

THE PASSIONATE LEADER

THE FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF LEADERSHIP

Terry Calkin with Paul Beasley-Murray



VISION	PASSION	CHARACTER	GIFTING
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“Shepherd the flock of God... not for dishonest gain but passionately (Greek: *prothumos*)”
The Apostle Peter (1 Peter 5.2)

“Leadership is the ability to mobilise with integrity a group of people to a common objective”
Terry Calkin



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PREFACE

Terry Calkin is the founding pastor of Green Lane Christian Centre, Auckland, today one of New Zealand's 'mega' churches. Terry has lived and breathed church growth! In 2012 Terry relinquished the role of senior pastor of Green Lane Christian Centre to spend more time exercising a wider ministry amongst churches in Africa and Asia. Before assuming church leadership Terry's background was in business – he was a senior lecturer in management and cost accounting.

Ordained as a missionary in 1970, Paul Beasley Murray began his ministry by teaching New Testament and Greek in the National University of Congo/Zaire; later he was Principal of Spurgeon's College, London. However, for most of his ministry Paul has been as pastor – first in Altrincham, Cheshire, and then in Chelmsford, Essex, where under Paul's leadership significant church growth was the feature. In 2014 Paul retired from pastoral ministry and is now chairman of both Ministry Today UK and the College of Baptist Ministers. He also has a world-wide ministry both as a theological teacher and as a prolific author.

In some ways Terry and Paul are very different people. Yet, in recent years, they have become the firmest of friends, sharing a common passion to see churches grow. Although Paul himself has written widely on Christian leadership, he has been particularly impressed by the model of leadership developed by Terry. Indeed, Paul would go so far as to say that he has never met another pastor with such a clear and insightful understanding of Christian leadership. Furthermore, although many books on leadership talk about the importance of vision, passion, character, and gifting, none of them brings together these four aspects of leadership in the way in which Terry does. Nor does any other author have quite the same emphasis on 'passion'. Thanks to Rick Warren of Saddleback Community Church, California, we have become familiar with the concept of the 'purpose-driven' church; ¹however Paul would argue that perhaps we now need to talk much more about the 'passion-driven' church. The reality is that although knowing your purpose in ministry is vital, that

¹ See Rich Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Zondervan, Grand Rapids 1995).

purpose will only be fulfilled if passion is present. Purpose may tell us where we are going, but passion gives us the energy and determination to get there.

To Paul's surprise, although Terry has gone all over the world teaching leadership seminars, he has never set out his approach within a conventionally published book. As a result, Paul decided that he would write up and develop some of Terry's key insights. Hence this booklet: *The Passionate Leader: The Four Foundations of Leadership*.

Note: Unless otherwise stated, the Bible quotations are from the *New Revised Standard Bible* (NRSV). Other versions of the Bible used are *The New King James' Version* (NKJV), the *Good News Bible* (GNB), *The Revised English Bible* (REB), the *New International Version* of the Bible (NIV), and *The Message: the Bible in Contemporary Language* by Eugene Peterson.

DEDICATION

To our wives, Jayne and to Caroline, who have shared the joys and also the pain of ministry.



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INTRODUCTION

Jesus said: “I will build my church” (Matthew 16.18). How does Jesus build his church? He builds his church upon men and women who confess Jesus to be “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16.16). Jesus began to build his church when Peter stood up on the Day of Pentecost and proclaimed Jesus as “Lord and Christ” (Acts 2.36). He has continued ever since to build his church on those who confess his name. In this task of building the church of Jesus, leadership is vital. Leadership is needed to encourage the church to engage in adventurous mission. Without leadership churches lose direction and ultimately die.

A good example of secular leadership is provided by Field Marshal Viscount Bernard Montgomery. Perhaps the most critical battle in the Second World War was the one that took place at El Alamein in North Africa in 1942. The British Army had been pushed back to the borders of Egypt and was facing imminent defeat. The leadership of the British Army was changed and Montgomery took command. His first job was to change the psyche of every soldier in his command. He inculcated them with a vision of victory. It is said that never before in the history of warfare have soldiers been so aware of their purpose, objective and vision as Montgomery’s troops. The result was the first victory that Britain had had in three years of warfare, and it marked the turning point in the course of the Second World War. The success was due entirely to Montgomery.

Montgomery was a true leader. He defined leadership as “the capacity to rally men and women to a common purpose, and the character which inspires confidence”. A leader, he said, “must exercise an effective influence, and the degree to which he can do this will depend on the personality of the man – the *incandescence* of which he is capable, the flame which burns within him, the magnetism which will draw the hearts of men toward him”.² These qualities for leadership are also needed in the church. Indeed, as we shall see, these qualities are reflected in our four foundation stones of vision, passion, character, and gifting

Many years ago Paul studied 350 English Baptist churches to see what makes them grow. He

² See further Bernard Montgomery, *The Art of Leadership* (Collins, London 1961; reprinted 2009)

discovered that the key factor for growth were the leadership, vision, and possibility thinking of a pastor. Even the gifts of preaching and pastoral care were less significant for growth than the gifts of leadership and vision.³

At a time when the church in the West is facing massive decline, leadership is all the more important. In the words of one American church consultant: “There are three requirements for a good programme within the church. The first is leadership, the second is leadership, and the third is leadership. A lack of leadership may be part of the reason that in a typical year, an average of at least eight protestant congregations disappear every day... Churches need more leaders, not more members”.⁴ This is true not just of churches in North America, but of churches in many other parts of the world too.

If today's churches are to face up to the challenges offered by contemporary culture, then it desperately needs leaders who will think through those challenges and who will offer strategies for enabling their churches to fulfil Christ's mission today. If such strategies are to be effective, then churches will need leaders who will help enable churches to make the necessary changes to their life in order to adopt the necessary strategies.

Today's pastors need to be leaders. For where the right leaders are not only present, but also exercising their power to lead, there the church will grow and new members will be found. What is more, these new members will not just be Christians ‘recycled’ from other churches, but converts whose lives have truly been turned around by the Gospel of Christ. But this will only happen as leaders exercise their ‘powers’ of leadership.

But what is the essence of Christian leadership? In this booklet we wish to argue that leadership involves four key principles. Or to use the metaphor Terry has developed over the years, there are four ‘foundations’ or ‘corner-stones’ of ‘the house of leadership’. Each is vital: to keep the subsequent building stable, they must all play an equal role in the life of the leader. These four basic ‘foundations’ or principles of leadership are vision, passion, character and gifting.

³ Paul Beasley-Murray & Alan Wilkinson, *Turning the Tide: an assessment of Baptist church growth in England* (Bible Society, London 1981) 35, 36.

⁴ Lloyd Perry, *Getting the Church on Target* (Moody Press, Chicago 1977) 3.

THE FIRST FOUNDATION OF LEADERSHIP: VISION



VISION	PASSION	CHARACTER	GIFTING
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Vision is essential

According to the Book of Proverbs nations rise or fall on vision: so we read in Proverbs 29.18: “Where there is no vision the people perish” (NKJV); which in turn is reminiscent of Proverbs 11.14: “Where there is no guidance, a nation falls”. True, the vision the Bible has in mind is a vision based on God’s values as expressed in the Law, as distinct from a modern vision statement, but the general truth remains clear nonetheless. Vision is vital.

What is true of nations is true of churches. George Carey, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote: “I discovered a common malaise in churches that were in advanced stages of ecclesiastical terminal illness – lack of vision. Unless the minister and at least some of the people have a spiritual vision which sees beyond the difficulties of the human situation, everything will seem hopeless. Vision thus becomes the driving force of prayer and the wheels of change are set in motion. It is important also for this vision to be shared with others, so that it may gently permeate the life of the church, creating expectancy and awareness of what is possible”.

If pastors are to inspire, they need to be leaders with vision. In spite of the many demands made upon them, they need to make time to gain a clear sense of God's direction for their church. Prayerful thinking and planning are vital if churches are to grow.

Vision may be defined as the ability to know and to define the common objective. Leaders must have a clear focus on the common objective and resist any temptation to deviate from the vision. Vision is essentially an ultimate destination that the leader wants to reach.

Vision is specific to each church

Vision is related to the mission of the church, but is different. All churches have the same mission which is to fulfil the Great Commission of the Risen Lord Jesus. It is significant that whatever the form of the Commission, whether it be found in Matthew (Matt 28.18-20), in Mark's longer ending (Mark 16.15), in Luke (Luke 24.46-29; see also Acts 1.8) or in John (John 20.21-23), the mandate is clear: the Good News of the Gospel is to be shared with people everywhere. Vision is insight into how a local church believes God wishes it to carry out its mission in its context in the next five or ten years. Vision is specific to each church, and is therefore unique. Vision not only reflects the surroundings of the church, but also the personality and giftedness of the church.

At Green Lane Christian Centre the mission of the church was 'to make unchurched people fully devoted followers of Christ'. Its vision, however, was to fulfil its mission by dividing into cells and releasing people into their ministries.

At Chelmsford, the mission of the church was to 'go Christ's way and make disciples'. To fulfil that vision the church developed the following vision statement:

"We want to be a strong and vibrant city-centre church. As a city centre-church we are different from most other churches. We have no particular neighbourhood to minister to – instead we see the whole city as our 'parish'.... Our vision is to be a vibrant seven-day-a-week city-centre church, witnessing in word and deed to the love of Jesus. We want to be strong, not for the sake of growth, but for the sake of making a greater impact on our city for Christ.... In particular we want to be a strong and vibrant city-centre church where everybody is:

- Passion for God (worship)
- Passionate for others (evangelism)
- Passionate for one another (pastoral care)
- Passionate to grow in the faith (nurture)
- Passionate to serve Jesus (social action)

We want to be a church where every member is on fire for God. For only where we are passionate for God and for others will we be effective in our mission."

Terry believes that Habakkuk 2.1-3 contains four principles for developing a God-given vision. These four principles are

1. 'Watch' – just as Habakkuk had been "keeping watch to see what he [the Lord] will say" (2.1), so leaders need to spend time asking God for direction
2. 'Write' – just as God told Habakkuk to "write the vision and make it plain on tablets" (2.2a), so leaders today need to write down the vision God has given them, and thereby begin to communicate the vision clearly to everybody.
3. 'Work' - just as God spoke to Habakkuk of "a herald running with it [the vision]" (2.2b NIV), so leaders today need to 'run with vision' by working at it. The fact is that it takes a good deal of effort to implement vision..
4. 'Wait' - God says to leaders today, as he said to Habakkuk, "If it seems to tarry wait for it; it will surely come" (2.3b). Leaders need to be patient for the outcome of their vision.

Terry adds that a recent study has shown that the 1% of people who write their vision down and continuously review it, achieve much more than the 99% who do not.

Vision needs to be regularly communicated

A temptation many leaders face is to assume that once a vision has been shared, it has been shared. The reality is that church members have short memories. A one-off sermon or a one-off article in a church magazine is not sufficient. The vision needs to be constantly communicated.

Rick Warren, on the basis of Nehemiah 4.6-15, developed what he called the ‘Nehemiah Principle’: “Vision and purpose must be restated every 26 days to keep the church moving in the right direction”.⁵ Terry believes the vision should be shared every Sunday! One way of doing this might be to have an ‘excited’ spot in every Sunday service, where one or two members might share how God in the past week has been blessing the church as it seeks to fulfil its mission.

A strategy is needed to implement the vision

Vision is not enough. A more detailed strategy is called for to implement the vision, and then ultimately goals need to be set. It is not enough for a church to say that it wants to win people for Jesus Christ and his church – the church needs to have a plan.

Some people are fearful of creating a strategy and setting goals because they believe it will lead to the Holy Spirit being organised out of the church. This is a false spirituality. God wants us to use our minds as well as to look to him in prayer. As Psalm 32.8,9 clearly indicates, God expects us to use our minds in his service – we are not to “be like horses and mules without understanding” and who “must be curbed with bit and bridle”. God’s guidance in this context is received through the use of our minds.

So, for instance, at one stage the church at Chelmsford developed the following strategy:

“In the light of our mission and vision, we have developed the following five-fold strategy to achieve the five purposes of our church. Through worship and prayer, through teaching and preaching, through meeting together in small groups and through reflecting together in church meeting, through paper and through electronic forms of communication:-

1. We will excite fresh hope and faith in God
 - By creating services which are relevant to people’s lives
 - By striving for excellence in every aspect of our Sunday worship
 - By encouraging people to pray expectantly
2. We will ensure every member feels they belong
 - By making home groups the essential core of church life
 - By linking every member to a home group
 - By caring for those who for one reason or another cannot be present at home groups

⁵ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* 111

3. We will empower God's people to witness
 - By creating a culture of people inviting friends to church activities and services
 - By making our church a place where people of all ages and cultures feel welcome
 - By encouraging people to share their faith wherever they are

4. We will help every member to grow in their faith
 - By mentoring new members
 - By encouraging every member to set aside at least 10 minutes a day for God alone
 - By offering specialised teaching in growth groups

5. We will help every member reach their potential to serve others
 - By inviting every new member to identify and use their gifts both in the church and in the wider community
 - By encouraging long-standing members to develop their gifts and abilities to serve Christ both in the church and in the wider community.
 - By offering training and on-going support to all.”

SMART goals need to be set

A strategy is not enough. SMART goals need to be developed to go alongside the agreed strategy. These goals design the detailed programme for achieving the vision of the church.

SMART goals have been defined as:

- S - specific**
- M - measurable**
- A - attainable**
- R - relevant**
- T - time-based**

Scriptural support for this rigorous approach to working out the vision may perhaps be found in Proverbs 4.26: “Plan carefully what you do and whatever you do will turn out right” (GNB). Yet at the same time we need to recognise that “we may make our plans, but God has the last word” (Proverbs 16.2 GNB). With the help of God's Spirit we may seek to set out a plan for the mission and ministry of our churches – but the plan cannot be set in stone. Churches need to constantly listen to God and to follow his direction, even if this means changing plans.

THE SECOND FOUNDATION OF LEADERSHIP: PASSION



VISION	PASSION	CHARACTER	GIFTING
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The benefits of passion

Passion is vital. G.W.F. Hegel, a great 19th century German philosopher, said: “Nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion”. Kent Millard, pastor of an American Methodist mega-church, has written that purpose comes from the head, while passion comes from the heart. He quoted Charles Powell, a management coach, who maintained that a person with a clear purpose says “I will do this!”, while a person with passion says “I love to do this”.⁶

Ministry without passion is almost contradictory. Ian Stackhouse, a Baptist pastor in England, reflecting on Paul’s passion for Jesus and his church, provocatively stated: “A doctor may be able to do his work dispassionately, but for a minister of Christ it is a sackable offence”.⁷ Yet sadly there are many leaders who seem to have lost their passion for their calling – they have allowed God’s gift of leadership to become cold and grey, rather than burn fiercely within their hearts and lives.⁸

Leadership demands passion. According to one recent study on passion five things happen when a leader has passion

1. Passion produces energy. A leader who has passion is driven forward from the energy it produces. Donald Trump said, “Without passion you don’t have energy; without energy, you have nothing.”
2. Passion drives vision. If a leader wants to see their vision and goals being accomplished, then the leader’s passion is the fuel that drives the production and results of the vision.

⁶ E. Carver McGriff & M. Kent Millard, *The Passion Driven Congregation* (Abingdon, Nashville, 2003) 56.

⁷ Ian Stackhouse, *Primitive Piety* (Paternoster, Milton Keynes, 2012) 104.

⁸ God’s gift of leadership needs regular attending to, like a fire: see 2 Timothy 1.6,7,

3. Passion ignites others. A person's passions can ignite other people's passions and brings energy into their lives.
4. Passion raises influence. John Wesley said, "When you set yourself on fire, people love to come and see you burn". This is what happens when a leader has passion. The leader starts gaining more influence with others and people want to be a part of what is going on.
5. Passion provides potential. A leader's passion brings new opportunity and opens the door to (personal) success!⁹

Passion and vision

Passion is essentially the application of deep and strongly felt emotions. As a leader your implementation of your vision will attract other people to follow you in your vision. If you have no passion for your God-given vision, your enterprise will falter and eventually fail. Passion is the ability to communicate that common objective (or vision) to others, to motivate them to achieve that objective.

This link between vision and passion is of utmost importance. Vision needs passion – passion needs vision. Vision gives direction to passion – passion motivates vision. The two are inseparably intertwined in a successful leader. With tongue no doubt somewhat in cheek, Terry states that vision without passion is a day-dream, while passion without vision is a nightmare. Or as he put it in one of his sermons:

“Vision comes from God. Passion comes from you. When passion and vision mix you have fulfilment. If you have vision without passion you have a daydreamer. If you have passion without vision you have a wheel spinner. All action and nowhere to go. Passion is a strong desire, a drive to see vision come to fulfilment.”

Passion and enthusiasm

In the past Paul has tended to talk about enthusiasm rather than passion. Indeed, in one of his earlier books on leadership he identifies enthusiasm as one of the six key qualities necessary for a leader – along with vision, industry, perseverance, humility, and love. He wrote:

“Enthusiasm is needed to communicate the vision to the people, and in turn to excite others with that vision. Enthusiasm it is which enables a leader truly to influence others. Without enthusiasm there is no influence, there is no leader. Conversely, where there is enthusiasm combined with vision, there is leadership. Thus Charles Schwab, the man to whom the 19th century businessman Andrew Carnegie paid \$1 million a year because of his ability to motivate people, once said: ‘A man can succeed at almost anything for which he has unlimited enthusiasm’....

Although enthusiasm can be a very human quality, it is first and foremost a spiritual one. Indeed, the word literally means ‘possession by God’. Rightly understood, enthusiasm is a quality generated by the Holy Spirit. Enthusiasts are men and women fired by God's Spirit. ‘Fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the

⁹ Dan Black, *Are You A Passionate Leader?* (2014 blog: www.churchleaders.com)

laying on of my hands’, said Paul to the young leader, Timothy. ‘For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline’ (2 Timothy 1.6-7).

Enthusiasm is therefore to be encouraged. It is faith looking into the future and committing itself in the face of the seemingly impossible. But to the Christian enthusiast the probabilities are always favourable. Convinced that God is with them, enthusiasts have no fear of the present or future, for ‘in all these things we are more than conquerors’ (see Romans 8.31-39).”¹⁰

Although Terry says that enthusiasm is just “another display of passion”, Paul now feels that the term ‘passion’ is preferable. For passion seems to him to be a ‘deeper’ emotion, an emotion rooted deep in the soul.

Passion is a ‘deep’ word

This deeper aspect of passion comes to clear expression in Terry’s exposition of the three meanings of the English word ‘passion’

1. ‘Deep excitement’. This is the contagion of leadership. This is what makes other people want to follow the leader. This is what makes the leader ‘charismatic’. People crave a sense of excitement in their own lives, and when they recognise it in the leader’s life, they intuitively want to follow it.
2. ‘Deep desire’. This is the element of passion that keeps the leader committed to his objective, even when the ‘going gets tough’. Commitment to the task ahead comes directly from the deep desire within the heart of the leader to achieve the common objective. Vision is always tested. It goes with the territory of leadership. If objectives were easy to attain, then leadership would not be required. The deeper the vision is held in the leader’s heart, the deeper the commitment will be in the heart of the leader to see it achieved. The task of leadership is to take people through tough times.
3. ‘Deep suffering’. We talk about the Passion of Christ, i.e. Christ’s suffering upon the cross. Leadership is often a lonely existence. Anyone aspiring to leadership should recognise this. One of the most successful ways of reducing the impact of suffering upon leadership is to build a team around the leader, thus enabling the burdens of leadership to be shared”.

From this we see that passion is more than enthusiasm. Passion is ultimately ‘cruciform’ in shape. Passion is what we see in the Garden of Gethsemane; passion is what we see on the Cross of Calvary.

Although the suffering Jesus endured culminated in the agony of crucifixion, it is significant that when Jesus predicted his passion, he did not simply say that “the Son of Man must undergo great suffering”, he went on “and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed” (Mark 8.31). For Jesus the suffering lay not just in his death, but also in his rejection at the hands of the religious leaders of his day. It is in this context that Jesus

¹⁰ Paul Beasley-Murray, *Dynamic Leadership* (Marc, Eastbourne 1990) 185-186

said, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me” (Mark 8.34). For only very few followers of Jesus in the West will this entail literally dying for Jesus; but it may well mean misunderstanding and rejection by people with positions of influence in the church today. The fact is that vision means change, and change can be a threat to self-interest and to the ‘status quo’, with the result that people invent apparently ‘godly’ reasons to resist and reject not just the vision, but also the vision-bearer, and much suffering can then ensue. As many pastors have discovered to their cost, going the way of Jesus often involves in sharing in the passion of Jesus. But as the apostle Peter wrote: “Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example” (1 Peter 2.21).

Passion and perseverance

Passionate leadership inevitably involves perseverance. Passion is rooted not in occasional flashes of inspiration, but rather in a life-time of following Jesus. Passionate leadership is not to be confused with youthful enthusiasm, but entails long-term commitment to implementing the vision God has given us. In the words of Samuel Johnson, “great works are performed not by strength, but by perseverance”. Perseverance in leadership calls for courage and tenacity. Or as Ghandi defined it, leadership is “to put up with misrepresentation and to stick to one’s guns, come what may”. Perseverance is of the essence if leaders are to implement their God-given vision.

Jesus, of course, is our great example. In the words of the unknown author of Hebrews: “Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, disregarding its shame and has taken his seat at the right hand of God” (Hebrews 12.2). Or in Eugene Peterson’s splendid paraphrase: “Keep your eyes on JESUS, who both began and finished this race we’re in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed - that exhilarating finish in and with God - he could put up with anything along the way: cross, shame, whatever. And now he’s THERE, in the place of honour, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. THAT will shoot adrenaline into your souls” (Hebrews 12.2-3).

THE THIRD FOUNDATION OF LEADERSHIP: CHARACTER



VISION	PASSION	CHARACTER	GIFTING
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Leadership necessitates character

In 1 Timothy 3.1-13 the Apostle Paul lists the qualities for those aspiring to leadership in Ephesus: first, Paul lists the qualifications for ‘bishops’ or ‘overseers’ (3.1-7), and then those for ‘deacons’ (3.8-13). As has often been observed, the emphasis is on ‘graces’ rather than ‘gifts’ – on ‘character’ rather than ‘charisma’.

Paul’s chief concern was that the life of the Christian leader should be exemplary as far as the world was concerned: “Now a bishop must be above reproach”; or as the GNB puts it, “a church leader must be without fault”. Under this general umbrella Paul then listed a further eleven virtues which should characterise any Christian leader:

- Faithful to his marriage vows: literally “married only once” (NRSV)
- Self-controlled: i.e. “temperate, sensible, respectable”.
- “Hospitable”
- “An apt teacher” – it is often said that this is the one virtue that specifies ability, but in fact managing one’s household also involves ability
- “Not a drunkard”
- “Not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome”
- “Not a lover of money”: i.e. not greedy
- “He must manage his own household well...for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God’s church?” Almost certainly this is a reference to leadership skills. We need to remember the first churches were small family-sized communities – it was vital for their first leaders to have people skills.
- “He must not be a recent convert...”

- “He must be well-thought of by outsiders”. This emphasis on the perception of outsiders perhaps explains why none of the virtues in this list is distinctively Christian, such as faith and love – the virtues Paul has singled out simply reflected the highest ideals of secular moral philosophy.

Christian leaders must be of good moral character. Leaders may have all the gifts imaginable, but if their lives are not right, then the Gospel is denied before it is preached. Richard Baxter, the great 17th century pastor of Kidderminster, wrote:

“Take heed to yourselves lest your example contradict your doctrine, and lest you lay such stumbling-blocks before the blind as may be the occasion of their ruin: lest you unsay with your lives what you may say with your tongues; and be the greatest hinderers of the success of your own labours”.¹¹

Leaders, if they are to be effective in their ministry, must in the first place live lives that reflect the King whom they serve. Character and competence go together. As Rick Warren wrote: “You really need both character and skills to be a good leader. If you have character without competence what you have is sincere ineffectiveness. But far worse is when you have competence without character. If you have competence without character you become a menace – a menace to a church, a menace to a small group, and a menace to society”.¹²

Character entails integrity

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, integrity is ‘the soundness of moral principle; the character of uncorrupted virtue; uprightness, honesty, sincerity’.

Character is the integrity with which leadership is exercised. We could well say that Hitler was initially a very successful leader. He had a defined vision which was implemented with passion, but it had a distinct lack of integrity. This led to his ultimate downfall. You cannot fake integrity. You either have it or you don’t. If there is no integrity in a Christian leader, that lack will ultimately be expressed.

Often the lack of integrity is hidden by leadership banning any questioning, and demanding obedience to the vision. Character is what you are when non-one is looking.

Character reflects the inner life of the leader. It shapes the way a person acts or reacts. It is the filter through which a person’s thoughts values and motivation come to be expressed to the outside world. In essence, character is a leader working in obedience to God’s Word. The development of character involves the exercise of discipline in a leader’s life so that Christ’s character is demonstrated to his followers.

Character is about inner integrity – it is what a person truly is, as distinct from what he or she may appear to be. Terry distinguishes between ‘personality’ and ‘reputation’ on the one hand, and ‘character’ on the other. Personality is what we are born with – character is the result of choice. Reputation is what people think of us, character is what we are when no one is looking. In this respect Proverbs 4.23 has some good advice: “Keep your heart with all

¹¹ Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor* (First published in 1656, but Banner of Truth Trust edition, Edinburgh 1974) 63.

¹² Rick Warren, charisma-v-character, www.pastors.com June 2014.

vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life”, or in the words of the GNB: “Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts”.

Integrity expresses itself in selflessness

Integrity in leadership is best defined as selflessness. By contrast selfishness is the prevailing human condition. Indeed, sin can be defined as selfishness. Sin is putting self before God. Sin is egocentricity of the first order. Not surprisingly, selflessness is the major issue that all Christian leaders have to struggle with as it just does not come naturally. In this context integrity is the ability to lead without personal prejudice or bias or self-interest. This is probably the key challenge of Christian leadership.

Jesus is the greatest example of a selfless leader; Jesus who in the Upper Room said ‘greater love has no man than this, than to lay down his life for his friend’ (John 15.12 NKJV). Terry comments: “This He did himself and by doing so exemplified integrity in his leadership and mission and life”.

We see too the selflessness of Jesus in John 10.1-18, where Jesus declared “I am the good shepherd’ (John 10.11, 14). His goodness lay in seeking not his own good, but the good of the sheep. Unlike the thief in the parable, who “comes only to steal and kill and destroy”, Jesus said the good shepherd comes not to deprive people of life, but “that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (10.10). Whereas in the parable the ‘hired hand’ was only in the shepherding business for what he could get out of it and did not truly care for the sheep (10.13), Jesus the Good Shepherd was not only prepared to give his all for the sheep but actually did “lay down his life for the sheep” (10.14: see also 10.17,18).

What an example Jesus offers to those of us who would lead his church. In the light of John 10 we can say that true Christian leadership always enhances the life of others, whereas the abuse of power always leads to the destruction of others. True Christian leadership refuses to use others – whether they be individuals or churches – as stepping stones in a career. Far from living off others, it gives sacrificially to others. In the last resort, it is this willingness to lay down one’s life for others which ultimately distinguishes a good shepherd from a bad or faithless one. Important as are such things as competence and ability, even more important is love and sacrifice.

Selflessness expresses itself in servanthood

The main attribute of a Christian leader is that of servanthood. In the New Testament Paul describes himself frequently by the Greek term ‘*doulos*’, which though often translated as ‘servant’ really means ‘slave’. Paul uses this term not just to describe his relationship to the Lord Jesus, but also his relationship to his churches: “We do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus’ sake” (2 Corinthians 4.5).

On a number of occasions Jesus emphasised the necessity of the servant role, if a person would be a leader. When James and John asked if they might sit at his right and left hand in glory, Jesus replied: "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant" (Mark 10.42; Matthew 20.25-27; see also Luke 22.24-26).

Jesus, in defining leadership in terms of service, turned upside down all previous preconceptions of leadership. Jesus spoke of the greatness of service rather than greatness of power, prestige and authority. He went on: "Whoever wants to be first must be slave of all" (Mark 10.44; similarly Mark 9.35 & Luke 9.48). From the perspective of Jesus' hearers this was a preposterous idea – and about as realistic as the thought of a camel going through the eye of a needle (Mark 10.25). These words of Jesus probably induced smiles and shaking heads from Jesus' audience. But this is where Jesus' model of servant leadership is so radically different: for the desire for power and authority focuses attention on self, whereas love by its very nature is focussed on others – and service is but an expression of love for others.

Jesus was the Servant 'par excellence'. He said that service was the hallmark of his mission: "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10.45). Nowhere more clearly do we see Jesus as the Servant than when he washed his disciples' feet in the Upper Room (John 13). It is impossible to overemphasize the menial nature of this act. For the rabbis it was a task which could not be required of a Jewish male slave. Washing the feet of another person was an undignified action, and was a job reserved for Gentile slaves, wives and children. Jesus went on to say: "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" (John 13.15).

This teaching on the importance of being a servant must not lead us to underplay the importance of leadership itself. Leadership, rightly understood, does not stand in opposition to service. Leadership can be an expression of service. If leadership is undertaken for the sake of others, rather than for the sake of one's own personal ego, then such leadership is service in the cause of Christ.

There is therefore a very real difference between servant-leaders and high-powered business executives. Servant-leaders focus on the people to be cared for rather than just the job to be done. Servant-leaders cannot trample on people even in pursuit of the kingdom. But for all these necessary caveats, servant leadership must still lead – it must not become an excuse for no leadership.

THE FOURTH FOUNDATION OF LEADERSHIP: GIFTING



VISION	PASSION	CHARACTER	GIFTING
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Leadership is a gift

Leaders are men and women who have been gifted by God to serve. While all Christians are called to serve God, only some are called to serve God by leading his people.

Leaders need to be gifted. Sadly there are many who claim leadership, but it is evident by their lack of leadership ability that it is the power or status of leadership which attracts them rather than the call or gifting of leadership.

In all three lists of spiritual gifts in Paul's writings the gift of leadership features: Romans 12.8, 1 Corinthians 12.28 and Ephesians 4.11. Each of these three references to leadership reveals a different aspect.

In Romans 12.6 Paul writes: "We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us". He goes on to urge that those who have been given the gift of leadership, should exercise it "with diligence" (Romans 12.6 NRSV: similarly NIV & NKJ). Other English translations read: "if you are a leader, lead with enthusiasm" (REB); or "whoever has authority should work hard" (GNB). Leaders are not to sit on their back side, rather they are to be energetic, enthusiastic, hard-working as they live out their calling. But what kind of leadership has Paul in mind? It is significant that the underlying Greek word Paul uses here has also the meaning of 'caring for' or 'helping' others. Here we have reminder that pastoral leadership is not about the exercise of power, but rather about the exercise of care. Christian leaders exercise their influence for the good of others. Paul uses the same Greek word for leadership in 1 Thessalonians 5.12 where he tells the Thessalonians "to respect those who labour among you and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you". Interestingly the NIV in its translation chooses to highlight the 'caring' aspect of leadership: "We ask you, brothers and

sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you”. Leaders care for their people.

In 1 Corinthians 12.28 Paul uses a very different Greek word for leadership, which has been translated in a variety of ways: for example, ‘forms of leadership’ (NRSV), ‘power to guide’ (REB), ‘guidance’ (NIV), or ‘those who are given power to direct’ (GNB); whereas the AV speaks of ‘governances’ and the NKJV of ‘administrations’. The word Paul uses literally means ‘helmsmanship’, a word which in the first place refers to steering a ship, but which in Greek literature was used metaphorically of the art of government, and referred to the statesman guiding ‘the ship of state’. Here in 1 Corinthians 12 the ship in question is the church. Leaders keep their hands on the tiller and ensure that the ship is kept on course. The picture here is of the church being driven along by the wind of the Spirit – sometimes storms arise from outside the church, but sometimes, as was certainly the case at Corinth, difficulties arise within the church itself. On those occasions, “unless the leader’s hand is firmly on the tiller, there is every danger that the ship’s course may be deflected by the cross-currents of human emotions and ambitions that move not over far below the surface of the sea over which she sails”.¹³

In Ephesians 4.7-19 Paul writes of how the ascended Christ gave gifts to his church: “The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers”. Here Paul employs yet another term for leadership: ‘shepherds’ normally translated as “pastors”. As in a Middle-Eastern context the shepherd goes ahead and leads his flock, so pastors should go ahead and lead God’s people. In the Old Testament – as in the ancient world in general – ‘shepherding’ was a common metaphor for leadership: kings were often described as shepherds, who cared for their people by exercising good leadership. Almost certainly the same idea is present here. At the same time we should note that in Ephesians 4.11 the term ‘pastor’ is linked very closely with that of ‘teacher’: with the implication that pastors lead their people not least as they teach and expound God’s Word.

Leadership is a gift that needs to be developed

Leadership is a gift which needs to be developed. In the debate of whether leaders are born or made, our conviction is that leaders are both born and made.

Jesus not only called the twelve apostles, he trained them – he taught them not least the importance of servant leadership. When John Mark went with Paul and Silas on their first missionary journey, he went as an apprentice – as one who had skills to learn (see Acts 12.25). Later Paul was a mentor to men like Timothy and Titus. When Paul told Timothy “what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well” (2 Timothy 2.2) there was surely an element of training involved.

Although leadership is a gift, leaders wanting to give their best to God will want to develop their skills of leadership. Such skills will include the art of communication, the management of change, the creating of strategies and the setting of goals.

¹³ John Gunstone, *A People for his Praise* (Hodder & Stoughton, London 1978) 39.

Leadership is a gift that needs to be shared

Jesus did not exercise a solo ministry, but rather he built a leadership team, known as the Twelve. So Luke tells us that Jesus “called the disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles” (Luke 6.13). The ‘Twelve’ were the leaders of the new movement that became the church.

The gift of leadership is not restricted to one person per church. Certainly within the pages of Scripture we discover that the apostolic churches always had more than one leader. In Jerusalem, for instance, the Twelve were initially responsible for leading the church forward. At Antioch the leadership was in the hands of a group of five ‘prophets and teachers’ (Acts 13.1). In Asia Minor Paul and Barnabas appointed ‘elders’ in each church (Acts 14.21). According to Philippians 1.1 in Philippi the leadership was made up of ‘bishops’ (literally ‘overseers’) and ‘deacons’ (literally ‘servants’); a pattern similar to Ephesus, where there were also bishops (sometimes called elders) and deacons (1 Timothy 3). Wherever we look, the churches of the New Testament were led by a team of leaders.

Shared leadership does not mean that there is no team leader. A leader of the leaders is called for and will almost always emerge. The leaders in the church at Jerusalem, for instance, were first led by Peter, and then by James. However, today’s pastors need to be not just team leaders, but also team players. Part of being a good team player is delegating to others significant responsibility for achieving the mission of the church. Team leadership is about empowering others to fulfil their calling to be leaders in God’s church.

Leadership involves charisma

In one sense to say that ‘leadership is a gift’ and that ‘leadership involves charisma’ is to say one and the same thing. For our English word ‘charisma’ is derived from the Greek word ‘*charisma*’, which simply means ‘gift’. However, in contemporary English the word ‘charisma’ involves what the *Oxford English Dictionary* calls ‘the capacity to inspire devotion and enthusiasm’. This modern sense of ‘charisma’ is surely essential for Christian leadership. Christian leaders need to have the capacity to inspire their people; leadership without inspiration will not get a church very far. Within this context of the four ‘cornerstones’ of leadership, leadership inspires where there is vision and passion.

Some leaders are more ‘charismatic’ than others. Styles of leadership inevitably vary not least because personality types vary. Terry and Paul, for instance, have different leadership styles. But, in one way or another, leaders must be able to excite their people. Thus when Paul was senior minister of Central Baptist Church, Chelmsford, common to the ‘job purpose’ of every leader of the ministry team was the call:

“To excite fresh hope and faith in God, encouraging God’s people to embrace others with ‘love of another kind’, enabling individuals to change and to grow, and empowering the church for witness and service.”

Leadership is not about position, but about influence, motivation, and inspiration. Leadership is about ‘making things happen’, it is about ‘making a difference’. This very capacity is a sign of God’s gifting.

In the Auckland Maritime Museum, there is a display featuring the work of Sir Peter Blake, a distinguished yachtsman, who helped New Zealand on one occasion to beat the USA and win the Admirals Cup. Following his death, a Blake medal is issued every year for outstanding leadership. We note with interest the leadership qualities that the Sir Peter Blake Trust looks for:

- Determination and the will to succeed
- Belief in achieving extraordinary things
- Willingness to learn
- Desire for constant improvement
- Trusting and empowering team-mates
- The initiative to pursue an idea
- Ability to have fun

IN CONCLUSION

Pastors are called to be inspirational leaders. Precisely how they fulfil this calling will vary from personality to personality, and from situation to situation. However, their leadership needs to be characterised by the four foundational principles of vision, passion, character and gifting. Only where all four of these principles are in place will Jesus be able to build his church.