

# MINISTERIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

## SEMINAR I

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### **Theme: “The Mission and Ministry of the Pentecostal Church”**

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## **Building a Shared Vision**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The core premise for all ministry is to build on the foundation of God’s Word with faithfulness to God’s vision for the church. The vision must stay focused on the priority to glorify God and bear the fruit of new converts. The vision must follow the process of discipleship, unity, and partnership.

Our trust must always be first in the power of the Holy Spirit, who will anoint our vision and our work to build a life-giving church through the empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The vision must be shared by people committed to prayer, spiritual disciplines, humility, integrity, and obedience to God. The pastor will have to be a faithful shepherd who is willing to trust, equip, empower, and lead as one who truly walks in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The vision must be shared by lay leaders who yield themselves in sacrificial service to fulfill the passion God has placed in their hearts. These lay leaders have been recruited,

trained and trusted to stay the course. They have a clear personal statement of purpose that directs their efforts to see God's vision for their church become a reality.

## **I. LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR BUILDING A SHARED VISION**

Leaders get impatient with "process" and they want to know, "How fast can I get through these stages of groundwork?" These early stages are not highly visible and leaders sometimes become overly eager to start the real work and get meaningful results.

Laying the groundwork is critical to the ultimate success of the process. When the implementation of the vision begins, the likelihood of controversy, resistance, or apathy will increase significantly. Either the congregation will not understand why change is necessary, or they may refuse to support the vision.

The early stages of the process enable the pastor and other key leaders to demonstrate why change is needed and why this vision is right. The first stages in building a shared vision bring the church to the point of being prepared to change and allow the new vision to bring about the needed transformation. [*The following stages are drawn from the book "Leading Congregational Change," Herrington, Bonem, & Furr*]

### **STAGE ONE - Personal Preparation**

Prepare yourself and key leaders to be ready for the journey of casting the vision and building unity within the congregation. Effective leaders continually hold up the mission and vision of the church as a basis for unity. They call people

to commitment by describing and pursuing the Biblical mission of the church. The mission then becomes a foundation that allows the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of people.

Unity can come out of people's commitment to God's mission and through the development of spiritual maturity and vitality.

Personal Preparation involves:

- Consistent practice of spiritual disciplines
- Focusing on what God wants to do in the future to clarify how you can be mission driven
- Conducting an honest self-assessment and determining to immediately address issues that become clear
- Being accountable to peers and/or a mentor
- Proactively addressing problems
- Determining to stay humble and open to God
- Finding the right speed for your process of bringing change and transformation

The key challenge for Stage One is committing enough time and energy to starting right and coping with the stress of the process.

## **STAGE TWO – Create a Sense of Urgency**

Communicating to the church the urgency of working through the process of committing to God's vision and bringing about transformation is critical.

Urgency is critical for congregational change and transformation because it becomes a driving force motivating compliance and commitment.

A sense of urgency can cause people to start asking the right questions. In a negative sense, it can also create conflict, denial, and resignation as some people resist needed change. Many people do not want to feel the discomfort of admitting needs.

Creating urgency involves:

- Correctly identifying current realities
- Communicating these realities to everyone
- Conducting a congregational assessment
- Being open to feedback
- Promoting honest and constructive criticism as appreciated and necessary
- Making the status quo unacceptable

The key challenge will be that Stage Two makes people uncomfortable and will cause some resistance.

### **STAGE THREE – Engage the core of leaders in casting the vision.**

Moving a church to a new or expanded vision must not be the sole undertaking of the pastor. Building a trusting relationship with a core of key lay leaders is absolutely necessary. This is where stage one and stage two can often be best accomplished by launching the Lay Leadership Development program. Six

months or even one year of mentoring of key leaders will expand the core of leaders to where you can quickly move beyond Stage Three.

Stage Three – just as Level One in Lay Leadership Development, involves:

- Recruiting the right people
- Involving a diverse community
- Training and encouraging growth and personal development
- Building unity, trust, and consensus
- Promoting personal accountability with each lay leader in relation to their passion and calling
- Additional training where needed, combined with regular group meetings
- Finding the connection between the lay leader's personal hopes and aspirations and the clarified vision
- Lay Leadership Development engaging within the group a collaborative process of discernment and decision making

The key challenge in Stage Three is to create an environment in which people are led to a dimension of unity, commitment, and trust. Stage Three then involves the recruiting and training of lay leaders, who will make up the visionary leadership group of core influencers.

## **II. COMMUNICATING THE VISION**

When the pastor is spiritually prepared and a core team of visionary leaders is ready, the vision must be communicated to the entire congregation. The core leaders already have committed themselves to the vision and are ready to lead others towards God's will and toward the renewing and transforming of the local church.

#### **STAGE FOUR – Communicating the Vision**

A vision is a clear, shared, and compelling picture of the preferred future to which God is calling the church. Achieving God's vision always requires the deep commitment of a group of individuals, not just the pastor.

Discerning and articulating the vision must be done in stages one to three when the pastor and key lay leaders unite around the vision. During this process in stages one to three, the vision will become perfected and made ready for stage four.

The pastor will always play a central leadership role in discerning and clarifying the vision. However, the vision will also merge with the visions of the individual key lay leaders so that the final shared vision reflects the commitment and consensus of the core group.

Without a mentoring program such as Lay Leadership Development, it can be very difficult for a pastor to find a positive way to make the transition from his/her vision to a genuinely shared vision celebrated in unity.

Jesus told His disciples, “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house,” (Matthew 5:14,15).

In the same way, we must proclaim God’s vision to the local body of believers. The local church leadership team publicly communicates the vision and how the vision will change the church in a positive way.

The communication stage is to be ongoing and will use various methods to keep the vision clear, up-front, and alive to sustain the process of transformation. Most churches under-communicate the vision! The vision must be restated on a frequent basis (perhaps every week). It is unrealistic to expect the total congregation to ever come to understand and support the vision without adequate interaction, training, and support.

People learn in different ways and they hear through different filters. Constant and varied communication is necessary. The more the vision is communicated and celebrated as vital will reinforce or signal to the congregation that this is priority—it is essential.

Communicating the vision involves:

- An explicit communication strategy
- Core group leading the congregation using various methods to build unity for the vision
- Selecting words, phrases, and analogies that will be owned by the congregation to communicate and remember the vision

- Repeating, repeating, repeating
- Getting feedback on the vision and the methods used for communication.

The key challenge in communicating the vision is to find enough creative ways to enable everyone to understand God's vision for the future.

### **III. KEEP THE VISION ALIVE AND THE PROCESS MOVING**

Reaching the goals of a shared vision is something that “the pastor cannot do this alone!” Stage five is best accomplished by an equipping pastor who is continuing to mentor lay leaders through Lay Leadership Development and thus expanding the local church's core group of trustworthy leaders.

#### **STAGE FIVE – Empowering Lay Leaders**

Developing and mentoring lay leaders establishes a new model for leadership within the local church. It also removes many obstacles that have prevented or destroyed unity and cooperation.

Broadening the base or expanding the core of leadership requires that the pastor trust others and delegate responsibility. It requires that the lay leaders live worthy of trust and accept the responsibility to follow their passion and be accountable to other lay leaders.

Empowering lay leaders involves:

- Constant recruiting, training, and trusting
- Mentoring

- Delegating
- Accountability
- Trusting people in leadership to be creative and to take some risks
- Facilitating change without destroying needed structure
- Communicating the value and importance of change
- Not breaking the rules needed to maintain stability and trust

The key challenge in Stage Five is to keep cultivating new leaders and expanding the core through pastoral mentoring and lay leadership development. A danger is that the pastor will undervalue the importance of continuing to personally mentor new leaders and further expand the core of trustworthy lay leaders.

Maintaining growth and a widespread impact of the vision requires commitment to working this process and keeping lay leaders focused, motivated, and spiritually strong.

## **CONCLUSION**

The process of Lay Leadership Development will work in any church and can enable a committed few to lead the implementation of a new vision and spiritual transformation within the church.

When a church is declining, leaders often try to implement some new change but fail to build a foundation and core vision group to produce growth and new life.

Successful implementation of a vision requires coordination, consensus, commitment, and positive expectation. The larger the core group of trustworthy lay leaders, the greater the success of implementing God's vision.

First things first...the pastor is the key to building a shared vision. Becoming an equipper and a mentor of lay leaders must become a high priority for the pastor. Then with patience, the pastor must work the process – recruit, train, and trust people who are necessary for the vision to become a reality.

In order to build a shared vision, we must build a leadership team of laity whose gifts, passions, and resources are fully committed to God's vision for their church. When a team of lay leaders dialogue, connect, treat one another as colleagues, and hold each other accountable for leadership integrity, great things happen and radical spiritual transformation is possible!