



# DIVERGENT

## CHURCH

### **LEADERSHIP AT DIVERGENT CHURCH**

Spiritually, Jesus is the head of the Church (Col 1:18), of which DIVERGENT CHURCH is but a part, he is the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4, Hebrews 13:20). In all things we seek the Spirit's leading, building upon the foundation that is Christ himself (1 Cor 3).

Under Christ, DIVERGENT CHURCH is led by a team we call the 'Global Eldership Team' (overseers), this group consists of both "Global Community Elders", those within Divergent and "Global External Elders", these being experienced leaders from across the wider Church and indeed in both the Australian Christian Churches and other denominations.

The initial leadership was appointed by the Eldership in our mother Church (now LifeGate Christian Church) with formally 'ordained' Leaders recognised under the Australian Christian Churches movement.

In an ongoing regard, new appointments are made by our Global Eldership in consultation with wider Church Leaders that speak into the life of our Church (Acts 14:23, 20:28, 1 Tim 1:5) and wise voices of maturity and influence within our community.

Helping our Church manage the governance, administrative decisions and functions is the Divergent Global Board. This board is made of individuals suitably qualified for the task.

They operate in a Biblical regard as Deacons, given they are not expected to “*be able to teach*” (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:9)

Importantly, it must be noted as a Church and a Leadership, DIVERGENT CHURCH is part of the 'Australian Christian Churches' (Assemblies of God in Australia) movement, and as such our Church submits to the Doctrine, Codes and oversight of our movement

## **WHAT MAKES A PERSON A LEADER?**

Functionally, that answer is simple, someone who is 'leading people'. A person without followers is simply taking a walk. However, behind the question of 'what makes a person a leader?' is a deeper and important question. In the Church, what qualifies a person for 'positional' Leadership?

## **THREE IMPORTANT FACTORS**

### **Calling**

Are you called to Lead people? Why?

Clarifying or discerning a calling in life is understood through journey, service and gifting. Callings in Scripture are recognised through Leaders in the Church. (Acts 13:1 – 3)

### **Capacity**

Are you 'able' to lead people?

This is not simply an *ability* question but an *availability* question. Do you have the time and emotional energy to do so? Differing ability and availability also

determines what level of leadership you are also able to sustainably operate at.

## **Character**

Are you the 'right' person to lead?

Character is about integrity, being a person that is reflecting the nature of Christ in all areas of their life.

## **TRANSITIONING INTO LEADERSHIP**

Leadership authority goes hand in hand with leadership responsibility. The first thing you will start to notice as you step into leadership is the weight of the task, possibly a change in the dynamic of the spiritual war and atmosphere. Also, like any new task, there are things to learn.

This is simple advice but

- a) **Hold on**, don't run the race expecting to arrive tomorrow. This is going to take a lot of time
- b) **Expect significant challenges** – challenges are not evidence you are not called rather evidence you are now in the midst of real opportunity.
- c) **Understand it takes a while** to get used to having the extra weight of responsibility on your shoulders.
- d) **Stay humble and close** to your leaders, follow them closely. Actively seek their input and prayer.

## **FOUNDATIONS FOR ALL GODLY LEADERSHIP**

In Matthew 20:25 - 27, after the two sons of Zebedee (with the help of their mother) seek position in the Kingdom, we see Jesus' response.

*“Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with*

you. **Instead**, whoever wants to become great among you must be your **servant**, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your **slave** – 28 **just as** the Son of Man did not come to be served, **but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.**'

The foundational reality of Kingdom leadership is servant hood. This is not simply a path to leadership but the path of leadership. It also must be noted that Jesus not only speaks of 'servant leadership' but 'slave leadership'. The path to 'greatness' in the Kingdom is one of descent, not ascent, laying aside privilege to see God's will evident in the community and a continuing maturing of it.

### **Understanding our approach to Leadership language**

In Divergent Church we don't often use the word Eldership directly but rather Leadership or 'Senior Leadership'. This approach has strengths and weaknesses which we acknowledge.

We also do not use the terms Pastor or other five-fold Gifts (APEST) as titles. Thus no one is called, nor do we encourage any to be called "Pastor... fill in the blank". This practice exists to bring respect and recognise Godly authority, but we believe it to not be biblically expressed and ultimately counter-productive in limiting individual leaders giftings and expressions.

### **The strength is that our leadership is about leading.**

It is not about age nor time spent around, not an ability to raise votes or have business nous. It is also much more fluid, if one is qualified to lead and does so they are in leadership, if they step aside from actual leading, they are not. The word Elder can give a sense of an 'age related' role but that is not the central intent of the overseer in scripture, Timothy was noted for his Youth (1 Tim 4:12), yet the Elder is nonetheless not to be a 'novice' (1 Tim 3:6)

## **The weaknesses are mainly due to the fluid nature of our Leadership.**

New leaders tend to think of themselves as the same as other leaders, with the same authority as established leaders. This is largely a cultural phenomenon born from Australian egalitarianism and not a biblical view which I will address.

Secondarily, the fluid nature of our approach does potentially open some people to thinking leadership is something they can easily adopt and drop as they feel. This should not be the case and is something to be better understood.

The movement orientation of the Church, as biblically pursued is fluid and changing and as such will always contain challenges. We pursue a biblical posture as much as possible even when cultural or contextual challenges may arise.

## **DIFFERENCES IN AUTHORITY**

Naturally, authority goes hand in hand with roles and responsibilities. Being an Elder in and of itself does not qualify someone to have direct authority in an area unless that is within the scope of that leader's responsibility.

For instance, it may be wise to listen to the collective wisdom of Elders from different gatherings but at the end of the day, a localised Elder has responsibility and authority over their own gathering but not that of another.

A regional Elder has broader authority because their role and responsibility is different. They will naturally have more direct authority in the life of multiple local gatherings given their responsibility.

We clearly see this in scripture, Paul had broad authority, mainly into Churches he had a specific relationship with, often having planted them. Whilst some may try to make a clear distinction between Apostle and Elder, Peter makes it clear that he is a "fellow Elder" (1 Peter 5:1).

We believe it more accurate to say, all Apostles are Elders but not all Elders are Apostles. Unlike a democratic process, the Apostles, and Elders, *have "much*

*discussion*" (Acts 15:7), especially over major issues, the goal being some sense of consensus. However, as seen in Acts 15:13;19, the Senior Elder in context brings conclusion to the matter. This process is a little unusual for the western individualistic mindset, but this allows both open discussion and clear authority to be expressed.

**Note the process of submission and authority.**

**1. The Apostles recognise and send Barnabas** into the Antioch Church (Acts 4:36 – 37; Acts 11:22).

**2. Barnabas recognises Paul** and introduces him to the Apostles (Acts 9:26 – 30)

**3. The Church at Antioch** (through the Prophets and Teachers) send Barnabas and Paul (Acts 13)

**4. The Council at Jerusalem recognises Paul and Barnabas'** unique ministry (Acts 15:22)

**5. Paul recognises and appoints Timothy and others** (1 Tim 1:3 – 6)

**6. Timothy and others appoints new local Elders** (Titus 1:5, 1 Tim 5:22)

Timothy is appointed to his position and task, which included the appointment of Elders, and is continually accountable. Paul then, of course, is accountable both to the Antioch Church and the Council at Jerusalem (Acts 15).

It is important to wrestle with the biblical tension of strongly expressed leadership with a strong accountability of all leaders. The mission of God moves forward best in this environment.

**WHAT IS BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP?** And what qualifies one to be in such a position?

Biblically, there are two primary positions of leadership within the Church, the Elder and the Deacon. Each of these has two different but similar lists of qualities.

**THE ELDER** (Overseer – on our Senior Leadership Team)

In our context, we call our Elders the 'Senior Leadership team'. The primary role of the 'Senior Leadership team' is oversight, working 'on' the Church as community,

cause and catalyst for all that happens within it and through it. Regional Leadership teams may include both Elders and Deacons.

## **THE DEACON**

The word “deacon,” (diakonos in Greek) simply means “servant.”, their role is to serve and lead in the ministry. The Deacon has the same character traits of the Elder but may lack one key skill, that being ‘teaching’

Using 1 Tim 3:1 – 7 we draw a number of important questions for those desiring such leadership (there is a second similar list in Titus 1:5 – 9)

**1. Do you have Godly desire for the Leadership task?** What practical evidence is there of your desire?

*“Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task.” (1 Tim 3:2a)*

*“Now the overseer is to be...” (1 Tim 3:2a)*

**2. Both in a past regard, present regard and habitual regard moving into the future is there anything that would bring 'reproach' to the name of Jesus and the Church in your life?** Are you happy for us to ask those in your life? eg. Co-workers, Family, Friends etc.

*“above reproach...” (1 Tim 3:2b)*

**3. If married, how is your relationship with your spouse? What is your track record in relationships?**

*“...faithful to his wife...” (1 Tim 3:2b)*

**Note:** some take this verse to indicate that only married men can be in this position. We do not understand such to be the case for two reasons.

Firstly, Paul, for example, was an unmarried Elder (1 Peter 5:1, 1 Cor 7:8). This

standard is clearly not about being married so much as it is about faithfulness. Additionally, the Greek phrasing indicates it as a 'one woman man', speaking against one who is known for 'womanising' or 'faithlessness' in his behaviour and character.

Secondly, we do not hold it to be strictly about male leadership as we see numerous indicators across scripture of God's appointment and empowerment of women in the believing community. For more information theologically in this area simply ask.

**4. Are you given to emotional outburst?** Are you easily upset, how do you handle conflict?

*"...temperate..." (1 Tim 3:3a)*

**5. Are you given to self indulgence?**

*"...self-controlled..." (1 Tim 3:3b)*

Titus 1:8 also reminds us that leaders must be self-controlled, maintaining discipline in internal and external attitudes and actions. Such is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:23)

In our modern internet driven context self-indulgence can also often be seen in facebook / twitter postings drawing attention to self through self-proclamation or constant self-pity. Always remember there is wisdom in a multitude of counsellors (Prov 15:22) not the multitude.

**6. Is your life 'in order'?**

*"...respectable..." (1 Tim 3:2b)*

The word used here in Greek is 'kosmios' which denotes a life of virtue and things 'set' as they should be.



## **7. Do you have a life open to people?**

*"...hospitable..." (1 Tim 3:3b)*

Hospitality is not the ability to cook great food (though that is pretty amazing), it is the desire and ability to create a welcoming atmosphere in your life. 1 Peter 4:9 says, *"Be hospitable to one another without grumbling."*

## **8. Are you able to understand, articulate and communicate Biblical doctrine?**

*"...able to teach" (1 Tim 3:2b)*

Leaders are readers, people of the word. Titus 1:9 says leaders must *"hold fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict"* (Titus 1:9).

Those that seek to be in senior Leadership in DIVERGENT CHURCH must abide by our doctrinal statement both in faith and practice.

## **9. Do you have control issues with Alcohol? or other substances?**

*"not given to drunkenness..." (1 Tim 3:3a)*

Scripture is clear in warning against the negative effects of drunkenness and addiction. Leaders must always be aware, not only of their own position in regards to alcohol but influence in these areas as well. (Rom 14:21)

## **10. Are you known for violent outbursts physically, verbally or emotionally?**

*"...not violent but gentle..." (1 Tim 3:3b)*

**11. Do you like an argument?** Would you rather win the argument or the person over? Do you seek to be the 'devils advocate' all the time?

*"...not quarrelsome..." (1 Tim 3:3b)*

**12. Does desire for money drive you?** Do you give generously to the Church out of what God has blessed you with? Is your life in general marked by generosity?

*"...not a lover of money." (1 Tim 3:3b)*

The crucial issue here is not one have 'having money' but whether money 'has you'.

*"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Luke 12:34*

**13. What does your family and work life look like?**

*"He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. 5 (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) (1 Tim 3:4 - 5)*

Romans 12:8 says that if our gift and call is "to lead, do it diligently" (Rom 12:8)

**14. When did you start following Christ? Have you been in Church that entire time?**

*"He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgement as the devil." (1 Tim 3:6)*

**15. Can you give us 3 non-believers as references?**

*"He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap." 1 Tim 3:7*

## **WHO APPOINTS THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM? (Elders)**

Under Christ, DIVERGENT CHURCH is led by a team we call the 'Senior Leadership Team' (overseers). Our initial team was appointed by the Eldership of LifeGate Christian Church and their leadership continued to oversight our Church for five years. After that point, they released our team and ongoing appointment is made by appointed by our Senior Leadership Team in consultation with external church pastors that speak into the life of our Church (Acts 14:23, 20:28, 1 Tim 1:5, Titus 1:5, 1 Tim 5:22).

Those appointed to Senior Leadership must fulfil the biblical requirements of Leadership (1 Tim 3:1 – 7, Titus 1:5 – 9), and abide and operate by the Doctrine and practices of the 'Australian Christian Churches' (to which we submit). Additionally, each potential person proposed by the Eldership for appointment is presented to the wider Church community so to give room for people to bring any concerns if needed to the Leadership team privately.

All appointees to the Senior Leadership Team must serve firstly in a Ministry Leadership position proving both their character, skill and capacity for leadership.

## **Who does our Church and Senior Leadership team submit to?**

DIVERGENT CHURCH is part of the 'Australian Christian Churches' (Assemblies of God in Australia) movement, and as such our Church submits to the Leadership, Doctrine, Codes and oversight of our movement.

Additionally, we relate closely to a number of key Church Leaders that actively speak into our Leadership including Andrew Chin (Wesley Church) Luke and Katherine Fletcher (Rivers Edge Church) Ric and Naomi Burrell (Strong Nation Church) and Hamish and Anne Thomson (Abundant Life Church). It is this team, in coordination with the ACC and local Leadership that will appoint a Divergent Senior Leader in the case of such a need.

## **THE DEACON** (on our 'Ministry Leadership Team)

Deacons, in our context, “Ministry Leaders”, carry out their ministry under the oversight of the Senior Leadership Team and are called to carry the weight of ministries that tend to distract the Senior leadership from their responsibilities. The Ministry Leadership Team commit to meeting on a regular basis to ensure the ministry of the Church stays healthy and develops well. At present this meeting would normally happen at EQUIP Nights.

Ministry comes from the work diakoneo meaning 'to serve'. Ministry is simply serving others in the name of Jesus.

In our context, those that are Deacons are called the “Ministry Leadership Team”

In Acts 6, normally considered the very first appointment of Deacons two crucial qualities are highlighted, they were to be “full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom” (Acts 6:3)

1 Tim 3:8 – 13 outlines the qualities of a Deacon

*“In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. 9 They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. 11 In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. 12 A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. 13 Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.” 1 Tim 3:8 –*

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Similar questions asked of potential 'Senior Leadership team' are also asked of those seeking to step into 'Ministry Leadership'. Those that seek to be in 'Ministry Leadership’ must agree to support the doctrinal standards of DIVERGENT CHURCH.

We understand people hold some minor differences at times, in such we always

seek to live with grace and mercy. However, in those areas, those in Ministry Leadership seek the unity of the body first accepting these positions as the positions of DIVERGENT CHURCH, always seeking to “keep the unity of the Spirit” (Eph 4:3). Any effort to undermine these positions is understood as divisive (Rom 16:17).

### **Expectations of Ministry Team Leaders**

Ministry Team Leaders are to fulfil the character requirements and standards of Acts 6 and 1 Tim 3 and are to be tested in their character, commitment, chemistry and competency.

Additionally, practical requirements are asked of the Ministry Team including Life Community Leadership, participation in 'Equip Nights' and participation in occasional Leadership development events.

### **FORMAL LEADERSHIP IS POSITIONAL**

Whilst general leadership is informal and simply about influence, in this context leadership is specifically positional. Without responsibility, there is no authority. This equates to a fairly straightforward reality, whilst a person maintains positional responsibility, they maintain positional authority. If they step out of responsibility, they also step out of positional authority. At DIVERGENT CHURCH we do not have committees, we have teams. Teams that lead together, that work together. There is no such thing as a leader that has no direct responsibility, to step out of a position, is to step out of leadership.

### **LEADERSHIP GIFTS**

Our Church is shaped around the five equipping Gifts as listed in Ephesians 4. The Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher. The role of these people, is to “equip the saints for the ministry” (Eph 4:12) These Gifts are crucial to a movement oriented Church, we are focussed not on producing programs that maintain but people that step out. For more insight into how this works in our context please see our “WELCOME TO DIVERGENT CHURCH” booklet. Additionally, it must be noted

that men and women are noted as having these gifts in the New Testament and thus logically function in them.

We believe each person will broadly fit into these areas (such is not to say everyone is a specific position). We do not, however, believe that every 'Evangelist' is an Elder but rather such a gifting may enable them practically to step into such an area.

A connected reality is that some people have a “gift of leadership or administration” (1 Cor 12:28) but the context of its application is not always the Church community. People can and are gifted by God to thrive, lead and minister in the workplace or other domains. A 'gift of leadership' however must be twinned with an Ephesians 4 gifting to be effective for equipping the Church for ministry.

### WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE AT DIVERGENT CHURCH?

#### LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE OF DIVERGENT CHURCH

	GLOBAL	MISSIONAL	PASTORAL	BIBLICAL	SUPERNATURAL
JESUS					
REGIONAL					
LOCAL CHURCH					
CLUSTER					
LIFECOM					

<b>REGIONAL LEAD TEAM (Elders)</b>	<b>LOCAL CHURCH FOCUS LEADERSHIP (Deacons)</b>
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Functionally, the Leadership Structure of Divergent Church takes into account the Giftings expressed in Ephesians 4 and the Senior Leadership and Ministry Leadership positions.

### GENDER AND LEADERSHIP

This is an area of huge controversy in some areas of the wider Church, we respect people that take differing positions but at DIVERGENT CHURCH we affirm the

calling on men and women to positions of authority and influence in our community. Leadership is primarily birthed of gifting not gender.

The purview of this document is not 'Women in leadership' but suffice to say Scripture shows women who led both men and women at the highest level. For instance, the Judge and Prophet Deborah (Judges 4,5) held spiritual, political, civil, judicial and militaristic authority over all. The Prophetess Huldah, who was a contemporary of Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum and Habakkuk (2 Kings 22) spoke prophetically at the highest level. She was chosen, not these other Godly men to speak at this important time.

Importantly, the New Covenant community is marked by the empowerment and enabling of both men and women, from the lowest in society to the highest.

In Acts 2:17 – 18, the Prophet Joel is quoted by Peter saying

*“In the last days, God says,  
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
your young men will see visions,  
your old men will dream dreams.  
18 Even on my servants, both men and women,  
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.”*

As we move through the New Testament we see other women listed in significant positions of leadership such as Priscilla (Acts 18:26, Rom 16:3 – 5) and Phoebe (Rom 16:1 - 3). Additionally noted is that the Eldership qualifications in Timothy and Titus do not actually say 'man' or use 'masculine' pronouns in the Greek, rather are placed there in some translations.

There are a few passages that can be difficult that need to be handled appropriately, we will make available teaching on these passages. We hold the scriptures in highest regard as the foundation stones and parameters of our faith

and practice and always seek to handle them faithfully, understanding them in their context and intent.

## **PRACTICAL STEPS TOWARDS LEADERSHIP**

At DIVERGENT CHURCH we are keen to see people 'desire to be bishops/overseers' (1 Tim 3:1). A Godly desire is something to be celebrated but equally something to be tested and proven.

### **Requirements for aspiring and present Leadership at DIVERGENT CHURCH.**

#### **1. Commitment to Corporate Gathering**

Sunday Church is our 'family dinner', it is when we all get together. It is the only time we are able to directly equip and minister to all those in our community. Sundays are crucial. None of us would miss a weekly special family dinner in normal circumstances. We prioritise the importance of our Christ centred 'Family dinner experience'. Going beyond standard expectations of the general community is also important.

As part of being on the 'Ministry Team' we would expect each Ministry Team leader to be at Church about 15 – 20 mins earlier than advertised 'starting time' (on weeks you are not 'rostered' on a formal team). This is to ensure there is opportunity for prayer, community and familiar faces in the community. Being active as a ministry leader is not something we 'roster on, roster off' from, it is a calling birthed from a heart for people.

#### **2. Serve on a Gathering Team**

Leadership is built upon servant hood. Servant hood is not about pursuing personal gifting and desires but the needs of others.

#### **3. Disciple others**

Jesus said he would build his Church' (Matt 16:18). Our role in such is making disciples (Matt 28:18 – 20). Discipleship is not a bible study or course (though of



course, it will involve both) but sowing into others and sacrificing for their good. All Christians should be able to name who they are discipling.

For practical resource in leading someone in studying scripture, you can download the 'Green Book' and 'Blue Book' by Jesus Life House Church on the Android and Apple Markets for free.

#### **4. Life Community Leadership**

We expect all leaders to lead people communally. The proving ground for leadership is not the ability to run a project but lead and care for people. The starting place is in Life Communities.

Our growth strategy at Divergent Church is simple, Multiply disciples, Multiply Life Communities, Multiply Churches. Leadership is about people.

#### **5. Equip nights**

Fortnightly, on a Wednesday night, we run Equip nights. We seek to equip people for leadership and ministry, these are open to all. These nights are filled with leadership teaching, practical equipping and discussions around ministry. This is also an environment for ministering to the leaders in our Church, without such a distinct environment, people can isolate themselves, making pastoral ministry to Leaders difficult.

#### **6. Commitment to Character**

One who desires to be a leader in any capacity need be committed to character and the transparency that proves such. At times, as you walk, our Leadership team will meet with you and ask hard questions, questions seeking to test integrity. Leadership is about the stewardship of something that is not ours, Christ is the head of the Church and we steward such a responsibility with care and diligence.

## TRANSITIONING OUT OF LEADERSHIP

The realities of life sometimes lead to the inability to continue to operate in positional authority. Often this is as simple as job changes, family changes or other circumstantial factors that limit one's ability to operate effectively. It is important that when one steps aside from formal leadership that they show the same grace and attitude they showed when embracing the position.

There are also times when someone may be asked to step down from a leadership position by our Senior Leadership Team. This could be for a contradiction to the standards of commitment, character, action and attitudes as listed in this document. Scripture also lays down the possible removal from the wider community for ongoing unrepentant sin (1 Cor 5:5)

Scripture is clear that there is process in this area, we always endeavour to follow the scriptural precedents and prescriptions as laid out in Matt 18:15 – 20 and 1 Cor 5:1 – 13. The goal of biblical discipline is to bring about restoration of people, not their destruction, *“so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.”* (1 Cor 5:5)

Discipline is a reflection and evidence of love (Heb 12:6).

At DIVERGENT CHURCH we are clear that to step out of responsibility positionally is to step out of authority. However, when one does so, often there are emotional, relational and practical shifts that can catch people by surprise. Understanding these inevitable changes can help in making the transition easier.

**Practical Shift** – you are no longer in leadership meetings. This leads to a more limited knowledge of the inner workings of the Church and play a more limited part in Leadership decisions. This can be hard, you can feel 'out of the loop'.

**Relational Shift** – teams spend time together. When you move out of any team, the closeness of that team is often lost. Friendships feel more distant, there can be a temptation to think that those in leadership no longer care for you. The reality is far more practical.

**Emotional Shift** – serving and leading results in a high level of 'ownership' and emotional investment. The emotional impact of leaving a leadership position is such that one can feel they have lost something emotionally significant, that things 'are not like they use to be'. Rather than recognise that the change is largely personal, the temptation can be to think everyone else has moved away.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF IDENTITY IN LEADERSHIP TRANSITION**

In theory, our identity should be so settled in Christ that whether we are leading, serving or sitting our satisfaction is in Christ. However, practically nearly everyone is affected by change. The impact of transitions can act as an indicator, revealing where our identity is centred. As believers our identity should be in Christ, our service, leadership and gifting stem from him but sometimes we find our identity and security has become dependant on our positional roles.

We must allow such transitions to lead us back into Christ.

### **Three elements to help**

#### **1. Re-Energise**

Take some specific time to re-energise. Spend time in prayer, spend time doing those things that 'breathe' into your soul. Have some fun.

#### **2. Revel in God**

If the transition out has been particularly taxing, it could be indicating you have been striving in your own energy. The Apostle Paul said, "*I strive in his energy*" (Col 1:29). Enjoy his word, enjoy a coffee whilst praying to God, Enjoy creation itself as it declares God's goodness and handiwork (Psalm 19:1)

#### **3. Refocus**

Remember, we are in a war, there is still Kingdom work to be done. What has God put on your heart? Maybe you need to re-centre your family life as more missional? Pray and prepare for God to be evident in your work place. What else

in the life of Church can you do to serve those who are now lifting the weight you use to hold. Don't become a spectator that judges now you are not leading, be released to serve elsewhere.

## **A FINAL WORD**

Scripture makes it clear that those in authority, especially teachers will be judged more harshly (James 3:1). Aspiring to leadership is a GOOD thing and we celebrate your desire!!! Keep in mind as you consider your giftings, callings and service that we are stewards of the gifts God has given us ((1 Peter 4:10).

Consider your desire prayerfully, prepare well, position to grow!

We would love to hear what God has put on your heart. Contact us if you wish to chat about this and one of the 'Senior Leadership team' or 'Ministry Leadership team' will arrange to speak to you at some point.

4Life,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Josh Reading". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "4Life,".

JOSH

Senior Leader

DIVERGENT CHURCH GLOBAL

Ps. Check out the next page for recommended resources for developing your character, capacity and discerning your call as a leader.

## **GROWTH RESOURCE**

**More to come...**

### **General Leadership**

"You the Leader" - Phil Pringle

"The making of a Leader" Frank Demazio

"The Heart of a Leader" Ken Blanchard

"Greatness Principle, The Finding of significance and Joy by Serving" Nelson Searcy

"How people tick: A Guide to over 50 Types of Difficult People" Mike Leibling

"The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable" Patrick M. Lencioni

### **Discipleship**

"Building a Discipling Culture" Mike Breen

"Follow me" David Platt

"T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution" Steve Smith, Ying Kai

### **Missional Living**

<http://www.vergenetwork.org/> - plenty of resource / free ebooks / articles etc.

more coming...