

God's Plan for
Revitalizing Your Ministry

THE
Spirit
DRIVEN
CHURCH



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CHAPTER 6

LOVING PEOPLE,
NOT USING PEOPLE

During my time of education and for years into my banking career, I (Allen) learned about a number of concepts regarding leadership and management. One of those concepts had to do with “input factors.” Simplistically, input factors are what you invest into a process that results in output. People use the term “input factor” in a variety of disciplines, but I became familiar with it as it is primarily used in business.

As best that I recall, the primary input factors in business are money, real and personal property, and people (usually referred to by the impersonal term, human resources). It never was particularly exciting to me to know that I was a human resource. I never did feel like one; I always felt like a person. For as long as I can remember, in banking and in most of the companies large enough to have departments, the group that was responsible for people was called the Human Resource Department, or HR for short.

As far as employer/employee correspondence is concerned, I never did get a letter from the bank that said, “Dear Human Resource.” The worst I ever received was “Dear Valued Employee.” I have to admit that “Dear Valued Employee” was still better than “Dear Human Resource.” It could have been worse. The letter could have said, “To whom it may concern.” Fortunately, most letters said, “Dear Allen.”

When I left banking and went to seminary, I said good-bye to Human Resources. I thought that in ministry, both churches and parachurch ministries, they must have something other than human resources; they must have something like the Ministry Care Department, or maybe the Servant Service Section.

To my dismay, even in large churches and in many parachurch ministries, some still use the term “human resource,” though many use the term “Personnel Department.” I like that better; I am still a person.

By now you are asking, “Where is this guy going?” In this chapter, we will be addressing a tendency in churches and parachurch ministries to forget how important people are to God. We will be looking at the struggle leadership has, often unknowingly, of using people rather than loving people. We will be examining how a leader executes time management through delegation and training in the new light of ministry.

THE LEADER IS THE SLAVE

To me, one of the most powerful stories in Scripture is in John 13. Jesus and his disciples were eating a meal when Jesus got up and began washing their feet. What makes this act difficult to grasp is that in a home that had servants at that time, washing the feet of the guests was the job of the servant lowest in the order of hierarchy. Jesus was assuming the role of the lowest servant. After he finished serving them, he taught them.

“You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you” (John 13:13–15).

For a long time, I believed that the foot-washing lesson was for leaders to remember that they are serving those they lead. I think that is where they get the term *servant-leader*. Lately, I discovered an additional lesson I believe Jesus wanted us to learn; it has to do with the role Jesus accepted as being the lowest of servants.

At the beginning of John 13, it says that Jesus knew that it was time for him to go back to the Father. Jesus knew that he was about to return to the glory he came from, that of God himself. Yet he took this lowest of all positions. From a worldly point of view, you could draw a continuum line with God at one end and the lowest person in the world at the other end. Jesus is obviously at God's end of the continuum. But Jesus demonstrated an extreme shift by taking the servant role at the very opposite end of the continuum. And Jesus did not give up his position as Christ while he made that shift. That is the power of this story.

The lesson that Jesus demonstrated was that leaders always have two roles. First, the leader is a steward or agent for Christ, leading as Christ's representative. The leader is not more important or valuable than any other follower of Christ.

Second, the leader is a servant, serving those being led and doing it from the *heart*. This means that the leader leads while serving those being led. If the leader does not make the switch in his heart, but only in his behavior, they could easily become like the Pharisees. Jesus is asking leaders to do what he did, which is to accept these two roles. We will identify a leader who accepts both of these roles as a servant-leader.

The two roles of servant leadership are seen clearly in the Great Commandment, found in Matthew 22. The leader is to love God, which is foundational to the stewardship role of leading the people of Christ's church. The leader is to love others, which is foundational to the role of serving others (those led).

USING PEOPLE

In our travels and meetings with a variety of church leaders, we have noticed a tendency for ministry leaders to perceive people as "human resources" and to forget their role as ministers to those people. When people become only a "human resource," an "input factor" invested to produce a successful output, they become a tool for leaders to use for their desired result. We believe the vast majority of Christian leaders

do not intentionally ponder how they might use people for the their own purposes or to make themselves look good or make work their easier. We believe that the tendency to use people (to see them as primarily a human resource) is a function of several influences.

- Using people can be a result of forgetting (or ignorance of) the depth of the stewardship role to which Christ called his leaders.
- Using people can be a result of forgetting (or ignorance of) the depth of the servant leadership role to which Christ called his leaders.
- Using people can often stem from the current trend of adopting secular leadership and management techniques without overlaying them with God's love-based model of servant leadership.
- Using people can result from a lack of awareness about the impact that normal leadership and management activities have on people without the influence of love through servant leadership. *We are not arguing against the use of leadership and management techniques, only their use without overlaying God's love for his children.*

For the rest of this chapter, we will be focusing on the role of servant leadership to minister to the people being led. In later chapters, we will explore the servant-leader's role as a steward for God. This stewardship relates to leading the church toward its God-given purpose and mission through God's unique vision and plan for the ministry.

MINISTRY OF DELEGATION

One of the significant activities of a leader is assigning and directing the activities of those he leads, an activity frequently called delegation.

A leaders usually delegates for one of two reasons:

1. Delegation to get something done or save the leader time.

2. Delegation to accomplish God's purpose and mission for the church while at the same time providing a means to serve, love, and develop the servant.

1. Delegation for the Sole Purpose of Getting Something Done or Saving the Leader Time

Jack was pastor over the children's ministries and had been so for sixteen years. He was fortunate to have a number of very good teachers, most of whom required little oversight. It was that time of year again when Jack had to line up teachers for the season from September through May, and he was busy at it. All the classes now had teachers except for third grade girls.

Maggie had been teaching that group of girls now for nine years and was fantastic. It was a large group, but Maggie had a real gift at recruiting volunteers to help her, even when she was going to be absent herself. She was very organized, an excellent communicator, well liked and respected. Yet she had a desire to move on to something more challenging.

Most teachers did not have an assistant and so had to do everything themselves unless they could find someone to help. However, Janet was Maggie's assistant. She started helping Maggie while she was a senior in high school. With Maggie's coaching and encouragement, she could step in when Maggie was away and the class functioned normally. Janet was looking forward to taking over the class on her own. However, Pastor Jack needed them to stay together with the same class again. So they agreed.

What is notable about this scenario is that Jack needed someone to handle the third grade girls, and that is what he got. From Jack's perspective, he got the job done, and all is well because, after all, Maggie and Janet enjoy what they do.



Joyce was the women's ministry director over a large group of three hundred women. She enjoyed this ministry. Then again, she enjoyed most everything in life, including her tennis club. She would do more in the tennis club if she had the time but she did not. Women's ministry consumed too much time.

It occurred to Joyce that one of the things she did that took much time was the word processing, printing, and mailing of the monthly women's ministry newsletter. It had grown to a six-page document and required about five hours a week to produce.

One of the women in the group was Naomi, an older woman but retired from being a secretary for a publishing company. Naomi was so good that she could do the newsletter in her sleep. The problem was that Naomi was tired of word processing and publishing and wanted take some Bible courses to prepare her to spend her later years as a missionary in Latin America. She just needed more Bible training.

Joyce really needed Naomi to take over the newsletter so Joyce could become more involved in the tennis club. What was Naomi going to say? She felt guilty for thinking about herself and not Joyce's need. So she agreed.

Joyce accomplished her goal. She was able to recover the five hours a week she wanted in order to do something else. How is Naomi? She is doing an unbelievable job at the newsletter. It is amazingly professional, just as Joyce had expected.

Both Jack and Joyce accomplished what they wanted to accomplish. Both Jack and Joyce led people to accomplish the ministry they believe God called them to lead. Jack filled all the teacher roles he wanted to fill, including the third grade girls' class by keeping Maggie and Janet. He had a great team to get the job done, and done well. Joyce accomplished what she wanted to accomplish. She now has gifted Naomi putting out a newsletter that any women's director would covet.

But what about God's vision for Maggie, Janet, and Naomi? Maggie is still doing third grade girls, even though she is challenged to step into something more stretching. Janet is not having the opportunity to try her wings as she would like to do and feels she is ready

for. Naomi is doing a great job, but the ministry to which God has called her will have to wait.

THE SERVANT-LEADER APPROACH

Let us run those two scenarios again, only this time let us change the motivations of both Pastor Jack and Joyce to be that of the servant-leader who is a lover of those he is leading. Remember the two roles of the servant-leader: (1) to be a steward or agent for Christ, leading as Christ's representative, and (2) to be a servant, serving those being led.

2. Delegation to Accomplishing God's Purpose and Mission for the Church While at the Same Time Providing a Means to Serve, Love, and Develop the Servant

Jack was pastor over the children's ministries and had been so for sixteen years. He was fortunate to have a number of very good teachers, most of whom required little oversight. It was that time of year again when Jack had to line up teachers for the season from September through May and he was busy at it. All the classes now had teachers except for third grade girls.

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Most teachers did not have an assistant and so had to do everything themselves, unless they could find someone to help. However, Janet was Maggie's assistant. She started helping Maggie while she was a senior in high school. With Maggie's coaching and encouragement, she could step in when Maggie was away and the class functioned normally. Janet was looking forward to taking over the class on her own.

Maggie and Janet were a great team. Pastor Jack would love to have them to stay together with the same class again—it would mean less work for him, but it was not the best for the future of Maggie or Janet.

Maggie had a gift for organization and leadership. She recognized new talent when she saw it and knew how to develop it. The gift God had given Maggie was something this church could use; for that matter, any church could use it. Asking Maggie to teach the third grade girls was no longer a growing experience for her and would limit what God may want to do in her life for the years to come.

Janet was young, but was fully able to handle her own class and wanted to.

Jack pondered what he could do to give Maggie a stretching, growing experience and still accomplish what was needed to be consistent with the church's purpose and mission for God in the lives of the children.

It did not take long for Jack to realize he could minister to these two servants while at the same time perform his role as a ministry leader. He asked Janet to step up and take the lead teacher role for the third grade girls. Janet was thrilled to have Pastor Jack trust her with the challenge. Maggie had trained Janet well, and Janet was ready for the stretch.

Jack then asked Maggie if she would be willing to be his assistant. This would accomplish two things. Maggie could start a new challenge with all the new experiences it would bring, and Jack could begin developing his replacement, so he could consider any new challenge God may put in front of him.

What a deal. Jack was a dual-role servant-leader. He acted as a steward of the responsibilities God gave him regarding the purpose, mission, and unique vision of the church. At the same time, he was a steward of the responsibilities God gave him regarding serving, loving, and discipling two of God's servants.



Joyce was the women's ministry director over a large group of three hundred women. She enjoyed this ministry. Then again, she enjoyed most everything in life, including her tennis club. Joyce saw the tennis club as an outreach opportunity to women. Establishing a new outreach like that was just what the women's ministry needed to spur on more women to do something similar. However, it was impossible since the women's ministry consumed so much of her time.

It occurred to Joyce that one of the things she did that took much time was the word processing, printing, and mailing of the monthly women's ministry newsletter. It had grown to a six-page document and required about five hours a week to produce. If Joyce could delegate that to someone else, it would free the time for Joyce to focus on developing more outreach; something that is in line with the purpose and mission of the church.

One of the women in the group was Naomi, an older woman and retired from being a secretary for a publishing company. Naomi was so good that she could do the newsletter in her sleep. The problem was that Naomi was tired of typing and publishing and wanted take some Bible courses to prepare her to spend her later years as a missionary in Latin America. Naomi spoke Spanish well, but she just needed more Bible training.

What was Joyce to do?

Joyce realized that since Naomi is retired, she has time to do the newsletter and take an online Bible course. And Joyce could be her mentor. In addition, Joyce thought that Naomi, as she was ready, could begin to write a women's Bible course that could be published in the newsletter.

Naomi was thrilled. What a challenge. Not only does she have a great mentor and friend in Joyce, she has the opportunity to learn two things. She will learn more Bible, which is something she will need on the mission field. She will also learn how to write Bible lessons for women, something she will also need on the mission field. Joyce now has the time to begin leading a new thrust in women's ministry.

Joyce was a servant-leader for God, leading people to accomplish Christ's purpose, mission, and unique vision for the church. At the same time she helped accomplish Christ's purpose, mission, and unique vision for Naomi through serving, loving, and discipling her.

IMPLICATIONS

In the second scenario, Jack and Joyce were able to see people as more than a human resource to use to accomplish ministry. They saw ministry as an opportunity to accomplish God's purpose, mission, and unique vision for the church while simultaneously accomplishing God's purpose, mission, and unique vision in the lives of the ministers.

GETTING TO KNOW PEOPLE

Another significant activity of servant-leaders, besides delegating, is getting to know each person being led. To know someone is one of the most difficult yet awesome tasks a leader faces. Yet it is the key to maintaining a balance between leading God's people to accomplish the purpose, mission, and unique vision of the church, while serving the lives of the ministers.

To know someone who is under our leadership is difficult because it requires a great deal of us.

- It requires listening with the "third ear." That ear hears what the heart is saying.
- It requires selecting carefully the questions to be asked. Not all questions are appropriate. There are some areas of a person's life that are not anyone's business but God's or certain special and trusted people.
- It requires trustworthiness at all times, which means keeping everything that is said confidential unless there

is permission to repeat it. Being trustworthy also requires a guarding of intentions. It is easy to fall into the trap of asking questions that can later be used as weapons to manipulate a person.

- Listening, asking questions, and trustworthiness require us as leaders to be sure we have no hidden agendas.

Both Jack and Joyce had to spend time getting to know Maggie, Janet, and Naomi. They had to learn the same information we have to learn about those under our direct leadership. What are their hopes, dreams, and fears? How long have they been doing what it is they are doing? Is it time to start challenging them again? What gift has God given them? What training do they need? We will come up with much more to learn as we take on the role of ministering to those under our direct leadership.

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

In addition to what we have already discussed, there are supporting activities involved in being a servant-leader. One is to prepare people for expanded ministry—as God would define it for them.

We should meet with each person we are leading and jointly create a development plan aimed at God's unique vision for that person. After creating the plan, coaching and training are natural next steps to making sure the plan happens. Periodically evaluating progress, which is part of coaching, will keep the plan in the person's mind. Encouraging each person we lead will help him or her stay energized and focused.

QUALITY RESULTS

A balanced view of accomplishing the purpose, mission, and unique vision of the church while developing the servants will change what

leaders evaluate. When leaders focus on ministry and projects with people as a resource, then numbers, dollars, and trends become the basis for evaluation. The growth of those being led is then often pushed aside. When leaders focus on people, then the growth of the follower becomes the basis for evaluation. In such cases, the ministry process is often pushed aside. When leaders focus on both the growth of the people and the ministry process, then a new set of standards becomes the basis of evaluation—standards that include both people and process. Discovering the new set of standards would be a great exercise for the senior leadership of your church. We are confident it will include a balance of both the Great Commandments to love God and others, and the Great Commission to go and make disciples.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Usually when leaders think about environment, they consider items such as friendliness, safety, cleanliness, colors, light, and comfortable-ness. As important as those things are, we will focus on a value environment.

Many churches we visit emphasize finding volunteers to do the ministry. Some churches announce the need for volunteers from the front during a worship service. Some churches have campaigns to fill the various ministry slots needed to keep the church running smoothly. The large majority of the time, communication centers on finding people to step up and help. Some use excitement, guilt, warning, and pressure.

Churches with servant-leaders focus on the person while leading the ministry process. In churches with servant-leaders, there is a constant awareness of the people: where they are in their walk with God, their knowledge of his Word, their skills and experiences, and their hopes and fears. That information is then used and balanced with the needs of the church as a body. It is not only about getting

ministry done. It is also about developing people. This is the type of environment that true servant-leaders try to foster in the churches they lead.

PROVIDING FOR GROWTH

Outside of spiritual problems in the church and negative economic conditions in the community, there are two primary reasons that can cause a church to reach and stay on a plateau or start to decline. Those two reasons are a facility that can hold no more people and an overworked leadership. If the facility has no more room, there are several potential solutions: hold more services each week, move to or build a larger facility, create a new church with some of the members, thereby reducing the number of people attending, or create a number of house churches in strategic locations around your community.

More critical is overworked leadership. Tired and hurting, Moses found his load far too much for him to handle. His father-in-law, Jethro, approached him with some great advice; Moses needed more leadership help. Even in the days of Moses, overworked leadership was an issue.

To provide for and to maintain growth over a long period, congregations must have adequate leadership in place, which will require a leadership development program to prepare new leadership talent to replace those who leave or die, as well as to fill newly created jobs as the need arises. A quality leadership development ministry does not happen accidentally; leadership needs to make it happen intentionally.

One of the easily ignored steps in leadership development is practice. For people to develop their leadership skills, they need to lead. However, for the church it is a win-win situation. We are able to give them leadership developmental responsibilities that fit their skill levels and at the same time have their growing skill as a reserve to grow the church.

LOVING PEOPLE, NOT USING PEOPLE

In the last chapter, we concluded that a leader's walk with Christ is central to his or her love for God and for people, as well as knowing God's will.

In this chapter, we concluded from Scripture that leaders have two roles: (1) to be a steward or agent for Christ, leading as Christ's representative, and (2) to be a servant, serving those being led, keeping the two roles in balance.

In the next chapter, we will be wrestling with the times when it seems that God is saying, "No."

About the Authors

Dr. Timothy Robnett—

Inspiring and equipping people for effective evangelism and church life is the focus of Tim's ministry.

Following his university training at Stanford, where Tim played football on two Rose Bowl championship teams, he interned as a youth minister at Peninsula Bible Church, where God sparked his desire for vocational ministry. After attending Western Seminary, he served as an associate pastor in Bakersfield and then as senior pastor of Palm Springs Baptist Church, (Palm Springs, California) for eleven years. In 1994, Tim received his Doctor of Ministry degree from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

Throughout his leadership to the Fellowship of Christ, and the Conservative Southern California, and Evangelism Network of

Since 1990, Robnett Association. His ministry has included festivals in twelve nations, evangelists training sessions coordinating collaborative missions in several states in India and several African nations, and, since 2000, directing the Next Generation Alliance ministry in equipping a new generation of proclamation evangelists.

Tim also served as an Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Internship Director at Multnomah Biblical Seminary from 1996–2004. He coordinated the Master of Arts program in pastoral studies. He also developed additional majors in ministry management, evangelism, and family ministries.

Tim married his high-school sweetheart, Sharon, in 1971. They have two adult children, their son Joel and his wife Kate, and their daughter Karen. He enjoys horseback riding, weightlifting, racquetball, and gardening. He can be contacted at tim.robnett@palau.org



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Allen H. Quist—

“Few men are more passionate and articulate about godly, biblical church management and leadership than Allen Quist,”—Dr. Don Brake, dean and vice president of Multnomah Biblical Seminary.

This passion has developed from many years of experiences, beginning when Allen was a young boy. He first learned leadership from his father, who challenged him never to be a quitter. With this strong foundation, Allen went on to attend Washington State University, marry his college sweetheart, and begin a family and a thirty-five year career in banking.

Besides graduating School and Northwest Allen spent much of his last developing valuable leadership business lending activities, retail branches, and helping up to and through two bank

During the later years began participating in foreign activities. In 1998, feeling hunger to know Jesus Christ

banking career to complete a Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies in 2002 at Multnomah Biblical Seminary.

Allen is now an adjunct faculty member at Multnomah Biblical Seminary in Portland, Oregon, and is currently enrolled at Regent University, working on a Doctorate in Strategic Leadership.

Along with Rick Battershell, CPA, and Troy Anderson, an attorney, Allen co-founded Ministry Management Seminars, a non-profit organization dedicated to equipping church leaders on matters of accounting, law, financial management, strategic planning, conflict mediation, leadership refocusing, and church re-birthing.

Allen helps church leaders intentionally adopt a leadership model dependent on God's leading. As opportunities open, he shares his passion for leadership in other countries.

Allen and Mary reside in Troutdale, Oregon, near their two sons and daughter and their families. Allen can be contacted at allen@spiritdrivenchurch.net.



from Pacific Coast Banking Agricultural Credit School, two decades in banking skills through managing small leading a region of twenty-four manage change and transition mergers.

of his banking career, Allen missions and ministry related called to focus on his growing more deeply, Allen left his

Recommended Reading

Anderson, Neil T. and Charles Mylander. *Setting Your Church Free*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1994.

This book addresses the fundamental issues of church leadership today.

Biehl, Bobb. *Masterplanning: A Complete Guide for Building a Strategic Plan for Your Business, Church, or Organization*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997.

Using a step-by-step process for leading an organization that begins with understanding and developing a heart inspired vision, Biehl shows readers how they can turn that vision into reality for the church or mission's organization.

Bridges, William. *Managing Transitions*. Reading, MA: Perseus Books, 1991.

William Bridges is both artful and accurate in his dealing with change and transition. This is an extremely useful work for churches that struggle with change because they fail to recognize the issue of fear that Bridges describes.

Clinton, J. Robert. *The Making of a Leader*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1988.

A well organized presentation of the stages of leadership growth and development.

Covey, Stephen R. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989.

Before you can lead others, you must order your personal life. Integrity demands congruity of heart and life. Covey shares effective principles for achieving personal victory and then public victory, creating harmony in one's personal and public life.

Curtis, B. and J. Eldredge. *The Sacred Romance*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997.

This is a wakeup book. While it is addressed to individuals, it takes little imagination to think of it corporately. God is a lover, pursuing us into a loving and adventurous relationship with Him.

George, Carl F., and Robert E. Logan. *Leading and Managing Your Church*. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1987.

A unique approach to the everyday details of managing the church, seen through the eyes of one who equips God's people to do the work of ministry. Logan and George present many helpful principles for leading the people of God by the power of his Word and Spirit.

Malphurs, Aubrey. *Advanced Strategic Planning*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.

This book is rich with helpful ideas, presenting them in the context of a strategic management model. This would be a good book for a management team such as a board of elders to work through together.

Malphurs, Aubrey, *Developing Vision for Ministry in the 21st Century*. Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1992.

A step-by-step approach to creating a vision for your organization, with ample illustrations and worksheets to assist you in creating and implementing the vision.

Malphurs, Aubrey. *Doing Church: A Biblical Guide for Leading Ministries Through Change*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1999.

Don't let the size of the book fool you. It is a small book but it is thick with thought provoking material.

Malphurs, Aubrey. *Values-Driven Leadership*. Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1996.

An excellent and extensive survey in understanding the importance of discovering, clarifying and using core values in leadership and organizational management.

Malphurs, Aubrey. *Vision America*. Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1994.

Oncken, William, III. *Monkey Business*. Provo, UT: Executive Excellence Publishing, 2000.

This is a book on the art of delegation that you will never forget.

Maxwell, John C. *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998.

Dynamic and practical, this book includes twenty-one principles that apply across the board for any leader and any leadership role.

Schwarz, Christian A. *Natural Church Development*. Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 1996.

Outlines basic principles and factors that contribute to church health and growth.

Stanley, Andrew. *Visioneering*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 1999.

Through a study of the life of Nehemiah, Stanley applies age-old principles of leadership to leaders today in their challenge to create a biblical vision for ministry.

Westing, Harold J. *Church Staff Handbook*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1997.

A seasoned church leader shares practical insights for leading the church staff. Gives

practical information on understanding leadership styles and team building, and demonstrates how the Spirit of God can engage in administrative processes.

Wilkes, C. Gene. *Jesus On Leadership*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998.
A valuable contribution to understanding the unique qualities in Jesus as a leader.
Practical descriptions and definitions of servant leadership and how it works in today's world.

Sanders, J. Oswald. *Spiritual Leadership*. Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1977.
A focus on the character qualities essential for a truly Spirit-filled and directed leader.

Spirit Driven Church by Timothy Robnett and Allen Quist

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