

Meeker Christian Church  
Pastor Jim Pelley  
Laudable Leadership  
03/30/25

Various thoughts about leadership and an application. Spiritual gifts have been our focus for several weeks, which leads very naturally to today when we take that a step further as we discuss leadership for MCC in particular. First and foremost is for you to absolutely understand that you are the church.

The church is the people God has called into this fellowship and gifted. Your gifts work together for the purpose for which we are called. Your combined giftedness makes up the church! The preacher, minister, or whatever term you are pleased to use is not THE CHURCH, but rather a member yoked together with God's assembly. Collectively we are the church! Dr. Jeremiah used the term synergism in a lesson we listened to this week, it describes the way I see Meeker Christian Church. Here is the dictionary definition: *the interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects...* i.e. we are brought together to share our spiritual gifts and thereby accomplish what otherwise cannot be done under God's direct influence and guidance.

I'm sure you have heard the old story, but it sure illustrates the point: An old farmer was asked to pray at a men's breakfast. After all were seated, the older farmer began: "Lord, I hate buttermilk." Then he loudly proclaimed, "Lord, I hate lard." "And Lord, you know I don't care much for raw white flour." "But Lord, when You mix 'em all together and bake 'em up, I do love fresh biscuits. So Lord, when things come up we don't like, when life gets hard, when we just don't understand what You are sayin' to us, we just need to relax and wait 'till you're done mixin', and Lord I know, it will be somethin' even better than biscuits. Amen." In other words, we are at our very best when working together. Help us Dear Lord, because we want to become a batch of something even better than biscuits fresh out of the oven...

When you identify and assume responsibilities of Spiritual Giftedness it makes you a qualified, God gifted, and ordained leader with responsibility for the overall health and welfare of the congregation. Therefore a form of leadership is an automatic result from spiritual giftedness. One gift is not more or less important than the others, but in the gift itself is a leadership quality. In that sense every Christian using their gifts is a leader. A leader in the sense that your life becomes a model for others to follow. The Holy Spirit inspires careful planning and goals through teamwork of persons brought together in spite of our shortcomings and bruises... Leaders love fellow leaders because with their gifts we then become a more complete and fulfilled Christian in joy, peace, and endurance.

Exodus 18:17-24 *17 So Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you do is not good. 18 Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself. 19 Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you: Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God. 20 And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do. 21 Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear*

*God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 22 And let them judge the people at all times. Then it will be that every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge. So it will be easier for you, for they will bear the burden with you. 23 If you do this thing, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all this people will also go to their place in peace.” 24 So Moses heeded the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said.*

In this example God gave Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses and a Midianite priest instructions for Moses. Please be reminded that God speaks through the Holy Bible always, oftentimes as in this scripture through others, and sometimes God speaks through direct inspiration as we learn from Bible examples. However with that, I quickly insert that instructions from other sources than the written word of the Bible have the innate danger of being fabricated or outright violate God - so be sure and verify what you hear or are told. 1 Corinthians 14:33 *For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.*

That is another reason for the variety of gifts - to have checks and balances available to be sure we are listening to God and not telling God what to do!!! In our scripture, Jethro directs Moses in verse 20 to equip the people; *20 And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do.* - we model that example by Sunday School, Bible studies and worship services to learn from the recorded word and the incredible resource of generations of scholars to help us learn about God and His created life for us on this earth. Do not minimize any of those sources for they impart wisdom, knowledge, and help us increase our faith, motivation, dedication and development of giftedness established in Acts 2:38 as we have seen in previous weeks.

In the book, *We Who Wrestle With God* by Jordan B. Peterson, on Page 380 there is a one sentence summary for this: He wrote: “This is a hierarchy of competence and ability rather than one of power and force.” His terminology “hierarchy of competence and ability” is what we have called spiritual gifts. “Power, force, and manipulation” are leadership tools more often prompted from the prince of the power of this earth - you are familiar with him as satan and you have seen his power by all the church splits and other stories and sad church experiences. One example is in Philippians chapter 4 and how Paul dealt with Euodia and Syntyche. Such divisiveness is always prompted by the forces of evil.

This next quote from Dr. Peterson’s book is on Page 390 revealing his academic thrust and vocabulary but helps to clarify the synergy of our combined efforts for MCC. He writes: “The nuances of that structure are clearly more complex than can be acted out completely, let alone fully understood by any given member of the group. This means that the pattern of interactions characterizing the group contains more information than any of the individual members realize, regardless of how completely they have adapted to that pattern behaviorally or mapped it imaginatively or linguistically. This pool of implicit information comes to serve as the storehouse of behavior and imagination enabling further hierarchy of competence and ability revelation.” Thanks for the helpful and challenging insight Dr. Peterson.

A classic example of planning by dynamic leadership is recorded in Nehemiah 6 culminating in: Nehemiah 6:15-16 *15 So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days. 16 And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was done by our God.*

What I learned from this context is that when things are accomplished under God's divine guidance and support, outsiders will recognize that this work was done by our God. As taught in Nehemiah 6:16... Working together with our various gifts is a tool that God uses for evangelism - did you know that?? Isn't that an uplifting insight? Our spiritual gifts work together with the serendipity of evangelism as an additional result of our efforts. That is church growth - a tool God uses and inspires directly in causing a church to grow. That is what is happening here.

Okay --- We have established the cooperative attitude and benefits of using our gifts together. Let's look at refining our personal responsibilities by looking to the best leader of all and learn or be reminded of principles of personal leadership from Him: Remember His declaration in Matthew 5:17 *"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill."* Jesus came to earth to fulfill what God had established in the OT and that which was prophesied. Our gifts are not given for rewriting, or reinterpreting, and revising the Bible truths! We are gifted to fulfill them, just like Jesus did. That is what Sunday School does - I am so impressed with the growing knowledge and understanding of our kids. For instance, their memorization of the Ten Commandments, Fruits of the Spirit and oh so much more. Thank you wonderful and dedicated teachers! We love you for your leadership gifting that results in God's glory.

This next passage is one that is tough for our 21st century, American, freedom defined by secularists, mind and education to get wrapped around - lets give it a go anyway.

Matthew 10:34-36 *34 "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. 35 For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; 36 and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.'"*

At first this may shock our sensibilities about Jesus and the Bible. But then we come to understand that Jesus is simply explaining that HE did not come to earth to tolerate, capitulate or negotiate with evil or any type or form of sin or untruth concerning God's Sacred Righteousness...PERIOD. Jesus came to draw and model a clear line of truth, morality, ethics, and spiritual devotion to the only possible GOD of Creation and mankind... PERIOD. Remember last week -- giddy up? So Jesus is calling us: Mark 1:38 *But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth."* The model of Jesus for us to emulate is wherever we are and wherever we go -- to model our faith, and respond with Bible truths whenever the moment comes, Our 4 o'clock Sunday afternoon study is about learning tools for evangelism. John 6:38 *For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*

This final verse may be the most challenging for each of us. Satan has produced a world that teaches us that our highest purpose and goal of life is self actualization and aggrandizement, which means to make self and self desires #1 and increase with that the power and status in the secular world of self.

But what does Jesus, our model - teach us? Not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Doing God's will and understanding what it is and the application is a life long and enduring and endearing pursuit. But that is why God established and sustains MCC - to inspire everyone involved as John said not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Do you remember the children's Sunday School song: Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so? It is that love made real in our lives and those of our loved ones that we have looked at this morning - and this verse is just dripping with that love - and becomes our invitation for this morning:

Matthew 6:33 *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*