

**Progressing Together**  
EGLI 203

# **Character and Qualities of a Servant of God**



## **Church Leadership**

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March 2012

## INTRODUCTION

We can find the beginnings of all the major themes of the Bible in its first five books: Genesis through Deuteronomy. These themes then are developed progressively and historically in the whole Bible. They find their fulfillment in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is also true when we come to study the subject of leadership. In this course we will study the character and qualities of those God calls to be in leadership positions in the church.

We will cover such topics as

- Calling: how and why God calls people into leadership positions.
- Qualifications: the character qualities, which God looks for in a leader.
- Gifting: how God equips and enables someone to lead.
- Vision and task: what God calls a leader to do.
- Responsibilities of a leader.
- Practical problems a leader often has to deal with.
- Relationships between leaders in the same church and between leaders of different churches.

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## Syllabus for CHUR203 - Servant Leaders Facilitator – To be announced Certificate Level

### Course objectives

To equip elders, discipleship group leaders and church planters with practical leaderships skills applicable to their ministry context, following a model of servant leadership.

### Course description

This course focuses specifically on true spiritual leadership in the church. It begins by looking at biblical examples of leadership in Moses, David, Jesus and Paul. It then moves on to discuss the roles of elder and deacon, taking into account the role that women play in the church as well. Other subjects dealt with are the ministries of preaching, teaching, counselling, church discipline, church finances, and relationships between pastors and other leaders.

### Learning Outcomes

**Content:** By the end of the course, the student will be able:

- To outline the roles of elders and deacons, their qualifications and responsibilities.
- To recognize his or her individual gifts in leadership, pasturing, teaching, and etc.
- To describe different styles of church government, and to recognize the dangers of authoritarian leadership.

**Character:** By the end of the course, the student will demonstrate:

- A commitment to servant leadership: to serving the body of Christ in humility and holiness with the gifts and abilities that God has granted to him or her.
- An appreciation for Christian unity, an understanding of its theological foundations and a desire to see unity within his/her congregation, and between churches in his or her area

**Competency:** By the end of the course, the student will be able:

- To better understand how to guide, protect, enable and coordinate his fellowship in a spirit of Christian humility so that each person fulfills God's calling upon him or her.
- To grasp the basic principles of resolving conflicts, and applying church discipline.
- To lead a worship service, to preach a simple message (15 minutes), and to lead a Bible study.
- To balance a simple accounting ledger and handle basic financial matters in the church.
- To establish a goal and a plan for the growth of his/her church, based upon present resources.

### Course requirements

#### Certificate Level

- To demonstrate knowledge of course material through

- answering questions at the end of each section
- completion of the final exam
- To attend 18 of 20 instructor-led sessions (27 contact hours minimum)
- To participate in discussions by listening, contributing as appropriate, and responding when asked a specific question
- To plan and lead one 20 minute period of worship.
- To lead one section or entire lesson of the course being studied, depending on the number of students in the course.
- To write and deliver a 15 minute message on a verse or paragraph of Scripture.
- To maintain a ledger of the local church, fellowship, or small group's assets, receipts, and expenses for the period of the course (not less than one month).
- To conceive of a goal for the local congregation and develop a two to four page plan about how to achieve it.

### **Evaluation methodology and scale**

- Student performance and mastery will be assessed according to the following scale:
  - 50% on completion of reading, of questions, and of assignments (5% on worship time, 5% on Bible study, 5% on lesson taught, 5% on homily, 5% on ledger, 5% on goal and plan for the local church)
  - 10% on student participation and attitude in discussions
  - 10% on attendance (percentage equals number of classes attended, divided by number of classes held, times ten)
  - 30% on the final written, or oral, exam.
- The evaluation scale is as follows
  - passing grade - 70-79%
  - good grade – 80-89%
  - excellent grade – 90-100%

### **Course schedule**

To be announced.

### **Credits earnable**

- 2 hours of credit towards a Certificate in Christian Studies

### **Prerequisites**

(Progressing Together course CHUR201, or equivalent)

### **Textbook and related materials**

- Required - Progressing Together Manual for CHUR203
- Additional readings may be required at the instructor's discretion.
- Recommended - Any book dealing with issues related to leadership and ministry in the Church

### **Course methodology**

The student will work inductively, reading texts, answering questions concerning knowledge, application and analysis, and drawing conclusions which will be applicable to local context. After answering the questions in each lesson, students will gather to discuss answers and practical application. When possible, the course leader will give additional talks to reinforce what the students are learning through the lessons.

### Policies

- Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated, because it is deemed contrary to Christian teaching and academic integrity.
- Absences in excess of 3 class hours will lead to a reduced grade; no student missing more than 6 class hours will receive credit for the course. Students who show little or no interest in completing course work will first be warned, then asked to leave the course if they do not change their conduct.

### Bibliography

- Callahan, Kennon. *Effective Church Leadership*. San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers. 1990.
- Lundy, David. *Servant Leadership for Slow Learners*. Reading, England: Authentic Lifestyle. 2002.
- Maxwell, John. *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. 2007.
- Sumner, Sarah. *Men and Women in the Church*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books. 2003.

## Lesson 1: Joshua and David

### Lesson objectives:

1. *To see basic principles of leadership in the lives of Joshua and David.*
2. *To apply these principles to ourselves.*

### A. Joshua

Joshua's character, faith and conduct were all outstanding. He was the leader who guided the people of Israel into the Promised Land, and by the hand of God led them to victory over their enemies.

#### 1. Read Numbers 14:1-9

- a. What outstanding quality did Joshua (along with Caleb) demonstrate by doing this?

#### 2. Read Numbers 27:12-23.

- a. Why did Moses ask God to appoint a leader over the people of Israel? (15-16)
- b. The Bible uses a common illustration taken from everyday life to describe the leader and the people. What is it?
- c. How was Joshua chosen? (v.18)
- d. What vital quality did Joshua have (v.18)?
- e. Why did Joshua need authority? (v.20)

#### 3. Read Joshua 1:1-9.

- a. On many occasions God calls a leader to accomplish a specific task. What was the task that God entrusted to Joshua?



b. What did God tell Joshua he must do to be successful?

4. Read Joshua 5:13-15.

a. What do we learn from this passage about Joshua's heart attitudes?

5. Read Joshua 23

a. How do we know that Joshua was successful in completing the task which the Lord gave him?

b. To whom did Joshua give the credit for this success?

c. What warning did Joshua give to the people of Israel?

6. Read Joshua 24:14-15.

a. What essential quality for a leader do we see in Joshua here? Describe this quality in your own words.

## **B. David**

The life stories of Joshua and David have much in common. This teaches us that the Lord has established some definite criteria for those He calls to be leaders of His people. David was an outstanding king. We will only observe a few of the lessons that we can learn from his life here.

1. Read 1 Samuel 13:14.

a. What did God see to be desirable in David?

2. Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13.

a. How did God call David? What part did David play in this?

b. What important principle is mentioned in verse seven?

c. God empowers those whom he chooses to lead his people. Like Joshua, David is consecrated and commissioned by one of God's prophets. How did Samuel consecrate David?

d. What does the anointing with oil represent? (1 Samuel 16:13b)

3. Read 1 Samuel 24:1-13.

a. Like Joshua, David often showed godly behaviour. Here he could have easily killed Saul who falsely accused him and pursued him. Why did David spare his life?

4. Read 2 Samuel 5:1-5.

a. Like Joshua, David was called by God to accomplish a particular task in the history of God's people. What was that task?

5. Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17.

a. God's plan for David went far beyond his being the king of Israel. What did God promise to do for David? (11-16)

b. How was this promise finally fulfilled? (See Luke 1:30-33)

6. Read 2 Samuel 11.

a. In contrast to Joshua, David sinned very seriously. What sins did he commit?

b. What lessons do all church leaders need to learn from this disastrous incident?

### **Lessons from the lives of Joshua and David**

Note some important principles which we learn from the lives of these two leaders.

- a. How were they called to their leadership positions?
- b. What qualities of character did they have?
- c. How did God equip them for their work?
- d. What did God call them to do?
- e. How can we apply these truths to ourselves and to Christian leaders today?

### ***For Further Study***

Read 1 Samuel 13:1-14 and 15:1-35, and provide reasons for why Saul was rejected as the leader of God's people.

## Lesson 2: Jesus and Paul

### Introduction

Jesus is “the Word of God who became flesh” (John 1:14). Yet, in his earthly life, we can see many parallels with the lives and ministries of other great leaders. During his earthly life, Jesus was the leader of his disciples and He is now the head of His church. In fact, each of the principles of leadership finds its perfect expression and fulfilment in Him. He is the highest, the purest, and the most holy example of what a church leader should be. Here we look at a few essential aspects of Jesus as a leader.

### Lesson objectives:

1. *To see basic principles of leadership in the lives of Jesus and Paul*
2. *To apply these principles to ourselves.*

#### 1. Read Matthew 3:13-17.

a. Who commissioned Jesus for his earthly ministry?

b. What power did Jesus receive for his ministry?

#### 2. Read Luke 22:24-27.

a. We read here one of Jesus’ most significant teachings about leadership. What quality did Jesus say was essential for a church leader?

b. Give some examples of this quality in the life and ministry of Jesus.

#### 3. Jesus’ whole life was governed by his obedience to his Father in heaven. Describe how Jesus saw his mission in the following passages.

a. Mark 10:45

b. Luke 4:42-44

c. Luke 19:10

d. Luke 24:45-49

### **Paul**

Paul was an apostle, called by God to proclaim the gospel to the gentiles and to build the church of Jesus Christ. By faith Paul was enabled by the Spirit to preach and teach the Gospel. He was also empowered by the same Spirit to live an exemplary Christian life.

#### **4. Read Acts 9:1-20**

a. How did the Lord Jesus call Paul into His service?

b. How did he equip Paul for this service? (v. 17)

c. What essential quality of a church leader did Paul show in his response to the Lord's call?

d. What was the task for which the Lord called Paul? (v. 15)

#### **5. Read Galatians 5:13-26.**

a. Paul experienced the most severe trials during his ministry. What was the source of his power?

b. How can a church leader today put into practice the principle of living by the Spirit?

Paul knew his calling from God very clearly. How does he describe it in the following passages?

6. Acts 20:17-24

7. Rom. 15:14-22

**Lessons from the lives of Jesus and Paul**

Note some important principles which we learn from the lives of these two leaders.

8. How were they called to their leadership positions?

9. What qualities of character did they have?

10. How did God equip them for their work?

11. What did God call them to do?

12. How can we apply these truths to ourselves and to Christian leaders today?

## Lesson 3: Leadership in the church; Elders and Deacons

### Lesson objectives:

1. *To see the pattern of church leadership which developed in the New Testament, looking particularly at the book of Acts and Paul's pastoral letters to Timothy and Titus.*
2. *To discuss how we can apply these patterns today.*

### A. Elders

In the New Testament, we find a body of leaders called “elders” in leadership of the local Church.<sup>iii</sup> Their main responsibilities were to insure the teaching, prayer, and pastoral care of the community, as well as to train and oversee the other leaders within the different ministries and activities of the local church. The 12 apostles had already trained and designated elders to assume the leadership of the church in Jerusalem in Acts 11:30.<sup>iii</sup>

#### 1. Read Acts 14:21-28.

a. This is the second time in the New Testament that the word ‘elder’ is used to refer to the leaders of the local church in Acts. On their first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas appointed elders over each newly planted church. What does this passage tell us about the importance of church leadership?

b. Having appointed the elders, what did Paul and Barnabas do next?

#### 2. Read 1 Peter 5:1-5.

a. The apostle Peter here calls himself ‘a fellow elder’. How should an elder (or ‘overseer’) exercise his authority?

#### 3. Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

a. One of Timothy’s responsibilities was the appointment of elders (overseers). What qualities did Paul tell Timothy he must look for in an elder? Make a list.

4. In 1 Timothy 3:2, we find a quality that includes all the requirements and which has been called by some commentators an ‘all-embracing requirement’: ‘above reproach.’ However,

Paul certainly cannot be saying that elders must be perfect or near perfect, or practically sinless in order to qualify to be an elder. What do you think he meant?

5. Read Acts 20:17-35.

- a. It is clear from this passage and a number of others (e.g. 1 Timothy 4:14) that elders shepherded and oversaw churches as a group of men rather than as single individuals. How does Paul describe their main task and responsibility? (see especially 28-35)

## B. Deacons

In the early church, it soon became clear that the leaders elders need help with their work. There were many practical matters that needed their attention. If they had given their time to such things, they would have been in danger of neglecting their responsibility to give spiritual leadership. So a second type of leader was appointed: a deacon (diakonos).

1. Read Acts 6:1-7.

- a. The 'Seven' were appointed by the apostles to 'serve' tables (the Greek infinitive is 'diakonein'). What was the exact purpose of their task?

- b. What were the qualities the apostles told the believers to look for in the men who were to be appointed to this task?

- c. Both Stephen and Philip went on to exercise outstanding ministries (see 6:8-15 and 7:1-53 for Stephen; 8:4-8, 26-40 for Philip). How do you think their work as deacons prepared them for this?

2. Read 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

- a. By the time Paul wrote his letters to Timothy and Titus, the roles of 'elder / overseer' and 'deacon' were well established. What kind of men did Paul tell Timothy he was to look for as deacons?



b. Do you have deacons in your church? What role should they play in a church today?

### C. Different forms of government in the church

The writings of the New Testament demonstrate the importance of the role of **elders** in the leadership of the local church. The role of the entire **congregation's** approval is also emphasized (Acts 6:5; Acts 15:12, 22), with every member's the responsibility to discern the will of God and to correct where there is error (Phil 1:1; 2 Cor 11:19-21; Gal 1:6-8; Col 3:16). Very early in the history of the church, the **bishop's** role developed – a member of the elders'/bishops'/pastors' council who represented the assembly and presided over the council. This is more or less equivalent to the role of **pastor** in several evangelical churches of today. When the church spread, the bishop sometimes also came to represent all the assemblies of a city and its surroundings.

Maintaining balance in the exercise of these two –or three– different sources of authority is very important for the proper functioning and good health of the church.

However, throughout the history of the Church, we observe 3 main forms of government, each reflecting a concentration of authority that comes from one particular source.

Form of government	Description	Main source of authority
Congregationalist	The whole congregation gathers to determine church affairs through majority vote or consensus. The leaders represent the congregation and execute its decisions. I.e. Congregationalist; certain Baptists	The assembly/the congregation
Presbyterian	A group of elders supervises and governs the local church. The congregation expresses itself through its choice of elders and is involved in discipline. I.e. Presbyterians, Assembly of brothers	The council of elders
Episcopal	A bishop leads the church as God's representative. The elders and leaders counsel him and execute his decisions. For some, the bishop is invested by other bishops. Anglicans; Assemblies of God; Methodists	The bishop/pastor

1. What form of church government is to be preferred? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What form of government best describes the way your church functions
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What changes do you think would help your church to be better balanced, if it were possible?

**D. Review and reflection**

1. Basing your answer on your study of elders and deacons until now, how do you think God wants to see His church administered today?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What attitudes should you entertain towards the leaders of your church? (see 1 Pet 5:5-6; Heb 13:17; 1 Thes 5:12-13)

***For Further Study***

1. At times it may happen that only one leader is recognized to lead a community, especially when planting a new church. What problems and dangers should be avoided in such cases?

## Lesson 4: Deborah, Priscilla and Women in Leadership

*Lesson objectives:*

1. *To study several important passages about women in leadership.*
2. *To see how these passages can be applied today.*

In recent years, there has been much discussion about the role of women in the church. What leadership roles are open to both men and women? Is it right for a woman to hold a position of leadership where this would place her in authority over men? In this lesson, we shall look for biblical guidelines to help us decide these questions. What does the Holy Spirit teach us through the word of God?

### A. Deborah

1. Read Judges 4.

a. Deborah held a position of public leadership and authority. What roles did she have? (4-5)

b. What message did she give to Barak? (6-7)

c. How would you describe Barak's response? (v. 8)

d. Although Deborah agreed to Barak's request, she warned him that he would lose something because of his attitude. What would he lose? (v. 9)

e. What was the result of the battle?

f. How did Sisera die?

g. What lessons about leadership can we learn from these events?

**B. Priscilla**

Priscilla and Aquila were a great help to both Paul and Apollos. They also had a church in their home in Ephesus. They were clearly an outstanding Christian couple and there is much we can learn from them. It is interesting to note that it is often Priscilla's name which is mentioned first.

1. Read Acts 18:1-4, 18-26.

1. How did Paul get to know Aquila and Priscilla?
2. What help were Priscilla and Aquila able to give to Apollos?

2. Read Romans 16:3-5.

3. How are Priscilla and Aquila described? (v. 3)
4. What had they done for Paul? (v. 4a)
5. What else do we learn about them? (v. 4b)

**C. Women and leadership roles**

God has prepared a ministry for each Christian, women and men. He has also given him or her the gifts to exercise it. But some questions do arise: Is it right for a woman to be the pastor of a congregation or to have the responsibility of teaching a congregation? Can a woman be an elder? If it is not right for her to have these roles, then what roles should she have?

1. Read Titus 2:3-5.

- a. What did Paul tell Titus to teach the older women? (v. 3)
- b. What special role did he encourage them to have towards the younger women? (4-5)

2. Read 1 Timothy 2:8-15.

- a. What instruction did Paul give about “teaching and the exercise of authority”? (11-12)
- b. On what principles does Paul base his argument?
- c. Are these principles still valid? Do you think they apply equally in every cultural setting?
- d. What basic principles have we learnt in this lesson about the ministries God entrusts to women?
- e. What are some creative ways women can develop and exercise their ministries according to biblical guidelines?

### ***For Further Study***

The Bible has much to teach us about the roles of men and women in the home, in the church and in the wider world. In this lesson we have focussed on the church, but we have only been able to look at a few passages. Here we give some others which will help you to think further about these questions:

On the day of Pentecost, about 120 believers, including both men and women (see Acts 1:12-15) were gathered together. The Holy Spirit came upon them and they began to speak in ‘other tongues’.

1. Read Acts 2:5-18.

f. What were the believers declaring as they spoke in 'other tongues'? (v. 11)

g. On whom did God pour out His Spirit? (15-18)

3. Read Acts 21:8-9. These verses tell us about some people who prophesied. Who were they?

Paul had to give detailed instructions to the Corinthian church about the place of women in the worship service. There was obviously a serious problem of disorder.

4. Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-16.

a. How does Paul describe the relationship between man and woman? (3, 7-9, 11-12)

b. How do we know from this passage that women prayed and prophesied in the church? (4-5).

*Note: prostitutes had their heads shaven as a sign of disgrace.*

c. What was the meaning of wearing the veil (covering the head)? (v. 10)

*Note: wearing the veil. Some Christian groups today still believe that the woman should cover her head during the worship service. Others believe that the important principle is that the women should respect the authority of the men who are leading the church and should dress accordingly (as in 1 Timothy 2:9-10). They would say that wearing the veil was a sign of this respect in Corinth in the first century, but that it is not always necessary today in the 21st century.*

5. Read 1 Corinthians 14:26-40.

Paul returns here to the conduct of the worship meeting. As we have seen above, it appears that women were free to pray and prophesy during this meeting (1 Cor 11:5). However, in verses 33-35, Paul says that the women should remain silent. What are we to do with this obvious contradiction? Paul perhaps meant by this that a woman did not have the authority



## Lesson 5: Responsibilities of leaders

### Lesson objectives:

1. *To see how the early church conducted their worship meetings.*
2. *To study some important passages about teaching.*
3. *To apply what we have learnt to our own situations.*

We shall now look more closely at the responsibilities of leaders in the Church of Jesus Christ today. According to the NT pattern, the elders have the responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the church. This includes:

- Leading meetings of believers
- Preaching and teaching
- Pastoral care

In this lesson we shall look at the leading of meetings and teaching. In lessons 6 and 7, we shall go on to study various aspects of pastoral care. We should also keep in mind that the deacons assist the elders in being responsible for the material welfare of the church.

### A. Leading Meetings of Believers

The New Testament does not give us a specific model for a worship service. However, there is plenty of material in both the Old and New Testaments to help us, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to prepare and conduct worship services which are pleasing and acceptable to God.

The person leading the worship does not necessarily have to be one of the elders or deacons. Nevertheless, the worship service takes place under the authority of the church; this function is called “chairmanship”. It is therefore essential that they have a good understanding of what the Bible teaches as to what is acceptable worship.

#### 1. Read Acts 2:42.

- a. Here we see the believers beginning to meet together, under the leadership of the apostles. What were the key elements of their meetings? (*Note: ‘breaking of bread’ – this probably refers to the Lord’s Supper*).

#### 2. Read Acts 16:11-15.

- a. Here we see a simple, informal worship service by the riverside. What were the important elements of this service?

#### 3. Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.



a. It seems that in the first century church Christians celebrated the Lord's Supper whenever they met for worship. What does Paul indicate in this passage as the primary reason to celebrate communion (v.26)?

b. Paul also had to remind the Corinthians of the attitudes they should have towards each other, and particularly during the Lord's Supper. What should these attitudes be?

4. Read 1 Corinthians 14:26-40.

a. What are the main principles taught in this passage concerning the conduct of a worship meeting (26 and 40)?

5. Read Psalm 100.

a. What can we learn from this expression of OT worship?

6. Read Ephesians 5:15-21 .

a. Paul is not necessarily giving instructions for a worship meeting in this passage. However, we can apply his teaching to our meetings. What should we be aiming for?

## **B. Preaching & Teaching**

Worship should always go hand in hand with preaching and teaching. This is for the simple reason that if the Word is not proclaimed (see John 17:17), all the other elements, including the sacraments of the Lord's Supper or Baptism, lose their meaning or can even become idolatrous. Church history gives many sad examples of how this has happened.

1. Read Matt. 28:18-20.

a. Part of the 'Great Commission' refers to teaching. What did Jesus expect his disciples to teach the new believers?

2. Read 2 Tim. 1:11.

a. How does Paul describe his calling and ministry here?

3. Read Col. 1:24 – 2:5.

- a. How does Paul describe his calling and ministry here? (25-27)
  
- b. What was the goal of Paul's ministry? (28-29)
  
- c. Paul's ministry of teaching was not simply an academic presentation of the facts of the gospel. According to this passage, what else did it involve?

4. Read Eph. 4:11-16.

- a. What 'gifts' has the risen Christ given to his church (v.11)?
  
- b. What is the purpose of the ministry of the 'apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers'? (12-13)
  
- c. What was Paul's vision for the church? (14-16).

5. Revise what we have learnt about leading meetings and teaching in this lesson. What practical applications can you see for your own situation?

- a. Leading meetings

- b. Teaching

### ***For Further Study***

#### **Do we have ‘apostles’ and ‘prophets’ today?**

1. Reread Eph. 4:11-16.

Some Christians believe that the ministries of ‘apostles’ and ‘prophets’ are still continuing today, together with ‘evangelists’ and ‘pastors and teachers’. The ministry of a ‘pastor / teacher’ clearly corresponds closely with that of an elder. We all recognise the continuing need for evangelism. But what about the ‘apostle’ and ‘prophet’?

Were ‘apostles’ restricted to the 12 apostles, with Paul and a few others, in the first generation of the church’s life? And were ‘prophets’ only needed in the period before God’s revelation in the NT was complete? Or can we still have apostles and prophets today? We will look at some other passages which will help us answer these questions.

6. Read Eph. 2:19-20.

a. How does Paul describe the ministry of ‘the apostles and prophets’ here?

7. Read Eph. 3:4-6, 9-10.

a. What did God reveal to his ‘holy apostles and prophets’?

Jesus chose his twelve apostles to have a foundational role in his new community, the church. This new community was to be made up of Jews and Gentiles – all who would believe in Jesus. After Judas had betrayed Jesus and committed suicide, Peter saw the need to replace him.

8. Read Acts 1:21-22.

a. What requirements (qualifications) did the person who was to be added to the ranks of the apostles have to meet?

b. Who was appointed and what was the purpose of his appointment?

Later, Paul became an apostle in a unique way.

9. Read Acts 9:1-6, 15.

a. How did Paul meet the first requirement (‘seeing the Lord Jesus’)?

b. Why did God call Paul as an apostle?

10. Read Romans 16:7.

a. What title seems to have been given to Andronicus and Julia?

11. Read 1 Corinthians 12:28-31.

a. What are the greater gifts which the believers are encouraged to strive for?

b. If Paul is encouraging the believers to strive for these gifts, what does this imply about their availability for believers other than those mentioned by name as having them?

12. Read 2 Cor. 11:9-13.

a. What does Paul complain about in this passage?

b. These deceivers were obviously none of Christ's 12 apostles, and yet some of the Corinthian believers accepted them with the title of "apostle". What does this imply about the existence of others having the gift of apostle, outside of the 12 disciples of Christ?

Question for discussion: do you think there can be 'apostles' today with the same authority as the twelve and Paul?

Definition of Apostle: In the New Testament, there are two uses for the Greek word 'apostle.' One is simply a messenger (e.g. Philippians 2:24) and the other is an especially appointed person called and ordained by Christ himself (e.g. Romans 1:1). These especially designated apostles such as the 12 disciples and Paul were all eye witnesses of the resurrection and had the same authority as the Old Testament prophets to receive, teach, and write authoritative, infallible revelations of God, many of which become a part of the

New Testament canon of Scripture. In the latter sense, these apostles are entirely unique and their specific role and function in redemptive history is therefore unrepeatable.

## Prophets

**Definition of Prophet:** In general, a prophet is a person appointed by God to receive infallible revelations and give those revelations either orally or in written form to the believing community.

Does God still give the gift of prophecy today? Does He still call people to be prophets? The answer we give to this question will depend partly on our answer to the previous question about apostles.

Christians who believe that God still calls people to be apostles today will certainly think that He also calls people to be prophets.

However, Christians who do not believe that God still calls people to be apostles today are divided over whether He still calls people to be prophets. Some believe that both the apostles and prophets of the NT church had a ministry of laying the foundation of God's perfect revelation of salvation. Once that revelation in the NT was completed, there was no more need for apostles or prophets. Therefore God no longer calls people to these ministries. Rather, He guides us by giving us the Holy Spirit to help us understand and put into practice the teaching of the NT.

Other Christians believe that, although there are no more apostles, there may still be prophets, who bring direct messages from God for today. These messages must, of course, be in harmony with the teaching of the Bible.

It is not possible for us to discuss this question in detail here. However, it is clear from the NT that *every* message which claims to be from God, whether or not we call it a 'prophecy' or a 'word from the Lord' must be tested.

13. Read I Thessalonians 5:19-21.

a. What did Paul tell the Thessalonians that their attitude to prophecies must be? (v. 20)

b. Why is it important to 'test everything'? (v. 21)

c. How should prophecies be tested?

14. What should our attitude be if someone claims to bring a message from God today?

*Note: Paul addressed this letter to the first century church at Thessalonica. Within the first century church there were both true and false prophets (see 2 Peter 2; 1 John 4:1). Whether or not we believe that God is still calling people to be prophets today, the principle which Paul gives: 'test everything' applies to all teaching given by Christian leaders.*

In conclusion, we have said that a prophet is a person appointed by God to receive infallible revelations and give those revelations either orally or in written form to the believing community. There are Old Testament prophets and New Testament prophets. In the New Testament, some scholars believe there were foundational prophets (see Ephesians 2:20; 3:5) and people ('congregational' prophets) who regularly gave prophetic messages in the churches (e.g. 1 Corinthians 14:29). There is no scholarly consensus whether 'congregational' prophets gave infallible utterances as these utterances needed to be weighed. Further, there is no definitive New Testament teaching which states clearly that the ministry of the prophets was to cease after the apostolic age.

## Lesson 6: Pastoral Care (1) - General

### Lesson objectives:

1. *To see how church leaders should care for those in their charge*
2. *To look at ways to handle difficult situations*
3. *To apply this teaching to our own situation*

In lessons 6 and 7 we look at how the elders are to care for their church members. The biblical image of the shepherd with his sheep illustrates perfectly what pastoral care is all about. The elders, assisted by the deacons, have the responsibility both spiritually and materially to care for the believers in their church. Jesus is the good shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep. He expects his under-shepherds to have the same attitude of self-sacrifice.

### A. The Cost of Pastoral Care

#### 1. Read John 21:15-19.

a. What commission did Jesus repeat three times to Peter?

b. What kind of suffering did Jesus predict for Peter?

#### 2. Read 1 Thess. 2:1-12.

a. To whom does Paul compare himself in v.7?

b. To whom does Paul compare himself in v.11?

c. What do we learn from these comparisons about the heart of a true pastor?

The responsibilities of the elders and deacons are both spiritual and material. They must be concerned for the well-being of their church members in both these areas.

### B. Spiritual needs

Above all, a church leader will be concerned for the spiritual growth of the church members under his care.

1. Read Gal. 4:12-20.

- a. What was Paul's great desire for the believers in Galatia? (v. 19)
- b. What danger was he worried concerning them? (v.16-17; Gal 1:6-7)
- c. What illustration does he use to describe his role and attitude towards them (v19)?  
What does it teach us?

2. Read Gal. 6:1-2.

1. What should our attitude be to a fellow-believer who falls into sin?

**C. Physical needs**

1. Read James 2:14-17, 1 Thess 4:9-12; 2 Thess 3:10-15.

- a. What should our attitude be towards brothers or sisters in need?

2. Read James 5:14-16.

- a. What are the elders to do when they are called by someone who is sick?
- b. What will the result of their prayer be?

**D. Relationships**

In John 13:34-35 Jesus said to his disciples: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my



disciples, if you love one another.” Part of a leader’s responsibility is to help believers obey this command.

1. Read Phil. 4:2-9.

- a. What did Paul ask one of his fellow workers to do for Euodia and Syntyche?
- b. Why is it so important to help church members be reconciled to each other?

Sometimes church members have problems between each other which they cannot resolve themselves. In such cases, the elders may have to intervene.

2. Read Matt. 18:15-20.

In this passage Jesus gives us a pattern to follow if a brother sins.

- a. What is the first step to take?
- b. If the brother will not listen, what is the second step to take?
- c. If the brother still will not listen, what is the third and final step?
- d. When Jesus instructs us to ‘tell the church’, this clearly includes the elders. They may, of course, have been involved earlier. The first responsibility of the elders will be to establish the facts. How are they to do this? (Compare 1 Tim. 5:19.)
- e. If the elders are able to reconcile the two parties, that is clearly the best outcome. But if they find that one of them has sinned and refuses to repent, what action should they take?

In the next lesson, we shall look more closely at the subject of ‘church discipline’.

**Review the passages we have studied in this lesson. Which one might be particularly appropriate for you and your church's situation at this moment?**

## Lesson 7: Pastoral Care (2) – Church Discipline

*Lesson objectives:*

1. *To study several examples of church discipline in the NT*
2. *To see how this teaching applies to our own situations.*

Just as a father must sometimes discipline his children, so a church leader must also be ready to discipline church members when this is necessary. This is both for their own good and for the good of the church body as a whole. However, it must be carried out with great care and sensitivity, or it can be very damaging to the life of the whole church. It requires wisdom, humility, firmness and love.

### **A. The purpose of discipline**

1. Read Hebrews 12:4-11.

a. In general, what is the true purpose of discipline according to this text?

b. How can we apply this to church discipline?

### **B. Case Studies**

Discipline is needed when a brother or sister who has clearly sinned is unwilling to repent, in spite of the loving efforts of the church leaders to help them.

1. Read 1 Corinthians 5.

*Note: 'A man has his father's wife'. Presumably the woman involved was the step-mother and not the mother, of the person who had taken her.*

a. How seriously did Paul view this case of immorality? (1-2)

b. What judgement did Paul himself pass, and want the church to pass, on this person? (3-5)

- c. What was the purpose of this judgement? (v. 5)
- d. What was the effect of this sinful behaviour on the church as a whole? (v. 6)
- e. What other kinds of sinful behaviour did Paul urge the Corinthians not to tolerate among those who called themselves Christians? (v. 11)

2. Read 2 Cor. 2:5-11.

*Note: Paul may be talking about the same person as the offender in 1 Cor. 5, but this is not clear.*

- a. When church discipline has had the desired effect and an offender is truly sorry for what he has done, what should be the attitude of the church towards him?
- b. How might Satan exploit a failure on the part of the church to forgive and restore?

3. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15.

- a. What sin does Paul warn against here?
- b. How did Paul want the believers to treat those who ignored his instructions? (14-15)

**C. False teaching**

A church leader may also have to exercise discipline when a church member, or even another leader, gives false teaching. Such teaching could clearly be very damaging to new or weaker members of the fellowship.

1. Read Galatians 1:1-10.

False teachers had come to the churches in Galatia telling them that, although they had been saved by faith in Christ, they must now complete their salvation by keeping the Jewish ceremonial law.

- a. What was Paul's attitude to those who preached 'another gospel'?

2. Read Galatians 2:11-21

- a. What error had Peter fallen into?

- b. Why did Paul oppose him publicly?

**D. Reflection and Review**

1. Sharpen your discernment (1). Every behavioral problem does not require confrontation or severe sanctions. In 1 Thessalonians 5:14, Paul distinguishes at least three types of people in spiritual difficulty, and he suggests a specific method for taking care of each one.

- a. Identify the three recommended ways of helping by filling in the following table:

Type of difficulty	How to accompany the person.
<i>I.e. Those who live disorderly</i>	

- b. According to the previous recommendations, in which of the three types of difficulty is it appropriate to exercise discipline by following the peace process of Matt. 18?

- c. What recommendations are equally applicable to all (v14b-15; Gal 6:1)?

2. Sharpen your discernment (2). When a case of discipline arises before the council of elders, it is often preferable for him to interact directly with the person concerned without informing the whole congregation. In which of the following situations is it preferable to exercise discipline by publicly confronting the offender when the peace process has had no effect on the culprit?

a. Level of commitment

- ☐ The person in question is a church leader.
- ☐ The person calls himself a “brother” or a “sister” in Christ.
- ☐ The person attends more or less regularly the church without any commitment.
- ☐ The person comes occasionally and does not confess faith in Christ.

b. Repetition of offense

- ☐ The person in question committed a sin.
- ☐ The person keeps leaving a disturbed life.

c. Reputation

- ☐ The sin was committed before the whole community.
- ☐ Only a few people are aware of the sin.
- ☐ The sin gives a bad testimony to people outside the church.

d. Protection

- ☐ The behavior defect of the person places other members of the community in danger (example: false doctrine, pedophilia, murder, slander).
- ☐ The behavior defect mainly affects the person in question.

3. Review this lesson. What are the purposes for the use of discipline in the church? What practical application do you see for your own community?

***For Further Study***

**Slander** and gossip are easily practiced –and unfortunately often tolerated– in the intimate circles of the church. How can we discern when our words are going beyond the limits of sharing news for prayer, and are instead creeping on the destructive land of slander or gossip? Here is a practical definition for slander: Sharing anything concerning anyone, when the act of sharing it is not a part of the resolution of the person’s problem.<sup>iv</sup>

1. Read the following texts and summarize what they teach us concerning those who practice slander. Lev. 19:16; Prov. 8:13; Rom. 1:28-32; 1 Tim. 5:13; Psalm 101:5.

4. What do the following texts say concerning listening to gossip? Prov. 17:4; Prov. 18:8; Prov. 10:19; Eph. 4:29-5:4; Phil. 4:8.

5. How can we fight slander and gossip in our communities? (Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Tim 5:19)

## Lesson 8: Finances

### Lesson objectives:

1. *To study NT teaching about the handling of money and Christian giving.*
2. *To see how we can apply this teaching to our own situations*

A Christian leader, elder or deacon must first of all set a good example in the management of his own finances. But he will probably also be responsible for the handling of gifts made by others. The Bible gives clear teaching in both of these areas.

### A. The leader and his personal finances:

1. Read 1 Timothy 3:1-10.

- a. Remember that a church leader must be 'above reproach' (v.2) in all areas of his life. Look at the qualities of character that Paul gives for both overseers (elders) and deacons. Which of them relate to the handling of money?

- b. Provide practical examples of how we can put these apply principles?

### B. Christian giving

A small group of believers meeting in a home or outside in the open air may have few expenses. Nevertheless, Christian believers will want to give generously for several reasons.

### Helping the needy

1. Read Acts 4:32-35.

- a. What motivated some of the believers to sell their possessions?
- b. Who took responsibility for the distribution of these gifts?
- c. Is it necessary for Christian giving to be channelled through the leaders? Why or why not?



- d. What are the advantages of channeling gifts through the leaders?

### **Supporting Christian ministry.**

#### **2. Read Philippians 4:10-17.**

- a. Why did the Philippian Christians send gifts to Paul?

- b. How did Paul see these gifts? (17-18)

*(For himself, it was a joy and a personal relief to see that the brothers and sisters of*

- c. What promise from the God did the Holy Spirit inspire Paul to give to the Philippians? (v. 19)

- d. Is there an opportunity for your church to give in the same way? If so, please explain.

### **Meeting their own needs for teaching and pastoral care**

As well as caring for poor people within the fellowship, a Christian group must, of course, meet its own needs. As the group grows, they may want to set one of the members apart as a part-time or full-time worker. This person will then need financial support. The group may also decide to rent, buy, or build a building for their meetings.

#### **3. Read 1 Cor. 9:7-18.**

- a. What command has the Lord given concerning those who proclaim the gospel? (v.14)

- b. Why did Paul not exercise his right to receive financial support due him in return for his work? (12, 15)

#### **4. Read Gal. 6:6-10.**

- a. What responsibility does the believer have towards his teacher in the Christian faith?
- b. What responsibility does the believer have towards all people?
- c. What responsibility does the believer have towards his fellow believers?

**C. A generous gift and how it was managed**

Paul organised a collection among the mainly gentile churches of Greece in order to help the poor believers in Jerusalem. As well as bringing needed material help, this collection showed the unity of God's people in Christ.

The Macedonian churches had already given generously. Now Paul urges the Corinthians to complete the collection they had previously begun.

1. Read 2 Cor. 8:1-15.

- a. What did the Macedonians do first of all? (v.5)
- b. What were the material circumstances of the Macedonians? (v.2)
- c. What motivated the Macedonians to give so generously? (v.2)
- d. What motivation did Paul want the Corinthians to have? (8-11)
- e. How did Paul want the Corinthians to decide how much they should give? (10-12)
- f. What was the goal of the gift, both for the givers and the receivers? (13-15)

2. Read 2 Cor. 8:16-24

- a. How many people did Paul send to Corinth to receive the collection?

- b. What was Paul anxious to avoid? (20-21)
- c. What does this teach us about how money given by believers should be handled?
- d. How can you apply this in your own situation?

3. Review this lesson: what practical implications do you find in it for yourself and for your community?

### ***For Further Study***

#### **Tithing**

Christian believers who read the OT often ask the question: 'Should we be tithing – i.e. giving a tenth of our income to God - just as the Jewish people did in the OT?' Christian leaders sometimes ask: 'Should I be encouraging the believers in my church to tithe?'

Tithing is first mentioned in the Bible in Gen. 14:17-24, long before the time of Moses. It was a practice of several of the peoples of the Ancient Near East.

- 4. Read Gen. 14:17-24.
  - a. Who was Melchizedek?
  - b. Why did Abraham give him 'a tenth of everything'?

In Gen. 28:20-22, Jacob promised to give a tithe to God. Then Moses established tithing as a regular practice for the people of Israel.

5. Read Leviticus 27:30-33.

- a. To whom did the tithe belong?
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What was to be included in the tithe?

6. Read Numbers 18:20-32.

- a. Why did God give the tithes to the Levites? (21-24)
  
  
  
  
  
- b. To whom did the Levites in their turn give a tithe? (25-29)
  
  
  
  
  
- c. What does this passage teach us about the purpose of giving the tithe for God's people in the Old Testament?

7. Read Deut. 14:22-29.

- a. Apart from the Levites, who else was to benefit from the tithe?
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What similarities do you see between the purpose of the tithe and the reasons for giving in the NT?

## The New Testament

Given the importance of the tithe in the OT, it is a surprise to come to the NT and to find that it is hardly mentioned. There are just three references in the gospels:

- Luke 18:12 - the words of the self-righteous Pharisee.
- Matt. 23:23-24 (= Luke 11:42) – Jesus' severe criticism of the Pharisees.

The only references to tithing in the letters of the apostles occur in:

- Heb. 7:1-10. But this passage, which quotes Gen. 14:17-24, is about Jesus being a priest 'like Melchizedek'. It does not deal with the subject of Christian giving.

8. Read Matt. 23:23-24.

a. Why did Jesus criticise the Pharisees?

b. What does this passage tell us about Jesus' attitude to the practice of tithing?

### For discussion:

9. Why do you think tithing is so little mentioned in the NT?

10. Is it still a helpful guideline for Christian giving today?

11. What are the best reasons and guidelines for Christian giving?

12. When should we pay elders/pastors? Write down your response after having consulted the following biblical texts and others: Acts 20; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; Gal. 6:6; 1 Cor. 9:4-19.

## **Lesson 9: Relationships between leaders in a local church and Relationships between churches**

### **Lesson objectives:**

1. *To study NT teaching on these subjects*
2. *To apply this teaching to our own situations*

### **A. Relationships between leaders in a local church**

If there is to be unity and harmony in a local church, there must be unity and harmony between the leaders. They must set the example. But how can this unity first be achieved and then be maintained?

#### 1. Read Ephesians 4:1-6.

a. Who creates unity in the body of Christ? (v.3)

b. How is it possible to keep this unity?

#### 2. Read Philippians 2:1-11.

a. What did Paul desire most of all for the believers at Philippi? (v.2)

b. How could they achieve this? (3-4)

c. Whose example should they follow? (5-11)

#### 3. Read John 15:1-8.

a. What is the secret of bearing fruit in the Christian life?

b. What does it mean practically to 'abide' (remain) in Christ?

c. What promise concerning prayer does Jesus give to those who 'abide in him'?  
(v. 7)

4. Read John 15:9-17.

- a. How can we 'abide in Jesus' love'? (v. 10)
- b. What is Jesus' command? (12,17)
- c. What are the practical implications of this teaching for a group of elders (and deacons) in a local church?

### **B. Relationships between local churches**

As we read in Eph. 4:1-6, there is a unity between all true believers in Christ wherever they are. There is 'one body and one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.'

Each local church or group of believers is the body of Christ in that particular place. If the number of believers grows there may, of course, be a number of groups in a given town. This was certainly the case in Jerusalem in the early days of the book of Acts. Nevertheless, there was a unity among them and Luke refers to 'the whole church' (5:11) or 'the church' (8:1-3) and 'the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria' (9:31).

1. Read Acts 2:42-47.

- a. What were the four activities to which the believers devoted themselves? (v. 42)
- b. Note that "the apostles' teaching" is mentioned first. What do you think was the content of these teachings?

Since those early days there have, as we know, been many divisions. Today we see many different Christian denominations and groups. There are the three main groupings of Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant. Within them there are also divisions. For example, among Protestants we find Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Pentecostals and others. (For the reasons behind these divisions, refer to the course on Church History, EGLI 206.)

What should our attitude be to other groups who may hold different views to ours? Are some of the differences so serious that we cannot cooperate with certain groups?

2. Read John 1:15-18.

- a. What two characteristics were especially found in Jesus? (v. 17)
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What are the implications of these two characteristics for our attitudes towards other people and other groups?

3. Read Phil. 1:27-30.

- a. How did Paul want the believers in Philippi to conduct themselves? (v. 27)
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What did Paul want the believers to 'contend for'?
  
  
  
  
  
- c. What consequences might this have for the believers?

4. Read 1 Cor. 15:1-8.

- a. Why is it so important to hold firmly to the gospel? (v. 2)
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What does Paul regard as being 'of the first importance'? (3-8)

5. Read Romans 14:1-12.

- a. What kind of difference of opinion did Paul regard as a 'disputable matter', yet secondary? (v. 1)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What attitude should we have to a brother or sister who holds a different opinion to ours on a 'disputable matter' that is secondary?



c. Looking at other Christian groups today, can you give other examples of 'disputable matters' which should not prevent us from enjoying fellowship together?

**Questions for discussion:**

6. Christian believers have often felt the need to define carefully the doctrines which are of 'the first importance' and on which it is essential that we should agree. (See, for example, our course DOCT 201.)

a. Make a short list of doctrines which you consider to be essential to the gospel.

7. How much should we cooperate with Christians who say themselves to be "Christians" but hold different opinions than us on matters 'of the first importance'?

8. How can we demonstrate unity between the churches of a same region?

***For Further Study***

The “Apostles’ Creed” is a confession of faith that is known to be orthodox – it agrees with biblical teaching. It is from the early centuries of the church and is recited in many churches today.

**The Apostles’ Creed**

*I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
The Creator of heaven and earth,  
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:*

*Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,  
Born of the Virgin Mary,  
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
Was crucified, died, and was buried.*

*He descended into hell.*

*The third day He arose again from the dead.*

*He ascended into heaven  
And sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,  
From there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic (universal) church,  
The communion of saints,  
The forgiveness of sins,  
The resurrection of the body,  
And the life everlasting.*

**Question for discussion:**

Does agreement on this creed still provide an adequate basis for working together with other Christian groups today?

## Lesson 10: Revision and Exam

### Lesson objectives:

1. *To revise the course*
2. *To see what is most helpful and relevant to our own situations*
3. *To work out practically how to apply the Bible's teaching on these matters.*

### Instructions:

1. Review the course: look through the contents page.
2. Now choose three areas which you feel are especially significant to you.
3. Summarise in one or two paragraphs the biblical teaching on each of these areas.
4. Describe how the biblical teaching on each area can be applied to your local situation.

## Endnotes

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ii Two different Greek words are used in the New Testament to describe the senior leaders of the church: *presbuteros* (elder) and *episkopos* (responsible or bishop). Both words refer to the same person or position within the church.

*Presbuteros* is the word that was chosen to refer to the Jewish elders by those who translated the Old testament in Greek (250 B.C.). This word is used in the New Testament to designate the Jewish elders as well as the elders of the Christian Church.

*Episkopos* has Greek roots and means a person who is in a position of authority and responsibility.

There is, therefore, no biblical basis for arguing that there were two different kinds of elder in the NT, or a system where one kind of elder was superior to the others. For example, some have suggested that there might have been a 'senior elder' overseeing several congregations and 'ordinary elders' overseeing one congregation. Although this arrangement is not seen in the book of Acts, this was, in fact, the pattern of church leadership that developed in the church during the second century.

iii See lesson 3 (section D, p.15-16) of the course "Church life" CHUR 203 of Progressing Together.

iv This definition was taken from a tract called "Gossip!" by Melody Green, from Last days ministries, Oceanside, CA, USA.