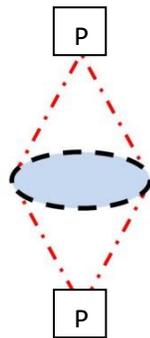


The Conundrum of Preaching and Leading

Evertt W. Huffard, PhD

Professor of Leadership and Missions

Session One **Neither President Nor Peon: Expected to Execute But Needs to Equip**



How are you viewed by:

- **the leaders:** president-partner-peon?
- **the members:** president-partner-peon?
- **yourself:** president-partner-peon?

Effectiveness in Ministry

[Adapted by Evertt W. Huffard from Mary Alice Seals, "Evaluation in the Supervisory Experience," in *Experiencing Ministry Supervision*, edited by W.T. Pyle and M.A. Seals, Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1995 pp. 134-137]

Evaluate your effectiveness in ministry in each of the following areas:

- E = excellent; I consider this among my strengths/gifts
 S = satisfactory; I need to develop this more
 U = unsatisfactory; I want to grow in this area; I am not sure I can
 UK = unknown; I am not sure at this time

- ___ 1. **Trustworthiness:** Can you be trusted to carry out responsibilities without constant supervision? Are you dependable in completing tasks and assignments? Do you keep confidences?
- ___ 2. **Honesty and Openness in Relationships:** Do you relate to others in genuine ways? Are you able to reveal yourself to others in appropriate ways? Do you value the worth of other people?
- ___ 3. **Ability to Relate with Warmth and Interest:** Do you communicate to others that you are interested in them as persons and not just as objects of your ministry?
- ___ 4. **Criticism:** Are you able to give constructive criticism to others? How do you respond when others criticize you harshly?
- ___ 5. **Organizational Skills:** Are you able to plan your ministry and implement your plans effectively? Are you able to prioritize your work, giving appropriate attention to important matters and not getting caught up in minutiae? Are you able to delegate tasks to others, equipping them to do the necessary work, trusting them to do what you asked, and accepting the result of their work (even if it is accomplished in a different manner than you would have accomplished it)?

1. Church governance and context: How would each shift change the church?

- From Presbyterian/Pastor system to plural-elder congregationalism
- From evangelists to located preachers
- From small rural to large suburban; agricultural to corporate/suburban

2. Church governance and personality

- Relational-task continuum
- Directive/non-directive style

Church governance and doctrine: Doctrine almost always has practical implications. It is evident that the form of church government a church adopts will have a direct impact on the lives of church members and the course of the church's life and ministry. How a church is structured and what officers it ordains (and who ordains them) impacts who does what in the ministry of the church as well as how it is done. Moreover, the form of church government determines what problems a church will face and how they will be solved. For example, single-elder congregations have to be concerned more than others about one person having too much power and "lording it over" the flock, while plural-elder Congregationalists must avoid the potential of a deadlocked leadership when equal pastors disagree on the right course of action.¹

3. Church governance and the Word (1 Th. 5:12-15; 1 Ti. 4:11-16; Rom. 12:6-8)

- If role confusion creates stress for me it likely creates stress for volunteers.²
- Does the current governance produce healthy leaders?
- How do I motivate without manipulating?
- Why would anyone follow me?³
- Does it really matter if my goal is empowerment?⁴
- Can I stay in a church long enough to gain the trust and respect to lead in a culture where expectations are high and trust low for any leader?⁵
- No relationship exists between breaking growth barriers and quality of preaching.⁶
- The traditional church is not equipped emotionally to handle rapid change.⁷

¹ Paul E. Engle and Steven B. Cowan, eds., *Who Runs the Church? 4 Views on Church Government*. (Zondervan, 2004), p. 17.

² Kenneth O. Gangel, *Feeding & Leading: A Practical Handbook on Administration in Churches and Christian Organizations*. (Victor, 1989), see ch. 20, "Reproducing Leaders who Reproduce."

³ Tom Rath and Barry Conchie, *Strengths Based Leadership* (Gallop, 2008), see Part Three: Understanding Why People Follow. They suggest followers need from leaders- trust, compassion, stability, and hope (p. 82).

⁴ Eddie Gibbs, *LeadershipNext: Changing Leaders in a Changing Culture* (IVP, 2005). Empowerment includes valuing others, removing constraints, and granting opportunities (p. 101). "Hierarchical organizations are too cumbersome and monolithic to operate effectively in a context of diversity and rapid, often unpredictable, change. Networks, on the other hand, are flexible, responsive and empowering precisely because they have no control center and are able to grow exponentially (p. 62). . . . The leader does not *control* but *cultivates* (p. 63).

⁵ Leath Anderson, *Leadership That Works* (Bethany House, 1999), p. 35f. Leadership is not just about leaders: it "is about leaders, followers, organizations, circumstances, power, history, and more" (p. 44). "Mentors are teachers-friends-influencers who shape our lives and leadership more than anyone else. They can make or break us" (184).

⁶ C. Kirk Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles: Separating Fact from Fiction* (Broadman, 1991) "Apparently the specific content and quality of preaching is less important than its use in imparting a vision, a sense of urgency, and an expectation of spiritual growth" (p. 81). Breakout pastors did not come into churches and take over. "Instead, they played the role of catalyst—sharing their vision with the church, creating a sense of excitement, and providing encouragement to those in the church who could see the vision and who were willing to work for it" (p. 91). Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development* (ChurchSmart Resources, 1996) "Leaders in growing churches concentrate on empowering other Christians for ministry. They do not use lay workers as "helpers" in attaining their own goals and fulfilling their own visions. Rather, they invert the pyramid of authority so that the leader assists Christians to attain the spiritual potential God has for them" (p. 22).

⁷ Thom Rainer & Chuck Lawless, *Eating the Elephant: Leading an Established Church to Grow* (Pinnacle, 2003), 164

Session Two **Lots of Responsibility without Authority – Influencing Followers without Creating Our Own Followers**

Teachers would enjoy teaching more if they did not have to set up the classroom, provide reading material, grade papers, develop a virtual classroom for distance education, etc. Preachers would enjoy preaching more if they did not have to take care of the building, fix communion, make all the visits, organize the volunteers of any program the church will attempt to offer, publish the bulletin and order of worship, and work with the teens. Would preaching really be better if all I had to do is preach? Issues:

- How will more authority strengthen the effectiveness of my ministry?
- How much of the problems of authority relate to inadequate leadership?⁸

Effectiveness in Ministry

- ___ 1. **Personal Faith Commitment:** Do you have an active and dynamic faith? Is your faith real? Are you able to share your faith in appropriate ways?
 - ___ 2. **Decision-Making:** Can you make decisions easily? Do you rely upon other people to make decisions so that you will not have to take responsibility for the outcomes of those decisions? Are you too quick to make decisions without considering all of the consequences of your decisions?
 - ___ 3. **Conflict:** Can you identify various forms of conflict? Do you know different ways of confronting/dealing with conflict? What is your personal conflict-management style? Do you enjoy conflict? Do you avoid conflict?
 - ___ 4. **Collegiality:** Do you work well with others? Do you always need to be in control? Do you share in group process, or do you tend to be passive in group situations?
 - ___ 5. **Authority:** Do you have a healthy sense of personal authority? How do you react to those in authority over you? Does the gender, age, race, or socio-economic background of the person in authority over you affect the way you respond?
-

⁸ Doran McCarty, *Leading the Small Church* (Broadman, 1991) "In summary, (1) the small church may have inadequate number of leaders; (2) the leadership may not be adequately qualified; (3) and the leaders may need the church to stay small for them not to have competition for leadership" (p. 50).

Session Three Vulnerable Authority—Leading From Within

- ___ 1. **Personal Integrity:** Are you a person of your word? Do you live a principle-centered life or do your principles shift according to the current situation?
- ___ 2. **Personal Spiritual Discipline:** Do you have an active devotional life, including the use of scripture, prayer, and meditation?
- ___ 3. **Flexibility:** Are you flexible in dealing with your own life and the lives of others around you? Are you flexible to the point of having no firm convictions? Are you rigid, unbending? Can you be spontaneous?
- ___ 4. **Anger:** How do you handle the anger of others? Do you recognize the presence of anger in your own life? What kinds of people or situations cause you to become angry? How do you deal with anger?
- ___ 5. **Understanding of Structures:** Do you understand the formal and informal power structures at work in your place of ministry? Are you able to work within these structures?

Perry W. H. Shaw, "Vulnerable Authority: A Theological Approach to Leadership and Teamwork." **Christian Education Journal**, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2006):119-133.

- Overwhelmingly throughout the Scriptures the ideal model is not that of democracy or autocracy; leaders see themselves as, first and foremost, servants and followers under the authority and leadership of God, and from that position lead others. (p. 121)
- Unfortunately, while theocratic leadership sounds good in theory, it is difficult to apply in practice. It is far too easy for church leaders to claim theocratic leadership as a spiritualized guise for autocratic control, particularly in high-grid societies . . . (Lingenfelter, 1992). (p. 121)
- With respect to leadership, our cultural background greatly influences our preferences for vertical or horizontal patterns of power, for autocracy or democracy. Most of us are so embedded within our culture that it can be very difficult to see that theologically the attraction to *both* autocracy and democracy is largely the product of the Fall. (p. 122)
- As Nouwen (1989) describes it, "The long painful history of the Church is the history of people ever and again tempted to choose power over love, control over the cross, being a leader over being led" (p. 60). (p. 124)
- A careful study of the model of Jesus would suggest a solution in the source of the leader's significance—the extent to which the leader's identity is found in his or her relationship with God, as against the need for power or influence over others, or the significance attributed to his or her role and function as a leader." (p. 125)
- This transformation of leadership from a controlling follower-developing pattern to an empowering leader-developing pattern can emerge only in as much as leaders are freed from the need to find their significance in their role as leaders. (p. 129)
- When leaders avoid at all costs being vulnerable, when they are reluctant to acknowledge weakness and fault, when they resist allowing their leadership to be subject to evaluation, they are effectively claiming that they are not between the already and the not yet, but have already attained perfection and consequently have no need for the cross. (p. 130)

Session Four Staying On Mission in Anxious Times—Function, Personality & Style

- ___ 1. **Sensitivity to the Gifts of Others:** Do you need to be the center of attention or can you truly find joy in the gifts and abilities of other people? Does your sensitivity to the gifts and abilities of others mean that you find little worth in your own gifts and abilities?
- ___ 2. **Self-Discipline:** Are you a disciplined person in the good sense of the word? Are you punctual in completing your tasks? Do you value the time of other people? Are you able to provide personal initiative for your ministry or must you be prodded and reminded by others?
- ___ 3. **Listening:** Do you listen to others with your ears, eyes, and your heart? Do you talk too much or do you spend your listening time shaping your own responses while others are talking to you?
- ___ 4. **Stress:** How do you react to stress in your life? Do you work well under pressure? If so, what effect does this have on your other relationships? How does the presence of stress manifest itself in your life (e.g. irritability, overeating, procrastination, task-oriented approach to work, etc.)?
- ___ 5. **Self-Awareness:** How open are you with yourself about your strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, and the way your past has influenced the way you behave in the present?

Issues

1. What resources do I have that carries me through times of spiritual dryness, spiritual shadows and spiritual struggle?⁹
2. How does my personality type (“gut”) impact my ability to lead?
3. How well do I exegete my context? Effective ministry involves life-long learning in ways to build bridges from a follower to a leader; from theory to practice, from structure to freedom, from school structures to people and from peers to a multi-generational support system.¹⁰
4. Dragons thrive when the church’s formal authority and informal power structure don’t match.¹¹

⁹ Keith R. Anderson and Randy D. Reese, *Spiritual Mentoring: A Guide for Seeking and Giving Direction* (IVP, 1999) Through mentoring we may discover “that darkness is only a perception of God’s absence and withdrawal” (p. 115). “Great maturity is born in the purgation of the dark night” (p. 117)

¹⁰ Doran McCarty, *Leading the Small Church* (Broadman, 1991), p. 116-117.

¹¹ Marshall Shelley, *Well-Intentioned Dragons: Ministering to Problem People in the Church* (Leadership/Word, 1985).