

MODULE 4:

The Nature of Christian Leadership



This module will introduce students to an understanding of Christian leadership that will be effective in producing missional congregations. It will help to examine some of the key character issues that relate to the growth and development of a leader, like the importance of interpersonal communications and their own interpersonal styles and preferences or conflict management theory and skills. This course will also challenge students to the dynamics involved in planting and/or revitalising a congregation.

This entire section will be structured in 6 e-learning units and each of them will include readings, online classes, and discussions around significant questions in relation to the topic. The focus of these units is on understanding the root of a life with Christ, based on his model.

Unit 1: Foundations of a Biblical leadership

The nature of leadership is under the microscope as never before; what are the distinctive of Christian leadership and more specifically, is our thinking about leadership shaped by theology or secular management theory? In this Topic area, we will pay particular attention to the Biblical basis for leadership and propose a leadership matrix that seeks to explain how the various kinds of leadership functions can operate together for maximum missional impact. Three passages of Scripture dominate the New Testament picture regarding the leading of Christ's people. We will explore these three passages over the next four sections because they lay a grid of expectations over all the other necessary statements. They form the "culture" in which New Testament Church leadership operates.

Unit 2: The Composition of the Leadership Team

In our previous sections, we were looking at several foundations in relation to leadership in the New Testament.

We now need to look at the practical outworking of these principles in a leadership team setting. We want to be able to understand what God the Spirit did through the church in the book of Acts, but make it live in the twenty-first century because that's the century we live in – that's our reality. So, when he left, says Paul, he gave this gift to his bride, that gift is contained in people and their role is outside of themselves. How do we know when apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are doing their job? When we look at the saints and we see them empowered. Empowered in what? Empowered to be whom God has created them to be. Empowered to do what God has created them to do.

Unit 3: What is Communication?

As ministry effectiveness is greatly dependent upon the quality of our relationships, the capacity to engage in effective communications will directly impact the success of our personal and working lives. Our ability to know our own strengths and weaknesses and to allow for others', the ability to fully understand the other, and our depth of understanding of the dynamics of interpersonal communications are all vital aspects of the ministry life. Even for those among us who do have public speaking roles in our work or ministry, the most important communication we do is in the daily interaction of our relationships.

Unit 4: More Communication Skills

The study of non-verbal communication and body language has its cynics, but there has been a significant body of research going on now for many years, to the extent that pupil dilation and the minutiae of change in facial expression are studied. If we hope to understand people deeply, we need to develop our skills in reading and sending in this language. Of particular interest to us is the idea that non-verbal communication is the language of feelings. While information is best conveyed with words, the meaning and the feelings attending their

relationships and the information given is communicated by 'non-verbals'. In how that person is coping with those feelings is often displayed through expression and gesture. Rarely do we think 'now I am going to fold my arms, look away, and begin to yawn to show how little this communication means to me.'

Unit 5: Temptations and the Shaping of Leadership Character

Out of who we are, flows the leadership, ministry, and mission or 'what we do'. Leadership flows from character, from who we are before God. Identity and belonging, heart and character should emerge and develop from our relationship with God. Therefore, a good leader's character is formed by their relationship with Christ. This unit will explore some of the temptations and pressures of leadership and how they impact our lives and ministry and how we might respond to them in a way that forms our characters.

Unit 6: Servanthood, for the good and the bad

In this unit, we shall look at the essential mark of a Christian leader who following the example of Christ embraces Servanthood. Jesus' definition of leadership finds expression in Servanthood. A Christian leader is a servant by nature. Yet, we will look at some of the factors that have both the potential to deepen or damage the character of a leader and reflect on the experiences of the disciples who were called by Christ to be his disciples. The journey and the experiences that accompanied their own calling mirrors that of a leader's own path of discipleship and character development.