

The Quality Of Church Leadership And The Changing Times

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Abstract. This study shows a relationship between the quality of church leadership and changing times in the context of congregational interests. As Christ is the head of the church, and the church is the body of Christ, the quality of church leadership must refer to the leadership of Christ. The critical question then is whether people can have the leadership quality of Jesus completely and permanently. This involves difficult things such as unique love, holiness, truth and unlimited supernatural abilities (reviving the dead). Nevertheless, a church leader (pastor) still must refer to the leadership of Christ in the Bible. With the rapid change of times in the millennial era, the quality of leadership of a pastor is crucial because the changes that occur greatly influence the life of the church either spiritually and worldly. One of the keys to overcoming the changing times is to understand that change is constant. The Word of God in Ecclesiastes 1: 9 states that there is nothing new under the sun, what ever was will be again, whatever have been made will be done again. Therefore, there will be repetitions but in different settings, different technologies, different tools, a different world from generation to generation.

Keywords: Quality of Leadership, Church, Age Change

1 Introduction

George Barna conducted a 15-year survey of the future of the church in America and concluded that the American church would die because of lack of strong leadership. In an age filled with opportunities that have never existed so far and abundant resources, the church truly lost influence. The main reason is the lack of leaders who have strong leadership. Hence, nothing is more important than leadership

The pastor as a church leader must realize that he must have two commitments. First is a commitment to the Bible as "the written word of God". Second is a commitment to the world where God has placed the person. Both of these commitments are non-negotiable. Often the Bible seems rather old-fashioned that it may sound outdated because it dates back thousands of years, not seemingly fitting to the modern world with 'micro-processors' and space flight. This causes leaders to feel sandwiched between different worlds and they are often tempted to withdraw from one and succumb to the other.

There are Christians in the church who long to be faithful to the Word of God from the past, unconsciously breaking ties with the present. This is done by ignoring all the challenges that come from the modern world. On the contrary, there are Christians who in their enthusiasm respond to the world of the present, distort or streamline the word of God, so as to make things appear logical and more relevant to the changing times.

The call of Christians is to obey the Word of God (historically originating from that past) in the frame of reference of present reality. That is the Christian calling: to live by the Word of God in the world. This world must be a concern of Christians not only because we live in it, but also because they are God's co-workers in restoring and renewing the world. This is the basis of the involvement of Christian leadership, namely leadership in serving the truth and divine love.

Meanwhile the world is changing rapidly and changes in other parts of the world can be immediately known in other hemispheres. The advancement of information technology makes this world only in the fingertips. Almost all questions about life seem to have answers if they are searched in Google, but the quality of the answer is another thing. The values used in the past decades have gradually changed. The pattern of business relationships no longer needs to be face to face; people even no longer need to leave their homes.

These challenges must be faced by the church and church leaders so that the life of the entire congregation can be maintained as in the Word of God in Romans 12: 2 God, forbidding us to be conformed to this world, but rather to be transformed by the renewal of mind.

2 Discussion

According to the Unabridged Indonesian Dictionary (*KBBI*), the definition of quality:

1. Level of good or bad of something;
2. Degrees or levels (intelligence, skills, etc.; quality)

On the other hand, the word leadership according to the dictionary is about leaders; how to lead. Based on reference on the *KBBI* above, leadership quality is the level of good or bad or the quality of someone in leading an organization or people. However, the essential meaning of leadership in practice definitely so many concepts have been put forwards by expert authors. Unfortunately there is no universally acceptable definition of leadership. Even if we ask ten leadership analysts, more than a dozen or more definitions can emerge. Why is this so? The reason is because leadership is not a mere science. Leadership is an art. Nevertheless, the author includes some definitions of leadership from literature.

Table 1. Definitions of Leadership by Authors

	LEADERSHIP EXPERTS	DEFINITION
1	• Waren Bennis and Burt Nanus,	"Leadership is doing everything right"
2	• James McGregor Burns,	"Leadership is when someone with a certain purpose and motivation, mobilizes, competes or conflicts with other people, with institutions, with political, psychological and other sources to direct, to invite, and to satisfy the motives of his followers."
3	• Vance Packard,	"Leadership is to make other people willing to do something that is believed to be necessary."
4	• Tom Peters,	"Leadership is mastering your opponent and mastering what they maintain."
5	• J. Oswald Sanders,	"Leadership is influence."
6	• Garry Wills,	"Leadership is directing others towards the goals that are shared by leaders and their followers."

All pastors must have been trained extensively to interpret the Bible and have the gift to convey God's truth, but there is no denying that they fail to lead a group of believers. They fail to mobilize people to serve. Some fail to maintain their behavior in order to remain trustworthy, to motivate them to sustain their spiritual revolution, and to attract the various resources needed to do the works as exemplified by Christ.

The Bible teaches us that God has provided us leaders. Suppose the leaders do not need God, God will not include leadership among spiritual gifts. The Bible will not give a great deal of leadership; and the Holy Spirit will not inspire biblical writers to include so many examples of strong leadership. For example, Jethro would not free Moses from the burden of leading the nation of Israel; Jesus will not train the apostles; Paul will not be a counselor for Timothy.

For the present era, what kind of quality must leaders possess in order to be suitable to lead the church? The word of God in James 3: 1 says "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."

Therefore the author argues that good church leadership qualities must be owned by church leaders in order to anticipate changing times, which includes the following.

2.1 Fulfilling God's call.

The Bible records the great leaders who have ever existed, among others, Moses, Gideon, Jeremiah to the apostle Paul. We learn how they are prepared, formed and respond to God's calling. One's background and/or sins and mistakes have been resolved by the Lord Jesus on the cross. Therefore, if God calls a person for an assignment, that person must not allow feelings of inadequacy or "bad background" to prevent him/her from following His guidance. In the Christian environment, people often think of various elements as "spiritual gifts in the form of leadership." Gift means receiving from God all the things needed to become strong leaders for God's purposes. Literature about leadership focuses almost exclusively on functional abilities. This ability is undeniably very important, but a leader who has technical abilities and skills but is not called by God will only follow the impulses of personal will. How do we know that we have been called by God to be a spiritual leader? There are two of the most important signs of a calling from God, first *feeling called*. If one truly has been called, that person will feel divinely chosen for a task. We will have deep conviction that God wants us to lead people because of Him and for Him making the person feel that the Spirit of God strengthens him. The second indication is *loving the call*. Leading people is rarely an arena for fun. Those who are called by God to lead bear much sorrow, opposition and extraordinary hatred.

2.2. Having a vision

According to George Barna, if a person aspires to be a leader, vision is not an option; vision is part of the standard equipment for a true leader. However it must be understood that to be a Christian leader, the vision used to lead people is not a vision that created by the individual, but a vision that is given by God. So what is the definition of vision? Vision is a clear mental picture of a better future, which is conveyed by God to leaders who are also His chosen servants, based on the right understanding of God, self, and situation. It can be seen that there are three important things, namely an understanding of God, the leader is fully aware of true vision comes from God. Only He knows the best for us, and He gives it to His chosen people. In other words, His vision is a gift, and will be given in time to the person He

wants. His chosen people are "leaders and servants", whom he calls to be leaders of the people, but their hearts and attitudes remain as servants. The second understanding of self is the awareness of what he wants to achieve, and what the end result he wants to see. He focuses on what does not yet exist, but must exist - "a better future." Third understanding of the situation, a qualified leader must also absorb a lot of every dimension in life. Technological progress must be seen, sorted out and anticipated not to make the growth of the faith and life of people negatively affected. The church today really needs leaders who have a vision, so we know what tasks we must do, and how to do it.

2.3. Firm but gentle character

Is it human nature to fight? The amount of time church leaders waste in resolving conflicts arise from spiritual immaturity. This immaturity is often manifested through evil in the heart (Jeremiah 17: 9); focus on self (Isaiah 53: 6); and personal pride (Proverbs 13:10). Research conducted by Norman Shawchuck emphasized the influence that destroyed the church because of conflict. According to him, the number one reason for conflict is leaders who lack ability in interpersonal relationships. The second is that many congregations feel stable and do not want to change even though they cannot avoid the changes that have spread through their environment. Many people become church leaders or pastors because they have a soft heart and want to show compassion and love like a servant. Undeniably, the church is a field of spiritual struggle and often requires firm leadership power. When someone becomes a "firm leader," he needs to carry out his leadership duties as a victor. Viewing things from this perspective, there will be a winning and losing party. Conversely, soft leadership will solve conflicts with an attitude of mutual victory. The gentle leadership can come out of disputes with as little scratches and resentments as possible.

Terje Hausken writes; the Christian church has been around for several thousand years now. In its history, there have been countless contradictions and conflicts and wars, but the church still survives. This of course provides trust and evidence about the Holy Spirit in Christ and His power to love when we have differences. However, the intensity and frequency of conflicts has increased over the past two decades. What is the reason? Yes, conflicts are numerous and varied. Furthermore, these reasons certainly reflect changes in our society as a whole. Solving problems by mediating can create greater stability and more hope for the church in our complex times. The Holy Spirit in Christ has many ways to work. We are living at a time when the Holy Spirit is ready to bring the tools and means of goodness that Christ continues to give and show us. Solving problems by mediating is a means, through us the Holy Spirit can create a process of maintaining peace. The aim is to make peace, and this is our Christ God protecting us all, the true Intercessor, the King of Peace. Nevertheless it is argued that if the cause of conflict is a fundamental dogmatic biblical problem, then there is no other way a church leader must be courageously assertive by saying what is wrong and what is right in a loving manner.

2.4. Serve to lead like Jesus

It is uniformly agreed upon that Christians everywhere in the world are experiencing a very urgent need for trained leaders. This is felt in almost all areas of church service. If the congregation lacks guidance, they will begin to crave imitating worldly leadership models, which prioritize visible targets and often highlights human abilities rather than God's guidance. The critical question is, can a Christian leader lead like Jesus? The Bible records

that leading and serving Jesus is like two sides of a coin that cannot be separated. He came into the world to serve all mankind with His love and service that led mankind out of sin, to eternal life in heaven.

In the world leadership, love is almost always identified with weakness, ignorance and will cause difficulty in solving various problems that arise. If a company is led with love, it is certain that the company will lose money.

The love that Jesus possesses has been firmly attached to His persona, as His nature. Jesus' love is God's love for humans (agape), more than love or friendship between humans (philia), or family love like parents to their children (storge), or love that contains lust between two partners (eros). Loving (agapao) is indeed unique and unique to Jesus such as loving the enemy, or loving without limits, or as He does, sacrificing for this world. So it is true that love transcends all knowledge (Matthew 5: 39-40; Ephesians 3:19). From Jesus' example, a serving leader must practice in his daily life leading himself, leading a new family well, leading a larger organization such as a church. The success of leading like Jesus depends on a leader's closeness to Him; that is, always relying on the Holy Spirit within him.

2. 5. Knowing the priority scale of church problems

Change in this world is certain, therefore the age will never stop moving to agree or disagree, we will continue to experience changing times. In the 21st century, technological advances have been so rapid that whatever happens in the other hemisphere is only a matter of seconds, can be accessed from anywhere. This change encompasses almost all life issues, namely the changing values previously held in social, economic, political and cultural terms. This of course is also experienced by church congregations wherever they are. Thus, should all of these fields be anticipated by a church leader? Who is the leader who is able to do it perfectly, while he must also be a good example in the eyes of the church?. This paper argues that church leaders must strengthen the basis of the life of the church. He must make the family a priority scale, because the church base is families, if the family is healthy and strong the church is also healthy and strong, if the church is healthy and strong the city is also healthy and strong. For this reason, a church leader must lead discipleship in his church because a man is a source. Man was created first by God in time on earth to function as head of everything God has entrusted to him. Genesis 1:26, "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." Even though humans have fallen into sin, the function that God has set does not change. What distinguishes them is the task and function of men becoming imperfect, even experiencing chaos, both he as a person, as a husband, as father and leader of the household.

3 Conclusion

- a. The leadership quality of a church leader who is able to anticipate changing times is a leader who has the following characteristics:
 - There is a call from God and fulfill it.
 - Have a clear vision.
 - Character is firm but soft
 - Serve and lead like Jesus

- b. The change of times that is certain to occur can only be anticipated so that it does not negatively affect the life of church members. This is achieved by strengthening families by making disciples to return to be functioning again as the right source in the family, becoming priests, prophets and kings in their families.

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