

# From Vision to Reality

**Part One: Discernment / Assessment / Application and Guide for  
Church Planting**



145 Lincoln Road, Waterloo, ON N2J 2N8  
[www.vision-ministries.org](http://www.vision-ministries.org)

# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	3
Welcome! .....	3
Church Plants (and Church Planters) Come in All Shapes and Sizes .....	4
Common Models in Church-Planting/Multiplication/Extension .....	4
Leadership and Church Planting .....	4
Funding the Planter .....	5
The VMC Planting Process Overview .....	6
Accountability and Coaching .....	6
Accountability .....	7
Coaching .....	8
Prayer .....	8
The Agreement .....	9
Primary Documents .....	9
Let's talk about this new church plant you are thinking of .....	10
Appendix A .....	16
Acceptance of VMC's Statement of Faith, Ministry Values and The Mission of the Church .....	16
Appendix B .....	17
The Agreement .....	17
Statement of Faith .....	18
Ministry Values .....	20
The Mission of the Church .....	21
Appendix C .....	22
Quarterly Report .....	22
Appendix D .....	24
Gathering a Core Group for Church Planting .....	24
Appendix E .....	26
<i>Some Additional Thinking about Church Leadership</i> .....	26
Appendix F .....	28
<i>Shared Pastoral Leadership</i> by Alexander Strauch .....	28
Appendix G .....	35
<i>Three Types of Servant-Leaders Every Church Needs</i> .....	36

# Introduction

## Welcome!

New churches are exciting. Every activity is a first! The first meeting for prayer, the first public service, the first sermon, the first conversion, the first baptism, the first wedding, the first facility—and the list of firsts goes on!

They are exciting too because every initiative is an act of faith in God with potential for both exhilarating successes and humbling disappointments. There is nothing like attempting a new venture of faith, which only the activity of God can bring to fulfilment. It is that kind of faith that pleases him (*Hebrews 11:1-6*).

Evangelism and evangelistic church-planting are acts of faith in the unchangeable God of the Bible. Evangelistic activity followed by church-planting flourished in the New Testament era as a result of:

- The empowering and outward-oriented push of the Holy Spirit.
- The obedience of prepared leaders.
- The scattering of persecuted believers who didn't want to leave Jerusalem, but ended up proclaiming the good news everywhere they went.
- The spontaneously formed new fellowships in new and sometimes hostile surroundings.
- The pioneering activity of key leaders such as apostles, prophets, evangelists and others.
- God sometimes working supernaturally through early Christians, giving added impetus to their work.
- The public defence of a persecuted and despised movement.
- The division of equally committed leaders who concluded that working separately was more appealing than working together!

It is clear that there were key Divine and human ingredients. On the one hand, the sovereign workings of the Holy Spirit are unmistakable. On the other hand, there were leaders prepared by God and people full of Christ and the Holy Spirit bursting to declare the good news!

The infant church was sometimes reluctant to step forward in faith to spread the Gospel. It took persecution to move them out! Let us prepare to move forward in faith and obedience rather than wait to be forced by the hand of God.

## Church Plants (and Church Planters) Come in All Shapes and Sizes

Since effective church-planting is not primarily a human activity, variety should be anticipated as the norm, for our God is a God who delights in surprises!

### Common Models in Church-Planting/Multiplication/Extension

Just as we'd expect of a Creator of such infinite variety, the models in church-planting that he uses also vary. While the seven models below are probably the most common, VMC has come alongside many variations of these and others:

1. **The "Mother-Daughter"**  
An established congregation empowers and releases some of its members to form a new church.
2. **The "Core Group"**  
A catalyst gathers a core group from a variety of sources to form an outreach team and the nucleus of a new church.
3. **The "Pioneer"**  
An individual proclaims the Gospel by various means, gathers the responsive and believing, and forms them into a new church.
4. **"Planting by Division"**  
An existing church divides for some reason. The group that leaves forms the nucleus of a new church.
5. **Church Extension/Multi-Congregation/Multi-Site**  
More and more churches are recognizing the strength of small and big, by adding or bringing separate congregations with slightly different vision under the umbrella of one church. This can take the form of a new service, congregation or sub-congregation either on or off site.
6. **Missional communities and house churches, etc**  
House churches, missional communities, multi-site versions of both of those, and many other small, less formal kinds of organic local churches are being formed all over and all the time.

### Leadership and Church Planting

**Leader and Team:** As with church plants themselves, church leaders may also take a variety of approaches. While team leadership is clearly the New Testament model, usually, the Leadership Team/Church Plant also has a leader/church planter who is gifted in such a way that he or she functions as a "First Among Equals". This person will be the visionary or catalyst who "gets things going". This concept is further developed by Alexander Strauch (see *APPENDIX F*). Vision Ministries has additional materials about the makeup and necessary roles on the church planting team.

## Funding the Planter

Church plants may adopt different approaches, including:

- **Self-Supporting or Bi-Vocational Leaders**

The apostle Paul did not hesitate to adopt this approach. Many very effective leaders and church-planters are, and should be, self-supporting.

- **Partially or Fully Supported Leaders**

Paul and other New Testament leaders devoted all of their time to ministry whenever finances permitted. Those benefiting from their ministry and those participating with them in their work supported them financially. Some are called to such “full-time ministry”. Part 2 of VMC’s *Vision to Reality* addresses additional concerns regarding their calling, activity, and more.

# The VMC Planting Process Overview

We're constantly on the lookout for people who want to have a conversation. Initial connection with Vision Ministries can lead to these conversations, which usually culminate in an assessment process.

Even informal/organic new initiatives will have some kind of assessment, and all *funded* church plants have a more comprehensive and robust assessment process. Our primary assessment approach includes completing the documents we call *Vision to Reality*, parts 1 and 2.

At the end of this process, a decision is made by the plant and VMC whether to continue to partner. If we're on the same page, we sign the *The Agreement* (see Appendix B), which includes indicating the degree of agreement with the VMC Statement of Faith, Ministry Values, and The Mission of the Church documents. Differences must be indicated and discussed with VMC to determine whether the church and ministry will be able to work together.

From there, we develop a plan for training and coaching, and funding (as determined on a case-by-case basis).

VMC also has a *Full Service (IN TRUST) Church Planting Package* available, which can be used during the "incubation" of the plant, formally under the auspices of VMC (i.e., before it has been incorporated and received Canada Revenue Agency charitable status). It includes all of the following "systems":

1. Charitable receipting by VMC (in a sense, on behalf of the church plant)
2. On-line bookkeeping system
3. Basic insurance coverage
4. A "VMC in trust for" bank account in the name of the plant
5. Payroll system
6. Optional benefits packages
7. A system for providing licenses to marry for planters in all provinces

Note that this *Full Service Planting Package* is partly funded by an administrative fee of 5% of funds for which receipts are given.

## Accountability and Coaching

While new church plants are by nature diverse, they all have a vulnerability that can benefit greatly from helpful coaching and accountability.

## Accountability

The degree to which a new church plant needs or would benefit from supervision and accountability varies with its diversity. Likewise, the party responsible for providing the supervisory role also varies: daughter churches may arrange for their mother church to provide accountability, or a partnering network like Vision Ministries, or a denomination, etc. When VMC is the primary partner or provides funds for a plant, principal accountability is then to Vision Ministries.

Vision Ministries uses the following questions and terms to assess the primary *spheres of accountability* when coaching and providing accountability to new church plants:

### **1. Are new people becoming disciples of Jesus?**

- a. Outreach is always priority number one. Is this happening?
- b. Is everyone on the church planting team involved in kingdom expansion activities?
- c. How much outreach is the church planter doing?

The church planter must manage his/her time well. There must be time to pray, prepare sermons, be with family, etc. It is always a temptation to give our time to that which comes most naturally to us. Don't neglect the evangelistic purpose of your church. It is uphill work.

*"As a rule of thumb, a full-time church planter should spend half of his first year's ministry time in activities that directly engage non-believers of the community."*

*- Bob Logan*

### **2. Are outreach, the spiritual nurturing of members, and worship properly balanced in terms of the time and attention devoted to each?**

- a. What is happening in each sphere?
- b. How can we demonstrate that we are balancing our priorities well?

### **3. Are relational challenges being addressed well?**

- a. What relational tensions exist? Among the leaders? Among others?
- b. What is being done about them?

### **4. Are all the leaders of the church doing what they should be doing?**

- a. Are they giving the time to ministry they said they would?
- b. Are they following through with the ministry commitments they made?
- c. Are they doing their ministries competently? What's the evidence?
- d. Is there a forum where these concerns can be discussed?

**5. Is the vision of the church on course?**

- a. Compare its present activity with the original written vision for the church.
- b. Are we shifting course? Should we be?

**6. Administrative Accountability:** The plant must provide a quarterly attendance and finance report to VMC. See APPENDIX C.

- a. Numbers attending per week
  - i. Adults
  - ii. Youth (high school)
  - iii. Children
  - iv. First time visitors from the community (in the same above categories)
- b. Finances: Budgeted vs. Actual Income and Expenses.
- c. Annual meeting: A representative from VMC and the planting or leadership team of the church plant will together review all spheres of ministry on an annual basis.

**7. Additional terms of accountability may be worked out between the church plant and VMC.**

## Coaching

Coaching is another important aspect of the support that VMC provides to leaders/church planters.

1. For 1-3 years, VMC will provide a strategic coach to work with the primary leader. They will usually meet monthly to:
  - a. Review what has gone well and what has been challenging
  - b. Provide support, encourage and answer questions
  - c. Work through a number of books and articles for training purposes
  - d. Consider the Spheres of Accountability (above)
2. VMC also usually provides a whole life/spiritual life coach for 1 year (sometimes longer) who will focus on:
  - a. Spiritual Direction
  - b. The personal life of the planter
3. Additional training and coaching is described in VMC CMd Training and Coaching

## Prayer

Vision Ministries includes all new church plants in a prayer support "system".

## The Agreement

VMC-related church plants are required to enter into a Partnership Agreement once their application to become a VMC church plant has been approved. (See *APPENDIX B* for a copy of the complete agreement.)

Before this agreement is completed, church plant teams should walk through *APPENDIX A* as part of the application process for *Vision to Reality, Part 1*.

## Primary Documents

For more detailed information on the Vision Ministries planting process, please see the series of *VMC CHURCH MULTIPLICATION documents* (available separately). These documents provide more details of how we find new initiatives and our approach to assessing, training and coaching, funding, and supporting them. All of these documents are available at [www.vision-ministries.org](http://www.vision-ministries.org).

- *VMC Church Multiplication document (CMd) Finding New Initiatives*
- *VMC CMd Assessment*
- *VMC CMd Training and Coaching*
- *VMC CMd Funding*
- *Full Service IN-TRUST Church Plant Package*



5. What type of services or gatherings do you envision on a weekly, monthly or annual basis? *(For each, describe its purpose, participants, content, leadership, atmosphere, frequency and at what stage each would begin. Attach additional sheets if necessary. Include special interest events for children, youth, etc., as applicable.)*
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.
6. Insert or attach a Statement of Faith, and/or itemize your primary theological positions, and/or complete *Appendix A* of this document.
7. List the names of those praying for you and for this proposed new church. Make sure to include gifted intercessors.

*What have you asked them to pray for?*

8. Are you talking with, or considering talking with other denominations, networks, etc; who would also partner with you in this church planting initiative? If so, which groups and key leaders?
9. What will your stance be on matters that are sometimes debated or become controversial?
  - a. Membership
  - b. Baptism

- c. Participation in the Lord's Supper
- d. Charismatic gifts
- e. Divorce and Remarriage
- f. Use of Alcohol
- g. Egalitarian/Complementarian (Role of Women)
- h. View of end-times prophecy
- i. Style of Music
- j. Style of Preaching
- k. Formal vs. Informal (e.g., thoroughly planned or more spontaneous)
- l. Approach to Outreach/Evangelism
- m. Attitude toward social issues (e.g., poverty, political involvement, concerns for justice)
- n. View on borrowing money for building facilities
- o. Leadership style (e.g., one leader, team leadership, congregational leadership)
- p. Affiliation with other churches, camps, ministries, agencies, etc.
- q. Style of Dress
- r. Other

*Before completing questions 10 through 12, please, review related material in Appendix E: Some Additional Thinking about Church Leadership*

10. Ideals about church governance/management – how will the church be organized?

- Pastor led
- Elder group led
- Congregationally governed
- Combinations or variation of the above:
- Other:

11. Visionary or inspirational leadership for church plant will be provided by:

- Church Planter
- Church Planter + 2-3 key people
- Church planter + core group
- Other

12. At what size of church or at what point in time will a formal leadership team or elders be appointed? How do you anticipate that such a change will alter the way decisions are made?

13. Will one or more people be partially or fully supported financially?

(circle)      YES      NO

Explain:

14. What is the strategy for outreach? Who are you trying to reach? How? Who has experience at doing so? How much time, energy and money will be devoted to it?

15. What is your strategy for discipleship? Who will teach? In what settings will they teach and disciple? Who will do the counselling? How heavily will they be involved in counselling? How will leadership training be provided?

16. How will the Lord's Supper be practised?

17. Describe the ministry to children and youth.

18. What would be the ideal size at which to begin public services? What would be the ideal largest size? What happens after that largest size is reached?

19. Where will the congregation meet? For how long? How long would you anticipate using rented space? Are there buildings available to renovate? Is there land available for purchase? How would you pay for it?
  
20. Will this church incorporate? Will it apply to be registered as a charity? Or will it establish a charitable trust?
  
21. Finances. Complete the worksheet on the following page, or attach a proposed first year's budget.
  
22. Who will be in charge of administering the finances?
  
23. What kind of experience have they had in managing finances?
  
24. What will the church be called? How was/will this be decided?
  
25. Provide (attach) a timeline for the first year. When do you anticipate having your first public meeting? List other anticipated significant beginnings.
  
26. Review *Appendix D "Gathering a Core Group for Church Planting"*; complete *Appendix G "Three Types of Servant-Leaders Every Church Needs"*; then list here the names of all potential participants in this new venture of faith.  
Indicate the key partners, their gifts, their experience, their anticipated roles, and their current levels of commitment to this proposed new church.

## NEW CHURCH BUDGET WORKSHEET

*Estimate the revenue and expenses for the new church plant over the next twelve months to the best of your ability.*

<b>Revenue Categories</b>	<b>Monthly Estimate</b>
Church Planting Team/Congregational Offerings	
Support from Individuals/Organizations outside of the church	
Planter Fundraising of Personal Support	
Church Planting Loan	
Grants from "mother" church	
VMC/Network & Denominational partners	
<b>Other Revenue</b>	
<i>Total Estimate Revenue</i>	

<b>Expense Categories</b>	<b>Monthly Estimate</b>
Staff Support (Compensation for Planter, etc.)	
Advertising, Printing & Promotion	
Outreach & Ministry Expenses	
Office & Administration	
Legal & Professional Fees (Incorporation, etc.)	
Demographic studies	
Facilities (Rentals, utilities, etc.)	
Equipment (Office, P.A., computer, phone)	
Missions	
Other -	
Other -	
Other -	
<i>Total Estimated Expense</i>	

# Appendix A

## Acceptance of VMC's Statement of Faith, Ministry Values and The Mission of the Church

We accept the VMC *Statement of Faith* (see Appendix B): Fully [ ] Partially [ ]

Summary of Adjustments (to be discussed with and initialed by Church Planting Team and Vision Ministries representative):

We accept the VMC *Ministry Values* and VMC's understanding of *The Mission of the Church* (see Appendix B): Fully [ ] Partially [ ]

Summary of Adjustments (to be discussed with and initialed by Church Planting Team and Vision Ministries representative):

Our church will commit to sending 3% of its income to VMC (per the terms of The Agreement).

Date:

Name of Church:

Signatures/Names of Planting Team members:

Name of VMC facilitator:

Signature:

### **VISION MINISTRIES CANADA**

145 LINCOLN ROAD, WATERLOO, ONTARIO N2J 2N8

Tel: (519) 725-1212 FAX: (519) 725-9421

Call toll-free: 1-877-509-5060

E-mail: [info@vision-ministries.org](mailto:info@vision-ministries.org) Web Site [www.vision-ministries.org](http://www.vision-ministries.org)

# Appendix B

## The Agreement

1. In order to Move the Mission Forward, VMC and partnering churches agree to work together to accomplish the Vision, Mission and Strategy as outlined in the attached pages.
2. Partnering churches affirm their agreement with VMC's beliefs and values. (*Indicate portions of these statements with which you disagree*).
3. This Agreement is established between the leadership of VMC and the leaders of partnering churches. Church leaders will engage their congregations with this agreement as they choose.
4. Partnering churches agree to provide the resources identified in the attached pages to help ensure the vision will be achieved.
5. Pastors and leaders of partnering churches and church plants are expected to participate in regional MMF gatherings and in national consultations or conferences along with the Board and staff of VMC.
6. VMC agrees to provide financial reports for MMF projects.
7. VMC will provide (*upon request*) a copy of its annual financial statements to partnering churches/plants.
8. It is understood that partnering churches and church plants are not controlled by VMC, nor is VMC controlled by partnering churches. This relationship is voluntary and continues as long as the terms of the agreement are met.
9. It is further understood that partnering churches associated with VMC by this agreement are not legally responsible for the actions of VMC, nor is VMC legally responsible for the actions of partnering churches.

---

**To be completed by two Board members or representatives who have the authority to commit this church/ministry to the terms of this agreement.**

*"Our church board/leaders affirm this agreement with Vision Ministries Canada."*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Church's name & complete mailing address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel # : \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel #: \_\_\_\_\_

---

VMC Executive Director

## Statement of Faith

### God

There is one eternal God who is creator, sustainer, and redeemer, who exists in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is at work in the world to redeem creation and to establish an eternal kingdom.

### The Bible

The Bible is uniquely inspired by God as a revelation of his purpose and will; consequently, it is inerrant in all it teaches, entirely trustworthy, and of authority in all matters of faith and practice.

### Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the Redeemer for all of humanity. He is fully God and fully human. He was born of a virgin and as a man lived a life of perfect obedience to God. His substitutionary sacrifice, his bodily resurrection, and his ascension atoned for our sins and accomplished our salvation.

### Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit indwells the church corporately and every believer individually, equipping them with gifts for service, and is present to guide them individually and corporately, to comfort, transform, and empower.

### Sin and Salvation

Each member of the human race is created in the image of God to live in love and holiness. But every person is also tainted and damaged by sin and is accountable to God's righteous judgment. Salvation is God's gracious gift; those who repent and believe are "in Christ". Their salvation is founded on the merits of Christ and is reflected in lives that are holy and pleasing to him.

### The Church

The Church universal is composed of all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The local church is composed of believers in a locality who gather regularly in Christ's name for worship, prayer, fellowship, instruction, and to reach out to their communities, bringing the values of heaven to earth and making disciples of all nations.

### Baptism and Communion

There are two ordinances which our Lord requires: the baptism of believers in Christ signifying new life and devotion to him as Saviour and Lord; and communion as a primary ongoing expression of remembrance and thanksgiving for the atoning death and resurrection life of Jesus Christ.

## The Return of Christ

The promise of the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ is a source of joy and hope to his people. The Kingdom of God, which has already begun, will reach its fulfillment when Jesus returns in power and great glory to reign forever and ever. His return will consummate his kingdom of peace and fulfill the promises made to Israel and the church. Everyone will be accountable to him on that day when he brings about righteous judgement on all who have ever lived. This truth is an ongoing incentive to holy living and faithful service for every believer.

## Ministry Values

We will honour the reality that all who are in Christ are one, by accepting and loving all who are his.

We will honour the corresponding truths that local churches are:

- Independent and responsible for their own leadership and activities.
- Interdependent in that they need the benefits of giftedness, encouragement, guidance, and fellowship of others.

We will honour the truth that all believers are uniquely gifted by the Spirit of God. Those who are gifted and called to lead are responsible to do so in a manner that enables every member of the Body of Christ to become all God has designed them to be as ambassadors in his service.

We will honour the New Testament pattern and precept of deliberate diversity of gifting in team leadership of the church. These team leaders must be individuals of character, devotion, and maturity, with a willingness to lead, reach, correct, shepherd, and teach faithfully. They are affirmed by their congregations for agreed-upon terms of service.

We will honour the freedom of the Holy Spirit to raise up people from among us to serve our churches and ministry agencies either part-time or full-time, and we will support them as needed.

We will honour the specific request of Jesus Christ to "remember him" by frequent observation of the Lord's Supper (often on a weekly basis).

We will honour the diversity of the creative hand of God by showing respect and acceptance to all his people, regardless of race, gender, culture, or social class.

We will honour the truth that the poor, disadvantaged, and oppressed are special (blessed) people in the eyes of God. We will seek to take the initiative in reaching out to them with compassion, respect, and truth, working together with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

We will honour the mandate given to us at the creation to care for God's good earth by teaching and practicing environmental (ecological) stewardship.

We will honour the holiness and righteousness of God by rejecting all the Bible declares to be sinful, in order that we may live lives that are beyond reproach, pleasing our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

## The Mission of the Church

The mission of the church is to make disciples of non-followers of Jesus from every nation and to “teach them all things...” Churches must advance this single-purpose through:

- Evangelism with vigour and integrity.
- Discipleship that brings Biblical change to every sphere of life: spiritual, social, intellectual, physical, economic, and emotional.
- Worship that brings glory to God and is engaging and compelling both to his people and to those who do not yet know him.
- Prayer that reflects confidence in the power of God.
- Social involvement that brings the wisdom of God to every human situation.

# Appendix C

## Quarterly Report

QUARTER (please circle):            1st    2nd    3rd    4th

Please print name of CHURCH / CONGREGATION: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Completed:                      Person completing this Report:

<b>1. ATTENDANCE</b>			Adults	Youth	Children	# of 1 <sup>st</sup> -time Visitors	Total # of People
Month:	Week	1					
		2					
		3					
		4					
		5					
Month:	Week	1					
		2					
		3					
		4					
		5					
Month:	Week	1					
		2					
		3					
		4					
		5					

<b>2. FINANCES</b>			Offerings	Budgeted Amount	Actual Expenses
Month:	Week	1			
		2			
		3			
		4			
		5			
Month:	Week	1			
		2			
		3			
		4			
		5			
Month:	Week	1			
		2			
		3			
		4			
		5			
<i>Totals</i>					

# Appendix D

## Gathering a Core Group for Church Planting

1. Pray for God to bring together the core he knows you need.
2. List every 'like-minded' person you know who might be interested.
3. Invite them to an information meeting at which you will explain your vision for a new church.
4. At the meeting:
  - a. Explain why you want to see this new church started.
  - b. State clearly the non-negotiables from your perspective:
    - i. Doctrine
    - ii. Decision-making structure
    - iii. Location and facilities
    - iv. Style of worship, outreach, and discipling
    - v. Your role (bi-vocational, part-time, full-time)
    - vi. Affiliation
    - vii. General culture of your church
    - viii. Size of group envisioned – at the beginning and hopefully in 5 years
    - ix. Finances
  - c. Indicate areas you would like to see the core group address together.
  - d. Outline proposed steps on a timeline toward reality.
  - e. What are the key roles that need to be filled?
  - f. What will the benefits be for those who join?
  - g. What kind of commitment is being requested? When? (e.g., Meet weekly for 2-6 months to pray, study, and know God's will). Don't ask people to "declare themselves" publicly.
5. Follow-up individually
  - a. What do you think? Were there questions about your presentation?
  - b. Will you be part of this?
  - c. Who else do you know who might be interested?
6. In meetings of the core group:
  - a. Keep explaining why.
  - b. Write out your plans as they develop in the group and review them often.
  - c. Keep doing what you said you would do.
  - d. Model the vision you are talking about
  - e. Remember, you will not be able to please everyone.
  - f. Be sure to take new people through the material the core group has produced.
    - The Three Rs: Repeat it Repeatedly and Redundantly
7. In selecting or appointing leaders for the planting team:

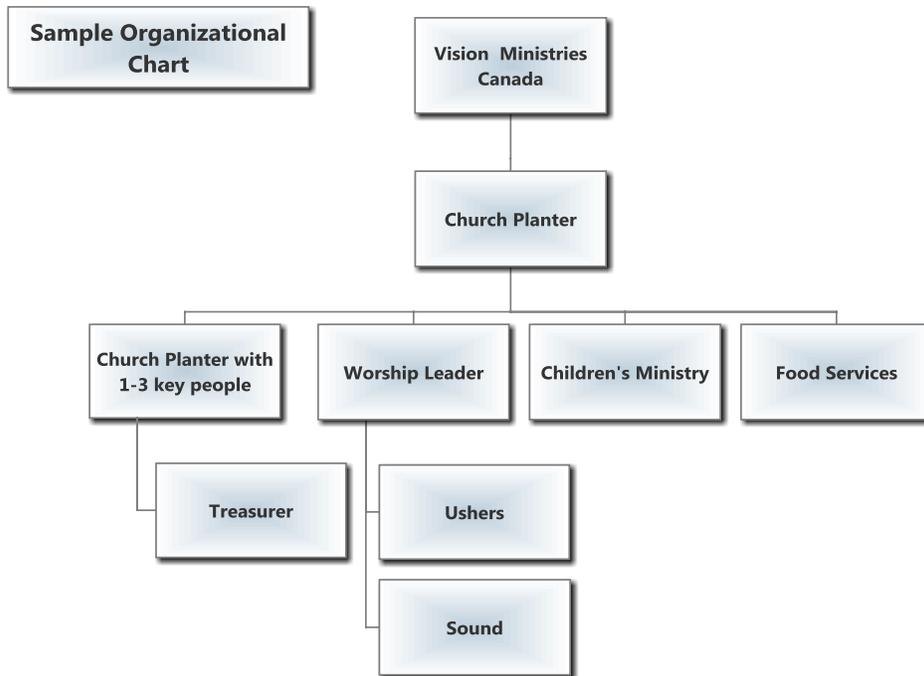
- a. Select according to vision and maturity
  - b. Do not appoint politically or to please
  - c. Do not focus only on skills
  - d. Do not appoint them because they are friends.
  - e. Do not appoint them because they have 'unfulfilled potential'.
  - f. Make short-term appointments: six months to one year
  - g. Don't establish elders or permanent leadership roles too soon.
8. In addition, select leaders using these approaches as guidelines:
- a. VMC Leadership Type Assessment Profile (*Appendix F*)
  - b. A group that has all of the Ephesians 4 "APEST" gifting (ie a group which has apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, shepherding and teaching voices)

# Appendix E

## *Some Additional Thinking about Church Leadership*

1. Appointment and terms for leaders: this will have to be considered when the church eventually appoints long-term leaders and as it grows. Normally, the leadership structure and decision-making process will change based on the size of the church. Vision Ministries will coach a local church through these changes.
2. Planter
  - a. The planter is approved by VMC through the **Vision to Reality** process
  - b. The planter reports to VMC through VMC staff, coaches and administrative staff
3. Key People who share responsibility with the planter
  - a. Names and Roles/Areas of Responsibility
  - b. Frequency of meetings with the planter
  - c. Recommended by the planter, approved by the core group or congregation
  - d. Reporting relationships – report to the planter
  - e. Length of service (Initial one year term)
4. Ministry leaders
  - a. Names and Roles/Areas of responsibility/Job descriptions
  - b. Appointed by the planter and 2-3 key people
  - c. Report to the planter
  - d. Length of service (Initial one year term)
5. The members of the congregation should be involved in decision-making as follows:
  - a. Those who are believers and attend regularly should participate in congregational meetings.
  - b. The agenda for such congregational meetings should include:
    - i. Information the leaders wish to communicate to the congregation
    - ii. Issues the leaders wish to discuss with the congregation that do not require a conclusion or decision on the day of the meeting. Such dialogue is for the purpose of increasing our mutual understanding of issues.
    - iii. Matters that need to be discussed, understood (without haste) and approved by a show of hands. An obvious majority can carry any item. When there is not an obvious majority the leaders should take the item “back to the drawing board” for further reflection and brought back to the congregation for approval or affirmation.
  - c. Items that usually require congregational support:
    - i. Annual budget
    - ii. Approval of primary leaders
    - iii. Borrowing of funds
    - iv. Purchase of property or facilities
    - v. Relocation of worship service
    - vi. Major changes in philosophy of ministry or governance
    - vii. Other

6. Sample organizational chart showing how governance may work in your church



7. Leadership and governance must adapt and change as a church grows. Leadership becomes more representative and leadership roles become more permanent.
- We encourage church plants to continue to adapt with growth
  - This requires annual re-evaluation. Set a date now for that re-evaluation time
  - How will leadership and governance change when this church doubles in size? How might it be different?

# Appendix F

## *Shared Pastoral Leadership by Alexander Strauch*

*“Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.” Hebrews 13:17*

### **Shared Pastoral Leadership**

Shared leadership should not be a new concept to a Bible-reading Christian. Shared leadership is rooted both in the Old Testament institution of the elders of Israel and in Jesus' founding of the apostolate. It is a highly significant and often overlooked fact that our Lord did not appoint one man to lead His Church. He personally appointed and trained twelve men! Jesus Christ gave the Church a plurality of leadership. The Twelve made up the first leadership body of the Christian Church and, in the most exemplary way, jointly led and taught the first Christian community. The Twelve provide a marvellous example of unity, humble brotherly love, and shared leadership structure.

The New Testament reveals that the pastoral oversight of many of the first churches was committed to a plurality of elders. This was true of the earliest Jewish Christian churches in Jerusalem, Judea, and neighboring countries, as well as many of the first Gentile churches.

After methodically examining every passage in the New Testament that addresses local church leadership, Bruce Stabbert, author of the book, *The Team Concept: Paul's Church Leadership Patterns or Ours*, summarizes by stating:

It is concluded after examining all the passages which mention local church leadership on the pastoral level, that the New Testament presents a united teaching on this subject and that it is on the side of plurality. This is based on the evidence of the seven clear passages which teach the existence of plural elders in single local assemblies. These passages should be allowed to carry hermeneutical weight over the eight other plural passages which teach neither singularity or plurality. This is a case where the clear passages must be permitted to set the interpretation for the obscure. Thus, of the eighteen passages which speak of church leadership, fifteen of them are plural. Of these fifteen, seven of them most definitely speak of a single congregation. Only three passages talk about church leadership in singular terms, and in each passage the singular may be seen as fully compatible with plurality. In all these passages, there is not one passage which describes a church being governed by one pastor.

### **Describing Shared Leadership**

#### A Council of Equals

By definition, the elder structure of government is collective leadership, in which each elder shares equally the position, authority, and responsibility of the office. There are different names for this form of leadership structure. More formally is called collective, corporate, or collegiate leadership. In contemporary terms it is referred to as multiple church leadership, plurality, shared leadership, or team leadership.

New Testament eldership is not, as many think, a status, board position that is open to any and all who desire membership. On the contrary, New Testament elders must be qualified men able to meet specific moral and spiritual qualifications before they serve (I Tim.3:1-7). They must be publicly examined by the church as to their qualifications (I Tim. 3:10). They must be publicly installed into office (I Tim. 5:22; Acts 14:23). They must be motivated and empowered by the Holy Spirit for their work (Acts 20:28). Finally, they must be acknowledged, loved, and honored by the whole congregation (I Thess. 5:12,13), which includes the giving of financial remuneration to elders who are uniquely gifted at leading and/or teaching, thus allowing them to serve the church full or part time (I Tim. 5:17,18). Thus a team of qualified, dedicated, Spirit-placed elders is not a passive, ineffective committee; it is an effective form of leadership structure that is of great benefit to the church family.

### Benefits of Shared Leadership

#### *Balancing people's weaknesses.*

Collective leadership can provide a church leader with critically needed recognition and balance for his faults and deficiencies. We all have our blind spots, eccentricities, and deficiencies. We all have what C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) called "a fatal flaw."

In team leadership structure, however, different members complement one another and balance one another's weaknesses. If one elder has a tendency to act too harshly with people, the others can temper that harshness. If some members fear confrontation with people, then others can press for action. Elders who are more doctrinally oriented can sharpen those who are more outreach or service-oriented, and the outreach or service-minded elders can ignite the intellectually oriented members to more evangelism and service.

Erroll Hulse, editor of the magazine *Reformation Today*, expresses the matter this way: "Within an eldership extreme ideas are tempered, harsh judgments moderated and doctrinal imbalances corrected. If one elder shows prejudice toward, or personal dislike for any person, in or outside the church, the others can correct that and insist on fair play and justice. If one elder is in a fierce mood over some offender, that offender has others to whom he can appeal."

#### *Lighten the work load.*

Shared pastoral leadership also helps lighten a very heavy work load. If the long hours, weighty responsibilities, and problems of shepherding a congregation of people are not enough to overwhelm a person, then dealing with people's sins and listening to seemingly endless complaints and bitter conflicts can completely crush a person. Even the mighty Moses wilted to near death under the pressures of leading the people of Israel (Num. 11). Certainly every shepherd who has sought to do his duty according to Scripture has felt, at one time or another, like Moses.

In a multiple-elder system of leadership, heavy burdens of pastoral life are shared by a number of qualified, functioning, shepherd-elders, and as Bruce Stabbert masterfully states, "a team ministry provides pastors for each pastor, men from whom one can expect full encouragement and help."

Finally, plurality of leadership also allows each shepherd elder to function primarily according to personal giftedness rather than being forced to do everything and then being criticized for not being multi-gifted.

### *Accountability*

Biblical eldership provides a formal structure for genuine accountability. The English historian Lord Acton (1834-1902) said, "power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Only if there is genuine accountability between equals in leadership is there any hope for breaking down the horrible abuse of pastoral authority that plagues many churches.

"Multiple leaders will serve as a 'check and balance' on each other and serve as a safeguard against the very human tendency to play God over other people." says Earl D. Radmacher, chancellor of a Baptist seminary in America.

It was never our Lord's will for the local church to be controlled by one individual. The concept of the pastor as a lonely, trained professional -- the sacred person over the church who can never really become a part of the congregation -- is utterly unscriptural. Not only is this concept unscriptural, it is psychologically and spiritually unhealthy.

Shared leadership also provides the local church shepherd accountability for his work. Church leaders (like all of us) can be lazy, forgetful, fearful, or too busy to fulfil their responsibilities. Thus they need fellow colleagues in ministry to whom they are answerable for their work.

### Hazards

All this is not to suggest that shared leadership is problem free. Certainly not! Team leadership in a church family can be painfully slow and terribly aggravating. D.E. Hoste (1861-1946), the successor to Hudson Taylor of the China Inland Mission and an extraordinarily skilled people manager, reminds us that "colleagueship calls for an orientation and method different from the direct rule over juniors and subordinates." The orientation of brotherly shared leadership requires a great deal of patience, persevering prayer, wisdom, self-control, humility, trust, love, and genuine respect for the gifts and perspectives of others in the body of Christ. Because colleagueship is slower and more difficult than unitary leadership, most pastors prefer to work alone or with a staff under them.

Team leadership can also be an organizational sand trap of inaction if good principles of management, communication, and clear delineation of responsibilities are not implemented. In the final analysis, however, the long-term benefits to the local church and the personal satisfaction of working for the Lord with a team of godly shepherds far outweigh the difficulties and weaknesses of shared leadership.

### First Among a Council Of Equals; Leaders Among Leaders

An extremely important but terribly misunderstood aspect of biblical eldership is the principle of "first among equals." Failure to understand "first among equals" (1 Timothy 5:17) has caused some elderships to be tragically ineffective in their pastoral care and leadership. Although elders act jointly as a council and share equal authority and responsibility for the leadership of the church, all are not equal in their giftedness, biblical knowledge, leadership ability, experience, or dedication. Therefore, those among the elders who are specially gifted leaders and/or teachers will naturally stand out among the other elders as leaders and teachers within the leadership body. This is what

the Romans call *primus inter pares* – “first among equals,” or *primi inter pares* – “first ones among equals.”

The principle of “first among equals” is observed first in our Lord’s dealing with the twelve apostles. Jesus chose twelve apostles, all of whom He had empowered to preach and heal, but singled out three for special attention -- Peter, James, and John (“first ones among equals”). Among the three, as well as among the Twelve, Peter stood out as the most prominent (“first among equals”). Consider the following facts:

Among the twelve apostles, Peter, James and John, and sometimes Andrew, were “first ones among equals.” On key occasions Jesus chose only Peter, James, and John to accompany Him to witness His power, glory, and agony (Luke 8:51; 9:28; Mark 14:33).

Among the three, as well as the Twelve, Peter is unquestionably first among his equals. In all four lists of the apostles’ names, Peter’s name is first (Matt. 10:2-4 Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13). Matthew actually refers to Peter as “the first” (Matt.10:2). By calling Peter “the first,” Matthew means “first among his equals.” We must not, in reaction to Roman Catholicism’s mistaken elevation of Peter, underestimate Peter’s outstanding leadership among the Twelve. The Gospel writers don’t.

In all four Gospels, Peter is indisputably the prominent figure among the Twelve. Outside of Jesus, Peter is mentioned most often as speaking and acting. If you doubt this, look up the name Peter in a Bible concordance, then look up the names of the other apostles. You will immediately see Peter’s prominence among the Twelve in the four Gospels and especially in Acts.

Jesus charged Peter to “...strengthen your brothers” (Luke 22:32). Jesus acknowledges that Peter is first among his brothers as the natural leader and motivator. He knows that they will need Peter’s leadership in order to help them through dark days that would immediately follow their Lord’s departure.

The Book of Acts richly demonstrates Peter’s leadership. Among the Twelve who jointly shared the leadership of the first church (Acts 2:14,42; 4:33,35; 5:12,18,25,29,42; 6:2-6; 8:14; 9:27; 15:2-29), Peter is the chief spokesman and natural leader throughout the first twelve chapters of Acts (Acts 1:15; 2:14; 3:1 ff; 4:8 ff; 5:3 ff; 5:15,29; 8:14-24; 9:32-11:18; 12:3 ff; 15:7-11; Gal. 2:7-14). Some scholars even divide the book of Acts according to its two central figures: the acts of Peter (Acts 1-12) and the acts of Paul (Acts 13-28). Many sound evangelical Bible commentators interpret Christ’s statement in Matthew 16:18 to mean that Peter is the rock and that upon him (but not exclusively according to other passages, Eph. 2:20) Christ would build His Church. They view the book of Acts as the record of that promise fulfilled (especially Acts 10:1-11:18).

In Paul’s letter to the Galatians, Paul speaks of James, Peter, and John as the acknowledged “pillars” of the church in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:9; see also Gal. 2:7,8).

As the natural leader, the chief speaker, the man of action, Peter challenged, energized, strengthened, and ignited the group. Without Peter, the group would have been less effective.

When surrounded by the other eleven apostles as equals, Peter was stronger, more balanced, and protected from his impetuosity and fears. In spite of his outstanding leadership and speaking ability, *Peter possessed no legal or official rank or title above the other eleven. They were not his subordinates. They were not his staff or team of assistants. He wasn't the apostles' "senior pastor."* Peter was first among his equals, and that by our Lord's own approval.

The concept of "first among equals" is further evidenced in the relationship of Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey. Paul and Barnabas were both apostles (Acts 13:1-3; 14:4; 15:36-39; I Cor. 9:1-6), yet Paul is first among the two because he was "the chief speaker" and dynamic leader (Acts 13:13; 14:12). Although Paul is plainly the more gifted of the two apostles, he held no formal ranking over Barnabas; together they labored as partners in the work of the gospel. The same relationship seems to have existed between Paul and Silas, who was also an apostle (I Thess. 2:6), during the second missionary journey.

The principle of "first among equals" is also witnessed among the first Christian elders. Since the eldership itself is a group, just as the congregation is, it requires leadership (or chairmanship) from its individual members, or it will flounder in disorganization, undiscipline, and aimlessness. The size of the eldership, of course, affects how the eldership will organize itself for most effective service. An eldership comprised of twenty-five men or more will, by necessity, need more structure and leadership than an eldership of two men.

To the church in Ephesus, Paul writes concerning the elders: "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing,' and 'The laborer is worthy of his wages'" (I Tim. 5:17,18). All elders rule and all must be able to teach the Word, but not all desire to work fully at preaching and teaching. Those who are thus gifted and spend the time should be properly acknowledged by the local church by receiving double honor.

This doesn't mean, however, that elders who are first among their equals do all the thinking and decision-making for the group or that they are the pastors and the rest are merely elders. The advantage of the principle of "first among equals" is that it allows for functional, gift-based diversity within the church eldership without creating an official, superior office over fellow brethren. So just as leading apostles, like Peter and John, bore no special title or formal distinctions from the other apostles, so too, elders who receive double honor form no official class or receive no special titles. The differences among the elders are functional, not formal.

### *Benefits*

The principle of "first among equals" allows within the plurality of elders a highly gifted leader(s) and/or teacher(s) *to use his God-given gift to its full potential.* In many cases, but not all, this will mean providing financial support so that the gifted brother can give more time to the service of the local church. When a man has to support himself through daily employment, all busy elders know that there is little time left for serious study, outreach, or administrative business. I'm not suggesting for a moment that self-supporting, or what are sometimes called "tent-making elders," are not

effective as teachers or leaders. They most assuredly are, but they are limited in time and energy. The church I am a member of was started by several tent-making elders and built up to more than two hundred people before any elder became a full-time, church-supported elder. Full and/or part-time elders significantly enhance the effectiveness and work output of the eldership. In turn, the entire flock prospers.

According to the I Timothy 5:17 passage, double honor is due “especially” to “those who work hard at preaching and teaching.” The reason for this is that God has ordained the local church to grow, be strengthened, and be protected from false doctrine through the preaching and teaching of the Word. So we must not neglect to care for those who labor in the Word. They, as Scripture says, are truly “worthy of double honor.”

Furthermore, “first among equals” provides desperately needed protection from the all-too-common pitfalls of egoism, greed, personality imbalance, and unholy ambition to which highly gifted leaders and teachers may succumb. An exceptionally gifted leader or teacher can lead and teach with all his zeal and might, as the Scripture commands a leader and teacher to do (Rom. 12:7,8) and yet be held accountable to fellow leaders and teachers. The Christian leader or teacher who refuses brotherly accountability is self-deceived and is heading for self-destruction. The Christian leader who really knows his Bible and has an honest view of his own sinfulness and weaknesses understands his undeniable need for the checks and balances provided by fellow colleagues. Only dictators fear accountability from godly colleagues.

#### *Solutions to Common Pitfalls of “First Among Equals”*

There are dangers in every form of government or leadership structure administered by sinful humans, and the principle of “first among equals” is not exempt. There is, first of all, the very real danger that the elders will relinquish their God-given responsibilities for the care of the church to one or two exceptionally gifted men. This danger will always exist because people are selfish and lazy by nature, particularly in spiritual matters, and are more than eager to pay others to do the work. But once that happens, the elders are reduced to advisor status and the first among equals concept becomes first without equals. Biblical eldership vanishes.

The other danger is that the principle of “first among equals” will be abused by a dominating, controlling leader to monopolize the church’s key ministries, to have his own way, and to force out all dissent and disagreement. Controlling leaders don’t want colleagues, they want “yes men,” “rubber stamps,” followers, and loyal subjects. Such dangers can be avoided, however. Here are several suggestions:

The local church and its leaders must be serious about the biblical requirement for elders. A “self-willed” man, “lording it over” others, does not qualify to be a church leader according to the New Testament and should thus be removed from office (Titus 1:7; I Peter 5:3). Also, non-functioning elders, that is, mere “figureheads,” are not qualified to serve as elders and should be removed from office (I Peter 5:2). If the local church is not solidly committed to having biblically qualified elders, it will find itself powerless to act against tyrants or idle shepherds.

Elders need to actually work closely together as a united team, building trust and growing together. The elders' meetings, therefore, are an extremely important time for ministering to one another as well as for doing business. One of the secrets to a successful eldership is regular, effective meetings that include a major portion of the time together laboring in prayer (Acts 6:4). Board elders don't labor in prayer together, but spiritual shepherds cannot do otherwise. To change an old cliché, "the elders who pray together stay together." However, times of relaxed fellowship are also necessary for building friendship, teamwork, and trust. Summerton comments: "It is important that elders (and, I would recommend, their wives) should give time, despite the press of other things, to prayer, fellowship and relaxation together, without the impediment of any agenda. The purpose is to build the bonds of love which should be evident to the congregation and which will survive the inevitable strains which responsibility imposes in an imperfect world."

Elders need to be building up one another's lives. Older, more experienced elders need to mentor younger elders. Elders need to recommend times of sabbatical rest for weary colleagues. Elders need to set up educational programs for themselves. Elders need to take continuous, practical steps toward building an effective, spiritually minded eldership that involves all the elders who share the responsibility of shepherding God's flock.

*Adapted from Biblical Eldership. Used by permission.*

# Appendix G

## Three Types of Servant-Leaders Every Church Needs

### 1. Review the Three Kinds of Leaders on the following page

- a. Read rows from left to right
- b. Ministry mostly happens in the right column. This is what we are called to do
- c. Middle column people add two very important functions
  - i They take time to understand the vision in detail and also make sure that is communicable and doable before it reviewed with pastoral leaders.
  - ii They know how to deploy and organize people so that more and more can be involved, know what to do, knowing who they do it with, knowing where their resources are coming from etc.
  - iii They know how to under-gird the ministry's finances and legal structures
  - iv They are not to be blockers or "no people", they are to facilitate the ministry that takes place in the right column
- d. Left column people are important at strategic points along the way
  - i They inspire the group to see the unseen and they make it believable
  - ii They help the church keep the main thing the main thing
  - iii They help the congregation adapt to changes in their environment
  - iv They help the congregation make major shifts or decisions
  - v They don't get caught up with too much detail and are able to communicate the need for change and make it sound doable and compelling

### 2. These different leadership types do not easily trust each other

- a. We should identify the people in our leadership group according to type
- b. We should empower each other in our area of strength
- c. We should follow in our areas of comparative weakness

### 3. Which type are we, mostly?

- a. Who are the other people on our team, mostly? Who am I, mostly? **For Vision to Reality purposes, complete the chart below for the planters and all others on the core church planting team.** Have each individual say which column each person on the team is in....primarily. Then ask the following questions:
  - i What are the implications for our team? How should we function as a team in view of who we are and what we are like?
  - ii What should we do if we are missing one or more of the types? Usually churches have pastoral leaders but may not have Directional Leaders or Organizational Leaders.
  - iii Talk to VMC staff or coaches about this.

## Three Kinds of Servant-Leaders Every Church Needs

*To be identified and appointed to service for the glory of God*

<b>“Directional” Leaders</b> <b>Thinking:</b> <b>Where are we going as a church?</b>  <b>David &amp; Paul</b>	<b>“Organizational” Leaders</b> <b>Thinking:</b> <b>How will we organize &amp; deploy people &amp; resources for ministry?</b> <b>Solomon &amp; “the seven”</b> I Kings 10:5; II Chronicles 9:4	<b>“Pastoral” Leaders</b> <b>Thinking:</b> <b>How will we Reach, Teach, Correct and Care for people?</b> <b>Ministry is about People</b> <b>Barnabas &amp; Timothy</b>
Leading the whole	Organizing the whole	Reaching, Teaching, Caring & Correcting among the whole
Assessing and adapting to environmental changes	Adjusting ministries to the demands of complexity	Gathers grass-roots and constructive feed back
Setting direction/vision that others will follow	Detailed planning of programs & budgeting	Putting the ministry plan into action with people
Initiate the vision	Initiate a plan	Initiate the work
Aligning key people & groups	Organizing and staffing	Helping people adapt to change
Motivates people to move towards common goals	Maintaining order creating functional systems	Helping people participate according to gifts etc.
Insist that the main things continue to be the main things	Make the main things do-able	Join the big ideals to where real people live and serve
Approaches multiplication from a broad and somewhat detached big picture perspective	Approaches multiplication from a comprehensive planning perspective	Approaches multiplication from a close up people perspective
Doing right things	Doing things right	Doing right things in a Godly manner
<b>Who fits here – primarily?</b>	<b>Who fits here – primarily?</b>	<b>Who fits here – primarily?</b>
<b>Expected Spiritual Gifts</b> Combined with others	<b>Expected Spiritual Gifts</b> Combined with others	<b>Expected Spiritual Gifts</b> Combined with others
Leadership Faith Knowledge Wisdom Apostle	Leadership Faith Knowledge Wisdom Administration Helping/Serving	Leadership, Faith Knowledge, Wisdom Evangelist, Teacher Shepherd/Pastor Prophecy, Mercy Encouragement/Exhortation Helping/Serving



