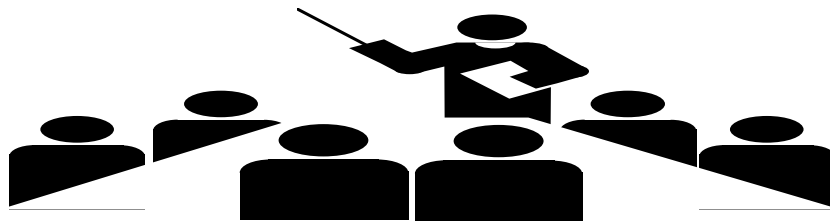
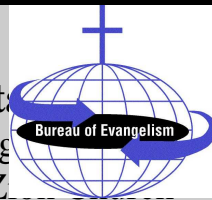


LEADERSHIP SEMINAR



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TOPIC:
**CONNECTING EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP WITH GIFT-ORIENTED MINISTRY
LEADERSHIP SEMINAR**

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Connecting Empowering Leadership with Gift-Oriented Ministry

Introduction: The Bureau of Evangelism’s quadrennial theme [2005-2009] “Quality Characteristics of Healthy Congregations” is inspired by Christian A. Schwarz’s *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*. The book was the result of the most comprehensive research project on the causes of church growth ever undertaken and included more than a thousand churches from 32 countries on six continents. In this seminar, we will connect the first two quality characteristics: *Empowering Leadership* and *Gift-Oriented Leadership*.

PROPOSITION: **Empowering leaders equip others to serve and assign ministry tasks according to the spiritual gifts of the members.**

I. Empowering Leadership

A. The Meaning of Empowering Leadership

Schwarz: “Leaders of 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. These pastors equip, support, motivate, and mentor individuals, enabling them to become all that God wants them to be.”¹

B. The Importance of Empowering Leadership

1. John Wesley stressed the use of lay leaders in the ministries of the church by both precept and example. He fostered that the primary function of spiritual/educational leadership is to equip others to lead and minister, not to perform the ministry personally.
2. Empowering leaders equip laity and clergy for ministry by helping them to discover, develop, and use their *spiritual gifts*; by providing the kind of Christian nurture that results in their *spiritual growth*; by supplying the kind of Christian discipleship that results in their *character development*.
3. Schwarz: “Leaders who realize their own empowerment by empowering others experience how the “all-by-itself” principle contributes to growth. Rather than handling the bulk of church responsibilities on their own, they invest the majority of their time in discipleship, delegation, and multiplication. Thus, the energy they expend can be multiplied indefinitely.”²
4. Apostle Paul instructs Timothy on empowering leadership: “*And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*” (2 Timothy 2:2)

¹ Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches* (St. Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources, 2003), p. 22.

² Ibid, 23

5. The example of Jesus is one of equipping His disciples to do ministry and empowering them to carry out His mission long after He was gone.

C. Functions of Leadership: empowering leaders value both expressive and instrumental functions.

1. **EXPRESSIVE FUNCTIONS:** those operations that create and maintain in a body of people a vital commitment to a clear and shared purpose. These operations point the way, guide, motivate, challenge, inspire, devise and execute plans, instruct, enable people to function well, and keep the vision clear.
2. **INSTRUMENTAL FUNCTIONS:** those operations that deal with finding and marshaling resources (human & natural); developing ways & means; and administering programs for achieving the purpose.

D. Balance in Leadership: empowering leaders balance their responsibility to maintain harmony with that of accomplishing the mission. The four major tendencies toward which leaders lean are:

1. **THE HARD-DRIVING GOAL ACHIEVERS:** These leaders are out of balance on the side of accomplishing the mission and task orientation. They accomplish goals at the expense of the people and their relationships. People are often left bleeding in a cloud of dust as they lead to the achievement of the organization's goals.
2. **THE STATIC RELATIONSHIP BUILDERS:** These leaders are out of balance on the side of maintaining harmony. They want to keep everybody happy and do anything to keep peace and harmony. They however, do very little toward accomplishing the organization's goals and objectives.
3. **THE BUREAUCRATS:** These leaders have as their primary concern the following of rules and procedures and the preserving of their own position. They neglect both the maintaining of harmony among the people as well as the achieving of the organization's mission and goals. They just follow routines and care nothing about people or goals.
4. **THE BALANCED LEADERS:** These leaders maintain the health of the organization by being sensitive to persons and their needs and to the interpersonal relationships within the organization. They also keep the organization moving by devoting their attention to task requirements, which are necessary to the accomplishment of the mission of the organization.

E. Christian Leadership: empowering leaders must embrace a Christian understanding of leadership. (Mark 10:35-45)

1. What Christian Leadership is not!
 - a. Christian leadership is not about seeking position or recognition. (35-40)
 - b. Christian leadership is not about lording it or ruling over people. (41-42)
 - c. Christian leadership is not about making people serve us. (45)
2. What Christian Leadership is!
 - a. Christian leadership is about suffering for righteousness' sake. (38-40)
 - b. Christian leadership is about serving those whom we lead. (43-45)
 - c. Christian leadership is about sacrificing for the sake of the kingdom. (45)

II. Gift-Oriented Leadership

A. The Meaning of Gift-Oriented Ministry

1. Schwarz: “Healthy congregations assign tasks in the church on the basis of the spiritual gifts of the members.
2. Scripture: “*As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*”(1 Peter 4:10)

B. The Importance of Gift-Oriented Ministry

1. *Its impact on the worker:* a decisive factor in the proper assimilation of new converts is finding their rightful place in the body. This is fostered by their involvement in meaningful ministry, which is possible only when they are placed in an area of ministry consistent with their spiritual gifts. Consequently, spiritual growth is enhanced; faithfulness to the means of grace is increased; and the bond with the church is strengthened.
2. *Its impact on the church:* our spiritual gifts are given to us primarily so that we can build up the body of Christ in general and our local church in particular. Apostle Paul says that “*the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.*” (1 Cor. 12: 7) Gift-oriented ministry is an indispensable part of a healthy congregation.
3. The criteria by which church workers are assigned tasks should be:
 - a. Commitment rather than popularity
 - b. Moral character rather than political control
 - c. Christian maturity rather than economic affluence
 - d. Spiritual gifts rather than natural talents

C. The Process of Gift-Oriented Ministry

1. Discovering, developing, and using spiritual gifts in ministry: a shared responsibility
 - a. The recommendation of a nurturing class leader
 - b. The nomination of a praying pastor
 - c. The confirmation of a discerning Quarterly Conference
 - d. The acceptance of willing worker
2. Discerning your spiritual gifts: *The Disciples Study Bible*’s six helpful hints:
 - a. *Believe you are gifted.* Spiritual gifts are not special rewards for the spiritual elite. They are given to every believer.
 - b. *Pray.* “You have not, because you ask not.” (Jas 4:2b). Ask God to show you what spiritual gifts He has given you.
 - c. *Become aware of the gifts available to you.* Study passages (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12: 8-10, 28-30; Eph. 4:11); be sensitive as you see gifts becoming operative in your life.
 - d. *Accept responsibility.* Many biblical commands coincide with spiritual gifts. All believers are commanded to evangelize, show mercy, encourage, give, help, etc. As we fulfill these roles, the Holy Spirit unveils certain gifts.
 - e. *Consider your desires.* What do you enjoy doing? To what are you drawn? What seems to come “naturally” to you? Your desire for a gift may well be God’s way of showing you that you possess that gift.
 - f. *Accept confirmation of others.* What do others say about you? In what areas do people look up to you? What have you done in the past for which you were genuinely complimented? As we are doing Christian service in obedience to the commands of Christ, others may see a gift in us long before we are aware of it.
3. Dedicating your gifts: unwrap your gifts; dedicate them and yourself to ministry.