

Thriving Through Good Leadership

Lesson 05 of the series, "Thrive"

I. Jesus wants our church to thrive.

"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10 (NKJV)

II. Our church will thrive through good leadership.

"But as the believers rapidly multiplied, there were rumblings of discontent. The Greek-speaking believers complained about the Hebrew-speaking believers, saying that their widows were being discriminated against in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve called a meeting of all the believers. They said, "We apostles should spend our time teaching the word of God, not running a food program. And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility. Then we apostles can spend our time in prayer and teaching the word." Everyone liked this idea, and they chose the following: Stephen (a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit), Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas of Antioch (an earlier convert to the Jewish faith). These seven were presented to the apostles, who prayed for them as they laid their hands on them. So God's message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too." Acts 6:1-7 (NLT)

Note: Delegation is vital to the health of our church.

"This is not good!" Moses' father-in-law exclaimed. "You're going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself. Now listen to me, and let me give you a word of advice, and may God be with you. You should continue to be the people's representative before God, bringing their disputes to him. Teach them God's decrees, and give them his instructions. Show them how to conduct their lives. But select from all the people some capable, honest men who fear God and hate bribes. Appoint them as leaders over groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. They should always be available to solve the people's common disputes, but have them bring the major cases to you. Let the leaders decide the smaller matters themselves. They will help you carry the load, making the task easier for you. If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all these people will go home in peace." Exodus 18:17-23 (NLT)

III. At Centerpoint we have identified good leaders at each of our sites and asked them to serve as deacons.

Note: "Deacon" is from the ancient Greek word "diakonos" which means "servant".

a. Deacons are servant leaders.

"You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Matthew 20:25-28 (NLT)

b. Deacons are recognized for their character and commitment.

"In the same way, deacons must be well respected and have integrity. They must not be heavy drinkers or dishonest with money. They must be committed to the mystery of the faith now revealed and must live with a clear conscience. Before they are appointed as deacons, let them be closely examined. If they pass the test, then let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives must be respected and must not slander others. They must exercise self-control and be faithful in everything they do. A deacon must be faithful to his wife, and he must manage his children and household well."

1 Timothy 3:8-12 (NLT)

c. Deacons are being developed by God.

"Those who do well as deacons will be rewarded with respect from others and will have increased confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 3:13 (NLT)

"Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed amazing miracles and signs among the people." Acts 6:8 (NLT)

“Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there...there was great joy in that city... they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Acts 8:5-12 (NIV)

d. Deacons are role models.

“Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and follow the example of their faith.” Hebrews 13:7 (NLT)

IV. Key Duties of Centerpoint Deacons

- Meet with our pastors routinely to review the operation, growth and ministry of each location.
- Assist our pastors in accomplishing the overall goals of Centerpoint.
- Represent their congregation’s concerns to our pastors and our pastors’ concerns to their congregations.
- Pray for the sick. (See James 5:13-18)
- Ensure our locations stay aligned with the Mission, Vision, Values and Statement of Faith of Centerpoint.
- Assist our pastors in developing new locations.

Note: Deacons commit to serve for a three-year term and to remain faithful in serving, giving and participating in Connect Groups and worship.

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Connect Group Questions:

1. John Maxwell said, “Everything rises and falls on leadership.” How have you seen this quote realized in your life?
2. Based on your personal experience, who have you seen show great leadership in a church? What do you think made that person a good leader?
3. Read Matthew 20:20-28. Based on this passage, what does the Jesus model of leadership look like? Why do you think we struggle with this style’ of leadership in today’s society?
4. Read Titus 2:1-8. Have you ever considered yourself a role model? How can you put into action the things Paul is telling Titus?
5. In Acts 6:1-7 we see that the first New Testament church had the same issues as current day churches. What were the two qualifiers for the role of deacon? Why do you think those two qualifiers were important, and how did everyone know these things about these men?
6. Christ taught us in John 15:4-8 that our ability to lead in ministry comes from Him. Why is it so important to remain/abide in Christ? What are some ways we can get close to God (see James 4:8)?
7. Take time to pray for the deacons and their wives:
Jack and Ashley Clark
Reid and Ashley Tolar
Ken and Kim Dismukes
Mark and Tim Barber
Mike and April Rogers
Chad and Brooke Carr
Neal and Stacy Gruhn