

THE ROLE OF A CHURCH LEADER

The following points are not in any order of priority, they are areas to which special attentions must be paid if his/her role is to be successful.

1. A church leader must be able to hold an overview of the whole body, ensuring that every area of church life is being taken care of. This is why the word 'overseer' or 'bishops' is used in Scripture (eg Acts 20:28).
2. Since the final objective of the leader's role is to "present every man complete in Christ", his first concern must always be to watch over, stimulate and guide the individual's relationship with God. The greatest commandment is to love God with our all (Matthew 22:37). To achieve this, teaching will be required on subjects such as prayer, praise and worship etc.
3. It follows that the next area of care, stimulation and guidance must come in terms of relationships with people. Matthew 22:39 commands, "Love your neighbour as yourself". This area is vast, and must include family relationships, church and secular relationships. It will require both teaching and personal discipline in the fruits of the spirit.
4. To reach maturity in Christ is to become like Him, and this means personal growth as we are changed from glory to glory. To ensure continuous growth, the leader will need to provide good teaching from the Word, personal discipline, challenge, confrontation, encouragement (in large doses), and an underlying passion to go on with God as an example. Particular attention should be paid to the teaching that is given so that a healthy diet is maintained. It is not good to live on chocolate alone in the natural realm, and neither is it good to be fed by simply 'the favourite preacher' in the spiritual realm. To be watching for situations where folks are becoming unbalanced in one direction, and to encourage 'fasting' from that source by introducing other sources, is part of the leader's role.
5. Since we are all vital members of the body (1 Corinthians 12) we must stimulate every member into functioning. Some will naturally find their way of serving, but the majority will need stimulation, guidance or simply a job given to them. Ministry needs monitoring if we are to ensure that people are finding their right gifts, growing and improving in those gifts and building those gifts into the Body rather than outside of it. Attention needs to be paid to attitudes and motivation for service. We must build in the knowledge, skills and attitudes to do the job.
6. "Go and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19) is the commission we have been given. We must stimulate every individual into seeing that they have a part to play in fulfilling this commission. Some will be better than others at winning people into the Kingdom; some will excel at discipling those new Christians; some at praying for them; and others at making coffee for the outreach meetings. All have a part to play.

7. If growth is to be achieved, there must be a clear concept of teams emerging. In order to reproduce quality ministry, it will require the willingness and personal security to delegate, as well as patience, accountability, basic instruction and correction. An ability to work in a team ourselves is essential, and qualities such as mutual respect, submission and self-sacrifice will be best taught by our example. Teams required will include: Eldership, Home Group Leaders, Worship Leaders, Venue Organising teams, Dance and Drama Teams, Pastoral, Administration, Prayer and Practical Serving teams, Children and Youth workers team and Music Ministry teams.
8. The leader must impart vision to the whole church and specifically to each section (team) of it. He must guard the work from those who would seek to bring another vision/ethos into the church. A commitment series is particularly helpful in this area.
9. Doctrinal foundations must be clear if people are to be well-grounded, and splits are to be avoided. A commitment series helps in this area too.
10. The leader must hold an oversight of finances, administration, and resources such as property, vehicles, PA systems etc.
11. Good relationships with other parts of the Body are the leader's goal too. This should be promoted at local, national and international levels by involvement in joint local projects where possible, national camps and international conferences.
12. The link with apostolic ministry is a special one and vital to the right founding and ongoing building of the church. Relationships outside the church will depend on the leaders and the apostle having healthy attitudes to other parts of the body. Whatever attitudes they have will be reflected throughout the church as a whole.

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