



Decade of Availability Spirit-Directed Leadership

As Paul plants churches, he also plants leaders. Much of the time that he spent at Ephesus was in training leadership. He codified what he taught in his letter to the Ephesians. Here we have his challenge to leaders.

A. The Call to Leadership v. 28

In this one verse we see a local church, the leadership in that church and the Trinity: The Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

1. **The leaders:** *Take heed*—to hold the mind to; pay attention to
 - a. **Yourself:** *1 Tim. 4:16* Take heed unto thyself (character) and unto the doctrine—insures a healthy church. (*See also Jer. 23:1*)
 - b. **All the flock:** Feed/oversee them according to *Psalms 23*
2. **The flock:** The flock (the local church) — a specific assembled group of believers. (*See Revelation chapters 1-2-3; 2:1-7 Ephesus*)
3. **The Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit both places us in the church and appoints leaders in each church. Where is the church that the Holy Spirit has placed you, where leadership is caring for you?
4. **God the Father:** The church is the Church of God-The Trinity
5. **Jesus:** It is the blood of the Lamb that causes us to be in the family of God. We are the Bride of Christ the Messiah.

B. Why We Need Leadership? Vv. 29-31

1. **The wolves:** These were false teachers that would come from outside the church and from within the church. (*See 1 Tim 1:3-7*)
2. **Watch and remember:** To watch is to keep awake and be vigilant. It is to guard the core values and teaching of the Word. The word for ‘remember’ means to ‘rehearse’ in the mind. Leadership today needs to have Paul’s heart with ‘tears’ for the church they lead.

C. The Power Behind Leadership v. 32

1. **God will do it:** Paul knew his limitations and the unlimited power of God. How great that the church is in God’s hands.
2. **Word of His grace:** This means that leadership should model the ‘word of grace’ in leading a congregation. Let grace lead. Let the Word of God and the power of His unmerited favor be our inheritance.
3. **Sanctification:** Regarding leadership and the work of God in sanctification, Paul expressed it this way in *Eph. 4:12* *He gave leadership...“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”*

D. A Warning to Leaders vv. 33-38

1. **Do not covet:** vv. 33-34 Misusing ‘position’ for personal gain is a major problem within leadership in the church. Coveting a large church: *“Numbers are terribly seductive idols.”* Sheryl Kujawa
2. **Giving and receiving:** v. 35 This verse is quoted often—but Paul uses it as a challenge to leadership. Except for this verse the quote is unknown. In this context it serves to strengthen the idea that leaders are to be ‘givers’ and not ‘takers.’
3. **Prayer and submission:** vv. 36-38 Here Paul reveals a Pastor’s heart for his people. He kneels with them and prays with them. Note: He both prayed for them—and prayed with them. Paul understood the power of corporate prayer. Paul ‘submitted’ himself (with everyone else) to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit — in prayer.

The Church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ the Lord!

Acts 20:27-38 (KJV)

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

32 And now, brethren, **I commend you to God**, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

33 I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold, or apparel.

34 Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

36 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.

37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul’s neck, and kissed him,

38 Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.