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# The EMPOWERED Church

*RELEASING MINISTRY THROUGH EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP*

IAN JAGELMAN

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CHAPTER FOUR

The Power of Structures

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CHAPTER FOUR

# THE POWER OF STRUCTURES

## *I The Need for Flexibility*

The Christian Life Assembly is a church of eight hundred members which over the past five years has had three different senior pastors. It had the same senior pastor for nearly fifteen years, and under his leadership there was continuing growth, despite the fact that he was neither overly charismatic in personality nor powerful in the pulpit. When he retired, his replacement was dynamic, both in terms of personality and in the pulpit and yet the church stopped growing.

The United Church of Hope is forty years old and has seventy-two members and an average Sunday morning attendance of about sixty adults and three small children.

What is surprising is that the fundamental organisational structures of both churches are the same. They both have governing boards to whom the pastor is accountable, boards which have oversight of both spiritual and financial matters. All major decisions affecting the life and future of both churches are voted on by the board, and no staff appointments can be made without the approval of a congregational meeting.

The structures of both churches contain elements both of a bureaucracy and a democracy, but have few of the dynamic elements associated with organisations which have to survive in a competitive environment.

Democracy and bureaucracy are suited to situations where everything is going fine and the context of the organisation is supportive rather than hostile. However, in today's world this is rarely the situation for the Christian church. A local church

normally exists in an environment of constant change, where it competes with sport and other philosophies or ideologies. In many cases it is opposed by hostile forces determined to see its destruction. Alternatively it may be confronted by an apathy which simply sees the church as harmless and irrelevant.

Under such circumstances the organisational structure of the church needs to be dynamic, flexible and empowering, though it rarely is.

In the case of a new church, the task of designing and redesigning structures during it's early life and growth is of crucial importance. However, for existing churches the task is even more difficult.

What was the last significant change to your church's organisational structure and when did it occur? How would you rate the present need for change?

## *II How Organisations Develop Their Structure—Choices*

Unless we are looking at a church which is decades old and has a highly complex written constitution, the organisational structure of a church is usually in a state of flux. It is still forming itself and is the result of a multitude of small choices which are being made. None of the choices in themselves seem particularly significant, but taken together they will determine whether the resulting structure is empowering or disempowering.

These choices that are available to people have been summarised under the following three categories:[1]

(a) Choices for maintenance or greatness
So many decisions made by church leaders and committee members are to preserve what they have, not to achieve what might be possible. Vision is sometimes defined as 'what could be'. Many decisions are taken entirely by looking back, without any sense of vision. For example, decisions about the type of music used, the type of clothes worn by clergy, and the translation of the Bible read in church are often decisions for maintenance rather than greatness.

In fact, often no decisions are made at all. The need for change is not identified, and the refusal to consider change is, in itself, a decision for maintenance.

Greatness, in biblical terms, is a choice for maximum fruitfulness. In the parable of the sower, there is reference to different yields of 30-, 60- and 100-fold. The greater danger for maintenance choices is for the church with a 30-fold yield. It is not like the parable of the talents, where the talent is buried in the ground and produces nothing. The danger is the desire to protect and maintain the 30-fold increase rather than press on and try for 60-fold.

(b) Choices for caution or courage
In many governmental bureaucracies the comment 'that's a courageous decision' is simply another way of saying you are being unwise. Caution is a virtue and courage is an act of foolishness.

Sadly, many church organisations reflect these same values. Tradition is more highly valued than effectiveness, and a cautious response to proposals for change often defers decision making until it is too late.

As I write, a major denomination in Australia has just discovered that one-third of its churches in a particular area are no longer financially viable. This has not happened overnight. It is the result of years of cautious decision making.

Now the leaders of the denomination are being forced to take 'courageous decisions' in a context of high risk with little room for trial and error. Their options are now extremely limited in terms of the time they have and the choices available to them.

Courageous decisions do not necessarily place the whole organisation at risk. In fact, good decisions never do so. It should always be possible to calculate the impact of a decision if it fails and know that the church is strong enough to

[1] See P Block, *The Empowered Manager*, p 11.

withstand the impact of such a failure. Sadly, pastors who undertake 'courageous' building programs, way beyond the financial capacity of the congregation, are quite often not stepping out in faith or courage but are acting out of fantasy, and the whole congregation suffers the consequences.

There is plenty of evidence that God will protect a church from the consequences of a courageous decision which was wrong. There is little evidence of God's protection of Christian organisations whose leaders have acted foolishly rather than courageously, on the basis of their own egos.

(c) Choices for dependency or autonomy

In many churches initiatives by members rather than by leaders are interpreted as rebellion. The church is run on military lines, whereby members are discouraged from thinking and are encouraged to simply let God's anointed leaders tell them what to do.

This style of leadership quickly creates dependency and stifles any sense of autonomy and initiative.

It reflects a certain belief system held by many church leaders and business managers. In management theory it involves what is called theory 'x' and theory 'y'. Those who hold to theory 'x' believe that people are fundamentally unreliable and need to be told what to do.

In the church this theory is widely held, to the point where information is deliberately withheld from the laity in the belief that they do not have the ability to be trusted with the information. Prior to the Reformation of the sixteenth century, the Bible was maintained in Latin lest the people be able to read it for themselves! Today many Protestant churches, at a parish level, maintain an approach whereby only a few people really know what is going on and make all the significant decisions.

Alternatively, theory 'y' maintains that people are inherently reliable, provided they are given the required information and support.

For many years after the Second World War American industry reflected theory 'x' beliefs and Japanese industry reflected theory 'y'. This has now changed, but in both countries there are businesses which are failing because theory 'x' continues to dominate.



In the church, theory 'x' has dominated the thinking of leadership for centuries. Theory 'y' has been challenged by the Roman Catholic Church on traditional grounds, and by Protestants on theological grounds. The papacy is an institution grounded in theory 'x', and the 'total depravity of humanity' is a reason to hold to theory 'x' as well. It is strange that churches so different in theology are so similar in structure, or so it seems to the public perception.

However, circumstances are forcing Catholic, Protestant and Pentecostal local churches to re-examine where they stand on this issue. The role of Catholic priests is being redefined due to the falling number of people offering for the priesthood. Many Protestant pastors are retraining and are being exposed, for the first time, to modern management principles. Pentecostal pastors are discovering that the 'anointing' is no substitute for sound leadership principles.

In advocating the choice of 'autonomy' over 'dependence' I am not meaning to encourage either democracy or anarchy. Churches in which all significant decisions are subject to a congregational vote are, except where the votes are manipulated politically, likely to result in a cautious and maintenance approach.

Autonomy does not mean anarchy. I have already spelt out the power of vision, mission and value statements. Anarchy can result only where there are no such statements or where there is a total breakdown of relationships between the leaders and the group which wants to break away.

Adopting theory 'y' does not mean adopting democracy. My solution is the formation of leadership and ministry teams as discussed in chapter three.

## *III A Model of How Organisations Form—Bureaucracies*

There are four general ways of identifying bureaucratic attitudes in either the design of church structures or in the way the church is being run.[2]

[2] See P Block, *The Empowered Manager*, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1987, for a discussion of the difference between bureaucratic and entrepreneurial structures in business, a model which has influenced the author's thinking.

(a) A top–down attitude towards authority
Where this is the case you will find a typically hierarchical structure in place. It is typical of organisations like the military and most forms of government. There is strongly centralised control (eg a single board with all power), precise definitions given to all roles (the delegation of responsibility without delegated authority), strongly built-in discipline (a strong reporting system of accountability) and strong overall control. If authority is delegated, it is structured so that many people have a little authority but no-one other than those at the top of the organisation has any real authority.

(b) A strong self-interested or self-advancement attitude among second and subsequent tier leaders
This is detected by discovering what is motivating people to accept tasks in the church. If they are motivated by promotion or reward, rather than a desire to serve the vision and mission of the church, a bureaucracy is forming. The emphasis will be on promotion rather than meaning. People will be looking for ways to exploit the church's structure rather than serve its vision.

(c) Exploitation of other people's skills by manipulation
Manipulation is the control of people's behaviour without them being aware of it. It is playing politics rather than giving authentic leadership. It denies people the opportunity of true and faithful service. It is the exploitation of people who themselves are motivated by self-interest.

(d) A belief that one's future is in someone else's hands
Does the structure create passive rather than active followers who increasingly lose any incentive to take initiative and become dependent on directives from above? If so, a bureaucracy is forming. Some ethnic churches seem to be prone to this trend for cultural reasons.

These four elements of bureaucracies are present in many large churches and in themselves are not wholly wrong. In many ways they provide the organisation with a strong sense of stability upon which further growth can be built. However, over time this kind of structure (skeleton) can become restrictive and prevent further growth.



## *IV Seven Reasons Why People Choose to Belong to Bureaucratic Structures*

I have indicated the four general characteristics of bureaucratic structures and why many elements of these characteristics are helpful and not harmful. Such structures are stable, which is good, but inflexible, which is not good. It is useful to examine why leaders and followers alike often feel comfortable within bureaucratic structures despite their inflexibility. The following seven reasons have been given:

(1) It enables leaders to control the church.

(2) Church members feel secure.

(3) Leaders confuse the need for structure with lording it over the church.

(4) A denomination's desire for order is greater than the local church's desire for effectiveness.

(5) Individual church members fear punishment more than they desire to receive a future reward.

(6) People are afraid of change.

(7) People accept that manipulation is inevitable in all organisations, including the church.

## *V An Empowering Model*

Having described the four general characteristics of a bureaucratic structure, I shall now, in an overview, discuss the four general characteristics of what I am calling an 'empowered church'.[3]

1 Shared ownership
In this type of church, people use inclusive language. It is 'our' church, not 'your' church. People are members, not just adherents. A high percentage of members are actually involved, and the possibility of merely being spectators is minimised and actively discouraged.

[3] Again my general thinking is influenced by P Block's model.

Members want their church to grow, and they embrace the vision, mission and value statements as their own. They are consulted about their views and all major decisions but are not necessarily involved in making the decisions. They feel that their opinions are respected but do not feel the need to be involved in all levels of the decision-making process.

When the National Church Life Survey results of my own church were produced in 1996, two interesting trends emerged:

a) Nineteen per cent of members often participate in the decision-making process. But only one per cent of members not involved expressed a desire for an opportunity to be involved.

b) Less than five per cent of members are unaware of our vision and only two percent expressed a view that we need to rethink the vision.

Because we have a strong sense of community, people are committed to our vision without having to be involved in the decision-making process, although the vision of the church is regularly communicated.

Members are self-motivated and often volunteer rather than wait to be asked. They often see the needs of the organisation before the leaders of the church have the opportunity to present these needs to the church.

The members do not wait to be told what to do. See chapter seven for a full discussion of the value of membership.

2 Love as the motivation for service

Although there may be a ladder of promotion whereby people are able to be tested as to maturity and giftedness (1 Tim 3:10), people are not motivated by the desire for promotion itself. There is respect for both laity and clergy, so that the 'ordained ministry' is not sought as a symbol of spiritual elitism. The role of full-time leadership is not rejected as ungodly and nor is it denied the respect which the Bible says is its due (1 Thess 5:12).

Strong leaders can have servant hearts (Mark 10:45), and lay followers feel valued because they are encouraged to serve the Lord in a meaningful way. The use of 'titles' is minimised and is not used as a way of 'rewarding' those who put in extra effort.



Car parking spaces are not allocated on the basis of position held but rather on the basis of need. Musicians who have to carry heavy equipment may be given parking places closest to the meeting venue, rather than the senior pastor.

Name tags are kept to a minimum and are used to help build community, not identify roles held. Identifying roles is better achieved through a noticeboard with photographs rather than by badges of office.

Love for the Lord will motivate what is done, not who sees what is done. Recognition of a job well done will be discreet rather than ostentatious, in the knowledge that many faithful workers will never be publicly recognised and their roles should not be despised or undervalued by the way others are treated. People who are willing to serve only for the recognition they receive are normally unreliable in their service and fickle in their commitment. Recognition does not give meaning to a task but is positive when it is an authentic expression of encouragement, not a manipulative form of reward.

3 Commonly held values

The Christian church is an organisation driven by values, not by profit. As such it attracts people with strong belief systems, whether they can articulate them or not. The senior pastor and the woman leading a small class of five-year-old children have equally strong beliefs undergirding their function within the life of the church.

Conflicts which arise between such people are often explained in terms of different personality types. However, it is their belief systems which may really be in conflict. Included in these beliefs is the system of values which was discussed in chapter two.

Effectively empowered churches harness the power of these values and recognise the need for a strong unity of purpose. Paul tells the Philippians he is praying that they will have the same love, being one in spirit and purpose (Phil 2:2). Their values, he observes, will be a reflection of their experience (Phil 2:1). Where their experience is inadequate to shape right values, he directs their attention to the experience of Christ (Phil 2:5–8).

It is our experience of God and the example of Christ which should fundamentally shape our values. Unfortunately, this is frequently not the case. When it comes to our beliefs about the

church, it is often our past experience of church which shapes our belief system.

For the church to be empowered, this cycle must be broken. However, so long as members believe the church is a bureaucratic structure in which manipulation and politics thrive, people will hide their personal values and play the game to reach their personal goals, regardless of its impact on the church as a whole. Headhunting, which used to be a term associated with cannibalism, is now used by aggressive pastors in regard to locating the next youth leader. It is the language of free enterprise, but it does not reflect the values found in an empowered church, no matter what short-term success is achieved.

There is an important distinction between 'successful' and 'effective' leadership. Some leaders can get people to work contrary to their own values, over a short period of time, by the promise of a long-term reward. On the basis of the results they achieve they are deemed successful by those they are accountable to and are promoted accordingly. Consequently, they leave the scene and fail to deliver the rewards which motivated their followers to work hard, contrary to their values. When their replacement takes over, the followers rebel and results decline.

This leadership style is successful over the short term, but is not effective in the long term.

Church leaders who demand sacrificial service which is destructive to family life may achieve short-term success (eg the youth ministry may grow), but long term a culture has been sown in the church which is very destructive.

Long-term effectiveness is only achieved when values are respected and reinforced by the style of leadership at each level of the church organisation. Sometimes the senior pastor is the nice guy who respects everyone's values, but his or her associate adopts the role of the hatchet man or woman. Other times the roles are reversed.

Such 'good cop/bad cop' behaviour may exist within the free enterprise system, but it has no place within the church.

To obtain commitment, not sacrifice, the following four approaches are helpful:[4]

[4] P Block, *The Empowered Manager*, pp 77,78.



i) Stay focused on both what we and those around us want.
ii) Act in ways which give others a sense of ownership.
iii) Confront and discourage passive, non-assertive behaviour.
iv) Create a vision of greatness for yourself and ask others to do the same.

## 4 Creating autonomy without rebellion

In discussing 'how organisations develop their structure', I discussed the three general categories of choice people in churches make. The third general category was the choice for dependency over autonomy (see page 62). I discussed the reasons why leaders are afraid that autonomy may lead to rebellion in terms of theory 'x' and theory 'y'. Autonomy, although creating room for rebellion, need not necessarily lead to it. Let me now suggest five practical ways in which autonomy can be encouraged without rebellion resulting.

(a) Avoid individuals or small teams having long-term responsibility over a single ministry area. This can be achieved by
   i) changing responsibilities every two or three years
   ii) rotating personnel so that leadership does not become a 'right' and remains a privilege
   iii) changing overall structures so that areas overlap and absorb new members naturally
   iv) creating matrix teams so that people cannot work in isolation and are forced to interact with people in other ministry areas
   v) not allowing leaders in youth groups and children's work to move on as the people they work with get older and move to the next age group.

(b) Adopt a culture of organisational change where there is an expectation that roles and responsibilities will change for reasons unrelated to performance.

(c) Keep a flat organisational structure or flatten it if there are too many tiers within the structure. The need to do this will be evident if an organisational flow chart shows a pyramid with three or four tiers of leaders and many involved in ministry who have little contact with the first two tiers of leaders.

(d) Use lower level leaders as consultants. People whose views are valued feel themselves to be part of the whole church, not just the area of ministry in which they are mainly involved.

(e) Allow the principles in regard to real teams (see chapter 3) apply right through the church, particularly the concept of mutual accountability.

In particular, create and reinforce an environment which encourages self-expression. Staff and leaders meetings must encourage a frank and open expression of views, even if such frankness leads to verbal conflict. However, when the discussion is finished, personal relationships should not be affected by the opinions expressed. This can be achieved by

i) the senior pastor modelling the desired behaviour
ii) members being openly confronted about their true views
iii) explaining the culture of discussion to new team members
iv) confronting team members who harbour resentment
v) not allowing people to take sides in the discussion.

## VI The Four Models of Change

Whether one builds one's own structure (as a church planter) or inherits one (when employed by a church), changing structures is a reality most leaders face whether they want to or not. Historically, changes to church organisations and church structures have occurred in one of four ways.[5]

1. Evolution: This occurs when factors bring about gradual change without the deliberate intervention of a catalyst. History would suggest, in the case of the church, that only the fittest (strongest) churches survive this process and, as a result, many churches gradually die and are closed, and only the buildings remain as monuments to the past.

2. Reformation: This occurs when a catalyst for renewal exists within the church but is opposed by those in power. As a result, the organisation divides and a new organisation is born in competition to the old. The old is not changed (initially), though a counter-reformation may take place. The changes are reflected mainly in the new organisation which forms.

3. Revolution: This occurs when the organisation can only be changed by getting rid of those in power who stand in the way of the renewing of the structures. However, since the end never justifies the means, in the economy of God such change generally leaves the structure damaged and incapable of embracing change as a process without further explosive conflicts.

4. Innovation: This occurs when an organisation adopts change as a lifestyle and values change for change's sake. In the corporate world money spent on research and development and time spent on writing new business plans presupposes that nothing remains static for very long.

The message of the church does not change. But the church, which in a broad sense can be seen as the packaging for the gospel, needs to interface with its community if the message is to be heard. It is so much better if this change takes place slowly and pro-actively rather than simply reactively. For this to happen, the leaders of the church need to be keen students of society and not just the Scriptures.

I am reluctant to provide a prototype of an 'empowered church structure' because of denominational and demographic factors. However, I have observed that in many traditional churches change has been implemented by expansion rather than by reformation. For example, where constitutions require a certain board which cannot be removed from the structure, the role of that board is minimalised and a parallel team is developed which is more empowered. Also, I have observed that the type of structure used in a church with a high proportion of working-class people differs from those where the church is predominantly professional.

Also, as a church grows in size—from say 100 to 300 to 700—then the organisational structure will not just expand, it will also change. For this reason I am in favour of organisational structures based on policies (which can be easily rewritten) rather than on constitutions, which can easily become 'our tradition'.

[5] E Gibbs, *I Believe in Church Growth*, Eerdmans, 1982, pp 262,263.

## VII The Process of Change

Three phases of an attack on the problem are necessary.

1. Identify the need for change.
2. Discover the nature of necessary changes and implement them.
3. Reinforce the changes that are made.

There must be a 'refreezing' period, when any changes made are supported until they become a permanent and effective part of the organisation.

Organisation structures are the result of human choices made on the basis of belief systems. Any behavioural change not based on a change in belief systems will not last. Any behavioural change which ignores the human personality types involved in key leadership positions is also likely to fail.

Consequently, changes in belief systems will require reinforcing. As in the parable of the sower, one should not assume that assent, even when given enthusiastically, will last when the fruits of change are not immediately apparent. In fact, once doubts begin, the temptation to revert to old patterns is very difficult to resist. The fear of failure puts enormous pressure on the leader of change to step back into the old familiar and comfortable patterns.

Whether or not the leader of change will persevere is largely determined by the signals he or she receives from others in the organisation. If the process is described in terms of 'discovery', whereby failure is permissible as part of the process, then change will be embraced despite its cost.

However, if the language used involves terms such as 'risk', 'your future is at stake', 'you are on your own this time', then even the strongest leader is likely to become self-protective and forego the long-term wellbeing of the church.

I have a friend who travelled halfway around the world to lead a church through change at the unanimous request of its deacons board. Unfortunately, it was only after he and his family had moved and had begun the process of change that he discovered that those with 'position' power were supporting him but those with 'personal' power were opposed to the changes.

Without the support of all those with influence the process faltered, and he was soon looking for a new job (which he found).

Buildings are reinforced with steel and concrete, but organisational structures are reinforced by influential leaders standing beside the leader of change. The supports must not be removed until the culture of the church changes to reflect the new organisational structure, and this is likely to take years rather than months.

## VIII Mixing Personal and Position Power

Many contemporary writers have recognised that leaders within organisational structures have different sources of authority to draw on when it comes to the influence they have. Jesus recognised this in a critical discussion with his own disciples. In Mark 10:35–45 Jesus contrasts leadership in the kingdom of God with leadership among the Gentiles. Jesus models leadership authority by adopting a servant spirit. The Gentile leaders love to lord it over one another.

In contemporary leadership literature this difference is described in terms of 'position' power and 'personal' power.[6]

1 Sources of positional power
Positional power comes from above and has four typical expressions.

(a) Coercive power, based on fear. In the context of the church this relates to the power of the priest or pastor to discipline members, with the ultimate discipline being excommunication. In the army the ultimate discipline is the firing squad. Sometimes, when I see the way in which church discipline is exercised, there appears to be little difference!

[6] P. Hersey, *The Situational Leader*, Warner Books, 1985, p 78ff.

(b) Connective power, based on the followers' perception of the leader's connection to influential or important persons both inside and outside the organisation. In the context of the church, the senior pastor is assumed to have special access to God, and other key leaders are assumed to have a special relationship with the senior pastor. In a large church the perceived relationship between the senior pastor and well-known visiting ministers further enhances his or her power to lead.

(c) Legitimate power, based on the followers' perception of what is appropriate to someone in the leader's position. This will vary significantly due to denominational expectations, longevity in the position held, and the size of the church.

(d) Reward power, based on the followers' perception of the leader being a source of rewards. Members wishing to climb a perceived ladder may give much greater authority to a leader above them than will a member who is content to remain where he or she is in the church structure. In the Roman Catholic church and Pentecostal churches, priests and pastors seem to have much greater perceived reward power than in many Protestant churches!

3 Sources of personal power

Personal power comes from below and is earned. It has three common expressions.

(a) Expert power, based on the followers' perception of the leader's knowledge, skill and expertise. Increasingly in the Western church there has been an erosion of the position power of clergy. In response, continuing education programs have been developed which are frequently linked to post-graduate degree programs. In many medium-sized and large churches, new pastors are now expected to have a doctor of ministry degree. This reflects the shift from position power to personal power, in part caused by the fact that church members are no longer theologically illiterate. Pastors must keep ahead if they are to have the capacity to influence.

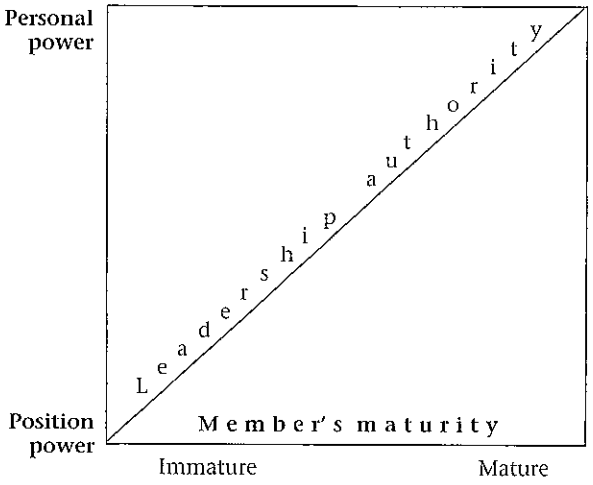
(b) Informational power, based on the followers' perception that the leader possesses or has access to information that is valuable to them. In sacramental traditions this relates to insights into the spiritual mysteries of the sacraments.



In evangelical circles this may involve the mastery of Greek and Hebrew, which even literate lay people feel inadequate about. To some extent it is assumed that clergy know more about the Bible, but it is not assumed that they necessarily pray more or know God better.

In charismatic and Pentecostal circles it is assumed that God will speak directly to leaders through such things as dreams, visions, revelations, words of wisdom and words of knowledge. While this is not necessarily the case, and many Pentecostal pastors and evangelical pastors have a very similar relationship with God, that is not the perception of their followers. This may mean that Pentecostal pastors have a greater degree of information power based entirely on their followers' perceptions.

(c) Referent power, based on the followers' perception of the attractiveness of interacting with the leader. Jesus chose the twelve disciples so that they might be with him (Mark 3:14), and so that he might send them out. Whether this is a strong factor in Catholic or evangelical traditions probably varies a lot, based on such things as the reputation of the leader and the size of the church. Within Pentecostal circles it is normally a significant factor, even when the leader chooses to basically stay aloof from church members. Just the possibility of being asked to 'be with him' is enough to turn otherwise strong members into fawning followers.



Within effective structures that empower the whole church, leaders learn to adapt the sources of leadership authority available to them to the maturity of the members they are relating to. Basically it can be said that the less mature a member is, the more he or she is likely to be influenced by expressions of position power. Conversely, the more spiritually mature a church member or leader is, the more likely they are to be influenced by expressions of personal power. This means that effective leaders are able to assess members' maturity levels and adapt themselves accordingly. It also means that pastors and leaders, even if they retain the same position for long periods of time (eg senior pastor), will lose their capacity to influence many key members of the church unless they themselves are growing personally alongside the growth of the church.

In the long term, money spent on staff training, continuing education and study, travel, conferences and books may be as important as money spent on building extensions and music and sound equipment.

## *IX Where to from Here?*

At the beginning of this chapter, I briefly described two churches of very different size. Without change, the smaller of the two churches was likely to survive the longest. This is so because smaller churches seem most able to isolate themselves from changes occurring within society at large and are often found in rural villages where change occurs most slowly.

However, the larger church recognised the need for effective leadership and organisational flexibility over the long term. A careful search was undertaken to find a good leader rather than an outstanding minister. The church is beginning to rebuild, and, provided the pastor stays long enough, continuing growth is likely.

The smaller church has been caught up in a denominational dispute which is draining its membership of good people, and it is in danger of closing.

Tragically, in some countries where the early church was most vital (eg Turkey, where Antioch and Ephesus were situated), political changes saw the demise of the church; it was unable to survive. My prayer is that at this time the church of Western Christendom will embrace the change necessary to survive as a vital missionary force in our increasingly secular world.

In our church we have adopted a structure which seems to facilitate the mentoring of both leadership and ministry personnel in a situation where there are many professionally trained people. A brief summary of the model can be found in appendix A(i) and (ii) at the end of the book. It is given for reference purposes only, not as paradigm.

I suggest you now take the following series of steps:

1. Identify what areas of your present organisational structure are disempowering the ministry potential of the church.
2. Identify key holders of both position and personal power.
3. Form a team of the power holders to explore possible changes within the framework of your denominational and demographic context.
4. Design an innovative strategy involving both the implementation of change and its long-term reinforcement.
5. Identify currently held belief systems which need to be changed to prevent passive resistance.