

Leadership Unity

TOP TEN PRINCIPLES

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Introduction

- ▶ Pride is... the delusion that our achievements are primarily the results of our own doing.
- ▶ ...esteeming ourselves above and beyond the condition and proportion that God has appointed for us.
- ▶ ...the desire to be esteemed by others above and beyond the condition and proportion that God has appointed for us.
- ▶ ...the desire to exalt ourselves above and beyond the condition and proportion that God has appointed for us.

Introduction

- ▶ **NEGATIVE:** Pride is a major factor in disputes and disunity in church leadership.
- ▶ **POSITIVE:** A leadership team characterized by humility, deference, and selflessness works at unity

Introduction

- ▶ Consequences:
 - ▶ Unified leadership handles challenges in the church in a spiritually mature fashion.
 - ▶ Disunified leadership may tear a church apart and force members to deal with immaturity at the leadership level.

Introduction

- ▶ Consider the model of Christ, the Head:
 - ▶ John 5:19
 - ▶ John 5:30
 - ▶ John 5:41
 - ▶ John 6:38
 - ▶ John 7:16, 28
 - ▶ John 8:28, 50
 - ▶ John 14:10, 24

Introduction

- ▶ There IS a time and place to CAUSE conflict and disunity:
 - ▶ Biblical gospel
 - ▶ Integrity of eldership
 - ▶ Purity of the church
 - ▶ Revealing hidden observable sin
 - ▶ Beginning a dispute concerning the honor of Christ

Principle 1: Foundation of Trust and Loyalty

- ▶ Titus 3:10–11
- ▶ A decision you make—not based in perfectionism—based in love and mutual support
- ▶ BEWARE: Familiarity can breed contempt
- ▶ Trust is given but also earned over time.

Principle 2: Mutual Deference

- ▶ Ephesians 5:21
- ▶ Hold getting your way lightly on all matters of opinion
- ▶ Disagree if you must but defer when you can
- ▶ Never make someone else look foolish in a disagreement
- ▶ Never let bad feelings grow about not getting your way
- ▶ Choose carefully what you stand firmly for

Principle 3: Loyalty to the Corporate Direction

- ▶ Col 1:28; Eph 4:11-13.
- ▶ Beware of self-fulfilling prophecies
- ▶ Test everything against Col 1:28—you can support anything aimed at that goal.
- ▶ Beware of holding back support
- ▶ No one get his way on everything
- ▶ Beware of personal motives

Principle 4: Prevent and Avoid “Meetings after the meetings”

- ▶ Ephesians 4:29--“unwholesome word” = “corrupting talk”—rot, decay
- ▶ Makes remaining objective almost impossible.
- ▶ Speak positive of one another to all (including wives!)
- ▶ Do not build doubts in the minds of others
- ▶ Share what is good and encouraging
- ▶ Do not be a delegate representing others in the leadership process (including wife).
- ▶ Do not be a go-between instead of Matthew 18.

Principle 5: Know the Difference Between Unity and Exclusivity

- ▶ Rom 12:16; James 2:1
- ▶ Beware of appearing “club-like”
- ▶ Beware of “holy huddles” especially in the company of the whole church.
- ▶ Clique: a closed group with a perceived leader showing over-affection and attention in the presence of others.
- ▶ Dealing with perception of “cliques”...

Principle 6: Think Less about Personal Satisfaction and More about Sacrificial Service

- ▶ 1 Peter 4:10-11; Col 4:12
- ▶ Focus on building your team
- ▶ Keep the gospel in front of you
- ▶ Keep Christ in front of you
- ▶ Think in terms of years not weeks or months...wait on the Lord.

Principle 7: Be Able to Give and Receive Correction and Direction

- ▶ Phil 2:3-4
- ▶ We all need each other's perspective—let that be okay.
- ▶ Be a genuine plurality as elders that help one another.
- ▶ Let the norm be encouragement and having EARNED the right to speak into another leader's life.

Principle 8: Guard Carefully Your Thoughts of One Another

- ▶ James 3:6; Phil 4:8
- ▶ Love and pray for one another!!!
- ▶ Guard your words and guard your *wife's* words.
- ▶ Work to build each other up genuinely from the heart
- ▶ Confess the sin of harboring negative thoughts—stop it at the thought level.

Principle 9: Freedom to Fail and Expectation to Improve

- ▶ Freedom to grow and learn from experience
- ▶ Become the expert in your area of responsibility.
- ▶ Treat your area of ministry as a vital cog/part in the church.
- ▶ Beware of complaining that something you are responsible for is not like you want it. Be proactive and positive instead.

Principle 10: Make Wise Decisions and Develop Your Ministry

- ▶ If not done already, form an organizational chart.
- ▶ Decision process related to the chart: Go up? Take care of it personally? Delegate to team member?
- ▶ For elders: Almost NOTHING is an all-elder decision.
- ▶ For deacons: Bring ideas, not just problems, to your elder.
- ▶ Follow-through on developing your ministry (Col 1:29)
 - ▶ Do “Priority Threes”—improvements/developments to ministry

BONUS: How to Form a Biblical Position in a Leadership Team

- ▶ Why important? “Assertion without argument is a mark of false teachers” (Mike Riccardi) (1 Tim 1:6-7).
- ▶ “The ultimate downfall of a church is pretty certain when the elders start making decisions based on opinion, personality, or personal preference. If they are united the whole church will fail. If they are split, the church may split. If they are split long enough, you may experience ‘fight or flight’ as the pastor.” (Classroom discussion, Dr. Alex Montoya)
- ▶ Titus 1:9

What Forms a Biblical Position?

- ▶ Process of study, often by formally trained pastors/elders.
- ▶ Lay elders have five options:
 - ▶ Don't trust and don't study
 - ▶ Don't trust and study
 - ▶ Trust and don't study
 - ▶ Trust and study
 - ▶ Trust or not trust while acknowledging your limitations.

Initial Principles

- ▶ A one-statement challenge does not constitute a biblical argument.
- ▶ A long discussion does not form a biblical position. That is **DEBATE, not STUDY.**
 - ▶ **Discussion** can include emotion, time pressure, personality, decision pressure, presuppositions.
- ▶ Well-developed biblical argument vs. proof texts.
- ▶ Must come from proper motivation
- ▶ Disagreement without study is unhelpful

Feature of Forming a Biblical Position

- ▶ Grammatical/lexical analysis of texts used
- ▶ Contextual analysis of texts used
- ▶ Checking principle: commentaries, theologies, academic articles as needed. Beware of popular sources such as blogs.
- ▶ Forming an argument (viewpoint) based on **MULTIPLE** strong pieces of evidence.
- ▶ Including a fair consideration of alternate views, including fair rebuttals.

Feature of Forming a Biblical Position (continued)

- ▶ Avoid anecdotal material or experience as sole evidence for a view
- ▶ Use a line of reasoning which can be followed beyond “proof texts”
- ▶ Listing Bible verses alone does not form an argument; placing those verses in a reasonable chain of logic forms an argument.