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## INTENTIONAL LEADER-SHIP

Ever operate a remote-controlled airplane? Ever seen what happens when the controller quits? Same thing that happens to a leader-less church! But what's that got to do with YOU ?

The Bible likens believers to "**living stones**" who are being built up together into a "**living temple**" in which the Holy Spirit lives. The architect and builder and Head is Jesus, who as Ephesians 4:16 says, "**when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.**"

God designed things so that each person has an important role to fulfill in the Body of Christ. And God gives each believer "**spiritual gifts**" to help the body grow. Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4, Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 all talk about these gifts, usually designated as speaking, serving, or sign gifts.

Often, our attention goes to those we consider leaders in the church, people with titles like pastor, elder, deacon, etc. But leadership is action, not position. Someone said, "*good leaders take care of those in their charge, and bad leaders take charge of those in their care.*" 1 Peter 5:1-7 puts it like this: "**shepherd the flock of God... being examples to the flock.**"

Shepherding involves care-giving. But shepherds in the church are also sheep under the Great Shepherd. Jesus, the Head of the church, is the prime example of "**servant-leader.**" And regardless of their gifts, church leaders are rightly expected to be good examples of leading by serving others, as Jesus did.

But such leadership isn't limited to people with titles. Every believer needs to be a "leader" in terms of fulfilling their own calling in the body of Christ - and being a good example for others to follow. So how can YOU add some "**intentional leadership**" to YOUR function in the Body of Christ?

**Are you a FOLLOWER?** Jesus is the Head leader of the church. When He says, "**follow Me**" He means commit to learn to become like Me. A disciple is a follower, a learner, who is becoming like the Master.

**Are you a SERVANT?** Jesus said, "**I am among you as one who serves**" and He calls you, not to lord yourself over others, but to honor Jesus as Lord, to imitate Him, and to serve others like He did.

**Are you HUMBLE?** Before you answer "yes" consider that it means not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less. It means taking more than your share of the blame and less than your share of the credit. Peter says "**clothe yourselves with humility - for God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.**" Jesus is the greatest example of putting the best interests of others ahead of your own.

**Are you RESPONSIBLE?** Many people are obsessed with their rights, but few want to take responsibility for their well-being or that of others. Someone said, "*There are two kinds of people who will never realize their God-given potential - those who will not do what they're told, and those who will only do what they're told.*" Jesus says, take responsibility for putting the best interests of others ahead of yours.

**Are you PRAYERFUL?** Think of the times Jesus prayed for His followers, to withstand temptation, to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and to fulfill His commission for their lives. The prayers in Scripture show us how to pray for others in your flock - primarily for their spiritual needs and secondarily for physical needs.

**Are you MINISTERING?** Disciples of Christ submit to the Lordship of Christ by knowing and obeying the Scriptures. They are "*ministers of the Word*" as they share the message of Jesus, pointing others to Him and helping them to grow by understanding and living out the truths of God's Word.

**Are you an EXAMPLE?** A good example? Someone said "*Example is not the main thing in influencing others. Example is the only thing.*" Your transformed life shows others what Jesus can do for them.

What brings **life** to God's divine design for His church? **Intentional living in Jesus!** His blueprint provides for transformed people who are gifted to encourage and equip others to live out their God-given potential. Every person and every gift is necessary. Trust Jesus for His power - so YOU do your part !