



Leading As Jesus Led (Elective B)

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So, Why Should We Listen To This Easum Guy?

Bill Easum has a thirty year track record of growing congregations in two denominations. His last church, which he pastored for twenty-four years, grew to the largest United Methodist Church in South Texas. His record of "evangelization" and "social justice" ministries was acknowledged by Industrial Areas Foundation in New York as one of the finest examples in North America.

The past fifteen years, Bill has served as a consultant to congregations and denominations. In 1986 he founded 21st Century Strategies which in 2000 with Thriving Church Consultants and became Easum, Bandy & Associates (EBA) with his new partner Tom Bandy who offices out of Canada. EBA serves the U.S., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Bill has personally worked in over 500 congregations, some of which are the largest in the nation, and has taught hundreds of thousands of leaders.

Bill is the author of numerous best-selling books such as *Sacred Cows Make Gourmet Burgers*, *Dancing with Dinosaurs*, *Leadership on the OtherSide*, *Unfreezing Moves*, and *Beyond the Box*. His most recent book, written with Bil Cornelius, is titled *Go Big: How to Have Explosive Growth*.

A few of the areas in which Bill consults are church planting, multiple site congregations, demographics, local church consultations, church growth seminars, stewardship, lay ministries, social justice, small groups, spiritual gifts, postmodern ministry, small church dynamics, systems thinking and organizational transformation, strategic mapping, using the Ministry Audit, and leadership development, to mention only a few

Bill is a graduate of Baylor University, B.A., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, M.D., and Perkins School of Theology, S.T.M.

Elective B

Leading as Jesus Led

The Foundation for biblical leadership

Notes

The life of Jesus, as it is recorded, is the basis for understanding Christian leadership. Three texts will guide us, John 21:16, Matthew 28:18-19, and John 17.

The basic legacy of Jesus was a team of eleven, transformed and uneducated, disciples who would, along with a few other people such as Paul, change the course of human events. His primary method was to share himself with his disciples. He brought them into a deep relationship with Him and shared life with them.

He spent the bulk of his time doing three things: Modeling, Equipping, and mentoring the leaders of tomorrow.

Jesus saw the role of leadership to be that of radically transforming the hearts and minds of people, not just taking care of them.

Three classic texts explain the heart of Jesus' understanding of leadership.

John 21:16

"A second time Jesus said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep."

Peter never saw a shepherd feed a sheep, so what did he hear Jesus say? Shepherds had three roles in Jesus' time.

- To insure that the sheep were in a safe environment in which they could feed.
- To help them grow for the sole purpose of reproducing more sheep.
- To keep them mobile --- otherwise they would run out of food.

The point: Sheep beget sheep; shepherds do not. Shepherds don't feed sheep. Sheep have to be mobile enough to move from pasture to pasture to find food.

Great leaders produce a culture in which people naturally grow - thus we speak of spiritual midwives.

Great leaders know that greatness is not based on what they achieve but what they help others achieve.

Great leaders learn to do less than good leaders.

Matthew 28:18-19

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

The last will and testament Jesus gave was for us to be disciple makers - transformers.

Here's the rub. Transforming people requires that you first love and take care of them. However, taking care of them does not require transforming them. Transformational leadership does both. Too many pastors embrace the first and ignore the latter. Our role is not either/or; it is both/and. We are called by our Lord to care for the church and to make disciples of the world. To be the church, we must do both.

If Jesus is our model, leadership is not about gathering followers or just taking care of people; it is about transforming and empowering disciples into teams.

John 17

This text is a key insight into the way Jesus lived his life.

First, he prayed for himself. He knew that he couldn't give what he didn't have so all through his life when he ran short, he would withdraw to renew himself. So in his last moments, he prays for himself that he might have strength. Each of us needs to focus on getting ourselves closer to God so that we may know the ways of God and be able to let those ways shine through our lives. Leadership is not about gimmicks or tactics. Leadership is about role modeling a deep spiritual connection between the leader and God. Churches are seldom any healthier than their leader.

Somewhere in his writings, Edwin Friedman says that all most people need to do in such a situation is take their Bible and go off until they get a vision.

Next he prayed for his disciples that God would keep them safe. Notice he prays for their safety because he has sent them into the world the same way God sent him into the world - vulnerable. And why is he really praying for them? He is praying for their safety not on just their behalf, but on behalf of those whom they will reach in his name.

Finally, he prayed for all the future disciples who would respond positively to the disciple's ministry.

It is important to note that Jesus never prayed for the world. He focused on those who were ready to respond. Leaders should do the same today. Your flock is not the congregation, but those who are ready.

Key point:

The key is to withdraw and discover or rediscover what God has called you to do and then equip the priesthood to make that vision happen. Here is a list of suggestions:

- Develop your own personal mission statement. What is it that you are willing to spend your life accomplishing? *The Path*, by Laurie Beth Jones is a good book to help in this process.

- Go on a two day overnight retreat by yourself. Some of the most important things in life happen during our dreams. Many of the prophets received their visions while asleep. Don't over estimate the connection between deep contemplation, deep sleep, and God's vision. Take only your Bible and a blank legal pad. It may surprise you to know that God usually has an agenda. Do not take any "to do" stuff. There is nothing you need to "do" on this retreat other than listen to God. If it has been awhile since you have done this, you may need to add a third day or do it more than once before you are satisfied with the results.
- Keep a daily journal. Review it now and then to see where you're making progress and where you struggle the most. Remind yourself of why you began the journey.
- Commune with nature. One of my joys in life is to be fifty or sixty miles out in the ocean and watch the sun come up. The experience always reminds me of God's glory and of my insignificant role.
- Join a health club with your spouse and schedule a time for the two of you to go. What is good for the body is usually good for the soul.
- Begin each day at home with prayer and train folks at the church not to expect you in the office until 10:00 or even later. Do not check your email before going to the office.
- Develop a habit of praying an hour or so each morning before tackling the day.
- Plan a yearly vacation and take it no matter what.
- Find a Spiritual Director. This is a trained person who listens and guides another person in deepening their walk with God, discerning God's will for their life, and praying for that person. This person listens to, prays with, suggests scripture, and disciplines the other person to deepen their life and to make decisions which are faithful to God's call on their life. The goal of this relationship is obedience to God's call. It is not counseling, but clearly based in listening, discerning, and following God's Word at a certain time and place in a person's journey. Many denominations have a section on their web page for Spiritual Directors.
- Develop an accountability group. This is a group of people that you trust to objectively give you feedback on your ministry. Meet with them regularly. Ask them to hold you accountable to what you are called to do. Perhaps give them a two-by-four with your name written on it. If you're like me, sometimes you're so headstrong that you remind yourself, and them, of the proverbial mule.
- Do some form of meditation and don't overlook such things as Tai Chi or Yoga. God can use most forms of meditation to the Kingdom's advantage.
- Ask a group in the church to pray for you. Studies are showing that people in hospitals who are prayed for do better even when they do not know people are praying for them.
- Some high charging people need more than one day off a week to recharge. If you are not a one-day-off-a-week person, take regular time away from ministry. Every four weeks or so, my wife and I would get lost for four or five days. We went to the beach. This worked for us better than a day off each week. Talk with the leaders of your church about customizing your time off to suite your personality.
- Read about the spiritual giants of the past and present. I have found great inspiration reading about Rosa Parks, Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, and Bonhoeffer. Who are the great spiritual giants in your life? Reflect on them.
- Listen to your favorite music, even if it's Rap. The younger a person is today, the more likely music will be a major form of renewal of the soul. My spirit soars when I hear music like "My Prayer," "Majesty," "God of Grace and God of Glory," and believe it or, "I'll fly away." What music fills your soul and turns you on to the wonder around you?
- Find a mentor. Mentors help people avoid making some of the mistakes they've made. One of the problems of being a pastor of a church is that often one is stuck in an area where they may be the only spiritual giant around. I had my first personal mentor in 1957 . . . the great liberal Southern Baptist Carlyle Marney. My second mentor arrived in 1975 in the person of the Lutheran pastor Wallace Fisher. Every time I was around those two, my spirit was renewed. Who do you have around you that makes you run on all cylinders?

The Jesus Model of Discipleship

- Come and see – recruit. Pastors need to spend maximum time looking for those who will be the first level of leadership in the church.
- Come and follow me and be with me – model. Modeling is more than teaching. *Modeling is hanging out*, spending time with, sharing one's inner character. Modeling can't be done in a course setting. It has to be experienced in life's settings.
- Remain in me and make disciples – coach. The lead pastor's work is never done with Peter, James, and John. Once they are deployed into ministry, it is the role of the lead pastor to be there for them whenever they need coaching or support.
- He spent his ministry with a small group of diverse people he picked based on Character and giftedness. He did not work with everyone nor treat people the same
- He taught us the mentoring rule of 10 to 12. He focused more on multiplying his DNA than adding people to the kingdom
- He provided an environment in which people could grow

Any solid discipleship model has two tracks.

- The more important track is some form of intentional modeling whereby all of the leaders, paid and unpaid, understand that their role is to model discipleship to everyone. Leaders become mentors. Part of this would be making sure there are enough entry point servant ministries in which people can begin serving along side their mentor. How many entry points do you have for first time guests and day old Christians? Then you work up from there with more and more responsible service ministries.
- A secondary and not as important track is the content training. Discipleship can't be taught. Don't start with a course; start with modeling. If nothing else, you begin to model it to those who are open to your mentoring. Start with any new people who come along. Start with new Christians. Think how Jesus did it. He did; and they watched. They did; and he watched.

What does this mean for our leadership?

- Lead pastors don't pastor the church; they pastor the leaders of the church. They spend most of their time with the inner core of leadership, the Peter's, James', and John's.
- Leaders need leaders.
- Lead pastors need to carefully select those with whom they will lead.
- Lead pastors set their own agenda and have a personal mission statement.

Leaders who lead like Jesus model, equip, and mentor future disciples

"Everything the leader does sends a message." James Hunter, author of *The Servant*:

As leaders move from poor, to good, to great, their primary role shifts dramatically from task management, to equipping skills, and on to mentoring moments.

One of the clearest lessons we've learned about leadership is that effective leaders spend most of their time coaching other leaders and holding them accountable to high moral and missional standards.

They don't try to take personal responsibility for the entire congregation. Instead, they have shifted their emphasis from what they can get done to whom they can mentor to go and do what God wants done.

When a leader gets up in the morning wondering whom God will put in his or her path to be the future leader of tomorrow, the whole life of that leader changes.

The big shift is from "What do I have to do today" to "Who will I mentor today." You must move from a "to do" list to a "to be" list.

So ask yourself, "*How much time do I spend mentoring future leaders and holding our present leaders accountable?*" This may be the most important question you will ever ask.

Modeling

Jesus spent his whole ministry modeling to his disciples how Christians are supposed to live out their lives. As such he equipped and mentored the disciples.

Jesus was more concerned about the disciples understanding ministry than with the cognitive elements of learning. Leadership training was more a matter of apprenticeship than scholarship. The goal of his leadership training was relational not informational. He taught potential leaders how to relate to others. He role modeled and taught by demonstration. He involved the disciples in actual ministry and then debriefed them on what they had learned (Mark 6:30-31). By doing this, Jesus rejected the established educational patterns of his day and ours.

Modeling is the biggest challenge to our existing mental models and one of the hardest tasks of getting out of the box. We live in a culture that has taught us to believe that these training models are the best for equipping people for roles. We have become quite successful at having training classes that transmit ideas and principles from one person to another. As leaders we often believe that education will lead to understanding, which will result in behavioral change. We challenge this belief. We have vastly underplayed the value of modeling the behavior, principles, and mindset that we seek. Modeling is much more powerful than cognitive approaches that focus on education and understanding. It is impossible to explain servanthood on a blackboard. It must be seen in action. Modeling focuses on learning, deployment and reflection. It is best when people are taught, modeled for, deployed and then brought back to discuss what they saw, learned and did.

Modeling examples

- The myth around Perimeter church is the pastor leads one person to Christ every day. That is role modeling.

- “Our pastor is a praying pastor.”
- The lead pastor who regularly does menial tasks in order to role model servanthood.

Mentoring and Equipping

Mentoring and equipping are two sides to the same coin. Wayne Cordiero’s Practicum is an example of mentoring. People just hang out with Wayne for a week.

Equipping produces good leaders; mentoring produces great leaders. People need both; some in sequence and some at the same time.

Equipping takes time. Mentoring takes a life time.

Most effective staff are equippers rather than mentors.

Great leaders will spend less and less time managing and equipping, and more time mentoring good leaders to be great leaders. That requires wise, spiritually credible, relationships. They need you to say: “You know, I’ve been watching you, and I think ...”

Mentoring was considered crucial in the first century church. It was the primary way to pass down the teachings of Jesus. Most people don’t realize that the first century church functioned for more than a decade before one line of what we know as New Testament scripture was written.

When confronted with heresy and schism, they didn’t have Scripture to give them direction. Instead, they would ask “Which of these persons had been with Jesus.”

With the passing of time, the question became, “Who was this person’s mentor?”

Today the question is “Has this person been with Jesus?”

Jesus spent almost one half of his time mentoring the disciples. His primary method was to share himself with his disciples. He brought them into a deep relationship with Him and shared life with them.

He was more concerned about the disciples understanding ministry than with the cognitive elements of learning. Leadership training was more a matter of apprenticeship than scholarship. The goal of his leadership training was relational not informational. He taught potential leaders how to relate to others. He role modeled and taught by demonstration.

He also equipped. He involved the disciples in actual ministry and then debriefed them on what they had learned (Mark 6:30-31). By doing this, Jesus rejected the established educational patterns of his day and ours.

It might be said Jesus trained on three different levels.

- First, He trained the public on many occasions.

- Next, He equipped the disciples on a daily basis.
- Finally, He gave special mentoring time with Peter, James, and John.
- But He role modeled for everyone!

This does not mean that leaders no longer equip. But it does mean the more the leader functions in the Apostolic role, the less the leader equips and the more the leader mentors.

Consider the people who have positively affected you the most. The odds are they spent more time with you than others.

Equipping

Equipping Examples:

- Take one or two people you are mentoring with you to the hospital and on visitations. You do all of the talking and they just watch. You may want to let them pray but no more.

Review and discuss the sessions later. What did they learn? What was confusing? How might they have done it differently? Explain what you do and why you do it. Do this four or five times.

When they appear ready, step back and let the person lead whatever you are doing. Then go somewhere and evaluate how they feel it went. Share with them your observations and offer suggestions. Do this three or four times with different kinds of visits.

When they appear ready, get out of their way and officially release and commission them to visit by themselves or in groups of no more than two. In most cases I would do this in worship.

- A Team Leader working with a small group intern.

Discuss each small group meeting in advance-why you chose the topic, etc.

After each meeting debrief what happened and what you both learned, then plan next week's meeting. Whenever you feel the Intern is ready, turn the planning and the meeting over to him/her.

Equipping thoughts are :

- "Who will I mentor today?" instead of "What must I do?"
- "Who will I discover today?" instead of "What is my job?"
- "How many can I equip to equip others?" instead of "How many can I equip today?"

Mentoring Moment

The “mentoring moment” is that unpredictable point in time when people are “ready” to hear good advice and act upon it. Sometimes you can anticipate it. Most often these moments happen unpredictably. If you observe people closely, you might see the “mentoring moment” coming. You must spend time watching people grow, observing the tell-tale signs of stagnation, monitoring their progress in Christ. If the “mentoring moment” comes and you fail to see it, or observe it too late, and then the moment passes ... it is too late.

The “mentoring moment” requires attention, and also courage. Intervention at the right time is often spontaneous. You don’t have much time to think about it and, therefore, your intervention could very easily be *wrong!*

Often, mentoring requires telling a person something they may not want to hear. Yet it is better to risk and be wrong, than never to risk at all. You can be diplomatic. You can be sensitive. But you must be clear, decisive, and urgent. Courage is essential because the best mentoring is almost always unwelcome. People don’t like to hear the truth. They prefer to hear a myth. Yet the best mentoring is almost always painful ... or, at best, slightly irritating. All too many leaders see a mentoring opportunity, but hold back for fear of making a mistake or offending a friend.

Mentoring takes time and requires one thing: strong relationships with a handful of people.

Mentoring Moments Examples

- You’ve noticed a person in the hub or fractal with which you primarily work has had a change in their attitude and not for the good. Your relationship with that person is strong enough for you to call to their attention that their life is no longer a good role model for those around them.
- The apprentice with whom you are leading the small group is not progressing at the rate you know the person is capable of. At the right moment you intervene with how you feel and a challenge to reach their potential.
- Mentoring thoughts are: “How well am I doing with my life?”

The steps in making disciples.

- **Identify** those who appear ready for discipleship. One equipped paid staff person has the capacity to identify 100-125 potential disciples a year. Usually an unpaid servant can identify fewer simply because of time. This assumes that they are free from managing programs so they can focus on disciple making. Remember, laity are the ones who run the ministries.

Spend as much time with this group as it takes to determine how open they are to becoming leaders or disciple makers.

Encourage those who are not ready to go deeper in their faith by pointing them to one of the growth opportunities that might prepare them.

- **Recruit** 50-75 people who are ready and willing to be coached in their faith development (spiritually pregnant). These people are found within the original 100-125 people.

- **Discern** who is spiritually pregnant.

Discernment is asking “I wonder what gift this new person brings to the Body that we don’t even know that we need?” Delegation is asking, “I wonder where this person will fit into our organizational needs.” One focuses on the person and their unique gift and the DNA of the organism; the other focuses on the institutional needs of the machine.

CAUTION: the number one mistake dying churches make is to either allow new people to sit in the pew and vegetate or to swiftly put them on a committee. Most people today do not have the spiritual maturity at this point. They need to be in a Bible study or share group first.

A discernment tool or opportunity is used to help this group discover their gifts and places of service within the Body.

Discernment is more important here than delegating. Delegating means that someone gives someone a task to perform or responsibility for something that needs to be done. Instead of delegation, disciple makers help people discern for themselves the gift that is within them. People are deployed on the basis of their gift and how they choose to live it out within the mission of the church and the boundaries of the Value Statement.

Discernment is more important than nominations and voting. More and more churches are eliminating most, if not all voting, and relying on God to raise up the leaders and ministries needed. Spiritual gift inventories are replacing “dialing for people” encountered by most nomination committees when they call people to fill offices that no body wants to fill. Two good books on discernment are *Yearning to Know God’s Will* by Morris, and *Experiencing God* by Blackaby.

The two most thorough are *Networking* by Bruce Bugbee, and *S.H.A.P.E.* by Rick Warren. They are also the longest and most difficult to get a large number of people in a low commitment church to do.

We used the Easum Spiritual Gift Inventory. It only takes an hour to do and score and it can be reproduced in a church as many times as one needs to once it is purchased. See workbook *Discovering Our Place in God’s World*.

Whatever tool you use, make sure the tool is indigenous to your theology.

- **Equip**, and/or **mentor** those who are ready to become disciple makers. Usually a paid staff person can then equip 10-20 of the original group of individuals into serious, hands-on ministry.

This is a time of internship when the staff person leads while the intern watches and then the intern leads while the staff person watches.

Mentoring and debriefing are essential parts of the process.

- **Deploy** into a specific ministry is the next step. Over time the staff person coaches the most committed of this group into becoming leaders (later called Lay Pastors).

- **Empower**

Empowerment means delegating to people responsibility for results, not just the task. Individuals or teams must be free to work on their own without interference. They must feel in control of the results. They must also be confident they can achieve the desired results.

The steps involved in empowering people.

- All information needed to live out one's gift on behalf of the Body needs to be shared with the person.
- Reduce or eliminate the barriers standing between the person and carrying out the ministry. Hierarchy must be reduced to where it is not a hindrance to ministry, a drain on one's energy, or a drain on the church's finances.
- People must be given autonomy and trusted to do what is best for the Body. Two good books on the subject of empowerment are *Empowerment Takes More Than a Minute* and *Lay Mobilization Starter Kit*, from Leadership Network.
- At the early stages when delegation may be necessary, make sure the task and role are clearly defined. Later in the process it will not be necessary.
- Provide regular encouragement.
- Hold the person accountable to the common mission.
- Provide the necessary tools. Two excellent tools for raising up leaders are *Empowering Leaders Through Coaching* by Ogne and Nebel, and *Raising Leaders for the Harvest*, by Logan and Cole, both from Church Smart Resources 1-800-253-4276.

Staff covenant

- I will use my gifts to enhance the mission of the church by focusing on making disciples who make disciples.
- I will identify, recruit, equip, and train 15 new disciple making leaders a year.
- I will spend 80% of my time with the 20% who are ready and willing to go and make disciples who make disciples.
- I will get out of the way but will not abdicate casting the vision, modeling for, coaching the servants, and being their spiritual leader.

For more help in this area see:

Tom Bandy, [Coaching Change](#), Abingdon Press

Bill Easum, [Leadership on the OtherSide](#), Abingdon Press