

SF 2.1 – Maturity of a Disciple

SPIRITUAL FORMATION – TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRY:

1. Spiritual maturity – what constitutes a mature disciple?

- a) **DEFINITION:** What is a disciple? The term is often used interchangeably with “Believer,” but from the context of the Great Commission it is something greater and far more wondrous.
 - i) Working definition of Christian Discipleship: “it is a quest fueled by a hunger to know God more intimately, a desire for Spiritual Holiness, and a thirst for Spiritual Water. It is an individual being progressively transformed into the character and likeness of Jesus. This transformation is a process that involves both mind and heart, and results in a profound love of God, the desire to live a life pleasing to God, and the desire to serve God and His purposes. It is the deliberate submersion of the self in Christ with living evidence of spiritual fruit [Gal 5:19-23].
 - ii) In this context, disciples are Spirit dependent, intentionally growing, consciously reproducing, and fully committed followers of Jesus Christ who live life in community where expectations, responsibilities, and hope are defined and experienced. Discipleship contains components of vertical relational interaction – between the disciple and God, and horizontal relational interaction – between disciples within community.
 - iii) Discipleship is the deliberate and purposeful discipline of the mind and heart in cooperation with the Spirit, where spiritual formation and personal transformation occurs. It is a process where Jesus is being formed in the inner being where life demonstrates His presence and priorities. It is not mere knowledge or wisdom. It is an integrated lifestyle based on a disciplined mind equipped with Biblical Truth, coupled with a tender heart that loves God, longs to be with Him, and willingly does what pleases Him.”
- b) **OBJECTIVE:** What is the proper goal of a discipling ministry?
 - i) The goal of a discipling ministry is in partnering with God to purposefully cultivate people to encourage and foster the growth the Spirit is producing inside the disciple.
 - ii) Ministry is thus preparing and equipping disciples for their own work of ministry. It is leveraging and multiplying disciple growth.
 - iii) In this context the work of preaching and the church gathered in corporate worship is equipping. Everything about the gathered church should be tailored toward this objective – to spiritually grow and mature faith. The works of ministry being performed by disciples is not merely “using people to get jobs done,” but rather “using the jobs to get people done.” It is the strategic use of jobs in a supervised mentoring/coaching process to grow people, and empowering people as ministers of the gospel.
- c) **PROBLEM:** You can’t hit a target if you don’t know what it looks like. Thus the definitions and the objectives need to be precise and visited often to evaluate if they are accomplishing the desired results.
 - i) Merely keeping people busy or completing functions outside of their ministry passion or calling is not discipling ministry.
 - ii) Putting people in charge of ministry they have not been adequately prepared for or equipped for is not empowering.
 - iii) Pastoral leadership should have an understanding and a plan of what someone who spends five years with you in your ministry will be like at the completion... at the end of those five years, how will they be different? What do you expect of them and from them? How will you evaluate their ability and giftedness?
 - iv) Ministry leadership requires an integrated vision of ministry and of the individual.

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- v) Programmatic approaches to ministry are readily available, but most likely won't accomplish specific targets. The more specific the target, the more involved you'll need to be.
- vi) It is important to know your mission field, to know what your people need to hear from you and what they need from you to succeed in their ministry assignments.
- d) **ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS:**
 - i) **God's Glory:** God's positive characteristics that distinguish Him from all else. These are what make God wondrous and worthy of praise and service. Disciples need to know exactly WHO they are serving.
 - ii) **Glorifying God:** Anything that calls attention to God, but especially how creation and humanity reflect and exhibit His glory. Disciples need to know exactly what they are doing in the context of furthering God's Kingdom principles.
 - iii) **Edification:** This is the principal purpose of the gathered church. It is the building up and equipping of the saints.
 - iv) **Evangelism:** This is the principal purpose of the dispersed church. It is the sending out of the saints on mission.
- e) What on earth is the Church supposed to be doing? There are 3 messages we are to bear witness of:
 - i) **Message of the Gospel** – emphasis on the front end – knowing Jesus initiates a new way of living/being.
 - ii) **Message of the Mission of the Church** – discipleship based on the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.
 - iii) **Message of the Kingdom of God** – emphasis on the back end – living in the Messianic community as partakers/partners of Jesus' mission/ministry.
- f) Why is a biblical philosophy of ministry vital?
 - i) The truth alone is an insufficient means to transformation... knowing does not necessarily translate to transformational life and a new way of living, but is a necessary foundation.
 - ii) The truth communicated through meaningful relationships is transformational... being caught up into people's lives that model and attest to the hope they live for, and then remaining connected to then in a coaching or mentoring relationship.

2. Aspects of Spiritual Maturity:

a. Biblical Literacy

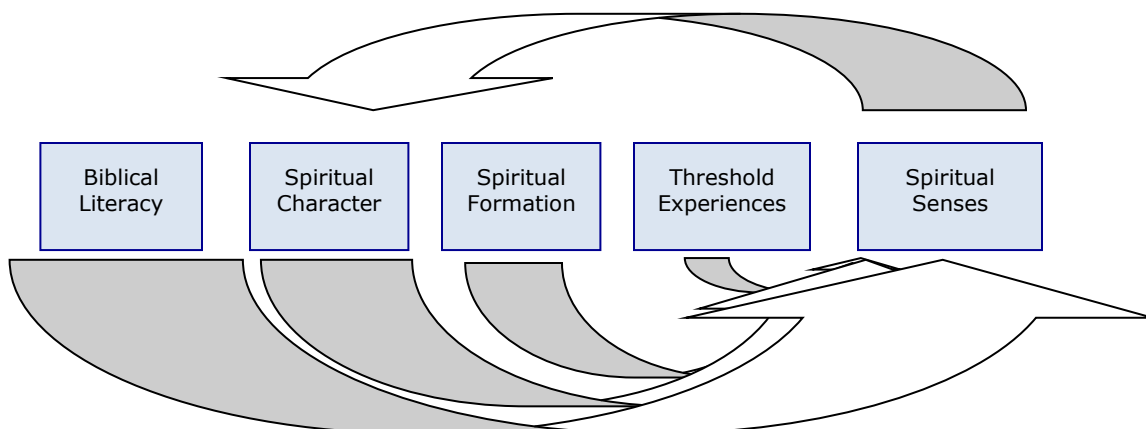
- i. Biblical literacy is "the forming of the mind of Christ" in discipleship.
- ii. Knowing what Scripture says, what it means, and how to apply it are necessary elements of maturity.
- iii. It is knowing God's redemptive plan/story – the gospel, and how it is revealed throughout redemptive history.
- iv. Biblical literacy is more than quoting Scripture. Too many think Scripture memorization alone will suffice for maturity – it will not!
- v. Scripture is provided not as a test, but as a door into relationship. The goal of Biblical Literacy is knowing AND loving God, and enjoying Him forever. The Scripture does its work in the mind and in the heart.

b. Spiritual Formation:

- i. Spiritual Formation is "the forming of the heart of Christ" in discipleship.
- ii. Maturity involves the development of spiritual fruit that is then exhibited in your life.

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- iii. It is having ethical and moral integrity, & self control. However, it is more than behavioral reprogramming and modification... instead it is Spiritual Life giving new life to the disciple.
 - iv. It is the awareness and demonstration of the stuff the Spirit is doing in your life – Gal.
 - v. Humility is a dominant characteristic of spiritually mature individuals.
- c. **Spiritual Disciplines:**
- i. This is having a working knowledge of spiritual disciplines and practices which develop spiritual character into the life of the disciple.
 - ii. It involves knowing how to pray, worship, and study Scripture.
 - iii. It also involves the discipline of wisdom in knowing what to do and when to do it.
 - iv. These experiential practices connect us with the life of the Spirit where trust and dependence on the inner-life with God transforms me and makes me all the more aware of God.
- d. **Threshold Experiences:**
- i. In all Spiritually alive disciples, in the developmental process from becoming spiritually aware to spiritually mature there are a number of Insight events that are transformational. This is where God engages you in the course of your life, and where you are never the same again.
 - ii. When someone trusts God in a crisis situation where they discover first-hand God's faithfulness, they learn to believe in a God who loves them personally and is invested in their life, and they are never the same because of it.
 - iii. This involves both social justice as well as spiritual encounters.
- e. **Spiritual Senses:**
- i. These senses are places in the 'innerman' where the Spirit shapes the choices we make.
 - ii. There are 5 physical senses – sight, smell, hearing, taste, and feeling.
 - iii. There are 5 Spiritual senses – forgiveness, identity, eternity, wonder, presence.
 - iv. Without this inner transformation – you cannot become who God intended you to be. Spiritual character is fed by both quantitative responses [such as moral obedience] and by qualitative transformation [such as love and desire]. The former alone often leads to legalism, the later alone to dependence on spiritual emotional experiences... but the two together lead to Spiritual maturity.
- f. **Spiritual Growth Chart** - Biblical literacy, spiritual formation, and threshold experiences all feed into and shape our spiritual senses... which then feeds back and shapes our spiritual formation.



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3. Understanding the Spiritual Senses – the 5th aspect of spiritual maturity is the natural outworking of God’s Spirit. These are a part of Imago Christi... who we are as living out our life as the image of Jesus. These senses grow and intensify as I mature in my Spiritual Growth. These senses include:

a. A Sense of Forgiveness:

- i. 2 Pet 1:9; 1 Tim 1:15-16; 1 Cor 1:8-10; Eph 2:8-10
- ii. We have a growing awareness of having been forgiven and the sufficiency of Grace.
- iii. It is knowing how broken and fallen I really am... and how desperate and lost I am without God.
- iv. It is living life in a broken and fallen world where discipline and obedience are balanced with grace and mercy.
- v. Sin stains humanity and is offensive and hurts God – the greater the awareness of the magnitude of my own personal sin and accountability before God – this is sin both wrong being and wrong doing – the greater my joy for the forgiveness God has provided me. ^{Lk 7:47} Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little [unaware of the magnitude of their sin, and sure in their self-righteousness] loves little.”

b. A Sense of Identity:

- i. 1 John 3:1; 1 Pet 2:5-11; Phil 1:6
- ii. It is knowing who we really are in Christ, rather than what I think I am.
- iii. It is understanding how God sees me, not how I see myself.
- iv. It is understanding that God sees me as the son/daughter He loves because of the Spirit within... and who I am being progressively transformed into.
- v. We see the person we are now... warts and all. God sees the perfected person we will be and are becoming as we’ll appear in heaven.

c. A Sense of Eternity:

- i. 2 Cor 4:16-18; Rom 8:18-25; 2 Kings 6:17; Col 3:1-4; 1 Pet 3:10-13
- ii. A growing awareness that something bigger is going on... God’s eternal plan is being lived out in time and space, and I know that I am caught up into it and am made a part of it.
- iii. It is seeing the spiritual reality behind the obvious physical event... much as Elisha’s servant saw the Heavenly Host arrayed for battle while surrounded by a vast human army. [2 Kings 6:17]

d. A Sense of Wonder:

- i. Gal 4:15; Phil 4:4; 1 Pet 1:8; Eph 1:18-19; Job 42:1-6
- ii. Recognizing that God is wondrous and amazing... He instills awe and wonder.
- iii. He is beyond all human explanation.
- iv. His self revelation in Scripture is such a small part of all He is... but enough to capture our enchantment. As we grow in maturity He becomes more real and more wonderful.

e. A Sense of Presence:

- i. 1 Chron 12:32; Phil 1:23-24; 1 Pet 4:7-11; Rom 12:2
- ii. This is the spiritual equivalent of Global Positioning Software – it locates my position within the plan of God, and the awareness that God’s presence surrounds me and supports me.
- iii. It is knowing that God is within me and has called me and I have become conscripted to His will and service, and playing out that role faithfully.
- iv. This is part of discernment... it is the awareness of the role I play in this body of believers.

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- v. Eph 4 – being renewed in the innerman.
- f. These spiritual senses help define who we are in the inner-person. This is what shapes all aspects of my worship and ministry.

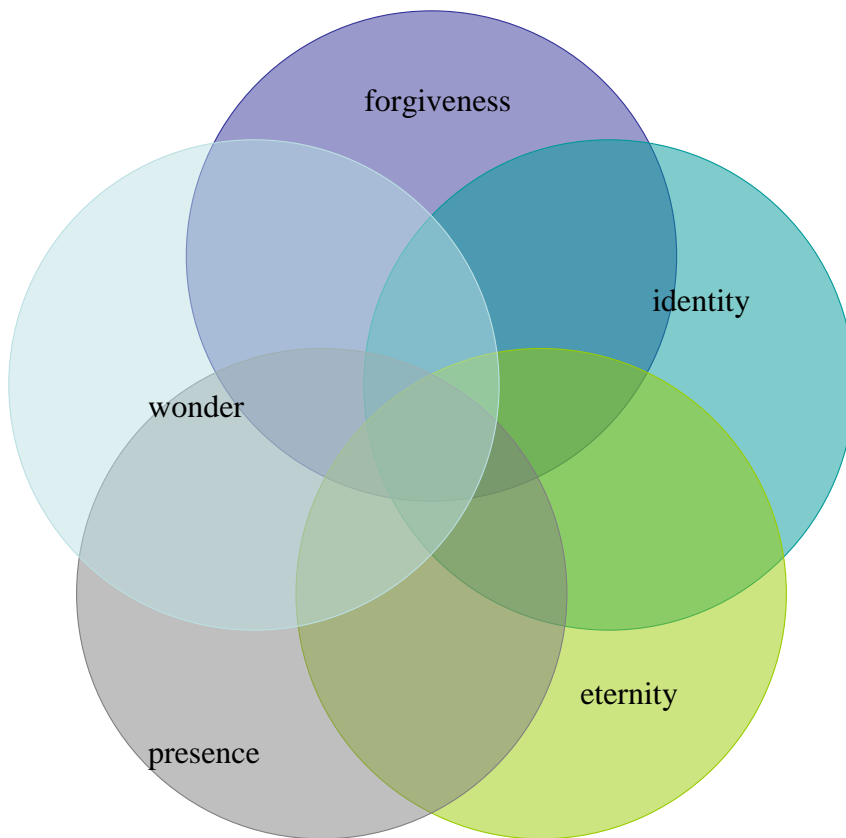
4. What does spiritual maturity look like?

- a. The 5 aspects of spiritual maturity have both objective measurable components and subjective more intangible components.
 - i. In other words, they are a combination of both quantitative and qualitative natures. As such, we should resist the tendency of desiring a definitive analytical tool to measure maturity.
 - ii. Because there will always be some immeasurable intangibles, we need to extend grace and avoid judgment. However, there are some ways to approximate maturity even within the more intangible areas. These are best left for personal evaluation on the disciple before God and perhaps with the loving help of a spiritual coach or mentor.
- b. In developing a diagnostic for self evaluation, it is useful to understand that we are each on a Spiritual Journey accompanied by the Spirit and some God appointed disciples and leaders.
 - i. Typical diagnostic evaluations may include personality tests, spiritual gifts tests, cognitive Scripture tests, etc.
 - ii. It is useful to take these tests with the supervision, evaluation and analysis of someone trained in the administration of such testing approaches.
 - iii. Some self-evaluation approaches will be provided at the end of this segment... please use wisely and take the suggestions guardedly.
- c. The 5 aspects of spiritual maturity and a brief discussion of their evaluation process:

BOX 1 Biblical Literacy More Objective	BOX 2 Spiritual Formation Somewhat Objective	BOX 3 Spiritual Disciplines Fairly Objective	BOX 4 Threshold Experiences Fairly Objective	BOX 5 5 spiritual senses More Subjective
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- i. Biblical Literacy – it is pretty straight forward to test one’s knowledge about Scripture, what is difficult is to ascertain the degree to which Scripture has mastered one’s mind and heart. Scripture is a means to know and become relationally connected to God. Evaluation usually involves what does it say, what does it mean, and how do you apply it.
- ii. Spiritual Formation – spiritual gifts can be tested in a self diagnostic, and the development of spiritual fruit in one’s life is usually apparent to those well acquainted with us.
- iii. Spiritual Disciplines – these are reasonably well known by the practice of them. However, merely being involved in performing the discipline is different than allowing the Spirit to have His way with us in seeking spiritual life transformation.
- iv. Threshold experiences – most of us that have had them know exactly what they are and the impacts they have had on us. Everyone to some extent has had experience in the conviction, confession, repentance, and forgiveness cycle of life in the Spirit.
- v. Spiritual Senses – these are the most subjective and require the most thought development to promote understanding. Note that they are interrelated and overlapping, rather than stand alone objective elements. These work together much like taste, smell, touch/texture combine when we eat food.

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- d. Boxes 1-4 are each more objective elements – they can be more easily qualified, quantified and measured. Box 5 is the most subjective element – though it may be qualified, being spiritual in nature it is pretty much beyond effective measurement.
 - i. Box 5 is the transformational component that drives formation of spiritual character which consequently forms the other objective elements.
 - ii. If spiritual senses do not form spiritual character, you are left with legalism – both moral and ethical... where no transformation occurs. Eph 4:22-24 [23 is key]. Gal 3 & 5.
- e. Boxes 1-5 have to do with developing spiritual maturity:
 - i. The result of spiritual maturity is a peaceful, joyful person.
 - ii. Such a person is attractational... people see the fruit of a spiritually mature life and are both attracted to it and challenged by it as positive Godly characteristics are formed and displayed.
 - iii. If legalism reigns instead of spiritual life – you are working in your own strength.
 - iv. Ministry based on legalistic knowledge has a shelf life of 3-5 years... then you have run the course of dispensing information. Information download is not transformational... because it is not relational or spiritual.
- f. Spirit and Truth are key... we need both - “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” [John 4:23-24]

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- i. Most people try to go with knowledge and skills to form spiritual maturity... these bypass change in the innerman that births spiritual character... this leads to Pharisaical life which Jesus condemned.
- ii. Head and heart need to be fused... with the work of God yielding transformational life... this is anti-Pharisaical.
- iii. Mere knowledge is not enough - JAS 2:19 You believe that God is one. You do well; [but even] the demons also believe, and shudder.
- iv. Personal relationship with God is born through individual brokenness and humility... it is born out of my desperate need of grace.

5. Transformational Life & Ministry Leadership:

- a. Somehow you have to internalize and personalize these concepts and put it into practice. It is usually best to engage in a small group of like-minded disciples who are called to work with you or in tandem to you.
- b. The goal defines the means:
 - i. Moving people into maturity requires defining spiritual maturity... you need to paint a picture of what it looks like in your ministry context.
 - ii. You need to design a pathway to move people to this goal.
 - iii. You need to conceptualize a means of measuring it as well... how you measure it sets up your priorities in accomplishing it.
- c. You need to think in terms of a journey:
 - i. Identify sign posts along the way that you can identify when you've past them.
 - ii. Initially, this may be simple... like Biblical literacy.
 - iii. But as you progress, it gets more difficult and personalized.
- d. Develop tools that allow a team of leaders to assess their progress:
 - i. Are they accomplishing what they intend, or are they achieving something else?
 - ii. Evaluation and recalibration is hard but necessary work.
 - iii. Develop a collective story that you can hold up and share... a story they can identify and find themselves in.
 - iv. Transformation is more difficult, but more fruitful than assimilation. The former leads to lifelong fruit, while the latter often only to short term gains.
- e. Willow Creek Association – Christian Life Profile – is one gage for evaluating transformational growth.
- f. The Missional church
 - i. Biblical truths are both spiritual and theological – you can't separate the two and evaluate them differently.
 - ii. The church does what it is ...the Goals define its mission and its substance.
 - iii. The church organizes what it does ...the Machinery is what most people see and conceptualize as the church, but it is primarily the organization or institution that enables the existence of the local aspect of the body of Christ – the world wide unity of believers united by the Spirit... this is the organism and is where the real value of the church exists.
- g. Leadership is a key component... usually they start with elders to pastors... this may not be the best approach as most elders don't know what Biblical eldership is all about.
 - i. It is always wise to have an outside entity that can be called upon to come in and evaluate what is going on and provide guidance. Such a group is Church Resource Ministries.

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- ii. It is always wise to have all the main lay leaders conscripted to the same goals and objectives the elders and pastors are engaged with. They are not secondary citizens in the church hierarchy... keep them a priority.
- h. Rather than just imposing plans based on some new vision which usually fails... look for evidence of where the Spirit is moving people.
 - i. Where are we going as a group?
 - ii. Identify driving patterns and passion.
 - iii. Try to catch up with what is already going on, rather than reinventing or worse redirecting what the Spirit is doing.
 - iv. Every church has an identity and a culture and spiritual life going on... identify it and encourage it. After it has been identified, then you can prayerfully shape it and redirect it as necessary.
- i. Practice “Re-visioning” – vision and vision casting are such overworked concepts that fail to mean anything. Re-visioning is catching up with what God is already doing in your congregation.
 - i. Step 1: Select 12-15 people who are the most mature and who are not pastors or on the board.
 - 1. It is important that they have the churches best interest at heart and not a pre-determined agenda.
 - 2. Commission them to interview everyone in the congregation using 5 activating questions that are guides to the conversation.
 - 3. Train them before they are sent out that they aren’t to defend the church or any pastor, or program. What we want is to hear what’s on the heart of the people.
 - ii. Step 2: 5 activating questions are intended to allow the church to identify who they are... this is to shape positive moving forward. We want to know what kind of a people are we becoming... to hear the story emerge out of the church. For a church of 500 people expect this process to take several months.
 - 1. Question 1 – how is God working in your life today?
 - 2. Question 2 – How would you describe this church to someone who has never been here before?
 - 3. Question 3 – What would you like this church to be known for 10 years from now?
 - 4. Question 4 – What would you like your own personal life to look like 10 years from now?
 - 5. Question 5 – How would you describe the kind of leaders that would help achieve these goals in Q 3 & 4 above?
 - iii. Step 3: Develop a “Green Book” – a summary report compiles from a data base of the responses.
 - 1. Look for major patterns and the more minor supporting patterns.
 - 2. Several focuses should crystallize from the responses.
 - iv. Step 4: Develop a “Blue Book” – how are we going to flesh out the patterns discovered?
 - 1. You will need to observe objectives from the patterns revealed.
 - 2. You will need to establish goals in keeping with the objectives discovered.
 - 3. How will you encourage transformational ministry in keeping with these patterns, objectives, and goals?

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4. This will help establish a new paradigm for ministry in keeping with the heart beat of the church.
- v. Step 5: Find leaders who can lead and take us to the place we have identified.
 1. What does the ideal leadership look like to carry out the Green Book?
 2. What giftedness will be necessary to accomplish the Blue Book?
 3. What staff can sync up into which portion of the new leadership approach?
 - a. Some can be reallocated and retrained.
 - b. Some will not find an appropriate spot and will need to be allowed to leave... well prepared and provisioned. Change has its impacts but they always require seasoning with grace and kindness. It is embarrassing that non-Christian group dynamics often are more functional and gracious than Christian groups.
 - c. Job searches will now be much more focused and evaluation of their efforts more easily made... as opposed to chasing some new vision down the road that leads nowhere.

6. Thinking theologically about personal ministry

- a. Qualifications for ministry – look at the Scriptures – what is stated, why is it there, what is not stated, why is it not there:
 - i. What IS listed – I Timothy 3:2-13 & Titus 1:6-9:
 1. Positive & negative qualities that demonstrate moral, ethical, & spiritual characteristics.
 2. Qualities are “soft” and personal – they are relational and emotional, not merely intellectual or social stature.
 3. Lists don’t seem to match up – they display different emphasis that is part of the mosaic of maturity..
 - ii. WHY are these listed:
 1. Fruit of the Spirit demonstrates and validates the Presence of the Spirit.
 2. These are qualities that encourage relational intimacy & interaction.
 3. This list along with the Beatitudes demonstrate a counter-cultural approach to leadership... it turns conventional leadership upside down.
 - a. It values leadership over authority.
 - b. It models servant-leadership rather than self-interest.
 - c. Emphasis is on who a person is internally, not with just what a person does externally.
 - d. It has nothing to do with wealth, stature, or accomplishments – it is all about integrity, relational connectedness, and moral management.
 4. These represent different categories of spiritual maturity – and together they form a picture of what spiritual maturity looks like.
 5. This is not a legalistic list to check off... something to grade or fail a person because of. Paul is saying in this text that mature people look like this.
 - iii. What is NOT listed
 1. No mention of calling.
 2. No mention of education, social standing, administrative ability, or wealth... these are the things the world values.

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3. No mechanics are listed for appointing, maintaining, or removing leaders.
- iv. WHY ARE THESE THINGS NOT LISTED:
1. Primary gifting is modeling the spiritual life – not administrative or organizational strengths.
 2. Focus is on character – on box #2... who you are in Christ.
 3. Focus is on who you are in the inner-being – not what you do.
 4. The “work” of ministry will get done... it can be done almost by anybody, but spiritual leaders have different priorities and purpose.
- v. Acts 6:2 – This is how spiritual wisdom and maturity are to play out in a ministry setting... these are the “Magnificent 7” – the best of the best, a catalyst and example/model to the rest.
- “Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, ‘It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word’.” [Acts 6:1-4]
- vi. IMPLICATIONS:
1. Primary gifting for leadership is the ability to model the Christian faith and walk – because the church will always look like its leader as one to emulate.
 2. The more visible and important the role, the more they need to demonstrate and model Christlikeness.
 3. All decisions being made are made by the moral/ethical, personal & spiritual nature of its leaders.
 4. All the decisions being made are dependent on individual Godliness and theology.
 5. In order to identify spiritual leaders, you need to look closely at them... you need to know them, you need to see spiritual maturity modeled. The result should be – “I want to look like that person.” Thus they need to be focal in the congregation.
 6. Authentic leadership is modeling a transformed life – both in failures as well as successes... all aspects of life play out accordingly.
 7. Until you have failed significantly or suffered pain – your ministry will be limited. That is because most of the people you will lead have direct experiences with failure, pain, suffering, difficulty, oppression – an “Ivory Tower” leadership model is of no value to the congregation.
 8. Ann LaMont – articulated well what she wants in a pastor and what we should also want to see – “I don’t want someone to tell me what to do, I want someone who’ll stand up there and say ‘yeah, me too’.”
- b. Calling for ministry:
- i. “Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God” Romans 1:1
 - ii. “*And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’”* Acts 13:2

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- iii. *“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers”* Ephesians 4:11
- iv. *“Peter said, ‘what about this man (John)?’ Jesus replied to him, ‘... what is that to you? You follow Me!’”* John 21:21-22
- v. There are at least three different aspects of vocational ministry:
 - 1. Profession – “an occupation or vocation requiring training in undergraduate and advanced study in a specialized field. Something that necessitates advanced study to enter into.”
 - 2. Career – “a chosen pursuit, a profession or an occupation that determines the general progression of one’s life work. Something that forms the substance of one’s life work.”
 - 3. Calling – “to be summoned to a particular career or pursuit. To be awakened. Something that sets you apart for a particular service or work for which you were made.”
- vi. How do you know God has called you to ministry?
- vii. How do you know God has called you to a specific ministry?
- viii. *“The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”*

Frederick Buechner

- c. Adequacy for ministry:
 - i. Spiritual Training
 - 1. I Timothy 4:12-16, II Timothy 2:2, **2:15**, 3:14-17, Titus 1:9
 - 2. *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.”*
 - ii. Spiritual Gifting
 - 1. Romans 12:3-8, I Corinthians 12:4-11, Ephesians 4:7-13, **I Timothy 4:14**, II Timothy 1:6
 - 2. *“do not neglect the spiritual gift within you”*
 - iii. Spiritual Power
 - 1. Acts 6:4, I Corinthians 2:1-5, **Colossians 1:28-29**, I Peter 4:10-11
 - 2. *“striving according to His power, which mightily works within me”*
- d. POINT: This is a collage of what ministry leadership looks like.
- e. Implications
 - i. Spiritual growth and continuing development are absolutely essential.
 - ii. Your spiritual dimension affects every single decision you make.
 - iii. The spiritual condition of your spiritual followers is just like their leaders.
 - iv. Personal ability and academic excellence cannot substitute for spiritual maturity.
 - v. Spiritual maturity is much more important than ministry mechanics... anybody can be taught to do stuff.

7. Thinking theologically about ministry teams –

- a. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS
 - i. Jesus sent out ministry teams of 2 (Mark 6:7)
 - ii. Spiritual leadership always referred to in plural terms
 - iii. Most ministry examples in NT demonstrate plurality

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- b. Why teams of 2 or more?
 - i. We were never intended to be alone... a ministry partner provides insight, encouragement, help to see blind spots, help to make me understand how I am coming across... does my word, walk, and approach demonstrate Christlikeness?
 - ii. We are never complete on our own... giftedness is augmented by complimentary giftedness... the difference in each of us multiplies our relational bridge to others.
 - iii. Relational aspect of a partner helps us do more and go farther... as when running or training with another, you help spur each other on.
 - iv. Cultural relevance in Judaism required the witness of 2 or more...
 - 1. Need a witness of 2 or more to be legally binding.
 - 2. Jesus argued that the Father and the Spirit were His witnesses, as well as the miracles He performed.
- c. BIBLICAL QUALIFICATIONS OF LEADERSHIP:
 - i. Stress spiritual character vs. practical skill
 - ii. Stress spiritual maturity vs. personality/charisma
 - iii. Stress shepherding vs. business development
 - iv. **Why should these things be important? They are the proof of the message you bring, and validates the witness of your words spoken into others lives.**
- d. BIBLICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF LEADERSHIP
 - i. Gifted/Calling
 - 1. Play to strengths rather than to weaknesses.
 - 2. Design ministry around people God has provided, not the jobs you want done.
 - ii. Positive Diversity
 - 1. Bring people who are threatening to you in closer to you.
 - 2. Also bring in people who are gifted differently, and who have different personalities... you don't want to have only people who think like you, and act like you, or speak like you.
 - 3. Your leadership team needs to reflect the community you are leading.
 - iii. Cautious Specialization
 - 1. Don't look for people who just have different skill sets.
 - 2. Look for people who have a shepherd's heart.
 - 3. Outstanding ability alone is not necessarily the most helpful.
 - iv. **Why should these things be important? The complexity of ministry requires a diverse leadership team that reflects the diversity of the people you lead.**
 - v. IMPLICATIONS:
 - 1. Ministry requires relationship from its leaders. Ministry leaders are primarily shepherds, coaches, mentors, and equippers.
 - 2. Ministry is a spiritual activity requiring spiritual ability. Those whose primary accomplishments are in the natural order of the world are not worthy of ministry leadership.
 - 3. Ministry often feels uncomfortable... and it should. If it begins to feel too comfortable, beware.