



Church Leaders

*God Has Appointed Leaders
In The Church*

A Teaching Outline

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Examples of Leadership

1 Corinthians 12:28

And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

The most helpful gifts are those that are beneficial to the body of Christ. Paul has already made it clear that one gift is not superior to another, but he urges the believers to discover how they can serve Christ's body with the gifts God has given them. Your spiritual gifts are not for your own self-advancement. They were given to you for serving God and enhancing the spiritual growth of the body of believers.

Remember those who have led you.

Hebrews 13:7

Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

If you are a Christian, you owe much to others who have taught you and modeled for you what you needed to know about the Good News and Christian living. Continue following the good examples of those who have invested themselves in you by investing in your life through evangelism, service, and Christian education.

Be an example of good deeds

Titus 2:7

In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified,

Paul urges Titus to be a good example to those around him so that others might see Titus's good deeds and imitate him. Paul's life would give his words greater impact.

If you want someone to act a certain way, be sure that you live that way yourself. Then you will earn the right to be heard, and your life will reinforce what you teach.

Obey and submit to your leaders.

Hebrews 13:17

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

The task of church leaders is to help people mature in Christ. Cooperative followers greatly ease the burden of leadership. Does your conduct give your leaders reason to report joyfully about you?

Show yourself as an example to those who believe.

1 Timothy 4:12

Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

Timothy was a young pastor. It would have been easy for older Christians to look down on him because of his youth. He had to earn the respect of his elders by setting an example in his speech, life, love, faith, and purity. Regardless of your age, God can use you. Whether you are young or old, don't think of your age as a handicap. Live so others can see Christ in you.

Provide examples to the flock.

1 Peter 5:3

Nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.

Peter describes several characteristics of good leaders in the church:

- (1) They realize they are caring for God's flock, not their own;
- (2) They lead out of eagerness to serve, not out of obligation;
- (3) They are concerned for what they can give, not for what they can get;
- (4) They lead by example, not force. All of us lead others in some way.

Whatever our role, our leadership should be in line with these characteristics.

A godly leaders must manage his own household.

1 Timothy 3:5

But if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?

Christian workers and volunteers sometimes make the mistake of being so involved in their work that they neglect their families, and especially the firm discipline of their children.

Spiritual leadership, however, must begin at home. If a man is not willing to care for, discipline, and teach his children, he is not qualified to lead the church. Don't allow your volunteer activities to detract from your family responsibilities.

Appreciate those who have charge over you.

1 Thessalonians 5:12

But we request of you, brethren that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction.

"Those who are your leaders in the Lord's work" probably refers to elders and deacons in the church. How can you honor your pastor and other church leaders?

Express your appreciation, tell them how you have been helped by their leadership and teaching, and thank them for their ministry in your life. If you say nothing, how will they know where you stand? Remember, they need and deserve your support and love.

God will make you a leader and commander for the people.

Isaiah 55:4

"Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

God's covenant with David promised a permanent homeland for the Israelites, no threat from pagan nations, and no wars (2 Samuel 7:10, 11). But Israel did not fulfill its part of the covenant to obey God and stay away from idols. Even so, God was ready to renew his covenant again. He is a forgiving God!

Isaiah tells us to call on the Lord while he is near. God is not planning to move away from us, but we often move far from him or erect barriers of sin between us. Don't wait until you have drifted far away from God to seek him. Turning to him may be far more difficult later in life. Or God may come to judge the earth before you decide to turn to him. Seek God now, while you can, before it is too late.

Choose wise and discerning leaders.

Deuteronomy 1:13

'Choose wise and discerning and experienced men from your tribes, and I will appoint them as your heads.'

The scouts had been sent into the land to determine not *whether* they should enter, but *where* they should enter. Upon returning, however, most of the scouts had concluded that the land was not worth the obstacles.

God would give the Israelites the power to conquer the land, but they were afraid of the risk and decided not to enter. God gives us the power to overcome our obstacles, but just as the Israelites were filled with fear and skepticism, we often let difficulties control our lives.

When we follow God regardless of the difficulties, we demonstrate courageous, overcoming faith.

The Lord is at hand.

Micah 2:13

"The breaker goes up before them; they break out, pass through the gate and go out by it. So their king goes on before them, And the LORD at their head."

Micah's prophecy telescopes two great events—Judah's return from captivity in Babylon, and the great gathering of all believers when the Messiah returns. God gave his prophets visions of various future events, but not necessarily the ability to discern when these events would happen.

For example, they could not see the long period of time between the Babylonian captivity and the coming of the Messiah, but they could clearly see that the Messiah was coming.

The purpose of this prophecy was not to predict exactly how this would occur but *that* it would. This gave the people hope and helped them turn from sin.

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Cry out to the Lord for direction.

Joel 1:14

Consecrate a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly; Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD.

A fast was a period of time when no food was eaten and people approached God with humility, sorrow for sin, and urgent prayer.

In the Old Testament, people often would fast during times of calamity in order to focus their attention on God and to demonstrate their change of heart and their true devotion (see, for example, Judges 20:26; 1 Kings 21:27; Ezra 8:21; Jonah 3:5).

This solemn meeting was a public religious gathering, called so that everyone could repent and pray to God for mercy

Lead with diligence, mercy and cheerfulness.

Romans 12:8

Or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Look at this list of gifts and imagine the kinds of people who would have each gift. Prophets are often bold and articulate.

Servers (those in ministry) are faithful and loyal. Teachers are clear thinkers. Encouragers know how to motivate others. Givers are generous and trusting. Leaders are good organizers and managers.

Those who show kindness are caring people who are happy to give their time to others. It would be difficult for one person to embody all these gifts. An assertive prophet would not usually make a good counselor, and a generous giver might fail as a leader.

When you identify your own gifts (and this list is far from complete), ask how you can use them to build up God's family.

At the same time, realize that your gifts can't do the work of the church all alone. Be thankful for people whose gifts are completely different from yours. Let your strengths balance their weaknesses, and be grateful that their abilities make up for your deficiencies. Together you can build Christ's church.

Shepherd the flock according to the will of God.

1 Peter 5:2

Shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;

The Great Shepherd is Jesus Christ. This refers to his second coming, when he will judge all people and give rewards to his faithful followers. The "crown," while metaphorical, pictures the glory believers will receive that is eternal and unchanging. What better motivation for selfless service! What better motivation for keeping the faith in the face of suffering and temptation!

Double honor should be given to those who serve well.

1 Timothy 5:17

The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.

Preaching and teaching are closely related. Preaching is proclaiming the Word of God and confronting listeners with the truth of Scripture. Teaching is explaining the truth in Scripture, helping learners understand difficult passages, and helping them apply God's Word to daily life.

Paul says that these elders are worthy of double honor. Unfortunately, however, we often take them for granted by not providing adequately for their needs or by subjecting them to heavy criticism. Think of how you can honor your leaders who work hard at preaching and teaching.

Jesus Christ is the leader.

Matthew 23:10

"Do not be called leaders; for one is your Leader, that is, Christ.

Jesus challenged society's norms. To him, greatness comes from serving—giving of yourself to help God and others. Service keeps us aware of others' needs, and it stops us from focusing only on ourselves. Jesus came as a servant. What kind of greatness do you seek?

A wise man will hear and increase in learning.

Proverbs 1:5

A wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel.

One of the most annoying types of people is a know-it-all, a person who has a dogmatic opinion about everything, is closed to anything new, resents discipline, and refuses to learn. Solomon calls this kind of person a fool.

Don't be a know-it-all. Instead, be open to the advice of others, especially those who know you well and can give valuable insight and counsel. Learn how to learn from others. Remember, only God knows it all.

The disciples were led by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 4:13

Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

Knowing that Peter and John were untrained, the council was amazed at what being with Jesus had done for them. A changed life convinces people of Christ's power. One of your greatest testimonies is the difference others see in your life and attitudes since you have believed in Christ.

An invitation is given to open your heart's door.

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print