
CHAPTER 7: THE “OVER” RELATIONAL IDENTITIES OF EQUIPPING LEADERS

"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others" - Jack Welch

"The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership"
- Harvey S. Firestone

Introduction

As leaders mature and develop their leadership and ministry skills, their experience affords them the opportunity to assimilate all that they have learned into a compendium of knowledge which they are able to transmit to others. It is once leaders have reached this stage of their ministry, that the “Over” Equipping identities emerge. Leaders are now able to not only themselves engage in ministry more productively, but they are in a position to use their reservoirs of wisdom help develop others (Clinton 1988:177). The subsidiary “Over” leadership identities in which leaders function at this stage of their leadership development are as “Mentors”, “Spiritual Directors” and “Spiritual Parents”.

7.1. The Leader as Mentor

Shawchuck and Heuser mention that most people have a desire to have someone “spiritually older and wiser” to talk to about their future dreams, or present sufferings and confusion (1993:125). Mentors are those “special divine contacts” that God provides to offer assistance and guidance to others in their journey of development (Clinton 1988:130). Leaders who have matured in their own personal development are often sought after as mentors by others. They are flexible and patient and have the vision and

ability to recognise the things which others need to help them develop (Clinton 1988:131). Clinton says that mentors “usually have a gift-mix that includes one or more of the encouragement spiritual gifts: mercy: giving, exhortation, faith, word of wisdom ... Mentors are people who can readily see potential in a person. They can tolerate mistakes, brashness, abrasiveness, etc. in order to see potential develop” (Clinton 1988:131).

The need for mentoring is especially acute in our society due to the fragmentation of the family, the speed of change which demands the constant learning of new skills, and society’s mobility which separates extended family members (Johnson 2000:36). The Uncommon Individual Foundation, an organization committed to mentoring research and training, reported that mentoring was the third most powerful relationship for influencing human behaviour, after marriage and the extended family (Johnson 2000:36).

Mentoring is a recognised form of equipping (Finzel 2000:157) that is suitable “for people of all ages, all races, and all nationalities. And all of life” (Johnson 2000:42). As an equipping function, mentoring promotes “self-development and self-sufficiency” (Brounstein 2000:3; also Gilbert Bilezikian in Johnson 2000:40). Furthermore, mentoring is an essential complementary component of other equipping functions. For example, since it facilitates the personal development of others, mentoring can complement teaching. Shawchuck and Heuser say that, “*teaching and learning are not the same*. There can be much teaching, good teaching, and yet absolutely no learning at all.... Learning happens by mentoring, modelling, hands-on experience and reflection on the experience” (1993:125, italics in original). Finzel says that through direct contact and the building of personal relationships, one person can influence another more than sermons, seminars or any classroom experience (2000:46). Research has shown that while knowledge can be transmitted in a variety of forms and media, learning occurs in interactive relationships, of which mentoring is one (Wright 2003:44-45). Mentors commonly speed up the process of development in others and set patterns that last for a lifetime (Clinton 1988:132).

7.1.1. Defining the Terms Mentor, Mentee and Mentorship

7.1.1.1. Mentor

The term “mentor” originated from the character “Mentor” in Greek mythology in Homer’s *Odyssey* (Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia 2010: no page numbers). Mentor was the son of Alcumus who, in his old age, was placed in charge of Telemachus, the son of Odysseus. The goddess Athena later visited Telemachus, took on the disguise of Mentor and gave Telemachus counsel in certain matters (Wikipedia 2010:no page numbers).

A mentor is defined as “a trusted friend, counsellor or teacher, usually a more experienced person” (Wikipedia 2010:no page numbers). The words “teacher”, “guide”, “coach”, or “wise, loyal advisor” are synonymous with mentoring (DeValve 2008:25). Mentors are also seen as influential senior sponsors or supporters (Dictionary.com 2010:no page numbers).

7.1.1.2. Mentee

The Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia relates the origin of the term “Mentee” as follows:

“The student of a mentor is called a protégé. More accurately, for the recondite, the protégé would be called the telemachus (pl. telemachuses or telemachi). Sometimes, the protégé is also called a mentee. The -or ending of the original name Mentor does not have the meaning of “the one who does something”, as in other English words such as contractor or actor. The derivation of mentee from mentor is therefore an example of backformation (cf. employer and employee)” (2010:no page numbers).

A mentee is also known as an “apprentice” (Wikipedia 2010:no page numbers).

7.1.1.3. Mentorship/Mentoring

The Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia describes “Mentorship” as follows (2010:no page numbers):

“Mentorship refers to a personal developmental relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps a less experienced or less knowledgeable person”.

“There are several definitions of mentoring ... Foremost, mentoring involves communication and is relationship based. In the organizational setting, mentoring can take many forms. One definition of the many that has been proposed, is ‘Mentoring is a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and the psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development; mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé)’ ”

“Historically significant systems of mentorship include traditional Greek pederasty, the guru - disciple tradition practiced in Hinduism and Buddhism, Elders, the discipleship system practiced by Rabbinical Judaism and the Christian church, and apprenticing under the medieval guild system”.

J. Robert Clinton defines mentoring as:

“the process where a person with a serving, giving, encouraging attitude, the mentor, sees leadership potential in a still-to-be-developed person, the protégé, and is able to promote or otherwise significantly influence the protégé in the realization of potential” (1988:130)

7.1.2. Biblical Precedents of Mentoring

Although the Bible doesn't use the words "mentor", "mentee", or "mentoring", it frequently refers to relationships which are considered to be successful mentoring relationships (Jones et al 2004a: no page numbers). University Christian Fellowship describe the biblical emphasis of mentoring as follows:

"Mentoring is a biblical idea. Although the word 'mentor' itself is never used in Scripture, the principles applied when using that terminology are found throughout the biblical text. We see numerous examples of mentoring relationships taking place throughout the Bible. In some cases, individuals were involved in multiple mentoring relationships. Sometimes mentoring happened on a one-to-one basis, and in other cases, mentoring took place in a group setting. However, the group was always small enough to listen to, and interact with, each individual. Jesus mentored 12, sometimes three and, on rare occasions, one" (2010:no page numbers).

Mentorship is also closely linked to the Biblical notion of discipleship (Russell and Briscoe 2003:27) since Biblical notions of mentoring all have "disciple-building" as their goals (Moore 2010a: no page numbers). Moore also considers disciple-making to be the "goal" of mentoring processes (2010a: no page numbers).

One aspect that is unique to biblical mentoring is that it goes beyond singular mentoring processes, occasional relationships or parochial purposes (Moore 2010a: no page numbers). Instead, with the help of the Holy Spirit, Christian mentors seek to assist others to accomplish the whole of God's will for their lives (Moore 2010a:no page numbers). They help others improve spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and socially in order to help them face every situation and challenge ahead of them (Jones et al 2004a:no page numbers). Jesus'

approach to mentoring illustrates a second emphasis of Biblical mentoring. This is that Christian mentors always focus their efforts on developing the mentees' relationships with God (Jones et al 2004b: no page numbers). Waylon Moore concurs with this concept and says:

“Mentoring is a deliberate, encouraging relationship in which the mentor seeks to spiritually lift another person to his/her full potential in Christ” (2010b: no page numbers).

7.1.2.1. Different Forms of Mentoring in the Bible

There is a wide diversity of mentoring relationships recorded in Scripture. These relationships are mentioned below, in no particular order of importance:

(a) Leaders as Mentors

Leaders often served as mentors in the Bible. The University Christian Fellowship see all of the following as examples of leaders assuming the responsibility of mentorship (2010: no page numbers):

“Moses mentored Joshua and the elders of Israel. And Joshua mentored the other remaining leaders of his army. Eli mentored Samuel. Samuel mentored Saul and David. Ahithophel and Nathan the prophet also mentored David. David became Israel's greatest king. David mentored his army commanders and government officials to establish the united nation of Israel. David also mentored Solomon. Solomon mentored the Queen of Sheba, who returned to her people with his wisdom in the form of Proverbs that applied God's laws. Elijah mentored Elisha. Elisha mentored king Jehoash and others ... Priscilla and Aquila mentored Apollos, and this resulted in a much-improved ministry for Apollos ... And finally, Jesus mentored the twelve apostles who established the Christian church. The apostles mentored hundreds of other leaders,

including Paul. Paul mentored Titus, Timothy, and many others. Timothy mentored ‘faithful men’ such as Epaphras. Epaphras and the other faithful men mentored others also, which led to a chain reaction that resulted in dozens of new churches in Asia. Ultimately, this specific mentoring chain is the beginning point of our churches today.”

(b) The Preparation of Protégés for Ministry

Another common mentoring theme for leaders in Scripture is for leaders to be groomed through Mentor-Protégé relationships. This mentoring relationship is one in which one person (the mentor) - regarded as senior by virtue of their age, experience, expertise or accomplishment - takes someone else junior to them (the protégé) and “shows them the ropes” (Finzel 2000:48). A protégé differs from other mentees in that protégés will implicitly understand, or be told explicitly that they are being “groomed” to take over leadership or ministry from their mentors (Finzel 2000:48; Clinton 1988:83).

A mentor/protégé mentoring relationship is one that is often developed in order to ensure leadership succession. In the Bible, mentors sometimes resigned themselves to grooming one protégé at a time - the person who would succeed them. This was the case with Elijah (the mentor) and Elisha (the protégé). However, it was also common for several protégés to be trained by a mentor. Where several protégés *were* prepared, one of them would sometimes assume the mentor’s mantle upon the mentor’s retirement or death. However, all protégés would follow in the mentor’s footsteps by continuing the ministry which the mentor was engaged in.

Jones et al, consider the relationship that existed between Moses (mentor) and Joshua (protégé) to be a prime biblical example of a healthy mentor/protégé mentoring relationship (2004a:no page numbers). They see the following key mentoring processes illustrated in Moses and

Joshua's relationship (Jones et al, 2004a:no page numbers):

- *assigning* the mentee preliminary stretch tasks (Exodus 17:9)
- depending on the mentee's initial performance, making *additional assignments* requiring more skills and responsibilities (Numbers 13:16)
- inviting him (or her) to *key events* (Exodus 32:17)
- allowing the mentee to *observe the mentor* in action (Exodus 24:13-14)
- *affirming* the mentee for achievements (Deuteronomy 31:7-8)
- *stepping aside* to let the mentee succeed (Numbers 27:15-23)

In the Bible, mentor/protégé relationships were initiated in different ways:

i. God would Elect a Protégé

There are several examples where God specifically instructed existing leaders to adopt others as their protégés. This was the case with Moses and Joshua (Numbers 27:18-23), and with Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 19:16). Jesus commissioned the twelve apostles in a similar way (Matt. 28:18-20), although he anticipated that all believers would continue the ministry that he had begun (Luke 12:42; Acts 1:8).

ii. The Succession of Leadership as a Biblical Leadership Principle

Apart from clear commands from God, there are also Scriptures that imply that leaders should consider the raising of successors to be standard practice amongst leaders (Numbers 11:29; 2 Timothy 2:2).

iii. Leadership Prudence

In some situations, existing leaders displayed clear foresight by adopting successors to ensure ministry continuity (Titus 1:5). This was the case with Paul and Timothy. It was for this reason that Barnabas also mentored John Mark (Clinton 1988:131).

Although mentoring relationships are initiated in various ways, Robert Clinton suggests that what we can learn from Scripture is that “emerging leaders can expect to cross paths with mentors early on and be significantly helped by them in early development” (1988:148). Similarly, Clinton says that “Mature leaders can expect to be used as divine contacts and mentors” (1988:148). In every mentorship relationship, God uses the mentoring process to speed up the protégé’s development and to set healthy patterns that will last for a lifetime (Clinton 1988:132).

(c) Peer Mentoring

Not all mentoring relationships need to assume a top-down or a senior/junior relational approach in order for mentoring to take place. Scripture also contains numerous examples of peer mentoring relationships. Peer mentoring relationships are lateral or horizontal mentoring relationships. These are relationships in which there is no status, seniority or authority assumed by either person serving as the mentor. Peer mentoring relationships are reciprocal agreements between people in mutually-beneficial relationships. All involved are committed to receiving input from others for their own personal development, while at the same time committing themselves to contributing to the development of those from they have benefitted. Jones et al consider Joshua to have eventually become a colleague of Moses, rather than remaining a protégé for the duration of Moses’ life (2004a:no page numbers). David grew as his “mentor-peer”, Jonathan, introduced him to political leadership (Moore 2010a:no page numbers). In the New

Testament, Priscilla and Aquila mentored Apollos (Acts 18:26). Peter had some type of mentoring relationship with Barnabas (Galatians 2:11-13). Barnabas then imitated the method that he had benefited from, by mentoring Mark and Paul. Through Paul, God “erected a chain of Spirit-filled, world-changing mentors and church planters” (Moore 2010a:no page numbers).

(d) “Body” Mentoring

In the Bible, at a very basic level, all believers are seen to be involved in “Body” mentoring. This is mentoring that takes places as all believers within the body of Christ contribute to mentoring one another while at the same time receiving a degree of mentoring. This is perhaps anticipated in Scriptures such as Proverbs 27:17:

- As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another (Prov. 27:17 NIV)
- People learn from one another, just as iron sharpens iron (Prov. 27:17 GNB)

The concept of “body” mentoring stems from the New Testament concept of the Church as the “body” of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:12). The relationship of mutual dependency of each individual within the body of Christ necessitates ministry to each other, part of which is “mutual-mentoring”. Romans 15:14 is one text that elucidates this concept of mentoring in the New Testament:

- “I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another” (Rom. 15:14, NIV).

Mentoring influences are not restricted to the influence of leaders upon others. Mutual influence takes place all the time when members of the

Church interact. Even the apostle Paul anticipated receiving positive input into his life through his mutually-beneficial interactions with the church in Rome (Romans 1:11-12). Several other passages demonstrate that “body-mentorship” was to be reciprocal: 1 Cor. 14:26; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:11; Hebrews 10:24-25.

(e) Familial Mentoring

Another biblical dimension of mentoring takes place between family members. The positive influence that one family member has on another to promote spiritual growth and the development of general life-skills can be included in the general ambit of mentoring.

Traditionally, mentoring is considered as something that takes place between individuals who are not family members. However, an expanded Biblical concept of mentoring includes the notion that “God builds through family” also (Broocks 2003:149). Familial mentoring has its origins in the concept of parents being entrusted with the spiritual development of their children and the preservation of faith (Broocks 2003:149; Henry 2008:33). Parents are regarded as being their children’s “primary faith influencers” (Haynes 2009:47). Henry says that homes are intended by God to be the first and primary places of catechism (2008:35). This responsibility is first made explicit in Genesis 18:19, and is part of the conditions that were attached to the fulfilment of the covenant that God made with Abraham. Abraham assumed the responsibility for initiating every male in his household into the covenant that God had made with him (Gen. 17:23-27; 21:4).

Scripture reveals that children were to learn faith from their parents, and parents were commanded to make the home and family environment the primary place of instruction (Ex. 12:26-27, 13:14-15; Deut. 4:9-10; 6:1-9. Cf. Malachi 2:15). Haynes explains that the reason for this is that:

“the single most important experience in a person’s life is his or her family of origin. Everything flows from the original familial relationship ... God’s plan for spiritual formation places the family in the lead when it comes to equipping the next generation” (2009:36).

In the New Testament Andrew was instrumental in introducing his brother Peter to the Lord (John 1:40-41). Timothy inherited his faith from his mother Eunice, who in turn, had inherited it from her mother Lois (2 Tim. 1:5). The responsibility of parents to instruct their children in the ways of the Lord are once again echoed in Ephesians 6:4.

Furthermore, familial mentoring was not confined to issues of faith and spirituality. Jethro mentored his son-in-law Moses in the art of leadership, management and delegation (Exodus 18). David instructed his son Solomon as to what he should do when assuming the throne (1 Kings 2:1-9).

(f) Intergenerational Mentoring

In the Bible, we also see a further extension of familial mentoring – intergenerational mentoring. Not only were parents to ensure that faith was transmitted to their children, but each existing generation was to instruct the following generation in the ways of the Lord (Psalm 44:1; 71:18, 78:1-7; 145:4, Isaiah 38:19; Joel 1:3; Cf. 2 Tim. 2:2). Although there is not as great an emphasis on intergenerational mentoring in the New Testament as in the Old Testament, the principles for spiritual development found in both the OT and the NT are to be regarded as being equally valuable (Haynes 2009:37). It is only when the mentorship principles of both the Old and New Testaments are taken together that we have “the whole counsel of God’s Word” (Haynes 2009:37).

University Christian Fellowship calls the mentoring that takes place between generations “cross-generational” mentoring (2010:no page

numbers). Brian Haynes cites the example of the church in which he serves (Kingsland Baptist Church, Texas), that has developed a “Generational Team”, which seeks to minister to people according to their generations, and across generations (2009:47). Intergenerational mentoring recognises that in addition to the affinity that develops between members of nuclear and extended families, there is an affinity that develops between the people of each generation.

The principle of intergenerational mentoring taken from the Scriptures mentioned above places the responsibility of mentoring each successive new generation upon the existing generation which has come to spiritual maturity. University Christian Fellowship mention that “[E]merging generations recognize almost naturally that they have a lot to learn, and the Bible affirms a relationship model that can be used to meet that need”, namely “cross generational” or intergenerational mentoring (2010:no page numbers). Judges 2:9-10 reveal the regrettable consequences where intergenerational mentoring failed to take place.

(g) Upward Mentoring

Occasionally in the Bible we also see examples of those in senior positions being mentored by others who traditionally would be considered to be subordinate, or “junior” to them in terms of authority, experience and age. In these situations, instead of the traditional “downward” mentoring flow, the mentorship flow is “upward”. In other words, a senior person is mentored by one who would traditionally be considered to be the lesser in status, age or experience. University Christian Fellowship (2010:no page numbers) cite the following as examples of this phenomenon:

“Mordecai mentored Esther. Esther mentored King Artaxerxes, which led to the liberation of God’s people ... Daniel mentored Nebuchadnezzar, who humbled himself before God”.

Waylon Moore notes that in Israel kings were often mentored by their religious teachers (2010a:no page numbers). Similarly, although Timothy was young in age, he was admonished to set an example for all believers, including those senior to him (1 Tim. 4:7). “Upward” mentoring recognises that in mentoring relationships both the mentor and the mentee mutually influence each other (Wright 2003:47). It also acknowledges that when God wants to commission someone to serve in a mentoring or influential capacity, it is His Spirit that facilitates the growth and influence, not the individual He uses. God does not require that His mentors acquire experience, status or any other form of seniority in order to qualify to be used by Him. Joshua, Gideon, David, Daniel and Jeremiah in the Old Testament, and John Mark and Titus in the New Testament are further examples of individuals who were used to exert influence at a time in their lives when others would’ve considered them to be too young and inexperienced for the task.

7.1.3. Additional Forms of Mentoring

In the secular arena, as mentorship has gained acceptance as an important means of developing others, it has also undergone significant development. Each of these developments has helped to further broaden the definition of mentorship and have helped to expand its application. This has resulted in a wider diversity of forms of mentoring. When added to the range of Biblical forms of mentoring, the additional developments and mutations of secular forms of mentoring help reveal the wide scope of influence that mentorship embraces. Some of these developments and applications are:

7.1.3.1. Mosaic Mentoring

In 1979 Robert Davis and Patricia Garrison wrote a master thesis listing the following as examples of the roles of mentors:

“cheerleader, coach, confidant, counsellor, developer of talent, ‘griot’ (oral historian for the organization or profession), guardian, guru, inspiration, master, ‘opener of doors’, patron, role model, pioneer, ‘seminal source’, ‘successful leader’, and teacher” (Vollmer 2010:no page numbers).

These varied roles gave rise to the term “mosaic mentoring” and identified mentorship as a multifaceted and broad-based endeavour that could take place in non-traditional settings (Vollmer 2010:no page numbers). The term “mosaic” also made reference to the fact that all people could participate in mentoring someone else, whether formally or informally. This was particularly applicable to “faith-based organizations” (Vollmer 2010:no page numbers; also Wikipedia 2010:no page numbers).

7.1.3.2. New-Hire Mentorship

“New-Hire” mentorship describes the process that takes place when, for example, newcomers to organizations (protégés) are paired with more experienced people (mentors) in order to facilitate their integration into the organization (Miller 2011:no page numbers). Mentors provide newcomers with information, good examples, advice, and help them develop networks in the organization (City of Mesa 2011:no page numbers). Often these processes take the form of structured programs which are designed to train newcomers and help them assimilate organizational culture (Miller 2011:no page numbers).

7.1.3.3. High-Potential Mentorship

“High Potential” mentorship describes the process used to groom up-and-coming employees deemed to have the potential to move up into senior leadership roles (Abudi 2009:no page numbers). Here the employee (mentee) is paired with a senior level leader (or leaders) for a series of career-coaching interactions. As part of the process, the employee may

be exposed to working in several different areas within the organization for small periods of time in order to learn the organization's structure, culture, and methods (Abudi 2009:no page numbers).

7.1.3.4. E-Mentoring

“E-mentoring” is a means of providing mentorship using e-resources (electronic and internet resources). “Telementoring” (the use of telephonic communication) was one of the forerunners of implementing communication technology in the process of mentoring. Many early e-mentoring programs used e-mail communication to link mentors and mentees. Conventional e-mentoring projects tend to rely on web-based solutions. Online software allows both mentors and mentees to log into a secure online environment where they can converse under supervision of moderators and coordinators (Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia 2010c: no page numbers). Staffordshire University describe e-Mentoring as follows:

“E-mentoring is a relationship that is established between a more senior individual (mentor) and a lesser skilled or experienced individual (mentee), primarily using electronic communications, and is intended to develop and grow the skills, knowledge, confidence, and cultural understanding of the mentee to help him or her succeed” (2011:no page numbers).

7.1.3.5. Blended Mentoring

“Blended mentoring” is a mix of the traditional personal, face-to-face, on-site mentoring and e-mentoring (European Journal of Open, Distance and E-Learning 2011:no page numbers). The blended mentorship programs can be initiated with the completion of online surveys or aptitude tests. They can then be followed up by the mentor providing an interpretation of results, either via pro-forma feedback templates, e-mail (cyber-counselling) or telephonic correspondence. This form of

mentorship is popular in short-term mentoring programs such as online/correspondence education (European Journal of Open, Distance and E-Learning 2011:no page numbers).

7.1.3.6. Reverse Mentoring

“Reverse mentoring” describes a mentoring relationship where the typical mentorship roles are reversed. In reverse mentoring the mentor may be younger and have less general experience than the mentee (Starcevich 2011:no page numbers). Anne Rolfe describes reverse mentoring as follows:

“Based on old paradigm mentoring where a more senior person (in terms of age, position or experience) mentors a junior, reverse mentoring places the more junior person as the mentor” (2011:no page numbers).

Reverse mentoring takes place because the mentor has more knowledge in a particular area than the mentee, or because the mentee seeks the perspective of the younger generation (Starcevich 2011:no page numbers). “Examples are when young internet or mobile savvy Millennial Generation teens train executives in using their high end Smart Phones” (Wikipedia 2010:no page numbers). The executives in turn offer the insights into business that they have acquired over time. Since, generally-speaking, mentees have greater reserves of knowledge, skill and experience, reverse mentoring relationships tend to be formed for specific purposes and for shorter periods of time (Starcevich 2011:no page numbers).

7.1.4 How to Mentor:

The following are guidelines for the practice of mentoring:

7.1.4.1. Stages of Mentoring Relationships

Every mentoring process goes through several distinguishable stages or phases. Ken Lawson notes that mentoring relationships go through three stages (2009:176):

- Stage 1: “The conception: how the mentor and mentee find each other and agree to embark upon a relationship”.
- Stage 2: “The development of the relationship which involves establishing goals, challenging assumptions, and building confidence in the mentee and the relationship”
- Stage 3: “The closure of the relationship and how to make sure the end of the relationship is positive, not negative”.

Connie Bullis uses a phase model to describe the mentoring process (Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia 2010:no page numbers):

- Initiation Phase - initially, the "mentee proves himself or herself worthy of the mentor's time and energy."
- Cultivation Phase - the actual coaching in which “a strong interpersonal bond between mentor and mentee develops.”
- The Separation Phase - "the mentee experiences more autonomy."

- The Redefinition Phase - ultimately, there is more equality in the relationship and roles are “Redefined”

In looking at the actual practice of mentorship, this thesis will delineate the mentoring relationship into three phases:

- The Preparatory Phase
- The Implementation Phase
- The Concluding Phase

(a) The Preparatory Phase

The preparatory phase of mentoring relationships embraces the initial, preliminary work that needs to be arranged if the relationship is to be successful.

i. Initiating Mentoring Relationships

Mentoring relationships can be initiated by either mentors or mentees. Traditionally mentoring relationships are started by younger individuals who seek someone to help them on the path to maturity or to help them develop in some area (Johnson 2000:36). Mentoring relationships are also initiated during transitional periods in people’s lives when they seek guidance in making important life decisions about their futures (Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia 2010:no page numbers). Experienced mentors may also start a mentoring relationship with someone whom they believe to have potential. Furthermore, we have also seen that God may initiate mentoring relationships as was the case with Moses and Joshua (Numbers 27:18-23), and with Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 19:16).

ii. Identifying Those Who Will Be Mentored

Since mentoring relationships are often personal relationships, careful consideration must be taken by mentors as to whom they will mentor. “Like tends to attract like” (Broocks 2003:189), and mentoring relationships work well when mentor and mentee share common interests (Wikipedia Online Encyclopaedia 2010:no page numbers). Although mentors and mentees need not share the same type of personality, mutual respect is an essential ingredient if the relationship is to be effective (Lawson 2009: 185). Below are some qualities that mentors should look for in prospective mentees:

- A desire to learn and to achieve personal growth and professional goals (Foster 2010:no page numbers). Mentees should demonstrate a large degree of “teachableness” and a desire to develop new skills or acquire ongoing knowledge (Lawson 2009:187).
- Mentees should also demonstrate that they are spiritually gifted to serve in the ministry areas in which they desire to be developed (Lawrenz 2003:26). Since mentoring entails the development of latent potential, mentees should demonstrate a certain degree of commitment and proficiency in areas already entrusted to them (Russell and Briscoe 2003:25, 27).
- Mentees should have a reputation for faithfulness in small things (Matt. 25:21).
- Mentees also need to exhibit the ability to receive and give honest and constructive feedback (Foster 2010: no page numbers). This includes the ability to receive correction, a willingness to learn from mistakes and the ability to submit to authority.
- Russell and Briscoe also mention that the following qualities are important qualities for prospective mentees to have: spiritual

maturity, a genuine love for people, a servant spirit and the ability to work as part of a team (2003:25).

iii. Discuss the Purpose and Nature of the Relationship

Before the mentoring relationship commences, both the mentor and mentee should clarify their expectations of the process. Mentoring relationships require “openness, hospitality *and boundaries*” (Johnson 2000:38, *italics added*). Johnson says:

“Mentors do not want mentees to expect too much or too little. Both problems can be avoided if expectations are discussed openly. Everything from ‘Is there homework?’ to ‘Who pays for the coffee?’ should be agreed upon ahead of time so that there will be mutual understanding. Unrealistic expectations can come back to haunt [mentors] later” (2000:38).

Agreeing on expectations will also help the mentor focus on the real needs that mentees have. Often mentors have large reserves of knowledge and experience and may address perceived needs based on their own ministry journey, instead of addressing the mentee’s unique, actual needs. Waylon Moore describes the need to discuss the nature of mentoring meetings as follows:

“Mentoring needs to be done by choice, rather than chance ... early on we need to clarify our expectations, if the friendship began as simply a loose time of counselling, for instance. This will neutralize potential relationship problems. Agree on a meeting place, a time and its length. Discuss together some perimeters about topics, goals, and how often you will meet. Get some agreement to complete a specific study or ministry you do together” (2010b: no page numbers).

The Orthodox Women's Ministries and Education Network (O.W.M.E.N.) require that mentees select a focus area in which they would like to be mentored before mentors are assigned to them (Orthodox Women's Ministries and Education Network 2010:no page numbers).

iv. Determine Meeting Parameters

Mentors and mentees should agree upon the length and frequency of meetings, as well as the times and places where meetings will take place (Johnson 2000:38). The period over which the mentoring will take place should also be discussed. Once this time period has been set, the possibility of extending the relationship can be discussed once the initial period has been completed.

However, while noting the need to set time constraints for the mentoring relationship, it must be noted that mentoring is a *process*. Effectual mentoring cannot be achieved by the application of a "few key principles" (Johnson 2000:42). Johnson says, there is "no short cut for equipping people to become theologically astute, godly in character, and competent in ministry" (2000:42; also Moore 2010b: no page numbers).

(b) The Implementation Phase

The implementation phase is when the actual meetings can commence. The following are guidelines for meetings:

i. Create an Environment of Trust

Mentoring relationships are very personal relationships. During the season of mentorship, both the mentors and mentees share information that may include disclosure of very personal matters that will require confidentiality. One way that mentors can lay the

foundation for this atmosphere of trust is to start by first sharing their journey in ministry, including some of the personal struggles they have faced (Johnson 2000:38).

ii. Listen

“Attentive listening is the key” to good mentoring relationships (Johnson 2000:38). All mentors “need enhanced listening skills” (Gibbs 2005:190). Mentors must avoid presuming to know what mentees are thinking and avoid making assumptions about what the needs of mentees are, or what it is that mentees need to hear (Johnson 2000:38). Rather, by listening to mentees, mentors are able to distinguish between the true and perceived needs of mentees (DeValve 2008:26).

iii. Ask Good Questions

While mentors will help provide answers to many of the dilemmas that mentees encounter, they are not to do so indefinitely. This helps avoid the mentee becoming dependent on the mentor. Instead, mentors must ask mentees questions that stimulate their own problem-solving skills (Johnson 2000:41). Mentees are also less likely to take offence if they are led to identify their own shortcomings, as opposed to mentors pointing these out. Mentors could ask mentees to regularly come to mentoring sessions with two or three pertinent questions that they have (Johnson 2000:41). These questions could form the basis for discussion and reflection. Below are some of the different types of questions that will help mentees think critically:

- Probing Questions

Probing questions challenge mentees to question superficial assumptions they may entertain regarding different issues. Probing

questions encourage mentees to consider the underlying issues regarding matters and then to develop their own personal convictions. This is as opposed to mentee simply adopting the assumptions of authority figures. Examples of probing questions are:

- Why do mentees hold to the doctrines that they do? Where there are several legitimate alternatives to certain issues, why have they adopted the particular viewpoint that they have?
- Do they understand the arguments of opposing points of view? If so, how would they respond to those who hold them? Are they able to see the weaknesses in their positions and the strengths of the positions of others? For example, when addressing sins, such as social injustices, do they understand the complex interplay of economics, politics, and history that have led to present-day situations? Or, do they summarily denounce such complex situations as indicative of the depravity of humankind?

- Questions of Self-Reflection

These are questions which help mentees develop an understanding of themselves. They help mentees separate symptoms that manifest in their behaviour and ministry from the underlying root causes. They can be used to help identify hidden, subconscious “behaviour drivers”, such as motives, phobias, unresolved conflict and emotional or other hurts that have not been resolved. They also help mentees identify their personal strengths and weaknesses. Dealing with these matters may bring repressed issues to the surface and elicit strong emotional reactions. However, this is one of the motivations behind mentoring. Mentoring should provide a relational environment of trust in which wise mentors can help mentees work through issues that pose potential hindrances to their

personal development and ministry effectiveness. Examples of self-reflection questions are:

- What pain have mentees experienced in life, and what were the effects of that pain (Johnson 2000:41). How well has that pain been resolved?
- Which types of people do mentees find easy to relate to and why? Which behaviours in people and what types of people anger them, and why? How is their relationship style or their communication style impacting their ministry? (Johnson 2000:41).
- How do they manage stress? How do they manage relational conflict? When, and in which areas are they more prone to be tempted? What measures are in place to deal with sin and temptation in their lives?

- “Perspective” Questions

Mentors help mentees understand the broader framework in which they live and minister by asking them questions of perspective. They help them understand the role that they have to play within these larger frameworks. Perspective questions also help mentees to take a long-range view of their life and ministry. They help mentees understand how to pace themselves in ministry, and how to work alongside others in order to accomplish something bigger than themselves. Furthermore, perspective questions help mentees distinguish the important from the urgent, and that which they do that keeps them busy from that which makes them effective. They help mentees to stay “on course” and to minister purposefully. Examples of perspective questions are:

- Have they been able to discern God’s purposes in leading them along the path of ministry that they are now on? What have been the defining moments of their development in ministry?

Where are they currently at in their development, and where do they think God is taking them in the future?

- Do they find it easier to work alone or collaboratively (in a team setting)? Why is this? What is the biggest contribution that they could make to collaborative (team) ministry?
- What do they perceive God to be doing in the world? What trends do they see in ministry? What changes do they see taking place in society? When they consider the answers to these questions, is there anything in their approach to ministry that may need to change in order to be more effective?

iv. Serve as a Sounding Board

In addition to asking mentees questions, mentors can also serve as “sounding boards” and “advisors” for mentees (Gibbs 2005:190). Because mentors have been exposed to a wide variety of ministry situations they are able to provide advice and direction to others (DeValve 2008:28). During the course of their lives, they have gathered a wealth of life and ministry experience. They will have faced many dilemmas and have processed their experience. Mentees will want to draw on those experiences. Mentors need not withhold the sharing of their life and ministry experience for fear of unduly influencing mentees. To overcome this, mentors can invite mentees to ask them questions regarding certain matters and then share whenever requests are made of them.

v. Serve as a Resource Person

Mentors can serve as resource people (Gilbert Bilezikian in Johnson 2000:40). Throughout their lives, mentors will have built up a wealth of resources that have enabled them to minister well and that have enabled them to grow and develop in ministry. These resources may be a network of people, partners in ministry, or books that have been pivotal in shaping their ministry philosophy

(Russell and Briscoe 2003:29). Mentors can make their network available to their mentees by introducing them to these resources (Johnson 2000:39). In this way, they can help mentees develop their own networks (Wikipedia 2010:no page numbers). Serving as a resource person is especially important when one considers that one of the aims of a mentor is to facilitate the personal growth of a mentee rather than to attempt nurture the mentee on their own.

vi. Expose Mentees to Ministry

Mentors can impart ministry skills and the concordant attitudes required to minister by simply taking mentees along with them when they minister (DeValve 2008:26; Johnson 2000:38; Russell and Briscoe 2003:29). “Taking risks and working outside our previous experience promotes growth and dependence upon God” (Johnson 2000:42). Often mentees learn many things through simply observing ministry practice (DeValve 2008:26; Russell and Briscoe 2003:29). These are often things that mentors may’ve neglected to discuss in their one-on-one mentoring sessions (Johnson 2000:38). Mentors must therefore identify these opportunities to expose mentees to ministry practice. After these events mentees can be “debriefed” about their experiences. Johnson says, “If mentors today send mentees on risk-taking, faith-stretching, kingdom-building adventures, there will be plenty to talk about!” (2000:39). Waylon Moore says,

“...ministry together is a great bonding experience. It also quickly reveals what principles you've taught the mentoree that are sticking. Without ministry together, you'll never know what he truly knows! Take someone out witnessing, and you'll discover quickly where he is in practical knowledge. His questions later will be pointed and real. No room for ‘theory’ here! When the mentoree begins to do ministry, his real fears, weaknesses, and gifts begin to surface. Then, your

progress in helping him into Christlikeness will accelerate” (2010b:no page numbers).

vii. Affirm People

During their mentorship period, mentees will benefit greatly from receiving positive affirmation. This will help them overcome their fears and insecurities. Erik Johnson says that the words of God the Father at Jesus’ baptism (Matthew 3:17), were a verbalization of his love for him (2000:38). He maintains that the affirmation of male figures in the lives of mentees makes a huge difference in their lives (Johnson 2000:38). Mentors build confidence in individuals by expressing their confidence in them (Johnson 2000:42). Mentees will benefit greatly when mentors encourage them in the areas in which they are showing healthy growth and development.

viii. Pray Together

Waylon Moore says that, “Perhaps the most bonding experience we can have is praying aloud regularly with another person. Prayer is a mentoring necessity” (2010b: no page numbers). Mentors can ask mentees about their prayer requests and commit themselves to pray for them regularly (Moore 2010b: no page numbers; DeValve 2008:28). Mentors and mentees should also agree to pray for each other between meetings (Johnson 2000:38). When mentors request that mentees pray for them, this increases the mentee’s self-confidence and can help break dependency upon a mentor.

(c) The Concluding Phase

Most mentoring relationships do not continue indefinitely. The exception is when mentors are developing protégés whom they anticipate will succeed them. Just as there are certain procedures for initiating

mentoring relationships, there are also procedures for concluding mentoring relationships.

i. Assess the Progress Made

Throughout the period of mentorship, there should be regular assessments of how well the goals set at the beginning of the mentoring period are being achieved. This will allow for continuous “mid-course corrections” to be made throughout the period. Mentoring relationships should then conclude with a final assessment of the overall progress made. The following are guideline for assessing mentoring relationships:

- Assess How Well Initial Goals and Objectives Have Been Accomplished

Evaluation should begin with assessing how well the stated goals and objectives that were set for the mentoring process have been achieved.

- Assess The Mentee’s Growth and Development

The mentee’s personal growth and development should then be assessed. This can be done by using evaluation questions. Examples of these are:

- Mention 3 ways in which you have grown spiritually and in your knowledge of the ministry to which you are called.
- What are the major lessons that you have learned about yourself during this period? What have you discovered to be the areas of your greatest strengths? What have you discovered to be the areas in which you need to improve most?

- Mention the 3 biggest personal challenges you have had to face during this period?
- What are the major lessons that you have learned about relating to people?
- What has God impressed upon you regarding what your unique call and ministry is?

Mentees should first have an opportunity to evaluate their own progress. Thereafter mentors can offer a summary evaluation of what they have perceived the mentees' strengths, weaknesses, calling and gifting, etc. to be. Mentors need to be careful that the feedback they give is honest and constructive.

- Assess the Mentor's Role

A mentor will also benefit from having his/her performance assessed. This will assist the mentor in his/her future role as a mentor. When mentors hold themselves accountable in this manner, it communicates humility to the mentee and demonstrates a positive example of servant leadership. Just as with the assessment of the mentee, certain areas of the mentor's role can be assessed. The mentor can be asked to firstly assess his/her own role during the process. After this, the mentee can be invited to give honest and constructive feedback. Finally, the mentor can share how it is that he/she has grown during the process and what he/she has learned. Some guidelines for areas to assess are as follows:

- Did the mentor maintain the right balance between passive mentoring and active mentoring? In other words, was the right balance maintained between the mentor assisting the mentee on a journey of self-discovery (passive mentoring), whilst at the same time providing constructive input when he/she saw that this was needed (active mentoring).
- Did the mentor provide enough exposure to ministry?

- Is it felt that the mentor shared enough personal experiences or was the mentor guarded when it came to his/her personal life and ministry?

- Assess the Nature and Efficacy of the Mentorship Process

The nature and content of the mentorship process should also be evaluated. Both mentor and mentee can assess whether the frequency of meetings was sufficient and whether enough time was allocated for their goals to be reached? They can also evaluate the relevance of any books and material that was given for study. Mentors and mentees can evaluate whether there was enough quality and quantity of exposure to ministry experiences directly related to the mentee's area of ministry too.

- ii. Assess the Future of the Mentoring Relationship

Both mentor and mentee should then ascertain whether any further mentorship is needed. If this is needed they should decide what form this will take and what the purposes of the mentoring should be. Few mentoring relationships will achieve all of their initial objectives and neither the mentor nor the mentee should feel *constrained* to continue with the relationship. The relationship should only continue by mutual agreement.

Ideally the mentor and mentee should take a break before commencing any additional periods of mentoring. Alternatively, the mentor may offer the mentee other avenues for further growth. One way may be for the mentor to offer the mentee his/her network and link the mentee to someone else who can assist with further development. Other mentors may be able to provide mentorship from another perspective.

iii. Encourage Mentees to Mentor Others

Equipping leaders never see ministering to individuals as an end in itself. Rather, they anticipate individuals participating as partners in ministry after they have received ministry. Mentees who assist in mentoring others further their own development by doing so (Johnson 2000:38). It is for these reasons that mentees should be encouraged to develop relationships with others in which they themselves will serve as the mentors. Mentees can even serve as mentors for others while they themselves are being mentored (Gibbs 2005:116).

7.1.5 The Rewards of Mentoring

Mentoring others has unique rewards, some of which are as follows:

7.1.5.1. A Sense of Significance

Through the input that they have in the lives of others, mentors experience “validation” and a “sense of significance” (Johnson 2000:36). The Blackabys note that, “Leaders who invest in people will know the deep satisfaction of seeing these people fulfil God’s purposes for their lives” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:276).

7.1.5.2. Personal Growth

A mentoring relationship with others also provides an opportunity for senior leaders to grow by keeping them “in a learning mode” (Gibbs 2005:191). This is because, in order to be authentic, mentors are regularly forced to address all the issues that they discuss with mentees in their own personal lives (Johnson 2000:37). Johnsons says that, “Mentoring relationships are not one-way, hierarchical relationships ... life-sharing goes both ways” (2000:38; also Russell and Briscoe

2003:29). Mentors must therefore “accept the mentee’s influence. This too builds trust” (Johnson 2000:38).

7.1.5.3. Ministry Longevity

By mentoring others, leaders who have retired from official ministry positions can continue to minister (Johnson 2000:42). Ultimately those who have a desire to be used by God as mentors will never lack opportunities to minister (Moore 2010b: no page numbers).

7.1.5.4. Influence Beyond the Mentor’s Personal Capacity

Equipping leaders who mentor others will soon find that their ministry influence is increased (Russell and Briscoe 2003:24). They will find that they leave behind an enduring legacy in the lives of others (Gibbs 2005:191; De Pree 2004:13). The reason for this is that they are, in a sense, ministering to others *through* the mentees whom they have mentored. In this way, mentors minister beyond the confines of their personal areas of ministry. Mentors will find that through their influence in the lives of their mentees they can extend their influence across the following boundaries:

- Ministry boundaries - Mentors are able to influence many diverse areas of ministry through the diversity of ministries that their mentees may engage in.
- Personnel boundaries - Through their mentees, mentors influence others whom they may never personally come into contact with (Gibbs 2005:21).
- Generational boundaries - Mentors typically mentor younger individuals, who in turn minister to their younger peers.
- Geographical boundaries - Mentors extend their influence to the diverse geographical areas from which their mentees hail, areas to which they may never travel. This is made possible by using

technology, such as the internet, as a platform for mentoring others.

5.2. The Leader as Spiritual Director

The second “Over” equipping identity of Christian leaders is that of the leader as a “Spiritual Director”. Sue Mallory traces the emergence of this identity as follows:

“up until the 1960’s “the title ‘pastor’ still meant someone who primarily preached the Word, taught the doctrines, and looked after the ‘flock’. By the end of the 80s, the church growth movement had added the roles of ‘vision castor’ and ‘chief executive officer’ to the pastor’s job description. These new sub-titles meant that the pastor had to be a preacher, a shepherd, and a professional leader ... a new emphasis was added to the pastor’s to-do list – the role of spiritual director” (2001:57).

Although applying titles such as “visionary”, “chief executive officer”, and even “director” to spiritual leaders may be a fairly recent development, the tasks associated with these terms have often been implicit in spiritual leadership functions (Mallory 2001:57). Oswald Sanders notes the correspondence between pastoral ministry and the need for leaders to give people direction as follows:

“The spiritual leader must know where he is going and, like the Eastern shepherd, go ahead of his flock ... and challenge them to follow” ... Leaders must remain in front and give guidance and a sense of direction to those behind” (1989:155-156).

Similarly Greg Ogden describes the need for leaders to provide direction as follows:

“The gift of leadership has to do with helping the body to reach it’s potential and arrive at it’s God-appointed destination” (2003:207).

In relating pastoral care to the leadership task of the management a congregation or ministry, Gene Getz says:

“The primary responsibility of the first-century pastor-teacher was to help the new and struggling church to get organised and to grow spiritually” (1985:136).

“ ‘Managing’ and ‘shepherding’ ... describe synonymous functions. They are overarching concepts which include more specific functions ... leaders were to manage or shepherd God’s people” (1984:141).

Bill Hybells talks about the leadership of congregations in similar terms:

“We can no longer afford to leave people leaderless in the arena of the church. For the church ever to reach its redemptive, life-giving potential, it must be well led. It must be powerfully envisioned, strategically focused, and internally aligned. Members must be motivated; values must be established and enforced. Resources need to be leveraged” (2007: no page numbers).

As human organizations, congregations or churches exhibit similar characteristics to those of “secular” organizations. They require similar leadership processes to ensure their sustainability, one of which is direction, albeit *spiritual* direction (Means 1990:41; Shawchuck and Hueser 1993:126). Cormack says that, “No group can operate effectively without direction” (1988:78). Furthermore, as churches and ministries grow in size and complexity, leaders often find that the nature of their roles needs to change in response to the new growth and development. More time needs to be dedicated to organizational oversight and management in order to ensure that growth and development is sustained. The leadership function of “directing” ensures that this is possible (Cormack 1988:78). Ademeyo says that it is God who calls and spiritually gifts some people to provide this leadership and direction

(2009:65). While leaders are not to “run the Church” (Damazio 1988:34), leaders are called to exert an influence upon others in order to provide that spiritual direction (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:22).

7.2.1. New Testament Precedents of Leaders as Spiritual Directors

A cursory study of some key New Testament words related to leadership and the passages in which they occur reveal that leadership is not passive. Instead, leadership is proactive and leaders are required to “oversee, guide, direct, govern, and steer the Church to accomplish God’s purposes” (Damazio 1988:19). Of special interest to this thesis, Frank Damazio says that the list of leaders mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 can be considered to be “governmental ministries” (1988:19). Damazio says:

“The governmental ministries oversee and develop the ministries in the Body of Christ ... but do NOT do all the ministering for the saints” (1988:19).

The following examples, whilst not being exhaustive, serve to illustrate the New Testament leadership function of providing spiritual direction:

7.2.1.1. Romans 12:8 and the Spiritual Gift of Leadership - προϊ΄στημι

- “... if it is leadership, let him govern diligently...” (Romans 12:8, NIV)

The word translated as “leadership” in the NIV in Romans 12:8 is the verb προϊ΄στημι. It means “to *stand before; look after*” (Adeyemo 2009:68); “to *preside in rank*, or (by implication) to be over, rule” (Strong’s Greek Dictionary 2009:no page numbers; Strong’s’ number – G4291); “practice” (Damazio 1988:25); “to be out in front” (Ogden 2003:207) . Thayer’s Greek Definitions defines προϊ΄στημι as: “to set or place before; to set over; to be over, to superintend, preside over; to be a

protector or guardian” (2009:no page number). It is used again in 1 Timothy 3:4 in the present middle participle form, *proistamenon*:

- “He must *manage* his own family well ...” (1 Tim. 3:4 NIV, *italics added*)

It is then repeated in the second aorist active infinitive form, *prostenai*, in 1 Tim. 3:5

- “If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?” (1 Tim. 3:5, NIV).

John Gill says that the reference in 1 Tim. 3:5 is to the responsibility of Christian leaders in churches to “preside over”, “rule in”, “provide for”, and see that everything is in its proper place, and done according to the will of God (Exposition of the Entire Bible 2009:no page numbers, Exposition of 1 Tim. 3:4-5). Similarly Gene Getz says that the responsibilities of elders were to “manage” the churches entrusted to them (1984:138). Getz says that the function of managing “is an all inclusive concept. There is nothing that is not included in this task ... It involves total and complete oversight of ... the church. God ... holds the elders responsible for the overall leadership in a church” (1984:138). The verb *προϊστήμι* occurs again in 1 Timothy 5:17 in the second perfect active participle as a reference to church leaders:

- “The elders who *direct the affairs* of the church well” (1 Tim 5:17, NIV, *italics added*)

Albert Barnes says that the word is used here to “apply to any officers to whom the *management and government* of the church was entrusted” (Notes on the Bible 2009:no page numbers, Commentary on 1 Timothy 5:17, *italics added*).

The word occurs once again in 1 Thess. 5:12 in participle form in reference to leaders:

- “Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you” (1 Thessalonians 5:12, NIV)

Vincent says that the reference here is to “superintendents of households” and to “the ruling of elders of the church” ... It is used functionally” (Vincent 2009:no page numbers)

7.2.1.2. 1 Cor. 12:28 and the Spiritual Gift of Administration or “Governments” - κυβέρνησις

- “And in the church God has appointed ... those with gifts of administration ...” (1 Cor. 12:28, NIV)

The word translated as “administration” in the NIV is the feminine noun κυβέρνησις, from the verb κυβερνάω. It means “to steer” and refers to “pilotage”, that is, “directorship”, or “government” (Strong’s Greek Dictionary 2009:no page numbers; Strong’s’ number – G2941). It is a word used only here in the New Testament. The kindred verb, κυβερνήτης, “shipmaster” or “steersman”, occurs Acts 27:11 and Rev. 18:17. It literally means “steering with a rudder”. It is an expression borrowed from nautical language and, amongst other things, is concerned with the making of a decision, with steering a ship on the correct course (Adeyemo 2009:70).

In the passage above, the word κυβέρνησις refers to the work of “administration” and “governing” in general, without any specific reference to spiritual leaders. However, some have deduced that the reference is at least an indirect reference to leadership since the gift of “administration” or “governing” is so closely aligned with the functions of spiritual leaders. Therefore, based on the close association of this passage to leadership functions, Ademeyo deduces that “Leadership is a God-given gift, to be used among other things to guide and to govern” (2009:89). For the same

reason, Tidball also sees 1 Cor. 12:28 as a reference to leadership since the word κυβέρνησις was used by the Greeks to speak of the art of government, or of “steermanship – guiding a ship to its destination” (1999:104). Tidball says that, as a spiritual gift, it was applied to both Christ and to Christian leaders (1999:106), and is one that lies “at the heart of the pastoral calling” (1999:120).

7.2.1.3. Hebrews 13:7 and the verb ἡγέομαι

- “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” (Hebrews 13:7, NKJV, *italics added*)

The phrase translated in the New King James version as “them which have the rule over you” (NIV – “leaders”) stems from the Greek verb ἡγέομαι. This word means “to *lead; command* (with official authority); ... (be) chief, count, esteem, governor, judge, have the rule over” (Strong’s Greek Dictionary 2009:no page numbers; Strong’s’ number – G2233). Thayer translates the word as “to lead; to go before; to rule, command; to have authority over; leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel, overseers or leaders of the churches” (Greek Definitions 2009:no page number). Albert Barnes similarly translates it as “leaders, guides, directors” (Notes on the Bible 2009:no page numbers). The word occurs again in Hebrews 13:17:

- “Obey them that *have the rule over you ...*” (Hebrews 13:17, KJV, *italics added*).

7.2.1.4. 1 Timothy 3:1 and the noun ἐπισκοπή

- “Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task” (1 Tim. 3:1, NIV)

The word translated as “overseer” (NIV); “overseership” (Literal Version of the Bible) and “office of a bishop” (KJV) is the word ἐπισκοπή. The word

is derived from the verb episkopeō, translated as “over-seership”. The word means “inspection (for relief); by implication superintendence; specifically the Christian ‘episcopate’: - the office of a ‘bishop, bishoprick” (Strong’s Greek Dictionary 2009:no page numbers; Strong’s number – G1984). Furthermore, it refers to “oversight”, “overseership”, “office”, “charge”, “the office of an elder” (Thayer’s Greek Definitions 2009:no page number).

In secular use it referred to officers in an army and of overseers of workmen. It was adopted into the New Testaments because of its use as “a title in clubs and guilds to designate functions analogous to those of the ecclesiastical administrator” (Vincent’s Word Studies, Commentary on 1 Timothy 3:1). The noun occurs in Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7; 1Pet. 2:25. Albert Barnes says the verb form means “to look upon, behold; to inspect, to look after, see to, take care of” and the noun denotes the office of overseeing, inspecting, or looking to (Notes on the Bible 2009: no page numbers. Commentary on 1 Tim. 3:1)

We conclude that several contexts and words referring to leadership in the New Testament, when taken as a whole, confirm that the function of leaders is to give spiritual direction to the churches and ministries entrusted to them. Leaders are those who stand before others or who preside over others as superintendents, guardians and protectors (προΐστημι). The nature of their ministry dictates that they will steer, direct, govern and manage church affairs (κυβέρνησις). Furthermore, they are set over others and given a measure of official authority to lead and command (ἡγέομαι) as they exercise oversight and take charge of church affairs (ἐπισκοπή).

7.2.2. The Leader as Spiritual Director of Corporate Bodies and of Individuals

For the purposes of this thesis, two areas in which leaders serve as spiritual directors will be considered. The first is when leaders function as directors of corporate bodies such as churches and ministries. The

second area is when leaders help direct individuals to find their place in a ministry or church.

7.2.2.1. The Leader as Spiritual Director of Corporate Bodies

(a) Leaders Hear from God and Receive Direction from Him for their Ministries

Henry and Richard Blackaby note that “God equips each church for particular assignments (1 Cor. 12:12-31)” (2001:62). Along with the rest of God’s people, leaders must discern what God’s particular assignments are for their corporate community. Once this has taken place, it is leaders who must then “marshal their people to pursue *God’s* plan” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:23, *italics added*).

Hearing from God and discerning His will for His people is crucial to true spiritual leadership (Getz 1984:141; Sanders 1989:155). The Blackabys note that it is this fact that sets spiritual leadership apart from secular leaders:

“Spiritual leaders work from *God’s* agenda ... Too often spiritual leaders assume the responsibility of determining what should be done. They develop aggressive goals. They dream grandiose dreams. They cast grand visions. Then they pray and ask God to join them in their agenda and to bless their efforts. This is not what spiritual leaders do” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:23, *italics added*).

The Blackabys mention that, “Jesus did not develop a plan nor did he cast a vision. He sought his father’s will” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:24). Having received God’s guidance, spiritual leaders are then to “move people from where they are at to where God wants them to be” (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:20).

The following are guidelines to help leaders discern God's will:

i. Leaders Must Develop a Close Relationship with God in Order To Discern His Will

A precursor to hearing from God is the development of a close walk with Him. The Blackabys note that, "Jesus developed his relationship with God the Father ... Since he knew the Father, Jesus recognized his voice and understood his will" (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:25). Having understood God the Father's will, Jesus then proceeded to implement all that the Father had communicated to him. "Jesus then trained his disciples to watch for God's activity rather than to set their own agendas" (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:28).

ii. Leaders Must Seek Counsel in order to Discern God's Will

Having spent time hearing from God, leaders must then seek counsel from others before implementing anything (Prov. 15:22; 20:18). Sanders says, "A leader cannot afford to ignore the counsel of cautious men around him. They will save him from unnecessary mistakes" (Sanders 1898:157). The Holy Spirit often uses the advice and confirmation of other believers to guide leaders (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:182). This fact should cause leaders to recruit a variety of godly counsellors and then give these advisors the freedom to express their opinions (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:182). When leaders invite feedback from wise and godly advisors from a wide diversity of disciplines, they gain better perspective on the situations that confront them (Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:183). Receiving counsel from others does not mean leaders need allow others to alter what they believe God has spoken to them. Instead the Lord may use others to confirm what he has said to the leader, thereby strengthening the leader's resolve.

(b) Leaders Must Carefully Consider the Implications and Ramifications of the Vision that God has Entrusted to them

All influential leaders have been men of vision, “men who have seen more and farther than others” (Sanders 1989:71; also Blackaby and Blackaby 2001:57). However, it is not enough for leaders to have vision. They must combine that vision with insight and foresight. Sanders says, “A leader must be able to envision the end result of the policies or methods he advocates. Responsible leadership always looks ahead to see how policies proposed will affect not only present but succeeding generations” (1989:72). Leaders must therefore not impulsively implement anything that they believe God has revealed to them to do. Rather, they must consider the full implications and ramifications of what they desire to proceed in doing. They must also consider the personal cost of fulfilling the vision (Cf. Luke 14:28-32).

(c) Leaders Must Communicate What God Has Revealed

Traditionally when a leader has developed a clear sense of direction or purpose, one of the next steps is for the leader to “cast the vision” (Gibbs and Coffey 2006:226-227). This entails leaders sharing with others that which has been revealed to them. The Blackabys urge caution in this regard:

“In the Christian context, the process of selling a vision is flawed. If a vision must be sold to others, it is not a compelling vision and is probably not from God. Spiritual leaders don’t sell vision; they share what God has revealed to them and trust that the Holy Spirit will confirm that same vision in the hearts of their people” (2001:75).

(d) Leaders Must Plot the Path and Ensure Organization

An integral part to accomplishing a vision or an objective is to know which steps will be necessary to bring about its realisation. The first

task of leaders may be to hear “What” it is that God would have accomplished, i.e. the details of the vision. When sharing the vision with others, the leader may also need to explain the “Why” of the vision so as to allow others to grasp what the leader has processed up till that point in time. After this, leaders will need to articulate a clear practical strategy or course of action to accomplish their goals. This is the “How” of the vision. The “When” of accomplishing the vision will be considered if the vision requires a time frame. All leaders need the ability to make decisions that result in efficient operation and the realization of goals (Ogden 2003:208). Sanders says:

“One who lacks executive ability to any considerable degree, however clearly he may see things spiritual, will be unable to translate his vision into action ... [A]lthough men cannot be organized into the kingdom, that does not justify the absence of careful planning, in dependence on the Spirit’s leading, and skilful execution of what has been planned for their salvation” (1989:93-94).

(e) Leaders Must “Manage” the Organization

During the implementation of any strategies for ministry, leaders will need to provide continual oversight of the process. While this responsibility often falls under the ambit of management, Gene Getz cautions us to not superimpose “a modern-day definition of management on the biblical concept of being a manager of God’s people” (1984:171). When implementing a vision, spiritual leaders should not function as administrators and decision-makers. They must continue to also shepherd the people of God (Getz 1984:171). Getz says further:

“Organizational structures in the Bible are always presented as a means to an end. They were never ends in themselves” (Getz 1984:210).

It is during this period of implementation that leaders will continue to communicate certain core values to others to ensure that a certain culture is created which will in turn cause others to embrace and internalize the vision (Adeyemo 2009:112). The leader's task during implementation is therefore to continually keep the vision in front of people and to inspire them to see it through to completion.

(f) Leaders Must Share Responsibilities With Other Spiritually-
Qualified Men and Women

Although God may initially reveal His purposes to an individual, He accomplishes it through the entire body of Christ. Leaders often make the mistake of assuming more duties than they can manage by failing to delegate some responsibilities to others (Sanders 1989:171). In order to manage ministry well, leaders should therefore be willing to share ministry responsibilities. For this to take place, leaders should be aware of what their responsibilities are for the execution of the corporate vision. They must then delegate other responsibilities to those whom God has spiritually gifted to serve alongside them. Getz maintains that the responsibilities of those who serve as elders must always be to "effectively manage the flock of God, which means shepherding, teaching and praying for people", thereby meeting "the *spiritual needs* of people" (1984:175; italics in the original). These are leadership responsibilities which may be shared with others, but which can never be completely delegated. This thesis further contends that one perpetual function for every leader will be for them to engage in equipping functions, so as to ensure that others are mobilised for ministry.

7.2.2.2. The Leader as Spiritual Director of Individuals

The second area that leaders serve as spiritual directors in is helping individuals find where it is that they should serve within the body of Christ (Ogden 2003:208). Leaders who have learned how to follow God's will for their own lives and ministry are well-suited to help others with

their calling. Frank Damazio says that as spiritual directors, leaders of churches and ministries are required to “discern those who are called to a particular work in the body, and to be able to release them to that work” (Damazio 1988:22). He considers the leaders mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 to be “Equippers of the Body of Christ” and “Placers of People” within ministry (1988:23). Similarly Oswald Sanders says:

“One definition of leadership is the ability to recognize the special abilities and limitations of others, combined with the capacity to fit each one into the job where he will do his best” (1989:167).

Because leaders often have insight into the kinds of people needed for certain tasks, they are able to urge people to engage in the ministry required of them (Ogden 2003:209). Ademeyo considers the word προΐστημι used in Romans 12:8 to be one that describes an administrative leadership gift, one that is part of a shepherd’s task. He notes that one of its functions is “the task of helping people to find their appropriate place in life” (Adeyemo 2009:69).

While helping people understand where it is that they are called to serve, leaders must also help people develop the skills that will help them work alongside others. This necessitates teaching people how to best co-operate with others and also how to process conflict. This is so that instead of conflict posing a threat to collaboration, it becomes a catalyst to understanding how the body of Christ functions as an interdependent organism. Foss says that the role of a leader is not only to equip people to grow, but also to guide them when necessary so that their participation does not undermine the unity within the ministering community (Foss 2000:30).

7.3. The Leader as Spiritual Parent

The third delineation of the “Over” Equipping function of leaders is that of leaders as “spiritual parents”, i.e. spiritual “fathers” and “mothers”.

While the terms “mentor” and spiritual “director” may be well-known in certain contexts, the terms “mother” and “father” have a more universal appeal. For example, urban societies which are literate and have a high degree of exposure to commerce may use the terms “mentor” and “director” across a wide range of applications. They will have a good understanding of the general meaning of the terms, even if they are not familiar with their technical usage. In more rural settings, however, the terms “mentor” and “director” may be foreign to people. The terms “father” and “mother” on the other hand, are used in all societies, whether urban or rural. Though the terms “father” and “mother” refer to one’s biological parents, they are also commonly used to describe people who have had a positive, formative role in an individual’s life or even a group’s life and welfare. For example, nations may look upon their leaders as the “father(s)” or “mother(s)” of the nation (ThisNation.com 2011:no page number). In tribal cultures, it is common to refer to the tribal leaders not only as the “elders” of the tribe, but also as the tribe’s “fathers” and “mothers”. Within Christianity, the writings of post-apostolic Christian leaders helped preserve apostolic doctrine. To this day they are called the apostolic “fathers” in recognition of their influential role (Hagner 1982:426).

The identity of spiritual leaders as spiritual parents corresponds well to the identity of the Church as a family (Broocks 2003:146). Albert Barnes notes that:

“A church resembles a family ... The authority of a minister of the gospel in a church is also less absolute than that of a father. But still there is a striking resemblance ... The government of the church also is designed to be ‘paternal’. It should be felt that he who presides over it has the feelings of a father; that he loves all the members of the great family; that he has no prejudices, no partialities, no selfish aims to gratify.” (2009: no page numbers, Commentary on 1 Tim. 3:5).

Since spiritual leaders are among those who have a positive formative role in the lives of individuals and groups, it is both natural and common for them to be looked upon as parental figures. Many have noted a close correlation between the style and functions of spiritual leaders and those of parents. For example, Means says:

“The ... style of church leaders should be that of a spiritual father’s relationship of understanding, affection, gentleness, compassion, and nurture with his children” (1990:132).

Peter Senge, quoted in Broocks says:

“The more I understand the real skills of leadership, ... the more I become convinced that these are the skills of effective parenting” (2003:156).

Finally, Floyd McClung and Frank Damazio express the Church’s need for spiritual parents as follows:

“We don’t need leadership hierarchies, quality control systems and other man-made mechanisms to make us function properly. We do need spiritual fathers and mothers to care for us” (McClung 2008:60).

“The Church has many scholars and professional ministers, but not nearly as many spiritual fathers ... Some religious colleges and seminaries today seem bent on mass-producing teachers. But who is attempting to produce spiritual fathers?” (Damazio 1988:75)

7.3.1. The Biblical Precedence for Leaders as Spiritual Parents

7.3.1.1. God as a Parent Figure

“The central picture Jesus gave of God was of a father” (Carson 1982:161; also McElroy 2006:40). For example, in teaching his disciples to pray, Jesus taught that God is to be approached as our heavenly “Father” (Matt. 6:6-9; 7:11; Luke 11:2). There are several biblical references to God as a Father (e.g. 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 68:5;89:26; Is. 63:16). While God is seldom referred to as a “mother”, in Matt. 23:37 and the parallel passage in Luke 13:34, Jesus likens himself to a mother hen caring for her chicks (Cf. Ruth 2:12; Ps. 91:4) and God likens his care to that of a mother in Isaiah 66:13 (Cf. Is. 49:15). Other passages make reference to God taking care of his people as a parent would take care of his/her children (Psalm 10:14, 18; 82:3-4; 146:9; Jer. 49:11; Hos. 14:3; Matt. 6:26, 32; 7:11; Luke 11:13; 12:24).

7.3.1.2. Biblical Examples where Leaders are Regarded as Spiritual Fathers and Mother

In addition to references to God being a parent, there are numerous examples where leaders are identified as spiritual fathers or mothers in the Bible. Elisha referred to Elijah as his “father” (2 Kings 2:12), thereby acknowledging Elijah’s fatherly affection and fatherly authority towards him (Wesley 2009:no page numbers, Commentary on 2:12). King Jehoram referred to Elijah as his “father” (2 Kings 6:21), as did King Jehoash (2 Kings 13:14). Abraham is regarded in a special sense as the father of the Jewish people (Barnes 2009:no page numbers, commentary on Romans 4:12) and also as the father of all believers (Rom. 4:11; Cf. Acts 13:26; Romans 9:8; Gal. 3:7). The title “father” indicated that as a spiritual parent, Abraham served as an archetype for his spiritual descendants (Barnes 2009:no page numbers, commentary on Rom. 4:12). Stephen addressed the Sanhedrin, being the religious leaders of the day as the “fathers” of the people (Acts 7:2). The apostles designated

themselves as “fathers” (1 Cor. 4:14), and considered others to be their children (1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Cor. 6:13; Gal. 4:19; 1 Tim. 1:2; Phil. 2:22, Phil. 1:10; 1 John 2:1; 3 John 4).

Although women are seldom designated as spiritual “mothers” as clearly as some men as designated as spiritual “fathers” in the Bible, there are numerous biblical examples of the maternal spiritual influence of women. Leila Bronner notes that although women did not always enjoy social power in the form of “authority” (culturally sanctioned hierarchical control), many women in the Bible did have “unassigned power”, this being defined as “unofficial” influence and persuasion (2010:no page numbers). Sarah is called “the mother of nations” (Gen. 17:16). As Abraham is represented as the father of all his male believing descendants, so Sarah is also represented as the mother of all her believing female descendants (1 Peter 3:6). In the Old Testament women often played significant roles in the lives of their families and the nation of Israel. Some cursory examples are Miriam whose ingenuity ensured Moses’ rescue and entrance to the Egyptian palace (Ex. 2:1-10), Deborah who served as judge (Judges 4:4ff.), and Esther who was instrumental in thwarting the genocide of the Jewish race (Esther). In the New Testament, Priscilla, along with her husband Aquila, disciples Apollos (Acts 18:26). Lois and Eunice’s spiritual influence shaped young Timothy (2 Tim. 1:5). Furthermore, Paul likened the ministry of Christian leaders to “a mother caring for her little children” (1 Thess. 2:7, NIV). Paul himself acknowledged that the mother of Rufus had been like a (spiritual) mother to him (Rom. 16:13). Significantly, we also see that older women were specifically instructed to disciple younger women in the faith, thereby serving as spiritual mothers to them (Titus 2:3-5).

7.3.1.3. Ways in Which Leaders Become Spiritual Parents

The Bible reveals several ways in which leaders become spiritual parents of others.

(a) Being Instrumental in Someone's Conversion

The most common way in which leaders (and others) became spiritual parents was when they led individuals to salvation (Cf. Gal. 4:19). During his missionary journeys, the apostle Paul had led a number of Corinthians to salvation and so claimed that, in Christ, he was their "spiritual father" and that they were his "children" (Gill 2009:no page numbers; also McClung 2008:73). Similarly the apostle John regarded those whom he had led to salvation as being his "children" (Gill 2009:no page number, commentary on 3 John 4; Cf. 1 John 2:1).

(b) Adopting Someone as a Spiritual Son or Daughter

In his last moments on the cross, the Lord Jesus asked that his mother would take the apostle John as her son, and that he would take her to be his mother to care for her (John 19:26-27). Paul in a sense "adopted" Timothy and Titus as his spiritual sons (2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4). While they may've come to salvation under someone else's ministry, he took it upon himself to be a spiritual father to them.

(c) Through Surrogacy

Individuals need not only minister to people's spiritual needs in order to serve as spiritual parents. Rather, the relationship between "parent" and "child" is spiritual because it has a spiritual foundation. It is their common faith which has placed them in relationship with each other. In this way individuals can serve as "surrogate" spiritual parents of others by tending to their needs, just as biological parents would. Frank Damazio say that Deut. 1:31 is a reference to God providing this type of

“foster care” for Israel, and Numbers 11:12 is a reference to Moses providing the same kind of care as a leader (1988:77). Further examples of this type of foster care are the widow of Zarepath who tended to Elijah’s needs (1 Kings 17:9) and the many women who cared for Jesus’ needs while he was on earth (Mark 15:40-41). Although it is not mentioned that these women cared for Jesus’ spiritual needs, they nevertheless did care for him in several other ways, all of which promoted his welfare. The apostle Paul also commended the mother of the disciple Rufus as one who had been “a mother” to him (Romans 16:13).

(d) By Playing a Formative Role in a Person’s or Group’s Life

Individuals who held significant spiritual influence in an individual’s life or even among a group of people were often afforded the social status of being called spiritual “parents” to the person or within that society. They are regarded as parents because of their guidance and example and because of the contribution they had made to the individual or group’s welfare and growth. Deborah designated herself as “a mother in Israel” (Judges 5:7, NIV). We have also seen that Elijah was referred to as “father” by King Jehoram (2 Kings 6:21) and King Jehoshaphat (2 Kings 13:14). Abraham is regarded as the father of all believers (Rom. 4:11; Cf. Acts 13:26; Romans 9:8; Gal. 3:7) and as the father of the Jewish people (John 8:39). Similarly Sarah is called “the mother of nations” (Gen. 17:16) and the mother of all female believers (1 Peter 3:6). The apostles considered themselves to be the spiritual parents of the congregations which they had founded and over which they exercised oversight (1 Cor. 4:15; 2 Cor. 6:13; 1 Thess. 2:11; 1 John 2:1).

Likewise leaders were considered to be spiritual parents because of their formative influence on other *individuals*. For example, we see that Elisha referred to Elijah as his father (2 Kings 2:12). The apostle Paul referred to both Timothy and Titus as his true sons in the faith (2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4). He also referred to Onesimus as his son (Phil. 1:10).

7.3.1.4. Understanding the Injunction to Not Call Any Person A
“Father”

While it is conceded that we may call our biological parents or surrogate parents our “fathers” or “mothers”, some may object to calling any person other than these a “father” or “mother”, since Matthew 23:8-10 seems to expressly forbid this. The objection is answered when the prohibition is properly understood. Albert Barnes helps us understand the exact force of the injunction in Matthew 23, when he says:

“The word ‘father’ also denotes ‘authority, eminence, superiority, a right to command, and a claim to particular respect.’ In this sense it is used here. In this sense it belongs eminently to God, and it is not right to give it to people. Christian brethren are equal” (2009:no page numbers, Commentary on Matthew 23:9).

Similarly John Gill says:

“... our Lord does not mean, by any of these expressions, to set aside all names and titles, of natural and civil distinction among men, but only to reject all such names and titles, as are used to signify an authoritative power over men's consciences” (2009:no page numbers, commentary on Matthew 23:9).

These two brief comments on the passage in Matthew reveal that it was not a “blanket” ban on the use of the title of “father” (or “mother”, or “teacher”) that Jesus had in mind in Matthew 23:8-10. Rather, Jesus was precluding anyone from usurping the honour and authority which alone belonged to God. It appears that the teachers of the law and Pharisees were assuming such titles for themselves (Matt. 23:2). The terms “father” and “mother” are terms of endearment and respect and an acknowledgement of the meaningful contribution that spiritual parents have in the life of their spiritual “children”. As can be seen elsewhere in this section, these nomenclatures are freely used in both the Old and New

Testaments when referring to leaders. It is to be understood that whenever Jesus issued commands such as in Matthew 23:9-10, he “often leaves the exceptions to be supplied” (Gill 2009:no page numbers, Commentary on Matthew 23:9).

7.3.2. The Functions of Leaders as Spiritual Parents

The identity of the Christian leader as a spiritual parent is fundamentally a relational identity. It is the leadership identity that requires the most personal relational commitment of all the Equipping leadership identities. By its very nature parenthood can only exist within a framework of relationships, being those of parents to their children (and grandchildren), and vice versa. The identity of parenthood originates in the contexts of relationships as spiritual parents give birth to spiritual children (1 Cor. 4:15; 9:1; Gal. 4:19), or as they undertake to nurture and care for others. The following areas describe the unique responsibilities that are commensurate with the identity of being a spiritual parent:

7.3.2.1. Spiritual Parents Maintain a Relational Atmosphere in Ministry

The greatest contribution that leaders make as spiritual parents is to bring a relational atmosphere to the ministry in which God has placed them as leaders (McElroy 2006:18). Rice Brooks says that when a sense of family is achieved within organizations, the chances of the organization succeeding increases dramatically (2003:144). By interpreting their own roles in familial terms, leaders help others approach their life together as members of a family. This is as opposed to people in ministry relating to each other as workers in an organisation. In a relational ministry environment, leaders help individuals interact on the basis of their personal relationship to each other instead of having their behaviour governed by organisational policy guidelines. They help maintain unity and resolve conflict by helping individuals develop strong interpersonal relationships with each other instead of relying on

constitutional regulations to ensure that there is peaceful and cordial co-existence. In the apostle Paul's ministry, we see him interpreting some of his leadership functions in familial terms:

- “⁷but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children ... ¹¹For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹²encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory” (1 Thess. 2:7, 11-12, NIV)

In his counsel to Timothy, Paul also admonished Timothy to interpret and address congregational matters in familial terms (1 Tim. 5:2. Cf. Gal. 4:19-20). In this family atmosphere leaders ensure that communication is transparent, sincere and honest. In churches, ministries and other Christian organisations where leaders cultivate a relational approach to ministry, they ensure that the welfare of individuals is not compromised in order to achieve organisational objectives. Instead they help others understand that cultivating loving relationships between individuals is one *chief end* of ministry. Similarly, safeguarding the welfare and spiritual health of every individual does not take place to ensure greater levels of productivity from every person. Instead, the welfare and spiritual health of each person is an integral part of the mission of every ministry.

7.3.2.2. Spiritual Parents Ensure People are Cared for as Individuals

According to Rice Brooks the family is a “God-ordained structure for producing life and happiness”, one in which people are to be “blessed and nurtured” (2003:145). When people are in spiritual families, they are to receive care in the form of protection from spiritual enemies and emotional attacks such as discouragement, loneliness and fear (Broocks 2003:151). Notwithstanding the need for each person to care for each other, spiritual mothers and fathers are those mature believers who are

needed to care for believers and give them counsel (McClung 2008:60,68). Their function is to “to feed and guide” (Lorne Sanney in Finzel 2000:48). Frank Damazio says that it is the function of spiritual fathers to “Consistently attend to the spiritual, emotional, physical or mental needs of the children of God” (1988:79).

Leaders who approach ministry as parents will treat each person as a unique individual who “has his or her own needs, character, strengths, fears, weaknesses, potential and personality” (Tidball 1999:97). Discerning parents also recognise the different levels of maturity of people and will discern how to minister to each person individually (Damazio 1988:78). In addition to his care for whole congregations, the apostle Paul dealt with people individually (1 Thess. 2:11-12). Several of his letters were addressed to individuals (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon). He often addressed each person individually and in a manner that was unique to the individual and his situation. For example, he first encouraged Timothy (2 Tim. 1:2-5) and thereafter he admonished him to deal with the timidity and reservation that were part of Timothy’s character (2 Tim. 2:6-8). As a spiritual father, he also urged Titus deal forthrightly with the churches in Crete (Titus 1:10-16, 2:15, 3:10-11) and to not allow himself to be undermined (Titus 2:15). He intervened to reconcile Onesimus to Philemon, while encouraging them both for the contributions they had made to him in his ministry (Philemon 1:4-7, 8-118).

7.3.2.3. Spiritual Parents Show Affection

“God thinks of leading as nursing, caring, being gentle, serving, teaching and loving children” (Damazio 1988:77). Frank Damazio therefore says that spiritual leaders are also to express love, mercy and compassion (1988:75; also Barnes 2009:no page numbers, Commentary on 1 Tim. 3:5).

Often leaders communicate the “father-love of God” for his Church when they as spiritual mothers and fathers express their spiritual “parent-love”

(Fernando 2002:154). By demonstrating affection, leaders also communicate the value of each individual and validate their self-worth (1 John 3:1). Paul communicated his love for the Thessalonians using maternal terminology in 1 Thess. 2:6-8. Similarly, to call someone a spiritual father or mother was a reciprocal expression of affection on the part of spiritual children (John Wesley 2009:no page numbers, Commentary on 2 Kings 2:12).

7.3.2.4. Spiritual Parents Ensure People Grow Spiritually

Rice Brooks says that a primary ministry of leaders is “to win souls and then father them in Christ” (2003:179; also McElroy 2006:75). Spiritual parents recognise that it is their responsibility to nurture and develop people, and not just to manage ministry. It is they who must provide the spiritual nourishment which individuals need for balanced growth (Damazio 1988:79). They discern the differing needs of individuals at their different stages of development (Damazio 1988:79) and ensure that they stay on the correct path in order to reach maturity (McElroy 2006:41).

The unique contribution of spiritual parents to spiritual growth is that they pay individual attention to people. John McElroy says that “For too long we have tried to mass produce mature Christians” (2006:74). Frank Damazio says that spiritual life cannot be taught from a college textbook in a college classroom:

“Spiritual life can only be learned in a close relationship with God, God’s people, *and the spiritual example of true fathers in the faith*” (Damazio 1988:75, *italics added*).

Spiritual parents recognise that “Many of life’s most profound and memorable lessons are learned, not in a classroom, but through relationships” (McElroy 2006:44). Spiritual parents therefore teach individuals through modelling the intended behaviour (2 Tim. 1:13). This

requires honesty and security on their part (McElroy 2006:80). They understand that different people respond to stimuli differently, and know which approach to take in order to stimulate growth in individuals.

The apostle Paul interpreted his responsibility to help new converts to grow spiritually in terms of a parent nurturing children to growth (Galatians 4:19). He admonished the Corinthian church as a father would reprimand his children (1 Cor. 4:14-16). Similarly, in his letters the apostle John also models his approach to teaching on that of a spiritual father, instructing his spiritual children in matters of faith and Christian life (1 John 2:1; 2:12, 3:7, 3:18, 4:4, 5:21; 3 John 4)

7.3.2.5. Spiritual Parents Help People Build Relationship and Resolve Conflict

Often the breakdown of social structures in society results in dysfunctional family relationships and the inability of individuals to form long-term relationships (Broocks 2003:146). Dysfunctional relational behaviour affects people in ministry too, and spiritual leaders must help individuals build healthy relationships with each other (Richards and Hoeldtke 1980:93). Since the church is meant to be a place for the transformation of society (Broocks 2003:146), we see that many apostolic writings are devoted to helping believers foster relational unity (Rom. 12:16-18; Eph. 4:1-6; James 3:17-18; 1 Peter 3:8-11). Believers were admonished to regard each other as members of a common family and relate to one another accordingly (Matt. 28:10; 1 Tim. 5:1-2; Titus 2:4-6).

Where relationships do become strained and conflict arises, leaders are to assist people to resolve it. Jesus was often found to correct behaviour and attitudes which would threaten unity among the disciples (Matt. 20:20-28; Mark 9:33-35). He did this whilst at the same time fostering a sense of servanthood among them (John 13:5-17, 34-35; 15:12-17). As a spiritual leader, the apostle Paul also often intervened to settle disputes between individuals (1 Cor. 1:10-13; Phil. 4:2; Philemon 1:8-18).

7.3.2.6. Spiritual Parents Discipline – With Love

At times, spiritual parents will be required to discipline others (Brooks 2003:145; Damazio 1988:79. Cf. Heb. 12:5-14). However, they do so in a unique way in that they are able to balance disciplinary measures with love (Damazio 1988:79). When correction is meted out in this way, it not only serves to correct the wrong behaviour, but also legitimises an individual's identity within the family and furthers their self-esteem (Hebrews 12:7-11). If discipline is meted out too harshly, leaders run the risk of injuring the people of God (Damazio 1988:76) or breaking their spirits (Ephesians 6:4; Col. 3:21).

Something that is unique to the method spiritual parents use when applying discipline, is that they may sometimes need to spend many hours with the disciplined individual in order to ensure that they process the correction in a constructive manner (Damazio 1988:80; Fernando 2002:186). There is therefore a commitment to the individual's personal welfare in the disciplinary process, and not just to resolving the issue at hand. Spiritual parents also take great care to ensure that those who are disciplined are reconciled to those whom they have offended and integrated back into the community (2 Cor. 2:4-11).

7.3.2.7. Spiritual Parents Lead the “Spiritual Family” into Mission And Service

Rice Brooks notes that “Family speaks of identity, loyalty, boundaries, and above all, *purpose*” (2003:144, *italics added*). Families are the means through which God builds (Brooks 2003:149). Brooks also says that it is only when people are joined to each other in “divinely ordered” relationships as a spiritual family that the Church can fulfil its calling (2003:152). Once spiritual parents have helped people develop healthy relationships with each other, they can then harness the zeal of individuals and help them serve together in ministry (Finzel 2000:72).