

**REDEFINING THE CHRISTIAN LEADER'S ROLE
BASED ON EPHESIANS 4:11-12:
THE LEADER AS EQUIPPER**

BY

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ABSTRACT

In the light of major transformational and “discontinuous” transitions taking place in society, this thesis proposes the development of an Equipping approach to Christian leadership (Thomas 2003:67; Roxburgh and Romanuk 2006:7; McLaren 2006:25). An Equipping paradigm is one in which Christian leaders see their central function as being to equip other believers for the ministry to which they have been called. The thesis does not propose that existing models of Christian leadership be disposed of. Instead it proposes that the function of Equipping others for ministry serve as the new organizing center for Christian leaders. It suggests that the Equipping of others for ministry be adopted by all Christian leaders as a function central to their ministerial responsibilities.

The paradigm finds its anchor in Ephesians 4:11-12. However, because Ephesians 4:11-12 has been used to justify both an clerical paradigm of Christian leadership and a contrasting egalitarian approach to ministry, the thesis starts by exploring the text and its ramifications for Christian leadership. The thesis then catalogues stereotypical leadership models into six leadership paradigms to show into which paradigm an Equipping paradigm fits. Reasons are postulated as to why stereotypical leadership models need to find their organizing center in an Equipping paradigm.

Once the need for the transition to an Equipping paradigm has been established, the thesis focuses on the development of an Equipping leadership paradigm. The Equipping paradigm is constructed on four Relational Leadership Identities. An introduction to the concept of Relational leadership is offered and then a chapter is dedicated to each of the four Leadership Equipping Identities. In developing the Identities, the theological precedents for each Identity is demonstrated and the ramifications for leadership practice are discussed.

The thesis also develops nine principles which undergird an Equipping approach to leadership. These principles can be used as benchmarks against which to gauge whether leadership models correspond to an Equipping approach to leadership and ministry. The thesis concludes with an exploration of the implications of an Equipping paradigm for Ecclesiology and a theology of Christian leadership. The conclusion also lists two issues which can be explored further in the light of an Equipping approach to leadership.



KEY TERMS

1. Christian Leader
2. Leadership
3. Ecclesiology
4. Ephesians 4:11-12
5. Equipping
6. The Body of Christ
7. The Church
8. Mentoring
9. Minister
10. Ministerial Identity
11. Networking
12. Pastor
13. Postmodernism
14. Priesthood of Believers
15. Relationship

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations for Bible Versions

BBE	- Bible in Basic English
CEV	- Contemporary English Version
GNB	- Good News Bible
GW	- God's Word
KJV	- King James Version
MSG	- The Message
NASB	- New American Standard Bible
NIV	- New International Version
NKJV	- New King James Version
NLT	- New Living Translation
NRSV	- New Revised Standard Version
RSV	- Revised Standard Version
TEV	- Today's English Version
TLB	- The Living Bible
TNIV	- Today's New International Version

General Abbreviations

OT	- Old Testament
NT	- New Testament

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