



SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

A Discipleship Study Guide

What is spiritual leadership?

Spiritual leadership has its foundation in a Christ-surrendered life. A spiritual leader inspires others to be Christ-like in a nurturing, promoting, self-sacrificial manner. He has no tolerance for sin and readily assumes responsibility for error without attempting to escape accountability. Spiritual leadership rests on trust, integrity, and honesty. (*Romans 12:17*) “*Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*”

Spiritual leaders are called to serve others, thereby serving God. They lead by example, striving to remain blameless by the grace of God. Spiritual leaders are enabled by their character and defined by their trust in God. They are being conformed to the image of Christ through their victories and failings, knowing that what defines them is their faith rather than their success. Spiritual leadership is often referred to as “servant leadership”. A spiritual leader is always open to counsel and willingly steps into the leadership roles the Lord has appointed them to even when they feel inadequate, fearful, or uncomfortable. Effective spiritual leadership requires a blend of assertiveness and humility which is grounded upon and guided by the Scripture and leading of the Holy Spirit. Biblically-based leadership behaviors must be intentional and purposeful rather than simply by chance. Knowing the Word of God and allowing it to change behaviors and attitudes first in himself is fundamental to a spiritual leader so that he can lead others by example. (*2 Timothy 3:10*) “*But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience.*”

What isn't spiritual leadership?

(*2 Timothy 2:24*) “*And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,*” Spiritual leaders do not lead by controlling or micromanaging others. They do not claim spiritual superiority but are gentle and patient realizing that they are what they are only by the grace of God. *1 Corinthians 15:10* “*But by the grace of God I am what I am...*” True spiritual leaders are never demeaning to women and never use coercion to further their agendas. They do not misapply the meaning of submission to indicate mental, physical, and emotional subordination but rather follow the biblical principles of being submissive one to another in the spirit of humility. (*1 Peter 5:5*) “*Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility:*”

The avoidance of accepting appropriate responsibilities or shirking biblical duties is not spiritual leadership. It is essential for spiritual leaders to be actively involved in their relationships with others. Unengaged leaders are ineffective and fail to uphold their call to diligence. (*John 10:13*) “*The hireling fleeth, for he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.*”

Who is a spiritual leader?

We might quickly assume that a spiritual leader is an elder, minister, or Sunday School teacher. However, since all Christians are called to a life of servitude and love toward others, all are spiritual leaders with varying roles and responsibilities. It is easy and tempting to pass off opportunities for service with the mind that we are not qualified or authorized. Granted, there are certain duties delegated to specific roles in the church but most of the time we all have opportunity to serve others. (*Galatians 5:13*) “*For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*”

Specific leadership roles.

The Bible mentions elders, bishops, ministers, teachers, rulers, prophets, etc. according to God-given spiritual gifts and church appointment. However, there are other spiritual leaders as well: single brothers, husbands, fathers, and “aged men” of the church. God’s Word indicates that church leadership roles should be occupied by brothers but there are many opportunities for sisters to lead by example through godly servitude in the church, at home, and in the workplace. (*1 Timothy 2:12*) “*But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*” This by no means puts a sister in an inferior position to a brother in Christ but only serves to establish biblical church authority.

Foundational requirements for leadership.

Christ is the foundation for all believers. The fruit exhibited in a spiritual leader’s life often speak much louder than what he says and actually can help the unconverted understand the truth and reality of Scripture.

Therefore, living in a manner above reproach is a foundational precept for a spiritual leader. We are reminded in the Bible that we should have a good report from those who are of the world. (*1 Timothy 3:7*) “*Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*”

Study goals.

Hopefully, through using this study aid, all participants can learn more about their responsibility to promote and nurture others through leading by modeling a biblical example and by discipleship mentoring. Whatever your method, be confident that time in God’s Word in the fellowship of God’s people has great potential to build up, convict and encourage your heart.

Study methods.

(Proverbs 27:17) “Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.”

This discipleship study guide is intended for small groups (2-10 brothers) that meet weekly or multiple times per month. Assuming you are meeting as a group, when you come together, begin with prayer and ask the Holy Spirit that He would penetrate hearts with His Word. The individual lessons have been designed to be used singly or in combination with others. Each lesson opens with at least one verse from Scripture which could be used as a memory verse although any verses could be used for that purpose. May God bless you as you study.

Spiritual Leadership Discipleship Study Guides

Foundational Principles

1. Faith
2. Trust
3. Integrity
4. Love
5. Self-Sacrifice
6. Humility
7. Holiness

Spiritual Growth

8. Sanctification
9. Growing as a Leader
10. Exercising Patience
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12. Stewardship
13. Empathy
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Spiritual Maturity

15. Submission
16. Contentment
17. Commitment
18. Discernment
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Spiritual Leadership is Not:

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22. Spiritually Superior
23. Demeaning
24. Dominating
25. Proud

Leadership in the Home

26. As a husband
27. As a provider
28. As a father in love
29. As a father teacher
30. As a father in discipline
31. As a father protector
32. As a father in worship
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Leadership in the Workplace

34. As an employer
35. As an employee
36. As a coworker

Leadership in the Church

37. As a brother/mentor
38. As a Sunday School teacher
39. As a minister
40. As an elder

1. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES – FAITH

(Hebrews 11:1) “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

Believing without seeing is the essence of the meaning of faith. However, achieving that level of confidence and trust is not an easy exercise. It is reached through prayer, by experience, and humble obedience to God and His Word. Spiritual leaders must be firmly anchored in the Word and to the Lord by faith or they will be ineffective. Faith and hope are intricately interwoven and cannot be separated as clearly indicated in *Romans 8:24* “*For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*”

(Hebrews 11:6) “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

1. Why is it impossible to please God without faith?

(Luke 22:67) “Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe.”

(John 20:27) “...be not faithless, but believing.”

2. What do these verses say about faith being a choice?

(Mark 9:24) “...Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

3. Do you struggle with having faith? Share an example when your faith was weak and when it was strong.

(Romans 5:1-2) “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

4. Comment on the importance of faith being a primary foundational principle of spiritual leadership.

(Romans 10:17) “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

5. In what state should we be in order to hear the Word of God and allow it to produce faith in us?

(Acts 28:24) “And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.”

(Romans 4:20) “He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;”

6. Compare these two verses and the consequences of each.

2. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES – TRUST

(2 Samuel 22:31) “As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the Lord is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him.”

This verse demonstrates the fact that trust is earned. We trust God because we know Him to be faithful. His Word is tried, we've seen His work, and experienced His blessings. Spiritual leadership rests on trust. We will likely not follow a leader in whom we haven't adequate trust. His counsel will be doubted and his effectiveness will be minimal. However, a trusted leader is very effective because his word isn't doubted and he has earned respect. Character is built by trusting God and obeying Him.

(Psalm 36:7) “How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

1. What does this verse imply that is necessary before trust is placed in a leader?
2. Do people trust you? How do you know?

(Psalm 9:10) “And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.”

3. How does this verse demonstrate another prerequisite for placing trust?
4. How have you treated those who sought you out for help?
5. In your own words, explain what it means to have trust in someone.

(Jeremiah 7:8) “Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit.”

6. What does this verse tell us about the need to know about whom or what we put our trust in?

3. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES – INTEGRITY

(Psalm 25:21) "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee."

Integrity, honesty, and character all seem to be woven together. Certainly they do go hand in hand and one can scarcely be present without the other. Yet, integrity contains within it the concept of consistency of behavior, values, beliefs, morality, and actions, all of which are grounded in honesty and truthfulness. Our integrity is made evident to others by how we are perceived as much as by our actual behavior.

(Psalm 41:12) "And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever."

1. According to this verse, who is ultimately responsible for your own integrity? Why?

(Proverbs 11:3) "The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them."

(Proverbs 19:1) "Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool."

2. Comment on the value of having integrity and explain in your own words what integrity means to you.
3. These verses contain contrasts and comparisons, actions and consequences. List them.

(Proverbs 20:7) "The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him."

4. Consider this cause and effect verse. How are you doing? What is the evidence in your life?

(Job 31:6) "Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity."

(Psalm 26:1-2) "Judge me, O Lord; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the Lord; therefore I shall not slide. ²Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart"

5. Can you say these verses and mean them for yourself? Why or why not?
6. Comment on the phrase "I shall not slide."

4. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES – LOVE

(1 Corinthians 12:25) “That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.”

God is love and the manifestation of that love is evident in Christ. His compassion and love for us before we loved Him is unsurpassed. A spiritual leader must have a desire to serve others and to care deeply for their needs even when they don't show love or appreciation in return. Without love, a leader can quickly become self-centered, using his position to satisfy his own aspirations. Such an individual cannot be an effective spiritual leader and can be a hindrance to the unconverted soul.

(Luke 10:33) “But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him.”

1. This is an excerpt from the story of the Good Samaritan. As you reflect on the whole account, what was the Good Samaritan's motivator?
2. What elements of self did he put aside to do this good deed?
3. Give an example of a time when God motivated you to do a kind deed.
4. In your own words, give a definition of compassion.

(1 John 4:18-20) “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?”

5. Explain how these verses demonstrate core concepts of spiritual leadership dos and don'ts.

(1 John 4:8) “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”

6. What excuses do we have for not exercising spiritual leadership in a loving way? What does this verse say about us if we do not love?

5. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES – SELF-SACRIFICE

(Galatians 1:3-4) “Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:”

Jesus exemplified what it means to have a self-sacrificing nature. He gave everything without regard to Himself. A godly spiritual leader will desire the best for others even though it costs him. Christ put our need of a Savior above His own glory and gave up His position in heaven to become sin for us. Only leaders possessing a selfless attitude can truly promote and nurture others as God expects because their sufficiency is in Christ and they don't need the honor and acclaim of this world. True humility and self-sacrifice are necessary attributes in the life of an effective spiritual leader.

(Titus 2:14) “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

1. Who benefitted from Christ's self-sacrifice?
2. Who benefits from an earthly leader's self-sacrifice?
3. Is it easy for you to deny self for the benefit of others?
4. Give an example of when you did sacrifice self. Also, give an example of when others sacrificed self for your sake.

(Genesis 20:2, 10-11) “And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. . . . And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake.”

(Esther 4:16) “. . . I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.”

5. Compare and contrast these verses and comment on the level of self-sacrifice leadership qualities of Esther and Abraham.

6. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES – HUMILITY

(James 4:6) "...God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

(James 4:10) "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

Being humble indicates having an attitude of modesty, reverence, and polite submission. A humble person never seeks his or her own glory but rather is self-abasing seeking to glorify God. Humility is not arrogant, high-minded, or rude. However, humility is also not self-destructive or excessively self-condescending bearing in remembrance that the gifts God has given are to be used to His name's glory and honor. Humility is a desired state yet elusive because once one feels he or she has arrived, pride in humility can begin to grow and true humility is diminished. A proud heart can be clothed in humble attire but a truly humble heart cannot be clothed in pride. True humility is rewarded with greater responsibility.

1. Is it accurate to make this statement? "I am humble."
2. Why is it so important for a spiritual leader to be humble and to strive after true humility?

(Proverbs 15:33) "The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility."

(1 Peter 5:6) "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"

3. What does the Bible say about humility being a choice?
4. What are some of the benefits of being humble?
5. Is it easy for you to be humble? Why or why not?

(Matthew 5:20) "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

(Luke 20:46) "Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;"

6. What do these verses tell us about the humility of the scribes and Pharisees?
7. List and discuss ways in which to display true humility.

7. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES – HOLINESS

(1 Peter 1:15-16) "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

The call and directive in God's Word to be holy indicates a need for action on our part. God desires for us to conduct ourselves in a holy manner so that He might impart His will to us in order to develop spiritual leadership. To be holy is to act holy which means to be separated from the world, sanctified unto God's service.

(2 Timothy 3:17) "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Living a holy life exemplifies the fact that we belong to God and as His children we are brought into holiness by the power of His Spirit through the cleansing blood of Jesus.

(1 Thessalonians 4:7) "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

1. Discuss the apparent contrast of terms in this verse.
2. How does God call us unto holiness?

(Hebrews 12:14) "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:"

3. What does this verse say about living peaceably and being holy?
4. How is the holiness in your life? Do you follow peace with all men?
5. Comment on why being peaceable and holy are so important to God.

(1 Thessalonians 3:13) "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

(Colossians 1:21-22) "...yet now hath he reconciled ²²In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight:"

6. Explain how being holy, unblameable, and unreprouable fit together. Why are these attributes important?
7. Does being holy mean being perfect? Why or why not?

8. SPIRITUAL GROWTH – SANCTIFICATION

(Jude 1:1-2) "...to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: ²Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied."

Sanctification means to be set apart for a special purpose and is a process which a Christian enters into at conversion and continues until life's end. Spiritual leaders must be sanctified through Christ having been born again and converted from sin and death to life and hope. *(Hebrews 10:10) "...we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."* Sanctification is an ongoing condition of being separated to God and His purpose and is an individual experience and relationship with God that is established and strengthened through obedience to God's Word and following the example of Christ. God alone can sanctify us but through our example of holiness and living separated from the world, God can touch the heart of others and thereby bring them to conviction and salvation. *(1 Corinthians 7:14) "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband..."*

(1 Thessalonians 5:23) "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1. Why is so much emphasis placed on being "wholly" sanctified and the "whole" spirit being blameless?
2. Comment on what it means to be found "blameless."

(John 17:17) "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

3. This is a portion of Jesus' High Priest's prayer. Discuss the concept of being sanctified through God's Word.

(2 Timothy 2:21) "If a man therefore purge himself from these [iniquities], he shall be a vessel unto honour [value], sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

4. According to this verse, what is our role in becoming sanctified? How are you doing in this area?
5. What are some examples of "every good work?"
6. Comment on the idea of being an honourable vessel, one of value to the Master.

9. SPIRITUAL GROWTH – GROWING AS A LEADER

(Acts 7:30) “And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.”

An effective spiritual leader must lead as directed by the Word of God. God expects us to excel in whatever job He gives us before He will entrust us with more responsibility. One of the most effective leaders in the Old Testament was Moses. However, he had to learn how to herd sheep in Midian for forty years before God saw that he was ready to lead His people. There are many examples throughout Scripture of leaders who first needed to be proved before they got their big assignments. A spiritual leader must continue to grow in grace and faith through personal study of the Word. *(2 Timothy 2:15) “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

(Hebrews 5:8) “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;”

1. What does this verse tell us about the need for continual learning? Are you willing to learn?

(Judges 2:22) “That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not.”

2. What does this verse tell us about God’s view of proving someone?

(1 Kings 9:4-7) “And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: ⁵Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. ⁶But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: ⁷Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people:”

3. A great contrast exists in these four verses. Comment on how God’s blessing is predicated by obedience to Him. How does this apply to spiritual leadership? What kind of growth is God looking for?

(Matthew 25:29) “For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”

4. This verse is the conclusion of the account of the distribution and use of talents. How does this account apply to spiritual leadership? What are God’s criteria for increasing our responsibility?

10. SPIRITUAL GROWTH – EXERCISING PATIENCE

(James 1:4) “But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

Many potentially great leaders have gone ahead of God to their own detriment. God knows how much talent He has given and asks that we wait upon Him to open up subsequent doors and responsibility. Patience is a virtue that may not be easily recognized in many of us. Too often we think we know better and God has to take some corrective action. This verse provides the motivation and need for patience; that we might be complete, wanting nothing.

(Psalm 59:9) “Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence.”

(Psalm 62:5) “My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.”

1. These two Psalms are attributed to David. They demonstrate his desire to exercise patience and not to run ahead of God. What are the reasons he gives for waiting on God?

(Romans 10:15) “And how shall they preach, except they be sent?...”

(Romans 12:7) “Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;”

2. What do these verses tell us about waiting for God’s direction in spiritual leadership? Are you willing to wait upon God?
3. Share a time when you ran ahead of God and the consequences of that.

(Romans 2:7-9) “To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: ⁸But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, ⁹Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil...”

4. These verses demonstrate a contrast. Comment on the actions and subsequent consequences.
5. In your own words, what is meant by “patient continuance in well doing?”
6. What is the relationship of patience to obedience?

11. SPIRITUAL GROWTH – ACCOUNTABILITY

(Hebrews 13:17) "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

A spiritual leader not only is required to be accountable for his behavior but is also expected to give an account for how he may influence others. The attitude of accountability is necessary in the life of every Christian but especially in that of a spiritual leader. Honesty, humility, and accountability are keys to maintaining a right relationship to God and others. Accountability means that we are responsible for the consequences of everything we do or say. *(Romans 14:12) "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."*

1. Share in your own words what accountability means to you. List some of the people to whom you are accountable. List some people who are accountable to you.

(Matthew 12:36) "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

2. This verse indicates accountability in a specific area. What is that and how are you doing?

(2 Corinthians 5:10) "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

3. What does this verse say about who is accountable and to what extent?

(1 Peter 5:1) "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:"

4. What does this verse say about the duties of someone to whom you are accountable? Does that accountability go both ways? Comment on the concept of 360° accountability.

(Proverbs 27:5-6) "Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."

(Proverbs 27:17) "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

5. What do these verses imply about the relationship that should exist between us as we keep each other accountable?

12. SPIRITUAL GROWTH – STEWARDSHIP

(Luke 16:2) “And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.”

Stewardship and accountability go hand in hand. In order to be a good steward, a leader must recognize that his first responsibility is to God and that he is caring for those things which are not his own. Only after realizing this important concept is a spiritual leader truly ready to grow in responsibility. This verse tells us what will happen to a steward who wastes His Master’s goods.

(1 Samuel 13:12-14) “Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering. ¹³And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. ¹⁴But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.”

1. It was unacceptable for a king to perform the duties of a priest yet King Saul, in his impatience, did just that. He even admitted that he “forced” himself. What were the consequences of his failure to exercise proper stewardship?
2. Does stewardship have boundaries? Why or why not?
3. Does title or position give exclusive rights to govern without restraint? Explain.

(Mark 12:43-44) “And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: ⁴⁴For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.”

4. These verses talk about money and giving but what do they also imply about stewardship in general? How much did the widow retain for herself?
5. How faithful is your stewardship? How can you improve?

(Luke 16:11-12) “If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?”

6. How do these verses apply to stewardship and the criteria for added responsibilities?

13. SPIRITUAL GROWTH - EMPATHY

(1 Peter 3:8) "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:"

To have empathy for others means to share in their experiences. It means to have the ability to feel what they are feeling and to be able to understand their emotional and psychological state although perhaps only momentarily. Spiritual leaders can be more effective when they are perceived as caring enough about others to want to know their life's situation at a deeper level than just at face value. They want to see things from the viewpoint of others. Often past experiences can give insight to the needs of those around us and enable us to better share in their joy, grief, suffering, disappointment, etc. Empathic people are willing to enter into someone else's pain and walk with them. Self-service and apathy or "mind-blindness" can distract us to the point of not recognizing even caring about the needs of others because we are lost in our own selves.

(Matthew 7:12) "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

1. This verse is often referred to as The Golden Rule. How does it relate to having empathy?

(Luke 18:2-5) "...There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: ³And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. ⁴And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; ⁵Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."

(Romans 12:15-16) "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. ¹⁶Be of the same mind one toward another..."

2. Compare these two Scripture passages and contrast God's direction against man's tendencies.

3. Do you find yourself reacting like the judge in Luke 18? What can you do in your life to change that?

4. Is it easy for you to reach out to others, to share in their suffering or joy? Why or why not?

(Philippians 2:19-21) "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. ²⁰For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. ²¹For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's."

5. The Apostle Paul was sending Timothy to Philippi for a purpose. Comment on what that purpose was and whether or not Timothy was perceived as empathetic. Why was there no one found locally to care for the Philippian believers?

6. Share experiences when others reached out to you and/or when you reached out to others.

14. SPIRITUAL GROWTH - PRAYER

(1 Thessalonians 5:17) "Pray without ceasing"

Prayer has been defined as the avenue in which we speak to God through Jesus Christ our Intercessor. To pray without ceasing appears to be a difficult suggestion until we view ourselves and our lives from God's perspective. He alone is able to provide what we need in order to serve Him. Spiritual leaders must recognize that their sufficiency rests in God and any other source is inadequate and uncertain. To be connected with God and His direction for our lives is paramount for effective leadership; hence the need to be instant and constant in prayer, to have a prayerful mind and attitude.

(Romans 12:12) "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;"

(Ephesians 6:18) "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

1. What is meant by all prayer and supplication being in the Spirit?
2. What is the connection between prayer and perseverance? Do you give up easily in your prayer life?

(Philippians 4:6) "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

3. How do you measure up according to this verse? Are you overly full of care? Are you thankful when making requests of God?

(Matthew 26:42) "...O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."

(John 14:13-14) "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

(1 John 5:14) "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: ¹⁵And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

4. What do these verses say about our requests being granted?
5. Share some specific answers to prayer. Share an instance where prayer was answered differently than expected.

15. SPIRITUAL MATURITY - SUBMISSION

(Ephesians 5:21) "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

Submission and pride together constitute a dichotomy and are mutually exclusive. They cannot co-exist. The Bible is clear that submission to God and to each other is not an option if we want to live according to His will and receive the blessings He is ready to give. Proper submission to God and His authority is a key factor in any relationship and failure to submit leads to dysfunction. Sometimes the concept of submission is misapplied and leadership and submission becomes dominance and submission. This is unscriptural and contributes to ineffective spiritual leadership.

(James 4:6-7) "...God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

1. Consider the implications of word "therefore" in these verses.
2. Compare submitting and resisting and how those actions apply in a Christian's life.
3. In what areas can you be more submissive to God?

(1 Peter 2:13-15) "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; ¹⁴Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. ¹⁵For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:"

4. What are the benefits of submitting to man's ordinances?
5. How could you improve in keeping the laws of the land?

(1 Peter 5:5) "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility:..."

(James 3:16) "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."

6. Compare and contrast these two passages. What are some results when submission and subjection are lacking in individual lives? In relationships?

16. SPIRITUAL MATURITY - CONTENTMENT

(Proverbs 30:7-9) "Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die: Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

We might consider this prayer in Proverbs to be very difficult to say and mean it. Contentment can be elusive especially in our society where advertising and marketing is designed to create discontentment, desire, lust, and covetousness. Likewise, in our pursuit of an occupation we are encouraged to be all that we can be and to climb the ladders of position and prestige. Scripture, on the other hand, teaches that we should be content with whatever state we are in, believing that God will provide for our every need. Contentment might be best defined as "wanting what we have rather than having what we want."

(Philippians 4:11-13) "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

1. Would you say that people in general are content? What do these verses say about how we become content?
2. Do you know how to be abased? Share a time when you were abased.
3. Do you know how to abound? Explain.

(Hebrews 13:5) "Let your conversation [character, lifestyle] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

4. According to this verse, why should we be content?
5. Are you content with your: job? position? wife? home? family? church? lifestyle?
6. Do you rejoice when others are blessed or do their blessings make you envious?
7. How important is contentment in the broad scope of spiritual leadership?

17. SPIRITUAL MATURITY - COMMITMENT

(1 Corinthians 16:15) "I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)"

(1 Peter 2:23) "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:"

Being "addicted to the ministry" is perhaps the most graphic description of consecrated devotion and commitment exhibited by people in service of others. The "house of Stephanas" level of loving dedication and duty to serve was to the exclusion of all else including their personal needs. Jesus exemplified the highest level ever of commitment to a purpose in total disregard of Himself for the betterment of others. Our own level of service and commitment might well be measured in how many resources we still reserve to satisfy self.

(1 Timothy 1:11) "According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."

(1 Timothy 6:20) "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust..."

1. Share thoughts on how commitment and trust are woven together.
2. List at least 10 items/individuals which/who are committed to your trust.
3. Rank your level of commitment to each one with 5 being the highest level and 0 the lowest.
4. Are you satisfied with the level of commitment on this list? How can you improve?

(Daniel 1:8) "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank:..."

(Daniel 3:17-18) "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. ¹⁸But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

5. What was the level of commitment exhibited in these familiar passages? How much were Daniel and his friends willing to pay to remain committed?
6. Comment on the need for spiritual leaders to be committed to: God, service, purpose, etc. (Add to the list as you see the need in your life.)

18. SPIRITUAL MATURITY – DISCERNMENT

(Ezekiel 44:23) “And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.”

Spiritual discernment is primarily a Christian term meaning the process through which we determine God’s will for our lives. Through prayerful consideration of God’s Word, each Christian must seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in sorting out what is the right or the wrong direction to take or decision to make. Discernment is listed in the Bible as a spiritual gift and is necessary for spiritual leadership. A spiritual leader must first discern God’s will in his own life to better be able to model Christ-like behavior in leading others.

(Malachi 3:18) “Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.”

1. In this verse and the verse above, what is the result of applying proper discernment?
2. Is there any indication that when using discernment some compromise is made? What word gives the clue to that answer?
3. Do you feel that discernment is a spiritual gift that you possess? Why or why not?

(Hebrews 5:14) “But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

4. What does this verse say about what we need to discern? Why?
5. Comment on the meaning of the phrase, “by reason of use have their senses exercised.”
6. What is the correlation between strong meat and exercised senses? What is the application in spiritual leadership?
7. How does the term “full age” pertain to spiritual leadership?

19. SPIRITUAL MATURITY – PURITY

(Matthew 5:8) “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”

(1 Timothy 4:12) “. . . be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

Purity is the absence of impurities or pollutants in a particular substance. From a biblical perspective, purity indicates freedom from sin. A spiritual leader must overcome self and temptation to remain pure in all aspects of life as indicted in the verses above. Since we read in Romans 3:23 “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*” we must first become pure in order to stay pure. Faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ is the cleansing agent that makes us pure, and by the grace and power of God, we can remain pure.

(Jeremiah 18:12) “And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.”

(2 Timothy 2:22) “Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

1. Compare these two verses and comment on the differences? What is the application to spiritual leadership?

(2 Timothy 1:3) “I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience. . . .”

2. Explain the necessity of a pure conscience and how that applies to spiritual leadership. Is your conscience pure? If not, what steps will you take to get there?

(Romans 6:22) “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

3. What is meant by having “your fruit unto holiness?”

4. How does this verse tie into spiritual leadership? What attitude does it suggest?

5. What promises does this verse hold out to those who remain free from sin?

(Revelation 21:18) “. . . and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.”

(Revelation 22:1) “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal. . . .”

6. Explain the meaning of purity as demonstrated in these verses.

20. SPIRITUAL MATURITY – PERSONAL WORSHIP

(Psalm 29:2) "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

For us to grow in spiritual leadership and be prepared for the responsibilities God wishes to give us, our personal devotion to Him is a prerequisite. Spiritual leaders must take time each day for reading and meditating on God's Word and fervent prayer. Satan would try to keep us too busy but daily personal worship in a quiet place where God's Spirit isn't drowned out is essential. The Psalmist tells us that the Lord is due glory and worship in the beauty of holiness. Our worship of a sovereign God should come from the depths of humble gratitude for what His love has accomplished in our lives. It should flow unchecked from a heart that desires to be one with its Master.

(Matthew 6:6) "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

1. What does this verse say about private prayer? What is the result?
2. What character trait is God looking for as implied in this verse? How are you exhibiting that trait?
3. How are you doing with daily devotions? How can you improve?

(John 4:24) "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

(Acts 17:23) "For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

4. Compare and contrast the two kinds of worship described in these verses.

(Psalm 138:2) "I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."

5. List some ways in which we worship God. Why should we worship and praise God?
6. Share thoughts on the meaning of "magnified thy word above all thy name."

21. NOT SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP – CONTROLLING

(Titus 3:2) "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men."

An individual with a controlling spirit and attitude cannot function effectively as a spiritual leader. There is no room in the life of a spiritual leader for over-lording or micro-managing. The Bible clearly reminds us that God alone is in control and all of nature is subject to Him. Although we have a position of authority, we have no right to exercise control over another human being by requiring him or her to yield to our agenda.

1. Comment on the attributes of a spiritual leader as listed in Titus 3:2.
2. Why is it wrong to be controlling? What is the root cause of a controlling spirit?

(1 Peter 5:2) "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

3. Contrast the two halves of this verse and the lesson given against being controlling.

(Leviticus 22:29) "And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the Lord, offer it at your own will."

4. What does this verse say about God controlling us and our allegiance to Him?

(Ephesians 1:22) "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,"

5. Who is this verse referring to? Do we have any right to be controlling over others? Why or why not?
6. How might you be tempted to be in control of others' lives? Why or why not?
7. What steps can you take to be more yielded to Christ and less controlling of others?

22. NOT SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP – SPIRITUALLY SUPERIOR

(2 Corinthians 1:24) “Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.”

A spiritual leader does not consider himself spiritually superior to others. Claiming spiritual superiority over another individual is akin to making ourselves more righteous than him or her which is abominable in the sight of God. Isaiah writes in 64:6 “...all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags...” God and His Word will be the ultimate judge of each soul. Our elevated opinion of our own spirituality as it compares to that of our brother is of no value and we have no right to make that comparison.

2 Peter 1:20) “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.”

1. What does this verse say about any of us claiming a level of spiritual understanding above that which is available to anyone?

(James 1:5) “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”

2. Does this verse give any exclusive rights to spiritual knowledge to anyone? Why or why not?

(Luke 18:11) “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. ¹²I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. ¹³And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”

3. Compare the apparent spiritual superiority of the Pharisee to the true spirituality of the publican.
4. Is it easy for you to feel spiritually superior? Why or why not?
5. Was there a time in your life when you played the part of the Pharisee? The publican? Explain.
6. Why does the attitude of spiritual superiority not fit into the character of a spiritual leader?

23. NOT SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP – DEMEANING

(Philippians 3:16) “Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.”

Portraying a demeaning attitude is unacceptable behavior for a spiritual leader. No one enjoys being humiliated, degraded, and otherwise dishonored or made to feel worthless. Individuals who are demeaning may actually have a sense of low self-worth and attempt to make themselves feel more worthy or credible but putting others down. Our self-worth and identity should be in Christ and therefore never predicated upon someone else being made lower than us to increase our feeling of worth. Scripture tells us that we are equal in Christ because we have nothing of ourselves for which to boast. *(Romans 3:27) “Where is boasting then? It is excluded...”*

(Ephesians 5:33) “Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.”

1. Does this verse give a husband any right to be demeaning to his wife? What does this verse about a husband’s responsibility to his wife?

(Colossians 3:15) “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”

2. Consider these three thoughts: peace, one body, and thankful. Why is there no room for a demeaning nature?

(2 Corinthians 6:6) “Giving no offence in any thing...”

3. Explain how being demeaning would be offensive.
4. Do you struggle with the temptation to put others down? Share a time when you elevated yourself by putting someone else down.

(1 Corinthians 4:7) “For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?”

5. What does this verse say about our right to elevate ourselves above another?
6. Share a time when you bragged or boasted? What was the outcome?

24. NOT SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP – DOMINATING

(Judges 8:23) “And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you.”

To dominate is very similar to being controlling and indicates an elevation of self over someone else. Spiritual leadership is never dominating and never forces others into submission. Someone with a dominating nature may actually be very insecure and have little confidence in his own abilities. Therefore, he attempts to hide that incompetence behind a mask of domination and control. In doing so, he will likely disregard any outside counsel or suggestions and appear unapproachable. As a result, dominating leaders often find themselves alone without many friends and are ineffective. Ultimately, God is the only One with the right to rule over anyone.

(Titus 3:2) “To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.”

1. Explain where the spirit of dominance exists in this verse.

(Ephesians 5:21) “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”

2. What does this verse tell us about our level of relationship one to another?
3. Is there any room for a dominant attitude? Why or why not?

(Ephesians 5:25) “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”

4. How should husbands love their wives? If married, how are you doing in this area?
5. Are you willing to give yourself for your wife to the extent that Christ gave Himself for us?

(James 4:17) “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

6. How does this verse apply to a demeaning, controlling, dominating nature?
7. Share thoughts on the effectiveness of a controlling, demeaning, and dominating spiritual leader.

25. NOT SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP – PROUD

(Proverbs 16:5) “Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD...”

Much could be written about the dangers of pride in leadership positions and the Bible is filled with warnings against it. There is no room for pride in any heart that wishes to serve God much less in a spiritual leader. A proud, haughty nature is contrary to the desire of God and hinders the effectiveness of leaders. The temptation may well exist, however, and each spiritual leader must recognize that tendency within himself and strive to overcome it. Pride in an individual is often more easily identified by others than by the person himself.

(Psalm 100:3) “Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves...”

1. How does this verse speak to the attitude of pride? Do we have any right to be proud?

(Proverbs 29:23) “A man’s pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.”

2. Consider and comment on the contrast between the two halves of this verse.
3. Explain how honor and humility can coexist.

(Jeremiah 13:15-16) “Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken. ¹⁶Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.”

4. According to these verses, what are the consequences of having pride in our lives?
5. Share a couple of instances in your life when pride caused you to make a poor decision.
6. What do you do to overcome pride? Where could you do better?
7. Discuss whether having pride is ever a good thing.

26. LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME – AS A HUSBAND

(Ephesians 5:23) “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

(Ephesians 5:25) “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”

Husbands are called to assume the role of a Christ-like servant leader who will guide the course of the family. He is to be the self-sacrificing head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church and gave Himself for it. This does not give authorization for lordship. Being controlling, domineering, or disrespectful to one's wife is sin. Likewise, not assuming the duties of spiritual leadership because of absence, apathy, passivity, or neglect is also unscriptural. Christ demonstrated His authority through submission.

As the scriptural head of the wife, a husband has numerous roles. He is to be a provider for her and his family. He is expected to lead in worship and family devotion. A husband is responsible for the spiritual welfare of his family. He cannot repent for them and isn't personally responsible for their sin but has a key role in helping them develop, maintain, and grow a relationship with Christ. As our own physical head governs our actions and makes decisions for our physical body, so should a husband lead in making decisions for his family according to biblical principles but not to the exclusion of his family's input. However, with that authority comes accountability to God. A husband, as the biblical head of his wife, is expected to continually promote and nurture her spiritual, emotional, and intellectual development. Jesus does not lead the Church merely by decree but by example through teaching and providing encouragement and inspiration. He allows the Church to be a free agent yet gently guides it in a way that is best for its spiritual welfare. Likewise, a husband needs to take responsibility for nurturing his wife and family lovingly and not with dominance.

(1 Corinthians 11:3) “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.”

1. Does God's order give license for domination to the husband? Why not?
2. What differences do you see between a husband who loves his wife as Christ loves the church and one who maintains excessive control and dominion over her and his family?
3. Name three specific areas in which you could improve as a husband. Would your spouse agree?
4. How might your wife help you to improve as a spiritual leader? Have you asked for her help?
5. Christ example of loving is self-sacrificial. Think of a time when your spouse gave of herself for your benefit. What are some things or activities you could sacrifice in order to please her?

27. LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME – AS A PROVIDER

(1 Timothy 5:8) “But if any provide [take thought] not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”

Caring and providing for those of our own households goes far beyond the provision of material goods such as food, shelter, and clothing. Being a provider includes taking a leadership role in establishing and maintaining biblical stability in the home, modeling Christ’s example of integrity and character. Adequate provision for a family requires foresight, purposeful prayer, and faith. A spiritual leader should be transparent, acting no differently at home than in public. *James 1:8* tells us that, “*A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*” Appearances can be deceiving but godly spiritual leaders must be authentic. Their credibility depends upon it. Changing opinions and directions regularly according to circumstances or environments sends an unclear message and can be confusing to the family. Consistency, purity, and humility are key ingredients of authentic spiritual leadership and provision for a family. Part of being a provider includes fair and equitable estate planning to reduce the potential for disputes which may result from an improperly prepared last will and testament.

(1 Timothy 6:10) “For the love of money is the root of all evil...”

1. Do you ever do things or buy things for yourself that do not benefit the rest of the family? Do those things or activities put a strain on the family budget or family relationships?
2. How do you view the purpose of money? Do you love money and crave more of it? Why or why not?
3. Do you teach your family the value and purpose of money? How or when do you do this?

(Proverbs 15:27) “He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts [bribes] shall live.”

4. Comment on how being greedy might trouble your own household. How is that a struggle for you?
5. How might the taking of bribes be applied in your life today?
6. Share a time when you were tempted to do a shady deal or cheat financially. How did you deal with that?

(Proverbs 13:22) “A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children’s children...”

7. What does this verse mean to you?

28. LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME – AS A FATHER IN LOVE

(Deuteronomy 6:6-7) “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: ⁷And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

Fatherhood brings a unique opportunity and a grave responsibility. Fathers are encouraged to teach and model biblical truth for the eternal benefit welfare of their children. They are to exercise appropriate, corrective discipline according to biblical directives and acknowledge and seek to honor God in all areas of life. This will involve modeling confession and forgiveness. This commission is for consistent lifelong duty in whatever additional roles fathers involve themselves. Fathers are called upon to love their children unconditionally forever and affirm them for who they are not for their performance.

(Psalm 103:13) “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.”

(Luke 15:20) “And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.”

1. What do these verses tell us about a father’s heart? Could they be written about you?
2. The prodigal son’s father had compassion. Does that mean he minimized his son’s sin? How do love and forgiveness fit together as biblical principles? Share a time when you were forgiven prompted by love.

(Colossians 3:20-21) “Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.”

3. Name some ways in which we can provoke our children to anger. How are you doing in this area? Would your children agree?

(Proverbs 20:7) “The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.”

4. This verse demonstrates cause and effect. How are you doing? Would your children agree?

(1 Timothy 3:4-5) “One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; ⁵(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)”

5. What do these verses say about the importance of fatherhood?

29. LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME – AS A FATHER TEACHER

(Proverbs 22:6) “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

Fathers have a grave responsibility to teach their children about God, His Word, and how to live life accordingly. Fathers have a special responsibility to their sons to teach them how to be godly men, to help them understand what it means to be male and how to conduct themselves in that role. Part of teaching includes giving instruction but most of what children remember of their dads is their model of behavior, attitude, and integrity.

(Deuteronomy 6:6-7) “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: ⁷And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

(Psalm 1:1) “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

1. According to these verses, where must God’s Word be before we can teach our children? How you doing in your personal study of the Bible?
2. What do these verses say about when and how often we should teach our children? How are you doing?
3. Do you pray for, and use, teachable moments? Share some examples.

(Proverbs 17:6) “Children’s children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.”

4. Explain the two different perspectives in this verse. Do your children see you as their glory? Has your conduct ever embarrassed your children?

(Joel 1:3) “Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.”

5. What does this verse imply about the importance of teaching your children? Discuss the exponential consequences of a lack of biblical teaching by parents, whether by word or example.
6. What are some things your parents taught you that are special to you? Are there things you wish they would have taught you? Are there things you wish they wouldn’t have taught you?

30. LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME – AS A FATHER IN DISCIPLINE

(Proverbs 22:15) “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”

(Ephesians 6:4) “And, ye fathers, provoke [enrage] not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

Children require discipline. Adults require discipline. In order for discipline to accomplish the purpose of correcting a behavior, it must be applied lovingly and without anger. The Bible reminds us that God corrects all of His children in love. *(Hebrews 12:6) “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”* Often fathers are looked to as the disciplinarian in the home but mothers also need to assume their proper role. Corrective discipline should be applied at the moment of error when a father may not be present. Both parents should work together to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Nevertheless, it is the father’s duty as the spiritual leader to set the standard for the children’s behavior according to biblical precepts by word and example. There is little to be gained by disciplining children for behaviors that parents allow in their lives. That may provoke children to wrath.

(Psalm 103:13) “Like as a father pitieth [has compassion on] his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.”

(Proverbs 13:24) “He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.”

1. What do these verses say about how God loves us and disciplines us? How does that apply to disciplining our children?
2. How should our attitude be when administering discipline? Think of a time when you administered discipline in anger. What can you do to keep this from happening?
3. How were you disciplined as a child by your parents? Does that affect how you discipline your children?

(Proverbs 23:13-14) “Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. ¹⁴Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.”

4. These verses sound harsh. What do they imply about the importance of discipline?
5. What is the desired effect of discipline? Is discipline portrayed as being pleasurable? Why not?

(2 Peter 1:6) “And to knowledge temperance [self control]; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;”

6. Comment on the importance of combining the principles of this verse in disciplining our children.

31. LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME – AS A FATHER PROTECTOR

(Psalm 4:8) "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."

God alone can keep us truly safe but there is an expectation that fathers will be the protector of the family. Protection can take many forms such as providing a home as a shelter from the element or keeping the family shielded from the evil in the world whether it is monitoring the use of technology or requiring modest dress. Fathers have the role as the go-to person when the doorbell rings at midnight or the power goes out in a storm. Our Heavenly Father is our Protector, our Rock, and our Shield so likewise Dad is the one who should provide stability, safety, and protection for his family from the elements and from the world.

(Proverbs 18:10) "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."

1. These verses refer to God as our Protector. List ways in which a father should keep his family safe.

(Psalm 16:1) "Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust."

2. For a family to put their trust in the father, how must he conduct himself?
3. Does your family trust you to preserve and protect them? Give some examples.
4. Did you trust your father as a protector of his family?
5. How might a father lose the trust of his family?

(John 17:11) "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

6. What are you doing to keep your family from evil?

(Proverbs 14:26) "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge."

7. List ways in which your home should be a place of refuge for your family.

32. LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME – AS A FATHER IN WORSHIP

(Hebrews 10:25) “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...”

The responsibilities of a father are many but none carry a weight equal to that of spiritual leadership in worship. Fathers as spiritual leaders set the standard for worship by instruction and example. Where this is lacking, leadership effectiveness is diminished. The Bible teaches that we are not to neglect assembling ourselves together so a father's duty is to take his family to church, to Sunday School, and whenever the church doors are open. Being critical of the message or the messenger is detrimental to the spiritual growth of children in the home. Dad needs to take the position of leading above reproach and negative talk must be avoided. He should be involved in the brotherhood taking the family to singings, visiting the sick, and helping those in need. Personalized, out-loud praying at the table, reading and discussing Scriptures and Bible stories, and singing hymns with the family are all essential elements of the role of an effective spiritual leader.

(James 5:16) “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

1. How important is prayer in your family? How could you do better?

(2 Timothy 3:15) “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

2. How is it possible for someone to know the Bible from a child? How well do your children know Scripture? What can/could you do to improve their knowledge?
3. What is your attitude towards the church, brotherhood, and/or individual members? Have your children picked up on that and do they feel the same?
4. Share your family's daily devotion activities. How can they be improved?

(Joshua 24:15) “...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

5. Does this verse speak your heart? Does your family know how you feel? How do they know?

(Isaiah 28:10) “But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little...”

6. How can this concept be applied to family worship?

33. LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME – AS A GRANDFATHER

(Proverbs 20:29) “The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the grey head.”

(Romans 4:11) “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:”

We often associate gray hair with wisdom simply because it usually indicates someone has lived a fair number of years and has gained wisdom from experience. Grandfathers have a unique role as spiritual leaders in families and in the church. They are often referred to as “pillars of the faith” which indicates they are respected as the strength of the church by the grace of God. Abraham is called the father of faith because of his example. The Apostle Paul lamented that there were ample instructors in Christ but not many fathers. *(1 Corinthians 4:15) “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers...”* The Bible uses the words: fathers, elders, and old men interchangeably in some passages with the implication being that these were established men of faith who represented an historical pattern of worship and behavior. Their offspring either benefitted spiritually or were at a spiritual loss because of those patterns. Spiritual leadership needs the wisdom and experience gained from a walk with Christ that can only come from years of service. The responsibility of the grandfathers establishing right biblical standards for those who follow them is huge.

(Joel 1:2-3) “Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? ³Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.”

1. What do these verses say about the perpetual importance of establishing biblical standards for the future?

(2 Chronicles 10:8) “But he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him...”

2. What does this verse say about the responsibilities of accepting biblical counsel?

(Hebrews 3:9) “When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.”

3. This passage refers to the children of Israel in the wilderness. Explain how the actions of the fathers affected future generations.

4. How have you benefitted from your earthly grandfather? From a spiritual grandfather?

5. How are you doing as a grandfather in modeling biblical standards? Where can you do better?

34. LEADERSHIP IN THE WORKPLACE – AS AN EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR

(Genesis 29:15) “And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be?”

Spiritual leadership in the workplace can be a challenge especially when surrounded by those who do not appear to have faith. Nevertheless, biblical principles are still the cornerstone for employers and adherence to them is a must for effective spiritual leadership. Even with the best of intentions, clearly motivated by Scripture, it may be difficult to reach certain employees. This does not lessen the responsibility of an employer to continue to treat those individuals with kindness and equality as souls for whom Christ died. Being a godly example of integrity beyond reproach is an essential key to building trust and respect. Although authority may come with a position, respect must be earned. Humble acknowledgement of human limitations and a willingness to admit fault will help to establish that respect. Micromanaging capable employees just because of given authority is certain to provoke them to anger and does not help to establish a good reputation.

(Proverbs 3:27) “Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.”

1. How might this verse apply to an employer/employee relationship?
2. Have you ever felt that good was withheld from you by an employer? Think of a time when you withheld good from others?

(Deuteronomy 24:14-15) “Thou shalt not oppress [defraud] an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: ¹⁵At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.”

3. What do these verses say about the payment of wages? Or, about giving raises or promotions?
4. Think of a time when you may have passed over someone in giving a raise or promotion for a reason that wasn't justifiable? How about a time when that may have happened to you?

(Colossians 4:1) “Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.”
(Hebrews 12:14) “Follow [pursue] peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

5. In the first of these two verses, what is the significance of mentioning the Master in heaven?
6. Discuss how the concepts in these two verses tie together.
7. How do you treat your employees equally and pursue peace? How can you improve?

35. LEADERSHIP IN THE WORKPLACE – AS AN EMPLOYEE

(Ephesians 6:5) “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.”

Employees are exhorted to be intentionally obedient and submissive to their employers with respect and honor as they would exhibit to Christ. Certainly no earthly employer can live up to Jesus but that doesn't matter, an employee is still expected to render due deference and service to their employer. Failure to do so is a violation of the employer's authority and corrective action may result. There are employer/employee relationships that are not ideal and some employees may be mistreated. However, Scripture does not give such an employee the justification to strike back in anger and retaliation but rather cautions to be prepared to take less than expected. Nearly everyone can work for a congenial, fair employer but it takes special grace to exhibit spiritual leadership in tolerating a difficult boss who may even take advantage of or ridicule employees who are believers. Employees are also reminded to treat their peers with dignity and respect. Much damage has been done by office gossip and that kind of behavior is forbidden in God's Word.

(Titus 2:9-10) “Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again [contradict, talk back]; ¹⁰Not purloining [embezzling], but showing all good fidelity [moral conviction]; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.”

1. How well are you doing in not talking back to your boss? Do you take things out of the office or the job site that are not yours?
2. Doing personal tasks on the clock outside of company policy is stealing. Are you guilty of that?
3. Share a time when you wanted to tell the boss off. Did you? Why or why not? What were the consequences?
4. These verses indicate that masters are to be obeyed in all things. Does that mean you can do something that violates Scripture? Why not? Have you been asked to do that? Explain.

(1 Peter 2:18-19) “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. ¹⁹For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.”

5. Discuss the meaning of these verses and how they apply in your life? Share a time when you suffered wrongfully.
6. Are you well spoken of as an employee? Discuss some ways to improve as a spiritual leader in the workplace.

36. LEADERSHIP IN THE WORKPLACE – AS A COWORKER

(1 Peter 2:17) “Honour all men...”

Throughout this study, the foundational principles of humility, holiness, love, and self-sacrifice have been reiterated. A spiritual leader might well be accomplished in all these areas yet struggle in the workplace. The workplace environment seems to bring to the surface the best and worst in most people. Repetitive activity may lead to a level of boredom and the job may become less challenging. Even the physical environment of the workplace or the close proximity of other employees may add to the building frustration. Suddenly someone is provoked, tempers flare, and words are exchanged. Retaliation can be a temptation and proper communication may be hindered. Gossip may replace constructive dialogue and soon the workplace environment becomes hostile and lethal to spirituality. A spiritual leader is called to walk the high road and rise above the turmoil and backbiting. Keeping words few, temper under control, and the love of God in the heart is a start to keeping peace with coworkers.

(James 1:19) “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:”

1. Discuss the value of James’ communication model.
2. What is your workplace environment like? Do you help it or hurt it? How can you do better?

(Proverbs 30:10) “Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.”

3. What does this verse say about being a tattle-tail? How are you tempted to engage in this practice? How can you avoid it?

(John 21:21-22) “Peter seeing him [John] saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? ²²Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.”

4. What is the lesson Jesus taught Peter? How easy is it for you to mind your own business at work? Share a time when you didn’t.

(Romans 14:4) “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth...”

5. What does this verse say about us being critical of our coworker? Think of a time when you were critical? How can you improve?
6. Are you generally considered to be easy to work with? Why or why not?

37. LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH – AS A BROTHER/MENTOR

(Philippians 2:2) "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

The Word of God reminds us that in our brotherhood community we are to be likeminded, to love each other with equality, and to be grounded on the same spiritual foundation. None of us has any right to exalt ourselves over another as we have nothing which we didn't receive from God. We are to be our brother's keeper and to be intentional in our striving for each other's welfare. Scripture tells us to even *"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2)*. A sincere spiritual leader will have the best interest of others at heart and will try to do his best in helping a fellow pilgrim. Mentoring means simply to come alongside and teach, guide, encourage, and maybe even exhort one another. Mentoring does not mean making a pest of oneself or getting inappropriately involved in someone else's life. Nor does it mean fixing someone else and/or their problems. We are reminded that each one's burden is their own responsibility but we can help them with it. *(Galatians 6:5) "For every man shall bear his own burden."*

(1 Corinthians 3:9) "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."

1. Share thoughts as how this verse relates to mentoring and helping each other. Do you willingly reach out to help others? How could you do better?

(2 Peter 1:5-7) "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; ⁶And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; ⁷And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."

2. Many lessons are taught in these verses. How do they apply to the relationship between any two brothers?

(Romans 12:10) "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;"

3. Compare this verse with the ones above it. Share thoughts on the difference between brotherly love and brotherly kindness.

(Proverbs 6:16-19) "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: ¹⁷A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations [evil plot], feet that be swift in running to mischief, ¹⁹A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord [stir up strife and discontentment] among brethren."

4. How seriously does God look at how we treat our brother? List the seven things in these verses that God hates. Share how many of them could apply to our relationships within the brotherhood.
5. How have you been tempted to say a falsehood about someone for any reason? Think of a time when you stirred up strife or knowingly sowed discord? Share how damaging these things are.

38. LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH – AS A SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER

(1 Timothy 4:11-12) “These things command and teach. ¹²Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

A Sunday School teacher may be with his students for only an hour a week but his example and model are usually fairly deeply inscribed in the mind of his students. Many brethren remember the positive influences of their Sunday School teachers. Even though they may not remember much about what was said, their teachers' examples left an indelible mark. Especially for younger students, a Sunday School teacher is their personal representative of the church body and he carries a great deal of credibility. This expectation places a burden of responsibility on teachers to exercise all of the elements of spiritual leadership that have been discussed thus far. Occasionally brothers are asked to serve in Sunday School at a fairly young age and may have children of their own at home. Taking time to prepare for lessons and establishing right priorities in personal lives gives brothers an opportunity to demonstrate at home the principles they will teach to their students on Sundays.

(Psalm 32:8) “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.”

(Psalm 34:11) “Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.”

1. What do these verses say about teaching by modeling?

2. Discuss the meaning of “guide thee with mine eye.”

(Psalm 78:4) “We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.”

3. How does this verse speak to the need to teach our youth the ways of God?

4. What does this verse imply about the need of a teacher to know his material?

5. Share some memories of your Sunday School teachers.

6. Share some experiences you've had as a teacher. Are you demonstrating spiritual leadership? Where or how could you improve?

7. Would your students say you're an effective teacher? Why or why not?

39. LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH – AS A MINISTER

(2 Timothy 4:2) "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

Being a minister means to be a servant of others which includes the duties of teaching and preaching the Gospel of Christ. Although the Apostle Paul wrote that he who desires the office of a bishop desires a good thing *(1 Timothy 3:1)*, ministers in our denomination are not self-nominated. Brothers are elected from the brotherhood through prayerful consideration of biblical qualifications and spiritual discernment. Spiritual leadership qualities are of great importance for a minister to possess as he preaches the Word of God by voice and example. For ministers to be effective, their message must come through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and not from themselves. They must have a good report from those outside the church, have their own household in good order, and be willing to study to know God's Word and to rightly divide it. *(2 Timothy 2:15) "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

(1 Corinthians 9:16-18) "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! ¹⁷For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. ¹⁸What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel."

1. What do these verses say about the attitude necessary for effective preaching? If you are a minister, how is your attitude?
2. Comment on the reward for preaching that the Apostle mentions.

(Philippians 1:16) "The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: ¹⁷But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel."

3. Discuss the idea of preaching out of contention. How might that be applicable today?

(1 Corinthians 2:4-5) "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: ⁵That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

4. What do these verses say about preaching man's wisdom? Why is that not sufficient?

(1 Corinthians 1:18) "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

5. Why might preaching be regarded as foolishness? How do you regard the preaching of the Word?

40. LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH – AS AN ELDER

(1 Timothy 5:17) “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”

In the Bible the terms elder and bishop are used interchangeably and indicate a position of teacher and church authority. The ecclesiastical duty of an elder is to spiritually feed, nurture, guard, warn, and sustain the flock. They are entrusted with the responsibility of shepherding much like a physical shepherd cares for his sheep. Elders are often referred to as undershepherds giving deference to Jesus Christ as the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. Elders are commissioned to watch for danger and to alert the flock; consequently they are also referred to as watchmen on the walls of Zion. Elders are often expected to be all things to all people but they are human and have limitations, sensitivities, and weaknesses like all other men. Although they are in a position of leadership in a theocracy, yet they must maintain a servant leadership posture as shepherds leading a flock and not as lords driving a flock. Spiritual leadership and all of the pieces thereof find themselves embodied in the position of elder.

(1 Peter 5:1-4) “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: ²Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ³Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. ⁴And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

1. List the key responsibilities of an elder according to these verses.
2. Discuss the directive given in verse 3. What is promised if verses 1-3 are upheld?
3. What is meant by “feed the flock of God?” Explain how “filthy lucre” could mar an elder’s effectiveness.

(Hebrews 13:7) “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”

4. What does this verse say about the importance of an elder’s example to the church? What is meant by “the end of their conversation?” In what ways can you remember them who have the rule over you?

(1 Corinthians 9:37) “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

5. What is the implication if the body is not kept under subjection? Consider the weight of this verse as it applies to elders and discuss some ways to better support them in their service to God and the church.