

## Intro to Spiritual Leadership: What is a Spiritual Leader?

### The Big Picture: Ministry Map

#### “Formal” Spiritual Leaders

- Small Group Facilitators
- Sunday School Teachers
- Servant Leader Board
- Elders
- Women Leadership Board

Michael Abrashoff, *USS Benfold*: different leadership

**1 Peter 5:**<sup>1</sup> To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ’s sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: <sup>2</sup> Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; <sup>3</sup> not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup> And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

- Leadership not for the leader’s glory and benefit, but for God’s glory and the flock’s benefit.

**1Tim. 3:**<sup>1</sup> The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup> Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup> not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup> He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, <sup>5</sup> for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church? <sup>6</sup> He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup> Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

<sup>8</sup> Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. <sup>9</sup> They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup> And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. <sup>11</sup> Their wives\* likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup> Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. <sup>13</sup> For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

(\*lit. “Wives/Women likewise”)

- Exemplary of what everyone is called to be.  
**1 Cor 11:1** “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.”

#### *Commitment Level*

**James 3:1** “not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that those who teach will be judged more strictly.”

The description of the qualifications of elders and deacons in the Pastoral Epistles reminds us that one should not enter into leadership lightly. The high calling takes ministry seriously and believes it is worthy of our best effort and highest priority.

While this always means sacrifice, it also means blessing (**1 Tim 5:17**: “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching”). You will grow far more through serving Christ’s body as a leader than you will standing on the sidelines.

One aspect of leadership is just showing up. Your physical presence makes a huge difference in the ministry of the church.

### **Five Mark, “Total Christ,” Spirituality applied to the individual Christian:**

#### **1. High Gospel:**

- Descriptive of ideal Christian → ideal human →
- “Skilful in the art of being a successful, fully-functioning, morally alive member of the people of God”
- Realized/realizable only in Christ.

### **Proverbs 9**

<sup>1</sup> Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn her seven pillars. <sup>2</sup> She has slaughtered her beasts; she has mixed her wine; she has also set her table. <sup>3</sup> She has sent out her young women to call from the highest places in the town,

<sup>4</sup> “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” To him who lacks sense she says, <sup>5</sup> “Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. <sup>6</sup> Leave your simple ways, and live, and walk in the way of insight.”

<sup>7</sup> Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury. <sup>8</sup> Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you. <sup>9</sup> Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning. <sup>10</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. <sup>11</sup> For by me your days will be multiplied, and years will be added to your life. <sup>12</sup> If you are wise, you are wise for yourself; if you scoff, you alone will bear it.

<sup>13</sup> The woman Folly is loud; she is seductive and knows nothing. <sup>14</sup> She sits at the door of her house; she takes a seat on the highest places of the town, <sup>15</sup> calling to those who pass by, who are going straight on their way, <sup>16</sup> “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” And to him who lacks sense she says, <sup>17</sup> “Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” <sup>18</sup> But he does not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

### **The characters (vv4-12)**

The Simple (vv4-6) = entice-able

- *Moral*, not *intellectual*, capacity... they're not applying themselves to the discipline of gaining skill in wisdom (you don't *fall* into wisdom)

- Not having trouble until they meet someone *who knows what they want, and what the simple person half wants* (Proverbs 7:4-23, 9:13-18)
- Correctable/recoverable (**1:4**, “to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth”), but look what it takes (**19:25**: “Strike a scoffer, and the simple will learn prudence; reprove a man of understanding, and he will gain knowledge.”).

The Scoffer (vv7-8a, 12b) = ridicules moral instruction & scoffs at great realities (Ps1)

The Wise (vv8b-12a) = teachable (note Pr 19:25 on both); **Proverbs 1:7**: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

### **The Woman Folly (vv13-18; recalls 7:6-23)**

- *Contrasts w. Wisdom*
- v18 results: destructiveness of undisciplined/unexamined life

**Lady Wisdom (vv1-6)** = beautiful, enjoyable, good-for-you,

- Wisdom seeks the simple and wise, to enrich them.
- Wisdom is the gift of God

**2:6-8**: “For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints.”

- Wisdom is Christ:

**Proverbs 8:22–24** “The LORD possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water.”

- Wisdom (Christ) must seek us:

**Proverbs 8:1–4**: “Does not wisdom call? Does not understanding raise her voice? On the heights beside the way, at the crossroads she takes her stand; beside the gates in front of the town, at the entrance of the portals she cries aloud: “To you, O men, I call, and my cry is to the children of man.”

- Inversely: the spiritual leader is “teachable” = understands/lives out of their dependency.

**Proverbs 1:7**: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

**Proverbs 3:5–7**: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.”

**Ephesians 2:8–10**: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

## 2. High Church

- The Spiritual leader as part of Christ's presence in this local place

### *Serving the Overall Mission of the Church*

Leaders are not just committed to their particular area of service, but to support the overall mission of the church. Part of what this means is working with other leaders, being attentive to the greater body. This will impact scheduling, recruiting, and problem solving just to name a few.

- Proverbs is about the healthy person (spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually, economically, relationally...)
- C. John Collins: "The covenant is never viewed in the Scripture in individualistic terms—"how can I be a fully functioning human being in relation to God, the world, and other people?" (For the evangelical tradition it has been treated as very individualistic—"how can I be right with God?")

**Ephesians 2:13–22:** "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit."

- "both one... in his flesh" "create in himself one new man"
- "access in one Spirit to the Father" "being built... into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit"
- Goal: moving beyond "my faith is about me" to participating in what God is doing through His Church.

### **Putting these two realities into practice in our lives:**

- (Lady Wisdom again): we practice/grow in Wisdom

**Proverbs 2:1–5:** "My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God."

Like learning to ride a motorcycle / learning to drive (moving from watching the tachometer to "feel").

- Hebrew word for wisdom ≈ spiritual counterpart of common sense

- “the skill of making choices in the light of God’s value system”
- not just intellectual/not just practical—both together.

### 3. Prophet:

- biblical fidelity, confessionalism
  - Session 3: Biblical interpretation.
  - Confessional Theology
  - Disciplines of personal piety (Chip, shortly)

### 4. Priest:

- priesting for the community;
  - Building others

**1 Peter 5** (again): Shepherds not executives

- Evangelism

**Romans 9:3:** “For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.”

- Discipleship

**Acts 20:26–28:** “Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.”

- Prayer for the Body, for the broader community...

**1 Timothy 2:1–4:** “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

### *Transitions*

Please plan a transition strategy now! We hope you love your leadership position and feel called to it, but your call can change. As a small church it is very difficult to pastors to spend time trying to fill last minute vacancies. Each leader should be training an apprentice even when he or she isn’t intending to leave the position. Also, please discuss transitions at the first sign of fatigue or change of call.

Be wary of leaving leadership all together. Life tends to fill all voids rather quickly, and it is difficult for leaders to be motivated to come back once they pull out entirely.

### 5. King:

- community/authority
  - A creator of/participant in community:

**1Tim. 3:2** Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, *hospitable*, able to teach,

**Titus 1:8** ...*hospitable*, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

- Not about introvert/extrovert issues...