

Church Leadership

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 July 2026

Preacher: Sam Clinton

[0:00] My topic that I was assigned today to teach on was church leadership.! Specifically, what we believe about church leadership here at Christchurch, Father in heaven, we ask you, Lord, that you would be with us now as we look at your word, as I teach.

I pray, God, that you would be with me as I speak and that we would be built up as a body to understand leadership in its true sense as you intended, Lord. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Okay, so church leadership. First of all, leadership is good. Leadership is a good thing. And it is absolutely essential.

Why am I saying this? Because I believe in the Bible, God continually reiterates that leadership is a good thing. He calls people up to leadership. He doesn't call people up to a bad thing or an evil thing.

Right? So it's good. But because God calls people up to leadership in very specific ways, leadership is also essential.

[1:27] We see that in the Bible. And we're going to talk about that as we go out. I just like to out of the gate say leadership is a good thing because God says it's a good thing. Okay? And here at Christ Church, we believe in the role of apostles, specifically the gifting of apostles, but also the function of apostles.

So you might come from more of a cessationist background, which is a fancy word for believing that some of the gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased or all of them. There's a range.

And so apostles, elders, deacons, and lead partners are what I'm going to discuss.

But before I do, I think it's important for us to have a frame that we're approaching the Bible with, which is that leadership is good.

Okay? All of us have different experiences of leadership. If I had to hedge my bet, all of us probably have experienced bad leadership. If you've somehow managed to escape bad leadership, that's crazy.

[2:45] That's a gift. Right? But because we live in a fallen world and God appoints sinners, you know, to flesh out a good thing, then even that can be abused by those sinners.

So we're all affected by bad leadership, but it's important to note that leadership is still good. Right? And I think that that will help us as we examine this topic because a lot of times what we can doctrinally agree with is a good thing.

Inside our soul, we can maybe subtly say is a bad thing because of our experience. So, apostles, elders, deacons, and lead partners. Speaking of apostles, elders, and deacons, right out of the gate, in the New Testament, Jesus is the perfect and chief example of actually all three of those. In Hebrews 3, verse 1 calls Jesus the apostle and high priest of our confession. Okay? He's the great sent one of God.

The word apostle means sent one. It speaks of someone who goes out from their sender, a type of emissary.

[4:07] Okay? And Jesus, if you read the Gospel of John, it's impossible to escape without this idea that Jesus was sent.

Jesus says over and over, speaking of his own father, he says, you sent me, he sent me, and the father who sent me has himself testified about me in John 5, John 6.

We're told to believe in the one whom he has sent. Okay? This type of sending is characteristic of Jesus' ultimate apostleship.

Okay? Again, the word apostle really just means sent one. And Jesus is the ultimate example. Jesus also is the ultimate example of an elder.

Okay? We believe that an elder is a shepherd or overseer. These words are in the scripture, and I believe in context are interchangeable. In 1 Peter 2, 25, it says, it calls Jesus the shepherd and overseer of our souls.

[5:14] Okay? So he's the chief elder and the overseer and the shepherd. John 10 speaks of him as the great shepherd. What about a deacon?

How is Jesus a deacon? Well, Jesus didn't hold the office of deacon as we hold it, but deacon really just means servant. Diakonos in the Greek means servant and has a little bit more of an orvid meaning there.

But Jesus was a servant. He embodied servitude. In Philippians 2, Paul writes about Jesus that he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant.

Okay? In Mark 10, 45, it says, for even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve. Okay? That was his ultimate mission. That's why he came, Mark 10, 45 says, was servitude. So if we have Jesus as the ultimate example, right?

[6:17] Right? So like I said in the beginning, all of us have flawed or have experienced flawed leadership. I've experienced bad leadership. Well, if we have Jesus as an example, we can't say that we've experienced Jesus as flawed leadership.

Right? We can't look at his life and say, yeah, I've experienced that hard thing with Jesus as well.

Right? If we were his disciples, maybe we would try to charge him with that.

Right? But in fact, it would be an ill charge. Jesus is perfect and sinless in all of his life and ministry. In all three of these categories.

In his apostleship, in his eldership, and in his servanthood. And so if we keep Jesus in mind, I think we could stay on the right path here.

So, God has chosen in his word to appoint different men in different roles throughout the church to carry out this ultimate example in Jesus through flawed people, through sinners.

[7:31] Right? He's chosen these roles that he embodied as a sinless person to be embodied in sinful people. Now, that might feel like a mistake.

That might be like, whoa, Lord, are you sure you want to do this? Like, I'm not sure if we can all get what you're getting after if you're going to use these sinful vessels. But obviously, I think you guys will know right away that devoid of the gospel, devoid of the saving work of Jesus in people's life, in sinners, this would be a fool's errand.

Right? But the power of God is actually manifested through people. And we can trust God to do that. And so, Jesus is not only the ultimate example of the perfect function of these roles, but he commissions us to embody him in the life of his church in these specific ways.

And so, Jesus left the earth and sent his spirit and actually said it was better that he leaves. He says, it's better that I go and send you the spirit to accomplish through the church what Ephesians call the manifest wisdom of God.

Okay? And these roles are a part of that. These leadership roles are a part of him doing that. And so, before we jump in, grab some water here. Sorry. Yeah.

[8:57] Is that better? Yeah. You guys can read back there? Cool. Sorry. Before we jump into each of these roles and explaining them from the Bible, what is your relationship to leadership in the church or leadership period?

How do you think about leadership? Do you have a disdain for leaders? Do you have an indifference towards leaders?

Or do you have a love for leadership? A love for leaders? Or a love for, a love that basically says, if God says leadership is good, that you love that it's good.

Right? What is your relationship towards leadership? What is your relationship towards authority figures? You know, we all have, like I said, bad examples.

We could have a bad father. Maybe you have had a bad husband or a bad boss. You know, different leadership roles in your life could inform your view of leadership.

[10:04] What is your relationship towards leadership? And all of us need to take this into account because a lot of times what we can do is project our experience onto church leaders.

And I think God wants us to have, in the same way that we are being redeemed, a redeemed mind towards leadership. And it's important to ask ourselves, how do I view leadership?

Am I a little jaded? You know, do I feel the need to apologize and qualify? What I mean by that is a lot of times when someone brings up the topic of leadership, there's this need to, like, make a

bunch of apologies about a bunch of different things or maybe qualify it and say, well, this and this and this and this and this.

Because there's already this disposition that leadership is generally bad. Or maybe not bad, no one would say that, but it's generally fleshed out in the wrong way.

So we need to add all these things and clear up the muddy water to where we can get to the little tiny nugget of gold in there if there's any. You know? And that's understandable.

[11:21] You know, we all can understand that. Like, being hurt and not understanding or not having the full picture is difficult. But we would never say about an objectively good thing, probably, we would never qualify or apologize about an objectively good thing as much as we do when we're jaded.

Okay? I think most of you would agree that marriage is an objectively good thing. Right? At least I hope all of us would agree that. But, you know, you could make many arguments about how many marriages have been bad.

Right? The divorces, the betrayal, the heartbreak, you know, you name it. Right? So you could talk about marriage that way. You could qualify and apologize with that.

But it's still a good thing. Right? You could talk about families that way. Right? There's been many dysfunctional, cratered families out there. Right? And many people, it feels like in this age, want to break down the family and reduce it to something that's not good.

But we would never talk about some categories that are objectively good in this way of apologizing and qualifying as much as we do when we're jaded or hurt.

[12:40] Okay? And so I would just ask this to consider, do we, are we jaded and hurt in some ways? And the Lord needs to redeem our mind if we are.

And the only way that we, you know, the only way that we know that something is good and right is because God says it. Okay? Okay? And so God says in his word that these leadership roles are for the good and building up of his church.

Okay? And so apostles. We'll talk for a minute about apostles. Apostles. We believe in Christ's church here that apostles are chosen men from God, that apostles are male.

That the, that we see that not only with Jesus, 12 apostles, but also that his, his delegates down through the New Testament are male as well in leadership.

Okay? Apostles. Um, apostolic authority, which is that authority used in leadership is reserved for men. We see that in 1 Timothy 2, 5 and elsewhere in the New Testament.

[13:59] There is one exception which scholars have debated about, which is the question of whether or not a person named Junia in Romans 16 is a man or a woman, which is referred to as prominent among the apostles.

But I think a wide consensus would say that basically she or he, it's either a man, and there's a difference in the wording there, or if it is a woman, it's talking about a relationship to the apostles, not necessarily calling her an apostle herself.

So that's one caveat in case someone would like to bring that up. But what are apostles? We believe that in Ephesians 4.11 it says that God gave gifts to the church, and these gifts are men with specific roles.

And it says there that he gave the apostles, the prophets, the teachers, the evangelists, for the building up of the church, for the work of ministry, to equip the saints.

So we have no reason to believe that the function of that apostle that he gave has ceased. And so that's what we're offering off of here at Christ Church.

[15:27] And so we have to know what an apostle is. So five things that an apostle is, and then I'm going to go over what an apostle does, and we'll work through the scripture.

Okay. Number one, an apostle is a father. This is coming from 1 Corinthians 4, verse 15, where Paul says, For I became a father to you in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

All right. He also speaks to the Thessalonians in 1 Thessalonians 2. He says, For you know how like a father with his children we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you. Those are like pretty fatherly things. Exhortation, encouragement, charging, right? But he says like a father. You know, like I treated you like my own children, he says. So an apostle embodies a father's heart, cares for his children, so to speak, the people that he's sent to, the people that he is caring for.

He does it like a father. Okay. An apostle is somebody who, actually I didn't even give a definition. Did I say sent one?

[16:55] Yeah. Yeah. So we believe that an apostle is not only a sent one, but sent to do a very specific thing, which is the planning and nurturing of churches.

So as I'm talking about, I realize I probably should swap these categories. As I'm talking about what an apostle is, this is in the context of church planting, building churches.

Okay. So think, think that way. So an apostle is a father. An apostle is a pioneer. Okay.

In Romans 15, 20, it says, and thus I make it, Paul says, and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named. Okay. So he has this pioneer spirit, meaning he's going out to where Christ hasn't been named, to where there's lack, to where there's nothing. Right. And he's going to that place. He's going into the darkness, into the unknown. Right. That's the pioneer of an apostle. And apostle is a master builder.

[17:57] Okay. First Corinthians three, Paul speaks of himself as a master builder. He says, like a skilled master builder. Some other translations say like a wise master builder.

I laid a foundation and other people are building upon it. Apostles. Apostles. Apostles. Mindset is to build. It's to understand how to construct a church.

Understands how the parts of the church, right? All the different giftings fit together. When you are, I work in construction and part of the role of the general contractor is to bring all of the parts, all of the types of trades together and make them work so that the job goes well, so that the building is built well, all these things, right?

You can kind of think of an apostle along those lines. He's trying to find the plumbers, the electricians, the carpenters, and schedule them and have them all work together, right?

Well, the church has different gifts that God has given. Each one of you has been blessed with a gift from God. And part of recognizing the parts of the body, namely apostle, we believe in apostle as a part of the body, part of recognizing the apostolic gift is saying, okay, his job is to help me and my gift fit into this thing so that this building called the church is built up, right?

[19:24] You can think of an apostle that way, particularly in the master builder mindset. So an apostle is a master builder. An apostle is also utterly self-sacrificial, okay?

If there is such a thing as an apostle today that doesn't, you know, get in there and do any work, or just kind of is a, you know, maybe green room pastor, as they say, but kind of sits back and lets everyone do everything, we don't see that in the New Testament, right?

Apostles are front and center, giving their life out for the sake of Jesus and for the sake of God's people. I think in another place, Paul even says, we apostles are considered as the least of all, right?

That's not saying that he has a self-esteem problem, but he's saying, like, our role is to pour ourselves out. You know, that's what we're supposed to do.

Lastly, apostles are stewards or servants. 1 Corinthians 4.1 says, this is how you should regard us. Paul is speaking directly about himself as an apostle and his delegates.

[20:38] He says, this is how you should regard us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Now, I don't know about you, but regarding someone as a servant, but also as a steward of the mysteries of God, that's pretty awesome that God would provide somebody to, as a vehicle, to display to us the mysteries of God.

Isn't that awesome, right? So, on that basis, we don't want to reject, like, apostolic gifting. If Paul is saying that we're here to serve you, to deliver to you the mysteries of God, right?

We want to not reject that, because it would be of no benefit to us. Okay, so those are some things. This is only a sampling. You guys can go home and extract more.

But of what an apostle is. So, what does an apostle do? I already mentioned it, but an apostle is a sent one of God, a type of emissary of God, to go and plant churches for their upbuilding, for their nurturing, for the glory of God.

An apostle also functions to appoint elders and or leaves his delegates to appoint elders. We see this in Titus 1.

[22:04] He directly says to Timothy, This is why I left you in Crete, to appoint elders, right? So, apostles can have little underlings or under-apostles to do his work of appointing elders.

Okay? So, an apostle appoints elders, or leaves his delegates to do so. What else does he do? An apostle imparts his way of life and tradition. We see Paul constantly talking about his letters that

he's writing to the churches.

He refers to his letters in a very specific way. Almost like an instruction like, Hey, take heed to what I'm saying to you in my letters.

Pay attention to what I'm saying, and don't be distracted. He wants them to obey his ways in the churches.

Okay? There's other verses that speak of Paul's way of life and his tradition. And so, an apostle has a way of life and a tradition that he imparts.

[23 : 18] An apostle also equips the saints for the work of ministry. You can see that in Ephesians 4.11. An apostle is translocal. Or, more specifically, someone who is ministering beyond their immediate locality.

All right? So, they're going, we see in the Acts narrative that they go from church to church. Strengthening the churches. Right? Paul has returned many times to different churches that he has planted.

And so, an apostle is not a pastor who stays in one church forever. Right? Paul stayed in certain churches for a period of time for a specific purpose.

But, his sent gifting, his apostleship, informed him to be moving on into the building and to be returning as a type of nurturing.

And so, an apostle is translocal. An apostle is always forward-looking, a visionary, an emissary type. And his desire is to see the gospel spread.

[24 : 33] An apostle has an evangelistic bent. He wants to see the name of God proclaimed. Not just among one people, but gone out from that people.

That people. Okay? There's much more that can be said about apostles. But, for the sake of time, we're not going to get into that. I would say, probably, among most leadership roles in the church, this is probably because of the rise of cessationism long ago at this point.

But, this role of apostle has been largely rejected and misinterpreted and misconstrued.

And, it's essential. It's essential in building a church. And, I could say much more about that. But, these core things, what an apostle is and what an apostle does, we have to know.

Especially in this church. Because, we have an apostolic gifting working. We have an apostolic authority working. And, regarding that as the way God would have us is crucial.

[25 : 41] Okay? Okay. Elders. Alright? Elders. The Bible teaches that an elder is a man appointed by the Holy Spirit.

And, or a team of elders. Or, apostle or apostles. Plural. For the purpose of shepherding the church. As well as directing the affairs of the church.

So that the body is built up into maturity. And, is equipped to do the ministry. And, ultimately is prepared for the Lord and his coming. The scripture teaches about how these men are to be before they go into the office.

These are the qualifications for an elder. You can see that in 1st Timothy chapter 3. As well as Titus chapter 1. And, Judah is actually going to do a sermon on the qualifications fairly soon.

So, I'll try not to get into it too much. But, it's really important that we regard what the scripture says about qualifications for elders.

[26 : 47] Because, there are so many unqualified elders out there. Maybe I should just say leaders. Because, they're not elders. According to the New Testament. Right?

And, in the scripture it says that an elder is appointed by the Holy Spirit. But, also through the laying on of hands. Okay? And, their role is to shepherd the flock of God.

Peter says in 1st Peter 5. To the overseers. To the elders. Care for the flock of God. Shepherd the flock of God. This idea of shepherding isn't just like a lead and teach occasionally.

Right? Be responsible for the meetings. Show up as the point man. Right? He speaks of this idea of shepherding. Which, if any of you know what it takes to be a shepherd and to care for sheep.

It's a lot of work. It's a lot of care. You have to be delicate with them. Okay? He calls this role with the elders a shepherding role.

[27 : 58] He says care for the flock. He speaks of the church as a flock. And so, if any man aspires to eldership. He's going to not only just embrace being the point man. Or the guy who gives instruction here and there.

But, he actually takes on the responsibility to pour out his life for the sheep. In a shepherding way. And, there's much that could be said on that.

But, the sad thing is many, many, many leaders are not shepherds. We have many leaders and many people who are the point man.

And, could give a sermon. And, could give a teaching. But, their life is not in the people. And, the people's life is not for the man. It's reciprocation. And, so, what is an elder then?

If all of us have mixed views of eldership. I would hope that today we could get from the Bible. From God's very mouth. A clear view. And, so, what is an elder?

[29:01] Eight things an elder is. Okay? An elder is a teacher. We see that in 1 Timothy 5. Elders are given as a labor to preaching and to teaching.

Okay? So, an elder has to teach. And, then one of the qualifications is 1 Timothy 3 is able to teach. It doesn't say he has to be like an immaculate teacher or the best around, right?

But, he's got to be able to teach. An elder is a shepherd. I just said that. That's from 1 Peter 5. An elder is a leader. From 1 Timothy 5.17.

Paul is saying to Timothy, Let the elders who rule well. This rule can also be understood as leading. So, an elder is a leader.

Ephesians 4.11. These gifts. The pastors. The gift of pastor is to equip the saints. Side note. If the body is not equipped to do the work of ministry, right?

[30:12] And, the pastor is the only one. Or, the elder is the only one who is doing the work of ministry in a church. Then, there's something wrong with the eldership. Something wrong with the elder.

It exists to equip the saints. Okay? So, if you are under someone's leadership, and there's no equipping, then something's off there.

Right? An elder, one of the things an elder is, is an equipper. What else is an elder? I said this about apostles. But, I think it bleeds in, it's in both.

But, an elder is a father. Okay? In 1 Corinthians 4.15. Paul says, You have countless guides in Christ.

And, you do not have many fathers. There's kind of an indictment there. Right? Man, I feel like that is so pervasive. Like, if Paul had a word, he would probably just say the same thing he said at Corinth today.

[31:14] To the church in our demographic and in America. I feel like you would be like, you have so many podcasters. You have so many instructors. You have so many guides.

You have so many people who give you even choice wisdom, you know, at times. But, where are the fathers? Right? And, I think one of the aspects that we should understand is, what does a father do?

A good father. He never leaves. Right? So, if there's this disposition towards, that an elder has, or any person that says, Let me just dispense the wisdom.

Let me give the instruction. And, then I'm out. You know? Here's this. You guys go run by yourself. Any of us could do that. We might as well stay at home and watch YouTube. Right? Because, we can get that.

We can get wisdom from many places. But, we can't get the gift of God through a man. Okay? As a father. That's unavoidable. So, and Paul wants that.

[32:19] He says, you have many guides, but not many fathers. Then, he actually says about himself. He says, I became a father to you in Christ Jesus. We need more people who embrace that role.

We need more people who love that role. Like, I'm a young man, and I had to be taught to love that role of a father in other men.

And, to regard other men as such. Because, I didn't want to actually miss the gift of God in that. But, an elder is a father. An elder is a laborer.

I already mentioned that. He labors in preaching and teaching, specifically. But, he pours out his life for the sheep. An elder is a steward. Titus 1 speaks of elders as, or Titus as God's steward.

Or, Paul speaking to Titus about them. An elder is an exemplar. Okay? Or, an example.

[33:22] 1 Peter 3 says, being examples to the flock. Okay, there's that flock language. That shepherd sheep language. He says, be examples to the flock.

Is there anyone in your life that you've known, as an elder figure maybe, for the pure and simple fact that they're just a really good example. Their life is worth emulating.

Right? If the men in your church that are leading, if the elders who are leading, are not worth being examples of. Right? If there's not that respect that comes from being an exemplar, then something might be off there.

Right? An elder is an example to the flock, 1 Peter 5 says. An exemplar. An exemplar in marriage. An exemplar in family. You know, it would be weird. It would be very weird for an elder and his wife to do marriage counseling, you know, and let's say a couple separated or something.

[34 : 30] And they're trying to dispense all this wisdom. And then the next week they're like, you know, my wife and I are having a hard time. We're actually separated right now. It's kind of like, I'm not sure we should be getting counsel from you.

You know, I think we need to get counsel for someone who actually has a healthy marriage. You know. And an elder is someone, at least according to Peter, and if we regard Peter as speaking the very words of God, an elder is somebody who's an example to the flock.

Right? That's just one example. There are many. So an elder is those eight things. Teacher, shepherd, leader, equipper, father, laborer, steward, and exemplar.

You guys can dive into more of those, but usually those are a good thing to look at and say, can I see these things in the leaders in my life?

Can I see those things in the elders that exist? Okay. Deacons. Man, I feel like each one of these you could have a sermon on.

[35 : 45] I'm just cruising straight along. Deacon. What is a deacon? Deacon, I mentioned earlier, the very word deacon denotes service or to serve, diaconess.

And it is just that. It's an appointed servant in the church to take care of specific tasks, to care for the church of God, so that the elders don't have to do the serving for those specific tasks.

That way it would free them up to actually do the tasks that are most important for elders. Namely, it says in Acts 6, the preaching and the teaching, the proclamation of God's word.

The word deacon is first introduced in Acts 6, when the twelve are all summoned. And the disciples said, it is not right that we should give up the preaching of the word of God to serve tables.

To serve tables is that introduction. And, you know, you might dispute about that being the first moment that deacons are introduced, but I think it's important to note that they were appointed in Acts 6.

[37 : 01] That it was actually a specific role for them so that the elders were freed up. So deacons are servants. Deacons are not elders, but they do have qualifications.

We see that right after the qualifications for the elders in 1 Timothy 3. And that's also not for nothing, right?

So deacons can be in a leading role. They're leading in their service. They're leading in all these tasks, right? Let's say, you know, someone is assigned to taking care of the finances or taking care of the food.

You know, all these things. Well, someone has to lead that, right? There has to be a leader there. And so there's specific people appointed to do these things.

And they have to be somewhat qualified, the Bible says, right? Because they're also exemplars in one sense of this service. And so although there's qualifications, deacons are not elders.

[38 : 09] I know in some churches, the deacons are treated maybe kind of at the same level, if not higher. And I think it's good to keep them in their own categories as far as a scriptural witness.

And call them what they are, which is servants. Deacons are a means of grace to the body. I know at Bellicose, the church we were sent out of, I totally see that.

It's like how many things would be on the mind of the elders that would just be impossible to take care of if there were no deacons, right?

There were no people appointed to those tasks. And it's a grace to the church. People are built up. We all feel it, right? And it's awesome. And so there's more that can be said on deacons, but that's how you can think of them, as servants to the church.

All right, last one. Lead partners. You might say, lead partners, what? That's not in the Bible. Which is true. It's not. So tread lightly, Sam.

[39 : 23] Although lead partners are not in the Bible, we believe that lead partners or someone who leads a missional community or leads in disciple making in that context is a means for the elders or, in this case, apostle or apostles to flesh out the building up of the body in a specific context.

Okay? So lead partners are not in the Bible, but the gift of leadership is Paul exhorts the Romans in Romans 12. He says, To the one who leads, let him lead with zeal.

So there seems to be a way for, or at least a charge, from Paul to say, Hey, this gift of leadership, like, let the one who leads, leads with zeal.

Okay? Let's flesh that out. And so lead partners in our church, if you're a partner, it's, it's a role of leading a missional community.

Like I said, leading in disciple making to do this thing, which is the building up of the body. Right? A way to flesh out the leadership role, but the one who leads, lead with zeal.

[40:34] Um, and, and that helps, kind of like deacons in one sense, it helps the elders and apostles, uh, basically care for the church.

Right? The role of lead partners exists as a, as a method, uh, for the elders or apostles to see fit to do 1 Peter 5, which is to care for the flock of God.

So, it's a, it's a subcategory, right? But for a very specific purpose. Our church is structured into smaller groups called missional communities, which are led by lead partners.

Uh, why? So that the body's best built up. So that, that life can happen on a smaller level, can happen on an intentional level, and won't be a free for all.

Right? There's some leadership there. And so, um, I think it's important to mention that category when we're talking about leadership, not, not just because, uh, we want to deviate from any biblical witness, but because this is how our church is organized.

[41:37] So you guys know. So, um, that's about all I got for lead partners. But, and thinking about church leadership, like I said in the beginning, it's easy to, you know, I don't know, all of us have different experiences.

Some of us have had maybe a lot worse of an experience than others with leadership. And, um, that really informs our view. And so, I would encourage all of us to say in our hearts, uh, and agree with God, and agree with His Word, that leadership is good.

And that, actually, God wants to set us free from any areas that leadership has become bad to us. That's that, that when we hear that word leadership, that there's that sinking feeling of like, oh no, my experience of leaders is so terrible, like I don't even know if I can, uh, you know, it's, it's a triggering thing, right?

Uh, but it shouldn't be. God should set us free from that, right? We should be able to call sin, sin, 100%, right? You were hurt, or it was wrong, right?

But then we should say, you know what, Lord, you are a redeeming God, you're a redeeming Savior, and you're going to redeem my mind and inform me of how to, uh, essentially, uh, know what it is you're talking about in the most fruitful and right, righteous way.

[43:05] And so, Jesus, um, Jesus is the ultimate example of this, and ultimately we're calling each other up, every leader is calling each other up to this, this example.

Um, Jesus is the, the chief shepherd, um, but we have to agree with Jesus that he has appointed under shepherds.

He's the chief one, but then there's the under shepherds. And if, if you are, if you're so jaded to the point where you're saying, you know what, I'll take the chief shepherd, but all the under shepherds, I'm not doing that.

Um, that's a really dangerous thing because you're actually going to miss Jesus because Jesus has said he's going to build his church and he said he's going to build it in a specific way and he laid out how he wants that done.

And so, if we say, you know what, I'll just have Jesus alone, what we end up doing is cutting him into pieces. We say, I like this portion, but not the rest. You know, again, the sin is real and, and church hurt is real and bad leaders are real, but we have to also say, I will miss Jesus if I throw this out.

[44:19] Okay? And so, uh, that's important to note because I would, hedge my bet, none of us want to miss Jesus, right?

And he's manifesting now in the world through his gifts and we could, we could, uh, we could actually quench the spirit of God by rejecting in our hearts the leaders of God.

that God has appointed. Um, so how do we do that? How do we, how do we move on? If you're hurt or if you're, maybe, maybe just confused, maybe you're not hurt.

Maybe you're just like, I don't even know what to think about it. Well, you got to go to the Bible. You got to, you got to hear from God about leaders and good leadership is meant for the building up. I'll say that again. Good leadership is meant for the building up. Maybe your experiences, leadership is meant for tearing down. Well, that's, that's unbiblical, right? Leadership is meant for building up.

[45:18] Every good leader is enjoyable to be under, periods, right? Uh, leadership or good authority is for those who are underneath it. When good leaders exist and good authority exists, everyone underneath that authority flourishes.

you can see this on almost any level. On the national level, when there's good leaders in the country, the country's blessed, right? You can see this all the way down to the family.

When there's a good husband and good father, the family's blessed, right? So, we have to say that leadership is for the up building and it's for you, right? Um, that's really important.

And I think, uh, the question is, are you, are you, do you have the biblical, do you have the spirit that says, I'm eager for that? I'm eager for that flourishing, right?

Um, one other footnote on this is in Hebrews chapter 13, um, it says, obey your leaders and submit to them for they are keeping watch over your souls.

[46:25] As those who are to give an account. Let them, then it says, let them do this with joy and not with groaning. For that will be of no advantage to you.

Okay, so, real quick. This, this verse exists in the Bible. This is God's word. So, you know, I, I get this temptation but sometimes I look at certain verses and I'm like, Lord, is that your word?

Is this you saying that? You know, like, sometimes if I'm honest like I have unbelief around the word of God. I don't really want to receive things but we got to look at it and say, you know what? This is the Lord speaking. He says, obey your leaders and submit to them for they are keeping watch for your souls.

Okay, there's a prophet. They're keeping watch for your souls. You guys believe that? And then it says, let them do this with joy and not with groaning for that will be of no advantage to you.

Okay, how many, how many times do we relate to leaders as, guys, make it easy for me? Just make it easy for me. Okay? Like, like, I, you know, in one sense it's, there's something true about that.

[47:32] Like I said earlier, good leaders make it easy for people. People flourish, right? But how often is it maybe kind of consumeristic or a little, like, like, make it easy for me.

Well, what about this verse? This says, let the leaders, let them do this with joy and not with groaning for that will be of no advantage to you.

No one's ever standing up saying, the leaders aren't saying, hey guys, make this easy for me. You know? And it seems like that's what this verse is getting at is, is hey, yes, there's this reciprocating, like, let's, let's serve each other with joy.

But, the truth is, you actually miss out. It says, this will be of no advantage to you. There's a type of blessing that you'll receive from good leadership that you won't get if it's only brute submission.

Right? You might obey the first part that says, okay, I'll obey the leaders, but begrudgingly and without joy. And then, the second half says, well, it's actually not going to be valuable at all to you.

[48:40] You won't get anything from it. And it's going to make it difficult on the leaders. Right?

And so, the way that you do it with joy is by having a bigger vision from the chief shepherd and the chief leader from the king.

Right? And, that's really important to do because if we don't come to the Lord and we say, Lord, you're the king, you're the chief shepherd, renew me, make me eager and excited about the leaders that you've appointed, about the gifts that you've given.

I want to be eager. If we don't come to the Lord in that way, then we're just going to be doing this circle. Right? We're going to be back here next time. And, all these roles are so that all of us can be built up into the head, into Christ.

And so, in closing, have a right regard for leadership. Don't quench the spirit in how you think and feel about leadership.

But, agree with the Lord and in His word what He says. Just three little exhortations. If any of this struck you, I would encourage you to examine yourself and ask yourself, do I need to repent?

[50:05] for maybe in my heart calling what God calls good, bad. You know? A lot of stuff we never say out loud. But, like, maybe in our hearts we're like, oh, this is bad.

This is bad. And the Lord's like, no, it's good. There's just things to work through, right? You have to understand how God is doing it.

How God is saving. How God is redeeming. But, consider if that seed has gotten inside of you. also consider how to stir yourself up to excited submission.

Right? Everybody hates, you know, the submission that doesn't have excitement behind it. You know, like, if I tell my son, like, hey son, can you go wash the car, please? And he says, yes! And he just walks out there and starts watching, you know, looking at him through the window. Like, I would probably be like, I don't know if this is actually good submission.

[51:07] Like, it's like, yeah, you did it, but like, like, I feel like we need to talk now, you know? Like, consider how you can stir up your own heart to being like, Lord, change my heart.

Make me excited. Because this is his ways, right? And then lastly, a call to trust in the chief shepherd, the chief apostle, and the chief servant.

Okay? Jesus is that. He doesn't change like our leaders do. He doesn't screw things up. He's building his church and the gates of hell won't prevail. Not, not they might not prevail, they won't. And so, you have to trust him. If you don't trust Jesus as the chief expression of those roles and the one currently fleshing himself out in his body, then it's not going to go well.

You know, you're going to be ashamed of him when he comes. Okay? Blessed is the one who is not ashamed, he says. Right? But God can save us.

[52:09] He can do it. Right? He is saving us presently by his spirit. So, in all these things, let's go after God and what he says on these roles.

There's much more that can be said. I mean, this is a, you know, there's a lot of other conversations, but I would encourage you guys to flesh these out on a smaller scale, you know, because the Lord is jealous for the purity of his church.

Amen? Amen? Amen. Amen.