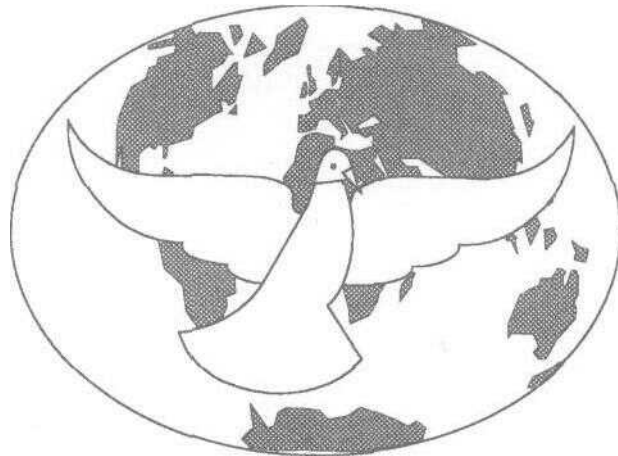


Dynamic Five Fold Team Ministry

By Mark & Patti Virkler



Multi-gifted Servant Leadership

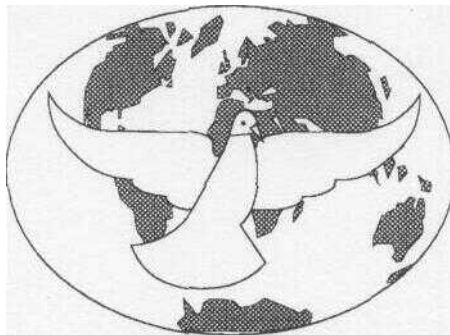
Dynamic Five Fold Team Ministry

Key verses:

"In a multitude of counselors there is safety (Prov. 11: 14)."

"Prepare plans by consultation (Prov. 20: 18)."

Key quote: "I cannot help expressing a wish that every member...would...doubt a little of his own infallibility...." Benjamin Franklin at signing of the Declaration of Independence



By Mark & Patti Virkler
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Multi-gifted Servant Leadership

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Introduction

The stage is set for God to usher in an amazing breakthrough in church leadership style. The pattern has been there all the time, but we have not seen it. It is the five fold team leadership style delineated in Ephesians chapter four of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher.

God has already set the stage. The pastors have been with us for years. The evangelists arose in the 50's and 60's. The teachers were the move of the 70's. The prophets arc with us now in the late 80's and the early 90's, and the apostles will be with us by the mid-nineties.

So the team is complete. It has been restored by the mighty hand of God. The One who restores all things is now restoring New Testament leadership style.

It never ceases to amaze me that when God speaks a word or move into the atmosphere, it is not only picked up simultaneously around the world by His Church, but it is also picked up by others in the world who listen with their hearts. Surely His rain does fall on the just and on the unjust. Surely Nebachadazzer received dreams as well as Daniel.

And as I look at the most progressive corporations around the world, they, too, have moved away from one man leadership to team leadership styles. They have found them more effective, creative, life-giving and prosperous. The move

toward the team leadership style is already well on its way. Naisbitt gives an excellent readable documentary of this move as it is manifested in the business world in his book entitled **Reinventing the Corporation**. It is available in secular bookstores, and we highly recommend it.

Kevin Conner provides an exhaustive **systematic theology** on the five fold leadership in the New Testament in his book **The Church in the New Testament** (©1989). It is line upon line of proof texting of every conceivable point of the set up of the five fold ministry. Therefore, I feel no need to redo in this book what he has already done so well. For the interested reader who needs this theological foundation and has not yet received it, I highly recommend Conner's outstanding book.

The book before you will not build a theological base for the five fold. It assumes you already have that. Instead we will focus on the practical aspects of working out an effective five fold team ministry in your church. We will discuss how teams work, how to build team spirit, how to avoid common team pitfalls. It is designed as a handy reference manual, with many practical worksheets ready for duplication for your staff meetings.

We have written another even more basic book on the five fold which focuses on helping people discover which heart motivation they have, and how to begin operating in it. This book, entitled

Discovering Your Heart's Motivations and Ministry/Vocational Placement, is available through Communion With God Ministries, along with an entire church-centered discipling experience which will train your people for the five fold ministry. Please request further information if interested.

Finally, we are developing a network of churches which will stimulate one another to faith in the working out of the principles of these books. A book or two will soon be available concerning this emerging network.

Let us not say, "The five fold team will not work." If God has ordained it, it will work. Let us not cower in fear because we see many obstacles in our path. Let us push on in faith, laying ground rules that will alleviate many, even most, of the potential problems we will face. Let us try leadership God's way, and see if it doesn't beat man's way. If this is indeed God's pattern, I expect we will experience more balanced and more expansive church growth than we have ever seen before.

I know I am taking the five fold ministry concept out of the clouds and, instead of reserving it for few mystics, I am making it available to all Christians. However, I like it when Christian experience is made available to the common man. It may not be God who removed it from us in the first place.

It is not required for churches that are using our "disciplining experience," which trains for

Dynamic Five Fold Team Ministry

the five fold ministry, to necessarily implement the leadership structure called for in this book.

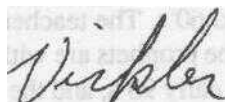
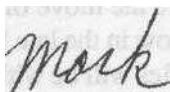
This book is not a required part of that curriculum package. We recognize that churches may take a period of time to adjust from one leadership style to another, and we also realize that some churches may not even desire to change. That is totally up to the church. This book simply lays out a vision of what could be for the churches who choose to move in this direction.

Since our local church is open to receiving as many of the revelation truths that God is currently restoring to the church as we can discover, I like to think of our church as "THE EXPERIMENT." Perhaps you would like to join in and "experiment" with us also.

One final note: For clarity and simplicity, we have used the pronoun "he" to refer to all people, positions and ministries. This should in no way be considered a gender qualification or prohibition of women. We strongly believe the Lord uses both men and women who are yielded to Him, and you will find many women in the lists of New Testament ministers.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ go with you as you build with Him in His kingdom.

Yours¹¹²¹ⁿ Christ



Mark & Patti Virkler

Chapter 1

God Established Team Ministry in the New Testament Church

Elders in Every Church

It should come as no surprise to discover that God established elders (plural) in every church in the New Testament. He never let the rulership of his body rest on the shoulders of one man, because each one of us has too many limitations within us. God has chosen to work through a multitude of counselors, rather than a single individual. Yes, various forms of government were expressed at various times throughout Biblical history, but with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts upon **all** flesh, we find a new form of government set up, that of a five fold team of elders serving each local assembly.

When Paul established churches, he did so by appointing elders. When elders were appointed, the local assemblies were called churches for the first time.

And when they had ordained them **elders** in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. (Acts 14: 23).

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain **elders** in every city, as I had appointed thee, (Titus 1:5)

So we see that churches were established through the ordination of elders (plural). Never do we find a single man ruling a church. *It* was always a plurality of men who participated as servant leaders. We also see that these men were not voted into office, but rather were ordained by the apostle who established the church. This is quite a contrast to much of what we see today as single pastors are voted in and out of church leadership positions. I recommend we follow the New Testament pattern of the appointment of elders to function as servant leaders in each church.

Why Team. Leadership?

No one man completely represents full truth, wisdom and power as Jesus did. Each of us experiences limitations in our lives. Each of us have areas of weakness and woundedness which are not yet healed. Therefore, we are counseled that:

In the multitude of counselors there is safety. (Prov. 11:14)

One can chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight... (Deut. 32:30)

Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.... a threefold cord is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12)

We multiply our effectiveness when we team up. We do not just add to it, we multiply it. This has been proven over and over in various statistical studies. One I have taken myself, a "Lost in the Desert Simulation Game." Our instructor told each of us to imagine that our plane had just crashed and we were alone in the desert 70 miles from the nearest city in 110 degree temperatures. As we rummaged through the wreckage we found 15 items which we could salvage, including a canvas, a jug of water, a compass, a rope, a mirror, a knife, etc. No one knew we had gone down and no one knew where we were.

We were to list these items in order of importance to us in getting us safely out of the desert. After we made our lists, we were instructed to get together in teams of three or four and re-rank them as a group using the consensus decision making process. Specific rules were given: "Do not give in to another to avoid a disagreement" and "Just because one gets his way in one decision does not mean that another should get his way in the next decision," etc.

After ranking them as a group, our individual scores and our group scores were compared to a NASA expert's score (one who really knew what was needed to get us out of the desert alive). It was found that the group scores were almost always higher than the individual scores. That was so in my case. So I had before me on a black and white score sheet the reality that I was not as brilliant as a group of three or four. (Two of the other four in the group were women. So much for my chauvinism!)

It confirmed my decision then and there to never act alone, but to work with a team of counselors. I am fully convinced that I will go further working as a team than I ever will working alone.

The Team — A Micro-organism of the Church

Jesus prayed for the church, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also **may be one in us**: that the **world may believe** that thou hast sent me (John 17: 21)."

A team ministry approach shows the world that Christians **can work together in unity**. After forming 2300 denominations which generally fight among themselves, it is high time the Church model a different picture. Jesus said the world would be convinced by seeing our unity. To get a team of five pastors with diversified giftings to work together in a unified ministry, is a pattern that the world (and the Church) desperately needs to see.

The Tower of Babel

And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men built. The Lord said, 'Behold, the people are **one**, and they have **all one language**; **...and now nothing will be restrained from them**, which they have **imagined** to do. Let us go down, and confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech' (Genesis 11: 5-7).

What an incredible testimony of what a people can do if they have:

1. One spirit;
2. Excellent communication; and
3. A clearly imagined or visioned goal or purpose.

If the leadership team of a church can have these three things, **nothing will be restrained from them**. Whatever they have purposed in the Spirit to do, can and will be accomplished. This is God's plan for the Church, that leadership teams have these three ingredients and that the Church grow in every way, until the covenant blessings of Deuteronomy 28: 1-14 be realized in Her midst. It is interesting to note that it was not even believers in Genesis 11: 5-7 who were accomplishing this great feat. The principles of spiritual creativity work for anyone who works them. However, since their purposes were contrary to the purposes of God, He stepped in to confuse their communication lines.

Let us be sure that the Church is experiencing the three key ingredients. This book is largely devoted to establishing and maintaining them.

Making Sure We Have All Three Key Ingredients

Unity of Spirit must be a key focus of all relationships within the Church. Without it there is no Church. Building the individual spirit, the corporate spirit and the anointing of the Holy Spirit become key focuses of all that is done in each and every relationship, service and program.

Cultivating communication skills: Open, honest, straightforward communication will be an ongoing priority of each and every relationship and eldership team meeting. Communication skills will be continually enhanced and refined, and continuous opportunity given to effective communication. Without it there is no fulfilling of the vision.

A clearly imagined or envisioned goal must be crystallized. This can be received and fashioned by the Eldership team working in conjunction with the rest of the church body. The more people who are brought in to offer a piece, the more it is owned by all. You must know where you are going and how you plan to get there, and this must be projected regularly to the people. (Note: In the author's book **God's Vision: A Supernatural Church Transforming the Earth**, a clearly envisioned goal is laid out which a church may adopt or adjust.)

A Man's Gift...

A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men (Proverbs 18: 16).

Elders will be constantly alert to helping people discover their heart motivations and begin operating in their giftings. They will nurture them and see that they have various opportunities to function in their areas of giftedness and to grow in ministry. Perfection will not be expected, as it is obvious that trial and error and mistakes are part of the mastery of each and every new skill. During the learning period, trainees will be serving in less central and visible ministries. Once skill is devel-

oped in the small group, opportunities will be given for them to function in ever larger group settings. There should be hundreds of opportunities to serve in a local church program, and weekly ministry should be expected of all. People's ministry should be fitted to their heart motivations. They should not be doing a job just because it needs to be done. There should be a sense of calling. On the other hand, it is sometimes necessary to expand yourself and learn to function in ministries and services that are not your central heart motivations. God is calling us to multiplying giftedness.

Spiritual sensitivity must be used in fitting people to jobs. We are here primarily to build people, not programs. Details for fitting people to ministries are laid out in detail in another text entitled **Discovering Your Heart's Motivations and Ministry/Vocational Placement**. Each one in the church is to find his place and be fitted into it. Every joint is to supply, according to its proper working.

Action Exercises

1. Complete the "Eldership Qualifications Worksheet"

Although a man's gift makes room for him, it is the **fruit of the Spirit** in his life that establishes and maintains his standing in ministry. The "Eldership Qualification Worksheet" is located as Worksheet Number One in the back of this manual. It is probably wise for each elder and prospective elder to regularly evaluate himself according to this list, to insure he is not disqualified by his lifestyle.

Have your Eldership team evaluate themselves on a copy of Worksheet Number One in the back. After each one has personally evaluated himself, you may want to come together and share openly so that you can pray, strengthen and encourage one another.

2. Complete "Three Key Ingredients for Success Worksheet"

This is Worksheet Number Two in the back of the book. Complete it together as a group in an Eldership meeting and discuss and pray about the results you find.

