

## Entrusted to Your Care

1 of 1 | The Role Playing Game

### SLIDE 1 Introduction

Even though the church has only one mission, it has many functions. It also has many people serving in many different capacities. As a whole the church is the largest multinational institution on earth.

Of the biblically defined personnel who serve the church, each serves under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit and they are held accountable by the local assembly they serve.

Today I'm not going to try to cover all the bases of what each of these ministers or leaders does within the church. I'm simply going to focus on the local pastor and his function in the body of believers he is called to. There are two reasons for this: 1) so you can better select the next pastor who will serve here at Calvary after me, and 2) so you can better understand my heart and how I have served these many years.

**SLIDE 2** • When Paul was instructing a young minister through his letters, he told Timothy this in the closing of his first letter to him:

**SLIDE 3** **1st Timothy 6:20,21 (NIV)** *"<sup>20</sup> Timothy, **guard what has been entrusted to your care.** Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, <sup>21</sup> which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith."*

Sometimes we can lose our focus and begin to make sure everyone is saying and doing the right thing, rather than caring for each other and supporting the growth that only the Holy Spirit can initiate and sustain in the first place.

In other words, "If God isn't showing it to you, you will not see it and you cannot do it."

**SLIDE 4** • In the Apostle Peter's closing remarks to the churches and exiles scattered across the land in his day, he tells the leaders this:

**SLIDE 5** **1st Peter 5:1-3 (NIV)** *"<sup>1</sup> To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and*

*a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: <sup>2</sup> Be shepherds of [KJV: feed] God's flock that is **under your care**, watching over them [KJV: taking the oversight]—"*

Then he continues:

**SLIDE 6** *"—not because you must, but because you are **willing**, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but **eager to serve**; <sup>3</sup> not lording it over those entrusted to you, but **being examples** to the flock."*

Three things to note from this: 1) a person who is serving must be doing it from a willing heart; 2) They must not be seeking their own benefit, but the benefit of those they serve; and 3) They must live their lives as examples of how a believer should act in word and deed.

After this Peter enjoins them to be submissive and humble so that they can receive from one another. No one has it all together. We are all growing as one body.

**SLIDE 7** • At the close of Paul's missionary journeys in Asia Minor, he gave a farewell speech to the leaders of the church at Ephesus. He challenged them with this statement:

**SLIDE 8 Acts 20:28 (NIV)** *"Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of **which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers**. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood."*

We must always remember, Calvary is not our church which we created. It serves God. It is his church, which he raised up to fulfill his purpose in this community. All of us who commit ourselves to this church are actually committing ourselves to the purpose and plan of God for our town.

We need to be warned by these admonitions so that we don't begin to think the focus of ministry is on us. Leaders are called to the church, and raised up within the church, to serve the body of believers in equipping and sending. Many times we have heard the term "Servant Leadership."

**SLIDE 9 Servant Leadership**

When we think of servant leadership, many think of holding a position over others. Often this means with some kind of authority given to them to tell others what to do.

If we took Israel's military as an example of leadership, we would find that even the king was out there swinging a sword with the rest. We do not order people around, we set an example for them to follow, first in their own lives, then in the life of the body of Christ.

We must first humble ourselves to established leadership, before we will ever realize a position for ourselves in the church. We must also understand that the position we may hold is a place of responsibility—to God and to those we serve.

**SLIDE 10** • This governing principle of leadership is found in Luke where Peter asked Jesus a question about servanthood, or actually—as we would say—stewardship.

**SLIDE 11** **Luke 12:48 (NIV)** *"From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from **the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.**"*

I have found in ministry that there is an ever-increasing responsibility placed upon the faithful who serve. However, this does not burden them because they understand that their lives are not their own. They were purchased by Christ to do his will. They are his servants—called, elected, equipped. They must produce fruit in the harvest.

### **SLIDE 12** **Establishing a Relationship of Trust**

The root of the word "entrusted" is "trust." Can God trust you with the responsibility of being an overseer in his church and among his people? Are you a living example of sacrificial service to others?

Another aspect of this is, "What are you doing to prepare yourself for his service? How are you using the giftedness that God has given you? What service do you function in within the church?" These are questions that everyone should be asking themselves in the midst of this "What-can-the-church-do-for-me?" generation.

Again, trust is the main factor. Do those around you trust your heart? Do they know your purpose? Can they see your submission to the Lord and your accountability to

the local church and those over you in the Lord?

Reflection is a good thing for those in leadership. In the world we may call it an annual review. Nevertheless, it is not something others impose on you, it is something that arises in your own heart as you serve.

### **SLIDE 13 Self-Assessment**

I've made this a part of my life on an annual basis. I sit down and reflect on the past year. I pray and fast for 21 days to find new direction for the new year. I set new goals and disciplines for myself so I don't rest on the past or drift off course from where I already am.

Anyone in leadership should have the ability to challenge themselves and advance in the midst of resistance.

These qualities in leadership set the tone for what God does in our church and among his people. Always be pressing to the next level.

### **SLIDE 14 Who's Next?**

Where will our church glean its next group of leaders? What example have we set for them in how we lead and what we pursue? Will we be next level believers, or will we constantly have to be reminded of who we are supposed to be in Christ?

Finally this:

**SLIDE 15 1st Thessalonians 5:12, 13 (NIV)** *"<sup>12</sup> Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, **who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you.** <sup>13</sup> Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other."*

### **SLIDE 16 Altar Time**

A pastoral position in the church is not a position of prominence as much as it is one of responsibility. The key word in serving in the church is "entrusted." As a pastor I take this extension of trust very seriously—feeding and leading the flock of which God has made me an overseer. Each of us ought to clearly define our areas of trust and labor to properly equip ourselves for the trust we have been given.