflecting on this text, it is essential to provide a little history on the home life of Joseph and how God raised up the son of Jacob to be the governor of all Egypt. According to Swindoll, “The home in which Joseph was raised was comprised of a family with anger, jealous, and deceitful people. Within that hostile environment, for seventeen years, the other sons of Jacob had watched as their father played favorites with Joseph.”²¹⁴ The favoritism that was shown toward Joseph by his father Jacob caused an indescribable spirit of jealousy among Joseph's brothers. When Jacob showed

²¹⁴ Charles R. Swindoll, *Joseph: A Man of Integrity and Forgiveness* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 11.

preferential treatment toward Joseph, it caused a spirit of dysfunctionality in the home of Jacob, and his sons reacted against Joseph.

Because of Jacob's favoritism toward Joseph, his brothers became vicious with jealousy and malice, and their hatred toward Joseph began to escalate. Genesis 37 describes what had taken place at the hands of his brothers. "Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver, and they brought Joseph into the land of Egypt."²¹⁵ At this point in Joseph's life, he was young and was probably in his late teens when he arrived in the land of Egypt. His age in the book of Genesis is not recorded.

Scripture includes a description of what happened following Joseph's arrival in Egypt. "Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard, bought him from the Ishmeelites, who had taken him down there. The Lord was with Joseph, so he became a successful man. And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian. Now his master saw that the Lord was with and *how* the Lord caused all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found favor in his sight and became his personal servant; and he *made him overseer* over his house, and all that he owned he put in his charge."²¹⁶ After Joseph arrived in Egypt, he became a key servant in the house of Potiphar and prospered because God was with him. As described in Genesis 39, "Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard, bought him

²¹⁵ Genesis 37:27, 28 (KJV).

²¹⁶ Genesis 39:1-4.

from the Ishmeelites.”²¹⁷ Throughout all the experiences that Joseph endured up to this point, the Lord was with him.

After being sold into slavery by his brothers, and being a servant/slave in the house of Potiphar, Joseph was soon to face another major challenge. According to Scripture, “And it came to pass after these things, that his master’s wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, ‘Lie with me.’”²¹⁸ After enduring temptation from Potiphar’s wife, day after day, Joseph said, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”²¹⁹ Joseph was a man of true integrity.

Integrity of Joseph

Throughout every trial and temptation Joseph endured, he retained his integrity in every area. The principle of integrity is essential for effective leadership and to pursue the work of God. Smith noted, “Without personal integrity, it is impossible to have integrity in leading others.”²²⁰ It is impossible to separate integrity from leadership because it is imperative to apply the principle of integrity in order to be competent in today’s ministry, as Christian leaders proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

It is significant to acknowledge that God was with Joseph, as the Lord brought him into favor with the King of Egypt. Scripture depicts Joseph’s time in Egypt as follows: “And Pharaoh said unto his servants, can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, forasmuch as God showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and

²¹⁷ Genesis 39:1.

²¹⁸ Genesis 39:7 (KJV).

²¹⁹ Genesis 39:9b (KJV).

²²⁰ Smith, *Leading with Integrity: Competence with Christian Character*, 19.

wise as thou art.”²²¹ This passage clearly states that Pharaoh saw, with his own eyes, the wisdom and spiritual integrity of Joseph. The Pharaoh elaborated on this. “And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, see, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.”²²² Because of Joseph’s faithfulness toward God and the integrity he possessed, the Lord brought him into favor with a pagan king and the whole land of Egypt.

In examining the life of Joseph in terms of integrity, one can observe how God brought Joseph to a high position in Egypt. Smith stated, “Leaders with strong character have power, dignity, and integrity.”²²³ A Christian leader can learn necessary lessons from the life and integrity of Joseph.

Moses: Principle of Dedication

Moses was an influential and dedicated leader, as recorded in the Old Testament. The ministry of Moses began at the burning bush at Mount Sinai, where Moses had an encounter with God, as described in Exodus 3: “And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of the bush. And he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, ‘Moses, Moses!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children out of Egypt.”²²⁴ At the burning bush, God revealed Himself to Moses and commissioned him to be the deliverer of God’s people, Israel, out of the land of bondage.

²²¹ Genesis 41: 38, 39 (KJV).

²²² Genesis 41:41 (KJV).

²²³ Smith, 46.

²²⁴ Exodus 3:2, 4, 10 (NKJV).

There at the burning bush, Moses receives a mandate from God to deliver a message to Pharaoh: “Let my people go...”²²⁵ As Swindoll explained, “The eighty-year-old Moses ran himself out of excuses (Exodus 4:1, 10). And then he reluctantly said (with great reservations), ‘Oh, all right, Lord. But it won’t work.’ Yet it did work. God worked. And Moses became the most magnificent leader Israel ever had—God appointed, not self-assumed.”²²⁶ The prophet Moses was one of the greatest leaders Israel had, especially when he led them out of Egyptian bondage.

Moses stands as a tall figure in the book of Exodus. For Moses, it was the desert experience that lasted for 40 years that broke and molded him for the task up ahead. According to Swindoll, “Moses had a four-decade course of study in the wilderness,”²²⁷ which prepared him to “know how to lead a whole nation through a similar wilderness.”²²⁸ It is through a wilderness experience that God breaks the will of humankind in order to use them effectively, as with Moses going back to Pharaoh to deliver the people out of Egypt. Throughout the whole process of the ministry of Moses as the deliverer, he remained faithful and dedicated to the mission. Numbers 12 contains more on this: “Not so, with My servant Moses, He is faithful in all My household.”²²⁹ Never was there a prophet like Moses, who remained faithful to the call of God. Moses pursued his relationship with God as he led the people to freedom.

²²⁵ Exodus 5:1 (NKJV).

²²⁶ Charles R. Swindoll, *Moses: A Man of Selfless Dedication* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 57.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 69.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ Numbers 12:7

Never was there a prophet like Moses. According to Deuteronomy 34, “Since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.”²³⁰ Moses was not only dedicated and committed to God, but he was also dedicated to the task that was set before him. As Meier pointed out, “We might assume that someone who has been granted Divine revelation and chosen for a holy, unique mission would feel very important, perhaps even haughty. But throughout Moses’s life, his ego remained remarkably uninflated.”²³¹ It is necessary that leaders draw from the mission and life of Moses for the purpose of dedication to the work of God. As written in Hebrews 3, “Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a *servant*, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later.”²³² Through the life and example of Moses, many leaders can learn from his humility, meekness, and dedication because he was consistent to the mission that God had placed before him.

Nehemiah: Principle of Service

The life and work of Nehemiah addresses the concept of service to God and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. In addition, Nehemiah is also recognized as an important leader who was noted for his organizational plans and team work. From the outset of Nehemiah’s ministry, one can observe that he was the cupbearer for King Artaxerxes, as described in Nehemiah 2: “And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king.”²³³ This

²³⁰ Deuteronomy 34:10

²³¹ Rabbi Levi Meier, *Moses—The Prince, the Prophet: His Life, Legend & Message for Our Lives* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1998), 188.

²³² Hebrews 3:5.

²³³ Nehemiah 2:1 (NKJV).

passage allows readers know that Nehemiah held an important position as the cupbearer for the king.

Swindoll has written about the subject of Nehemiah, too. “The cupbearer tasted the wine before the king drank it, and he sampled the food before the king ate it. If somebody was trying to poison the king, no more cupbearer, but long live the king.”²³⁴ Nehemiah, as the cupbearer, had a very significant position. Swindoll added, “Consequently, a high degree of trust would often develop between the taster and the partaker, between the cupbearer and the king. In fact, it has been suggested by historians that the cupbearer typically wielded great political influence, even more than the king’s own family.”²³⁵ Nehemiah being in such an important position as the cupbearer for the king brought him into favor with the king.

When Nehemiah received news that the walls of Jerusalem were in ruin (Neh. 1:3), the first thing that he did was pray (Neh. 1:4–11). Nehemiah was a man who was dedicated to the discipline of prayer. When Nehemiah heard of the destruction of the walls of Jerusalem, he responded and said, “So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.”²³⁶ After Nehemiah was granted permission from the king, he traveled to Judah and evaluated the ruins of the walls of Jerusalem. An excellent leader will first make an assessment of a situation and then pursue a plan for the purpose of meeting a specific goal. Swindoll voiced a related concern, writing, “I am greatly concerned that so many people who undertake some project in the Lord’s work enter

²³⁴ Charles R. Swindoll, *Hand Me Another Brick: How Effective Leaders Motivate Themselves and Others* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 11.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Nehemiah 1:4 (NKJV).

without planning.”²³⁷ The concept of team organization was the key to rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, as Nehemiah led the people to work, serve, and accomplish the project that was set before them.

Nehemiah was a key figure, as he served and provided leadership to the people for the purpose of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. The two main concepts in developing a team are serving others and providing successful leadership. Nehemiah provided an atmosphere that caused people to follow his leadership, which involved a spirit of unity. Working together as a team requires good leadership and unity.

The people who followed Nehemiah’s lead understood the importance of serving others. Gangel noted, “A Christian unwilling to share responsibilities for service demonstrates a deficient spiritual life. He has not come to grips with the New Testament demands upon his time, talent, and entire being.”²³⁸ It is imperative that people come together with one common purpose to fulfill God’s will. Nehemiah serves as an example for the church to follow when working together for the purpose of accomplishing a specific project. The effectiveness of Nehemiah’s leadership was based on prayer and planning. These two principles are essential when taking on a large project that will result as a tool in winning people to Jesus Christ.

Apostle Paul: Principle of Faith

The apostle Paul was the greatest apostle and leader who ever ministered to the Gentile world. Paul was recognized for his fervency, devotion, and his faith in God. Paul’s life was filled with unprecedented trials, adversity, and hardship. When addressing the element of Paul’s faith, it is essential to examine his faith based on the backdrop of Paul’s opposition and trials. Though

²³⁷ Swindoll, *Hand Me Another Brick: How Effective Leaders Motivate Themselves and Others*, 43.

²³⁸ Kenneth O. Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1997), 321.

Paul was faced with numerous trials, the apostle remained strong in his faith in God. The book of 2 Corinthians provides clear examples of the trials Paul endured throughout his travels while preaching the gospel.

In 2 Corinthians 6, Paul expressed the various forms of adversity he endured, stating, “But in everything commending ourselves as servants *of God*, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, and in hunger.”²³⁹ Despite all the suffering Paul encountered, he remained strong in his faith in God. There is no evidence in Scripture that would indicate that Paul ever wavered in his faith and confidence in Jesus Christ. He was consistent because of his relationship with God.

Swindoll wrote about Paul’s trials: “Despite all of that suffering, he chose not to boast in his remarkable grit, or in his ability to face enormous odds with undaunted courage, or in his physical stamina and emotional stability. He testifies to none of that. Rather, he confesses, ‘If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness’ (2 Cor.11:30). Boasting in *weakness*?”²⁴⁰ The apostle Paul could boast in his weakness because he took pleasure in his trials and suffering for the name of Jesus. Paul was strong in faith because Jesus was the object of his faith.

Paul’s Faith and Leadership

Throughout the inconceivable adversities that Paul experienced and endured, he remained strong in his faith in God. Paul’s faith was instrumental to his mission. One must also consider Paul’s leadership as he fulfilled the mission that was instilled in his heart. The centrality of Paul’s message is recorded in 1 Corinthians 2. Paul stated, “For I determined not to know

²³⁹ 2 Corinthians 6:4, 5.

²⁴⁰ Charles R. Swindoll, *Paul: A Man of Grace and Grit* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 96.

anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”²⁴¹ The message of the cross was central to Paul. The apostle further noted, “I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, *that your faith* should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”²⁴² Paul wanted the church in Corinth to know that his message of the cross of Jesus was perpetuated by the power of the Spirit.

The apostle Paul was known for his effective leadership in organizing others to join with him as he proclaimed the “Good News.” Reading the letters of the apostle Paul, one cannot ignore that he was a true servant of Jesus Christ and people. As Agosto noted, “Paul defined leadership in terms of *servanthood*, much like Jesus did. He called Apollos and himself *servants* through whom the Corinthians came to believe (1 Corinthians 3:5).”²⁴³ Paul was recognized for his ongoing faith in Jesus Christ and his servant leadership.

Though Paul was strong in faith, the apostle remained fervent as a servant to people by displaying effective leadership, allowing others to assist him in propagating the good news of Jesus Christ.

Apostle John: Principle of Love

In researching the life and ministry of the apostle John, many recognize this disciple as the apostle of love. One of the main themes in John’s writings addresses the love of God. One of the key verses in John’s gospel is recorded in John 3. Jesus said, “For God so loved the

²⁴¹ 1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV).

²⁴² 1 Corinthians 2:3–5 (NKJV).

²⁴³ Efrain Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus & Paul*, 202.

world...’’²⁴⁴ Though John was part of the inner circle of Jesus (Peter, James, and John), the apostle stands out as the apostle who proclaimed the message of love.

According to Delhousaye, “John the Apostle has become known as the Apostle of love, writing more about love than all the other New Testament writers combined.”²⁴⁵ Throughout the writings of John, the apostle spoke a great deal about the significance of the love of God and the love among the Christian world.

Throughout the writings of the apostle John, the importance of having love for God and expressing love for one other is discussed. The apostle John said, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.”²⁴⁶ John affirmed the necessity and importance of having love for one another. The foundation of one’s love for others is a result of one’s love for God. The greatest biblical principle recorded in Scripture is love. The apostle Paul stated, “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”²⁴⁷ Within the context of today’s church, it is imperative that pastors exhibit God’s love for those they lead. Having love for others is the ultimate remedy for church conflict.

A significant element of God’s love is stated by the apostle John: “If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.”²⁴⁸ Bonhoeffer provided clarity

²⁴⁴ John 3:16a.

²⁴⁵ Darryl Delhousaye, *John the Beloved: How the Son of Thunder Became the Apostle of Love* (Scottsdale, AZ: LLJ Ministries, 1995), 14.

²⁴⁶ 1 John 4:7, 12 (NJKV).

²⁴⁷ 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NKJV).

²⁴⁸ 1 John 4:12 (NKJV).

concerning the statement “His love is perfected in us,”²⁴⁹ stating, “Love is made perfect when it delivers itself entirely to the other and uniquely for the good of the other. Love that serves, forgetting everything for the sake of the other, and even gives up its own salvation in order to bring it to brothers and sisters.”²⁵⁰ Bonhoeffer challenged his readers and advocated a spirit of selfless love. It is imperative that leaders express God’s love to others.

It is imperative for leaders never to underestimate the power and ability of the love of God when ministering to people. Bonhoeffer also stated that “the true believer knows that faith in Jesus Christ can never be taken for granted.”²⁵¹ Each day, God’s love is renewed in one’s heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. The principle of love is one of the major elements connecting people together. It was love that motivated Jesus to minister to those in need. As Delhousaye noted, “Jesus wanted them (disciples) to understand that He was demonstrating a life of *love* and *service*. He was not motivated by a desire to sit at the right hand of the Father. He was motivated by His compassion for the lost.”²⁵² The principle of love is the driving power that causes servant leaders to reach out and impact lost people. It was love that sent Jesus to the cross to make the provision for all to come to Christ. The apostle John was truly the apostle of love because he chose to have an intimate relationship with the Master. May every church leader adopt and emulate the spirit of the apostle John and express love to the people they are leading. It is essential that the church of Jesus Christ be known for its love, as leaders manifest the love of Jesus Christ to a world that is in need of the love and compassion of God.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Jean-Pierre Fortin, “Understanding as Love: Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s Pastoral Theology.” *Pro Ecclesia* 23, no. 4 (2014), 447.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 448.

²⁵² Delhousaye, *John the Beloved: How the Son of Thunder Became the Apostle of Love*, 36.

Summary

An examination of servant leadership was addressed by providing biblical evidence for this type of leadership style. From the outset of this section, an assessment concerning the heart of servant leadership was provided. The heart of servant leadership always focuses on people, as well as expressing love toward others.

This writer also addressed the difference between servant leadership and shepherd leadership. Though they are distinct in name, they are almost identical in application. Both servant leadership and shepherd leadership include a strong love for people as they strive to meet the needs of others. An exposition was provided for both types of leadership. It was also stated that Jesus Christ was the greatest leader who ever lived in relation to servanthood. Various passages from God's Word were utilized to provide necessary support for Christ's role as a servant leader. There are many biblical references in the gospels that would substantiate Jesus as being a servant to all people. Jesus came to earth to fulfill the will of His Father by being a servant to all.

This document also provided descriptions of five key leaders: Joseph, Moses, Nehemiah, the apostle Paul, and the apostle John, as recorded in Scripture, who represent servanthood; it also explained five indispensable principles that they possessed: integrity, dedication, service, faith, and love. These five biblical disciplines are essential when addressing the importance of servant leadership. The five biblical characters described were leaders who set an example for pastors and church leaders to emulate. All five leaders were servants to God and to people. Their purpose was to fulfill the plan of God, as well as to serve the people whom God placed in their care. The author of this paper is convinced that God has provided effective leaders in Scripture to allow people to draw upon them and learn significant lessons and principles from their lives.

CHAPTER FIVE

SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC CHURCH PLANNING RESULTING IN THE GREAT COMMISSION

Introduction

The discipline of servant leadership is clearly referenced throughout this document. A brief analysis of servant leadership is examined in direct relationship with the pastoral role. The author aims to show the relationship between servant leadership and today's pastor. One of the main roles and responsibilities in Christian ministry today is the role and function of the senior pastor. From a general perspective, the pastoral role is examined in relation to certain biblical principles as recorded in Scripture.

This section attempts to show the importance and necessity of providing a strategic plan while examining the various principles referenced throughout the Word of God. Prayer and a workable plan will provide for a strong church, resulting in a dynamic church that can grow spiritually and in terms of membership. Biblical principles are considered and examined in relation to church growth. Church development does not take place on its own. Rather, such development requires assistance as pastors implement certain biblical concepts.

Jesus said, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."²⁵³ However, this text does not mean that pastors and leaders can sit by the sideline and do nothing—they have to implement specific principles that God has provided in His Word. This document considers the following principles regarding church development: prayer, pastoral vision, integrity, the elements of spiritual formation, the power of the Holy Spirit, discipleship, and evangelism resulting in the Great Commission. All of these principles are essential for a growing and mature church.

²⁵³ Matthew 16:18.

Review of Servant Leadership

The principle of servant leadership has been documented previously in this study, but it is necessary to underscore once again, highlighting the key points regarding a servant leader. From the genesis of this study, one must realize that a servant leader is selfless in nature. Instead of focusing on the needs of the leader, a true servant focuses on the needs of others. Servant leaders always try to discover the best in others as they advance toward their personal goals.

Servant leadership begins with Jesus, who said, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”²⁵⁴ Those who desire to be a servant to people must first realize that true servanthood begins with Jesus. Throughout the study of the gospels, one can observe that Jesus ministered to people with the heart of a servant. Jesus always thought of people before He thought of Himself. Jesus always focused His eyes and heart on the people of Israel as He ministered to thousands. Jesus said, “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! *How often I wanted to gather your children together*, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.”²⁵⁵ The latter part of this text addresses servant leadership and the heart of Jesus.

A student of the gospels will soon come to realize that Jesus was constantly focusing on people and their needs. Ministry and servant leadership is not about programs and church activities, but people. The church, as well as its leadership, must evaluate and examine the motivation of its purpose in ministry. The author of the current paper would suggest that pastors need to re-examine their calling to ministry. When reading through the entirety of Scripture, one will soon come to realize the necessity of one’s call in fulfilling God’s will and purpose.

²⁵⁴ Mark 10:45.

²⁵⁵ Matthew 23:37.

Servant Leadership and the Pastoral Role

In this paper, it is argued that servant leadership is paramount and necessary in the life and ministry of a pastor. Though there are various styles of leadership, servant leadership takes center stage among other types of leadership in today's church and ministry. The reason for this assessment is that Jesus adopted and practiced this style of leadership. Servant leadership was the motivation in Jesus' ministry because of His love and compassion toward people.

In the present-day, one can conclude that there is a great need for pastors to adopt servant leadership. Among those involved in prosperity theology and also among mega church pastors, servant leadership is a foreign concept. Reading through the gospels, one can clearly see that Jesus was a servant to the 12 disciples that He chose.

Most people can observe that the church is in a state of spiritual decline. The question that needs to be addressed is as follows: "What can be done to stop the spiritual decline in the evangelical church of today?" There is one thing that this writer has come to realize, and that is the lack of individual contact with people that are hurting. It is imperative that pastors be relational with the people they lead. People must know that they are significant, and pastors must affirm to their congregations that people are important in the eyes of God. That is why the implementation of servant leadership is so important. Servant leadership answers many questions that people are asking about the challenges they are facing.

In order to break the cycle of spiritual decline, it is necessary to implement servant leadership. Servant leadership, like shepherd leadership, promotes a healthy relationship between the pastor and the congregation. Several studies have been conducted, and the results show that there is a great need for servant leadership in the pastorate. If Jesus was a servant leader, then it would be imperative that pastors today follow His example.

Necessary Disciplines for Strategic Planning

Prayer

This section initiates a strategic plan to implement the Great Commission. Prayer is the first phase in the life of the servant leader. It is completely impossible for a Christian or a leader to be effective in the work of God without the application of prayer. Prayer then becomes a necessity in the life and ministry of a servant leader and not an option. As E. M. Bounds argued, “The apostles knew the necessity and worth of prayer to their ministry. They knew that their high commission as apostles, instead of relieving them from the necessity of prayer, committed them to it by a more urgent need.”²⁵⁶ Bounds made it clear that prayer is necessary for those involved in ministry.

Throughout Scripture, one can easily observe the necessity and significance of prayer in the lives of believers and leaders. As written in Acts 6, “But we will give ourselves *continually* to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word.”²⁵⁷ This passage shows the dedication the apostles gave to prayer. If leaders today were committed to the ministry of prayer, their church and ministry would be completely transformed by the power of God.

As a senior pastor of 39 years, the author of this paper has discovered that personal prayer has the ability to change the course of history and to make a strong impact on the church of Jesus Christ. Murray stated, “The man who mobilizes the Christian church to pray will make the greatest contribution to world evangelization in history.”²⁵⁸ As leaders in ministry today, it is

²⁵⁶ E. M. Bounds, *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds*, 41.

²⁵⁷ Acts 6:4 (KJV).

²⁵⁸ Dave Earley, *Pastoral Leadership...How to Shepherd God's People with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2012), 110.

imperative that prayer be the number one priority because it is prayer that causes God to move and change people for the purpose and advancement of God's kingdom on earth.

Prayer must be viewed as the most important ministry in the church. According to Isaiah 56, "Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; *for mine house shall be called a house of prayer* for all people."²⁵⁹ The church must return to prayer and must continue in prayer to God. The church was birthed in prayer, and the church must prevail in prayer. Jesus addressed the importance of prayer in the church. Jesus said to them, "The Scriptures declare, 'My Temple will be called a house of prayer,' but you have turned it into a den of thieves!"²⁶⁰ Jesus set the record straight in addressing the subject of prayer. A pastor must provide opportunities and an atmosphere for God's people to pray.

The decline of the church today is a direct result of leaders not giving time for prayer. Once again, pastors must initiate a revival of prayer within the church. The principle of prayer also aids in one's relationship with God. As Prime proposed, "The first priority for a shepherd and teacher is to live as a Christian ought to live, and that means using prayer to the full. It is one thing to say that prayer is an undisputed priority and another to practice it."²⁶¹ God is calling leaders and churches to commit to the practice of prayer as referenced in God's Word. In order to lead the church effectively and see people changed and transformed, prayer then becomes compulsory. Silvos stated, "If pastors would mobilize their people to pray, the world would be

²⁵⁹ Isaiah 56:7 (KJV).

²⁶⁰ Matthew 21:13 (NLT).

²⁶¹ Derek J. Prime & Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor: Understanding Our Calling and Work* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2004), 62, 65.

transformed.”²⁶² It is essential that pastors recognize the need and importance of prayer. Also, pastors and church leadership have to set the example for people to pray.

Pastoral Vision

Second, this pastor, the author of this paper, is convinced that developing and presenting a vision to the people is imperative because it provides direction for the church. Without the implementation of a vision, the church loses its sense of purpose. A vision also aids in the process of church growth and development. Jesus and His mandate must be the focus when developing a vision for the church. Rainer noted, “If visionary leadership is one of the key components to church growth, we then must determine how a leader develops a vision. Prayer is indispensable to understanding God’s vision for churches.”²⁶³ Rainer further added, “As we pray to God for a vision for our churches, He will miraculously open our eyes to possibilities.”²⁶⁴ God will impart a vision to pastors as they pray and seek the face of God. The author of the current paper believes that God will speak and communicate His vision for churches and communities as leaders commit to prayer.

As already stated, vision is essential because it gives clear direction to the pastor and congregation. Many in the church ask, “In what direction is the church headed?” That is the reason why a vision is indispensable. Barna echoed this: “Unless God’s people have a clear understanding of where they are headed, the probability of a successful journey is severely limited.”²⁶⁵ Casting a vision is imperative because it aids in reconciling people to God. Barna

²⁶² Earley, *Pastoral Leadership Is...How to Shepherd God’s People with compassion and Confidence*, 117.

²⁶³ Thom S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology, and Principles* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1993), 178.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

further added, “The vision entrusted to Moses did not focus on selfish desires but on a selfless quest to reconcile the world to its Creator.”²⁶⁶ A vision is essential because it provides clarity and imparts spiritual direction in fulfilling the Great Commission as Jesus commanded.

Need for Integrity

The third principle is integrity, which is essential when leading people, because it provides a necessary foundation of truth, honesty, and virtue. People will easily follow a leader who emulates those qualities and therefore follow the person and ministry of Jesus. The most important command and mandate Jesus gave to His church (Mk. 16:15) was to reach out and impact lost people with the good news. When developing a strategic plan for implementing the Great Commission, it is necessary to be a person of integrity. People will follow a leader who exemplifies a Christian spirit of integrity, and they will also identify with the “fruit of the Spirit,”²⁶⁷ as stated by Paul. A leader who has integrity will manifest the fruit of the Spirit in influencing others. Integrity is an extremely necessary attribute in today’s church.

The need for integrity is significant for a servant leader because it demonstrates a moral and spiritual example to the people being led. It is completely impossible to be successful in implementing the Great Commission without applying integrity and a godly character. The principle of integrity is referenced in the book of Psalms. Asaph the Psalmist wrote, “So he (David) shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart.”²⁶⁸ The concept of integrity is important to the life of a servant because it is a result of one’s righteousness and motivation.

²⁶⁵ Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 11.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 20.

²⁶⁷ Galatians 5:22–23.

²⁶⁸ Psalms 78:72.

Kuest explained that “David knew that the temptation to breach integrity is strong for those in leadership, especially when one is convinced that no one is going to know.”²⁶⁹ A servant leader will manifest true integrity as he or she follows the lead and example of Jesus Christ. May each Christian leader focus on the greatest servant leader (Heb. 12:2), Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Formation

The fourth discipline necessary to implement the Great Commission in the local church is spiritual formation. As a pastor of almost four decades, the author of this paper believes that spiritual development is essential for a servant leader as well as for individual members of the congregation. As of March 2015, the author of this paper assumed the office of pastor in a church in West Virginia. After a short time, it became apparent that spiritual development was a great need in the church. Unfortunately, some issues involving certain people in the church had to be addressed. After providing instruction and discipline, this pastor (the author of the current paper) came to a conclusion that certain people were deficient in their relationship with God, which indicated that there was a need for spiritual formation and growth.

The need for spiritual growth is an essential need in the church of Jesus Christ. Prior to implementing the Great Commission, it is imperative that Christians continue on the path toward spiritual maturity. The apostle Peter stated, “*But grow* in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”²⁷⁰ Peter was admonishing believers to mature in their relationship with God. As believers continue to mature in the Lord, there will be less conflict in the church, and the church will be better prepared to implement the Great Commission.

²⁶⁹ Robert D. Kuest, *Uncommon Leadership: Servant Leadership in a Power-Based World* (Fort Meyers: FL: New Mission Systems International, 2009), 131.

²⁷⁰ 2 Peter 3:18.

Some have asked the question: “What is spiritual formation?” Nouwen provided an answer, stating, “Spiritual formation is not about steps or stages on the way to perfection. It’s about the *movements* from the mind to the heart through prayer in its many forms that reunite us with God, each other, and our truest selves.”²⁷¹ Prayer is the means by which Christians and servant leaders pursue spiritual development. May the church never underestimate the power and vehicle of prayer.

The principle of spiritual formation is comparable to the discipline of discipleship. Ongoing spiritual development is necessary in the pursuit of the implementation of the Great Commission. Spiritual growth and maturity are essential in the lives of believers and servant leaders alike. A dedicated leader and Christian focused on Jesus (Heb.12:2) will always have the desire to grow in the Lord. Geiger noted, “A Christian’s desire to grow in faith is beautiful, best illustrated in Jeremiah 17:7–8 where Scripture describes ‘the man who trusts in the Lord’ as being ‘like a tree planted by water . . . It will not worry in a year of drought or cease producing fruit.’”²⁷² Spiritual maturity takes place when a believer places his or her faith in Jesus.

The concept of spiritual formation is defined and explained in Ephesians 3. The apostle Paul declared, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love.”²⁷³ As Christians strive to be more like Jesus, the love of God will be manifested among them, especially for a lost world. Pink pointed out that “spiritual growth consists in a greater love for God,”²⁷⁴ adding that “a deeper and increasing love for God is not to

²⁷¹ Henri Nouwen, *Spiritual Formation: Following the Movements of the Spirit*, 7.

²⁷² Eric Geiger, Michael Kelley & Philip Nation, *Transformational Discipleship: How People Really Grow* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2012), 1–2.

²⁷³ Ephesians 3:17 (NKJV).

be ascertained so much by our consciousness of the same as by the evidences it produces.”²⁷⁵ In challenging believers to grow and develop in their relationship with God, it is also essential that church leaders continue to pursue the Lord in order to be an example to the people they lead. In this day, there is a great need in the church for a godly example and a manifestation of God’s love among leadership. The indictment is not placed on church members but on those in leadership. May God send a revival of love to His church.

The Holy Spirit

The fifth strategic element in fulfilling the Great Commission in His church here in West Virginia consists of utilizing the power of the Spirit that was promised by the Father (Jn. 14:16). The need for the Person and Power of the Holy Spirit is imperative as the church goes forward in ministering the good news of Jesus Christ to a lost community. Leaders and church members alike need to be bold as the Holy Spirit empowers the church in proclaiming the good news.

The words of Jesus provide clarity in relation to the Holy Spirit in fulfilling the Great Commission. Jesus said, “But you will *receive power* when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall *be My witnesses* both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”²⁷⁶ This passage focuses on the enablement and power of the Holy Spirit in fulfilling the mandate of Jesus, as recorded in Matthew 28:19, 20 and Mark 16:15.

The power of the Spirit must never be underestimated when addressing the Great Commission. It is impossible to fulfill the mandate (Matt. 28:19, 20) of Jesus without the power of God’s Spirit and without a clear focus on people. For a servant leader, one draws power,

²⁷⁴ Arthur W. Pink, *Spiritual Growth* (Middletown, DE: Ichthus Publications, 2017), 55.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 57.

²⁷⁶ Acts 1:8.

direction, and spiritual insight through the means of the Holy Spirit. Blackaby summarized this, stating that “leaders seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance.”²⁷⁷ There is a desperate need in the church today for the help of the Holy Spirit. As indicated by Blackaby, “True spiritual leaders recognize their utter dependence on God...”²⁷⁸ The power of the Holy Spirit was given to assist leaders in implementing the greatest command (Mk. 16:15) ever uttered from the mouth of Jesus. For the church to be successful in fulfilling the Great Commission, leaders need to follow the direction of the Spirit.

The Need for Revival

More than ever, the church is in need of a sovereign revival. The author of this paper is convinced that the church is experiencing a spiritual decline, and church leadership needs to re-examine its motivation and purpose. A great move of the Spirit of God is essential because it will cause the church to align itself with the purpose and plan of God.

Leonard Ravenhill commented on the necessity of revival, stating, “Many people express an *interest* in revival. There are not so many deeply *concerned* about it, and fewer still *burdened* for it, still fewer *heartbroken* for it. Yet, spiritual revival is not an alternative for the nations right now. It is *imperative*.”²⁷⁹ There is no doubt in the minds of many that the evangelical church is in need of a mighty move of the Holy Spirit.

Recognizing that the church is suffering from a spiritual decline, A. W. Tozer addressed the possibility for revival: “I think what we need today is a good old-fashioned revival. I do not like to use the word *revival* because it has been abused in the house of its friends. Most revivals

²⁷⁷ Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda*, 220.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 223.

²⁷⁹ Leonard Ravenhill, *Why Revival Tarries* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1997), 64.

today are simply an enthusiastic meeting, perhaps with a guest speaker, that does not change anyone. In fact, it often leaves folks the same as when they came in.”²⁸⁰ There is a need in the church for an authentic revival that is birthed from God and not from man. Tozer further stated, “If you study the old-time revivals, those meetings changed not only people’s lives, but the community as well. There was a power that did not *come* from the assembly, but a power that *came down* on that assembly—and that power was the Holy Spirit...and the agenda of the early church needs to be our agenda.”²⁸¹ The Holy Spirit has the power to revive His church.

Making Disciples

The sixth phase of a strategic plan in fulfilling the Great Commission (Mk. 16:15) in the local church is developing disciples (Matt. 28:19, 20) as Jesus commanded. The author of this paper is a servant leader to the people who provides a systematic plan for making disciples. According to Arn, “The words of Christ in Matthew 28:19–20 communicate vividly Christ’s understanding of a disciple. He saw a disciple as one who becomes a follower, who is taught, who is nurtured in the faith, who in turn goes out to make disciples, who are then taught and nurtured in the faith, who then in turn go out.”²⁸² Arn presented the multiplication process in order to make disciples.

Making disciples is the passion of Jesus Christ and the heartbeat of the church. Hull argued that “discipling should remain at the heart of the church.”²⁸³ It is important to note that

²⁸⁰ A. W. Tozer, *Alive in the Spirit* (Bloomington, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 2016), 83.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Win Arn & Charles Arn, *The Master’s Plan for Making Disciples: Every Christian an Effective Witness through an Enabling Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 24.

²⁸³ Bill Hull, *The Disciple-Making Church: Leading a Body of Believers on the Journey of Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2010), 35.

following salvation, it becomes necessary to begin the process of making disciples. Young believers must be discipled and trained so they will be able to disciple others. The author of this paper is always preaching and teaching about the necessity of making disciples because it is a means of fulfilling the Great Commission. As explained by Hull, “Paul’s letter to the Ephesians details the people’s priorities; his letters to Timothy, the pastor at Ephesus, detail pastoral priorities. Luke’s account in Acts provides another look at Paul’s work. From these we have a rich data base for understanding a modern version of the discipling church.”²⁸⁴ The Word of God provides a plethora of examples in relation to making disciples. The church is mandated by Jesus Christ to make disciples of people. As a leader in a growing church, it is imperative to disciple young believers as commanded by Jesus Christ.

What is the problem with the ministry of discipleship and church growth today? Greg Ogden responded to this important question: “Many church leaders, yearning for church growth, look to the latest evangelistic strategies of seeker-targeted worship services. But lack of growth might be due to lack of concern for new people. It may be because we are not effectively discipling the people we already have.”²⁸⁵ It is imperative that senior pastors take spiritual inventory of their congregations, pursue those who are spiritually mature in the faith, and allow them to train and disciple young believers in the Lord.

Discipleship is something that this pastor takes very seriously. As Dempsey noted, “The church must come to grips with the clear call of the Great Commission to ‘make disciples.’ The local church is the expression of the kingdom of God, and the kingdom is the expression of the mission of God, and the mission springs from the heart of God. In order to accomplish the

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 32.

²⁸⁵ Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 22.

mission, the church must develop disciples to their full potential.”²⁸⁶ It is essential that pastors recognize the importance and necessity of the mission of the local church; then, they have to implement a workable and effective ministry to make disciples. Dempsey further stated, “As the disciple grows in Christlikeness, the church needs to help the person discover his/her gifts and abilities for the kingdom. And then the church needs to help the disciple learn to serve.”²⁸⁷ The author of the current paper is of the conviction that mature believers need to encourage those that are young in the faith. Church leaders must never forget the words of Jesus, “Make disciples of all nations.”²⁸⁸ Making disciples is mandated from Jesus Christ, and pastors must make it a priority in their church.

Nature of Evangelism

The final phase in developing a strategic plan in implementing the Great Commission is to examine and address the crucial need of evangelism in today’s church. The author of this paper places evangelism at the center of all its ministry endeavors, but it is important to establish a definition of evangelism.

Several biblical scholars have defined evangelism from various perspectives. Drummond provided a clear definition of evangelism: “A concerted effort in the power of the Holy Spirit to confront unbelievers with the truth about Jesus Christ and the claims of our Lord with a view to leading unbelievers into repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and, thus, into the fellowship of His church so they may grow in the Spirit.”²⁸⁹ The concept of evangelism is to

²⁸⁶ Jonathan Falwell, *InnovateChurch* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2008), 112.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 113.

²⁸⁸ Matthew 28:19.

²⁸⁹ Reid, *Evangelism Handbook: Biblical, Spiritual, Intentional, hand Missional*, 29.

present the good news of Jesus Christ to those who are lost. Another perspective in relation to the definition of evangelism is known as servant evangelism. Reid and Wheeler define this concept in the following way.

Servant Evangelism involves intentionally sharing Christ by modeling biblical servanthood. It offers the simplest, most transferable, and yes, most fun approach for moving believers closer to a biblical lifestyle marked by a consistent witnessing. *Servant Evangelism* also demonstrates both a biblical and missional posture, as Christ who first exemplified this lifestyle of reaching out to an unsaved world, sent by His Father as He now sends us.²⁹⁰

Though there are various types of evangelistic definitions and approaches, servant evangelism has become popular and practical in its approach in leading people to Jesus. Servant evangelism reaches people right where they are. Evangelism must be at the center of the local church. It has been this writer's observation that if a church is not reaching out to lost people, the church may eventually face its demise. The local church must rise up and impact the community with the message of Jesus Christ.

The spirit of evangelism speaks directly to the message of the gospel. According to Sproul, "The Bible teaches that evangelism is the proclamation of the gospel to the whole world. That task is still central to the mission of the church."²⁹¹ For this pastor, the preaching of the good news of the gospel is paramount in God's church. There is no better news than Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The apostle Paul put this into perspective: "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."²⁹² Jesus paid the ultimate price for all humanity to be free from the bondage of sin and to be restored and reconciled to the Father.

²⁹⁰ Alvin Reid & David A. Wheeler, *Servant Evangelism: Showing and Sharing Good News* (Lexington, KY: Gospel Advance Books, 2016), 7.

²⁹¹ R. C. Sproul, *What Is the Great Commission?* (Sanford, FL: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2015), 12.

²⁹² 1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV).

It is essential to shed light on the spiritual decline of the Western Evangelical Church.

Reid and Wheeler elaborated on this.

In the Western Church, decline has become the norm, not the exception. Even in the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Protestant group in the United States, a slight decline has marked the denomination for some time, including the lowest baptism total in over half a century in 2010. The trends do not look good. Movements change the world, and a Gospel-sharing, effective movement of evangelism is greatly needed. Most of us appear to talk *about* evangelism than to really practice it. Surveys show that only three to five percent of believers consistently share their faith.²⁹³

The Southern Baptist Convention facing a spiritual decline, but there are many other denominations facing the same problem. Being an Assembly of God pastor, the author of this paper can affirm that there is a limited focus on the things of God in the way church is being managed. This writer is convinced that pastoral leadership needs to refocus its energies on God and ministry—not programs. Servant leadership causes leaders to place ample emphasis on the need for servant evangelism. It is imperative that the church continue to share the love of God with those in need. The church of Jesus Christ must recognize people’s need of the power of the Spirit and share the love of Christ.

Matthew 28:19, 20

This passage provides some of the final words of Jesus that were spoken to the disciples. Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”²⁹⁴ This text teaches that the church is commissioned to go and make disciples. This is not an option, but a direct command of Jesus Christ. Morris stated, “The Master is not giving a command that will merely

²⁹³ Reid & Wheeler, *Servant Evangelism: Showing and Sharing the Good News*, 11.

²⁹⁴ Matthew 28:19, 20 (NKJV).

secure nominal adherence to a group, but one that will secure wholehearted commitment to a person.”²⁹⁵ Morris argued that if a disciple is going to follow Jesus, he or she will be committed to a cause. Morris further stated, “Those who are disciples of such a leader are committed people. And, of course, this is the kind of disciple that He looks for His followers to make . . . which points to a worldwide scope for their mission.”²⁹⁶ According to Jesus, His church should align with His plan.

This Scripture addresses the idea that leadership and the church must adhere to the command of Jesus to make disciples if people claim to be Christian. It is the responsibility of a pastor or leader “to help people become fully devoted followers of Christ.”²⁹⁷ This statement addresses the spiritual maturity of a disciple. If a sinner has been transformed by the blood and power of Jesus, that person will be open to obey and pursue the Lord no matter the cost. This pastor is convinced that the evangelical church has become too soft in its proclamation of truth. Jesus has provided a clear plan in making disciples so that all nations may hear of the good news of the gospel.

Great Commission

The Great Commission is recorded in Matthew 28:19, 20 and Mark 16:15. These two passages are essential for the advancement of the kingdom of God and the expansion of the church of Jesus Christ. It is imperative to return to the principles of the New Testament that have caused the church to be powerful and effective during the times of the apostles and for this time as well. As Robinson asserted, “Our world has all but forgotten what church is all about, [and] so

²⁹⁵ Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 746.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21st-Century Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 196.

have many churches. The greatest need in our time is for ‘the church to be the church,’ a first-century church in a twenty-first century world.”²⁹⁸ Servant leaders and the church must consistently focus on what is important and necessary that would cause the church to be effective in this time period. It is necessary to focus on the essentials and disregard the non-essentials of church life.

Robinson addressed the importance of the Great Commission and the need for evangelism if the church is going to reach the unsaved community. Robinson further stated, “It is time that the church return to the elementary principles of the New Testament. Let the church be the church getting a vision from God for its life and mission.”²⁹⁹ Jesus did not make His command complicated but simple for all to understand and apply.

As a pastor of a church in West Virginia, this writer has learned to love people, show compassion, and be a good listener to people. In addition, this pastor has trained the pastoral team and staff to love people and be attentive to the needs of individuals. It is amazing how people respond to the love of God. The Great Commission is to present the gospel to the unsaved community and then to make those individuals disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. For the sake of lost souls, the church should re-introduce the necessity of the Great Commission.

Overview of Servant Leadership

Though there are numerous styles of leadership within the church, servant leadership is paramount because Jesus was a servant (Matt. 20:26; Mk. 10:45; Phil. 2:5–7) to the people of His day. A servant is a selfless leader as he or she ministers to the needs of people. For many Christian leaders and pastors today, servant leadership is a foreign concept, and many even

²⁹⁸ Darrell W. Robinson, *Total Church Life: How to Be a First Century Church in a 21st Century World* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 9.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

consider it foolish.³⁰⁰ Even though servant leadership is rejected by many leaders, it is a type of leadership that is necessary because it was practiced by Jesus.

Servant leadership is characterized as “the Christlike Leadership Approach”³⁰¹ when leading and serving people. Servant leaders always place the needs of others before their own. A servant always views people through the lens of love and compassion. Matthew stated, “But when he saw the multitudes, *he was moved with compassion on them*, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.”³⁰² Jesus was gripped with a spirit of compassion because His people had no leader, and the people had no sense of direction.

The greatest need in the church today is leadership. Without leadership, the church has no sense of direction, and the people begin to ask, “Where are we headed, and what is the pastor trying to accomplish?” When leadership is absent, the people begin to become discouraged and frustrated. Jesus was a great leader because He provided His disciples with direction, fulfillment, and understanding. This writer is convinced that servant leadership produces effectiveness and growth in ministry. After much research, this writer is confident that servant leadership is the most proven approach because it produces long-lasting results in the lives of people.

³⁰⁰ Jack Niewold, “Beyond Servant Leadership.” *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 1, no. 2 (2007), 133.

³⁰¹ Oakes, *Christlike Leadership: Leadership That Starts with an Attitude*, 22.

³⁰² Matthew 9:36 (KJV).

Summary

In summary, this chapter is a significant part of this document because it covers a plethora of principles that address the church and ministry. From the outset of this treatise, a review of servant leadership was addressed in correlation to the pastoral role. In addition, a seven-phase strategic approach was provided for the purpose of implementing the Great Commission recorded in Matthew 28:19, 20 and Mark 16:15. The seven-fold biblical concepts that were alluded to are as follows: prayer, vision, integrity, spiritual formation, the Holy Spirit, making disciples, and evangelism. All seven concepts are necessary and significant as the church strives to fulfill the Great Commission.

All seven principles and practices are needed in order to fulfill God's plan and purpose for His church. The need and application of prayer is imperative for the purpose of receiving and hearing from God in order to receive direction and also to sustain the vision and mission that has been imparted to the pastor. Prayer is also a means to impart God's vision for His church to the people. Prayer also prepares the people to receive the vision that presented by the leadership. As previously stated, prayer plays an important role in implementing the Great Commission. Prayer is not an option but a necessity.

An overview of the Holy Spirit was addressed with a brief explanation. This writer is convinced that the power and guidance of the Spirit is needed to implement the mission and the Great Commission in impacting souls for His kingdom.

An exposition of Matthew 28:19, 20 was provided, which causes the church to understand its purpose. Finally, an overview of servant leadership was provided for the purpose of understanding Jesus' approach toward leadership. Throughout this chapter, the concept of servant leadership was underscored in relation to the specific principles referenced.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

In this paper, the biblical concept of servant leadership has been examined in length while applying various biblical principles. From the outset of this document, the introduction was written with the purpose of introducing the biblical concept of servant leadership. The foundational question that was presented: Is servant leadership referenced in Scripture and for what purpose? Servant leadership was examined with limitations in relation to the pastoral role. A statement of the problem concerning the spiritual decline of the evangelical church was examined and a remedy was provided. The means of responding to the main question was through the vehicle and the application of Scripture, primary and secondary books, scholarly journals, and two anonymous surveys. The introductory chapter was written with the intent of presenting servant leadership as a remedy to the spiritual decline of the evangelical church.

The second chapter focused on the need for servant leadership and its essential principles. Chapter 2 also provided various definitions for servant leadership and the varied disciplines related to the noted style of leadership. Robert Greenleaf's ideas about the subject of servant leadership and the disciplines of "caring" and "serving" were discussed. Greenleaf contended that "caring for persons, the more able and the less able serving each other, is the rock upon which a good society is built."³⁰³ The principles of caring for and serving people are essential for the expansion of God's kingdom. The necessity of a servant leader was referenced with a strong emphasis placed on spiritual maturity. The principle of change was included in relation to spiritual growth while utilizing biblical references in correlation to one's focus pertaining to

³⁰³ Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 62.

leadership. Finally, prayer was explored in relation to servant leadership and the change it produces.

Chapter 3 addressed the characteristics of servant leadership. The term servant was defined in direct relationship with a strong desire to serve others. It is impossible to lead people unless a leader understands the biblical definition of a servant. Jesus said, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”³⁰⁴ The centrality of servant leadership always involves people. A servant invests his or her life in the lives of others, as seen in the life and ministry of Jesus. According to Spears, “True leadership emerges from those whose primary motivation is a deep desire to help others.”³⁰⁵ People are always the main focus in expressing the principle of a servant. It is essential for Christian leaders to recognize the necessity of serving and being a channel of God’s love.

Seven characteristics of servant leadership were noted: love, compassion, listening, serving, influence, integrity, and encouragement. These principles are necessary for the purpose of ministering to people effectively. All seven characteristics are essential to servant leadership as one leads people. When these characteristics are applied, serving others becomes effective.

The fourth chapter introduced servant leadership and its relationship to biblical theology. Scripture plays an important role in being a servant leader. The heartbeat of a servant leader focuses strictly on people. If a leader loves God, then leadership will love people. Blanchard noted, “If you do not really love Jesus, then you will not truly love the people you lead. However, Christ’s kind of love will make your work easier, and it will encourage those you lead

³⁰⁴ Mark 10:45.

³⁰⁵ Spears, “The Understanding and Practice of Servant-Leadership,” 2.

wholeheartedly.”³⁰⁶ Loving people is a direct result of God’s love working through the leader.

An exposition was provided regarding Jesus as the greatest leader that ever lived. During the public ministry of Jesus, people were the main focus of His ministry. Most of Jesus’ ministry was on a one-to-one basis. Three key passages were utilized: Matthew 20:26–28; Mark 10:45, and Philippians 2:7; an exposition was provided for each. This chapter focused on five key leaders: Joseph, Moses, Nehemiah, Paul, and John. These leaders were recognized for their expression of five dominant disciplines: integrity, dedication, service, faith, and love. As Christian leaders, there is much to learn from other styles of leadership. The concept of leadership is imperative, but every leader must be open to learn from Scripture.

Finally, Chapter 5 addressed the importance of servant leadership and how pastoral leaders ought to develop a strategic plan for the purpose of implementing the Great Commission. The Great Commission cannot be actualized unless a plan has been established. The author also explained the correlation between servant leadership and the pastoral role.

In order for a pastor to lead people in implementing a strategic plan, the congregation must be open to change. This paper includes seven key principles that will result in a plan that to effectuate the Great Commission. The seven indispensable principles alluded in this chapter are: prayer, pastoral vision, integrity, spiritual formation, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, making disciples, and evangelism. These seven principles are imperative for a successful plan to accomplish and fulfill the command (Matthew 28:19, 20) of the Great Commission. The first principle is significant because people in positions of pastoral leadership must commit themselves to prayer. Prayer is essential in the lives of pastors because it builds one’s relationship with God and gives direction to the church. Prayer is the heartbeat of Christianity,

³⁰⁶ Blanchard, *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of all Time*, 178.

and it provides direction for leaders as the church focuses on implementing a strategic plan for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission.

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Appendix A

This section addresses the findings of the survey distributed to church members. In total, 300 church members from evangelical churches answered 10 true/false questions regarding their pastor and the biblical concept of servant leadership.

Q1: Does your pastor exemplify a spirit of compassion?

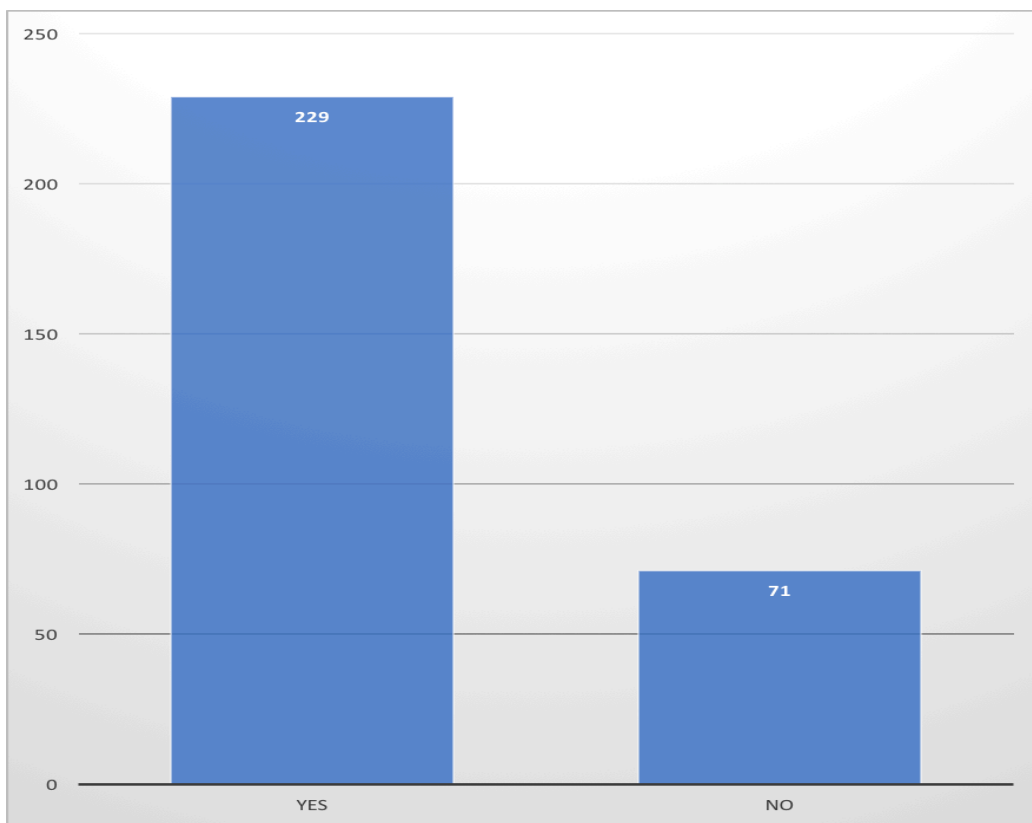


Figure 1.1. Out of 300 church members from evangelical churches surveyed, 229 members believed that their pastor was a compassionate leader, while 71 members observed that their pastor did not exhibit compassion.

Q2: Does your pastor have the heart of a servant when leading people?

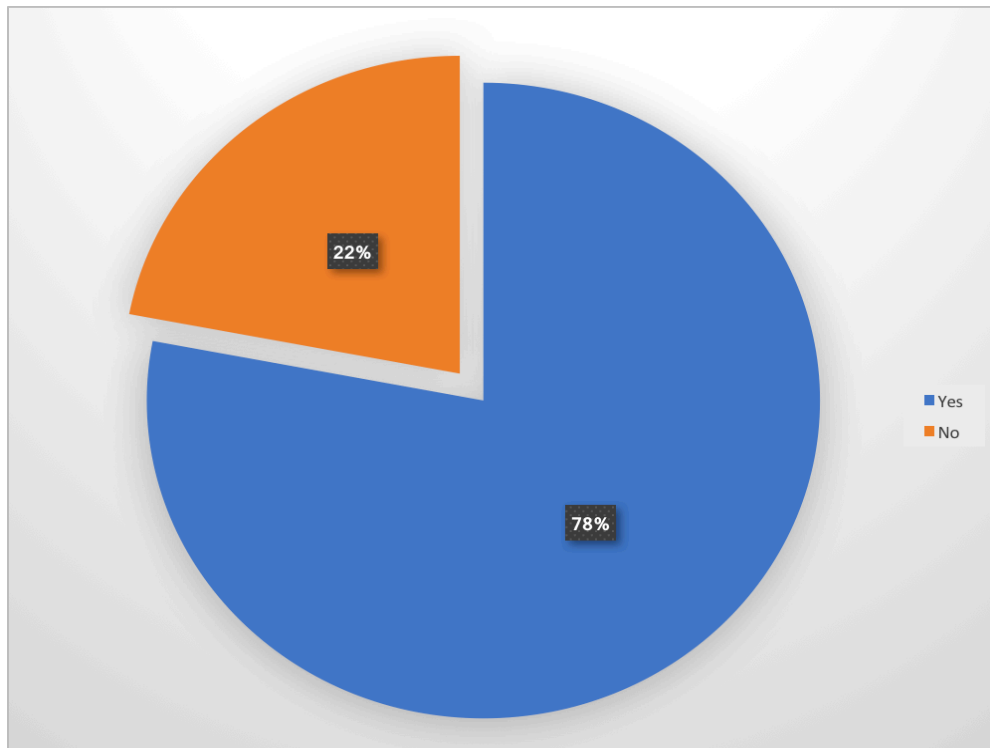


Figure 1.2. Out of 300 church members surveyed, 234 people believed that their pastor had the heart of a servant when leading people. However, 66 members believed that their pastor did not lead the congregation with the spirit of a servant.

Q3: Do you believe your pastor takes on the burden of lost people?

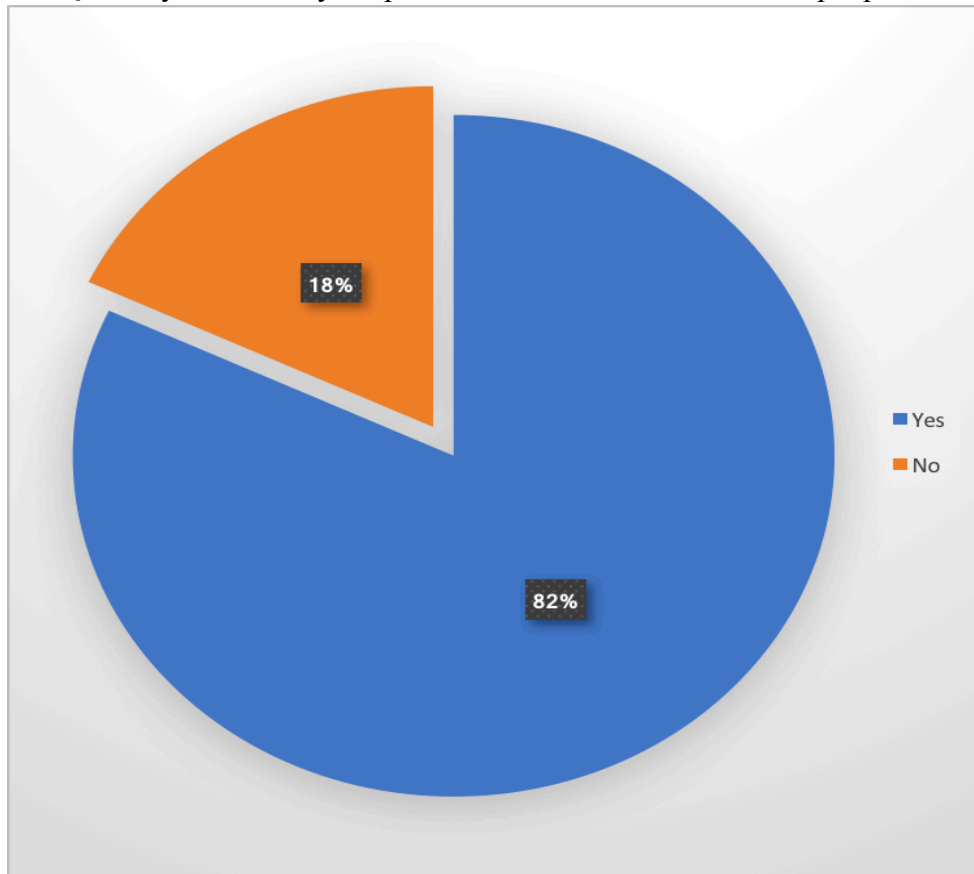


Figure 1.3. This chart reveals that a large percentage of church members believed that their pastor took on the burden of the lost.

Q4: Does your pastor have a clear vision for the church?

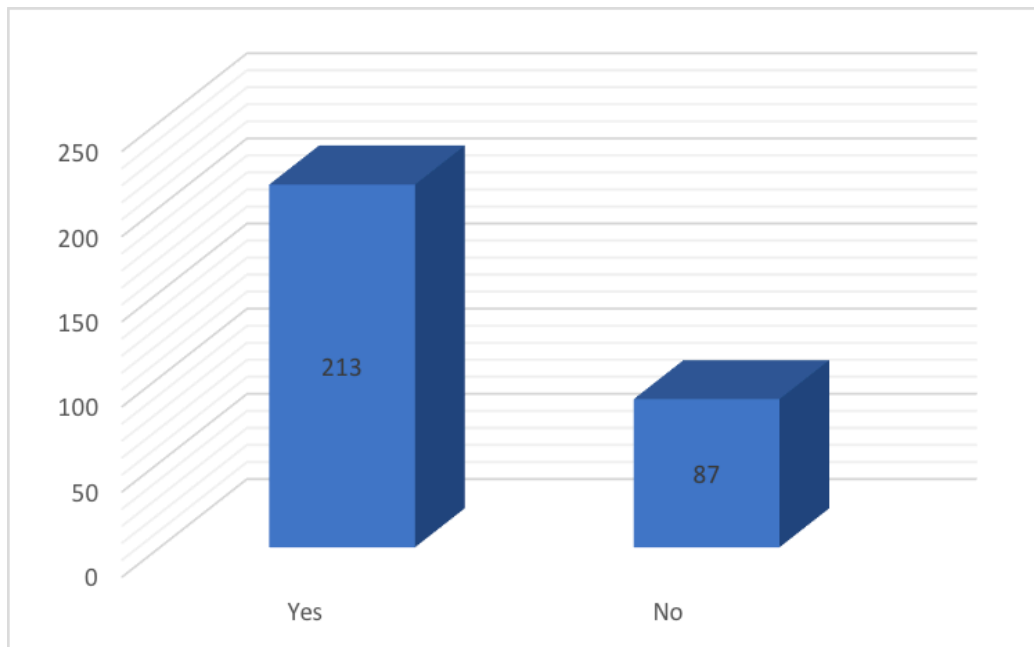


Figure 1.4. This chart shows that 213 pastors were reported as having a vision for their churches.

Q5: Does your pastor relate well with members of the congregation?

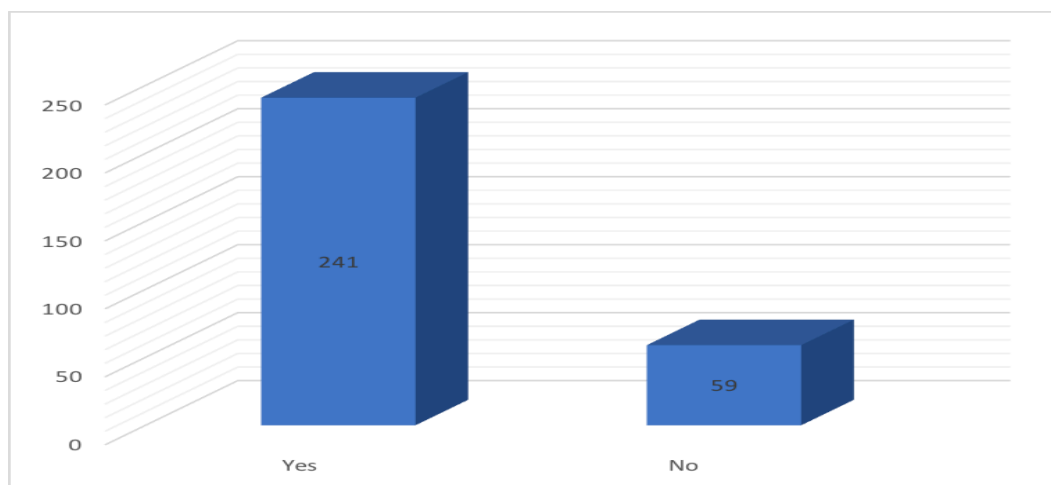


Figure 1.5. From the 300 members surveyed, 241 members suggested that their pastor communicated well and was relational with the congregation.

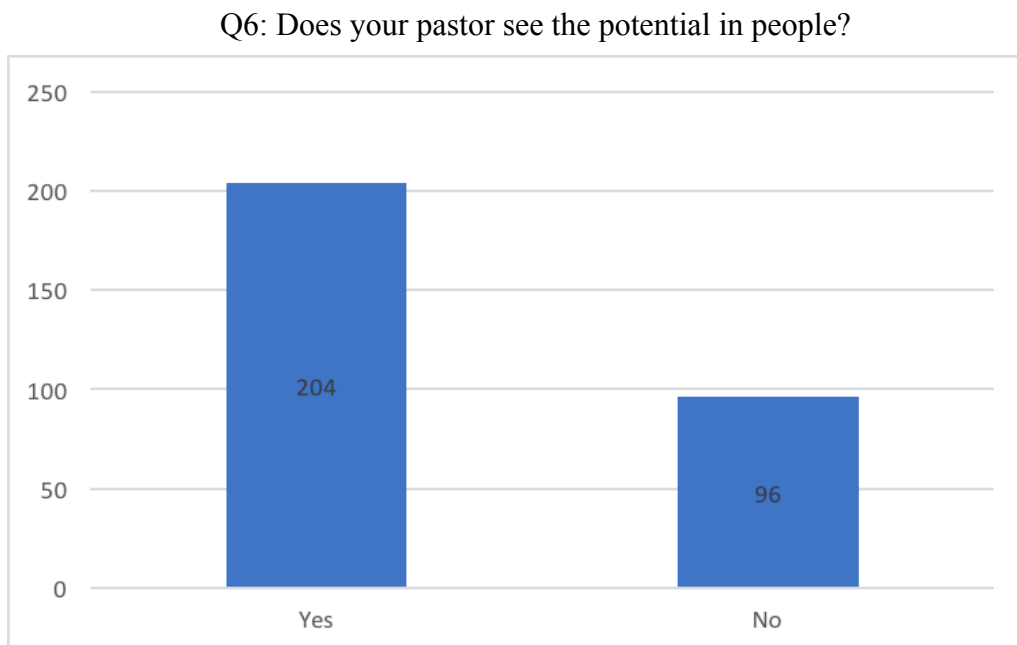


Figure 1.6. Among those surveyed, 96 out of 300 members reported that their pastor did not see the potential of the church's members.

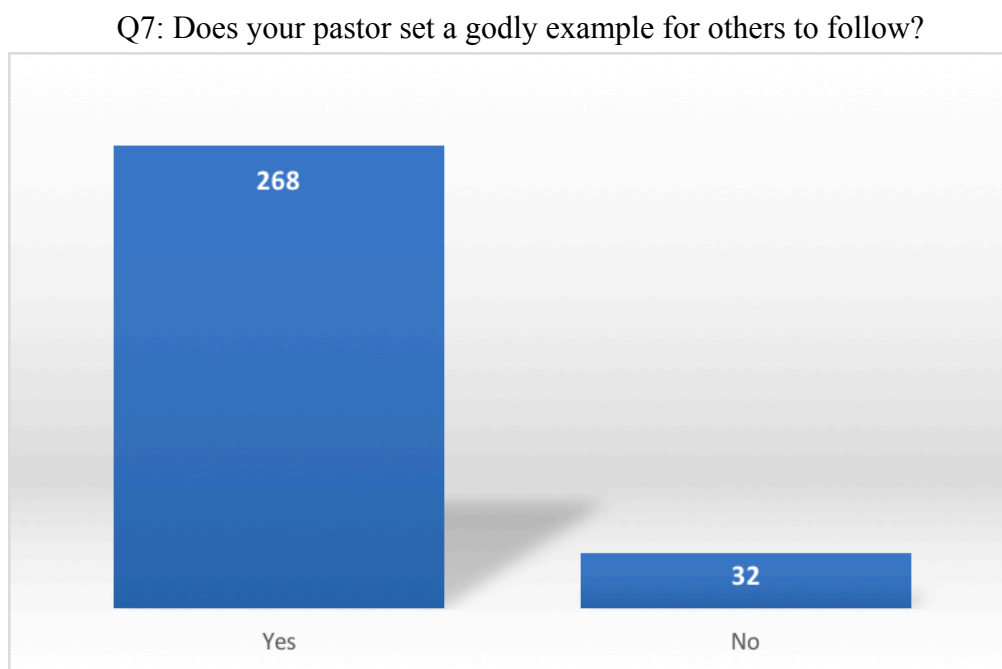


Figure 1.7. Almost 100% of members reported that their pastor set a godly example for the congregation.

Q8: Servant leadership can be defined as having a caring and compassionate heart for people. Do you believe the role of servant leadership will contribute to the growth of the church?

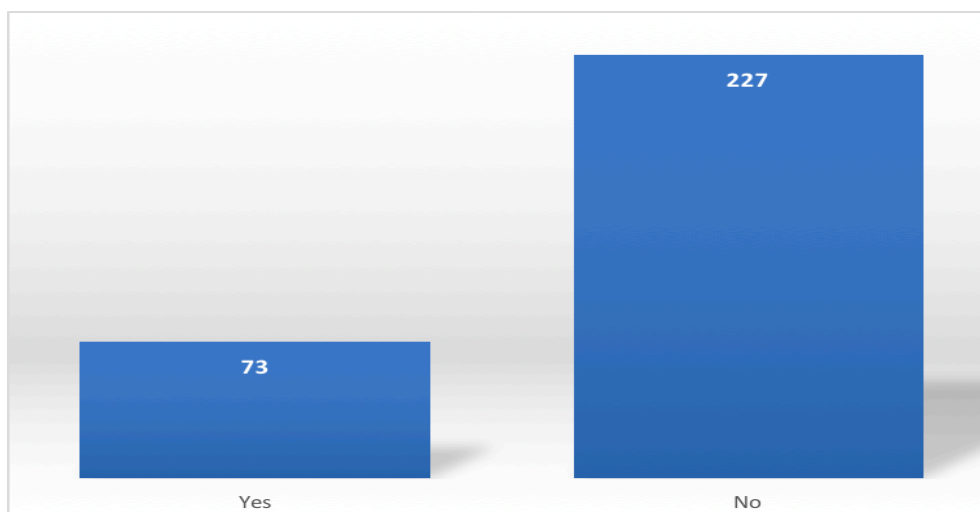


Figure 1.8. From the 300 members surveyed, 227 members did not believe that servant leadership would add to the church.

Q9: Does your pastor encourage and train others to be potential leaders?

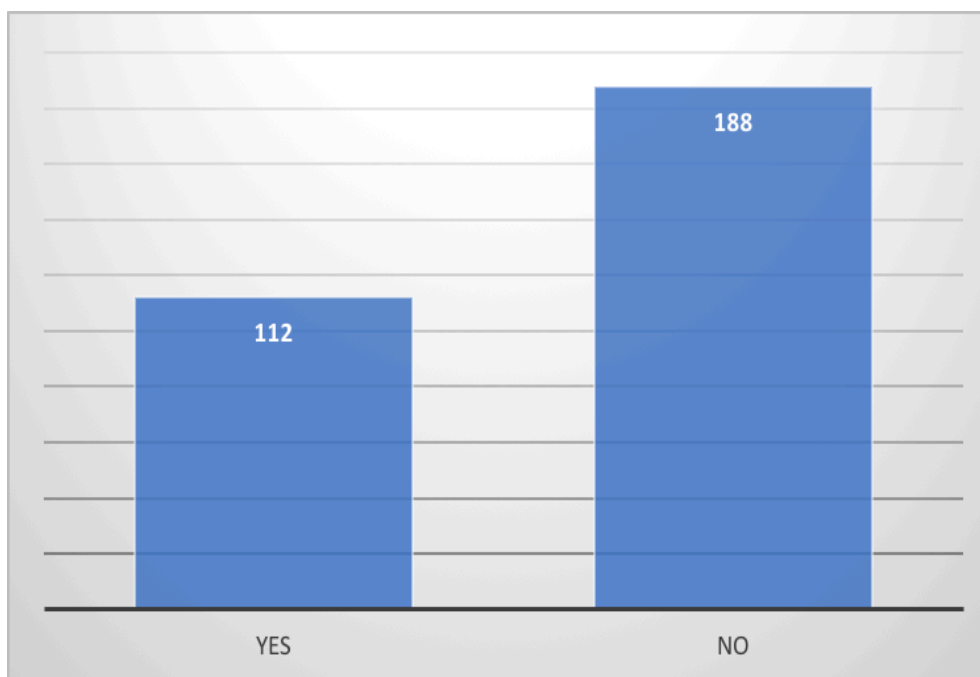


Figure 1.9. Almost 200 members did not believe that their pastor encouraged or trained others to be leaders.

Q10: Understanding that the Great Commission refers to presenting the gospel to a lost world according to Mark 16:15, does your pastor preach and challenge the church to implement the Great Commission within the community?

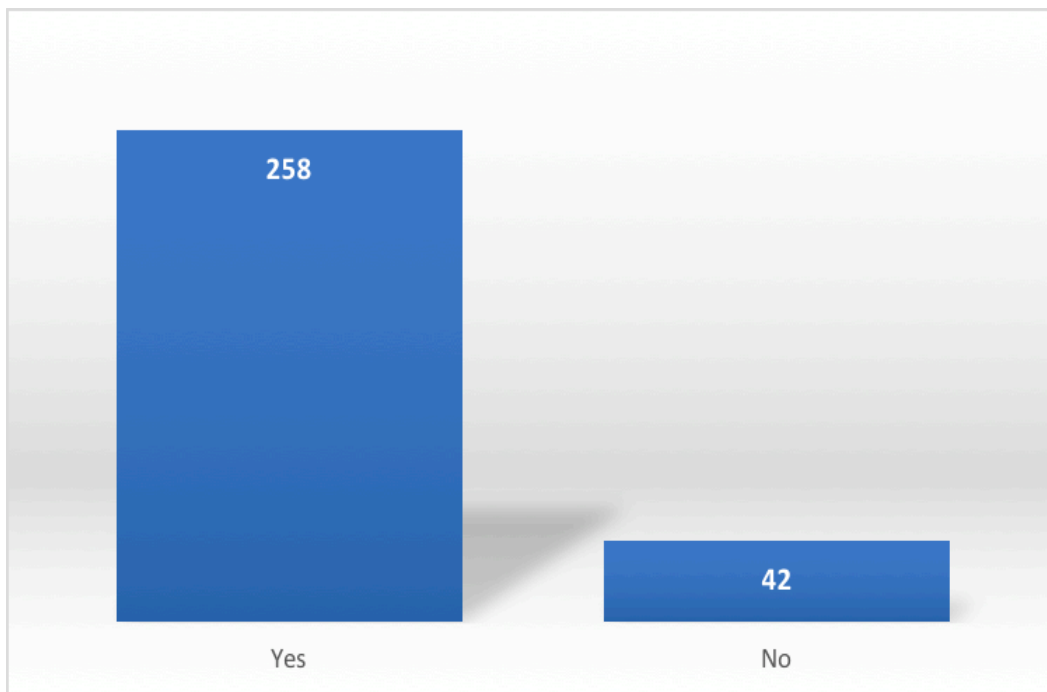


Figure 1.10. Out of 300 church members, 42 reported that their pastor did not preach or teach about the Great Commission to the community.

Appendix B

This section of the document contains the results of an anonymous survey of senior pastors. The surveys consisted of 10 true/false questions distributed to 100 pastors. The first question was a response question, and pastors had to provide their own personal answers. The answers given were in their own personal words in relation to servant leadership. This writer only referenced 10 pastors in response to servant leadership.

Q1: As a pastor, how would you define servant leadership from a biblical perspective?

- A. Servant leadership models Jesus as in the Bible.
- B. Focusing on people is servant leadership.
- C. As a pastor, it is my responsibility to be an example to my congregation.
- D. Being a servant leader focuses on people.
- E. Servant leadership is following the example of Jesus.
- F. As Jesus was a servant, we are to follow His example.
- G. A servant leader shares the love of Christ.
- H. Servant leadership is following Jesus.
- I. Being a servant means setting an example for people to follow.
- J. Servant leadership means loving people.

Q2: Do you believe that servant leadership will contribute to the growth of your church?

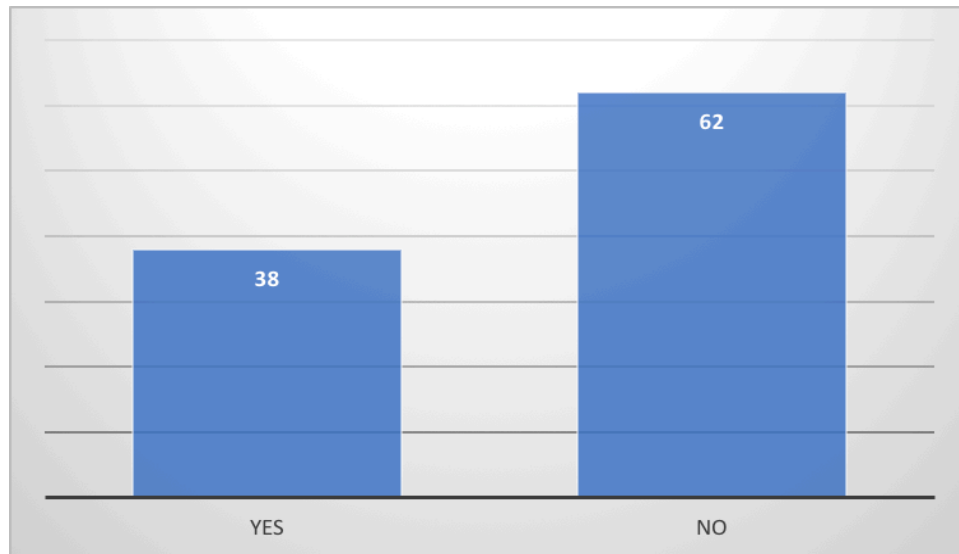


Figure 1.2. Out of 100 pastors, 62 pastors did not believe that servant leadership would produce growth in their churches.

Q3: Is love and compassion at the center of your leadership?

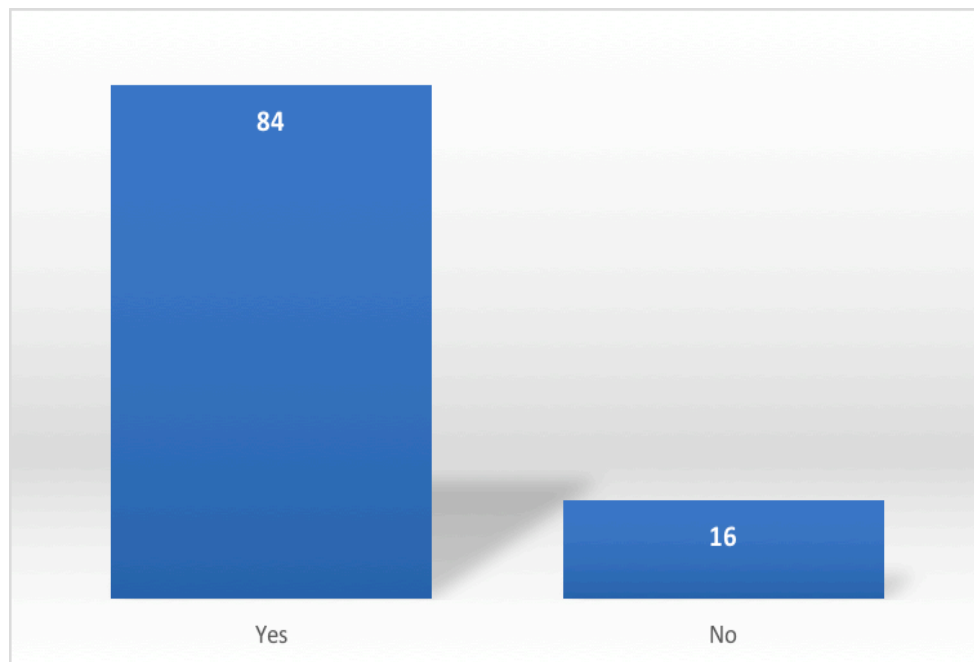


Figure 1.3. It was reported that 16 pastors out of 100 did not apply love or compassion in their leadership.

Q4: Do you have a vision for your church?

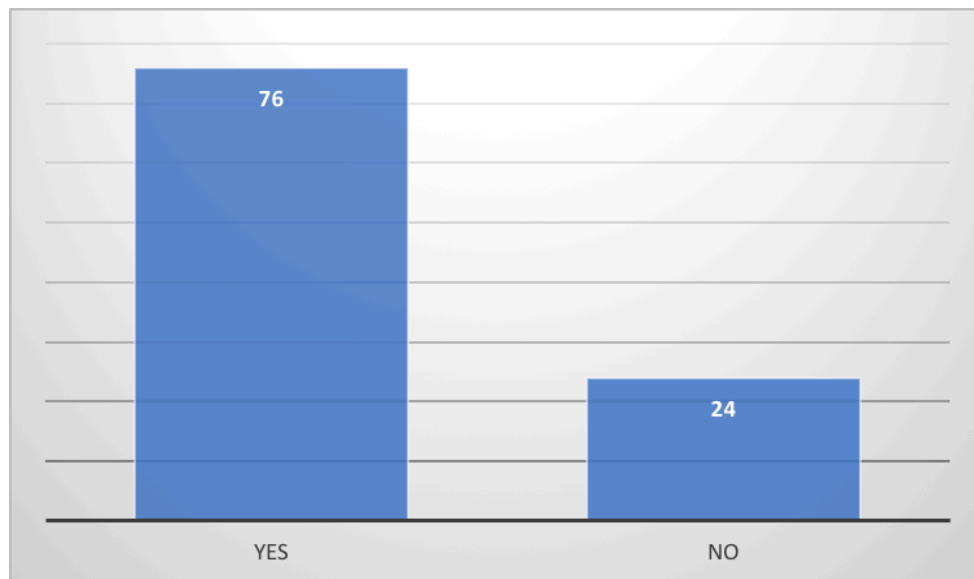


Figure 1.4. From 100 pastors surveyed, 76 pastors reported having a vision for their churches.

Q5: Do you have a plan to develop potential members to become leaders?

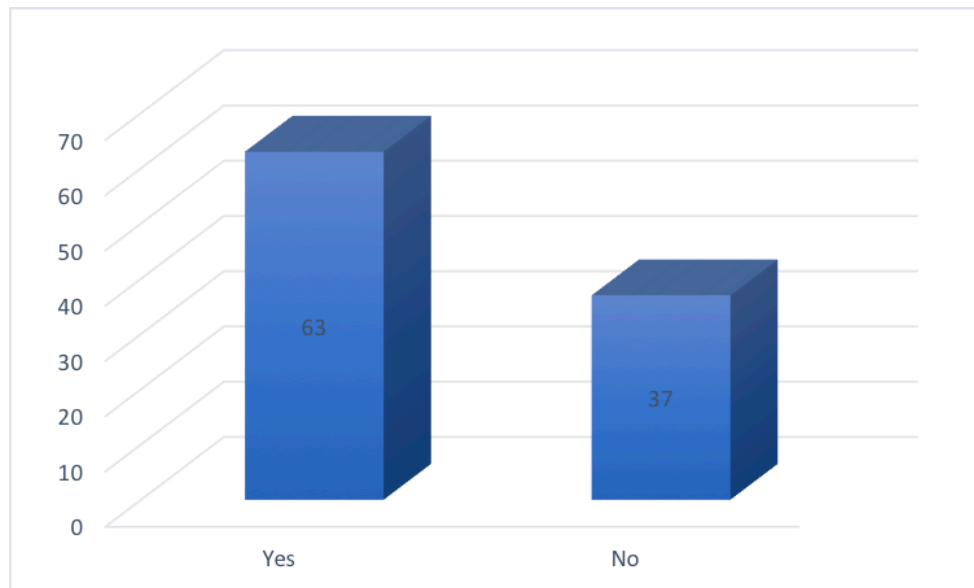


Figure 1.5. It was reported that 37 pastors had no plan to develop future leaders from the membership.

Q6: Do you have strategic plan to disciple members?

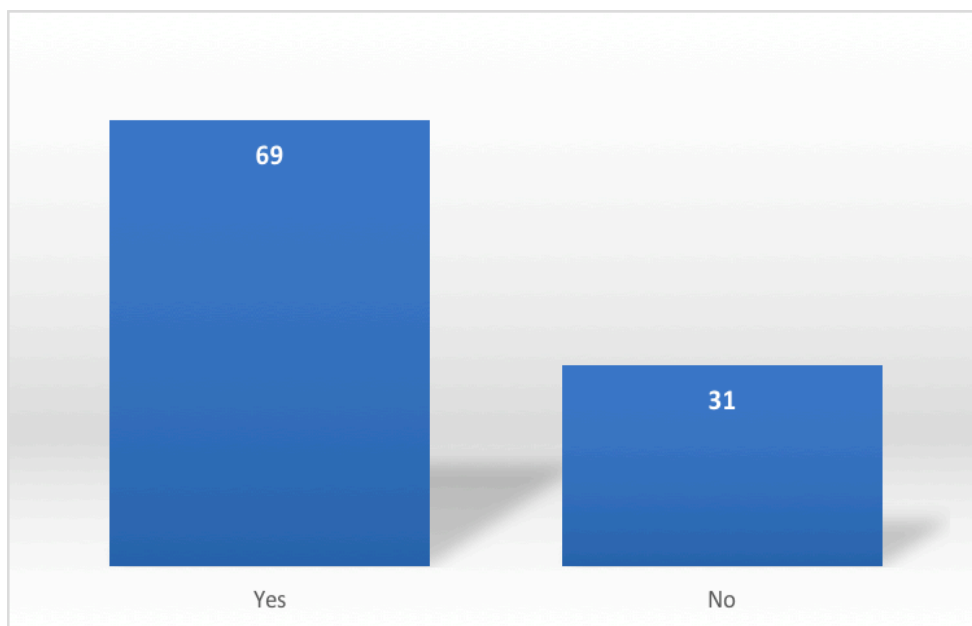


Figure 1.6. Out of 100 pastors surveyed, only 69 leaders had a plan to develop disciples from the membership.

Q7: Do you set aside time for daily prayer and devotions?

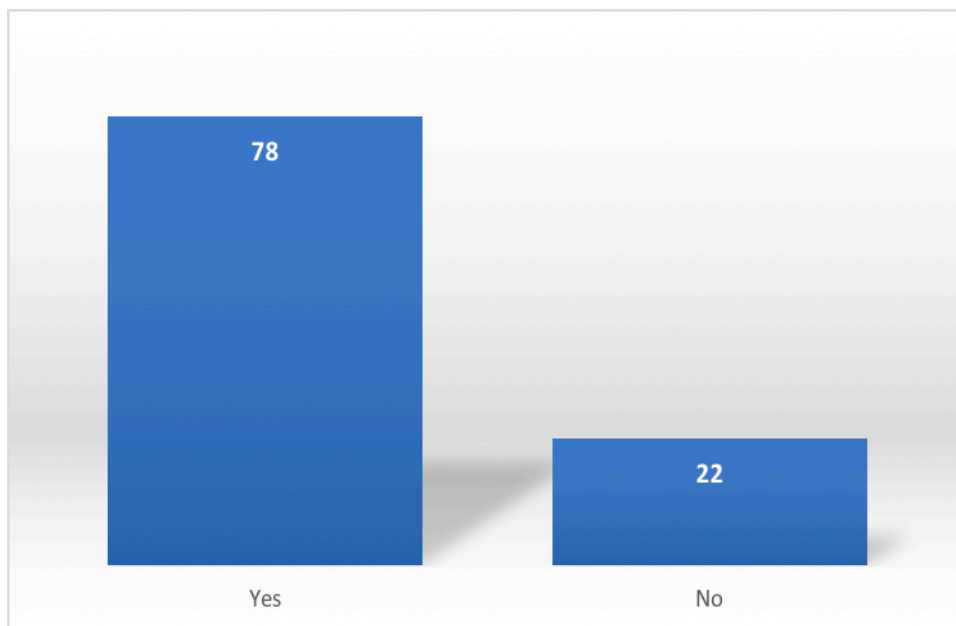


Figure 1.7. Out of 100 pastors surveyed, 78 of them prioritized their time to pray and read God's Word.

Q8: Is integrity necessary in order to be a servant leader?

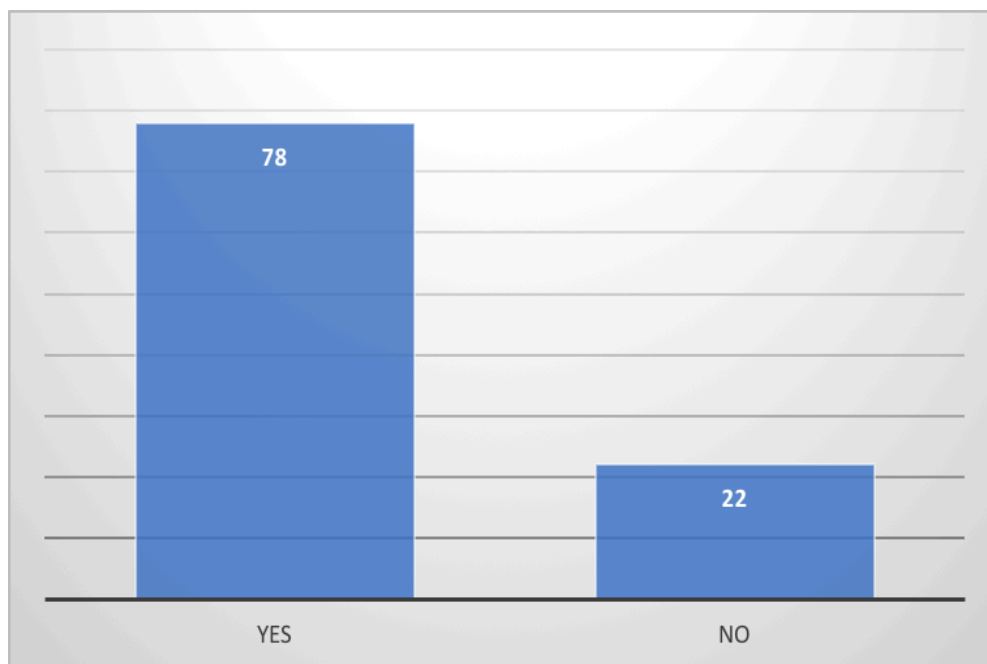


Figure 1.8. From 100 pastors surveyed, 78 agreed that integrity is necessary to be a servant leader.

Q9: Is your church focused on meeting the needs of your community?

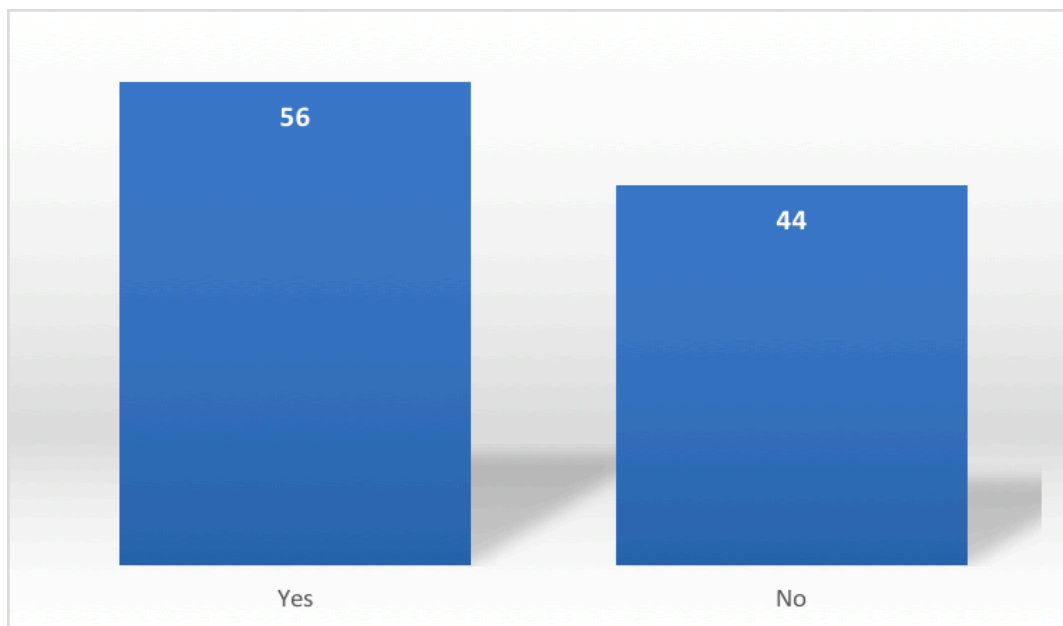


Figure 1.9. Out of 100 pastors surveyed, 56 reported that they were meeting the needs of the community.

Q10: As a pastor, is the Great Commission one of the highest priorities in your church?

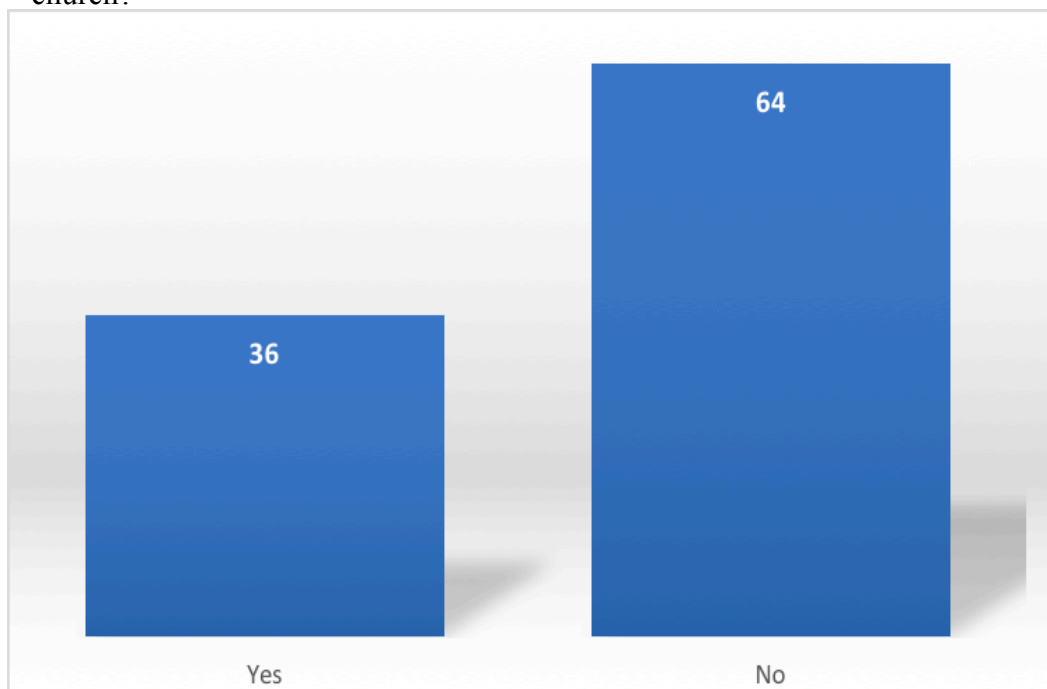


Figure 1.10. Out of 100 pastors surveyed, 64 stated that the Great Commission was not their number one priority.

Appendix C
Survey of Church Members

1. Does your pastor exemplify a spirit of compassion?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

2. Does your pastor have the heart of a servant when leading people?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

3. Do you believe your pastor takes on the burden of lost people?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

4. Does your pastor have a clear vision for the church?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

5. Does your pastor relate well with members of the congregation?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

6. Does your pastor see the potential in people?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

7. Does your pastor set a godly example for others to follow?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

8. Servant leadership can be defined as having a caring and compassionate heart for people. Do you believe the role of servant leadership will contribute to the growth of the church?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9. Does your pastor encourage and train others to be potential leaders?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. Understanding that the Great Commission refers to presenting the gospel to a lost world according to Mark 16:15, does your pastor preach and challenge church members to implement the Great Commission within the community?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Additional Comments: _____

Survey for Pastors

1. As a pastor, how would you define servant leadership from a biblical perspective?

2. Do you believe that servant leadership will contribute to the growth of your church?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. Is love and compassion at the center of your leadership?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4. Do you have a vision for your church?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

5. Do you have a plan to develop potential members to become leaders?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6. Do you have a strategic plan to disciple members?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. Do you set aside time for daily prayer and devotions?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

8. Is integrity necessary in order to be a servant leader?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9. Is your church focused on meeting the needs of your community?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. As a pastor, is the Great Commission one of the highest priorities in your church?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Additional Comments: _____

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

March 31, 2017

Fred Jensen IRB Exemption 2771.033117: An Examination of the Necessity for Servant Leadership in the Pastoral Role

Dear Fred Jensen,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP

Administrative Chair of Institutional Research

The Graduate School

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