

# PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY

John Guido

**AIM Institute | Philosophy of Ministry**  
**Instructor: John Guido**  
**Study Guide**

Welcome to our course, "Philosophy of Ministry." This publication provides a weekly schedule and preparation to be completed before each session.

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

All those who are in Christ have been called to minister. We have been given gifts and anointed with power and authority to serve in the church and go out into the world. We are called to proclaim the gospel and serve others in the love of Christ. Every believer should have a philosophy of ministry and every congregation would benefit from developing a clear well-defined description of what, why, how, when and where it will do ministry.

What are our values and priorities for serving one another and reaching out into the world? What does the Bible teach concerning ministry? What philosophy of ministry and leadership leads to spiritual growth and development of the individual, the family and the church?

This course will explore the key biblical mandates and foundational priorities established in scripture for ministry in the church and to the community. We will examine the differences between Old Testament and New Testament leadership, covering specific topics like team building, servant, and collegial leadership. We will explore the proper expression and application of spiritual authority and power and together we'll unpack important aspects of discipleship, conflict resolution, and ministerial ethics.

The Course Format enables you to receive college level instruction while studying at home (AIM Institute is not accredited and does not offer college credits.) The course grade will be pass/fail. In addition to the videos, which you can view anything during the week, we will have weekly zoom debriefing sessions. These sessions will give you an opportunity to discuss the course material with a facilitator and fellow students.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

This course is designed to develop the student's ability to...

- Answer the question, what is a philosophy of ministry? Why is it important?
- Explore the biblical patterns of ministry, leadership, and their underlying philosophical foundations.
- Explore the biblical mandates for ministry and the foundational priorities of the church.
- Explore biblical principles of conflict resolution, discipleship, leadership development, and team building.
- Evaluate biblical and contemporary leadership practices.
- Write a personal philosophy of ministry using the key areas addressed in the course including the Biblical mandates, discipleship, leadership and team building, and a personal response to authority and power.

INSTRUCTOR: John Guido

John Guido and his wife Marilyn have served in Ecuador since 1988. A large church with many community ministries has been raised up. The work in Cuenca includes a hospital, Christian school, hospital, after school programs for underprivileged children, an FM radio station, and medical missions. John has pastored five congregations and was instrumental in planting 10 churches in Ecuador and Peru. He is one of the founding team members of Arco Ministries and a member of the Coordinating Team of Alliance International Ministries. In addition to 47 years of ministry experience, John has a Master's degree in leadership development from Azusa Pacific University.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

This directed study format enables you to receive college level instruction while studying at home. (Note, AIM Institute does not offer accredited college credits.) Course elements include:

- Weekly video assignments
- Required textbook reading assignments
- Contact time with the instructor and classmates is provided in a weekly Zoom debrief classroom.
- Study questions are for your personal benefit as well as preparation for the weekly debrief.
- Course will be graded as pass or fail. Bear in mind your weekly preparation will have a direct bearing on how much you gain from the course.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

- Weekly Zoom Debrief begin September 15 at 7:00 PM (Eastern Standard Time) for 11 weeks except September 29 and November 25
- You will receive a Zoom invite by email for each debrief.
- Preparation can be done at any time before the debrief.
- To maximize the use of your time, we will not cover information from the videos in the debrief unless there are questions.
- Completion of the course requires a project. Students to write a personal philosophy of ministry.
- A complete schedule with weekly assignments will be sent to you after you are registered.

## REQUIREMENTS

- This is an intensive course; students should plan to participate in all class sessions.
- Complete all course reading, watch videos, and writing assignments (approximately one hour per week.)
- Complete course project.

## TEXT

- "Upside Down" by Stacy T. Rinehart, Navpress, Colorado Springs, CO (originally published in 1998, copies are available from a number of sources online.)

## COURSE MATERIALS

Videos are available at [CLICK HERE](#)

This Study Guide can be downloaded from

## PARTICIPATION

- Essential: Our weekly Zoom meeting is a discussion based debrief, not a lecture.
- Please be prepared to turn on your camera. Test your internet connection in advance.

**Study Guide Philosophy of Ministry**  
**September 15 to December 8 (expect September 29 and November 25)**  
**Weekly Debrief Thursday 7:00 PM New York Time**

**September 15| Session 1 Orientation and Course Introduction**

Preparation: Watch video 1

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**September 22| Session 2 Definitions, Bases I – Scripture, The Four Great Mandates, The Four Foundational Priorities.**

Preparation: Watch video 2

**I. Definitions**

A. Philosophy: 1) The activity of seeking to understand the fundamental truths about a subject (in this case ministry). 2) A critical study of fundamental beliefs and the grounds for them.

For our purposes it would be: Seeking to understand the fundamental truths and beliefs about ministry and the grounds for them.

B. Ministry: diakonia attendance (as a servant); figuratively aid, service (ad-) minister (-ing, -tration, -try), office, relief.

For this course it would be: Spiritual service and leadership including Preaching, Pastoring, Teaching, Discipling, Counseling, Service, and Mission.

**II. Purpose**

A. A Philosophy of Ministry (clearly defined and communicated) helps us:

- Know and understand God's will regarding ministry.
- Develop powerful and effective ministry
- Inspire and mobilize the congregation.
- Narrow the church's focus and deepen its impact.
- Establish and maintain a consistent approach to ministry.
- Facilitate discussion making.

B. As we discover and adopt our own Philosophy of Ministry the principles that govern our choices should be drawn primarily from Scripture. Our aim is to do God's work in God's way, and in God's time so our guidelines must come from God's word.

C. Each one of us has individual gifts and callings and we should develop our own somewhat unique philosophy of ministry which needs to fit in with and augment the vision and philosophy of ministry of our Local church or para-church organization.

D. We're setting ourselves up for failure if we approach ministry without a definite aim and direction, one that can be clearly defined and communicated. Valuable time and resources can be spent without ever accomplishing anything in particular if we only have a hit-and-miss philosophy of ministry. We could end up with little to show after a lifetime of service.

E. "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." Albert Einstein But sadly, that's what often happens in ministry. It would be beneficial for all in ministry to do a careful evaluation of their philosophy of ministry and develop one that is personal, biblically based, and clearly defined. One which considers the culture and needs of the population they are serving, their personal gifts and calling, and the gifts and calling of the people they are serving with.

F. A properly implemented philosophy of ministry will provide a needed check on the purposes and direction of the church. An ill-conceived, poorly defined understanding of the divine purposes for the church will lead to pragmatic, carnal, and even sinful approaches to ministry. We should never set aside the Biblical pattern set for the church and ministry for tradition, convention, or pragmatic reasons.

### III. Bases

A. Scripture - A philosophy of ministry should be based on a careful investigation of both the explicit teachings, implicit principles and values drawn from Scripture. The Bible is the roadmap, and final authority on all aspects of true ministry. God has chosen to reveal His truth about how to do ministry in His Word. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says Scripture is given to make the Christian "thoroughly equipped for every good work." The Bible is sufficient to thoroughly prepare each believer for every aspect of ministry and service and outlines what ministry is and how it is to be done.

B. The New Testament - True Christian ministry is modeled in the New Testament- The first Christian church ministered just as Jesus commanded and they are the model for us (1 Corinthians 11:1; 14:37-38; 1 John 4:6). Principles for biblical ministry are timeless and transcend cultures and every other demographic (Acts 2:38-39; 1 Corinthians 11:16). And all those principles are either modeled or stated in the Bible. This gives us great confidence as we carry out ministry.

C. The 4 Great Mandates - The Great Commandments, The Great Commission, The Great Empowering, The Great Requirements (Matthew 22:36-40, 28:18-20; Luke 10:19, Micah 6:8)

#### 1. Love for God and for others – The Great Commandments

In ministry we can be motivated by many things. However, the only true and pure motivation is love for God and others. There will always be some level of motivational mixture in our hearts and lives. By seeking the Lord's grace and continually examining our hearts before him we can minimize all other motivations and serve in love.

It is natural to be motivated by success, recognition, or money and these can quickly develop into pride, avarice, and selfishness. In Dostoevsky's "The Grand Inquisitor" the church is portrayed as accepting the three temptations of Christ because these

are effective in leading and ministering to human nature. May the Lord guard us from such carnal, sinful pragmatism.

## 2. Make Discipleship of all Nations – The Great Commission

All Christian ministry should be centered in and around the Great Commission. We as the church are called to evangelizing the lost, bring them into the church and make them disciples of Christ. When we serve others, it is our hope that they will come to Christ, grow in him, and reach others thus continuing the cycle from generation to generation and nation to nation.

## 3. The Spirit's power in Ministry – The Great Empowerment

The Lord has given us authority and power for ministry. Our ministry must be one to which we are called and empowered. Like the first disciples we must receive power from on high, the baptism in the Holy Spirit to be effective in ministry.

Human effort will only produce human results. His power will always produce abundant and lasting fruit. Our ministry must be dependent on Him and done in and through the Spirit's power and in the name of the Lord Jesus. Only then will he receive all the honor and glory.

## 4. Justice, Mercy, and Humility – The Great Requirements

True ministry must include a continual dedication to justice, mercy and humbly recognizing our dependence on God. We are to receive continual guidance and direction from the Holy Spirit. Essentially our ministry is not ours it His and it is He who working in and through us.

We are called not only to be just and merciful but to defend the weak and exploited. We are to let our light shine before men so that they may see our good works and glorify our Father. So, then these good works of justice and mercy should be done in humility but are also to be seen.

Ministry is service to God; we were created to serve Him as the Creator, Lord, Savior, and Judge. That's why we are here on earth – to do His bidding. Let our cry be that of the prophet Isaiah; "Here am I, send me".

"To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:21

## D. Foundational Priorities - Acts 2:42-47

Christian ministry has 4 foundational priorities – The Apostles Teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers, (Acts 2:42-47). We, the church, must make a priority of these corporate spiritual disciplines. These fundamental disciplines give the church an integral vital basis for ministry.

1. The Apostles Teaching – The Apostles Teaching (singular) implies the compendium of what they taught, which of course we find in the New Testament. We must emphasize regular, sound, inspirational and anointed Bible, (New Testament) teaching and our churches should be dedicated to not only preaching the word but practicing it.

2. Fellowship – Fellowship is much more than just a time to chat with friends after a service. It implies sharing life together, laying down our lives for one another. It is being in covenant relationship one with another. This requires deep commitment, sacrifice and dedication. As the body of Christ, we are a community, a spiritual family sharing life together in loving commitment to Christ and to one another.

3. Breaking of bread - We should regularly celebrate the Lord's Supper together as a community. Examining our hearts. Recognizing and repenting of our sins, forgiving, and asking for forgiveness. Confessing our sins and placing ourselves in the hands of a merciful Father who disciplines his children and proclaiming together that we are His children forgiven and washed by the blood of Christ. Committing our lives to Him and to one another in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the anointing and blessing that comes through our participation in His body.

4. The Prayers - Dedicating ourselves to all forms of prayer—Individual and corporate, times and types of Prayer. – Thanksgiving, Intercession, Petition, Blessings, and Intimacy,

5. The results of these practices:

- Praising God together.
- A healthy fear of God was evident among the people, signs and wonders.
- They were in unity and helped one another.
- They met together in homes and in Solomons Colonnade.
- They had favor with the people.
- God added to their numbers daily.

Assignments and Questions:

1. Would you add or eliminate a Mandate? What scripture would you use? Would you change the order I have placed them in? Why?
  2. Read and Study Acts 2:42-47 and the article by Steven J. Cole <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-9-snapshot-healthy-church-acts-242-47>
  3. Of the priorates you see practiced in the early church, which are strongest/weakest in your ministry and church?
  4. Can we, should we, expect the same results that the first church did?
  5. Read Chapter 1 of “Upside Down” and answer the questions on page 25
  6. Prepare to discuss some of your personal experiences in and under leadership in the church.
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### Session 3 Bases II - Impacting Society and Ecclesiastic Emphases

Preparation: Watch video 3

E. Impacting Society - A City Set on a Hill (Jeremiah 29:7, 1Corinthians 9:19-23, Matthew 5:13-16, 25:31-46) Christian ministry should extend into the world- Jesus came to seek and to save those who are lost (Luke 19:10). Ministry should extend to our immediate community, and beyond as an example of God's love and to win the lost for Christ.

1. We are Called to be Salt and Light in the World - Our ministry should be both preservative and saporous in nature. A healthy church will bring blessing to its city and forestall judgement. It will also bring the light of the gospel and revelation of the nature and character of God and His plan for humanity. (Matthew 5:13-16)

2. Seeking and Praying for the Shalom of your City - Seek and pray implies action, involvement, monitoring, guarding, and protecting. Shalom is a very broad term meaning, peace, welfare, safety, health, and prosperity. (Jeremiah 29:7) Seeking and praying for the Shalom – Action; Involvement, Guarding/Protecting, and Investigation.

As we go out into our community our principal call is to proclaim the gospel but as we do, we are also called to heal the sick, cast out demons, and share the love of Christ in practical ways. Love demands action, commitment, and service.

3. The Parables of the Kingdom - Along with John 15 the parables of the Kingdom in Matthew 12 illustrates our calling to be in world but not of it. This is a radical change from the Old Testament regarding the people of God. We are the wheat sown among tares, the leaven penetrating and influencing the world, the mustard seed Kingdom providing refuge even to those of this world. (Matthew 13:24-32) We are to go out into the world with compassion proclaiming and living the gospel of the kingdom, knowing that they are harassed and helpless sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:36)

4. Justice and Social Work – “As we proclaim the love of God we must be involved in loving service, as we preach the kingdom of God we must be committed to its demands of justice and peace. Evangelism is primary because our chief concern is with the gospel that all people may have the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Yet Jesus not only proclaimed the kingdom of God, he also demonstrated its arrival by works of mercy and power. We are called today to a similar integration of words and deeds. In a spirit of humility, we are to preach and teach, minister to the sick, feed the hungry, care for prisoners, help the disadvantaged and handicapped, and deliver the oppressed. While we acknowledge the diversity of spiritual gifts, callings, and contexts, we also affirm that good news and good works are inseparable. True mission should always be incarnational. It necessitates entering humbly into other people's worlds, identifying with their social reality, their sorrow and suffering, and their struggles for justice against oppressive powers. This cannot be done without personal sacrifices.” Manila Manifesto  
<https://lausanne.org/content/manifesto/the-manila-manifesto>

Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? Foreigner and welcome you, or naked and clothe you?

sick or in prison and visit you?’ ..., as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ Matthew 25:37-40

5. Being a Prophetic Voice – “The proclamation of God’s kingdom necessarily demands the prophetic denunciation of all that is incompatible with it. Among the evils we deplore are destructive violence, including institutionalized violence, political corruption, all forms of exploitation of people and of the earth, the undermining of the family, abortion on demand, the drug traffic, and the abuse of human rights. In our concern for the poor, we are distressed by the burden of debt in the two-thirds world. We are also outraged by the inhuman conditions in which millions live, who bear God’s image as we do. We affirm that we must demonstrate God’s love visibly by caring for those who are deprived of justice, dignity, food, and shelter.” Manila Manifesto

<https://lausanne.org/content/manifesto/the-manila-manifesto>

6. Being all things to all Men - The apostle Paul tells us he, “become all things to all men, that by all means I might save some.” (1Corinthians 9:19-23) The church has a responsibility to share the gospel within the culture so it can be understood and received. We must never water it down but neither should we ignore the fact that the way the story is told must be in a form that will be easily understood. There are many missionary stories that illustrate this point. (Mars Hill, Paul the Apostle (Acts 17:22-31), “Brucho” by Bruce Olson; “Peace Child” by Don Richardson, and “The “Pineapple Story” by Otto König)

“We affirm our duty to study the society in which we live, in order to understand its structures, values and needs, and so develop an appropriate strategy of mission.” Manila Manifesto

<https://lausanne.org/content/manifesto/the-manila-manifesto>

F. Sacramental, Evangelical, Charismatic (Acts 1:8, John 3:3, Romans 6:3-6, Luke 22:15-20)  
Often, we are restricted in our ability to hear from God and correctly interpret the scriptures by our narrow and parochial experiences and views. We easily become trapped by our biases. <https://www.tikvahlake.com/blog/x-common-biases-that-affect-how-we-make-everyday-decisions/>. It can be extremely beneficial in our development of a philosophy of ministry to examine the ideals and practices from the three main ecclesiastic emphases.

1. “Sacramental” implies placing a primary emphasis in ministry on the grace of God imparted in and through the two ordinances established by the Lord Jesus – Water Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.
2. “Evangelical” implies an emphasis in ministry on the preaching of the Word of God.
3. “Charismatic” implies an emphasis on the infilling and gifts of the Holy Spirit

Taking a cue from church history, tradition, and scripture provides us with a more balanced approach to ministry. We should study, learn from, and, where appropriate, include in our philosophy of ministry elements from these three ecclesiastic emphases. We should take full advantage to the grace, power and authority given us by His spirit, in His word, and through His ordinances. In this way we will be faithful stewards of the manifold grace of God”.

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (1Peter 4:10-11)

Assignments and Questions:

1. Should a percentage of the church's budget include ministry to the community or should that be left to the individual or parachurch ministries.
  2. What ministries are most needed in your city and community? How can they be encouraged?
  3. Do you see the parables of the Kingdom as contamination or impact?
  4. Prepare to comment on the declaration from the Manila Manifesto.
  5. Does "being all things to all men seem like compromising to you? Why, why not?
  6. Can or should we incorporate the strengths of each stream in our ministry?
  7. Read Chapter 2 of "Upside Down" and answer the questions on page 25
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## October 6 | Session 4 Bases II - Impacting Society and Ecclesiastic Emphases

Preparation: Watch video 4

### Authority and Power

#### I. Authority and Power has been Given

A. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Luke 10:19

B. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8

C. In order to glorify God, we must be in Christ and minister in His power and authority. That’s why it’s so important to minister in the authority and power that the Lord has graciously given us. When we are resting in our sonship, won by His blood, empowered by His Spirit, and living in His love, we can confidently and wisely exercise spiritual power - under His authority. So it is not about our ambitions, goals, reputation, our personal happiness, – the motive for ministry has nothing ultimately to do with us – it is all about God in Christ. The church and our ministry belong to God. This means making Him pre-eminent, seeking His will in all things, and leading others to Him. God’s glory is the motive for all real Christian service. “Whether then you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (1Corinthians 10:31).

D. We are qualified for ministry only after being called by Jesus Christ. If we have a ministry, it is because Jesus gave it to us. In Him we have been entrusted to carry on His work. Eph. 2:10 “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

E. A healthy understanding of the power and authority we have in Christ is a foundational part of our spiritual identity. One of the most important revelations we can receive from the Word of God and the Holy Spirit is to understand who we are in Christ. Walking in our identity in Christ changes the way we live and enables us to do his will and overcome adversity. Jesus said to His disciples, “Apart from me, you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

#### II. The Essence of Our Authority and Power

A. Jesus opened his ministry by fulfilling prophecy in reading from the book of Isaiah in his hometown synagogue. This scripture describes his anointing and calling. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.” Luke 4:18-19

B. In this scripture we see a synthesis of Authority and Power:

AUTHORITY

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me  
He has anointed me  
He has sent me

POWER

Liberty to the Captive  
Recovery of sight  
Freedom to the oppressed  
Proclamation of the Gospel

C. The Lord Jesus has commissioned us, His disciples, saying, "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" John 20:21, and whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. John 4:12

D. In Christ, we are anointed and called with authority and power to minister as Jesus did. Recognizing and moving in that authority and power should be what inspires and empowers our ministry.

III. Authority Without Power - Some may have authority but do not move in the power of the Holy Spirit, under His anointing and direction.

- (2Timoteo 3:5) They have the appearance of godliness but deny its power.
- (1Thessalonians 1:5) - Our ministry must not only be in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.
- (1Corinthians 2:4) - Not only with persuasives words of wisdom, but also with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

IV. Power without Authority - Sadly, our ministry can also be powerful but lack authority.

- (1Corinthians 13:2) We can have great prophetic anointing and understand mysteries and have great knowledge and enough faith to move mountains. We can even give away everything we have to the poor and become a martyr but if we don't have love, we are nothing and gain nothing.
- ((Matthew 7:22-23) We are warned that many will say Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied, cast out demons, and done wonderful works all in your name only to be told, "I never knew you; depart from me."

V. Ministering in Authority and Power

Regarding Power - We learn from scripture that:

- John 16:13 - The Spirit will give us revelation and the very words we are to speak. God wants to lead us so that we can speak prophetically and be guided in all situations to declare words of edification— what is lead and anointed by the Holy Spirit.
- Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 6:18, 5:18 We are to be continually filled with, walk in, and pray in the Holy Spirit. Walking in the Spirit empowers us in ministry – it should be all that empowers us, not our eloquence words or natural abilities but the power of God.
- 1 Corinthians 12:31, 14:1, 39 -We are told to earnestly desire and be zealous for the best gifts and to prophesy. God graciously, generously, and sovereignly gives His gifts to us and yet we are told to promote, procure, desire, be passionate about and fan into flames and not

quench the Spirit. We have an important part to play in collaborating with God in the manifestation of His power.

Regarding authority we learn:

- Matthew 7:23, Philippians 3:9-10 - We must know Him and be found in Him, not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness, which is of God by faith - to know the power of His resurrection.
- John 15:1-9 - We are told that unless we abide in him, we can do nothing but when we abide, we will bear lasting and abundant fruit and our joy will be full.
- John 15:10-12 We must keep His commandments by abiding in His in love and loving one another fully. (John 14:15)

#### VI. The Priesthood of the Believer (1Peter 2:4-5)

A. Part of our Ministry Philosophy must include a healthy respect for the priesthood of the believer. This helps us recognize the great authority and power which has been given to every member of the body of Christ. It reminds us that we are to equip the saints facilitating the discovery of their individual giftings and calling; sending them out into this world to fulfill their spiritual mission. Every believer is God's workmanship designed for specific good works which he has predestined them to walk in.

B. Every Christian is called to ministry, every believer is expected to serve God, Christ and the church in ministry (Colossians 3:23; 1 Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:11-12). God prepared works of ministry for every believer before the foundation of the world to complete in this life (Ephesians 2:10). We will all be held accountable for our works of ministry, or our negligence in ministry (2 Corinthians 5:10). Every Christian is enabled to bear fruit in ministry through spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7).

*"A good leader creates space; he doesn't occupy space."  
"We should see ministry and discipleship more as gardening not factory work."*

#### VII. The Centurion's Wisdom

The centurion in Matthew 8 reveals an important principle about walking in authority. The centurion states: "For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." (Matthew 8:8-9)

*We must be under authority to exercise authority.*

#### Conclusion

It is extremely powerful to rest in our identity in Christ. He has freely given us eternal life and sent us into this world to do His works with authority and power. Knowing and resting in this enables us to humbly serve others in love.

We don't serve God and others to earn salvation or His favor; we already have it, in Christ. When we recognize this, He receives all the glory and honor for everything we do. What motivates and empowers us is His love which abides and abounds in our hearts. We will see this even more clearly as we look at our philosophy of leadership.

Assignments and Questions:

1. What authority and power do all believers have?
  2. What are the bases of our authority and power in Christ?
  3. Have you seen authority without power or vice versa in your ministry or in the church?
  4. How can we move more in the power of God? In the Authority of God?
  5. Read Chapter 3 and 4 of "Upside Down" and be prepared to dialog about the reflections at the end the chapter.
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## October 13 | Session 5 Spheres of Authority, Ministry Gifts, and Leadership Philosophy I

Preparation: Watch video 5

### I. Spheres of Authority

The Lord has established 4 primary spheres of authority. By His example and teaching we learn that we ought to obey and be subject in each of these spheres.

#### A. God Himself (John 5:19-20, 15:1-10)

- a. Through the Spirit and Scripture
- b. Dreams, visions, occurrences, and nature
- c. Through other believers

#### B. The Family (Luke 2:51, Ephesians 6:1, Colossians 3:18-20)

- a. Children are instructed to obey their parents
- b. Wives are instructed to submit to their husbands
- c. We are told to submit to one another in the fear of Christ.

#### C. The Church (Matthew 18:15-18, 22:2-3, Hebrews 13:17, 1Thessalonians 5:12-13)

- a. We are told to remember and obey our spiritual leaders
- b. Elders are called to lead and supervise in the church
- c. The Church is the pillar and buttress of the truth

#### D. Civil Authorities (Mark 12:17, Romans 13:1-5, 1 Peter 2:13-14)

- a. We are told to honor and obey rulers
- b. We are told to pay taxes and tributes
- c. We are told that all civil authority is placed by God and has God's authority to punish the wrongdoer.

II. There is Specialized Ministry in the Church - Although every Christian is called to serve in ministry, God gave leaders to the church to be models of ministry and to equip the believers for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 5:17).

A. An important part of recognizing authority in our lives is allowing the ministry gifts to operate in the church and in our lives. We need each other and we are called to be equipped for works of service. If we as God's people are to grow into to the full measure of the stature of Christ and not be confused by false waves of doctrine and the deceitful schemes of men. Every member of the body must be equipped to do its part, working properly, allowing the body to grow and build itself up in love.

B. The government of the church lies in the local body of elders. The ministry gifts may be part of this governmental body but primarily they operate as equipping gifts not governmentally. Those who work extra-locally must respect and come under the leadership of the local church. Also, it is important that elders of the church to make space and opportunity for the full and proper equipping of the saints. This necessitates the operation of all the ministry gifts in balance and under submission.



C. In order to operate in authority and power we must be equipped, fully functioning as the body of Christ and aware of the winds of doctrine which threaten to blow us off course. We must together with God under His authority and in His power.

### III. Measure of Rule

A. "Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding. But we will not boast beyond limits but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even to you. For we are not overextending ourselves, as though we did not reach you. For we were the first to come all the way to you with the gospel of Christ. We do not boast beyond limit in the labors of others. But our hope is that as your faith increases, our area of influence among you may be greatly enlarged, so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another's area of influence." (2 Corinthians 10:12-16)

B. "Measure of Rule" is an important concept in developing a healthy Ministry Philosophy. As we examine the need to move in and under the Lord's authority and power in ministry, we understand that to do that we must respect the spheres of authority that He has established. It is especially important that we respect and honor the spheres of authority of fellow ministers and churches.

C. In the above portion of scripture from 1 Corinthians, Paul tells us that an area of influence in ministry had been assigned to him by the Lord. He was careful not to go beyond the limits of that ministry, overextending himself by daring to take credit for or interfere with the ministry of others. He strived to preach by the power of the Spirit where Christ had not been named, lest he build upon another man's foundation. (Romans 15:18-20) He also traveled to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus to consult with the apostles to ensure had not run in vain. (Galatians 2:2) They saw that the gospel to the uncircumcised had been committed to him and they gave him their blessing.

D. By showing deference and respect to his fellow leaders Paul was assured that he was walking with and in God's authority. If we carelessly boast or worse yet interfere in the sphere of authority of a fellow minister or church, we show disrespect for them and the Lord. This will greatly limit our ability to move in authority and power.

### Conclusion

When we are resting in our identity in Christ, knowing He has freely given us eternal life and sent us into this world to do His works with authority and power we can humbly serve others in love. We don't serve God and others to earn salvation or His favor; we already have it, in Christ. When we recognize this, He receives all the glory and honor for everything we do. What motivates and empowers us is His love which abides and abounds in our hearts.

### Assignments and Questions:

1. Where would you say you are weakest regarding submission under the four spheres? Where is the church weakest?
2. How important do you think the operation of the Ministry Gifts is for you and in your church?
3. Where have you seen blessing and/or damage done by Ephesians 4:11 ministry gifts?

4. What do you see as the most important aspects of “measure of rule”?
  5. Read Chapter 5 “Upside Down” and be prepared to dialog about the reflections at the end the chapter.
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## October 20 | Session 6 Discipleship, Spheres of Influence, Covenant Relationships

Preparation: Watch video 6

### I. Introduction

A. Jesus' ministry began with the calling of the twelve and ended with Him commissioning them to make disciples of the nations. Later we see the apostles establishing elders in every church and building ministry teams. The process of making disciples, (discipleship) must be a central part of our ministry philosophy.

B. The Christian life should be a dynamic experience whereby the members of the body of Christ are in constant interaction with one another. In this process we are mutually edified, encouraged and stimulated to love and to good works. (Hebrews 10:23-25).

C. Jesus' ministry began with the calling of the twelve and ended with Him commissioning them to make disciples of the nations. Later we see the apostles establishing elders in every church and building ministry teams. The process of making disciples, (discipleship) should be a central part of our ministry philosophy.

D. As we have seen ministry is primarily about serving one another effectively. All ministry must be motivated by God's love impelling and compelling us to dedicate ourselves to the interests and needs of others. (1Corinthians 13, 2Corinthians 5:14, Philippians 2:3-4)

E. "Love is the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth." M. Scott Peck

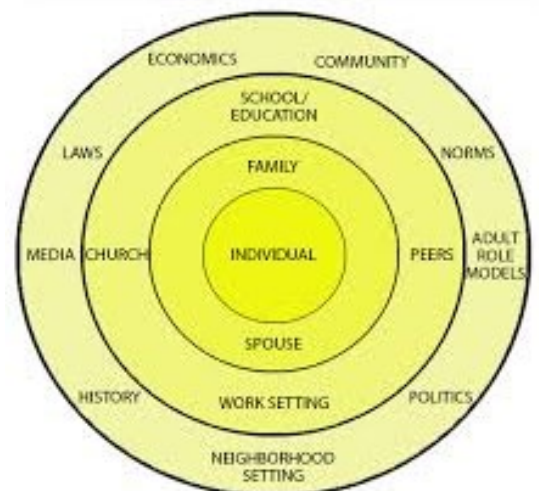
### II. Spheres of Influence

A. Essentially, we are the only person inside our innermost sphere of influence (the only sphere of control). Everyone else in our lives are outside our Sphere of Control. Our level of influence in their lives depends on the degree our opinion holds weight with them.

B. It is important to recognize where people stand in our spheres of influence and in what areas of their lives, we have influence.

C. This understanding establishes a base over which we can work on expanding and improving our relationship with others, positively influencing them through effective service. This also helps us avoid frustration and pain by not falling into the trap of trying to control others. It is also important to recognize there are different levels of influence.

D. "When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world. I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my nation. When I found I couldn't change the nation, I began to focus on my town. When I couldn't change the town



and as an older man, I tried to change my family. Now, finally, I realize the only thing I can change is myself, and suddenly I realize that if long ago I had changed myself, I could have influenced my family. My family and I could have influenced our town. Their influence may have made a difference in the nation, and I could indeed have changed the world.” Unknown Monk, in 1100 A.D

### III. Covenant Relationships (1John 3:16, Philippians 2:1-16, Ephesians 4:1-3)

A. The gospel of Mark tells us that Jesus called his disciples, “that he might be with them” and “that he might send them out to preach”. The apostles dropped their nets and left the tax collectors’ table and followed him. It wasn’t glamorous, “the son of man had nowhere to lay his head” but He called them his friends and washed their feet. We also see Barnabas taking Paul “under his wing” and later Paul does the same with Silas, Timothy, Titus, and others. We see the Ephesian elders weeping and hanging onto Paul when he left them. Peter stays with Simon the tanner for a season and Paul also lived with Aquilla and Pricilla (Mark 3:14, Matthew 8:20, John 13:23, Acts 20:37, 9:27, 43, 18:3).

B. New Testament discipleship means sharing life together being colleagues, co-laborers, friends, and brothers in Christ. It means sharing a covenant relationship together with Christ at the center of that bond. Our God relates to us through covenant. We are blessed to be part of the glorious New Covenant made in and through the blood of our Lord Jesus. It is a covenant which begins and ends with the love that Father God has for us manifested in the giving of His Son.

*1John 3:16 “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.” This tells us our covenant responsibility in response to John 3:16 “For God so loved the world – that He gave – His only begotten Son – so that whoever believes in Him – should not perish but have eternal life.”*

C. Covenant brings us into the family of God. We have been adopted into God’s family and have become God’s children. Romans 8:14-16 We are “fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household.” Ephesians 2:19. This Covenant comes with privileges and responsibilities.

#### D. Basic Attributes of The Covenant

##### 1. Love is preeminent

- It is the testimony the world is looking for –  
“By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34
- It is how we abide in Him –  
If you keep my commandments, you will abide in me, This is my commandment: Love one another, as I have loved you.” John 15:10, 12
- It sums up of the entire law.  
“For all the law in this one word is fulfilled: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Galatians 5:14

- The gifts and the fruit of the Spirit are given for serving others. (1Corinthians 12:7, 14:12, Galatians 5:22-23) The Fruit of the Spirit is not so much for our benefit as it is so that we can be a blessing to others.

## 2. From Dependence through independence to interdependence

- The basis of good relationships is a good relationship with God.
- Our joy, peace and behavior should not be based on how others treat us, or if they are doing well or not.
- We must find our identity in The Creator not in the creation.
- You will never discover who you are through another person, you will never see what you can do comparing yourself with others. If you want to know who you are and what you can do, get to know God. (2Peter 1:3-8)
- To truly love we must be truly free and be sure of who we are.

## Conclusion

Good relationships are not automatic or instantaneous. They require our time and energy; they must be our priority. When they are damaged, they cannot be repaired instantly. Building and repairing relationships are long-term investments. If they are not the priority, they will never have the intimacy and depth that the Lord asks for.

“You too, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” 1Peter 2:5A.

## Assignments and Questions:

1. Do you think you can improve on how you view control vs influence in your life and ministry? Is the concept of spheres of influence helpful in that regard?
  2. Do you feel covenant relationships are important in discipleship? Why, why not?
  3. Have you discussed the concept of covenant relationships in your ministry or church? What might the advantages or disadvantages for doing so?
  4. Read Chapter 6 “Upside Down” and be prepared to dialog about the reflections at the end the chapter.
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## October 27 | Session 7 Covenant Relationships II

Preparation: Watch video 7

### IV. Covenant Relationships (Continued)

A. As we continue to look at the importance of relationships, we are going to examine some additional strategies for maintaining and deepening this vital part of life, ministry, and discipleship.

B. “A long lunch out with co-workers or a late-night conversation with a family member might seem like a distraction from other healthy habits, such as going to the gym or getting a good night's sleep. But more than 100 years' worth of research shows that having a healthy social life is incredibly important to staying physically healthy. Overall, social support increases survival by some 50 percent, concluded the authors behind a new meta-analysis. The benefit of friends, family and even colleagues turns out to be just as good for long-term survival as giving up a 15-cigarette-a-day smoking habit. And by the study's numbers, interpersonal social networks are more crucial to physical health than exercising or beating obesity.” Katherine Harmon 2010, Scientific American

#### 1. We must know and understand the person.

- Gaining understanding is the greatest deposit you can make in a person's life.
- Our tendency is to project our own biases and motivations onto others.
- Listen to gain understanding.
- When we talk a lot, we say little.

#### 2. Sincerely apologize when you've done something wrong (“The 5 Apology Languages by Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas. Northfield Publishing, 2022, Chicago.)

- Express regret
- Accept responsibility
- Offer Restitution
- Genuinely repent
- Request forgiveness

#### 3. Clarify Expectations

- The cause of almost all relationship difficulties involves conflicting or ambiguous expectations.
- We should be clear and explicit about expectations.
- Clarifying expectations requires courage, it seems easier to act as if differences don't exist hoping that things work out.
- We must face differences and work to reach a mutual agreement, clarifying expectations.

#### 4. Relationships are like “Bank Accounts”

- They depend on the amount of trust we have built up.
- We make deposits through courtesy, kindness, honesty, and keeping commitments. (Proverbs 13:12)

- We make withdrawals through rudeness, disrespect, ignoring, overreacting, being arbitrary, disloyalty, and manipulation.
- The little things are the most important. Kindness, attentiveness, and respect.

#### 5. Limit and Prioritize our Relationships

- “A friend to all is a friend to none.” Aristotle
- If we treat everyone the same, we are not treating anyone well.
- If we do not limit our relationships, we will be ineffective in fulfilling God's purposes.
- Jesus limited and prioritized his relationships. The 3, 12 and 72 his disciples and the multitude.
- Once he even refused to receive his mother and brothers.
- Do not give what is holy to dogs, nor throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them underfoot and turn and tear you to pieces. (Matthew 7:8)

#### V. New Testament “One Anothers”

It is essential to realize that every member of the body of Christ is called to ministry. Not all have been called to pastor, but all possess God-given ministry responsibility. Specifically, these take the form of living out the — “one anothers” given scriptures.

- Contribute to one another’s needs. (Romans 12:13)
- Spur one another on to love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:24)
- Love one another. (John 13:34-35; Romans 13:8; 1 Peter 1:22; 4:9; 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7-12; 2 John 1:5)
- Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. (Romans 12:10; 1 Peter 3:8)
- Give preference to one another in honor. (Romans 12:10)
- Accept one another. (Romans 15:17)
- Admonish one another. (Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14)
- Be united with one another (Romans 12:16; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Peter 3:8)
- Serve one another through love (Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 4:10)
- Show forbearance to one another in love (Ephesians 4:2)
- Be kind to one another (Ephesians 4:32; 1 Peter 3:8)
- Be tender-hearted to one another (Ephesians 4:32)
- Forgive one another (Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13)
- Speak to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19)
- Teach one another (Colossians 3:16)
- Encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11, 14; Heb 3:13; 10:25)
- Build one another up (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
- Help one another (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
- Be patient with one another (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
- Be hospitable to one another (Romans 12:13; 1 Peter 4:9)
- Be sympathetic toward one another (Romans 12:15; 1 Peter 3:8)
- Restore one another (Galatians 6:1)
- Bear one another’s burdens (Galatians 6:2)
- Be humble toward one another (Philippians 2:3; 1 Peter 3:8; 5:5)
- Look out for one another’s interests (Philippines 2:4)

## Conclusion

The Christian life should be a dynamic love experience whereby the members of the body of Christ are in constant interaction with one another. In this process we are mutually edified by growing spiritually, encouraging, and stimulating each other to love and good works.

“Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:24-25)

You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:5)

## Assignments and Questions:

1. Be prepared to discuss listening skills you’ve learned and incorporated in ministry?
  2. What would you say is your apology language? What language do you most frequently use with others?
  3. What is your philosophy regarding having close friends in the church? With nonbelievers?
  4. What process would you use to clarify expectations with co-laborers in the church?
  5. What might you do to better prioritize relationships? Or make a deposit in a damaged relationship?
  6. Read Chapter 7 “Upside Down” and be prepared to dialog about the reflections at the end the chapter.
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## November 3 | Session 8 Conflict Resolution

Preparation: Watch video 8

### I. Introduction

A. Often Conflict is considered something negative. We may think friendship should be a conflict-free relationship, a “you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours” arrangement, relying solely on a mutual exchange of favors and compliments. But mutual loving confrontations are a source of blessing and a significant part of all successful and meaningful relationships. Without it relationships are either unsuccessful or shallow. During conflicts, we grow and mature, relationships deepen, and we walk together in increasing unity and harmony. The Bible clearly tells us that conflicts are to be expected and that they are for our good.

B. “Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy. Iron with iron sharpens; and so, a man sharpens the face of his friend.” Proverbs 27:5-6, 17

C. Jesus said he didn’t come to bring peace but a sword, and that forceful (energetic) people take hold of the kingdom. The scriptures exhort us, to be ready to face trials, difficulties, and challenges. We are called to speak the truth to one another in love, to exhort, admonish and rebuke with all authority and patience. (Matthew 10:34, 11:12, James 1:2, 2Timothy 4:2, Titus 2:15, 1Thessalonians 5:14)

### II. Conflict - Spiritual Growth and Maturity

A. Often when couples confront difficult issues which they’ve avoided dealing with “sparks may fly,” but after resolving the conflict they find their relationship deepens with greater harmony and intimacy. The same thing happens in the family, among friends, and with brothers in the church. If conflict never exists in a relationship, then there isn’t full participation. In church leadership we don’t want “yes men,” leaders who don’t express their opinion who aren’t willing to enter healthy conflict to maintain integrity and discover and walk in the Lord’s perfect will.

B. Advantages of Conflict Resolution:

- We openly discuss important matters.
- New and creative ideas are examined and implemented.
- Relationships are deepened and strengthened.
- We reevaluate and clarify our mission and goals.
- We can quickly and effectively implement important changes.
- Inappropriate or harmful practices can be eliminated.

C. “Working for peace is not avoiding conflicts, pretending they don't exist or being afraid to talk about them is cowardice. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, was never afraid of conflict. On one occasion he even provoked it for the good of all. Working for peace is not appeasement.” Rick Warren

D. Results of Conflict Avoidance:

- Bitterness and resentment.
- Susceptibility to manipulation.

- Stagnation in Relationship development and growth.
- Stagnation in developing new ideas and strategies.
- Lack of innovation and progress.

### III. Effective Conflict Resolution

A. Because we live in a society that generally avoids conflicts, we have not learned to resolve them in a healthy and effective way. If we want to be productive and effective in ministry and life we must learn the art of conflict resolution.

B. Developing an Environment of Honor and Respect:

- Listening for understand, especially emotions.
- Affirm identity and gifting with sincerity.
- Appreciate, being expressive and specific.
- Grant Authority, allow people to work autonomously and make mistakes.

C. Steps to follow:

- First talk to God; ask the Lord for forgiveness and forgive.
- Always take the initiative, approach the person with humility and meekness.
- Be understanding, first listen to understand.
- Attack the problem, not the person.
- Confess your part in the conflict.
- Emphasize reconciliation, not resolution.

D. Guidelines:

- Always listen to understand and make sure the person feels heard.
- Patiently explain how you feel and/or your point of view.
- Accept differences, don't be defensive, or judge.
- Don't try to do the work of the Holy Spirit.
- Together ask God for help to carry out the changes agreed upon.
- Be patient, keep waiting, forgiving, and fighting for change.

E. Forgive and ask for Forgiveness:

- If you didn't begin the conflict correctly – Ask for forgiveness and wait for another opportunity to confront.
- Ask for forgiveness and forgive "without buts".
- Forgiving is an act of the will and doesn't have to be felt.
- Doesn't mean you never think about the offense again.
- There are relationships which are toxic even in the church and unfortunately, we might have to decide to limit our relationship with some people.
- Hopefully their situation will be dealt with but it probably isn't our job.
- Use the five Languages of Apology – Gary Chapman

### Conclusion

If we want to mature in the Lord and develop intimate and uplifting family and friendship relationships, we must face problems and learn to resolve conflicts correctly. To walk in love, integrity, and unity we must learn to manage conflicts. We shouldn't fear conflicts but learn to resolve them by developing a culture of love and honor. When we avoid conflicts and refuse to deal

with the important things in life. Many times when conflict is avoided, eventually there is an explosion, resulting in bitterness and resentment.

"Many congregations are superficial because they fear conflict. This produces a flawed environment: there are secrets and gossip multiply. When a conflict is well managed and is addressed and resolved, relationships are strengthened." Rick Warren

"Brothers, if anyone is caught in a fault, you who are spiritual, restore him in a spirit of meekness, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted." (Galatians 6:1)

Assignments and Questions:

1. Do you agree that embracing conflict is positive and important?
  2. How do you think you can improve your conflict resolution skills?
  3. Do you feel the church is effective in conflict resolution? Why? Why not?
  4. Read Chapter 8 "Upside Down" and be prepared to dialog about the reflections at the end the chapter.
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## November 10 | Session 9 Leadership Philosophy

Preparation: Watch video 9

### I. The Role of Leadership

A. Our understanding of the role, and purposes of leadership determine our ability to minister effectively. Leadership has a major impact on the health and well-being of every society, nation, business, church, family, and individual. Developing and applying a biblical philosophy of leadership is a central element of any effective ministry.

B. Leadership is a calling. Many biblical leaders were set apart from birth to lead God's people for specific purposes at crucial times. The course of human history presented in the Bible emphasizes leadership as a key factor in the lives and development of His people. It shows us the positive and powerful effect spiritual leaders, called by God, have had on their people. Repeatedly in Scripture, God uses a leader to warn, admonish, deliver, and bless His people. Sadly, we can also see bad leaders bring destruction and despair to the nations they serve.

C. The New Testament warns us that we must be able to discern between true and false leaders. Jesus said, "For false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will do great signs and wonders, in such a way that they will deceive, if possible, even the elect." Matthew 24:24

D. Paul also spoke of this issue when he warned the Ephesians elders: "For I know that after my departure ravenous wolves will enter your midst, not sparing the flock. And of yourselves men who speak wicked things will rise up to draw the disciples after them. Therefore, be vigilant, remembering that, for three years, night and day, I have not ceased to admonish each one with tears". Acts 20:29-31

E. In the book of Revelation we read what the Spirit said to the church in Ephesus: "I know your works, and your hard work and patience; and that you cannot bear the wicked, and you have tested those who claim to be apostles, and they are not, and you have found them to be liars; and you have suffered, and you have been patient, and you have worked hard for my name's sake, and you have not fainted." Revelation 2:2-3

G. We should ask ourselves: What are we looking for in a leader? What do we value? What does the Bible teach concerning good leadership? What philosophy of leadership leads to spiritual growth and development of the individual and the family? Often, we fall into valuing charisma in leadership over integrity and anointing. We look for what will bring church growth over what will bring church maturity. We fall into a dangerous pragmatism instead of being led by Biblical values and principles.

### II. New Testament vs Old Testament Leadership

A. Sometimes we commit the error of drawing too close of a comparison between Old and New Testaments leaders. Seeing pastors in a priestly role or making exaggerated comparisons between their role and that of Moses or David. Without a doubt there are great and important leadership lessons we can glean from the Old Testament which can be wisely applied to our lives as leaders in the church. Anointed leadership has always played a significant role in the

history of the Church however, there are radical differences between New Testament and Old Testament leadership. Even so it is important to bear in mind the great distinctions between Old and New Testament leadership:

- In the New Testament all Christians are part of a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2: 5; Revelation 1: 6, 5:10). The Old Testament priesthood ended and now we have a new one to which all believers belong. The priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, Jesus being our high priest. (Exodus 19:6, Hebrews 7) He established a new style of leadership in the Church based on the universal priesthood of the believer.
- All believers are the temple of God. Believers are born of the Spirit; they are a new creation. The Spirit guides and teaches every believer. Each one is called and sent into the world with authority and power. Jesus said, "He who believes in me the works I do he shall also do; and greater works shall he do."
- It was never God's perfect will to have a king placed over his people. When they declared that they wanted a king like the other nations, God said that they were rejecting Him as king. Samuel warned them that they were rejecting God's rule and would suffer dire consequences. (1 Samuel 8:5-22)
- When Moses anointed the seventy elders, and they began to prophesy in the camp Joshua begged him to stop them, but Moses declared the Lord's desire and future for His people; "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" Numbers 11:29
- Jesus said that the leaders of this world lord it over their followers and exercise authority over them. Then he said clearly; "It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant." (Matthew 20:25-26)
- New Testament leaders are called to be servants of God's people and are warned not to lord it over those entrusted to them and to reject titles like rabbi, father, and master. (Matthew 23:8-11)

#### B. Additional Scriptures which Illustrate this Change

- "And after this I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy; your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions. And also on the male and female servants I will pour out my Spirit in those days. Joel 2: 28-29
- "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be my people. And no one shall teach his neighbor any more, neither shall any man teach his brother, saying, He knows the Lord; for all will know me, from the smallest of them to the greatest, says Jehovah; because I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31: 33-34
- "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9
- "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" 1 Corinthians 3:16

### III. Four Characteristics of New Testament Leadership

#### A. It is Servant Leadership

Jesus gave us a beautiful example of servant leadership when he washed His disciples' feet. This was a task reserved for the lowest of servants. It would have been a dirty, humiliating job. Imagine the condition of sandaled feet after walking the dusty streets and roads in sandals along with beasts of burden. Peter was shocked and said the Lord would never wash his feet. After washing their feet, the Lord said; "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." John 13:14

Before rising and girding himself to wash their feet John tells us that Jesus did so knowing that; "The Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God." John 13:3 This speaks of identity. Jesus knew who He was. He knew that He had power and authority, that he was sent by the Father and that He would return to the Father in glory. He was free from the insecurity which so often causes us to be hesitant to humble ourselves and truly serve others in love. The Lord humbled himself and served because He was secure knowing who He was in the Father. We too can serve in humility and love when we realize who we are in Him. He has given us authority and power, has sent us, and has given us eternal life. (Luke 10:19, John 20:21, John 13: 3-5)

When we're secure in our identity in Christ Jesus, we don't feel pressure to demonstrate how anointed, gifted, or wise we are. We seek the approval of God not of man. With this knowledge we can humble ourselves and serve in freedom and love.

#### A Servant Leader:

- Identifies as a servant first and secondarily as a leader or authority.
- Is aware of the authority he has in Jesus
- Knows his calling and is sure as a son of the Father
- Knows he has been given eternal life freely in Christ.
- Knows he is called and sent by Christ.
- Emphasizes his responsibilities more than his rights.
- Is not haughty in his thinking but condescends to the humble.
- Doesn't seek recognition but seeks how to be a better servant.
- Doesn't seek first his interests but the interests of others.
- Considers others as more important than himself.
- Honors and appreciates others, he listens carefully seeking to understand and empathize.

#### Scriptures which Emphasize Servant Leadership

- "Then Jesus calling them, said: You know that the princes of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise power over them. But among you it will not be so; but he who wants to become great among you will be your servant; and whoever wants to be first among you will be your servant." Matthew 20: 25-27
- "But you don't want to be called Rabbi; because one is your Master, the Christ, and you are all brothers. And call no one on earth your father; because one is your Father who is in heaven. Don't be called teachers; because one is your Master, the Christ. He who is the greatest of you, let him be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." Matthew 23: 8-12
- "Then he sat down and called the twelve and said to them: If anyone wants to be first, he will be last of all, and the servant of all." Mark 9:35

- “And he said to them: Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me; because the one who is the smallest among all of you, that one is the greatest.” Luke 9:48

“You know when you’re being a good servant leader when people treat you like a servant.”  
Terry King

## B. It is Plural Leadership

If we work independently as leaders perhaps, we can go faster with less complications; however, we will not go as far or have as great an impact. We must take the time and effort to build a strong team. We should strive to develop a unity around which we develop plans and make important decisions, it may produce inconveniences and limit us in some way. However, when we do not, we reap people who work with us, but often only with a superficial and apparent harmony. This condition abounds in secular organizations and sadly also in the church.

Plurality of leadership existed in the Old Testament but was not as strongly emphasized. We find it in the Deity, each person of the Trinity has their role, but they do not move independently, but in absolute unity. The Father has authority over the Son, but has put everything under his feet. The Holy Spirit speaks of the Son and gives him glory and honor. (1 Corinthians 15:27; John 14:13, 16: 14-15) Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness (Matthew 4:1)

God's people were governed by a plurality of leaders, the King, the High Priest and the prophets. God's plan was for them to lead the nation, working together. Like many other concepts, doctrines and revelations plurality in leadership reached its full expression in the New Testament.

### Plurality Emphasized in the New Testament

- Paul and Barnabas constituted "Elders (plural) in each church (singular)" (Acts 14:23)
- The specific ministry of "Pastor(s)" is mentioned only once in the New Testament; in Ephesians 4:12 and it is plural.
- Jesus sent his disciples out two by two and Paul and Barnabas always traveled with a team.
- Each of the 5 ministry gifts listed in Ephesians 4:12 are plural in themselves and can only be completely effective when they work together as a coordinated team. Their call is to equip all the saints to do the work of ministry.
- 1 Corinthians 12 teaches us that the church is the body of Christ and that every member has an important role to play. All the members need one another. The church is only effective “when each part is working properly, making the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.” Ephesians 4:16
- Leaders (hegeomani in the Greek found in Hebrews 13:7 and 17) is also plural

### Disadvantages and Pitfalls of Solo Leadership

1. The solo pastor has no real colleagues in the church only subordinates, who cannot communicate with him as a friend and colleague. This produces a distortion in communication in terms of honesty, feedback, criticism, creativity, and confrontation.
2. This model produces a distortion in the leader's good judgment. The leader cannot count on strong constructive criticism from colleagues and tends to form a self-image of infallibility.
3. These leaders often suffer from a palpable loneliness and tend not to have real friends in the church.
4. Hierarchy can cause a power struggle environment where no one is a "true" leader if they are not the "Senior Pastor". This makes it difficult to raise up and inspire strong leaders, commitment levels are low.
5. Men may avoid taking up leadership roles in the church feeling that real spiritual leadership should be left to the Senior Pastor and secondarily to faithful women.

The New Testament clearly shows the church was governed a leadership team of elders who work in plurality and unity in each church. For this model to work, there must be someone who chairs the council and serves as first among equals. There is no clear example of this position in the New Testament, but we can take as reference the leadership of Peter before, during and after the day of Pentecost and of James during the council of Jerusalem. Also, John warns the church about Diotrephes, who liked to put himself first and did not recognize the apostles' authority. (Acts 15, 21:18, 1Timothy 5:17, 3 John 1:9)

#### Assignments and Questions:

1. What role does identity play in servant leadership?
  2. What are 3 practical ways you can become more of a servant leader?
  3. How can you and your church foster plurality in leadership?
  4. Read Chapter 9 of "Upside Down" and be prepared to dialog about the reflections at the end the chapter.
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## November 17 | Session 10 Leadership Philosophy Continued

Preparation: Watch video 10

### IV. It is Leadership that Commissions

A. One of the first things the Lord Jesus did at the beginning of His ministry was select the twelve: "He appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him, and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons." Mark 3:14-15

B. We see in Luke 9:2 "He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. Later, in that same chapter - through their very hands, five loaves and two fishes fed a crowd of five thousand men. In this same chapter we see the apostles rebuked for not being able to cast out a demon. Then they were fighting about who was the greatest among them, and soon after, they wanted to forbid others from casting out demons. To top it off they also wanted to call fire down from heaven upon a Samaritan village that would not receive them. (Luke 9:40-41, 46, 49-50, 54-55) After seeing all this carnality and lack of maturity on the part of the apostles, instead of backing off, Jesus "appointed seventy-two more disciples and "sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go." Luke 10:1 When we release others into ministry, they will make mistakes, fail and perhaps fall into sin or bad attitudes. We cannot let this discourage or dissuade us from the all-important task of raising up and releasing others in ministry.

C. Christ's ministry gifts, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are given to the church and are specifically called to "equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ. As leaders, our great desire must be to multiply ourselves and replace ourselves equipping and raising up others, commissioning them in their individual calling. A leader who is more concerned with building his own ministry, securing his financial income, and establishing his own authority, may have "good" results in the ministerial field, but he is not fulfilling a central part of his calling as a minister of the Lord. We can become so concerned about establishing and developing our individual ministries that we devote little time to identifying and equipping others. We can easily become a bottleneck, narrowing, and slowing down the development and releasing of the saints into ministry.

D. The Lord was given all authority and power by the father, but immediately began to let his disciples occupy the field of ministry. He made a great declaration: "In truth the harvest is great, but the workers few. Pray, then, the Lord of the harvest, to send workers into his harvest. " Matthew 9:37-38 This means not only asking the Lord to send workers into the harvest, but we keep our eyes and hearts open to be able to identify men and women who God sends our way with a calling on their lives.

E. Every area of ministry in the church should be shared as soon as possible. We shouldn't be content to just build a team (this may be the first step) but the team should also be equipping others to move out in ministry this would include sharing the pulpit, allowing others to lead worship, small groups, and other important ministries. We may feel so much pressure to always put our "best foot forward" that we hesitate to let others, who may have way less experience, step out in public ministry. We must also guard our hearts against pride, jealousy, and ambition. We should always want our spiritual sons and daughters to "stand on our shoulders" to go

farther and deeper in the Lord and ministry than we have. “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.” Luke 6:40

F. With His final words to His disciples, He commissioned them to “go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20 We are called in His Name and in the power of the Holy Spirit to do what He did – COMMISSION DISCIPLES.

G. A servant leader creates space, he doesn’t occupy space.

## V. It is Leadership that Liberates

A. In order to serve effectively, a person must be free. “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. For you, brothers, were called to liberty; only do not use freedom as an occasion for the flesh but serve one another out of love.” Galatians 5:1,13 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

B. Scripture teaches us that we can speak in tongues have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and have enough faith to remove mountains. We can give away all we have, and even become a martyr but if it’s not done in love we are like a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal, without love we are nothing and gain nothing. A big part of encouraging and inspiring disciples in ministry is to allow them to freely serve not out of pressure or obligation.

C. If someone serves out of obligation or pressure, he will not bear the same fruit as one who serves motivated by love. When we pressure a leader, we don't give him the opportunity to reveal his heart. Many can meet requirements, “jump through the hoops” under pressure, or other manipulative stimuli. When those stimuli decrease or cease to exist, their true maturity will manifest itself.

D. If someone ends up serving the Lord through intimidation, manipulation, or condemnation etc., he cannot and will not be serving in love. When we are free, we can choose to use our freedom to serve one another in love or to sadly to indulge the flesh. When we know the truth of the gospel, we are not under the law, and the Lord enables us to follow His direction and to listen to His voice. His laws and commandments are written in our minds and in our hearts. We do not need someone to teach us to know the Lord, because we can all know him intimately. (John 8:32,36; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 5:1-13)

F. Our discipleship must recognize the individual. Each person is unique, has a special calling and will develop at their own pace. We must have the patience and wisdom to inspire and help others to hear the voice of the Lord. As servant leaders we see working with others like working in a garden not a factory. Every tree bears fruit in its season, they do not grow at the same rate, nor do they bear the same fruit. Each one is susceptible to different types of pests and fungi, etc. In the factory model everyone gets the same treatment, and we place the same expectations on everyone. It’s like wanting to turn out an army of clones.

We are not looking for uniformity and conformity and we do not turn disciples out of our mold. We are looking for co-laborers who manifest creativity, individuality and diversity of personalities and gifts.

#### Conclusion

The Lord has always and is now and will always be raising up leaders in His Church. To be a leader is to be lifted up to the position of a servant. Our calling is to bring people to Christ so that He may be their Lord, shepherd, teacher, counselor, and comforter. His authority and power must increase more and more in their lives and our ministry must decrease so that He receives all the glory, honor and power. Our duty as members of His Body is to value, honor, promote, and emulate this kind of leadership that will lead the church to mature, grow, and proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom with power and authority.

#### Assignments and Questions:

1. What can you and your church and ministry do to improve on the commission of leaders?
  2. How might you and your church be more liberating? How might you be limiting liberty?
  3. Read Chapter 10 of "Upside Down" and be prepared to dialog about the reflections at the end the chapter.
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## December 1 | Session 11 Ministerial Ethics

Preparation: Watch video 11

### I. Introduction

A. A big part of the enemy's plan is to bring down authority figures. The attack began by tearing down the father figure in the family. On T.V. in the past families were portrayed with strong, wise father figures in series from Bonanza to Leave it to Beaver it was always "Father knows best". Today fathers are portrayed as haplessly inept and hopelessly out of touch figures. The attack then moved from fathers to the police, the military, teachers, and on to political and spiritual leaders. Over the past 40 years Famous Pastors and Priests have regularly fallen into disrepute making headlines across the country and world.

B. Sadly, much damage has been done to the spread of the gospel because of scandals. At the same time Scripture tells us - that judgment must begin at the house of God. These scandals always involve the three great areas of temptation Money, Sex, and Power.

C. It is vitally important that we establish and delineate our ministerial ethics as part of a sound Philosophy of Ministry. "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin." Luke 17:1-2

D. In Galatians 5:19-21 Paul enumerates the works of the flesh: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. It may be easier to see and judge sins involving sexual immorality, sorcery, fits of anger, drunkenness and orgies and a bit more difficult to deal with jealousy, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, and envy. We are called to confront both. The later list of sins, although more challenging to confront, can have an even more devastating effects on the church and ministry.

E. It's clear, that these "works of the flesh" cannot be accepted nor practiced in the church much less in those who minister. We must keep watch over ourselves and all the flock, cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. We are called to meekly instruct those that oppose themselves; so that God may bring them to repentance so they may escape out of the snare of the devil. (Acts 20:28, 2Corinthians 7:1, 2Timothy 2:25-26)

F. In this lesson we won't be covering these specific areas. Our responsibility is clear in scripture. However, there are areas of ministerial ethics that might not universally understood or agreed upon and yet they are important areas to consider while developing a ministerial ethic.

### II. Respect for Ministers and Ministries

A. This is a vital area of integrity and ethics. An area where churches and ministers often fail. 2 Corinthians 10:13-16 We don't boast beyond limits, but only in the area of influence God has assigned to us. 14 We were the first to come to you with the gospel of Christ. 15 We do not

boast beyond limit in the labors of others. As your faith increases, our area of influence among you will increase. 16 so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another's area of influence.

B. Many popular ministers have made it their specialty to be the “keepers of the faith”. Their ministry is centered on pointing out what they see as the “bad doctrine” taught by “false teachers”. Certainly, there is plenty of bad doctrine and false teachers and we are responsible as shepherds of the flock to ensure that sound doctrine is taught in our congregations. However, in the fear of the Lord we must be very careful about publicly criticizing churches, ministers, and ministries.

C. If we are teaching sound doctrine, we shouldn’t have to spend much time being negative about what others are teaching. The adage is true, “if you want to identify a counterfeit, study the original don’t concentrate on the counterfeit.” Instead of preachers of the Good News we can easily become crusaders for the truth or campaigners for a cause. This can bring judgement upon us and upon those who pick up the same critical, judgmental behavior.

D. “Therefore, do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God. I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.” 1 Corinthians 4:5-6

E. “Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.” Romans 14:4

F. We should be careful about:

1. Speaking against other ministries, ministers, or denominations. (His servants and His saints.)
2. Pastoring or Recruiting members from other congregations without the knowledge of their spiritual leaders.
3. Accepting members from other churches without communicating with their former pastor or leaders.
4. Inviting people from other congregations to our meetings.
5. Having events that purposely draw members from other congregations.
6. Accepting students in schools, seminaries, and para-church organizations without receiving or requiring a recommendation from their leaders / pastor.

### III. Respect for the Family

A. The family is another important area of ministerial ethics and should be part of an integral Philosophy of Ministry. Many if not most of the men of God in the Bible were not successful parents. Isaac, Jacob, Eli, Samuel, and David were significantly flawed as fathers. It is all too common among ministers to dedicate too much time to ministry and not enough quality time to their families. Divorce, infidelity, and children who are rebellious or not following the Lord are all too common in the lives of ministers.

B. It behooves us to bear in mind the final words of the Old Testament; “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.” Malachi 4:5-6 May our hearts be powerfully turned to our children so that we may raise them up effectively in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In that way “the land” may be spared destruction”. We will leave a blessed legacy in the church and the Kingdom of God.

C. Also, one of the important qualifications of an elder is that he manages his household well, with dignity with believing, submissive, children free from debauchery or insubordination. If someone does not manage his household well, how can he care for God's church? (1Timoteo 3:4-5, Titus 1:6)

D. Our families must be an important part of our ministry. We must encourage and teach ministers to dedicate time and energy to their marriages and families.

E. Some broad recommendations might include:

1. Have a regular date with your spouse to listen, sharing thoughts and feelings.
2. Receive marital and family counseling as necessary. Be transparent with a mature leader about your marriage and children.
3. Spend quality and quantity time with your children. Take time with them individually.
4. Work decent hours, take vacations, take at least one whole day off a week to spend with the family.
5. Be very careful with Nepotism. No special treatment or privileges for family members.
6. A minister's spouse and children should not be held to a different standard than others in the congregation.

#### IV. Relationships with the Opposite Sex

A. Regularly ministering to persons of the opposite sex should be avoided.

B. Counseling the opposite sex should always be in a setting with unlocked doors, in a place where there is privacy but where the door is left open and only when others are present in the office space.

C. Laying on of hands, hugs and physical contact should be with maximum respect.

D. Traveling in a car, sharing a meal, or meeting together alone should be strictly avoided.

E. Never share intimate details about your spousal relationship with anyone of the opposite sex.

#### V. Finances

A. Budgets must be set and monitored by a team of elders, deacons, or trustees.

B. It is best if the pastor isolates himself from managing the finances. It is best if a competent member of the team be placed in charge of the finances.

C. Salaries and expense accounts must be set by this team and should be regularly monitored by them.

D. Pastors or Lead Elders should not sign checks or make financial decisions outside of the budget parameters.

E. Offerings should be counted by at least 2 individuals registered and deposited.

- F. Make sure that special offerings are spent as they were designated.
- G. Never give higher honor to those who give more.
- H. A church must always obey the laws of the Land.

## VI. Decision Making

- A. Listen to the people but don't follow them. (The sin of Saul)
- B. Be careful with frustration and anger. Guide them as a shepherd. (The sin of Moses)
- C. Be careful with authoritarian, autocratic, control-oriented leadership. We are servants first. We should always be working in a team and conferring and deferring to our team.
- D. Seek Prophetic Decision Making – what is God saying, what are our values and principles.
- E. Avoid Pragmatic Decision Making – Looking for the silver bullet, what “works”, what’s popular.

We always need to have clarity about our distinctives, values and principles. We should put them in writing and our decision making should first and foremost take them into account. If we start a ministry or invest resources, we should ask ourselves does this support and promote our distinctives, values and principles.

### Assignments and Questions:

1. What specific area of ethics philosophy laid out in the lecture might you see as problematic for you or your church?
2. Read Chapter 11 of “Upside Down” and be prepared to dialog about the reflections at the end the chapter.
3. Write a brief outline of your personal philosophy of ministry. (2-3 pages)

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## December 8 | Session 12 Final discussion and challenge

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