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The *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* (JBPL) is a refereed scholarly journal that aims to provide a forum for international research and exploration of leadership studies focused on the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. Representing the multidisciplinary fields of biblical, social-science, historical, and leadership studies, the JBPL publishes qualitative research papers that explore, engage, and extend the field of knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of leadership as found within the contexts of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. To stimulate scholarly debate and a free flow of ideas, the *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* is published in electronic format and provides access to all issues free of charge.

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## FROM THE EDITOR

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Greetings,

It is with great joy that we present the second edition of the *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership*. This edition of JBPL contains a wide variety of views and approaches in our common quest to explore leadership perspectives in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. It is our hope that the articles in this edition will serve to further extend the base for rigorous and well-grounded exegetical research in leadership.

I want to thank the members of our international editorial board for their continued guidance and hard work. I also want to thank the dean and faculty of the School of Global Leadership & Entrepreneurship at Regent University for their continued interests and support of the journal.

We welcome any comments, suggestions, and correspondence from our readers. I look forward with great anticipation to our continued interaction.

Peace and all good,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Corné J. Bekker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Corné J. Bekker, D. Litt. et Phil.  
Editor  
Regent University



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## WHAT WOULD JESUS LEAD: IDENTITY THEFT, LEADERSHIP EVOLUTION, AND OPEN SYSTEMS

JAY E. GARY

Recent discussions of “What would Jesus drive?” by environmental groups have raised the issue of whether Jesus of Nazareth would embrace the industrial growth paradigm. This paper evaluates this public policy debate by examining various leadership typologies that have been used to study Jesus. Drawing upon Daft’s four-cell evolutionary theory of leadership studies, this paper lays out an open systems and postindustrial research agenda for leadership scholars as they examine Jesus’ actions within a first-century context.

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On November 20, 2002, the Evangelical Environmental Network launched a public relations campaign in Detroit. Their director, Jim Ball, turned the popular question “What Would Jesus Do?” into the now-famous retort “What Would Jesus Drive?” Six months later, Ball and his wife Kara drove a Toyota *Prius* from Austin, Texas, to Washington, DC, to dramatize how creation care was a biblical mandate and not a “liberal claptrap cooked up by enviros to wreck the economy.”<sup>1</sup>

Riding a wave of criticism about rising gas prices, the “gas-guzzling” sport utility vehicle (SUV) became demonized as “Axles of Evil,” in part responsible for American addiction to foreign oil and driving the Middle East conflict. Sales of SUVs began to plummet from their highs in the 1990s.<sup>2</sup>

Not all evangelicals embraced Ball’s campaign or the moral support offered by the National Evangelical Association. As recent as March 2007, Dr. James Dobson and

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Lane, “Evangelist: What Would Jesus Drive?,” *Star-Ledger* (Newark, NJ), February 12, 2006, final, News, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Sarah A. Webster, “SUV Sales Teeter at Turning Point with Mixed Signals from Buyers,” *Detroit Free Press*, May 1, 2006, Business and Financial.

Gary Bauer warned this national body that their climate change initiative would distract America from conservative pro-life issues, such as opposing abortion and same-sex marriage.<sup>3</sup>

In a recent pre-Easter CNN special entitled, "What Would Jesus Do?," Pastor Frederick Douglas Haynes III expressed a frustration with the agenda of the Christian Right. He said, "Jesus has been crucified on a cross of identity theft...[he] has been de-radicalized, sanitized, to the point where he is totally divorced from the social, political and economic realities of his day." Haynes claims we should not "con ourselves into limiting Jesus to certain pet moral issues." He feels Jesus would be concerned about the budget deficit of the United States, the war in Iraq, and providing health care to nine million uninsured children, rather than just circumscribed issues.<sup>4</sup>

Whether among liberals or conservatives, Blue states or Red states, the question of leadership has never been more important. The debate over climate change, fuel economy, pro-life issues, and identity theft reminds us that Jesus of Nazareth will continue to animate our discussion of postindustrial leadership.<sup>5</sup> In today's pluralistic religious context we may not be able to develop a consensus on "What would Jesus drive?," but we should be able to answer the question "What would Jesus lead?"

Despite this opportunity Ebertz views evangelical scholarship today as seriously deficient in its purported "worldview analysis."<sup>6</sup> Both outsiders, such as Gerzon,<sup>7</sup> or insiders, such as Guinness<sup>8</sup> and Noll,<sup>9</sup> recognize it is deaf, mute, and dumb in regards to constructively shaping the future of U.S. society. Furthermore, most business or leadership books that appeal to Jesus—such as Jones' business trilogy,<sup>10</sup> Tamasy's workplace spirituality book,<sup>11</sup> or Wilkes' leadership primer<sup>12</sup>—are so impoverished in understanding his first-century context that they tempt us to agree with Haynes' charge of identity theft.

To fill this void, this paper draws upon Richard Daft's evolutionary model of leadership studies to examine various ways in which scholars have understood Jesus' leadership. An "open systems" research agenda is proposed to examine Jesus' actions within the context of Second Temple Judaism and correlate this to twenty-first-century

<sup>3</sup> Laurie Goodstein, "Evangelicals' Focus on Climate Draws Fire of Christian Right," *New York Times*, March 3, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Roland Martin, CNN Anchor, *Encore Presentation: What Would Jesus Do?*, TV No. 040801CN.V54, Frederick Douglas Haynes et al. 7608 words, CNN Cable News Network, April 8, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, *Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985); Joseph C. Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Praeger, 1991).

<sup>6</sup> Roger P. Ebertz, "Beyond Worldview Analysis: Insights from Hans-Georg Gadamer on Christian Scholarship," *Christian Scholar's Review* 36.1 (Fall 2006).

<sup>7</sup> Mark Gerzon, *A House Divided: Six Belief Systems Struggling for America's Soul* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1996).

<sup>8</sup> Os Guinness, *The American Hour: A Time of Reckoning and the Once and Future Role of Faith* (New York: Free Press, 1993).

<sup>9</sup> Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> Laurie Beth Jones, *Jesus, CEO: Using Ancient Wisdom for Visionary Leadership* (New York: Hyperion, 1995); ---, *Jesus, Inc., The Visionary Path: An Entrepreneur's Guide to True Success* (New York: Crown Business, 2001); ---, *Jesus, Life Coach: Learn from the Best* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004).

<sup>11</sup> Robert Tamasy, *Jesus Works Here* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1995).

<sup>12</sup> C. Gene Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998).

leadership issues of high performance management, industry transformation, and public policy.

I: The Evolution of Leadership

What was the nature of Jesus’ leadership? How did he influence those who followed him, as well as those who resisted his mode of covenantal renewal? Daft’s model of leadership evolution<sup>13</sup> gives us four ways to think about how to study the leadership of Jesus.

Leadership research, according to Daft, has varied in terms of its scope—ranging from a macrofocus to a microfocus—as well as in terms of its environment—ranging from stable to chaotic. Putting these two dimensions together Daft offers four cells, as depicted in Figure 1, from which leadership theory can be conceptualized.

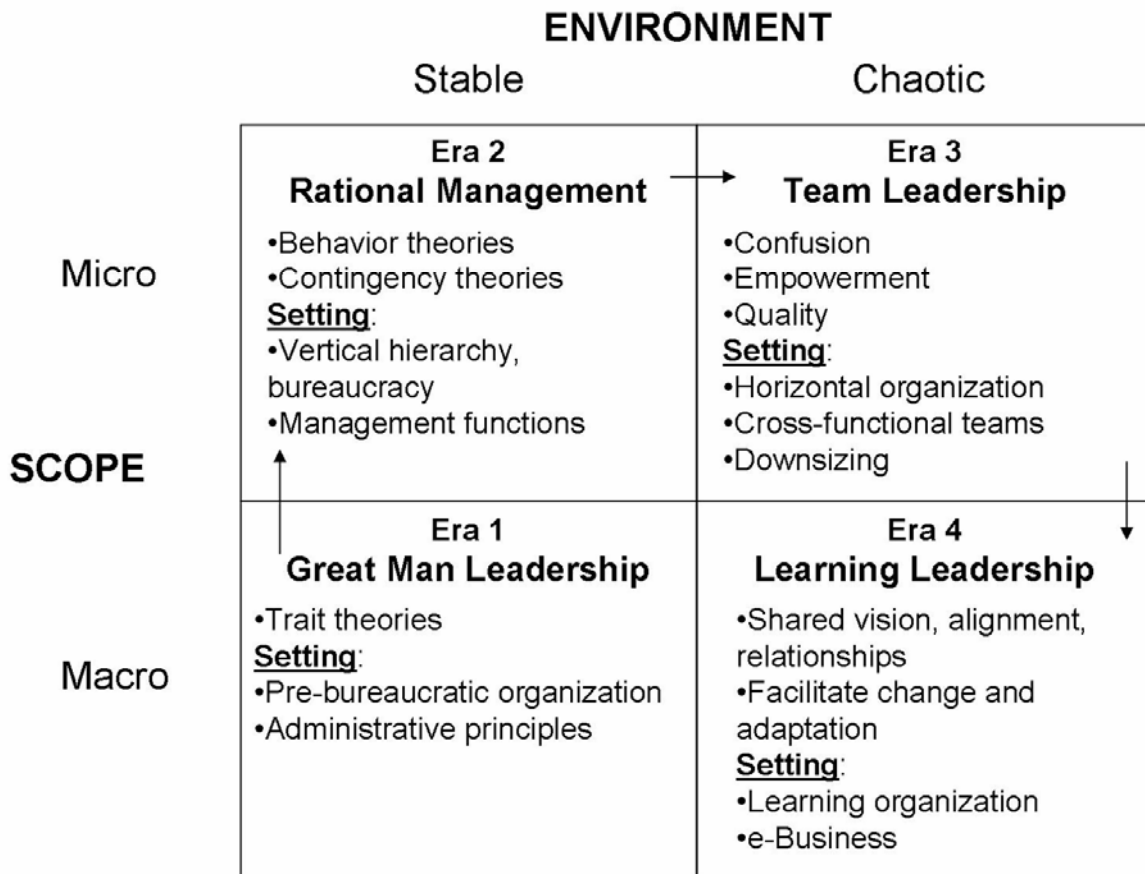


Figure 1. Richard Daft’s model of leadership evolution.

*Macroleadership in a Stable World*

<sup>13</sup> Richard L. Daft and Pat Lane, *The Leadership Experience, 2nd ed.* (Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt College, 2002), 595.

In the lower left of Daft's model we have macro-stable models of leadership. This corresponds to the era of "Great Man Leadership," conceptualized as pre-industrial and prebureaucratic. During this era, scholars assumed that the innate qualities of exceptional leaders, along with the stable nature of society, made it possible for them to shape large endeavors, whether military, political, or religious. For the first half of the twentieth century, leadership in this quadrant was largely studied through trait research by focusing on personal characteristics that distinguish the leader.

Beyond leadership studies, the trait theory has also been amply applied to the historical Jesus, as Charlotte Allen<sup>14</sup> illustrates. A century ago Albert Schweitzer<sup>15</sup> cataloged attempts to study the life of Jesus, including the more noted works of Reimarus, Renan, and Strauss. While this approach no longer dominates Jesus studies, some scholars still labor under critical constraints to write a biography of Jesus. Witness the recent *Rabbi Jesus* by Bruce Chilton,<sup>16</sup> a mix of historical and imaginary analysis.

Another approach in this era to study the leadership of Jesus is Max Weber's<sup>17</sup> theory of charismatic sovereignty. Weber conceived of popular charismatic authority as the antithesis of traditional and legal authority. Weber's charismatic approach with respect to Jesus continues to be developed today by Hengel, Theissen, Ebertz, and others.<sup>18</sup> Malina offers a critical and contemporary application of Weber's theory to Jesus.<sup>19</sup>

While the great charismatic leader *à la Weber* exudes confidence in his extraordinary abilities, thrives on power and glorification and, lacking ties to the established social order, seeks to effect its radical change, the great reputational, legitimate leader, exemplified in Jesus, affirms the traditional values and structures of his society.

In today's climate of religious pluralism the prospects to study Jesus through the lens of heroic leadership appears naïve to most. Yet apart from Christology, one viable approach in this macro-stable quadrant would be to use Conger and Kanungo's attribution theory of charismatic leadership<sup>20</sup> and extend Weber's widespread research tradition. By contrast, more contextual ways to study the leadership of Jesus have developed as scholars have researched leadership.

<sup>14</sup> Charlotte Allen, *The Human Christ: The Search for the Historical Jesus* (New York: Free Press, 1998).

<sup>15</sup> Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of Its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede*, trans. W. Montgomery (New York: Macmillan, 1968).

<sup>16</sup> Bruce Chilton, *Rabbi Jesus: An Intimate Biography* (New York: Doubleday, 2000).

<sup>17</sup> Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, trans. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

<sup>18</sup> Ekkehard Stegemann and Wolfgang Stegemann, *The Jesus Movement: A Social History of Its First Century* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1999).

<sup>19</sup> Bruce J. Malina, "Jesus as Charismatic Leader?," *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 14 (1984): 55-62.

<sup>20</sup> Jay A. Conger and Rabindra N. Kanungo, "Toward a Behavioral Theory of Charismatic Leadership in Organizational Settings," *The Academy of Management Review* 12.4 (October 1987): 637-47.

### *Microleadership in a Stable World*

In the upper left cell of Daft's model we have micro-stable models of leadership. This corresponds to the era of rational management, marked by the emergence of hierarchy and bureaucracy. Defined by Frederick Taylor's scientific management and Henry Ford's assembly line, the rational manager was expected to plan, organize and control others using an impersonal approach. Employees were expected to maximize production by following the rules, let the boss think for them, and perform assigned tasks. Daft sees leadership in this quadrant as largely studied through behavioral and contingent theories.

While the rational system may appear to have little to do with Jesus' leadership as a charismatic prophet, this frame fashioned nearly a half century of modern evangelical approaches to discipleship.<sup>21</sup> The leader-disciple relationship was programmed from start to finish, beginning with follow-up and ending with disciple-making. This was particularly true for crusade evangelism and collegiate ministries, which conceptualized Jesus' master plan for evangelism<sup>22</sup> as a universal pattern of spiritual growth through social modeling.<sup>23</sup> Jesus is seen as the consummate supervisor of new believers, bringing structure and stability through disciple-makers<sup>24</sup> who coach and mentor them.

This focus on dyadic or supervisory leadership is not without parallel in leadership research. Gary Yukl summarizes his behavioral theory of leadership as encompassing a variety of theories, relating to (1) task-oriented, (2) relations-oriented, and (3) change-oriented practices of managers.<sup>25</sup> Each of these dimensions could be used to study Jesus' relationship to his followers, across a wide spectrum of microleadership models, including Blake and Mouton's high-high leader;<sup>26</sup> Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson's situational leader;<sup>27</sup> or Dansereau's vertical dyadic or individualized leadership theory.<sup>28</sup> Examples of viewing Jesus as exhibiting microleadership in a stable world include books such as Briner and Pritchard's *The Leadership Lessons of Jesus*<sup>29</sup> or Manz's *The Leadership Wisdom of Jesus*.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Robert Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002).

<sup>22</sup> Robert Emerson Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1964).

<sup>23</sup> Alexander Balmain Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve or Passages Out of the Gospels, Exhibiting the Twelve Disciples of Jesus Under Discipline for the Apostleship*, 6th ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1877).

<sup>24</sup> Walter A. Henrichsen, *Disciples Are Made—Not Born* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1974).

<sup>25</sup> Gary A. Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*, 6th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2006).

<sup>26</sup> Robert Rogers Blake and Jane Srygley Mouton, *The Managerial Grid: Key Orientations for Achieving Production Through People* (Houston, TX: Gulf, 1964).

<sup>27</sup> Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard, and Dewey E. Johnson, *Management of Organizational Behavior: Leading Human Resources*, 8th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000).

<sup>28</sup> Fred Dansereau, "A Dyadic Approach to Leadership: Learning and Nurturing This Approach Under Fire," *Leadership Quarterly* 6.4 (1995): 479-90.

<sup>29</sup> Bob Briner and Ray Pritchard, *The Leadership Lessons of Jesus: A Timeless Model for Today's Leaders* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1997).

<sup>30</sup> Charles C. Manz, *The Leadership Wisdom of Jesus: Practical Lessons for Today* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1998).

### *Microleadership in a Chaotic World*

In the upper right cell of Daft's model we have micro-chaotic models of leadership. This corresponds to the era of team leadership, marked by worker empowerment, quality circles, and organizational downsizing. Daft claims the oil embargo of 1972 and growing global competition of the 1980s and 1990s left rational management practices in a state of confusion. Japan led through the fog by team leadership through the practice of total quality management. The leadership task was to improve performance in a chaotic world by maximizing frontline employee motivation and commitment.

The era of team leadership produced multiple theories of workplace empowerment such as (1) Kerr and Jermier's substitute for leadership theory,<sup>31</sup> (2) Manz and Sims' theory of self-managing teams,<sup>32</sup> or (3) servant leadership theory, conceptualized by Greenleaf<sup>33</sup> and amplified by Patterson's research model.<sup>34</sup> Jesus is well known as developing his twelve apostles and the seventy laborers as self-organizing teams. Could Jesus' team leadership be intentional in view of the prevailing chaos of his day?

Various popular leadership books have focused on Jesus' team leadership such as Blanchard's *Leadership by the Book*<sup>35</sup> or Ford's *Transforming Leadership*,<sup>36</sup> yet none have examined his group leadership in an open systems context. Grenz and Franke<sup>37</sup> claim that evangelicals have been slow to embrace postfoundational concepts that acknowledge chaos, complexity or an open future.

According to Dent, Christian philosophy and spirituality have instead preferred the stability of the traditional worldview (TWV), rather than the emerging worldview (EWV).<sup>38</sup> The TWV is a closed-system worldview defined by reductionism, objective observation, logic, and determinism. This corresponds to the left side of Daft's model. By contrast, the EMV is defined by holism, perspectival observation, paradox, and indeterminism. This corresponds to Daft's model's right side. While Dent seeks to show that faith is consistent with complexity theory and upward causation, few evangelicals look to Jesus as a paradoxical leader who acted at the edge of chaos. Daft's third cell of team leadership is fresh territory for scholars, provided one examines Jesus in an open system framework.

<sup>31</sup> Steve Kerr and John M. Jermier, "Substitutes for Leadership: Their Meaning and Measurement," *Organization Behavior and Human Performance* 22 (1978): 375-403.

<sup>32</sup> Charles C. Manz and Henry P. Sims, "Self-Management as a Substitute for Leadership: A Social Learning Theory Perspective," *Academy of Management Review* 5.3 (July 1980): 361-67.

<sup>33</sup> Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey Into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (New York: Paulist, 1977).

<sup>34</sup> Kathleen A. Patterson, "Servant Leadership: A Theoretical Model" (PhD dissertation, Regent University School of Leadership Studies, 2003), 570.

<sup>35</sup> Kenneth H. Blanchard, Bill Hybels, and Phil Hodges, *Leadership by the Book: Tools to Transform Your Workplace* (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook, 1999).

<sup>36</sup> Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus' Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values & Empowering Change* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991).

<sup>37</sup> Stanley J. Grenz and John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001).

<sup>38</sup> Eric B. Dent, "Reconciling Complexity Theory in Organizations and Christian Spirituality," *Emergence: A Journal of Complexity Issues in Organizations and Management* 5.4 (December 2003): 124-40.



### *Macroleadership in a Chaotic World*

In the lower right cell of Daft's model we find macro-chaotic models of leadership. Daft claims this corresponds to the era of learning leadership. He sees this postindustrial era as one that calls leaders and followers to experiment, learn, and change, in both their personal and professional lives. Mary O'Hara-Devereaux refers to this leadership challenge as "navigating the Badlands."<sup>39</sup> Given the pressure of both global business and global terrorism, organizations must learn how to thrive in a decade of radical transformation. Leaders must see their highest aim as creating horizontal, adaptable, and resilient organizations.

Daft's learning leadership cell corresponds to what Bryman<sup>40</sup> calls the "new leadership theories" or neocharismatic theories. This includes Bass and Avolio's theory of transformational leadership,<sup>41</sup> with its emphasis on leading through vision, values, and relationships rather than transactional exchange. It includes Fry's theory of spiritual leadership,<sup>42</sup> given its emphasis on workplace spirituality and learning organizations.

Another theory central to this domain of learning leadership is Elliot Jaques' stratified-systems approach.<sup>43</sup> This theory focuses on systemic or strategic leaders<sup>44</sup> at the corporate and portfolio level of organizations. Jaques found that these executives operate in nearly unbounded business and social environments. They have time horizons of 20 years or longer that interact with complex, intercultural, and multinational forces.<sup>45</sup> These executives intentionally shape organizational culture and carry out strategies as learning processes.<sup>46</sup>

Where are the studies that examine Jesus' macroleadership in a chaotic world with time spans of discretion that approach Jaques's findings? Is it possible now to study global leadership<sup>47</sup> or the change organizations<sup>48</sup> they lead in an open systems context that frames Jesus' leadership in the political tradition of James McGregor Burns?<sup>49</sup> Jesus clearly released the adaptive learning that his followers needed to survive the clash of Hellenism and Judaism in his day. His global leadership was not only pivotal in

<sup>39</sup> Mary O'Hara-Devereaux, *Navigating the Badlands: Thriving in the Decade of Radical Transformation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004).

<sup>40</sup> Alan Bryman, *Charisma and Leadership in Organizations* (Newbury, CA: Sage, 1992).

<sup>41</sup> Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M. Bass, *The Full Range of Leadership Development: Basic and Advanced Manuals* (Binghamton, NY: Bass, Avolio & Associates, 1991).

<sup>42</sup> Louis W. Fry, "Toward a Theory of Spiritual Leadership," *Leadership Quarterly* 14.6 (December 2003): 693-727.

<sup>43</sup> Elliott Jacques, *Requisite Organization: The CEO's Guide to Creative Structure and Leadership* (Arlington, VA: Cason Hall, 1989).

<sup>44</sup> Sydney Finkelstein and Donald C. Hambrick, *Strategic Leadership: Top Executives and Their Effects on Organizations (West's Strategic Management Series)* (Minneapolis/St. Paul: South-Western, 1996).

<sup>45</sup> James G. Hunt, *Leadership: A New Synthesis* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991).

<sup>46</sup> Richard L. Hughes and Katherine Colarelli Beatty, *Becoming a Strategic Leader: Your Role in Your Organization's Enduring Success* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2005).

<sup>47</sup> Cristina Moro Bueno and Stewart L. Tubbs, "Identifying Global Leadership Competencies: An Exploratory Study," *Journal of American Academy of Business* 5.1/2 (September 2004): 80-87.

<sup>48</sup> David L. Cooperrider and Jane E. Dutton, *Organizational Dimensions of Global Change: No Limits to Cooperation (Human Dimensions of Global Change)* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1999).

<sup>49</sup> James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978).

his day, it was significant to succeeding generations of Christians in reference to theological redemption.<sup>50</sup>

A key to examining Jesus' macroleadership in a chaotic world is the recognized fact that Herodian or Second Temple Judaism was by no means stable after the death of Herod the Great in 4 BCE. This historical period up until CE 70 clearly falls in Daft's lower right cell, as its fate was tied to macroforces. This tribal village-based Jewish society<sup>51</sup> was faced with the exogenous challenge of militarization, urbanization, and commercialization brought by the Roman Empire.<sup>52</sup> In response to these trends, Horsley and Hanson document the rival religious factions and Jewish insurgents who vied for power.<sup>53</sup> Jesus approached this swirling chaos with fresh eyes, new sense-making lenses,<sup>54</sup> and civilizational foresight.<sup>55</sup> Yet his collective action was anchored in ancient tradition and restoration eschatology.<sup>56</sup> Jesus led through both symbol and action to recalibrate the spiritual practices of his day (Matt 5:21-7:5, 21:12-13),<sup>57</sup> beyond the impending collapse of his society,<sup>58</sup> which traced its monarchy back a millennia to King David.

During a time where others saw the world as fixed, Jesus saw beyond the standing powers of his day and envisioned a new temple order not made by human hands.<sup>59</sup> In keeping with self-sacrificial leadership theory,<sup>60</sup> Jesus saw his death on the cross as taking up the chaos or "incomplete organizational design" that the body of Second Temple Judaism could not absorb (Matt 20:28; Mrk 10:45). Similar to the organizational theory of punctuated equilibrium,<sup>61</sup> Jesus saw the covenant history of Israel in his time as a dynamic of creative destruction. Following his death his contemporaries would experience a short period of turbulence, followed by a long period of covenantal stability (Mrk 13:19). The prevailing leadership of Israel would be displaced (Matt 23:34-36; Luk 11:49-52) by those who followed his way (Matt 19:28-30,

<sup>50</sup> Hans Küng, *Christianity: Essence, History and Future*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Continuum, 1995).

<sup>51</sup> Nicholas Thomas Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God (Christian Origins and the Question of God 1)* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992).

<sup>52</sup> John Dominic Crossan and Jonathan L. Reed, *Excavating Jesus: Beneath the Stones, Behind the Texts* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001).

<sup>53</sup> Richard A. Horsley and John S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 1999).

<sup>54</sup> Karl E. Weick, *Making Sense of the Organization* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001).

<sup>55</sup> Richard A. Slaughter, *Futures Beyond Dystopia: Creating Social Foresight* (New York: Routledge/Falmer, 2004).

<sup>56</sup> Brant James Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of the Exile: Restoration Eschatology and the Origin of the Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006).

<sup>57</sup> Nicholas Thomas Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God (Christian Origins and the Question of God 2)* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996).

<sup>58</sup> Jay E. Gary, "The Future of Business as Mission: An Inquiry Into Macro-Strategy," *Business as Mission: From Impoverishment to Empowered*, ed. Tom Steffen and Mike Barrett (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2006), 253-73.

<sup>59</sup> Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant: Mark 13:31 & Matthew 5:18," *Eschatology in Bible & Theology: Evangelical Essays at the Dawn of a New Millennium*, ed. K. E. Brower and M. W. Elliott (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997), 145-70.

<sup>60</sup> Yeon Choi and Renate R. Mai-Dalton, "On the Leadership Function of Self-Sacrifice," *Leadership Quarterly* 9.4 (Winter 1998): 475-501.

<sup>61</sup> Michael L. Tushman and Elaine Romanelli, "Organizational Evolution: A Metamorphosis Model of Convergence and Reorientation," *Research in Organizational Behavior* 7 (1985): 171-222.

21:42-43; Luk 22:28-30). In keeping with collective action social theory,<sup>62</sup> Jesus was a “dissident entrepreneur”<sup>63</sup> who would lead his nation through this time of turbulence into a renewed covenant (Matt 26:27-29; Mrk 14:24-25; Luk 22:20). This post-Herodian era would be marked by a new social economy with the Gentiles, who would also worship Yahweh (Matt 8:11-12, 12:41-42, 27:54, 28:19; John 4:21-24). Jesus considered his followers to be the vanguard of this new era. Their self-organizing teams would survive the Roman-Jewish War (Luk 19:41-44)<sup>64</sup> and the end of the Second Temple—some forty years after his death.<sup>65</sup>

This description of Jesus’ macroleadership in a chaotic world is at best partial.<sup>66</sup> It suggests, however, that Jesus led more than just a dissident minority. He saw his microleadership of the twelve, the seventy, and the downtrodden (Luk 12:32) in the macrocontext of the reversal of power that marked the first century.

## II: Conclusion

We come back to the question “What would Jesus lead?” Would Jesus lead Detroit to recreate the auto to drastically reduce carbon emissions and fuel dependency? Would he lead a pro-life demonstration at a local birth-control clinic? Would he lead a genetics research team? Would he lead a political party into the White House? Would he lead third-world dissidents, looking for cultural and economic relief from globalization? Conceivably, Jesus might lead any of these endeavors. Yet, this claim itself is a contextualized value statement.<sup>67</sup> Each generation must wrestle with this question as they explore the various textures of the Christian scriptures through social rhetorical criticism applied to their context.<sup>68</sup>

We may not all agree on what Jesus would lead, but we can say with unanimity that Jesus’ leadership would touch both the micro- and macrospheres. Therefore, in keeping with Daft’s model of evolutionary leadership, a research agenda related to Jesus’ leadership must rigorously think across multiple theoretical traditions and on multiple levels of analysis,<sup>69</sup> including (1) the microlevel of social psychology, (2) the

<sup>62</sup> Mark Irving Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma (Economics, Cognition, and Society)* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995).

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>64</sup> Neil Faulkner, *Apocalypse: The Great Jewish Revolt Against Rome, AD 66-73* (Charleston, SC: Tempus Publishing Ltd., 2002).

<sup>65</sup> C. H. Dodd, “The Fall of Jerusalem and the ‘Abomination of Desolation,’” *Journal of Roman Studies* 37 (1947): 47-54.

<sup>66</sup> This premise of Jesus’ contextual and global leadership in the first century needs further elaboration by leadership scholars. I develop this in a paper yet to be published—“The Future According to Jesus: Exploring a Galilean Model of Foresight.” However, much more work can be done to specify why Jesus’ leadership was directed through his followers to the nation of Israel and to Hellenistic society as a whole.

<sup>67</sup> Paul G. Hiebert, *The Missiological Implications of Epistemological Shifts: Affirming Truth in a Modern/Postmodern World* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 1999).

<sup>68</sup> Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of the Texts* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996).

<sup>69</sup> Kyoungsu Kim et al., “A Multiple-Level Theory of Leadership: The Impact of Culture as a Moderator,” *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 11.1 (2004): 7892.

mesolevel of organizational structure and change, and (3) the macrolevel of organizational ecology and resource dependency within industry change.<sup>70</sup>

Furthermore, any leadership research agenda that aims to understand Jesus must aggressively ground itself, as Reed argues, behind the texts and beneath the stones of Jesus' day.<sup>71</sup> It must grapple with how Jesus encountered the chaos of his era and show how these guiding beliefs, intentions, and behaviors can help us tackle the disruptive changes of our time, whether through people-centered leadership, industry transformation, or public policy choices. Anything less than this full scholarly mission will leave our work open to charges of identity theft.

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#### About the Author

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<sup>70</sup> W. Richard Scott, *Organizations: Rational, Natural, and Open Systems*, 5th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003).

<sup>71</sup> Jonathan L. Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-Examination of the Evidence* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 2000).



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## UPPER ECHELONS THEORY AT WORK IN THE EPHESIAN CHURCH

GAIL LONGBOTHAM, PH.D.  
BEN GUTIERREZ IV, PH.D.

This study relates Proposition 21 of Hambrick and Mason's (1984) Upper Echelons Theory (UET) to Paul and Timothy's leadership of the Ephesian church. Proposition 21 states, "In turbulent environments, team heterogeneity will be positively associated with profitability."<sup>1</sup> Using the texts of Acts, Ephesians, and I and II Timothy, this study demonstrates the merit of this proposition as evidenced in the historical, ministry context of Paul and Timothy as a leadership team in the turbulent environment of the first century and provides rationale for translating these concepts into a contemporary ministry context. A brief sketch of Paul and Timothy's personal backgrounds (birthplace, family, education, and conversion experience) and leadership experiences provides evidence for the heterogeneity of their leadership relationship. Evidence of heresy and persecution support the contention that theirs was a turbulent environment. The conduct of the Ephesian church in the years after the instruction (documented in Acts, Ephesians, and I and II Timothy) and leadership of Paul and Timothy provides supporting evidence of the profitability of that leadership. A summary of the study, its benefits, and suggestions for future research conclude this study.

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Christians view the Bible as a source of spiritual truth, inspiration, comfort, and guidance as they attempt to apply its teachings to the turbulent environments in which they live. A newer application is the use of the Bible in validating effective organizational

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Hambrick and Phyllis Mason, "Upper Echelons: The Organization as Reflection of Its Top Managers," *Academy of Management Review* 9 (1984): 193-206.

leadership principles.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, such methods often approach the Bible in a proof-text manner, ignoring the various contexts in which the Bible was written. Rarely, though, have researchers looked through the lens backwards and considered a specific biblical or ministerial context through the lens of organizational leadership theories and propositions.

Gerald Brown<sup>3</sup> translated a model recommended by Harvard Business School professor John Kotter<sup>4</sup> in *Leading Change* to prompt change within a ministry in Kansas City, Missouri.<sup>5</sup> His dissertation, *Leadership Behaviors and Personal Transitions that Occur in the Lives of Pastors Who Have Led Churches through Significant Growth*, utilized several sources including “scripture, theological writings, church growth literature, *books on leadership, management, transition, and change theory*” [italics added].<sup>6</sup>

Shope<sup>7</sup> implemented situational leadership concepts developed by Kenneth Blanchard<sup>8</sup> in a ministry context. Johnson,<sup>9</sup> drawing on recent trends in church growth and research in various leadership choices from biblical and secular viewpoints, designed a leadership development strategy for a local congregation. Wallace<sup>10</sup> utilized Katz and Lazarsfeld’s<sup>11</sup> “personal influence” model of communication and tested the model within a ministry context in Kentucky. Morris<sup>12</sup> proposed a new church growth

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<sup>2</sup> Hans Finzel, *The Top 10 Mistakes Leaders Make* (Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Publications, 2000); John C. Maxwell, *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2001); Henri J. M. Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1993); Roy M. Oswald, *New Beginnings: The Pastoral Start Up Workbook* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 1989); Roy M. Oswald and Otto Kroeger, *Personality Types and Religious Worship* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 1988), Alexander Stauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (New York: Lewis & Roth, 1995); Lorin Woolfe, *Bible on Leadership: From Moses to Matthew: Management Lessons for Contemporary Leaders* (Washington, DC: Amacom, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Gerald E. Brown, following a model recommended by Harvard Business School Professor John P. Kotter in the book *Leading Change* (1996), the pastor endeavors to “establish a sense of urgency” for change in order to prompt congregational renewal in the historic Antioch Community Church in Kansas City, Missouri (Doctoral dissertation, Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2000).

<sup>4</sup> John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> Andre J. Snodgrass, *Leadership Behaviors and Personal Transitions that Occur in the Lives of Pastors Who Have Led Churches Through Significant Growth* (Doctoral dissertation, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2003).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 8.

<sup>7</sup> F. W. Shope, Jr., *Equipping Church Staff from Central Baptist Association to Implement Situational Leadership Concepts Within the Local Church* (Doctoral dissertation, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002).

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth H. Blanchard and Patricia Zigarmi, *Leadership and the One-Minute Manager: Increasing Effectiveness Through Situational Leadership* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1985).

<sup>9</sup> D. C. Johnson, *A Design and Implementation of a Leadership Development Strategy for a Growing Independent Community Church* (Doctoral dissertation, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1997).

<sup>10</sup> Green L. Wallace, *Testing the Personal Influence Model of Communication in the First Church of God, Mount Sterling, Kentucky* (Doctoral dissertation, Anderson University School of Theology, 1997).

<sup>11</sup> Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications* (Somerset, NJ, 1955).

<sup>12</sup> D. L. Morris, Sr., *Building a Healthy Foundation for Long-term Church Growth at Centerville Baptist Church, Chesapeake, Virginia* (Doctoral dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1996).

strategy for a ministry context in Virginia using both biblical principles and the leadership principles of Kouzes and Posner.<sup>13</sup> Mexcur<sup>14</sup> followed by adapting “a secular model of leadership proposed by Kouzes & Posner for use in developing leadership potential of a congregation’s board of deacons.”<sup>15</sup>

Probably most notable is the work of Myers<sup>16</sup> who demonstrated the great effectiveness of evangelism through the synthesis of business principles and ethics with the exegesis of scripture. Thus, there is strong support that partnering a secular leadership theory with a ministerial context is a reputable method of research.

This study synthesizes Proposition 21 of Upper Echelons Leadership Theory<sup>17</sup> with the Ephesian ministerial context of Paul and Timothy in the first century. Proposition 21 of UET states, “In turbulent environments, team heterogeneity will be positively associated with profitability.”<sup>18</sup> Heterogeneity was of interest to researchers prior to the formation of UET.<sup>19</sup> Hambrick and Mason<sup>20</sup> synthesized the previous research, concluding that a homogeneous group best handles routine problem-solving and is profitable in leading in a stable environment, and a heterogeneous group best handles ill-defined, novel problem-solving and is profitable in leading in a turbulent environment. Since the formation of UET, there has been a continued interest in the study of heterogeneity.<sup>21</sup>

The study presented here is of the church at Ephesus in Asia Minor from the post-II Timothy era (circa 70 AD) through the late-apostolic era (circa 90-96 AD) and into the post-apostolic era (circa 120 AD). It involved an exegesis of Ephesians and I and II Timothy and an exploration of other biblical passages and historical documents for evidence of turbulence during the leadership of Paul and Timothy, evidence of the heterogeneity of their leadership team, and evidence of the profitability of that leadership. This study demonstrates that in the turbulent environment of the first

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<sup>13</sup> James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1986).

<sup>14</sup> Dwight E. Mexcur, *Nurturing the Leadership Potential of the Board of Deacons for Effective Ministry with and through the Congregation* (Doctoral dissertation, Hartford Seminary, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 8.

<sup>16</sup> K. D. Myers, *Leading a Congregation in Designing and Implementing a Business Ethics Ministry for Its Community* (Doctoral dissertation, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1994).

<sup>17</sup> Hambrick and Mason, “Upper Echelons.”

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 203.

<sup>19</sup> W. Gary Wagner, Jeffrey Pfeffer, and Charles A. O’Reilly, III, “Organizational Demography and Turnover in Top-management Groups,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 29 (1984): 74-92; Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Fiascoes*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1972); Alan C. Filley and Robert J. House, *Managerial Process and Organizational Behavior* (Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman, 1976); Kenneth McNeil and James D. Thompson, “The Regeneration of Social Organizations,” *American Sociological Review* 36 (1971): 624-637; Jeffery Pfeffer, “Some Consequences of Organizational Demography: Potential Impacts of an Aging Work Force on Formal Organizations,” in *Aging: Social Change*, ed. Sara B. Kiesler, James N. Morgan, and Valerie K. Oppenheimer (New York: Academic Press, 1981): 291-329.

<sup>20</sup> Hambrick and Mason, “Upper Echelons.”

<sup>21</sup> L. J. Bourgeois, III and Kathleen M. Eisenhardt, “Strategic Decision Processes in High Velocity Environments: Four Cases in the Microcomputer Industry,” *Management Science* 34 no. 7 (1988): 816-836; John G. Michael and Donald C. Hambrick, “Diversification Posture and Top Management Team Characteristics,” *Academy of Management Journal* 2 (1992): 9-37.

century, the team heterogeneity of Paul and Timothy's leadership is positively associated with the profitability of the church at Ephesus. This study was motivated by (1) the research done on the observable characteristics of group heterogeneity,<sup>22</sup> (2) current interest in the subject of heterogeneity,<sup>23</sup> (3) the ease of defining the terms of Proposition 21 (heterogeneous, turbulent environment, and profitability) in a ministry context, and (4) the evidence of these concepts in the specific, ministerial context of Paul and Timothy.

## I: Definition of Terms

### *Upper Echelons Theory*

Upper Echelons Theory was introduced by Donald Hambrick and Phyllis Mason in 1984 as an endeavor to "synthesize the previously fragmented literatures [from various fields about the characteristics of top managers] around a more general 'upper echelons perspective.'" <sup>24</sup> One of the authors' objectives in espousing this theory was to provide scholars a greater ability to predict and understand organizational outcomes. Two subordinate ideas of this theory have each "stimulated major streams of research,"<sup>25</sup> and both are relevant here: (1) "a focus on the characteristics of the top management team"<sup>26</sup> rather than on the individual top executive will better inform understanding of organizational outcomes and (2) "demographic profiles of executives . . . are highly related to strategy and performance outcomes."<sup>27</sup> There is a significant stream of empirical investigation verifying these ideas in multiple cultural and organizational contexts and verifying the profitability of homogeneity of leadership teams in stable times and the profitability of heterogeneous teams in turbulent times.

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<sup>22</sup> Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink*; Alan C. Filley and Robert J. House, *Managerial Process and Organizational Behavior*; McNeil and Thompson, "The Regeneration of Social Organizations"; J. Pfeffer, "Some Consequences of Organizational Demography."

<sup>23</sup> Hambrick and Mason, "Upper Echelons," 193.

<sup>24</sup> Donald Hambrick, "Upper Echelons Theory: An Update," *Academy of Management Review* 2 (2007): 334.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 334.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 335.

<sup>27</sup> Donald Hambrick, "Top Management Groups: A Conceptual Integration and Reconsideration of the 'Team' Label," in *Research in Organizational Behavior*, ed. Barry M. Staw and L. L. Cummings (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1994): 171-214; Susan E. Jackson, "Team Composition in Organizational Settings: Issues in Managing a Diverse Work Force," in *Group Process and Productivity*, ed. Stephen Worchel, Wendy L. Wood, and Jeffrey A. Simpson (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1991): 202-221; Vincent L. Barker and George C. Mueller, "CEO Characteristics and R & D Spending," *Management Science* 48, no. 6 (2002): 782-802.



### *Group Heterogeneity*

Group heterogeneity is the degree of individual differences within a managerial group manifested by diversity of personal background and leadership experiences. Hambrick and Mason<sup>28</sup> identify six specific observable characteristics (age, functional track, other career experiences, formal education, socioeconomic status, and financial position) that contribute to either an individual's personal background or leadership experience and consider differences in one or more of these to be sufficient for heterogeneity.<sup>29</sup>

### *Turbulent Environment*

Turbulent environment, for this study, is defined within the ministerial context and includes, but is not limited to, heretical teachers attempting to negatively influence a congregation both from within and without and persecution from within or without.

### *Profitability*

Profitability relates to Paul's primary goal, namely, to bring about the obedience of faith among all Christians<sup>30</sup> and, in particular, the Ephesian church. Obedience of faith is a Christian's process of spiritual maturity that begins at the point of conversion to Christianity and continues to be developed throughout the life of a Christian. Paul's ministry did not cease after conversion.<sup>31</sup> He felt under obligation to teach, encourage, and warn so that his converts might reach maturity in Christ. Therefore, profitability would include, but is not limited to, spiritual development of both the ministerial leadership team and the congregation in the areas of adherence to sound doctrine, love as demonstrated through caring for the needy, witness to the community in which the congregation exists, and healthy organization and administration.

## II: Through the Lens of Time

### *Heterogeneity of Paul and Timothy*

This section will discuss the differences between Paul and Timothy with respect to personal background (birthplace, family, education, and conversion experience) and leadership experiences (as summarized in Table 1).

*Birthplace.* Paul was born in Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia in southern Asia Minor. Situated on the Cydnus River and ten miles from the Mediterranean, it was the

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<sup>28</sup> Hambrick and Mason, "Upper Echelons."

<sup>29</sup> Colin G. Kruse, "Ministry," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Ralph P. Martin and Daniel G. Reid (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993): 602-608.

<sup>30</sup> Rom 1:11-17.

<sup>31</sup> Hambrick and Mason, "Upper Echelons"; Hambrick, "Top Management Groups."

intersection of ancient trade routes and cultures<sup>32</sup> and was of enough importance to be visited by Julius Caesar in 47 BC and Mark Antony in 41 BC.<sup>33</sup>

Timothy was born in Lystra, a small, mountain town in the region of Galatia (modern-day Turkey). Lystra “was off the main roads, and its seclusion marked it out as a small rustic town, where the people and customs would be quite provincial. [Once important, Lystra at this time was] sinking into the insignificance of a small provincial town.”<sup>34</sup> Even though Antiochus, a Greek ruler, encouraged thousands of Jews to emigrate from Babylonia to Asia Minor, in Lystra there were fewer than ten Jewish families – the required number for a synagogue.<sup>35</sup>

Table 1. Summary of the Heterogeneity of Paul and Timothy

	Paul	Timothy
Birthplace	Tarsus	Lystra
Family	Educated, Influential, Jewish	Jewish mother, Greek father, Christian mother and grandmother
Education	Formal, rabbinic	Informal, grandmother and mother
Conversion	Dramatic, as an adult/persecutor	Undramatic, Christian heritage
Age	Older	Mid-late teens
Leadership Experience	Significant	Learned as he accompanied Paul

*Family.* Paul was born into a Jewish family serious about its heritage and meticulous in fulfilling the law. Paul was “circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews.”<sup>36</sup> Being circumcised on the eighth day after birth was the “proudest claim any Jew could make, namely, that in strict conformity with the law he was circumcised on precisely the right day (Gen 17:12; Lev. 12:3).”<sup>37</sup> In saying the “stock of Israel,” Paul was emphasizing the fact that he belonged to the race of Israel by birth, not conversion.<sup>38</sup> Paul furthered his familial description by saying that he belonged to the “tribe of Benjamin.” Even though the tribe of Benjamin was small,<sup>39</sup> it was highly esteemed by the Jewish community for its significant members and example of purity and commitment to David and to God.<sup>40</sup> In the phrase

<sup>32</sup> Charles F. Pfeiffer, *Baker Bible Atlas* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1961), 202.

<sup>33</sup> John McRay, *Paul: His Life and Teaching* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003).

<sup>34</sup> Pfeiffer, *Baker Bible Atlas*, 351.

<sup>35</sup> William J. Petersen, *The Discipling of Timothy* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1980).

<sup>36</sup> Phil 3:5.

<sup>37</sup> Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians* (Waco, TX: Word, 1983), 13.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ps 68:27.

<sup>40</sup> Gen 30:22-23; 35:9-19; Judg 1:21, 5:14; I Sam 9:1-2; I Kgs 12:21; Esth 2:5; Hos 5:8.

“Hebrew of Hebrews,” Paul asserted that his Hebrew family had retained distinctive Jewish characteristic qualities in language and custom thus differing from Hellenistic Jews.<sup>41</sup> Though Paul was from Tarsus and knew Greek as well as Aramaic and Hebrew,<sup>42</sup> he had not become Hellenized.<sup>43</sup>

Timothy came from a heterogeneous home both religiously and nationally. In Acts 16:1 Timothy’s mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, are identified as Jewish and described as having “unfailing faith” in the Lord Jesus Christ, while Timothy’s father is identified as being Greek. Where Timothy’s father stood religiously is unknown. He certainly did not prevent his wife from instructing their son in the Scriptures<sup>44</sup> nor did he interfere with his son’s being named Timothy, which literally means “honoring God” or “dear to God.” Peterson<sup>45</sup> suggests that the name itself was Greek and, thus, may explain why the name was acceptable not only to his mother but to his father as well. The father, however, had drawn the line and not allowed Timothy to be circumcised,<sup>46</sup> indicating that he was not a proselyte. Because the native Lystrans resented the religious exclusivism of the Jews and the cultural intrusion of the Hellenes, Timothy may have felt the tension of being in the minority whether he identified with the Jewishness of his mother or the Hellenism of his father.

*Education.* Paul was formally educated and trained as a Jewish rabbi. He was schooled in a reputable synagogue in the university of Tarsus before traveling to Jerusalem as a teenager to sit at the feet of Gamaliel,<sup>47</sup> the foremost Jewish educator of the day<sup>48</sup> and a “leading [and] celebrated”<sup>49</sup> scribe.

Paul commended the quality of the instruction that Timothy had received<sup>50</sup> even though, compared to Paul’s formal education, Timothy’s education was considered informal because he was trained by his family. Paul said to Timothy, “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”<sup>51</sup>

*Conversion to Christianity.* Paul’s dramatic conversion is documented in Acts 9 and further commented on in Acts 22:1-11; 26:12-18; Galatians 1:12-16; Philippians 3:4-10; and I Timothy 1:12-16. As Paul was on his way to Damascus to restrain the

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<sup>41</sup> Acts 6:1.

<sup>42</sup> Acts 21:40; 22:2.

<sup>43</sup> Archiblad T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, vol. IV (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1930).

<sup>44</sup> II Tim 3:14-15.

<sup>45</sup> Petersen, *The Discipling of Timothy*, 11.

<sup>46</sup> Acts 16:1-3.

<sup>47</sup> Acts 5:34-39; 22:3.

<sup>48</sup> Peterson, *The Discipling of Timothy*.

<sup>49</sup> Graham H. Twelftree, “Scribes,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 1086-1089.

<sup>50</sup> II Tim 1:5; 3:14-15.

<sup>51</sup> II Tim 3:14-15.

Christian influence and its propagation, he had a supernatural encounter with the resurrected Christ leading to his confession of Jesus Christ as Lord.

In contrast, Timothy was not known to be a persecutor of The Way, and the specifics of his conversion are not dramatically recorded in Scripture. Paul refers to Timothy as “my own son in the faith,”<sup>52</sup> leading some to conjecture that Timothy was converted upon Paul’s first visit to Lystra.<sup>53</sup> What is known is that Timothy’s grandmother, Lois, and mother, Eunice, were of the faith prior to his conversion,<sup>54</sup> and by the time of Paul’s second missionary journey, Timothy had gained a reputation among the believing community in Lystra and nearby Iconium.<sup>55</sup>

*Leadership experiences.* At the time Paul took on Timothy as a co-worker<sup>56</sup> he had significant leadership experience, and Timothy had none. Paul’s leadership skills were developed prior to his conversion to Christianity. As adherents to the party of Pharisees,<sup>57</sup> the most strict and legalistic sect of Jewish leadership,<sup>58</sup> his parents exposed Paul to the tutelage of the Pharisees’ leadership and moral example.<sup>59</sup> Paul became a Pharisee<sup>60</sup> and interacted with and partnered with Jewish religious leaders in order to persecute Christians.<sup>61</sup> His level of leadership is evidenced by his authority over not just the persecution of Christians but over decreeing their deaths.<sup>62</sup> Paul also exercised authority on behalf of the religious leadership of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem<sup>63</sup> as seen in his issuance and the solicitation of “letters of extradition.”<sup>64</sup> Paul would also have had some influence on local religious leaders. Even though many local synagogue rulers outside Palestine respected the right of the Sanhedrin over fugitive Judeans (in this case, Christians), others did not<sup>65</sup> and would, therefore, require the Sanhedrin’s representative (in this case, Paul) to be able to tactfully persuade local leadership to cooperate with him in his mission to weed out the Jewish Christians. Thus, Paul’s leadership skills were cultivated and sharpened before his conversion.

Following his conversion, Paul was a leader in spreading the gospel and establishing local churches. He also participated as a leader of the early church at the

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<sup>52</sup> I Tim. 1:2.

<sup>53</sup> Ralph Earle, “First & Second Timothy,” in Frank E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), 341.

<sup>54</sup> II Tim 1:5.

<sup>55</sup> Acts 16:2.

<sup>56</sup> Acts 16:1-5.

<sup>57</sup> Acts 23:6.

<sup>58</sup> Walter A. Elwell and Robert W. Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 56.

<sup>59</sup> F. F. Bruce, “Paul the Apostle,” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 696-720.

<sup>60</sup> Phil 3:5.

<sup>61</sup> Acts 9:1-3; 22:3-5; 26:9-11; Gal 1:13; I Tim 1:13.

<sup>62</sup> Acts 7:58; 8:1; 22:20.

<sup>63</sup> Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary of the New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993).

<sup>64</sup> Acts 9:2.

<sup>65</sup> Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary of the New Testament*.

Jerusalem Council held to clarify the Christian leadership's position on the issue of Gentile observance of the law.

Paul exhibited leadership in a more challenging situation – confronting a fellow leader. He rebuked Peter concerning hypocrisy and legalism.<sup>66</sup> This was done publicly<sup>67</sup> and poignantly<sup>68</sup> but resulted in peaceful resolution as evidenced by Peter's written reference to Paul and his teachings – “our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as in also in all his epistles, speaking in them these things.”<sup>69</sup>

Unlike Paul, who brought numerous ministerial leadership experiences to their leadership team, Timothy brought none. His ministerial leadership experiences occurred after meeting and traveling with the apostle Paul. Paul and Timothy bring differences to their leadership team in each of the categories of the litmus test for heterogeneity suggested by Hambrick and Mason.<sup>70</sup> Their team more than meets the standard for heterogeneity. The next consideration is the turbulence of their environment.

### *Turbulent Environment*

Even though Paul and Timothy ministered during the Pax Romana, persecution from without and the fight for sound doctrine within made the specific context of their ministry turbulent. The turbulence of their context is evident even prior to the formation of their leadership team.

During his first missionary journey, Paul was evicted from Antioch. He experienced persecution by the very ones with whom he had partnered prior to his conversion.<sup>71</sup> These persecutors followed Paul to Iconium, drew him out of the city,<sup>72</sup> and encouraged his stoning at Lystra.<sup>73</sup> Paul later reminds Timothy of these sufferings “such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra.”<sup>74</sup>

During Paul's second missionary journey, he traveled to the places visited during his first missionary journey. This included Lystra where Paul warned Christians that more persecution lay ahead<sup>75</sup> and chose Timothy to be his co-worker.<sup>76</sup> Paul had many leadership experiences prior to inviting Timothy to join him, most in a turbulent environment. Paul makes vivid the turbulent nature of his leadership experiences in II Corinthians 11:27-33:

In journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the

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<sup>66</sup> Gal 2:11-21.

<sup>67</sup> Gal 2:14.

<sup>68</sup> Gal 2:11.

<sup>69</sup> II Pet 3:15-16.

<sup>70</sup> Hambrick and Mason, “Upper Echelons.”

<sup>71</sup> Acts 9:23-25; II Cor 11:32-33; II Tim 3:11.

<sup>72</sup> Acts 13:9.

<sup>73</sup> Acts 14:1-20; II Tim 3:11.

<sup>74</sup> II Tim 3:11-12.

<sup>75</sup> Acts 14:21-23.

<sup>76</sup> Acts 16.

wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness – besides the other things, what which comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; But I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

II Corinthians 7:5 provides a summary description of the turbulence: “For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within.”

### III: Profitability

This section will consider profitability as described in Paul’s letter to the church at Ephesus, his farewell to the elders of the church at Ephesus as recorded in Acts 20, and his exhortation to Timothy. This will be followed by evidence that the profitability exhibited by the church at Ephesus continued for several centuries.

#### *Profitability in Adherence to Sound Doctrine*

There is clear evidence in Paul’s ministry to the church at Ephesus and his letters to Timothy that the leadership team of Paul and Timothy exhorted the Ephesian congregation to adhere to sound doctrine. This is first seen in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians where he exhorts the congregation to grow in “knowledge of the Son of God” so they “should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.”<sup>77</sup> Knowledge here is *epignosis*, a “full knowledge, precise, and *correct* knowledge”<sup>78</sup> [italics added]. This same concern for learning and adhering to sound doctrine is reinforced in Paul’s departing words to the Ephesian elders:

For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard!<sup>79</sup>

Fee,<sup>80</sup> commenting on I Timothy 1:3, suggests that refuting false doctrine and enforcing sound doctrine is the very occasion for writing I Timothy. Paul refers to and

<sup>77</sup> Ephes 4:11-15.

<sup>78</sup> Kenneth S. Wuest, “The Exegesis of Ephesians,” in *Wuest’s Word Studies From the Greek New Testament* vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), 1-146.

<sup>79</sup> Acts 20: 27-31a.

<sup>80</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988).

enforces the importance of adhering to the sound doctrine nine times in I Timothy and reinforces the importance of adhering to sound doctrine four more times in II Timothy – all of this is in addition to the vivid denunciation of false teachers throughout both letters. Paul concluded his second letter by entreating Timothy and the Ephesian congregation to “continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it.”<sup>81</sup>

Paul coupled these exhortations with realistic warnings of persecution if the Ephesians continued to adhere to sound doctrine. “Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”<sup>82</sup> Paul reminds them of persecutions that have befallen him as a result of adhering to and propagating sound doctrine, “You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings – what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured,”<sup>83</sup> and reminds them that the Lord rescued him from his persecutions in order to fortify their commitment. Paul established the necessary commitment level and mindset incumbent upon the church at Ephesus if it were to continue in the injunctions he set forth in his letter to the church and in his two letters to Timothy.

There is clear evidence that the Ephesian congregation continued to maintain and adhere to sound doctrine even amid seasons of staunch opposition. Christians suffered significant persecution because Rome viewed Christianity as seceding from the state’s religion.<sup>84</sup> The administration of Rome believed that those who refused at least lip service to the traditional gods and to the emperor’s image were concealing some political conspiracy against the state. The conflict of religions in the early Roman Empire resulted in frequent persecution when the claims of Caesar clashed with the Christian conscience. Because Christians neither worshiped the Roman gods nor sacrificed for the emperors, they were accused of sacrilege and treason. In addition, since they had no “images” of God, Christians were considered “atheists.” This meant there was no need for new legislation to serve as a basis for prosecution of Christians.<sup>85</sup> Coleman-Norton,<sup>86</sup> quoting B. W. Henderson,<sup>87</sup> concluded that there was no new policy required for persecuting Christians as long as Christianity could be regarded as an unlicensed religion (*religio illicita*). Fragments from pagan/non-Christian sources vividly describe the hostility and opposition that Christians had to face during the late and post-apostolic era.

Compiled and translated by Grant,<sup>88</sup> these fragments assisted the researchers in understanding the hostility against Christians (including the church at Ephesus) during

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<sup>81</sup> II Tim 3:14.

<sup>82</sup> II Tim 3:12.

<sup>83</sup> II Tim 3:11-12.

<sup>84</sup> P. R. Coleman-Norton, *Roman State and Christian Church* (London: S.P.C.K., 1966).

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> B. W. Henderson, *Palestine, Its Historical Geography, with Topographical Index and Map* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1927).

<sup>88</sup> Robert M. Grant, *Second-century Christianity: A Collection of Fragments* (Louisville, KY: John Knox, 2003).

the first and second centuries. Pliny the Younger was governor of Bithynia and Pontus on the Black Sea around 110 AD. Grant noted that Pliny was sent to this distant province to provide “law and order.” Unsure what to do about the sect known as Christians, Pliny wrote Emperor Trajan (110 AD):

It is my custom, Majesty, to refer to you everything about which I have doubts...I have never attended examinations of Christians, and therefore I do not know what and how far it is customary to investigate or to punish.... Meanwhile, I have followed this procedure in the case of those who were denounced to me as Christians. I ask them if they were Christians. If they confessed, I asked a second and third time, threatening with punishment. I ordered those who persevered to be led away. For I did not doubt that whatever it might be that they confessed, certainly their stubbornness and unshakeable obstinacy ought to be punished.<sup>89</sup>

Emperor Trajan’s reply indicates his approval of Pliny’s procedure for punishing Christians.

You have followed the right procedure . . . in examining the cases of those who had been reported to you as Christians. . . . If they are reported and convicted they must be punished, but if someone denies he is a Christian and proves it by offering prayers to our gods, he is to obtain pardon by his repentance, even though he was previously suspect.<sup>90</sup>

Cornelius Tacitus, proconsul of Asia in 112-113 AD, discusses Christians when dealing with the fire at Rome under Nero. Though written at the beginning of the second century, Grant<sup>91</sup> noted that it speaks to the resolute commitment of Christians to continue in their faith amid great persecution.

To obliterate the rumor [that he had started the fire] Nero substituted as guilty, and punished with the most refined tortures, a group hated for its crimes and called “Christians” by the mob. After Christus, the founder of the name, had been punished by death through the procurator Pontius Pilate, the hateful superstition was suppressed for a moment but burst forth again not only in Judaea, where this evil originated, but [abroad].<sup>92</sup>

In 122-123 AD, Minucius Fundanus, the proconsul of Asia received a letter from Emperor Hadrian regarding current mob actions against Christians.<sup>93</sup> Even though Emperor Hadrian states that restraint should be exhibited when accusing Christians, the letter demonstrates that Christians continued to be persecuted:

To Minucius Fundanus. I have received a letter written to me from your predecessor, the most illustrious Serennius Granianus. It seems to me that the matter should not remain without investigation, so that men may not be troubled or provide subject matter for the malice of informers. If then the provincials can make a strong case for this petition against the Christians, so that they can answer for it before court, they will turn to this alone.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 4-5.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 5-6.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 5-6.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 7.



Colman-Norton,<sup>95</sup> in his collection of fragments of legal Roman documents from circa 113-535 AD, comments, “popular clamour or natural disaster whereby people could persuade themselves that divine wrath was displayed, often was another incentive to institute persecution.”<sup>96</sup> Further, Colman–Norton quotes Tertullian, “If the Tiber has risen to the walls [of Rome], if the Nile has not risen to the fields, if the sky has stood still [viz. a drought], if the earth has moved [viz. an earthquake], if there has been famine, if there has been pestilence, at once is raised the cry: ‘The Christians to the lion!’” Two centuries later on the same continent, St. Augustine preserved a proverb, “Rain falls; Christians are the cause.”<sup>97</sup> Early Christians, including those in Ephesus, experienced staunch opposition and tremendous pressure to denounce sound doctrine, yet they remained committed.

During the late-apostolic era, the church at Ephesus is commended by the apostle John in Revelation 2:2 for its commitment to maintaining sound doctrine, “I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.” Even though this commitment was challenged by political pressures from the Roman government, opposition from religious groups, and cultural changes commonly resulting in persecution,<sup>98</sup> the church at Ephesus remained resolute in its commitment to sound doctrine during the late-apostolic era.

This commitment continues into and during the post-apostolic era. Ignatius<sup>99</sup> of Antioch (c. 110-117 AD) in his letter to the Ephesians repeatedly commended the church for its resolute commitment to the tenets of Christianity:

1. You are imitators of God.<sup>100</sup>
2. Indeed Onesimus himself gives great praise to your good order in God, for you all live according to truth, and no heresy dwells among you; nay, you do not even listen to any unless he speak concerning Jesus Christ in truth.<sup>101</sup>
3. Indeed you have not been deceived, but belong wholly to God.<sup>102</sup>
4. You indeed live according to God.<sup>103</sup>
5. I have learnt, however, that some from elsewhere have stayed with you, who have evil doctrine; but you did not suffer them to sow it among you, and stopped your ears, so that you might not receive what they sow.<sup>104</sup>

The letter of Aurelius<sup>105</sup> on trials of Christians (ca. 161) speaks to the commitment of Christians amid persecution:

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<sup>95</sup> Coleman-Norton, *Roman State and Christian Church*.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>98</sup> Colin J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1986).

<sup>99</sup> Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol.1 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1912).

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, (1.1).

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, (6.2).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, (8.1).

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, (8.1).

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, (9.1).

<sup>105</sup> Coleman-Norton, *Roman State and Christian Church*.

. . . To them [Christians], when accused, it would be preferable to be reputed to die on behalf of their own god rather than to live; consequently they even win, surrendering their own lives rather than complying with what you demand them to do . . . whenever these occur, you are disheartened and you compare our condition with theirs [Christians]. They indeed become more boldly outspoken.<sup>106</sup>

Epictetus (50-120 AD) was an ex-slave who became a Stoic teacher and, after being banished from Rome under Domitian at the end of the first century, conducted a school at Nicopolis in Asia. There, his pupil, the Roman administrator Arrian, recorded Epictetus' lectures and conversations. Even though Epictetus refers to the Christians only once, calling them "Galileans," he provides a positive testimony of the Christians' commitment to sound doctrine amid persecution during this time.<sup>107</sup>

If madness can produce this attitude [of detachment] toward these things [death, loss of family and property], and also habit, as with the Galileans, can no one learn from reason and demonstration that God has made everything in the universe, and the whole universe itself, to be unhampered and self-sufficient, and the parts of it for the use of the whole?<sup>108</sup>

The Ephesian church remained resolute in its commitment to sound doctrine from the time of the writing of Ephesians and I and II Timothy into the early post-apostolic era.

#### *Profitability in Adherence to Love for One Another/Care for the Needy*

Paul, in his letter to the Ephesian church, commends the congregation for its love<sup>109</sup> and exhorts the congregation to "know this love that surpasses knowledge,"<sup>110</sup> bear "with one another in love,"<sup>111</sup> and "live a life of love."<sup>112</sup> John R. W. Stott<sup>113</sup> identifies love as a primary characteristic of the new society created through Jesus Christ as part of God's eternal purpose. In this new society, of which the church at Ephesus was a part, the fruit of this love "stands out in bright relief against the somber background of the old world"<sup>114</sup> and is evidenced by unity and peace instead of division, alienation, hatred, and strife. It manifests itself in caring more for the needs of others than for oneself.

I and II Timothy provide evidence that Paul and Timothy, during their leadership of the Ephesian church, exhorted the congregation to love one another. Seven times in I Timothy alone Paul explicitly refers to and enforces the importance of adhering to his instruction to love one another. Paul encouraged the church to demonstrate this love

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>107</sup> Grant, *Second-century Christianity*.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>109</sup> Ephes 1:15.

<sup>110</sup> Ephes 3:19.

<sup>111</sup> Ephes 4:2.

<sup>112</sup> Ephes 5:2.

<sup>113</sup> John R. W. Stott, *God's New Society: The Message of Ephesians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979)

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 9.

through caring for the needy and gave careful, detailed instructions for caring for widows as an example of such love.<sup>115</sup>

The effectiveness of Paul and Timothy's teaching is exhibited during the post-apostolic era in Ignatius of Antioch's letter to the Ephesians in which he commends the church at Ephesus for its example of love. He wrote, "And Crocus also, who is worthy of God and of you, whom I received as an example of your love, has relieved me in every way."<sup>116</sup> Ignatius also wrote, "Therefore by your concord and harmonious love Jesus Christ is being sung."<sup>117</sup> Rall suggests that the moral life of the church as a whole during this time seemed to have made steady advance such that even Roman critics of Christianity, like Pliny, admitted to the moral excellence of the life of its followers.<sup>118</sup> "The charity of the church was especially rich and beautiful. And yet there was wisdom in its exercise. The traveling brother was cared for two or three days. If he did not pass on then, he was to work; but the church was to help him find employment."<sup>119</sup> Lucian of Samosata, a critic of Christianity, spoke of the care and attention of the Christian community toward one individual, Peregrinus, during his imprisonment.

Later Peregrinus was arrested for this and cast into prison. . . . When he was imprisoned, the Christians, viewing the event as a disaster, did everything they could to rescue him. Then, as this was impossible, they gave him every other form of attention, not casually but with zeal. . . . elaborate meals were brought in. . . . Indeed, people even came from the cities of Asia, sent by the Christians at their common expense, to help and defend and encourage the man.<sup>120</sup>

The church at Ephesus continued to follow Paul and Timothy's instruction with regard to loving one another by caring for those in need.

### *Profitability in Adherence to Healthy Organization and Administration*

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul paints a picture of the spiritual organization of the church, which is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone."<sup>121</sup> The cornerstone is "part of and essential to the foundation; it helps to hold the building steady, and it also sets it and keeps it in line."<sup>122</sup> The Jewish and Gentile believers in Ephesus could appreciate this metaphor. The Jews could think of the temple in Jerusalem where "one ancient monolith excavated from the southern wall . . . measured 38 feet 9 inches in length"<sup>123</sup> and both Jews and Gentiles in Ephesus had before them "the magnificent, marble temple of Artemis ('great is Diana of the Ephesians'), one of the seven wonders of the ancient world."<sup>124</sup> Paul then moved

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<sup>115</sup> | Tim 5:3-16.

<sup>116</sup> Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, (2.1).

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, (4.1).

<sup>118</sup> Harris F. Rall, *New Testament History* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1914).

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 294.

<sup>120</sup> Grant, *Second-century Christianity*, 9.

<sup>121</sup> Ephes 2:20.

<sup>122</sup> Stott, *God's New Society*, 107-108.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

from describing the foundation and its cornerstone to describing the individual stones. Differing from Peter's picture of "living stones" being built into a spiritual house,<sup>125</sup> Paul adds additional stones ("you also") to purposefully include Gentile believers who would have been forbidden to enter the temple in Jerusalem.<sup>126</sup>

During their tenure as leaders, Paul and Timothy moved to more practical instruction for the Ephesian congregation about healthy organization and administration. This is exemplified in I and II Timothy where Paul most notably provides a list of qualifications for leadership positions in the church.

Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert. . . . He must also have a good reputation with outsiders. . . . Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. . . . A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. . . . Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household.<sup>127</sup>

Paul clearly establishes the necessary commitment level and mindset incumbent upon the church at Ephesus if it is to continue to maintain healthy organization and administration.

During the early post-apostolic era, Ignatius acknowledged and commended the Christian establishment in Ephesus when he wrote, "to the church, worthy of all felicitation [congratulation], which is at Ephesus in Asia."<sup>128</sup> During this era, non-Christians also acknowledged a vast, strong, and influential organization of Christians. Commenting on Trajan's response to Pliny in ca. 113 AD, Coleman-Norton<sup>129</sup> says, "While considering Christianity only as a "depraved and extravagant superstition" and while complaining at its prevalence in his province, yet the governor could not grasp the "underlying connexion between the two phenomena in Bithynia that caused Pliny the greatest concern – the decay of civic institutions and the spread of Christianity" in that "a vitality which was no longer finding a satisfactory outlet in secular civic life was flowing into the self-government of the local Christian communities in the municipal cells comprising the Roman body politic."<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> I Pet 2:4-5.

<sup>126</sup> Stott, *God's New Society*, 108-109.

<sup>127</sup> I Tim 3: 2-15.

<sup>128</sup> Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, (1.1).

<sup>129</sup> Coleman-Norton, *Roman State and Christian Church*.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

There is evidence that administrative health of the Ephesian church continued until the time of the Council of Ephesus in 431 AD.<sup>131</sup>

#### IV: Final Thoughts

The church at Ephesus did indeed follow the injunctions related to adhering to sound doctrine, loving one another as expressed in caring for the needy, and maintaining healthy organization and administration after Paul's last writing and his subsequent death; and they continued to follow these injunctions into the late-apostolic and post-apostolic eras even amid staunch opposition. The church thus remained faithful to Paul's teaching in Ephesians and I and II Timothy.

The question that launched this study was whether Paul and Timothy as a heterogeneous leadership team were profitable (according to the instruction given in Paul's letters – Ephesians and I and II Timothy) in the turbulent environment of their day. This question came from reflecting on Proposition 21 of Hambrick and Mason's Upper Echelons Theory.<sup>132</sup> ("In turbulent environments, team heterogeneity will be positively associated with profitability."<sup>133</sup>)

After developing the three key concepts (heterogeneity, turbulent environment, and profitability), this study provided support for each. Paul and Timothy were a heterogeneous leadership team functioning in a turbulent environment. A sketch of Paul and Timothy's differing personal backgrounds (birthplace, family, education, conversion experience, and age) and differing leadership experiences demonstrates the heterogeneity of their leadership. The heresies with which Paul and Timothy contended and the persecution of Christians demonstrate the turbulence of the environment. A study of the history of the Ephesian church in the years following Paul and Timothy's ministry verifies the profitability of their ministry. They successfully trained faithful men who continued and reproduced their work in subsequent generations of leaders.

In order to support the proposition that team heterogeneity is necessary for profitability in a turbulent environment, this study examined two areas: the injunctions set forth in Paul's writings in Ephesians and I and II Timothy and the conduct of the Ephesian church in Asia Minor from the time of the writing of the epistles (late-apostolic era) to the early second century (early post-apostolic era, circa 70-120 AD). This strain of research was necessary because true "profitability" could not be derived simply by documents (in this case Acts 20, Ephesians, and I and II Timothy) that reflect one leader corroborating with another leader as to what should be done. What was needed in order to conclude that the leadership team was profitable was evidence that the followers continued to follow the injunctions set forth by Paul and Timothy's leadership. This study not only describes the injunctions Paul entreated the church at Ephesus to follow but also provides evidence that the church at Ephesus continued to follow these injunctions even in the midst of challenges within and staunch opposition without.

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<sup>131</sup> George T. Kurian, ed., *Nelson's New Christian Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 271.

<sup>132</sup> Hambrick and Mason, "Upper Echelons."

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

### *Limitations*

This study limited its research to three injunctions (to adhere only to sound doctrine, to love one another as expressed through caring for the needy, and to maintain healthy organization and administration) because of the unique challenge in researching the Ephesian church in the late-apostolic to the post-apostolic era (circa 70-120 AD), namely, that there is not much written about the Ephesian church during this time. This study made conclusions only in these three areas since they were relatively clear and represented in the literature. Both biblical and extrabiblical sources contributed enough to provide a sketch of the life and spiritual development of the church at Ephesus in order to make some limited, yet adequate, conclusions.

### *Significance of the Study*

This study is significant because it encourages the church to consider current secular research in the areas of leadership and management to complement the tools used in church administration and hiring. It provides guiding principles for churches wishing to make well-informed future leadership hiring decisions. It brings the unique dynamics within the context of ministry to the attention of leadership; it brings to the attention of both secular and Christian leadership theorists that even though the ministry context has unique dynamics, leadership theory still applies. This study also provides a foundation for the researcher who may wish to form a ministerial UET.

In addition, this study followed through with the stated desire Hambrick and Mason<sup>134</sup> articulated – to “stimulate empirical inquiry into upper echelons.”<sup>135</sup> More recently, in a 2003 e-mail communication, theorist Hambrick personally expressed specific interest in a study comparing UET to a ministerial context. Admittedly, a ministry context was not initially in mind during the formation of the original UET. Nevertheless, to attempt to translate its tenets into other contexts, including ministry contexts, could provide points of continuity/discontinuity that may serve as building blocks to future theories yet unknown.

### *Suggestions for Future Research*

As demonstrated throughout this study, evidence supports the validity of proposition 21 of the Upper Echelons Theory in the ministry context of Paul and Timothy. Additional study into the other propositions of UET may provide possible continuities/discontinuities between this theory and the ministry context. This may assist the leadership theorist and/or theologian by providing empirical boundary lines between congruent and incongruent elements of leadership theories in a ministry context. This knowledge would be of benefit in managing a ministerial/religious organization and of practical value in knowing which theories should be adopted in practice. Continuing to evaluate leadership principles and theories within a biblical context will provide

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 198.

additional support for or provoke thoughtful revision of current ministerial leadership principles.

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## BEYOND SERVANT LEADERSHIP

JACK NIEWOLD, PH.D.

I argue that the servant leadership model that has been widely adopted by Christians has not been an unmixed blessing. Servant leadership in its secular form is based on non-Christian secular and religious ideas. But even in its Christianized form it is reflective of a heterodox and distorted Christology, which it in turn helps to perpetuate. I attempt to identify the elements of Christology that modern evangelicalism and its version of servant leadership neglect. Next, I endeavor to rehabilitate these neglected aspects of Christology in order to formulate a new model of leadership that I call *martyria*, a biblical term that I briefly explicate. Following a short exercise where I speculate what *martyria* might look like today, I argue that it is within this new martyriological model of leadership that the servant motif finds its true home. The implication is that when servanthood is lifted from its matrix as adjunct to *martyria* and permitted to usurp a central role in leadership formation, the result is weak leadership ill-suited to the exigencies of our time. Martyriological or witness-based leadership, on the other hand, contains the role of servant, but is much better suited in critical ways to the present historical *kairos*.

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In recent decades, the idea of servant leadership has become the prevailing model of leadership within the Christian community, as a Google.com search will readily show.<sup>1</sup> By now the outpouring of literature and activity relating to servant leadership is

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of writing this paper I did a Google advanced search using the two combinations “Christian transformational leadership” and “Christian servant leadership.” The results for the former were approximately 273,000 references, while the latter yielded approximately 1,950,000 references.



familiar to many people.<sup>2</sup> As both a theoretical and a pragmatic paradigm, the servant motif leaves other leadership paradigms, such as charismatic or transformational, far behind. But this state of affairs may be due for a change. Recently there have been stirrings of discontent. Some have questioned the servant motif on moral, metaphysical, and biblical grounds.<sup>3</sup> I am generally sympathetic with those who take a skeptical approach to servant leadership, not least because the undue attention paid to it may have prevented the development of alternative leadership models. The thesis of this article is to suggest another paradigm for Christian leadership, one more in keeping with the exigencies of our time, yet one in the context of which the servant motif will find its true expression. In the text following, we will first look at the cracks in the foundation of servant leadership, then discuss a different sort of Christian leadership that may be more suited to the world in which we are coming to live.

### I: The Uneasy Hegemony of Servant Leadership

H. Richard Niebuhr, in his 1951 book *Christ and Culture*, wrote the following: It would not be surprising if a new school of interpreters arose in the wake of [the] existentialists with an attempt to understand him [Jesus] as the man of radical humility. But the humility of Jesus is humility before God, and can only be understood as the humility of the Son. He neither exhibited nor commended and communicated the humility of inferiority-feeling before other men. Before Pharisees, high priests, Pilate, and “that fox” Herod he showed a confidence that had no trace of self-abnegation. Whatever may be true of his Messianic self-consciousness, he spoke with authority and acted with confidence of power.<sup>4</sup>

These words were a prophetic admonition that in many regards went unheeded. In the decades following Niebuhr’s warning, a mixture of existentialism, applied psychology, and Eastern mysticism provided much of the impulse of progressive intellectual culture in America and the West.<sup>5</sup> Out of this milieu arose a number of new spiritual currents, one of which was the teaching of Robert Greenleaf called “servant leadership.”<sup>6</sup> Greenleaf’s ideas caught on quickly in the secular sphere and have been widely accepted in Christian circles that were themselves prepared for it by this same cultural *Zeitgeist*. One might say that post-Lausanne evangelicalism and servant leadership were made for each other as the “radically humble” Jesus of Niebuhr’s vision became the rage of both movements. Today it is difficult to visit evangelical churches, colleges,

<sup>2</sup> Amazon.com currently lists approximately 2,400 books on servant leadership. This scarcely begins to cover the subject, however, since the scholarly literature in servant leadership, which is not significantly included in Amazon’s listing, is itself immense.

<sup>3</sup> For critiques of servant leadership, see, for instance, Yvonne Bradley, “Servant Leadership: A Critique of Robert Greenleaf’s Concept of Leadership,” *Journal of Christian Education* 42 (1999): 43-54; Joseph Maciariello, “Lessons in Leadership and Management from Nehemiah,” *Theology Today* 60 (2003): 397-407; Mark Wells, “Servant Leadership: A Theological Analysis of Robert K. Greenleaf’s Concept of Human Transformation,” UMI Microform 3124330 (2004), an unpublished doctoral dissertation.

<sup>4</sup> H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper, 1951), 26.

<sup>5</sup> On the intellectual developments in America and their influence on the church, see any of D. F. Wells’ recent books, especially *No Place for Truth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994).

<sup>6</sup> Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (New York: Paulist, 1977).

or service organizations where there is not at least some mention of servant leadership. Recently, a young pastor told me, "During my four years at a Christian college I heard about servant leadership countless times. In fact, it is one of the strongest memories of my education, though I have never been clear what it meant." Servant leadership has become a mainstay of popular books and seminars for Christian confessional groups as different as Southern Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Pentecostals. To those who ask, "Who is talking about servant leadership?," the reply is "Who isn't?"

But is servant leadership a benign presence? In spite of its near-universal popularity, I want to suggest that this uncritical acceptance of servant leadership by Christian leaders has a distorting effect on our understanding of who Jesus Christ is, what his work is, and what his continuing presence in the world is to look like. The orthodox *Christology* that had loosely prevailed in the West since the Council of Chalcedon (451 AD) has given way to a modern Jesuology that inhabits liberation, secular, and evangelical theology alike. Nor has this development been a mere academic project. Many of those who set out to domesticate servant leadership for use by Christian leaders and ministers have themselves been changed by the strange figure they have invited into their midst. I would like to point out some of the doctrinal components of this development.

## II: The Heterodox Jesus of Modern Evangelicalism

I will identify three theological developments that, when taken together, form a Christological composite very different from the Christology of the early church and the Reformation. Familiarizing ourselves with this new composite may help us to understand why servant leadership has found such a ready reception within modern evangelicalism, and why evangelicalism in turn has failed to challenge the tenets of servant leadership. The three developments predate servant leadership's appearance, but they provided a seedbed where it readily took root and flourished in American Christianity. Contemporary worship, missiology, and ministry have all been changed in the process. I would suggest that the current fascination with the concept of incarnational theology and practice is part of this same process.<sup>7</sup>

In the discussion following, I present each of these three theological developments as a polarity. Each of the poles represents a necessary but incomplete view of an aspect of the doctrine of the incarnation. The tendency will be to view the polarities as opposites, though it is more correct to think of them as complements. When the two poles are taken together, they form a synthesis that represents a more complete doctrinal unity. This will become clear as we proceed. It is important to keep in mind that the polarities are fictional devices that I use for the purpose of discussion.

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<sup>7</sup> In my recent unpublished doctoral dissertation, I distinguished between two ways in which the term "incarnational" is applied to leadership and ministry. First, incarnational as an adjective is used loosely to refer to contextualization in missions and to lifestyle witness in ministry and leadership. This is the far more common employment of the term. The primary exponent of this version of incarnational ministry is Darrel Guder, *The Incarnation and the Church's Witness* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1999). The second use of the term is as a theory that describes an ontological witnessing presence, based on Christological anthropology. I have developed this theory in *Incarnational Leadership: Towards a Distinctly Christian Theory of Leadership* (PhD dissertation, Regent University, 2006).

There is no suggestion that the two poles I identify for these doctrinal issues exhaust the matter for any of them. Yet I hope that the use of polarities will clarify the issues under discussion. The polar complements will be italicized.

### III: Kenosis and Pleroma

First, the so-called *kenotic* (empty) emphasis in the scriptures, whereby the earthly ministry of Jesus is understood primarily in terms of his surrender of the prerogatives of deity, has in pastoral theology come to dominate and eclipse the *pleromatic* (full) emphasis, which accentuates the constant deity and progressive glorification of Christ as man, most notably in the writings of John. Kenosis is usually associated with the synoptic gospels, but also with certain Pauline writings, particularly the hymn of Phil 2:6-8. We might say that Phil 2, the *locus classicus* for kenosis, has crowded out Col 2, a pleromatic passage, as a description of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

But it is a mistake to see the life and work of Jesus merely as a progressive march to the cross accompanied by a number of signs and wonders and humble acts of mercy calculated to bring Christ glory only in hindsight. The coming of Jesus is the coming of the kingdom of God and the conquest of the enemy. Thomas Oden expresses the pleromatic view of Jesus as follows:

While incarnate, the Son was truly God. Scripture does not teach that his divinity ceased, was cast aside, absorbed, or left behind. As incarnate Lord he acted in a way that only God can act: forgiving sin, giving life to the dead, revealing the secret thoughts of persons, dividing loaves and fishes, and laying down his life and taking it up again.<sup>8</sup>

The kenotic Jesus we meet in the pages of much popular leadership literature, on the other hand, is closely related both to the Jesus of nineteenth-century liberal theology and to the contemporary Jesus of “open theism.”<sup>9</sup> Here is a Jesus almost completely identified with us in our human tentativeness and angst, for whom leadership is largely a matter of communicating self-fulfillment and empowerment to his disciples.

### IV: Latin and Classic

The second development occurs when contemporary evangelicalism amplifies and refocuses an existing doctrinal trend whereby the earthly life of Jesus is accorded autonomy vis-à-vis his death. Here we see the near-complete loss of what Gustaf Aulen identified as the classical view of the atonement of Christ and its replacement with what

<sup>8</sup> Thomas C. Oden, *The Word of Life: Systematic Theology, II* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1989), 114.

<sup>9</sup> “Open theism” refers to a recent movement within evangelicalism that calls into doubt many of the historic Reformed doctrines, such as God’s foreknowledge, foreordination, and wrath. Open theism seems to have intellectual affinity with process theology, and in its dilution of the gravity of sin and the need for radical justification open theology is akin to the Liberalism of the nineteenth century and its twentieth-century descendants. The chief exponent of open theology is Clark Pinnock, whose book *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God’s Openness* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), seems to be the primary text of the movement.

the same author calls the Latin view.<sup>10</sup> Though Aulen's thesis has never, even from the first, gone unchallenged, his typology is compelling. The classical view of the atonement, in brief, stressed that the life of Jesus, no less than his death, is integral to his saving presence in the world. This view is closely related to the pleromatic emphasis presented above. Many theologians of the early church, such as Irenaeus, Athanasius, and Gregory of Nyssa, looked upon the life and work of Jesus as one of conquest of the powers of darkness through strong and peremptory command as much as through vicarious surrender and death. Jesus' acts, according to this early imagery, were warrior acts intended to deceive and conquer the evil one who had until then held humanity hostage. In spite of its occasional tendencies to fantastic extremes, this view of the atonement held sway through the early Middle Ages. The death of Christ, in this view, was seen as a ransom paid to release the souls of the lost, held in thrall by the evil one. "Its central theme," writes Aulen,

is the idea of the Atonement as a Divine conflict and victory; Christ—*Christus Victor*—fights against and triumphs over the evil powers of the world, the "tyrants" under which mankind is in bondage and suffering, and in Him God reconciles the world to Himself.<sup>11</sup>

The primary alternative to the classic view of the atonement, which dates from the work of Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo?* (ca.1090), is to a large extent the only view known in the West today. This view, variously called the Latin, forensic, objective, or substitutionary understanding of the atonement, has the effect of centering the work of Christ in his death, which is viewed as a penalty paid to God for humanity's sin. This view tends to result in separating the death of Christ as a salvific event from the life of Christ. The latter, Christ's life, comes to be viewed as of secondary importance, something perhaps to emulate but not equal to his death. Moreover, once the life of Christ is demoted, as it were, from a soteriological to a moral event, the temptation is to reduce it further to a mere model, example, or object lesson for human imitation. It is in this sense that servant leadership interprets the life of Jesus, and in so doing helps perpetuate the Latin view at the expense of the classical, or dramatic, view of Christ's saving work. Because servant leadership's picture of Jesus is consistent with the exemplary model of Christ's life that results indirectly from the Latin view, there has been little critical attention given to alternative Christologies within the field of leadership. Servant leadership reinforces what many wish to believe about the son of God rather than what might otherwise be believed. Much of servant leadership theory seems to be based on circular reasoning: since Christian leadership according to the common argument must of necessity be servantlike, and since Christian leadership is based on what Christ was like, Christ must have been above all else a servant. But was he?

#### V: Divinization and Humanization

The third way in which modern evangelicalism reinterprets the doctrine of the incarnation is, paradoxically, to empty the latter of much of its anthropological

<sup>10</sup> Gustaf Aulen, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement* (New York: Macmillan, 1969).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

significance. It may seem odd to bring anthropology under the rubric of the incarnation, but for the Christian this is exactly where we must address the problem of the human. If the kenotic-pleromatic polarity relates to the person of the incarnation, and the Latin-classic polarity to the work of the incarnation, this next polarity addresses the question of the historical means, the how, of the incarnation.<sup>12</sup> The how of the incarnation, its historical manifestations, is intimately involved in the question of the human, since Christ is present in the world through men and women who have his Holy Spirit. His person and work are channeled primarily through them. This ongoing presence of Christ is what I mean by Christological or incarnational anthropology, a concept that goes far beyond ideas of our being the “hands and feet of Jesus.” I have divided this third dimension of the incarnation into two aspects, the *divinization* of the human as one pole and the *humanization* of the human as the other.

In regards to the first two polarities discussed earlier, evangelicalism distorted each by suppressing one aspect while thrusting another forward. That is, the classic view of the atonement and the pleromatic view of Christ’s life were suppressed. Here, in the anthropological dimension, there has been a suppression of *both* aspects of the polarity. It is as though an anthropological meaning of the incarnation does not exist, as though the act of God becoming man has no human implications beyond the “saving of our soul” or inspiring us to good works. That is, the incarnation is usually understood only instrumentally, but not ontologically. But “[t]he incarnation has vast importance beyond Christology, strictly speaking,” writes Oden, “for it teaches us about our very selves.”<sup>13</sup> And what it teaches us is that the vocation to be fully human goes beyond what most of us imagine.

We will look at two implications of Christological anthropology for human experience. These have to do with the means whereby the incarnation acts on the human and through the human on the world. The first implication is what in theology is called divinization, the divine process whereby, in the formulation of Barth,<sup>14</sup> the humanity of the believer is taken up into the divinity of Christ and thereby transformed. This somewhat mystical process is called by the early theologians *theosis*, or *theopoiesis*, and is understood as the actual communication to humans of some of the essence of God.<sup>15</sup> Eastern Orthodoxy to this day speaks of theosis as a synonym for

<sup>12</sup> David F. Wells, in his recent Christology, *Above all Earthly Powers: Christ In a Postmodern World*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 7-8, describes how, in contrast to a Christology he had written twenty years earlier, that doctrine has come to encompass three aspects rather than the traditional two of the person and work of Christ. Now it is necessary, Wells holds, to add a description of *how* the incarnation is to be communicated in the culture of our time. I agree with this. I take this to mean that the gospel must be transmitted according to categories intrinsic to the doctrine of Christ rather than according to human standards, say of a Tillichian type. This casts a great deal of doubt on our efforts to contextualize the gospel. In my model of leadership, developed in this paper, I draw on the doctrine of the incarnation itself, rather than sociological or philosophical insights, to supply the categories necessary for the proclamation and propagation of the gospel.

<sup>13</sup> Oden, *The Word of Life*, 106.

<sup>14</sup> Barth, cited in Ray S. Anderson, *On Being Human: Essays in Theological Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 224. See also Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. 4/3.

<sup>15</sup> Theosis, variously called divinization or deification, is a term that came to be attached to the doctrine that the believer in the act of believing and devotion takes upon himself or herself something of the very nature of divinity. This teaching is the correlative of the doctrine of the incarnation, whereby Christ takes upon himself the essential nature of humanity. Theosis holds that just as Christ was glorified in

salvation itself, though in the West we have so lost track of this teaching that it will be unfamiliar to most Christians. Currently there is a rediscovery of this theological category occurring in the West, but it is still a neglected aspect of Christian anthropology, perhaps due in part to its superficial resemblance to certain Mormon teachings and to New Age panentheism.

The second anthropological implication for us is what we might call the humanization of the human that we find in the incarnation. By this I mean that it is only through the incarnation that we can understand what true humanity is to look like. "For Christian anthropology it is a matter of capital importance that in Christ human nature appeared in its original and authentic form," writes Robert Louis Wilken.<sup>16</sup> Humanization is the antidote to the excessive spiritualization to which our faith is prone, on the one hand, and the tendency toward reducing faith to ethics, on the other. With the concept of humanization the focus is nearly always on the public, historical expression of the incarnation, a posture that complements the inner personalism of divinization. It is through the human agency that Christ is revealed to the world, and it is in the form of the human that Christ is most clearly seen and understood. "The incarnation is constitutive of certain worldly realities," writes Colin Gunton. "It achieves things... Simply, the incarnation achieves its redemptive end by a form of divine immanence in the world."<sup>17</sup> Until the nineteenth century divinization and humanization were implicitly held together, even when they were not clearly understood. In recent times this has changed, either by a neglect of Christological anthropology altogether or by stressing one aspect to the neglect of the other.

## VI: Humanization and Leadership

I wish to develop the idea of Christological humanization at greater length, since this is the basis upon which a model or theory of Christian leadership must be developed. It is critical for theorists of leadership and other human arts and sciences to understand this doctrine. Where humanization occurs in the biblical sense, the program of God moves forward historically and socially. Humanization, when linked to and undergirded by divinization, provides a broad and stable platform for Christian action that is not accessible through kenotic imitationism.

Humanization may also be viewed as the corporate dimension of the incarnation, in the form of the church, and especially in its purest embodiment, the missionary movement. The missionary movement has been, quite simply, the most humanizing event in history, though it has become unfashionable for Christians to admit this in

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the flesh, so the flesh was glorified in him. The doctrine was held by most of the early church fathers to one degree or another. Theosis is found in Irenaeus, Athanasius, and John of Damascus, among others. In recent years there has been a renaissance of sorts in the study of this ancient doctrine. Curiously, it is Lutherans, particularly in Finland, who have led the way here. See, especially, Carl Braaten and Robert W. Jensen (Eds.), *Union with Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *One With God: Salvation as Deification and Justification* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004); and Norman Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition* (London: Oxford, 2006).

<sup>16</sup> Robert Louis Wilken, *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought* (New Haven: Yale, 2003), 154.

<sup>17</sup> Colin E. Gunton, *Christ and Creation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 90.

recent decades. Hendrikus Berkhof sees modernity itself, in all its self-contradictions, as the expression of Christological humanization in its missional form. “The first and central mark of [the Kingdom of God in history] is the continuation of the missionary movement,” writes Berkhof. “We have become so accustomed to it that we walk amidst the miracles without seeing.”<sup>18</sup> But this humanizing aspect of the doctrine has also often been changed from its biblical meaning and made captive to various ideologies. Liberation theology, for instance, made much of humanization some years ago, intending with the term to convey something like “man come of age”—a new form of post-Christian humanity. The secularization of Christianity, it was held, was a new and more advanced form of faith that would universalize the *missio dei* and bring it into alignment with those social currents that, to the liberationists, promised social justice, equality, and, to many, the end of capitalism. Choan-Seng Song, a Taiwanese liberation theologian, made humanization one of the centerpieces of his program,<sup>19</sup> though he was hardly the only one to link humanization with utopian ideology.

But biblical humanization is much more than, and perhaps something entirely different from, Marxist programs of liberation theology. Humanization, as noted, is the other side of divinization; as such, it is the apprehension, within the life of the church and in the experience of individuals, of the essential humanity that we see only in Jesus Christ. Humanization, in this sense, comprises not so much notions of personal fulfillment, but rather the historical and public expression of the saving incarnation acting through faithful lives, the church, and the kingdom of God in time and place. Individuals who represent the humanization of the incarnation become, in the words of Brunner, truly “historical.”<sup>20</sup> Catholic historians such as Christopher Dawson and Thomas Woods<sup>21</sup> interpret the core of what we know to be Western civilization as the outworking of this incarnational principle through people and institutions. Humanization is the public face of the inner transformation denoted by theosis and is never far removed from the program of God in disciplining the nations. When humanization is held in proper relationship with divinization, the results can be world-historical. The recent interest in the abolition of slavery in early nineteenth-century England under the influence of William Wilberforce highlights an instance of this kind of biblical and theological humanization.

It is in such a theological environment that we must develop our ideas of Christian leadership. Our work in this world is determined by our understanding of ourselves as participants in the very incarnation of God in Christ. Popular evangelicalism and its version of servant leadership, on the other hand, present a much-reduced theological composite: a Jesus divorced from the pleromatic and classic influences of historical doctrine and an implicit agnosticism concerning the anthropological dimension in either its divinizing or humanizing impulses. The result is a dehistoricized Jesus whose life and example is pushed forward at the expense of his

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<sup>18</sup> Ross Langmead, *The Word Made Flesh: Towards an Incarnational Missiology* (New York: University Press of America, 2004), 134-137.

<sup>19</sup> Hendrikus Berkhof, *Christ the Meaning of History* (Richmond: John Knox, 1966), 124-125.

<sup>20</sup> Emil Brunner, *Man in Revolt: A Christian Anthropology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1947), 450.

<sup>21</sup> See Thomas E. Woods, Jr., *How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2005) and Christopher Dawson, “Civilization in Crisis,” *Christianity and European Culture: Selections from the Work of Christopher Dawson*, ed. G. J. Russello (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1998), 65-83.

atoning life and death and whose ongoing presence in the world is seen as a disembodied spirituality. Here is a Christianized humanism suited to the modern autonomous self unfamiliar with, and even hostile to, such essential soteriological categories as transcendent holiness, sin, personal moral corruption, repentance, conversion, and even *missio dei*. It is little wonder that servant leadership glides easily across the great ontological divides that separate traditional orthodoxy from postmodern spiritualities. This fits well with the technocratic culture of postmodern business. For the conflicted and tragic world beyond the soft certitudes of the modern corporate bookshelf, however, servant leadership has little to offer.

Furthermore, servant leadership is characterized by inward-directedness and Pelagianism. By inward-directedness, I mean that servant leadership stresses the interior mental and spiritual processes of the leader as the means whereby outward change is effected. "Consciousness precedes being," writes Parker Palmer, "and consciousness can help deform or reform our world."<sup>22</sup> By Pelagian, I mean that the servant posture often presents itself as the means whereby both the leader and the follower find their human fulfillment, apart from the transforming power of Jesus Christ. Servant leadership seems to say that it is the process of choosing servanthood over alternative pursuits that affects the life-changing experience of individuals and organizations. In true existentialist fashion, this choosing renders the leader's existence authentic, and such existence, whatever it may mean, is alone efficacious for organizational well-being. Here is the personal construction of reality common to many Pelagian movements.

Servant leadership as commonly understood is, then, an heir to these Christological distortions that have arisen in modern times, and, in turn, perpetuates them in the Christian context. What would happen, however, if we bring to bear on the issue of leadership those missing elements of Christology: the pleromatic understanding of Christ's person and the classical, or dramatic, view of his atoning work? Furthermore, what if we brought these neglected aspects into contact with a Christian anthropology that stressed divinization and humanization? I suggest that we could recover a much strengthened biblical conception of leadership that goes well beyond servant leadership, which at the same time has the resources to recast servanthood in its proper role, as an expression of biblical humanization. And just as the allure of servant leadership was part of the theological weakening of popular evangelicalism over the past thirty years, perhaps a more biblical theory of leadership will help us find our way back to a more robust Christology.

## VII: Theological Foundations for a New Model of Christian Leadership

If the above critique is even partially accurate it would indicate that the time has come for a new approach to biblical leadership. Let me bring forth at this point work that I have already done on this subject. I suggest that we adopt and build upon the biblical concept of *martyria*, which can be rendered, loosely, as "witness" or "testimony." More specifically, the term may be taken to mean confirming the truth through one's own

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<sup>22</sup> Parker J. Palmer, "Leading from Within," *Insights on Leadership: Service, Stewardship, Spirit, and Servant Leadership*, ed. Larry C. Spears (New York: John Wiley, 1998), 197-208.



words. I have elsewhere<sup>23</sup> developed *martyria* as the joining of divinization and humanization through an examination of the leadership of Richard Wurmbrand, whose writings and example provide a model of Christian presence based on martyrological concepts. Though unknown to most Western Christians, except in its variant “martyr,” *martyria* and cognates are terms common to the New Testament, where they have several meanings associated with the witness theme.<sup>24</sup> For the purposes of this paper I am most interested in the way this word cluster is used by Luke, once in his own gospel and throughout the Acts; John in his gospel and in the Apocalypse; and Peter in his first epistle. As developed in these scriptures, the term “*martyria*” and its cognate *martyr* denote the act of Christian public proclamation and witness that has the following characteristics.

First, as developed by Luke in his gospel (24:48) and in the Acts of the Apostles, *martyria*, the witness of the believer to Jesus, becomes the property of the wider church and is no longer limited to the apostolate. That is, witness to the truth is extended beyond the circle of those who had known Jesus first-hand to those who came into the church later and who may never have seen or heard Jesus. This is true in the case of Paul, but a host of others such as Stephen, Aquila, Priscilla, Apollos, and Timothy in the early church who had no personal knowledge of Jesus who became witnesses to him in addition to the apostles.

Second, *martyria* is self-referential in its nature, meaning that just as Jesus’ witness was to himself, so the testimony of the early church was to its own experience of Jesus.<sup>25</sup> Numerous times Paul used his experience on the Road to Damascus as the substance of his testimony.<sup>26</sup> Yes, he was testifying of the saving work of Christ, but he was doing so in the framework of his own conversion.

Third, in Luke’s use of the term “*martyria*,” the meaning of the word changes from a witness to the historic facticity of Jesus’ saving work to a witness regarding the significance of that work. Unlike the previous point, which stressed the self-referential nature of the witness, here the stress is on the public “application” of the witness. The witness no longer merely tells his or her own story or personal testimony, as it were. He or she no longer imagines that such an act alone is the witnessing act. Instead, the witness is widening and turning outward on the hearers. Self-witness was never an end in itself, any more than it was for Jesus. This aspect of witness was intended to bring *krisis* into the experience of the hearer that would lead to conversion.<sup>27</sup> One of the most graphic examples of this is Peter’s sermon to the Jerusalem crowd on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40). Peter recounts in v. 32 that he and others are “witnesses” to the resurrection of Jesus Christ; this is followed with a call to repentance and baptism.

Fourth, *martyria* refers to a very specific kind of witness, one that is done publicly. Though *martyria* is extended to the whole church in the Acts of the Apostles, it is an activity carried on only by those who publicly testify to the saving work of Jesus

<sup>23</sup> Jack W. Niewold, *Incarnational Leadership*.

<sup>24</sup> The following section on *martyria* is largely drawn from H. Strathmann, “Martyr, etc.” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. IV, eds. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 474-514.

<sup>25</sup> J. C. Hindley, “Witness in the Fourth Gospel,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 18 (1965): 319-337.

<sup>26</sup> Paul’s conversion, recounted in Acts 9:1-19, is referred to twice in Paul’s preaching in Acts (22:4ff., 26:12ff.) and four times in his epistles (Gal 1:15, 16; I Cor 9:1, 15:8; 2 Cor 4:6).

<sup>27</sup> Hindley, “Witness in the Fourth Gospel,” 322.

and who thereby suffer and in some instances die for this activity. Not all of those who suffer or die for what they believe are referred to as martyrs, but only those who do so in the act of publicly testifying to the significance of Jesus Christ.<sup>28</sup> This meaning of *martyria* is especially prominent in the Apocalypse. Indeed, *martyria* need not necessarily entail death at all, as passages in both 1 Pet (5:1) and the Apocalypse (19:10) show, though it does entail public witness.

Fifth, *martyria* seems to undergo a transformation through the New Testament from signifying a discrete act of witnessing, in earlier instances, to the portrayal of a lifestyle of habitual witnessing (and suffering). This is certainly the intent of 1 Pet 5:1, and John carries it further in the Apocalypse.<sup>29</sup> From being an instance of oral testimony that still retains the legal overtones of the non-Johannine gospels, the word “cluster,” and especially the term “*martyria*,” increasingly take on the sense of a vocational habitude. It is in this sense that a human life could be considered a life of *martyria* that the term is especially useful in the present context. Furthermore, because *martyria* is, by nature, *oral proclamation that results in crisis*, it is much more closely tied with the actual content of the gospel. Martyrological Christian presence, we may say, was a highly focused semiotic event. After all, a way of life that often entailed the suffering or death of the subject, precisely because of the public and oral nature of the proclamation, was one that was unlikely to be marked by ambiguity.

As I have attempted to show, *martyria* rests upon the base of a strong Christology and its complement, a robust theology of the human. The classical and pleromatic emphases, when brought together with their Latin and kenotic counterparts, give us a more vigorous understanding of Jesus’ nature. When this understanding is linked with the theologically developed picture of the human that we gain through divinization and humanization, we can begin to understand what *martyria* may have looked like in the early church. In his first epistle, Peter (5:1) links his career as a witness with participating in the sufferings and the glory of the Lord. This is identification with Christ at a more profound level than that implied in his being an eyewitness of the crucifixion, shattering as that must have been. Moreover, Peter’s formulation is perhaps as close as the New Testament comes in linking the experience of divinization with the vocation of witness. It is difficult to imagine that the early witnesses could have carried on their work had they not both believed in and experienced some sense of sharing in the divine nature, an insight I gained in my study of Wurmbrand. The early church seemed much more attuned to this than we today. “He [Christ] assumed a created human body,” writes Athanasius, “that, having renewed it as its creator, he might deify it in himself, and thus bring us all into the kingdom of heaven through our likeness to him.”<sup>30</sup> By looking at leadership as participation in the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ—a vocation Peter calls *martys*—we can also regain the insight of the early church that witness is the very heart of leadership. In the passage under review, Peter goes on to claim in vv. 2-3, that his participation in Christ, his *martyria*, is a basis for his

<sup>28</sup> On the view that it is not death that makes a martyr, but a specific kind of witness, see Strathmann, “Martyr, etc.,” 495, and George Dragas, “Martyrdom and Orthodoxy in the New Testament: The Theme of *Martyria* as Witness to the Truth,” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 30 (1985): 287-296.

<sup>29</sup> Strathmann, “Martyr, etc.,” 502.

<sup>30</sup> Henry Bettenson, *The Early Christian Fathers: A Selection from the Writings of the Fathers from St. Clement of Rome to St. Athanasius* (London: Oxford, 1969), 293.

claim to be a “presbyter,” a leader. In fact, in the biblical record it seems as though martyrria is one of the earliest ideas of leadership, although, of course, a global concept of modern leadership, apart from its many roles, was as yet unformulated.

It is for these reasons that I propose the use of martyrria as a central theme in the theoretical formulation of Christian leadership. Indeed, as Glasson<sup>31</sup> has held, martyrria is the preferred term to use when referring to the content of the proclamation as well as the act of proclaiming the Christian gospel. Martyrria is, Glasson stated, a better concept than the much-used theological term *kerygma*, which occurs in the New Testament only six times as “proclamation,” and all of these are in the Pauline epistles. The verb and noun forms of martyrria, on the other hand, occur more than six times as often as those associated with *kerygma* and are spread over a much broader scriptural range.

Furthermore, martyrria is a far more comprehensive idea than other popular biblical terms that are commonly used to describe various kinds of leadership. Martyrria as witness may be construed to encompass, as it were, many of the modes and offices of the church as well as the functions of the apostolic ministries. Interestingly enough, however, martyrria did not involve waiting on tables or care of the widows (Acts 6:1-7)—important as those acts of mercy were. The temptation came early on to identify the crucial work of public witness with domestic compassion, and this temptation was resisted as outside the more narrow scope of apostolic ministry. But if martyrria is not to be caught up in the daily housekeeping of the believing community, it does seem to involve mission, proclamation, and Christian evangelistic presence per se. As such it can be seen as constitutive of, in one respect or another, prophecy, pastoral ministry, teaching, missionizing, and evangelism. Again, however, though martyrria is a broad and protean concept, it is not open-ended. Where there is public, intentional proclamation of Jesus Christ to the world, but only then, martyrria seems to be present. This proclamatory work may apparently be done in any number of ways, making martyrria a flexible concept. Yet it is not synonymous with any one role, office, or gift.

Finally, we must address the question of how martyrria is to be understood in its relationship to modern Western leadership in general, and ministry in particular. Let me speculate for a moment here. If the divinizing and humanizing impulses described above are perceived as legitimate spiritual and psychological objects of faith, the humble believer who prayerfully apprehends them can scarcely remain unchanged. These divine charismata will represent, at a minimum, the infusion of metaphysical seriousness into one’s consciousness and work, whatever that work may be. When kept together, they seem to provide a distinct evangelical ethos that I perceived in Wurmbrand’s life and work. Divinization alone tends to mysticism and hyperspirituality, while humanization alone has led, as we have seen, in the direction of a secularized and worldly Christian presence. Together, however, the two offer the possibility of deeply grounded, worldly-wise witness. That this may have broad application in the fields of ministry and leadership is the point I am attempting to make, and it is here, I believe, that we can forge a relationship between martyrria and Christian ministry and work. Obviously, much more work needs to be done concerning this.

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<sup>31</sup> T. Francis Glasson, “Kerygma or Martyrria?,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 22 (1969): 90-95.

### VIII: The Meaning of Martyria Today

It is my argument that in the present historical era, martyriological leadership results from the apperception of biblical divinization and humanization on the part of the historical actor. I am not asserting that this is necessarily the only formula for biblical living and leading. Other leadership motifs have served their hour, and others may continue to do so in the future. The church lives in a series of *kairoi*, “moments,” that together make up the *aion*, “age,” of her history. Each *kairos* demands a certain type of leadership. In times of cultural Christianity, for instance, the prophetic role comes to the fore, with leaders calling the church away from its love affair with what Luther contemptuously called *Theologia Gloriam*, the perennial attempt to accommodate the gospel to a regnant spirit of the times. In times of great persecution, on the other hand, Christian leadership has assumed such forms as the pilgrim and the shepherd-protector. Given the times in which we live, a period of post-Christian secularism that is not yet quite openly anti-Christian, the martyriological model of Christian leadership seems, to me at least, the ideal leadership style. Ours is a transitional historical moment when the church of the West is marginalized, and the delegitimation of public Christianity looms on the horizon as a distinct possibility.

But what does martyria look like, beyond its general character of public, specific witness to Jesus Christ? Certainly, one can say that the historical disposition I am calling martyria will take many forms. Yet at its core will be an identifiable stance over against culture, a stance drawn from its grounding in confessional witness. Unlike the “lifestyle” postures that Christians have adopted in recent decades, including the servant orientation, martyria will retain at its center the genius of oral, public witness. Beyond that, let me briefly enumerate a number of broad historical components that characterize the present era and suggest ways in which martyria addresses them.

As I have said, we live in a period whose primary characteristic of uncompromising secularism tends to marginalize those who espouse public faith. It is not so much that the life of faith is openly mocked and run out of the market place; rather, we find our commitment relegated to the margins of life, while the processes of modernity that “really matter,” such as work, business, entertainment, and social exchanges, seem to occur according to their own secular mandates. Attempts to bring Christian witness into the center of secular life invoke sanctions, some of which are by now woven deeply into the fabric of contemporary social mores. Though open hostility is present from time to time, it is more likely that the zealous Christian will be faced with subtle hints that he or she is upsetting the delicate conventions of diversity. That alone is often enough to silence all but the most determined Christian.

If Christian faith has been pushed to the margins of society in the West, the center is occupied by relativism and subjectivism. So much has been written on this that it is unnecessary to belabor the subject. What does need to be mentioned here, however, is that these cultural currents are now part of the church’s experience as well. We have all read the statistics of sexual compromise, theological confusion, and what used to be called carnality within the walls of evangelicalism. At least half of Christian teenagers

lose their faith upon entering college, and even seminary students are often unsure of their spiritual grounding.<sup>32</sup>

These are some of the dominant trends in the affluent West that are affecting the church. But there is another world-historical trend occurring in our time, one not subject to the currents of secularism and subjectivity. This is the megatrend that missiologists and writers such as Lamin Sanneh, Andrew Walls, and Philip Jenkins<sup>33</sup> call “southern” Christianity. The rise of Southern Christianity is really a number of movements that, when taken together, comprise a demographic *coup de main* of incalculable proportions. One thing seems certain: if demographic trends in Africa, Latin America, and Asia continue as they have, the post-Christian West will soon give way to post-Western Christianity.<sup>34</sup> Even when one factors in the persistence of religious, even evangelical, activity in North America, the center of gravity for the world Christian movement is shifting inexorably to the south. Birth rates alone would indicate that Western (European, Australian, and American) Christianity is waning in terms of its influence in the greater context of world Christianity.

But it is not a question of mere demographics; Western Christianity is increasingly seen as an expression of its culture by virtue of the very interests and pursuits close to its heart. Internally, much that the Western church spends its time and treasure doing, including some of its theological and academic endeavors, would seem strange and irrelevant to the eighty percent of world Christians who are associated with the South. Externally, biblical Christianity is viewed as an alien and unwelcome presence among secular elites of our own culture. Western evangelicalism, in spite of its energy and intellectual accomplishments, still finds itself to be just one more curiosity among others when viewed from the center of the vast, amorphous, relativizing entity we know as popular culture.<sup>35</sup> Thus, even at home, leisured Western Christianity is often confused, self-obsessed, and theologically parochial, on the one hand, while regarded as an irrelevant cult by its host society, on the other.

Southern Christianity, however, is a much more dynamic presence in its various situations. In some regions it is ascendant as a cultural force, as in central Africa and Latin America, while in others it suffers for its public witness, as in northern Africa, India, China, and parts of southeast Asia. The church of the South is marked by brownness, blackness, poverty, and supernaturalism. In general, it leads the life of martyrdom daily. This is, in the words of Jenkins quoting C. S. Lewis, “thick” religion, as opposed to the

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<sup>32</sup> On the religious thinking of young people today, see Christian Smith, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>33</sup> See Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom* (New York: Oxford, 2002); Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 2003 and Andrew Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis), 1996.

<sup>34</sup> The quote to the effect that “the post-Christian west is giving way to post-western Christianity” is commonly ascribed to Lamin Sanneh, but I have not yet found it in reading his materials.

<sup>35</sup> Many commentators have argued in recent years, contra the notion that the west is becoming increasingly secularized, that America is more religious than ever. I contend that the Christianity of America, in both its evangelical and liberal iterations, is often shallow and ineffective in its relationship with our secular culture. Contemporary American Christianity seems to me more and more “cultic” (defined by inner spirituality rather than outward influence) and shoved to the margins, and its numerical strength has little impact on the general direction of culture. See, e.g., Richard John Neuhaus, *The Naked Public Square* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984).

“clear” religion of the global “north.”<sup>36</sup> It is in the broad tableau of Southern Christianity that we may be able to discern the face of martyriological witness and leadership most clearly.

We may need to learn from third-world Christians techniques for surviving in hostile social climates, while opening ourselves to the moral and spiritual renewal their experience may offer us. The martyriological model may also encourage a countercultural posture toward secularism in the West just as it trains the mind for perseverance in the face of persecution in the South. Martyria, furthermore, takes seriously the demonic in much of modernity, making spiritual warfare a central responsibility of the leader. I do not believe servant leadership is capable of confronting such exigencies, bound as it is to a certain understanding of modern rationalism and to institutions specific to the educated West. Something more robust will be required in the decades to come.

### IX: The Rehabilitation of the Servant Motif

Having stated the above reservations concerning servant leadership, let me attempt to put the servant theme back on firm ground. Earlier I argued that the servant motif finds its proper home within the Christological category I have called humanization. This is not the only doctrinal home for servanthood, since the servant role also appears across the other Christological categories already discussed. However, insofar as servanthood is understood as an aspect of leadership, it falls properly under the anthropological dimension of the incarnation, most specifically humanization. Traditionally, servant leadership has been associated closely with the doctrine of kenosis, an association that, as we have seen, leads to attempts to imitate what is perceived to be the humble Jesus, with many attendant distortions for both Christology and humanity. Of course, we find a wide range of references to the servant in the New Testament. Jesus calls himself servant, one who came not to be served, but to serve (Mk 10:45). Believers are called servants at many points through the scriptures (i.e., Matt 10:24, 20:27, 25:21; John 15:15; Rom 1:1, 16:1; 1 Cor 9:19; Gal 1:10; Col 4:12; 2 Tim 2:24; Heb 3:5; 2 Pet 1:1; Jude 1—to cite only a few). There is not space here to develop the various meanings of servanthood in the New Testament or even the diverse biblical terms that we translate “servant.” Suffice it to say that servanthood is part of the biblical composites we know as leadership and discipleship; there is no denying this fact. Yet what we have seen happen in the widespread adoption of the servant model is the elevation of a role to the place of a calling, and it is this that I have endeavored to critique. One who views the evangelical world today may be excused for concluding that the servant motif has eclipsed the older and more primary callings of the Christian as disciple and witness, in practice if not in theory. Many have “neglected the Word of God in order to wait on tables” (Acts 6:2), reducing the gospel to ethical considerations.

It is significant, as Mather<sup>37</sup> argued some years ago, that Paul was appointed to be a servant when he was called to be a witness (Acts 26:16-18), but that the servant role was understood in terms of the apostolic ministry he was to fulfill. Throughout the

<sup>36</sup> Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity* (New York: Oxford, 2006), 192.

<sup>37</sup> P. Boyd Mather, “Paul in Acts as ‘Servant’ and ‘Witness,’” *Chicago Society of Biblical Research* 30 (1985), 23-44.

Acts, Paul's ministry is presented as both servant (*hupereitais*) and witness (*martys*) in a way that provides, in Mather's argument, a model for Christian living in the new age ushered in by Christ. For our purposes the point is not that the servant role was inferior to the vocation of witness (it is not), but that the two were seen as constituting a whole. That is, servanthood is a biblically sound Christian role and has been from the beginning, because it has always been associated closely with martyrdom or other missional concepts. That is, servanthood is not intended to stand alone as a vocational possibility for Christians and certainly not as the paradigmatic form it has assumed in recent years. Martyriological leadership will doubtless encompass much servitude and will not exist apart from it, but it will not be defined by it. This is a critical perspective to keep in mind as we go forward, since it is not in anyone's interest to denigrate the nobility of Christian servanthood. Rather, it is my intent to restore servanthood to the position as adjunct to the calling of witness, without servanthood usurping the place of witness, or substituting for it, as seems to have happened since the 1970s. It is precisely in the context of Christian proclamation that servanthood can reclaim its rightful biblical place. It is there that the servant will partake in the redemptive work of Christ on earth.

#### X: Summary and Conclusion

Beginning with a discussion of weaknesses in the servant leadership paradigm from a pragmatic point of view, I progressed toward a theological examination of servant leadership. I suggested that servant leadership has influenced evangelicalism's understanding of Jesus. Using aspects of the doctrine of the incarnation to indicate the components of a full Christology, I attempted to provide a sketch of contemporary evangelicalism, which seems lacking in some of these components, particularly the pleromatic view of Christ's assumption of flesh and the classic view of the atonement. I looked at a third Christological component, anthropology, to indicate that the modern evangelical Jesus, and the church as his body, fail to actualize two attributes: divinization and humanization. Since servant leadership is a reflection, at least in its Christian version, of contemporary Christology, I found servant leadership theologically vacuous and therefore inadequate as a Christian theory of leadership.

I then endeavored to ground Christian leadership in a Christology that retained all of the above aspects and in the process identified such a model of leadership as martyrdom. I suggested that martyrdom be subsumed under the humanization pole of christological anthropology in order to give it a historical and social character. I then tentatively laid out some ways in which martyrdom, or witness-based leadership, might express itself in the present world situation. Once I concluded that discussion, I relocated servanthood within the context of martyrdom, where, I believe, it finds its true home.

There are of course many other things one can say concerning martyrdom as a way of leadership. As I remarked earlier, perhaps one of the most urgent questions going forth will concern the appearance of martyrdom in the business or corporate setting. It is one thing to question the adequacy of servant leadership, but quite another to prescribe something more rarified, such as martyrdom, as its replacement. Can there be a "secularized" version of martyrdom that will be accepted in the contemporary marketplace,

yet which does not surrender its evangelical nature? Is martyria able to be translated into the language of the postmodern world, or is it destined to provide a theory only for pastors, church workers, missionaries, writers, and evangelists? Given the nature of contemporary social mores, will martyria be any more successful than older leadership styles that attempted to subjugate witness to social or interpersonal ethics? Some will no doubt argue that at the end of the day the only form of Christian presence we can hope to demonstrate in the secular business world today is something that resembles the abstract spirituality of servant leadership. I believe that this need not be the case. Witness and service are not exclusive of one another but complementary. It is when service is understood to be witness per se that Christian leadership is devitalized. Witness-based leadership, on the other hand, will retain servanthood near its center, but it will not confuse acts of kindness or interpersonal competencies with the work to which we are called as Christian leaders.

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## THE ROLE OF TRIBULATION AND VIRTUE IN CREATIVITY: A SACRED TEXTURE ANALYSIS OF 1 PETER

JACQUELINE FAULHABER

God's strategy to diffuse Christianity in vacillating economic, political, and economic environments is creative and reflects his nature to work in inexplicit and paradoxical ways.<sup>1</sup> In a sacred textual analysis of 1 Peter, employing the exegetical strategies of socio-rhetorical criticism, it is proposed that God uses tribulation and trials to effect individual and collective transformation. This transformative process, predicated on a believer's grateful response to grace, produces organizational cooperation over competition, forgiveness over grudges, and harmony over discord,<sup>2</sup> which is necessary to attain moral excellence and the good relationships needed for creating innovative organizations that require ongoing renewal for today's turbulent environments that organizations face. This essay further focuses on the nuances of spiritual transformation and character development, a process similar to that noted by Paul in Romans 5:3-6. It also focuses on the creative tools Peter uses, such as metaphors and opposites, to teach the requisites for spiritual formation/character development, as well as transformational leadership used by Peter in seeking to transform the Christian community toward moral excellence.

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It is difficult to find leadership articles and reports that do not address the need for innovation and creativity, whether this is in terms of new or improved products, services, systems, and processes that sustain the organization in the midst of ongoing

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<sup>1</sup> Vernon Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 121.

<sup>2</sup> David DeSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000), 318.

change, which may threaten the organization's long-term sustainability. These threats of turbulence, however, can be perceived by leaders as a form of trial and tribulation, moving leaders to look positively at these changes as an opportunity to innovate, or negatively, resulting in the leader doing nothing but holding on to the status quo. Also appearing in leadership headlines and titles is the importance of values and an increasing interest in the role of virtue ethics in leadership and organizational effectiveness. As we can see, it may be prudent to investigate how innovation, creativity, change, perceptions of trial and tribulation, values, and virtues are interwoven to help the organization reinvent or renew itself while staying grounded in the sea of change they face today and will certainly face in the future. As research indicates, these concepts are interwoven. Rosa Chun found a correlation between virtue and innovation and organizational success. Innovation (being imaginative, spirited, innovative, and excited) was correlated with the virtues of integrity (social responsibility, trustworthiness, sincerity, and honesty) and courage (ambitiousness, achievement orientation, and leading).<sup>3</sup>

While research on innovation, creativity, and values in leadership journals is vast, and some research on positive mindsets toward turbulence (primarily advocated by Gryskiewicz<sup>4</sup>) is available but not as vast, it is more difficult to find leadership literature that focuses on virtue and virtue development or spiritual formation and which leadership style best facilitates and is conducive to the spiritual formation process. One of the few leadership styles that addresses virtue as foundational to its character transformation is authentic transformational leadership, a concept articulated by Bernard Bass who describes transformational leadership as composed of four dimensions—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—and who defends transformational leadership as a legitimate style in his and Steidlmeier's paper *Ethics, Character, and Authentic Transformational Leadership*.<sup>5</sup>

Also not found in leadership literature is a comparison between Bass and Steidlmeier's dimensions grounded in virtue that contribute to creative and innovative thinking and the creative means God chose to diffuse (e.g., the creative process to communicate the innovation of the gospel and Christian ethos throughout the Christian community<sup>6</sup>) the gospel in a world that at the time was undergoing dramatic political, economic, and social change. It is at this juncture that this paper will attempt to compare and contrast Bass and Steidlmeier's dimensions that lead to innovation with God's system for forming the hearts and minds of his children as well as Peter's teaching modalities to convey God's system for spiritual change based on a sacred texture analysis of 1 Peter using the intertextual and social-cultural analysis process of socio-rhetorical criticism. This analysis fundamentally revealed that God worked in very

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<sup>3</sup> Rose Chun, "Innovation and Reputation: An Ethical Character Perspective," *Creativity and Innovation Management* 15 (2006), 63.

<sup>4</sup> Stanley Gryskiewicz, *Positive Turbulence: Developing Climates for Creativity, Innovation, and Renewal* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999).

<sup>5</sup> Bernard Bass and Paul Steidlmeier, "Ethics, Character, and Authentic Transformational Leadership," <http://cls.binghamton.edu/BassSteid.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Montgomery, *The Lopsided Spread of Christianity: Toward an Understanding of the Diffusion of Religions* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 162.

inexplicit, paradoxical,<sup>7</sup> and creative ways and at the least worked through the experiences and passions of his children to diffuse Christianity throughout the world in the first century.

Thus, this paper wishes to communicate the paradoxical and creative methods God and Peter used. God used “tribulation” and “trials,” which can be perceived as political, social, and cultural change, particularly that which is opposed to Christianity, to develop holiness and virtue in his followers. Authentic transformational leaders do the same when they have a positive mindset toward change that threatens the sustainability of the organization. Peter used the creative tool of “pairs of opposites” to teach the requisites for spiritual formation and character development. Today’s leaders can draw upon these to create the synergy needed to move both members and the organization as a whole beyond the status quo and into Christlikeness. Peter’s authentic transformational leadership can serve as an example for moving or transforming the Christian community toward moral excellence. Before delving into these areas, a discussion about what is meant by tribulation, tribulation’s active role in developing virtue, and the role of these two concepts in the growth of Christianity might be beneficial.

### I. Background: Tribulation, Virtue, Innovation, and Church Growth

*Thlipsis*, the Greek word for tribulation, means to press together or have pressure.<sup>8</sup> Metaphors for tribulation include oppression, affliction, distress, and straits.<sup>9</sup> Scripture teaches that tribulation cannot separate believers from the love of Christ;<sup>10</sup> is worked out with others;<sup>11</sup> is not feared;<sup>12</sup> is worth exulting over as it brings about perseverance,<sup>13</sup> spiritual maturity, Christlikeness, and trust in God;<sup>14</sup> works for good for those who love him;<sup>15</sup> and accompanied the giving of the word.<sup>16</sup> Tribulation is God’s way to “prune” his children to produce more fruit, virtue, and godly character is produced.<sup>17</sup>

The role of tribulation as God’s pruning device is important in the growth of Christianity. Jesus warned about the cost of following him.<sup>18</sup> God allowed persecution knowing it would create the right tension to develop strong godly leaders who would learn to trust, rely, and live out a faith based on the promises he communicated in his word and through Christ. The spiritual formation of these godly leaders would help

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<sup>7</sup> Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 121.

<sup>8</sup> *New American Standard Bible with Strong’s Numbers*, ed. Crosswalk.com.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Rom 8:35 (NASB).

<sup>11</sup> Rev 1:9 (NASB).

<sup>12</sup> Rev 2:10 (NASB).

<sup>13</sup> Rom 2:9 (NASB).

<sup>14</sup> James 1:1-13 (NASB).

<sup>15</sup> Rom 8:28 (NASB).

<sup>16</sup> 1 Thess 1:6 (NASB).

<sup>17</sup> John 15:2 (NASB).

<sup>18</sup> Matt 24:9 (NASB).

Christianity overcome persecution in the first century.<sup>19</sup> As Christians overcame evil by doing good, such as when Christians about to be devoured by wild beasts sang hymns on their walk into the Coliseum, they modeled true goodness to others. A leader that models Christian virtue during tribulation and inspires it in others attracts people who desire greater goodness in the world. Is it any wonder that a correlation between the admirable and praiseworthy virtues (*arête* in Greek meaning “excellent”<sup>20</sup>) of integrity, courage,<sup>21</sup> honesty, reliability, trustworthiness, and caring<sup>22</sup> is linked with sustaining organizational innovation,<sup>23</sup> just as it was linked to the growth of the church in the midst of persecution? The Christian being persecuted because of his holy or righteous character was at peace with God—through the blood of Christ who won victory over death—and could accomplish any feat or trial he was presented with; thus, peace with God brings peace of mind.<sup>24</sup> This peace catalyzes and becomes the conduit for peace with others and the foundation for good relationships with others. Furthermore, these good relationships with others create caring cultures that allow individuals to share tacit insights.<sup>25</sup> Collectively, these relationships help people share concepts together, such as a vision that relies on tacit ideas and feelings.<sup>26</sup> This sharing among people contributes to innovative ideas.<sup>27</sup>

We might consider the house church in the first century, which spread the gospel quickly throughout the known world,<sup>28</sup> as an innovation spawned by strong relationships forged and molded in tribulation that required the believers to unite and trust in God and each other to sustain the church. In these early first-century house churches the spirit of *koinonia* (e.g., deep fellowship with one another) was developed and nurtured. As it became part of the community’s character, it required each person to rely on his spiritual gifts to accomplish God’s purposes<sup>29</sup> even in the midst of trial, which, as we will see in greater detail later, served as the mobilizing force for accomplishing God’s purposes. To recap this section, examine the following diagram (Figure 1), which portrays the connection between trials, virtue development, relation development, and innovation.

<sup>19</sup> Dimitris Kyrtatas, “The Significance of Leadership and Organization in the Spread of Christianity,” in *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*, ed. W. V. Harris (Boston, MA: Brill, 2005), 63.

<sup>20</sup> Raymond Devettere, *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 60.

<sup>21</sup> Rosa Chun, “Innovation and Reputation: An Ethical Character Perspective,” *Creativity and Innovation Management* 15 (2006), 63.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>24</sup> *Mathew Henry Commentary*, ed. Crosswalk.com, John 16:33.

<sup>25</sup> Georg Krogh, Kazuo Ichijo, and Ikujiro Nonaka, *Enabling Knowledge Creation: How to Unlock the Mystery of Tacit Knowledge and Release the Power of Innovation* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), 55.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>28</sup> “House Church,” *The M Word Blog*, <http://themword.typepad.com/mainblog/2007/07/house-church.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Andrew Strom, “What of Earth is Koinonia,” *The Secrets of the Early Church* (2004), <http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~revival/secrets-ch.html>.

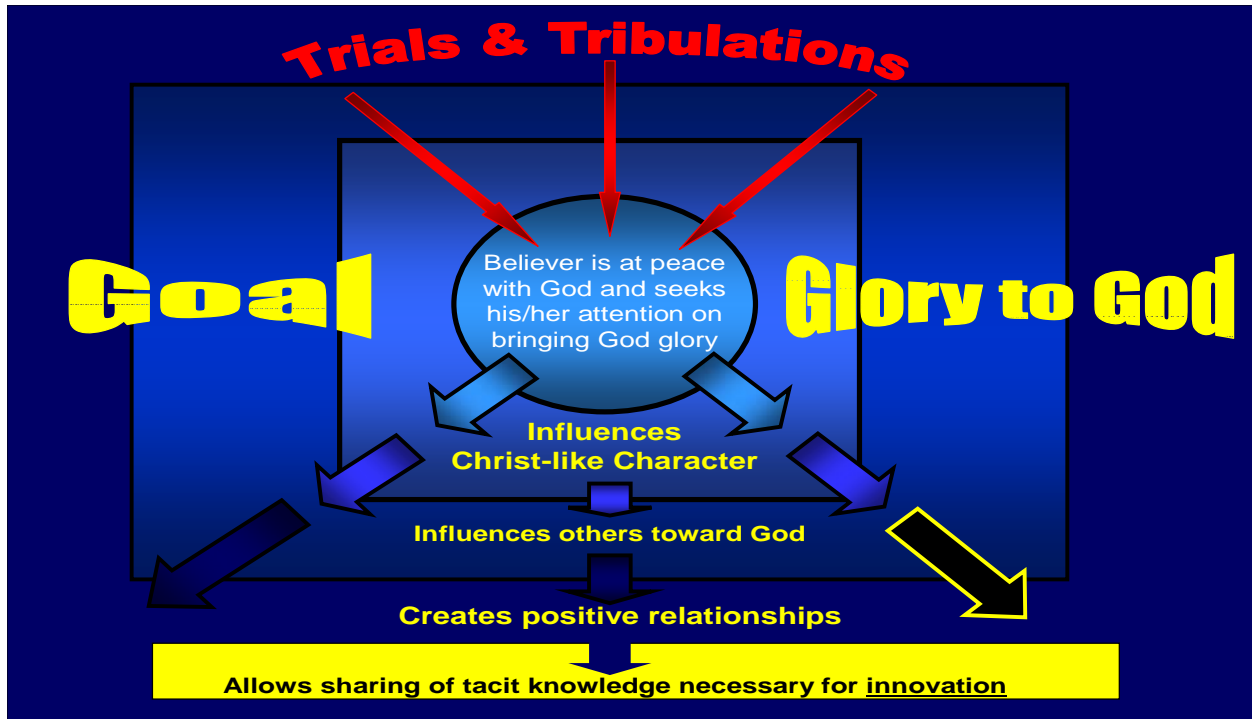


Figure 1. Diagram portraying the connection between trials, virtue development, relation development, and innovation.

We can further our understanding of the nuances of spiritual formation or virtue development by looking to the historical and social-cultural context of the first century, the context in which 1 Peter was written. The historical and social-cultural context reveals the tribulation that put pressure on the first-century church, not to divide it but to strengthen it. The church adapted and innovated in ways that may not have been possible without these trials. We now investigate the historical or political context of the first-century church, primarily the environment of those written to in 1 Peter.

## II. Historical Context of 1 Peter and Tribulation

The Greco-Roman world worshipped different gods, as well as local gods in Asia Minor,<sup>30</sup> through religious practices, rites, and rituals,<sup>31</sup> thus supporting the pagans' desire to live in idolatry.<sup>32</sup> For all practical reasons the Roman government tolerated different religions as long as emperor worship was observed,<sup>33</sup> thus maintaining the supremacy of the Roman religion.<sup>34</sup> Repression resulted only when emperors believed the religion threatened its law and order.<sup>35</sup> Because Christianity was considered a sect

<sup>30</sup> Martin Goodman, *Roman World 44 BC to 180 AD* (London, UK: Routledge, 1997), 240.

<sup>31</sup> James Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era: Exploring the Background of Early Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 89-102.

<sup>32</sup> 1 Pet 4:3 (NASB).

<sup>33</sup> Goodman, *Roman World*, 132.

<sup>34</sup> Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 105.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 105-107.

of Judaism that was tolerated,<sup>36</sup> it did not come under persecution until a fire ravaged Rome in 60 AD.<sup>37</sup> Emperor Nero blamed Christians, making them the scapegoat for the fire.<sup>38</sup> Persecution escalated when Christians refused to take an oath to the emperor guardian spirit, drawing suspicion that Christians did not support Roman supremacy.<sup>39</sup> In the Roman locality of Asia Minor, however, the region Peter wrote to, less severe persecution took the form of ostracization and insult,<sup>40</sup> comparable to today's peer pressure.<sup>41</sup> It is at this juncture that the social-cultural context of 1 Peter is discussed with the goal of emphasizing how social groups sought to conform group members to cultural norms rather than to what Christ taught.

### III: Social-Cultural Context of 1 Peter

Exploring the social-cultural context of 1 Peter is important; otherwise, the typical American/European interpretation using the individualist/guilt-oriented values, instead of the "group-oriented" and "honor-shame values characteristic of the Mediterranean society,"<sup>42</sup> results in misleading interpretations. DeSilva uses social rhetorical analysis of honor and shame to support his thesis that "challenge-riposte" exchanges were used to gain honor at the expense of someone else by posing challenges that cannot be answered.<sup>43</sup> The challenge-riposte was a mechanism, according to Malina, to "enter the social space of another"<sup>44</sup> with the motivation to temporarily or permanently dislodge the other person from his social space<sup>45</sup> for the sake of winning public honor. Public honor and worthiness is transferred to the challenger "if the person challenged cannot or does not respond to the challenge posed by his equal."<sup>46</sup> We could imagine how much more challenging this game might be in a pluralistic society. Malina argues that the pluralistic society prevalent in the first century was bound to create conflict due to the multiple and diverse social groups each having its own definition of honor.<sup>47</sup> Each person was continuously challenging another to gain honor, which would not build relationship but instead create division. As we know from scripture, the Christian always seeks to honor others,<sup>48</sup> always thinking of and serving others in love.<sup>49</sup>

Also important in the first-century culture was the use of shaming tactics to bring a transgressor back into conformity with group norms. Shaming tactics might include "insult, reproach, physical abuse, confiscation of property," and, at worst, execution.<sup>50</sup> Peter, reciting Isaiah 8:14 in 1 Peter 1:7-8, reasserts prophesy indicating the

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Goodman, *Roman World*, 239.

<sup>41</sup> DeSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*, 26.

<sup>42</sup> Robbins, *Exploring the Texture*, 76.

<sup>43</sup> DeSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*, 29.

<sup>44</sup> Robbins, *Exploring the Texture*, 80.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>48</sup> 1 Pet 2:17 (King James Version).

<sup>49</sup> Gal 5:13 (KJV).

<sup>50</sup> DeSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*, 36.

cornerstone (Jesus) would become a rock of stumbling and offense to others. The unbeliever, surprised that the believer no longer joins him, seeks to malign the believer.<sup>51</sup> If the shaming tactics proved successful, the unbeliever's norms and attitudes were realigned to those of the believing community.<sup>52</sup>

The best riposte to a challenge and shaming tactics, according to Webb, was virtuous living.<sup>53</sup> The new status as a child of God belonging to a new family required a response different from their previous life.<sup>54</sup> Believers were asked to give honor to all people and authority, just as Christ did, even if it meant suffering, knowing that God would judge righteously.<sup>55</sup> The believer would not be without reward, but would be considered "blessed,"<sup>56</sup> receiving an inheritance reserved for him in heaven.<sup>57</sup>

As we have seen, pressure by the Roman government to conform to emperor cult worship and the pressure from the Christians' previous social group to adhere to social-cultural norms in opposition to values and virtues taught by Jesus would cause tribulation for believers. The only way to persevere and not fall back into old ways<sup>58</sup> was for the believer to desire pure spiritual milk so that by it he or she may "grow up to salvation."<sup>59</sup> Growing up to salvation required that the believer become holy in all his conduct just as God is holy.<sup>60</sup> Yet, this growth process, known as spiritual formation or character development, would require refinement through fire (e.g., trials and tribulation for the purpose of testing one's faith so that the result would be praise and glory to God).<sup>61</sup>

Teaching this concept, however, was not easy. Peter, like Jesus, knew the value of using metaphors from the physical world to convey deep spiritual truths. Thus, Peter helped Christians connect or correlate the physical and spiritual in order to change their hearts and minds, making them stronger to withstand the political and social-culture pressures rather than revert to old ways.

#### IV: Metaphors and Opposites

One of the first metaphors Peter used to teach a spiritual truth was about the seed. The physical perishable seed and the spiritual imperishable<sup>62</sup> seed reflect God's system for accomplishing his will. Why would God choose to accomplish his work through opposites, such as the physical and spiritual?<sup>63</sup> Bushnell asserts the constant action and reaction between the relationship of nature and the supernatural, when taken

<sup>51</sup> 1 Pet 4:4 (NASB).

<sup>52</sup> DeSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*, 47.

<sup>53</sup> Robert Webb, "The Petrine Epistles: Recent Developments and Trends" in *The Face of New Testament Studies*, ed. Scot McKnight and Grant Osborne (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 378.

<sup>54</sup> Webb, *The Face of New Testament Studies*, 385.

<sup>55</sup> 1 Pet 2:13-23 (NASB).

<sup>56</sup> Luk 6:22, Matt 5:10, and 1 Pet 4:11 (NASB).

<sup>57</sup> 1 Pet 1:4 (NASB).

<sup>58</sup> 1 Pet 1:14, 2:1 (NASB).

<sup>59</sup> 1 Pet 2:2 (NASB).

<sup>60</sup> 1 Pet 1:16 (NASB).

<sup>61</sup> 1 Pet 1:6, 7 (NASB).

<sup>62</sup> 1 Pet 1:23 (NASB).

<sup>63</sup> "Chapter 24: The Works of God Go in Pairs by Opposites," *The Clock of God*, <http://goodnewschristianministry.org/clockchapter24.htm>.

together, represent the true system of God in that the “supernatural is the ever-present creative cause of the natural and the source of the restoration of the natural.”<sup>64</sup> The supernatural and natural work together and thus use of metaphors to teach opposites are beneficial to the student, particularly in learning acceptable behavior, such as good<sup>65</sup> and evil.<sup>66</sup> Irenaeus, a second-century church father, writes in *Adversus Haereses* that by receiving knowledge of good and evil<sup>67</sup> believers might be “trained by means of them” so that the believer might choose goodness<sup>68</sup> over evil. Supporting Irenaeus, Westman states,

As the creation of the inner world proceeds, as the psyche develops, there is an invariable pattern of action: the Word is uttered, the ear hears, the choice is made, the eye opens, and what stands revealed is a new aspect of human reality. This archetypal pattern appears here for the first time, in what has always been called the Fall of Man. It is, I suggest, the opposite, for it makes creativity possible in *both* orders of experience. Without the awareness of the truly other, nothing could have or can happen.<sup>69</sup>

Metaphors and opposites, such as good and evil, can be an impetus for moving beyond the status quo toward Christlikeness.

#### V: Motivator for Virtuousness

1 Peter 1:23, a recitation of Isaiah 40:6-8, emphasizes that eternal life is dependent upon the word rather than the flesh, with the latter the physical life that eventually dies. And, having been born again from an imperishable seed rather than the perishable seed of physical life, the believer turns away from the behavior of the flesh,<sup>70</sup> such as malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander.<sup>71</sup> Now belonging to God’s family<sup>72</sup> the believer is holy as God is holy,<sup>73</sup> holiness being one of the overarching virtues of God.<sup>74</sup> Peter’s recitation of Leviticus 11:44 reaffirms that the believer is consecrated to God in every aspect of his life and will gradually grow in virtuousness.

#### VI: Virtuousness

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> 1 Pet 2:12 (NASB).

<sup>66</sup> 1 Pet 2:14, 16; 3:9 (NASB).

<sup>67</sup> Gen 3:7 (NASB).

<sup>68</sup> Irenaeus, “Adversus Haereses” in *The Early Christian Fathers: A Selection from the Writings of the Fathers from St. Clement of Rome to St. Athanasius*, ed. Henry Bettenson (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1976), 70-71.

<sup>69</sup> Heinz Westman, *The Springs of Creativity* (New York, NY: Atheneum, 1961), 84.

<sup>70</sup> 1 Pet 1:14 (NASB).

<sup>71</sup> 1 Pet 2:1 (NASB).

<sup>72</sup> *New American Standard Study Bible*, 1813.

<sup>73</sup> 1 Pet 1:16 (NASB).

<sup>74</sup> Greg Herrick, “Virtues Leading to Christlikeness,” *Bible.org*. [www.bible.org/page.asp?page\\_id=77](http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page_id=77).



Stephen Evans writes, “Virtues are general character traits that provide inner sanctions on our particular motives, intentions and outward conduct.”<sup>75</sup> Character is a “tendency stemming from who you are at your core level, to act in certain ways”; “not simply an impulse, good or bad, but rather a settled habit of mind”; “has a function of providing judgment on motives and outward actions”; and relates “to who we are as people.”<sup>76</sup> Finally, holiness is consistent with God’s moral law,<sup>77</sup> is the absence of evil, and based on what is infinitely good and excellent.<sup>78</sup>

Love, the second overarching character of God, is at the “very heart of God,” motivating God to seek “the welfare of the lost and rebellious sinners.”<sup>79</sup> The believer, too, seeks the best for others.<sup>80</sup> In love a believer can “be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit, not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead.”<sup>81</sup> 1 Peter 3:10-12, a recitation of Psalm 35:12-16 and Proverbs 16:7, describes actions of loving others. They keep their tongue from evil and lips from speaking deceit, turn away from evil and do good, and seek and pursue peace. In this way the believer does what is good,<sup>82</sup> thereby showing forth God’s glory.

Love also honors others over the self. The believer gives honor to every human institution<sup>83</sup> and person for fear of God,<sup>84</sup> knowing each person bears the image of God.<sup>85</sup> In holiness the “tarnished image” of creation in God’s image is removed, facilitating a steward role in God’s creation.<sup>86</sup> In holiness, the believer is able to see each culture and ethnicity as God’s “amazing breadth of God’s creativity and expression.”<sup>87</sup>

## VII: Contingencies of Character Development (Holiness and Love)

Character development relies on two motivations: (1) a desire for nourishment in the word, resulting in knowledge,<sup>88</sup> and (2) active relationships with a community of believers. A believer, having “tasted the kindness of the Lord,” desires the pure milk of the word, just as a newborn desires milk, so that being nourished on the word he grows “in respect to salvation.”<sup>89</sup> The word “newborn” in 1 Peter 2:2 is a repetition of the argument that the person in Christ is born again from the imperishable seed<sup>90</sup> and

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> 1 Pet 3:8-9 (NASB).

<sup>82</sup> 1 Pet 4:12-12 (NASB); *New American Standard Study Bible*, 1817.

<sup>83</sup> 1 Pet 2:13 (NASB).

<sup>84</sup> 1 Pet 2:17 (NASB).

<sup>85</sup> *New American Standard Study Bible*, 1815.

<sup>86</sup> “What is the Image of God” in *Thinking Through Faith* (2006), InterVarsity’s StudentSoul.org. [www.intervarsity.org](http://www.intervarsity.org).

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Daryl Charles, “The Language and Logic of Virtue in 2 Peter 1:5-7,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 8 (1998), 61.

<sup>89</sup> 1 Pet 2:2-3 (NASB).

<sup>90</sup> 1 Pet 1:23 (NASB).

needs nourishment from spiritual milk to grow. As the believer is nourished by the word, he comes to greater knowledge, and, when accompanied by obedience, grows in holiness and a greater love for God, thus increasing in love for all.<sup>91</sup> Without spiritual nourishment, however, a believer withers and dies. Unable to overcome shaming tactics, he retreats to his old ways.

Peter, as suggested by John Elliot, called upon believers to maintain their distinctive Christian identity through “group consciousness, cohesion, and commitment.”<sup>92</sup> These values helped sustain, regenerate, and grow the community in times of tribulation. Community became important to the “aliens’ scatter throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia”<sup>93</sup> because their social status as a Christian made them reviled by others, even though they were native-born.<sup>94</sup> This community became, according to Elliot, a “home for the homeless.”<sup>95</sup> Peter gives a vision to this community, describing it as a “spiritual house” of believers that is constructed by each “living stone.”<sup>96</sup> The “spiritual house” having been built around the cornerstone of Jesus Christ offers sacrifices acceptable to God.<sup>97</sup> This fulfills Isaiah’s prophecy in 28:16 in that the “choice stone” would be costly (purchased through the blood of Christ) and has been tested (Christ overcoming death). The spiritual house is further occupied by a “holy priesthood.”<sup>98</sup> The spiritual house is not a physical place<sup>99</sup> where God once resided, but a spiritual house indwelt by the Holy Spirit.<sup>100</sup> These “living stones” are not physically connected but spiritually connected, forming the basis for social networks based on a common bond. These social networks—open to all believers regardless of physical domicile—are one of the reasons Rodney Stark believes Christianity spread.<sup>101</sup> At this point this paper diverges to investigate the commonalities and differences of Peter’s leadership style to that of Bass’ four dimensions of the authentic transformational leader.

### VIII: Comparison to Transformational Leadership

Kyratas asserts that Christianity could not have spread without able leaders.<sup>102</sup> The goal of effective and able leadership in the early Christian movements corresponded with the theological hope of progression in Christlikeness.<sup>103</sup> Peter, having experienced reconciliation and redemption from sin and failure,<sup>104</sup> based his leadership on the “good shepherd” himself.<sup>105</sup> Peter further encouraged elders to follow

<sup>91</sup> Gray, James. “The Obligation of Love,” *Fundamentalist Journal* (1986), 49.

<sup>92</sup> Webb, *The Petrine Epistles*, 377.

<sup>93</sup> 1 Pet 1:1 (NASB).

<sup>94</sup> Jeffers, *The Greco-Roman World*, 57.

<sup>95</sup> Webb, *The Petrine Epistles*, 384.

<sup>96</sup> 1 Pet 2:5 (NASB).

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> *New American Standard Study Bible*, 1814.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Montgomery, *The Lopsided Spread of Christianity*, 10.

<sup>102</sup> Kyratas, *The Spread of Christianity*, 66.

<sup>103</sup> Makoski, *Horace Bushnell*, 149.

<sup>104</sup> John 21:15-17 (NASB).

<sup>105</sup> John 10:11 (NASB).

likewise. In following the example of the chief shepherd, church leaders would receive the “unfading crown of glory.”<sup>106</sup> Leadership would be exercised not under compulsion, but through volunteering and exemplary service, showing one’s self as an example to others.<sup>107</sup> It is the type of leadership that is most similar, yet different in some ways due to the source of the leader’s underlying motivations, to Bass’ transformational leadership style.

In some aspects, Peter’s leadership exemplifies Bass and Steidlmeier’s definition of authentic transformational leadership in that Peter’s leadership was grounded in moral virtues. Differing, however, from Bass and Steidlmeier’s assertion that authentic transformational leadership is rooted in the long-standing literature of Socratic and Confucian typologies, specifically the Western Socratic tradition of ethics rooted in “liberty, utility, and distributive justice,”<sup>108</sup> Peter’s transformational leadership is sourced in the holy virtues of love and justice,<sup>109</sup> which are sourced in God and effects transformation into his likeness. Yet, commonality might be found between Socratic and godly virtue in the idea that “liberty, utility, and distributive justice” might be manifestations of the follower who consents to be led,<sup>110</sup> just as godly virtue is not based on forced conversion. Christ never forced anyone to follow him. However, “liberty, utility, and distributive justice” does not necessarily result in holiness—only virtues such as love and justice can accomplish this task. It is this task that Peter attempts to draw the Christian and Christian community to in 1 Peter.

Now comparing the means by which this task is accomplished, the following paragraphs will attempt to compare and contrast Bass’ four dimensions of the authentic transformational leader with Peter’s leadership. First, Peter meets Bass’ dimension of “idealized influence” in that Peter does not use terminology such as “we-they” in terms of “we having good values and they do not,”<sup>111</sup> but instead being “born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,” the Christian was to honor every person and government authority, whether suffering unjustly or not, for the sake of glorifying God.<sup>112</sup> Hence, although Peter discerned the difference between the behavior of a wicked and godly person, he did not point out “we” or “they,” but chose to focus on virtue development that would help every Christian work toward greater virtue and turn away from the wickedness that Christ saved man from. Yet, the source for Peter’s “idealized influence” is not in Peter but in Christ who is working through Peter.

Second, Peter provides “inspirational motivation”<sup>113</sup> in that he provides a vision for what type of life the Christian should live and how he should progress in holiness. This progression can only be accomplished by focusing on the best in others, as Bass and Steidlmeier assert, so that harmony might be created and charity might become the

<sup>106</sup> 1 Pet 5:4 (NASB).

<sup>107</sup> 1 Pet 5:2-3 (NASB).

<sup>108</sup> Bernard Bass and Paul Steidlmeier, “Ethics, Character, and Authentic Transformational Leadership” (1998), <http://cls.binghamton.edu/BassSteid.html>.

<sup>109</sup> Herrick, “Virtues.”

<sup>110</sup> Bass and Steidlmeier, “Ethics.”

<sup>111</sup> A Gregory Stone, Robert Russell, and Kathleen Patterson, “Transformational Versus Servant Leadership: A Difference in Focus,” *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 25 (2004): 350.

<sup>112</sup> 1 Pet 2 (English Standard Version).

<sup>113</sup> Bass and Steidlmeier, “Ethics.”

norm.<sup>114</sup> As we learned earlier, these virtues become the basis for good relationships that lead to community and subsequently knowledge sharing and innovation.

Third, Peter stimulates the intellect of the Christian mind. In his use of the metaphors to teach God's system of opposites, he challenges the Christian to move beyond the temporal to think about eternity. The political and social systems that the followers lived in would not endure, but that these would perish. Because these systems will not last, the Christian need not focus on the perishable but on the imperishable word and will of God. Further, Peter unequivocally challenges the Christian to rethink or reframe the value or role of tribulation or problems in a Christian's life, just as Avolio and Bass assert the transformational leader will question the validity of old ways and seek to reframe problems.<sup>115</sup> Peter's reframing of tribulation can mean the difference between hopefulness—which can bring spiritual development and the likeliness for which God will be praised and glorified—and helplessness. It is also at this juncture that today's leaders can find tremendous value in having a positive mindset toward the possibilities that come with change, particularly political, social, economic, and environmental change. These changes, if approached positively, can create a tension that ignites the creative and innovative energy necessary to close the gap between the current reality and a desired future.<sup>116</sup>

Last, Peter does not wish to lord over his followers; instead, he chooses to help develop other Christians to become leaders, which Bass and Steidlmeier assert the authentic transformational leader promotes,<sup>117</sup> in the sense that a person's character will attract and influence others to Christ and inspire them to desire to become Christlike. Peter is not concerned about becoming more powerful, as Bass and Steidlmeier would assert the pseudo or "false" transformational leader would be. The authentic transformational leader determines how he could use his power to serve others,<sup>118</sup> just as Peter chose to serve the Christians' need for eternal life and to overcome the tribulations that came with living for Christ. To accomplish this task, Peter focuses on increasing what Bass and Steidlmeier assert is the "awareness of what is right, good, important, and beautiful,<sup>119</sup>" moving the Christian beyond self-interest toward the interest of God, the Christian community, and the life of the Christian in terms of what type of life God desires for the Christian.

## IX: Conclusion

Although this essay touches only the surface of 1 Peter, it is hoped that the objectives set forth in the introduction were accomplished. The call to glorify God as a community and an individual through holiness, particularly in times of tribulation, provides the necessary development of virtue needed for organizations, communities, and societies that are in need of innovative and creative ideas to sustain themselves in turbulent times, just as the Christian church needed to sustain itself over numerous

<sup>114</sup> Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics."

<sup>115</sup> Stone, Russell, and Patterson, *Transformational Versus Servant Leadership*, 351.

<sup>116</sup> Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1990), 156-157

<sup>117</sup> Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics."

<sup>118</sup> Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics."

<sup>119</sup> Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics."

years of persecution and tribulation. To accomplish these feats from an organizational perspective, it takes authentic transformational leaders whose motivation is a desire to be like Christ and who aspire to help others along this journey. While traveling this journey, the authentic transformational leader will have manifested in his leadership idealized influence that draws from none other than Christ himself; inspirational motivation that provides a compelling vision of the Christian praising and glorying God by standing in holiness and overcoming life's tribulations; intellectual stimulation by creating gaps between the "ought" and "is," thus, sparking creativity and innovation; and consideration by using his power to help develop others to become leaders and create cultures where harmony and charity are the norm. These four dimensions, working together, grounded on a virtuous foundation in the turbulent and trying environment, bring to knowledge Peter's authentic transformational leadership that strives to influence the community of believers to glorify God by having the character of Christ.

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#### About the Author

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## LEARNING FROM EXAMPLE: LESSONS ON LEADERSHIP FROM EARLY BIBLICAL LEADERS

A Review of *The Genesis of Leadership: What the Bible Teaches Us About Vision, Values, and Leading Change* by Nathan Laufer

STEPHANIE A. SLINGERLAND

Beginning as children and continuing into adulthood, humans learn from the example of others. Learning from example may impact nearly every life experience; the same can be said for the experience of leadership. For instance, a student teacher learns to lead in the classroom under the guidance of experienced educators, while an aspiring team leader learns to lead under the mentorship of practiced executives. Thousands of people flock each year to leadership workshops hoping to learn what it takes to be successful from successful leaders themselves. Learning from example is the central premise of Nathan Laufer's book, *The Genesis of Leadership: What the Bible Teaches Us About Vision, Values, and Leading Change*.<sup>1</sup> In his text, Laufer argues that successful leadership is a learned art and a developed discipline. One can learn how to become an exceptional leader by examining both the missteps and achievements of past leaders. Through a discussion of various stories demonstrating the actions of early biblical leaders, Laufer attempts to express the vision, values, and characteristics of leadership that may be learned from one of the most widely read books in the world: the Bible.

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### I: Synopsis

In his foreword to the book, Senator Lieberman sets the stage for Laufer's examination of leadership. Lieberman states, as Laufer will later argue, that the foundation of leadership rests on the character and values of the individual. The senator commends Laufer, a Jewish rabbi, for writing a text that intertwines the principles of

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<sup>1</sup> Nathan Laufer, *The Genesis of Leadership: What the Bible Teaches Us About Vision, Values, and Leading Change* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2006).

leadership with the values and ideals set forth in the Bible. Lieberman argues that the biblical standards of responsibility challenge today's leaders to achieve a higher level of accountability. Three levels of accountability exist for leaders, according to both Lieberman and Laufer: leaders must be accountable for themselves and their actions, they must be responsible for the welfare of those with whom they have a personal relationship, and they are responsible for those touched by their leadership. Ultimately, leaders need to be accountable not only for their own success but the continued success of their followers and future leaders of the group. The values inherent in leadership, as well as the responsibility that comes with leadership, are central to the premise of *The Genesis of Leadership*.

Laufer divides his text into four subbooks, each discussing a different component of leadership. Book I examines the responsibilities and values associated with leadership, Book II outlines major guiding principles of leadership, Book III considers the challenges of leadership, and Book IV discusses the legacy of leadership. Throughout each section, Laufer walks the reader through stories of leadership found in the first five books of the Bible to complement his main points and assertions. As these books of the Bible purport the genesis of humankind, and the first book of the Bible is aptly named "Genesis," Laufer states *The Genesis of Leadership* may also be found in these holy books. Laufer utilizes these stories and lessons from the early books of the Bible to provide examples of exemplary leadership and the challenges of leadership, particularly when one fails to lead or leads followers in the wrong direction. According to Laufer, the Bible provides many relevant examples of people who not only demonstrated the caring, courage, and commitment to lead, but also overcame various obstacles and hardships often built into the experience of leadership.

For instance, despite his oversights, Moses provides an example of exemplary leadership. The story of Moses is significant. As Laufer points out, even the most successful leaders can make mistakes. On the other hand, Laufer also illustrates the consequences of leading in the wrong direction, such as when Adam and Eve consumed the forbidden fruit and condemned humanity to a life full of sin. As people learn from the examples and anecdotes of others, Laufer draws upon these biblical stories to provide lessons on leadership that leaders of nations, communities, and organizations can apply even today. Laufer posits the Bible can serve as a valuable resource to leaders, underscoring the values and responsibilities of leadership, the guiding principles of leadership, the challenges of leadership, and the legacy of leadership.

## II: Discussion

### *Strengths*

Several strengths make Laufer's text on the values, vision, and characteristics of a leader a valuable addition to the existing body of literature concerning leadership. First and foremost, Laufer immediately provides a definition of leadership, which sets the stage for his discussion on leadership. Given the book's biblical focus, some may be pleased to note that Laufer bases his definitions on existing scholarly leadership

research. Laufer draws on the work of several researchers, including Drucker,<sup>2</sup> Burns,<sup>3</sup> and Gardner,<sup>4</sup> to develop his definitions of leadership and management theory. Based on his research, Laufer defines leadership as “envisioning and initiating change, by persuading others to alter the status quo, in response to an urgent challenge and/or compelling opportunity.”<sup>5</sup> Laufer also cites the work of Kotter<sup>6</sup> when distinguishing leadership from management. In contrast to leadership, Laufer states management utilizes authority and control to maintain the status quo. Additionally, while the purpose of leadership is to affect long-term change through inspiration and encouragement, the purpose of management is to maintain the current state of affairs through command and control.

In addition to his definitions of leadership and his comparison to management theory, Laufer makes several other connections to scholarly leadership literature. For example, Laufer cites the work of Covey,<sup>7</sup> who posited the importance of seeking the roots of human behavior in character and by learning principles rather than just practices. Similarly, Laufer states that leadership is rooted in character and provides ten guiding principles leaders should utilize to direct their behaviors.

Laufer also cites the work of Kouzes and Posner,<sup>8</sup> which parallels the writings of Covey in 1990, that discusses the importance of attending to the needs of followers. Laufer explicitly states in his first subbook that building relationships is the key to leadership, and all leaders must be attuned to their “brothers and sisters.” An additional link to scholarly literature in Laufer’s text is the connection to the work of Heifetz<sup>9</sup>. Heifetz stresses the need for leaders to create a “holding environment” that produces a sense of trust, nurture, and empathy for followers. Laufer discusses this “holding environment” when speaking to the challenges leaders face. Laufer argues that if followers do not feel a sense of trust, nurture, and empathy from their leader, followers will not have faith in their leader and may resist their attempts at leadership altogether.

Beyond its connections to scholarly literature, Laufer’s book exhibits strengths in several other areas. As previously indicated, Laufer’s major premise is that one can learn how to become a successful leader by examining both the missteps and achievements of past leaders. He provides various examples and stories of early leadership found in the Bible. Much research has indicated that adults have various learning styles.<sup>10</sup> For instance, some learn by reading, others by experimenting, and

<sup>2</sup> Peter Ferdinand Drucker, *The Practice of Management* (New York: Harper, 1954).

<sup>3</sup> James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978).

<sup>4</sup> John W. Gardner, *On Leadership* (New York: Free Press, 1990).

<sup>5</sup> Laufer, *The Genesis of Leadership*, 9.

<sup>6</sup> John P. Kotter, “Leadership at the Turn of the Century,” *John P. Kotter on What Leaders Really Do* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999), 1-26.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989).

<sup>8</sup> James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Keep Getting Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995).

<sup>9</sup> Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> K. Patricia Cross, *Adults as Learners: Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1982); John Marshall Peters, *Adult Education: Evolution and Achievements in a Developing Field of Study* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991); and Raymond J. Wlodkowski, *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn: A Comprehensive Guide for Teaching all Adults* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999).



others by mimicking. As many people often relate to stories and narratives, Laufer's text specifically addresses these types of learners. In addition, the examples provided offer rich descriptions and clear connections to Laufer's guiding principles and challenges of leadership, as well as applicability to current-day leadership dilemmas. Laufer's detailed explanations of the guiding principles of leadership and the challenges of leadership allow his work to be easily applied to real-life situations—be it at home, in the classroom, or at the office. The book also does not predispose that readers are familiar with the biblical stories presented. Even if the reader has never read the Bible, Laufer provides adequate descriptions and sample scriptures so the reader can clearly understand the stories presented.

### *Limitations*

While Laufer's text has many strengths, it can be argued that some of its strengths are also its weaknesses. Laufer provides several examples of biblical leadership throughout the text to provide lessons on leadership that can be applied today. He also provides several connections to leadership research to support his guiding principles of leadership, as well as common challenges leaders face. Laufer states these biblical stories explicate the process of leadership, while also providing insights into the beginnings of leadership as his title *The Genesis of Leadership* suggests. Many examples of leadership presented in the text have clear connections to scholarly literature and applicability to present-day leaders, and Laufer explains in great detail the lessons that can be learned from numerous biblical figures in the first subbooks of his text.

However, Book I and Book II contain so many stories describing even the most minor of biblical characters, it is easy to become wrapped up in familiarizing oneself with the characters instead of identifying the lessons on leadership these characters provide. At the end of Book II and all of Book III, Laufer focuses solely on the character of Moses. By focusing on one character, it is easier to identify lessons on leadership. The earlier chapters in the book would have benefited from focusing on fewer characters and on more lessons of leadership from a handful of major characters, such as Adam and Eve, Noah, and Abraham.

A second limitation is that while the examples provided by Laufer are applicable to today's leadership experiences, the inclusion of biblical stories might discourage people from reading his text. Laufer's assertions are strongly rooted in values or virtue-based leadership, including the values of caring, courage, and commitment. While this area of leadership has strong connections to scholarly research, such as the virtue-based research of Velasquez<sup>11</sup> and Pojman,<sup>12</sup> the book touts the values and virtues found in the Bible. Although many of these virtues and values are similar to widely accepted ideals of morality and good behavior, readers may not be able to look past biblical doctrine to apply Laufer's lessons to their own leadership experiences.

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<sup>11</sup> Manuel G. Velasquez, *Business Ethics: Concepts and Cases*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992).

<sup>12</sup> Louis P. Pojman, *Ethical Theory: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, 2nd ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1995).

Furthermore, Laufer utilizes the stories and narratives of early biblical leaders to support his assertions, which are clearly based on his interpretations and opinions of biblical doctrine. While many can learn directly from these stories and narratives, Laufer provides no empirical data to support his premises of ethical leadership. Therefore, like the writings of his fellow ethical leadership researchers, Laufer's text can simply be characterized as descriptive and anecdotal in nature.

Finally, Laufer provides no quantifiable method for determining the success of a leader, despite providing clear steps on becoming a more successful leader. Laufer provides three methods for determining the success of a leader, including the actualization of the leader's vision, the ability to make his physical presence unnecessary to the continued success of his followers, and the favorable comparison to a similar leader. Laufer even provides specific examples of how Moses, considered to be a successful leader, met each of these criteria.

However, concrete guidelines for meeting each of these criteria are not provided, creating several gaps to Laufer's claims. For instance, what happens when circumstances necessitate a change to the leader's original vision? According to Laufer's measurement structure, it could be argued that the leader did not fulfill his original vision, because the vision required change. However, if the leader successfully implemented the revised vision, would Laufer still consider him a failure simply because he implemented a vision differing from the original, particularly when Laufer argues leaders must be flexible and open to change? More concrete guidelines, and preferably quantifiable guidelines, are required to measure the success of a leader utilizing Laufer's guiding principles of effective leadership.

### III: Conclusion

In conclusion, Laufer posits several worthwhile assertions regarding the values, vision, and characteristics of leadership that can be learned from the Bible. First, he clearly stresses the importance of caring and commitment and the courage to take responsibility so leaders can guide their followers to greatness and prosperity. Next, he outlines several guiding principles one can follow in becoming a successful leader, such as creating a sense of urgency, securing the legitimacy and authority to lead, and visualizing and enacting a vision of change. Third, Laufer provides several challenges leaders should be prepared for, including overconfidence and lack of communication. Finally, he states leaders must be prepared to continue their legacy by cultivating leaders to assume leadership when the time comes to step down. To support his assertions, Laufer draws on early biblical leaders from the first five books of the Bible to provide lessons on leadership. The examples provided in the text offer rich descriptions of biblical narrative, while making clear associations to Laufer's principles of leadership. These stories help readers to easily relate to Laufer's concepts on leadership and demonstrate how to apply his principles to their own leadership experiences.

Furthermore, given Laufer's biblical approach to lessons on leadership, it may be surprising to find numerous connections to scholarly literature. However, Laufer clearly makes connections to Burns'<sup>13</sup> theoretical framework of both transformational

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<sup>13</sup> Burns, *Leadership*.

leadership, as well as ideals of ethical leadership touted by Heifetz.<sup>14</sup> In addition, Laufer draws upon the existing leadership and management theory of Drucker,<sup>15</sup> Burns,<sup>16</sup> Gardner,<sup>17</sup> and Kotter<sup>18</sup> when creating his own definitions of leadership. Drawing upon these areas of research, as well as biblical ideals, Laufer argues for a value- or virtue-based leadership style, particularly emphasizing the values of caring, commitment, and courage. Laufer also clearly sides with researchers that argue people are not born leaders, contending leadership is a skill that can be learned and acquired. Laufer provides specific principles that a leader can learn and acquire to achieve success. While at first glance these principles may appear idealistic, he also explains leaders will make mistakes. Yet, like Moses, he states leaders must learn from their mistakes as well.

A final note is that Laufer seems to have the strongest theoretical connections to researchers such as Pojman,<sup>19</sup> who argue virtues and values are central to one's disposition. These virtues and values are not innate, however, but are attained and learned through practice. We learn these values from our families, friends, and communities. And as Laufer argues, these values may also be learned from the example of biblical leaders.

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#### About the Author

Stephanie A. Slingerland is a recent graduate of Western Michigan University (WMU), receiving a master of arts in communication. Her study focus included organizational communication, leadership, and public relations. She is currently an external communications specialist at the Kellogg Company, working primarily in media and public relations. Her bachelor of arts is in journalism, also from WMU.

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<sup>14</sup> Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*.

<sup>15</sup> Peter Ferdinand Drucker, *The Practice of Management* (New York: Harper, 1954).

<sup>16</sup> Burns, *Leadership*.

<sup>17</sup> Gardner, *On leadership*.

<sup>18</sup> Kotter, "Leadership at the Turn of the Century." *John P. Kotter on what Leaders Really Do*.

<sup>19</sup> Pojman, *Ethical Theory: Classical and Contemporary Readings*.



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## *LEADERSHIP REFLECTION:* LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES THAT WEAR WELL

MICHAEL PALMER, PH.D.

In one role or another—employee, parishioner, professor, administrator—I have had a long-standing interest in why some people make good leaders and others do not. Partly from watching leaders—the effective ones as well as the ineffective ones—and partly from reflecting on my own experiences as a leader, I have settled on certain core principles that guide me in my everyday interaction with colleagues and staff members. In no particular order, I present them here for reflection.

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A few of the principles are overtly “Christian” in that they derive specifically from my grasp of the Scriptures as well as my moral and faith commitments. The others are compatible with my core theological and moral convictions, and they underlie certain practices that I have come to regard as quite sensible. However, I have never tried to trace them to a specific biblical mandate or give a proof text for them.

1. Credible leaders build trust. In my view, trust is the fundamental currency in any organization. If this is true, then it is important for leaders to figure out what it takes to build and to maintain trust. They do so for at least two reasons. First, they do so because it is the pragmatic thing to do. Over the long haul, building and maintaining trust is the best way to get things done. Second and more important, they do so as an expression of their own integrity. Trust is built and maintained in several ways, including keeping one’s promises, protecting weaker parties, acting fairly, and exercising the courage to require others to do the same.

2. Credible leaders model what they want others to do. This is true with regard both to attitudes and patterns of behavior. For example, effective Christian leaders model compassion, tolerance, respect, integrity, and other virtues.<sup>1</sup> This list of virtues could be expanded by examining what Jesus says in the Beatitudes and what St. Paul says about the fruit of the Spirit. And, of course, the principle of reciprocity that is expressed here lies at the heart of the "Golden Rule." But the central point is this: effective Christian leaders establish and espouse standards and principles that they themselves are prepared to live by.<sup>2</sup>
3. Wise leaders empower other people. In one sense, this is simply a good management principle. You are likely to get the most out of people if you establish clear and realistic standards for them to follow, give them the resources they need to complete the task, and then send them on their way to do it without interfering with them. In another sense, the statement expresses the larger purpose—could we say, mandate—to help other people to bring to full expression the gifts and abilities that their Creator has entrusted to them. Empowering other people means functioning more as a facilitator than as a commander. To me, the process of empowering other people lies at the heart of what is sometimes called "servant leadership."<sup>3</sup>
4. Effective leaders celebrate others' accomplishments. If the tasks of an organization are important – and surely the fundamental tasks of church, business, and university are important – they require enormous expenditures of energy to do them well. Effective leaders find ways to recognize and reward hard work. They look for opportunities for others to succeed and to be celebrated. Doing so builds the esteem of those being recognized, nurtures collegiality and loyalty, and calls forth renewed effort, all of which are important when tasks are multidimensional, complex, protracted, or require teamwork.

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<sup>1</sup> A virtue is a good habit, a relatively fixed disposition to behave in an excellent way. Western culture is rich with readings on the virtues. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* is one of the most notable early sources in the Greco-Roman tradition. Important sources in the Judeo-Christian tradition include Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, qq 49-64.

<sup>2</sup> The classical philosophical expression of the principle of reciprocity appears in Immanuel Kant's statement of the categorical imperative: "Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means." See *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1981), translated by James W. Ellington, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Servant leadership does not always flow strictly from the top. Sometimes it flows – or ought to flow – from a much more precarious place in the organization: the middle. For this reason, I believe that it is important to think about a notable leadership principle that has special application to mid-level leaders: astute leaders know their place in the organization. Thus, it is important to ask the following: What are the organization's explicit and implicit protocols? What is the difference between the organization's "rational" structure (expressed, for example, in its organizational chart) and its "political" structure? Who has power and who does not? Successful mid-level leaders discern the answers to these questions. The answers provide important clues to where and how they fit into the organization and help them appreciate the extent as well as the limits of their own power. See Joseph L. Badaracco, Jr., *Leading Quietly: An Unorthodox Guide to Doing the Right Thing* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002).

5. Effective leaders explore fundamental questions. We often hear that leaders should pursue something called “best practices.” I acknowledge the value of best practices. At the same time—and perhaps this is a bit of the philosopher in me coming out—I think it is often better to focus less attention on best practices than on discerning the right questions. Doing so helps us avoid mimicking what other people do and forces us to consider the appropriateness of the “best practices” to the concrete situation that we inhabit.
6. Effective Christian leaders articulate a vision for the future, inspire others to adopt the vision as their own, and elicit their support to fulfill it. My own strategy for eliciting “buy in” is by building personal relations with colleagues and staff members. I find that I am most effective at stimulating the imagination of colleagues and staff members, building consensus, and eliciting their support when I talk with them quietly, face-to-face, and behind the scenes. In my experience, much good vision casting and consensus building goes on over a cup of coffee. While there is nothing theologically significant about coffee (I know this news will come as a shock to some of my closest friends), building relationships around acts of hospitality (often centered on sharing food) is an ancient Christian practice.<sup>4</sup>
7. Effective leaders practice Sabbath living. Authentic Sabbath living is much more than a Sunday activity. Properly done, it also lends structure and meaning to all of our activities in the other six days of the week. But integrating Sabbath rhythms into daily life involves careful preparation and follow-through. It requires that we thoughtfully and deliberately make choices that nurture it as a way of life. Dorothy Bass describes Sabbath living as practices of “leaning deliberately into the wind.”<sup>5</sup> Such practices ground us and help us resist the forces that hurry us on to distraction. We “lean into the wind” when we
  - Set aside a quiet moment to pray, reflect on a passage of Scripture, or consider the words of a thoughtful author
  - Arrive at our place of work before most other people, take a few minutes to welcome the day, and ask how do today’s activities fit with my larger set of priorities?
  - Make room in our daily schedule to nurture relationships with people that matter to us, including family and close friends
  - Take time on a regular basis for self-care, including emotional and physical rest, as well as spiritual renewal

These kinds of moments—and others besides—provide points of stability and reference that orient us in our otherwise busy schedules. I am convinced that Christian leaders cannot flourish in their careers unless they also flourish as persons and that, in the long run, they cannot flourish as persons unless they

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<sup>4</sup> On the subject of Christian practices, see Dorothy C. Bass, ed., *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for Searching People* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997) and Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass, eds. *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> Dorothy C. Bass, *Receiving the Day: Christian Practices for Opening the Gift of Time* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000).

intentionally incorporate Sabbath rhythms into their daily routines. This is so because Sabbath living is central to renewing one's vision, maintaining appropriate priorities, and resisting the temptation to succumb to the tyranny of the urgent.<sup>6</sup>

Seven principles—I make no pretense that the list is comprehensive; nor do I suggest that this brief discussion constitutes an adequate template for a full orb ed theory of leadership. But for me these principles have worn well—by which I mean I feel comfortable living by them in the workplace, explaining them to other people, and using them as a basis for making decisions.

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#### About the Author

Dr. Michael Palmer is a professor of philosophy and dean of Regent University's School of Divinity. A native of Missoula, Mont., his university education includes B.A. and M.A. degrees in philosophy from the University of Montana. He completed his Ph.D. in philosophy at Marquette University in 1984, specializing in ancient philosophy (Plato). From 2003 to 2006 he served as the director of *Project Envision: Discovering a Life of Christian Service and Leadership*, a five-year initiative funded by the Lilly Endowment and designed to help students and faculty explore the relationships between faith and vocation. The 2002 winner of Evangel University's E.M. and Estella Clark Award for Excellence in Teaching, Scholarship, and Service, Dr. Palmer has been listed five times in *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*. He has published numerous philosophical articles and two books, including *Elements of a Christian Worldview*. He is currently co-editing *The Berkshire Encyclopedia of Religion and Social Justice*.  
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<sup>6</sup> I have found the following resources useful in stimulating my thinking about Sabbath living: Lauren F. Wimmer, *Mudhouse Sabbath* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2003); Kathleen Norris, *Dakota; A Spiritual Geography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993, 2001); R. Paul Stevens, *Seven Days of Faith: Every Day Alive with God* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2001); Wayne Muller, *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives* (New York: Bantam Books, 1999); Wendell Barry, *The Timbered Choir: The Sabbath Poems 1979-1997* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 1998).