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LEADERSHIP STYLES FOR MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCHES

The issue of leadership styles is a perennial one in the church. The Mennonite Brethren Church is committed to being biblical. Therefore, there is a continual concern for and study of biblical patterns of leadership. But the church lives in the world and is influenced by the leadership models of the surrounding society. Thus there exists a constant tension in the church between biblical and sociological styles of leadership. The tension is a creative one if we recognize the dual pull of Scripture and world and if we continually test present styles of leadership in the church by the biblical patterns.

The Context of the Present Study

Every question has a history that impacts our understandings and our search for new directions. The issue of leadership styles in the Mennonite Brethren Church is colored by two particular strands of historical development.

First, the Mennonite Brethren Church has tended to move from a multiple-ministry to a single-pastoral ministry. Church leadership was multiple from 1860 until the mid-1940's. The style of leadership in the churches was characterized by the following: 1) several brethren were called out of the local church to form a shared leadership team. These brethren were called "elders", "leaders", or "brothers". 2) The shared leadership recognized a diversity of ministries in the church and in the leadership group. 3) The principle of authority in shared leadership was mutual subordination to one another and to the church body. In other words, authority was anchored in the authority of the corporate body. 4) The brethren in

leadership understood themselves as servants of the church and of each other.

Even when the salaried ministry was introduced (P. R. Lange in Buhler, Kansas, 1929, and H. W. Vogt in Hillsboro, 1937) it was understood and practiced in the context of multiple leadership. The purpose of a paid ministry was not to abandon multiple leadership for single leadership, but to free one brother for a full-time ministry in the ongoing context of shared leadership.

It was a great vision but visions get distorted in history. The multiple leadership pattern often rigidified into fixed positions of responsibility and authority. The pattern tended to become hierarchical and authoritarian. The "ordained" leaders were superior to and different from the non-ordained members in the church. In short, the pattern tended to centralize authority and ministry. The ministry was limited to a few who guarded their authority, positions and responsibilities.

New patterns of leadership began to emerge in the 1940's in the U.S. and in the 1960's in Canada both because of frustrations with shared leadership and because of increasing conformity to North American protestant models of leadership. Some of the young men returning from studies in protestant seminaries brought with them the protestant model of the single pastor style of leadership. In this model one person, usually professionally trained and usually not a member of the local church, is called as "the pastor." This person is the central leader of the church. He is the employee of the church, and is distinguished from other members in the church by ordination, formal training and full-time employment. Authority tends to be centralized in the pastor, and active ministry is often limited to this person. Consequently, the pastor is expected to fulfill a wide range of functions

independent of his particular gifts for ministry. If and when he fails, he

is replaced by another single pastor. In most churches this style of

pastoral leadership is modified somewhat in the direction of shared leader-

ship by a group of lay persons who work with the pastor in the capacity of

"church council" members. The name, however, tends to be description of

the function; they give counsel rather than participate in the leadership

of the church as ministers.

Questions began to emerge about the single-pastoral style in some

churches during the late 1960's and early 1970's. These questions were a

function of frustrations with the limitations of the model and a fresh read-

ing of the New Testament. Casualties in the ministry have been high.

There has been mutual disappointment between pastor and church because the

particular gifts of the pastor were not sufficiently exercised due to the

broad nature of the assignment or the expectations of the church were not

met by the particular gifts of the pastor. In the midst of all this both

pastor and church members have been re-reading the New Testament for guidance.

The New Testament itself has again raised the question of the multiple

ministry. Some churches began to develop new styles of multiple ministry.

Secondly, there has been a movement in the Mennonite Brethren Church

from a corporate definition of pastoral leadership to a hierarchical definition

to a democratic style of leadership. During the era of shared leadership

leaders were called out from the church and formed in the life of the church.

Leadership was authenticated by the community of believers. That is, the

authority to lead was derived from the oneness with and the trust of the

church. The shift to a single pastoral style of leadership involved a shift

in the base of authority for leadership. Authority to lead was now anchored

in the individual call to the pastorate which the pastor claimed. The

authority to lead became hierarchical rather than corporate. It centered

at the top, in the pastor, and sometimes the council, and was imposed on and/

or accepted by the members of the church. The greater the charisma of the

pastor the greater his authority. Hierarchical models of leadership, how-

ever, ran into difficulties in the 1960's and 1970's. Those were the years

of the "anti-leader" and the democratic view of leadership. Here authority

centers in each individual, not just one or a few. The biblical phrase that

every person has a gift or ministry was often interpreted to mean that every-

one takes a turn at leading. The leadership style became laissez faire.

Around the mid-70's the anti-leader mood began to pass and churches started

again to search for more assertive leadership. The reaction to leaderless-

ness plus the rediscovery of biblical language has been used in this context

to reaffirm a hierarchical pattern of leadership.

Consensus in the church is virtually impossible without clearly

defined patterns of leadership. But leadership is a function of authority.

And authority involves the interpretation and exercise of power. The church

in the 80's is searching for leadership that has authority which is rooted

in legitimate power. That search has sparked renewed interest in biblical

patterns of leadership and authority. Does the Bible offer a pattern of

leadership different than hierarchical or democratic styles of leadership?

If so, what is the shape of that biblical pattern?

The purpose of this paper is to outline a biblical pattern of church

leadership and authority and to suggest ways in which Mennonite Brethren

churches can more fully appropriate the biblical styles of leadership.

I. THE PATTERN OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament does not offer a single and fixed form of church leadership. In fact, there was a considerable variety in the forms of leadership in early Christianity. But in the diversity of forms there is a consistent pattern of leadership which suggests the distinctiveness of church leadership over against other forms of leadership current in the ancient world. The constants in the midst of diversity which give the pattern of biblical church leadership include the following:

1) The universality of the ministry. Every member of the church has a particular and identifiable gift or ministry (see 1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12; Eph. 4). And each believer is to exercise his/her particular gifts in the church. The context for leadership in the church is the universality of giftedness for ministry in the church. There is not one, but a multiplicity of ministries in the church.

2) The diversity of ministries. Despite some similarity in the New Testament lists of ministry (1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12; Eph. 4), the lists are not identical. There are diverse identifiable ministries in the church. The exhortation to exercise these diverse gifts suggests that both the individual and the church can know and do know what the diverse gifts and ministries are and who is enabled by what gift for which ministry. There is thus more than one form of leadership in the church. This does not mean that everyone is a leader, nor that no one is a leader. Rather, it indicates that church leadership takes diverse forms. Furthermore, the concern for church leadership is unity in plurality. The diversity of ministries must be enabled to work together in unity.

3) The plurality of the ministry. Each ministry is shared by several

persons rather than vested in one individual. The ministries in the New

Testament are always plural, e.g., apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors-

teachers, etc. The early church examples of leadership ministries similarly

are plural, e.g., apostles in Jerusalem during the 40's; prophets and

teachers in Antioch during the 40's; brethren, apostles, elders and prophets

in Jerusalem in the mid-40's; office-bearers in the early 50's in Thessa-

lonica; bishops and deacons in Philippi in the late 50's; and bishops and

elders in the early 60's in the Pastorals.

 4) The priority of certain ministries. While each gift of ministry

is valuable in its own place, and while there is no hint of progression

"upward" from one ministry to another, there is a certain priority in the

naming of apostles, prophets, teachers. In addition, there seems to be a

clustering of three terms for the same ministry, overseer, presbyter and

shepherd (Acts 20:28 and 1 Pet. 2:25, 5:1; Titus 1:5 and 7; Phil. 1:1;

Acts 15:2 and 16:4; Eph. 4:11; I Tim. 5:17). In other words, there is a

particular gift of leadership in the New Testament. This leadership is

always multiple in the church, e.g., prophets, teachers, pastor-teachers.

A team of leaders constitute the leadership of local congregations. It is

this multiple ministry which is responsible for oversight, shepherding and

teaching.

 The pattern of church leadership in the New Testament is a universality

of ministry and a multiple-ministry. All have a ministry because all are

gifted by Christ. Some have a leadership function of equipping the "all"

"for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11f.).

The "some" with a leadership function are always multiple, never single.

Their ministries are functions within the church, not offices.

II.   THE STYLES OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The assigned topic for this paper is "leadership styles." The word "styles" is a popular term today. At a superficial level it describes a way of doing things. But, more fundamentally, "style" denotes a distinctive mode of doing things. A "style" is that which gives particular character to an approach or a work. The question we must ask, therefore, is what was the distinctive mode of early church leadership? What is the particular character of church leadership in the New Testament that we should model in our "leadership styles"? I want to suggest that five styles characterized church leadership in the New Testament, and that, therefore, these five styles should be normative for our leadership styles.

1) The teaching style of leadership. We noted earlier that although a great diversity of gifts are given to the church, priority is given to the teaching gifts in all of the "gift lists", e.g., apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, pastor-teachers. The critical gifts Christ gives to the church are people who fulfill their ministry by speaking; they are ministers of the Word. They minister by proclaiming, teaching and directive counseling.

The manifold ministries of the church are dependent upon the teaching ministry of the gospel. Why is this so? Where there is no word of salvation, encouragement, direction and judgment, there is no community of saints and no mission. Without teaching there is no hearing and there is no obeying. This focus on leadership styles that teach does not exclude or devalue the other ministries (see 1 Cor. 12 and Rom. 12), but prioritizes the ministries that are necessary for the enablement and functioning of all the others. The exercise of the many other gifts in the church that are necessary if the church is to fill all things--to attain the unity of the faith and knowledge

of the Son of God, to attain the stature of the fulness of Christ, to be
steady in the midst of theological plurality and confusion, to speak the
truth in love, to grow up into Christ as head--are dependent on the enable-
ment that comes from teaching (Eph. 4:11f.).

2) <u>The enablement style of leadership</u>. Ephesians 4:12 states clearly
the purpose of the leadership gifts. The mission of leadership is the pre-
paration of others. Three things are specifically mentioned in this text.
a) Church leaders are to prepare or equip the saints. Literally the word
here means to "set a fractured bone" or to "mend the nets." The preparation
or training of the saints is the focus. b) Church leaders are to facilitate
the task of ministry, or, literally, the occupation of service. They are to
nurture mutual service in the body of Christ. c) Church leaders are to
build up the Messiah's body. They are to enable the process of constructing
the body of Christ. How do church leaders thus prepare others? They do so
by enabling and ordering the many gifts in the church so that they work
together in unity.

The task of church leadership is the enablement of members of the
body of Christ through training and service. The New Testament style of
leadership is not a "do it yourself style," but a train others style. Paul
makes this clear again in 2 Timothy 2:2 where he exhorts his disciple and
co-worker to "place before," that is, to teach the things which he has
heard to faithful men. The characteristic of these faithful men is that they
shall be adequate to teach others. The mandate of church leadership is
discipleship training. It concerns discerning "faithful believers" and
training them to train others. Multiplication by enablement is one of the
distinctive modes of church leadership in the New Testament.

3) <u>The servant style of leadership</u>. Jesus rejected the dominant
leadership styles available in his society, and chose instead to be a
servant. Each Synoptic Gospel contains the passage comparing "the rulers
of this age" with the "servant-hood" style of Christian leaders (Mk. 10:
35-45; Matt. 20:20-28; Lk. 22:24-27). In the Gospel of John the same point
is made in the context of the footwashing of Jesus (Jn. 13:1-20). The Jesus
word that "he who is greatest among you shall be servant" occurs no less than
seven times in the gospels (Matt. 20:27, 28; 23:11; Mk. 9:35; 10:43, 44;
Lk. 9:48; 22:26, 27; Jn. 13:14). The only saying of Jesus that is repeated
more often is the reference to "the Son of Man must suffer . . . " Jesus makes
it clear that there can be no analogy between the style of Christian leader-
ship and the forms of rule or power in the world. The critical difference
is not "spirituality", although that is important, but servant leadership.
By anchoring the call to servant leadership in his own servanthood and the
giving of his life, Jesus calls for a fundamental transformation of the
leaders nature, not just their attitude or their role. In other words, servant-
hood is not the assumption of a style as a strategy to be able to lead.
Rather servanthood is to become part of the nature of the leader through
the continual work of the cross in his/her life. Servant leadership describes
a process of self-emptying and becoming a servant.

That point is made clear again by the language for "leadership" that
is used in the New Testament. The Greek language has a wealth of words for
leadership roles and for "offices" in the social order, e.g., "rule" (<u>arche</u>),
"lord" (<u>kyrios</u>), "power" (<u>exousia</u>), "honor" (<u>time</u>), "lead" and "be over"
(<u>hegemon</u> and <u>proistanai</u>), "command" and "order" (<u>epitassein, keleuein, entole,
parangellein</u>), "obedience" and "submission" (<u>hypakouein, hypakoe, hypotas-
sein</u>). It is significant that these words are avoided in describing rela-
tionships within the church. They are used freely to describe Christ's

relationship to the world and the body of Christ, but they are <u>not</u> used to describe the role or style of leaders in the church. Instead three words are used to define the nature of Christian leadership. First, a church leader is a steward (<u>oikonomos</u>). He is delegated to be a superintendent to care for the household of the master. Much is said about the need for the steward to be trustworthy and diligent. Secondly, a church leader is a slave (<u>doulos</u>). A leader is a slave of the church for Jesus' sake and for the sake of the church. The model for this leadership style is Jesus. The word is used with special frequency by Paul in comparison with regular "leadership" words. The relationship of church leaders to each other and to those they lead is that of a slave. Thirdly, a church leader is a servant (<u>diakonia</u>). This is the most frequent word used to describe leaders in the church, and it is used to describe a wide range of forms of leadership, e.g., preaching, reconciliation, relief aid, etc. Leaders in the church are servants who fulfill a ministry; they are not officers who have rights and powers.

The apostolic writers of the New Testament seem to go out of their way to emphasize that church leaders are not rulers with special privileges and powers, but slaves and servants. Christ is the model. Paul reports repeatedly that leadership means the role of suffering servanthood (e.g., 1 Cor. 2:1-3; 2 Cor. 4:7-12; 6:4-10; 12:9-10; 13:9).

The basic leadership style of our churches must be that of <u>servants of servants</u>. The authority to lead is an authority granted by the led to the leader in response to and in proportion to the servant stature of the leader. Not only does this mean that genuine leadership must emerge out of the life of the church, but that it can emerge only in respone to proven and trusted servanthood. The New Testament calls us to recast our understanding

of leadership and authority. Leadership in the church means the freedom to
serve; it does not involve the right to rule.

4) The shepherd style of leadership. The servant leader in the church
is also a shepherd (Jn. 10; Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:1-5).

In the ancient Near East "shepherd" was a title of honour reserved
for kings and divinities. By contrast, in Israel the shepherd is a member
of the family who patiently and honestly cares for the flock of the family.
The shepherd of God's family, Israel, is God alone. He cares for his family.
Because "shepherd" is a family term and is applied to God alone as the shep-
herd of Israel, the title is not applied to Israel's kings. But it is used
to describe the messianic shepherd to be sent by God (Jer. 23; Ezek. 34;
Zech. 13).

Intertestamental Judaism became divided about the identity of the
shepherd. The pharisees and rabbis pictured them as poor, suspect and
unreliable; civic privileges were withdrawn from them as from the tax col-
lectors. In the eschatological theology of the Qumran sect, however, the
leaders of the community again become "shepherds." And in Psalm of Solomon
17:45 the metaphor is once more transferred to the messiah.

Jesus is presented as the Good Shepherd against this backdrop. In
the Synoptic Gospels he is the messianic shepherd of the Old Testament and
late Judaism (see Matt. 9:36; 10:6; 15:24; 26:31f.; Mk. 14:27f.; cf. Lk. 19:
10 with Ezek. 34:15). The Gospel of John presents Jesus as the shepherd who
knows, leads, nurtures, and guards his flock. But John puts special empha-
sis on the voluntary, self-sacrifice of the shepherd for his sheep.

Jesus as shepherd is the model for the church leader in Matthew 18:
12-14; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Peter 5:1-5. The church leader is a

member of the family, not a ruler, who guides, guards, feeds and cares for

his flock. Sacrifical service is central to the style of shepherd leader-

ship. The shepherd takes care of the flock of God intentionally and freely.

He does not lead by compulsion of any kind, outer or inner, nor for personal

gain. The shepherd cares for, he does not lord it over nor gain dominion

over (1 Peter 5:2-3). He leads by "modeling" (tupos), according to Peter,

not by power.

As Issac Block recently stated so clearly in the Mennonite Brethren

Herald, the shepherd style of church leadership runs counter to everything

we are taught about leadership in our society (see "Another name for leaders;

let's try shepherds," May 25, 1979, pp. 7-8). The shepherd is not a ruler,

nor even a corporation executive. He is a family member. Thus his agenda

is not power, organizational efficiency and effectiveness, or upward mobility.

He leads by sacrificially guiding, feeding and caring, not by manipulation,

persuasion or coercion. The good shepherd knows his sheep and lays down his

life for the sheep. All others are hirelings.

5) The family building style of leadership. The Pastoral Letters

outline the qualifications of church leaders (see 1 Tim. 3 and Tit. 1).

Those qualifications are suggestive of the leadership styles of church leaders.

First, a church leader must be a person who demonstrates the qualities which

build family solidarity. The person who can inspire family unity in his own

family will be able to help build solidarity in the family of God.

Secondly, a church leader must be a person of Christian maturity.

If a leader is an agent of internal unity, a new convert cannot be such a

leader because he is not a symbol of solidarity. He is just a young member

of the family; only sick or broken families are lead by the young. A leader-

ship role will destroy this person and the group. The criteria for leadership

outlined in 1 Timothy and Titus are critical. They screen out immature people or ambiguous models, to state it negatively. Or, to say it positively, they insure the discernment of proven and trusted people as leaders. And only such leaders can build solidarity and be authoritative.

Thirdly, Paul says both in 1 Timothy 3:2 and in Titus 1:9 that the church leader who builds the solidarity of God's family must be a good teacher. The leader must be able to discern what teachings and influences keeps the family in line with Jesus' teaching and which lead it astray. The family of God must have relational and theological solidarity. A family needs glue. Church leadership that unifies and provides sound teaching strengthens the glue, it helps to bond the community. Leaders who weaken the glue, who fracture family solidarity for whatever motives and by whatever means, are disqualified for church leadership. Such people may be good corporate leaders, but they are not good church leaders. Church leaders are distinguished by servant and shepherd styles that build the unity of God's people.

III. THE AUTHORITY OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The authority to lead is a function of power. A leader is a person who has been granted legitimate authority by a power source. Three words are critical, authority, power and legitimacy. Authority is interpreted and applied power. Legitimacy is the sense of rightness or appropriateness within a community of the application of authority.

Two observations are important. First, authority presupposes power. Second, both authority and power presuppose community. Where there is no community of people there is no power, there is no authority and there is no legitimacy of power and authority. In other words, the whole question and content of authority to lead is a concern of peoplehood. The nature of

leadership, therefore, is defined by the nature of the people to be led. The
authority to lead in the church thus is at bottom a question of ecclesiology,
of our theology of the church. The people to be led are the people of
God, not the nation or the city or the corporation. The power, authority and
legitimacy to lead, therefore, must grow out of God's activities and purposes
for his people.

Authority to lead in the church has a distinctive character. The
power source for authority in the New Testament is Jesus and the church.
Jesus gives power and authority to those who act in his name. That means
authority is 1) never merely traditional--it is not rooted in the tradition
of a whole group or the status of a small elite within the group. 2) Authority
is never merely legal--it is not rooted in rationally formulated systems of
law which apply to everyone in the same way and which are interpreted and
enforced by "expert officials." 3) Authority is never merely charismatic--it
is not rooted in powerful personalities with a strong sense of vocation and
strong powers of persuasion. Rather the authority of the church is the power
and authority of Jesus as the Head of the Church. In short, it is "delegated"
or "extended" authority that is given by Jesus and sustained by the Holy
Spirit working in the context of the believing community. Authority to lead
in the church is linked to Jesus; it is leadership which reflects the life of
Jesus in the context of Jesus' disciple community.

What does such a definition of the authority to lead mean for our
understanding of church leadership? The following suggestions represent only
an outline of a theology of leadership (space does not permit elaboration).

1) The authority to lead in the church is primarily corporate rather
than individual. The source of power for the authority to lead is the presence

of Christ in the church. He makes that presence known and real in the
many gifts of ministry which he gives to the church. The application of
power as authority to lead is exercised in the enablement of the gifts (see
Mt. 18; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4).

2) The call to leadership is the call of Jesus that is legitimated
by the church. The authority of Paul is anchored in his call to be an
apostle to the Gentiles. That call is legitimated by his ministry in the
church (see Acts 9; Gal. 1-2) and by the call of the church (see Acts 13).
The authority of the charisma (the gift) of the call of God without the
legitimization of the call of the church fractures what for the early church
was a whole. Because the source of the power for the authority to lead is
the presence of Christ in the church, every call to lead must be legitimated
by the church.

3) The test of genuine authority to lead in the church is service to
others. It is not "lording" it over others (1 Pet. 5). Servanthood is the
way in which authority is exercised in the church. In other words, authority
and servanthood are not contradictory in the church, as they are in vir-
tually all secular models of leadership. Jesus is the model of the authority
to lead (Mk. 10:42ff.; Phil. 2:5ff.), and slave (doulos) or steward (oikonomos)
or servant (diakonos) is the language of leadership in the New Testament.

The authority of leadership is lodged in the act of ministering.
There is no office of leadership in the New Testament. Authority is granted
to those who minister and is authenticated by the way they minister. Thus,
for example, prophetic authority is authority to prophecy under inspiration.
The authority of the prophet does not derive from a prophetic office, but
only from the prophetic ministry. Furthermore, it is an authority which can
be shared by others as God inspires and which must be tested continually

for authenticity (see 1 Cor. 14). Similarly, the authority of the teacher is the authority to transmit and interpret the tradition of Jesus' words and deeds and the apostolic message. It is not the authority of an office. Authority in the New Testament is dynamic, not official or positional. It is a verb which describes the action and the style of service, not a noun that defines a position or office.

4) The style of authoritative leadership is mutual subordination. Paul is called to apostolic leadership (Acts 9), but he is legitimated by the prophets and teachers together with the church in Antioch. Therefore, he is accountable to and subordinate to others in the church. Or, prophets and teachers are instructed to exhort and admonish the church in 1 Corinthians 14. But the church, especially other prophets and teachers, are to test the teaching of the prophets. The context for prophetic/teaching authority is mutual subordination. Or, according to 1 Timothy 5 elders are to oversee and teach the church. But other members of the church are to "correct" the elders.

The point is that leaders are empowered to lead, they are given authority by Christ and the church, but the authority to lead is grounded in and tested by mutual subordination. The leader who can only lead, but not submit is a false leader. The leader who cannot serve or be corrected has lost the legitimacy to lead, he has lost the authority to lead.

The flip side of leadership that is mutually subordinate and correctable is people who want to be led and who submit to the leaders they have legitimated. The question of authority in the church is related to the mutual subordination of all believers to each other and to their leaders. The church can have authoritative leaders only if the people in the church once again learn the biblical truth of submission to one another .

The leadership crisis in the church today is both a crisis of authority and submission. We often lack authoritative leaders because we have not given enough attention to discerning and forming leaders out of the life of the church. We have not empowered and legitimated leaders. We have been reluctant to do so in part because we fear leaders who do not know how to be servants and shepherds in the exercise of power. Too many power models in the church are secular rather than biblical. But the other side of our reluctance has been an unwillingness to be led. We have become too democratic in our church polity. All want to be leaders and none want to be followers.

The New Testament reminds us that God appoints some as leaders. The church must legitimize this call and learn submission to its leaders, all the while testing and correcting them. But testing and correcting is a function of followership and mutual submission in the body, not rebellion or "going one's own way".

The church needs authoritative leaders. But because the people to be led is the church, the authority to lead is the freedom to serve in a community of mutual subordination. The goal of this authority is not to subject others to the leader, but to subject all, including the leader, to the power of Jesus so that the body of Christ may be built up. The real test of leadership is service that enables the many gifts of Christ in the church to serve the Body in order that it may mature to eschatological fulfillment.

CONCLUSION

The New Testament pattern of leadership is shared leadership, speaking leadership, servant leadership and submitted leadership. Shared leadership describes multiple leadership that is discerned out of the local church.

Speaking leadership defines leadership that enables the many gifts in the church by teaching. Servant leadership identifies the nature of the leaders and the style of leadership as servanthood. Submitted leadership characterizes leadership that is mutually subordinate to other leaders and members in the church and that is open to correction.

The New Testament pattern can be incarnated in the life of the church in a variety of models. There is no single way to be biblical in our church leadership style. What is important is that the variety of models grow out of the biblical pattern and give expression to the biblical styles of leadership. Each church must continually ask what pattern and what styles of church leadership most faithfully and effectively lead the local body in its growth in Christ and in its ministry in the world.

Whatever the model of local church leadership, two things are imperative for Mennonite Brethren churches. First, we must move toward the biblical pattern of a multiple ministry. Church leadership must be shared leadership. The leadership of the church must be a team of leaders discerned and called out of the local church. All members of the leadership team should be ordained by the church. Whether all members of the leadership team are salaried or not must be determined by local need and context. Urban and professional churches will probably need to move increasingly in the direction of multiple-paid leadership teams because of the professional and time demands on church members. Or they will have to move toward multiple tent-making ministry teams.

The member or members of the leadership team with advanced training (usually college plus seminary) should increasingly be identified by the church and understand themselves as fellow members of the church rather than as "employees" of the church. They must be viewed as members of the

multiple ministry team whose strengths and weaknesses must be complemented by others in the leadership team and the church. As such they will need the same opportunities for growth and/or mutual correction as other members of the leadership team and the church. Over time there may even arise needs for vocational reorientation and/or change, but such decisions must be for the mutual welfare of the pastors, the pastoral team and the church.

Secondly, the primary task of church leadership must be defined as the discernment and enablement of the many gifts of Christ in the church. The mission of the multiple ministry is to call out and strengthen the ministry of others. Ministry by multiplication of ministry is the focus. There is not one ministry in the church, but many. Church leadership's singular opportunity and calling is the enablement of these ministries.

How do Mennonite Brethren churches move toward such styles of church leadership? I submit several suggestions in conclusion.

First, the church and church leadership must pray and discern out a group of leaders from the church to meet weekly with the pastor/pastors. The purpose of these weekly meetings is enablement for ministry, discipling for leadership in the church, mutual support and encouragement in the work of following Christ and leading his people.

Secondly, every church should pray out such a leadership team of at least 8-10 people, 20-30 in large churches. As the call of these people is legitimated by their ministry, some should be sent on for advanced training and others should be encouraged to disciple a new generation of leaders. Just as new converts should always be entering the church and maturing, so also new leaders should be discerned out of the church continually for discipling, for training and for leadership to enable and disciple others. Some of these leaders will be called to leadership positions in other churches,

some will be called to plant new churches, some will be commissioned to bear witness to Christ overseas, and some will continue to serve in the local church that called them into leadership ministries. But all will be leaders engaged in enabling others for ministry in the body of Christ.

Thirdly, the criteria for this discernment of leaders should be the qualifications for church leadership outlined in the Pastoral, i.e., mature Christians who have proven themselves as teachers, servants, shepherds and community builders in the church. The recognized leaders and the emerging leaders must encourage and disciple each other as they ask what does it mean to follow Jesus and what does it mean to lead Jesus' people in this city or country this week, this year and this decade.

Fourthly, the leadership team--the recognized leaders and emerging leaders who are being discipled--must define its ministry as the encouragement and enablement of the many gifts within the church. The leaders of the church must understand themselves as enablers, catalysts, encouragers, motivators, stimulators of the gifts. Their task is not to do it all, but to enable others to fulfill the ministry given them by Christ for the growth and upbuilding of the church.

The critical issue facing Mennonite Brethren church leaders is how to translate manifold giftedness in the body into ministries for the body. How can all become viable ministers in the church? To the extent that we can translate our many and diverse gifts into real ministries in the church, we will move beyond problems of pastoral "burn out", pastoral vacancies, and leadership crises. The church will grow because the gifts of the body will be enabled and ordered.

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