

The cover features a central image of two hands clasped together in a firm grip, symbolizing partnership and leadership. This image is overlaid with a complex network of white lines and dots, resembling a digital or organizational chart. Various icons are scattered throughout: a person icon in a circle at the top left, a bar chart icon in a circle on the left, and a city skyline at the bottom. The background has a soft, warm glow emanating from behind the hands.

THE SGI JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP

LEAD WITH LOVE

No
13

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THE SGI JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP

MISSION STATEMENT

Leading the United Pentecostal Church International to think strategically about future growth.

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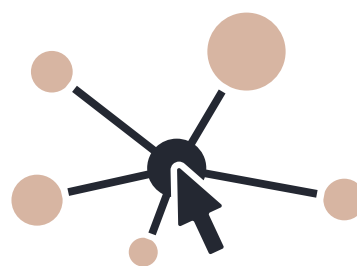
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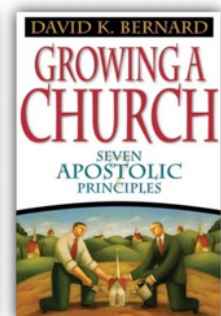
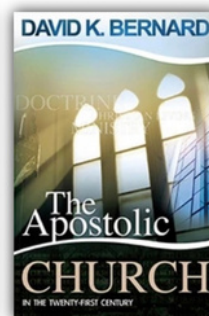
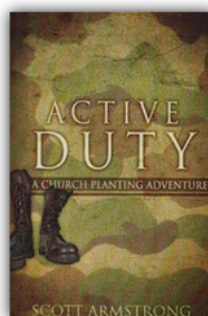
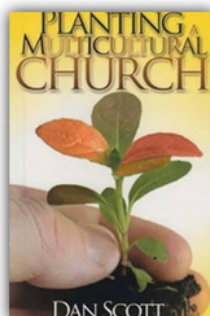
Strategic Growth Initiative (SGI) Resources



The Strategic Growth Initiative (SGI) was born in the heart of General Superintendent David K. Bernard as God gave him a vision for growing the North American church. The General Board of the UPCI approved the forming of SGI for the purpose of highlighting growth in the areas of the number of churches and ministers in North America. The four focus points of SGI are outlined below along with resources available through the Division of Publications.

Multiply the number of churches

SGI will assist districts by providing promotion, planning, and training with the goal of enabling every district to at least double the number of churches (including preaching points, daughter works, autonomous church plants, multicultural church plants, integrate independent Apostolic churches, etc.) in one decade.



LEAD WITH LOVE

DARRELL JOHNS
SGI Committee Chair

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing (I Corinthians 13:2).

Leadership is a gift given by God to serve His purpose and advance His Kingdom. The greatest motivation to lead others is love for God and His people. We are called to lead with love.

The five-fold ministry is a gift from God to His church. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers work in concert to equip the body of Christ to do the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12). According to I Corinthians 14:3, the gifts of the Spirit bring edification, exhortation, and comfort to the church. There are different gifts, administrations, and operations, but they all operate by the same Spirit for the common good of the whole body (I Corinthians 12:6-7).

Chapters 12-14 of I Corinthians focus on spiritual gifts. Everyone familiar with these chapters is aware that chapter 13 is the "love" chapter. Operating in the gifts without love is merely making noise (I Corinthians 13:1). The Bible is clear that we are nothing if our ministry is not motivated by love. *And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing* (I Corinthians 13:2 NKJV). We are to live and lead with love.

The motivation for the incarnation was love: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life* (John 3:16). It was God's love for us that motivated Him to take upon Himself the form of a servant and to humble Himself to endure the death of the cross (Philippians 2:7-8). In the days of His flesh, Jesus was moved with compassion to feed the multitudes, heal the sick, and raise the dead. Love for God and His people is the highest motivation for ministry. *Love never fails...* (1 Corinthians 13:8a).

It is perplexing when people minister with wrong motives and good things still happen. However, there is a biblical explanation. The power of the message we preach and the response of faith to that message transcends the motivation of the messenger. It is possible to do many wonderful works in the name of Jesus and not be in a right relationship with Him (Matthew 7:22-23). Paul wrote that Christ was being preached with the motives of envy, strife, and contention, but he rejoiced that even though the motives were wrong, Christ was still being preached (Philippians 1:15-18).

We do not need to settle for preaching the right message with the wrong motives. Compromising the message while claiming to have pure motives is not an acceptable option. We can have this and that. We can have a message of truth and a motive that is pure. We can lead with love.

Ministry is challenging, and it can be exhausting. Ministry can be discouraging. If we are not careful, our love for God and His people can be displaced by a guarded spirit that produces cynicism toward the people we were called to lead with love.

**As we enter a new year, let's commit
to purging our hearts of anything that
is not motivated by love.**

Let's renew our love for Jesus and people. Let us be like Jesus and lead with love.

Darrell Johns

Darrell Johns serves as pastor of Atlanta West Pentecostal Church, Assistant General Superintendent of the Eastern Zone, UPCI, and chair of the Strategic Growth Initiative Committee of the General Board.





From the General Superintendent

Pastoral Leadership

Look foremost to God for direction and affirmation.

A pastor's greatest joy is to see people miraculously saved and transformed; a pastor's greatest sorrow is to see some of the same people let the miracle slip through their grasp. Don't let this process destroy your vision, self-esteem, or love for people. Don't spend too much time or emotional energy on personal issues, such as opinions, criticisms, who might get credit, or who might be blamed, but focus on positive results for the kingdom of God.

The three keys to church growth are attracting, winning, and retaining people. Especially focus on retention, as it's the one most neglected.

Invest efforts and resources in areas of greatest productivity and in people with the potential to become leaders.

Instead of spending most of your time on problems, crises, and people with the greatest needs, invest quality time in training and mentoring leaders. Develop a strong team to help you with problems, crises, and needy people.

Accept necessary endings.

Know when to let go ... of people, projects, programs, and traditions. Don't continue to invest in unproductive activities. When dealing with people, err on the side of mercy and give them opportunities. When dealing with leaders, provide coaching, opportunities, and correction as needed. However, when people persistently act contrary to your advice and take advantage of your mercy, there is a time to act. At some point you must give priority to the needs of and costs to the body.

Don't take opposition, rejection, or defeat personally, but turn it over to God.

For many, their struggle is with God or authority, and you represent both. You can't fix everyone or everything. Some don't want to be fixed. Some won't accept your leadership. For some, hurt lasts a lifetime. You can't help them until they are willing to let go of the past. But failure is not final. There is always hope.

Err on the side of mercy.

Treat people as you wish to be treated, and treat their children as you want yours to be treated. You will be held to the same standard to which you hold others (Matthew 7:2). Nevertheless, sometimes you must make the difficult decision to remove someone from a position in the best interests of the body.

Love people.

In the end, ministry is about people. Respect them and serve them. Avoid the temptation to coerce, but genuinely care for people. In the end, the only acceptable motive and the only successful method of leadership is love.



Recommended Resource
Article adapted from *Spiritual Leadership in the Twenty-First Century* by David K. Bernard (Word Aflame Press, 2015).



Article No.1

Hands for the Harvest

"An incredible harvest is coming, followed by an incredible famine, and we must be ready." That was Joseph's essential message when Pharaoh brought him from prison to interpret his dream. Joseph told Pharaoh the coming harvest was *...established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass* (Genesis 41:32b). The whole point of God giving them advance notice was for them to adequately prepare for what was coming.

Joseph gave Pharaoh a detailed plan to maximize the opportunity before them. He said, *Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years* (Genesis 41:33-34).

The elements of his plan were: (1) Vision, (2) Leadership, (3) Authority, (4) Delegation, (5) Planning, and (6) Action.

Through a detailed plan, Joseph employed hands for the harvest *...that the land perish not through the famine* (Genesis 14:36b).

In Matthew 9:37-38, Jesus envisioned not a coming harvest but a present and plenteous harvest. However, while He recognized the potential of a great harvest, He also understood that for the vision to become a reality, there must be laborers willing to work in the harvest. The success of the harvest is directly connected to the ability to activate laborers to work in the field. We, too, are surrounded by a present and plenteous harvest, but our greatest need is laborers.

Jesus challenged His disciples to pray for the Lord of the harvest to "send forth" laborers into His harvest. The word translated "send forth" can also be translated as "thrust out" or expelled. Jesus recognized the necessity of a spiritual intervention to overcome the inertia of personal comfort zones. In Matthew 10, Jesus "sent out" or "thrust out" His disciples to preach the Kingdom message, and they became the answer to their own prayer request.

In 2023, we are surrounded by a present and plentiful harvest, but there is a great need for more laborers. If we are going to reach the eight billion people in our world with the gospel, we must have a multiplication of ministers. *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!* (Romans 10:14-15).

Our prayer and our priority must be the increase of hands for the harvest.

What can we do to increase the number of ministers? In his book *Deep Bench*, Matt Rogers offers a three-phase approach to leadership development: Discover, Develop, and Deploy. God is speaking to our children and young people about their role in the Kingdom.

We must help those around us recognize the call of God on their life, develop that call, and then release them to their divine destiny.

Creating pathways to ministry development will create a pipeline of laborers for the harvest before us. When our ministerial license applicants appear before the District Board, we tell them that they are the answer to our prayer.

Ministers do not develop by accident. Paul gave the imperative to *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ* (1 Corinthians 11:1). In their book *Hero Maker*, Dave Ferguson and Warren Bird identify five practices based on the life of Jesus for leaders to multiply leaders. They are: (1) Multiplication Thinking, (2) Permission Giving, (3) Disciple Multiplying, (4) Gift Activating, and (5) Kingdom Building. Embracing these practices will create a culture of leadership reproduction and multiplication.

Jesus handpicked His disciples and dedicated Himself to their development and deployment. He trained them up, thrust them out, and turned them loose. He entrusted everything He did on Calvary to them and put the future of His church in their hands. Who have you picked for your team? A present and plenteous harvest awaits!

Bryan Parkey



Article No.2

Let Love Lead the Way

Leadership and love are two commodities that the church must have in abundance.

Leadership gives vision and direction, while love motivates and inspires. Leadership shows the way, and love shares along the way. Leadership equips, and love encourages. Leadership corrects, and love convinces. Together they complete one another.

In his letters to the Corinthian church about his leadership and those who served with him, Paul writes that they tried to live in such a way that no one would ever be offended or kept back from finding the Lord because of the way they acted. They wanted no one to find fault with them and be able to blame it on the Lord. Their greatest desire was to show that they were true ministers of God. Paul then began to list many of their actions and responses in ministering to the people. One of those attributes is that they truly loved or, as the KJV says, they had "love unfeigned."

Paul told the Corinthians that the love of Christ constrained them or controlled them. As leaders, they were no longer living unto themselves or for their own will or agenda. We know from Paul's writings that love does not mean the absence of correction or turning a blind eye to sin. Love simply guides our responses as a leader of people.

We know that Paul had to correct the Corinthian church for many of their actions. First, they were too tolerant of sin and then were also too resistant to restore those who had repented. But his ability to lead by love kept him guiding and directing the church until they made things right. He led by example. He was open with them and, as a father with a child, kept working to bring them to maturity.

Love should be a defining attribute of every leader in the church.

Love should be the motive behind all we do for the kingdom of God. Love is the ultimate identification of a disciple of Jesus Christ. The great commandment that Jesus left with the church is to go and make disciples. If we are going to lead others to Jesus, it must be defined by love.

As a leader, you will at times, be misunderstood, mistreated, and even misrepresented, but you must allow love to direct your responses. Leaders can destroy or build those they lead. Be a builder.

- **Speak the truth in love:** When you speak in love, those you lead can grow up in Jesus (Ephesians 4:15). The father corrects those whom he loves, and, as leaders, we should not run from this responsibility.
- **Cover sins with love:** When people fail, don't write them off, but cover them with love so they will not be overcome with sorrow and can find forgiveness (II Corinthians 2:7). When you cover someone with love, you are not hiding their sin but exposing it to the never-ending love of God that can heal and make them whole.
- **Restore by love:** Love will allow you to lead with meekness, recognizing the temptations that we all must overcome (Galatians 6:1). As spiritual leaders, it is our duty to restore those who fall. Love equips us to be strong yet gentle, direct yet compassionate, accountable yet reassuring.

Love is the most powerful resource we possess from God.

Paul assures the Corinthians that love remains no matter the circumstances, disagreements, struggles, disappointments, blessings, or whether we are winning or losing. Love never loses hope, it looks for the best, and it never quits. Love never fails.

So, lead with love, by love, and through love. Let love lead the way, and you will always find a way.

Tom Foster





Article No. 3

Have You Ever Loved a City?

The Bible is city-centric. Abraham looked for a city; God placed His Name in a city, made a covenant with a city, sent prophets to cities, raised up cities, spared cities, and judged cities. Jesus spoke to a city, wept over a city, and is building a city. A geographic location alone, absent human beings, does not constitute an important place to God, absent human beings. However, God places enormous importance on cities. Cities are inanimate objects that should not be able to see, feel, or do anything independently, and yet, over and over, Scripture attributes human characteristics to cities. Part of the God-nature is the desire for community, and maybe that explains why humans have gathered in cities from the beginning.

As the church targets lost humanity, we must recognize that this will involve loving, reaching for, and attempting to understand the cities where they live.

But how do you love a city?

It's hard to love a city you have not been exposed to or visited. I was not the ideal candidate to answer a call to Detroit by anyone's standard but God's. My family has been established in Mississippi since before it was a state, and I am as southern as grits. However, that summer night in 1991, as I looked out the window of the little church where we were spending the night preparing to do an outreach blitz the next day, the sights and sounds of Detroit were overwhelming. As I was praying over the city and feeling the desperation of the lost souls, who at 3:00 a.m. were still wandering blindly around, trying to find some illicit pleasure to dull the pain, I heard the call very clearly.

**"I wept over Jerusalem;
who will weep over Detroit?"**

These words were so clearly impressed upon my mind that I will never forget them. Through my tears, I whispered in reply, "I will." This responsibility is never far from my conscience thoughts, ever.

I'm sure I am only one of the hundreds who have experienced the following scenario: When driving into a city, you immediately wonder if there is a United Pentecostal Church there. Upon discovering that the town has a strong church, satisfaction replaces the question. However, when you discover there is no United Pentecostal Church in the city, a knowing sense of responsibility lingers with you for the remainder of your stay, and, at times, the rest of your life. Yes, it is possible to "fall in love" with a city.

Over the years, I have observed a common trait among successful church planters. They love their city deeply. Yes, they consider the place that God called them to plant a church as "their city" or "their town." It's hard to describe, but somehow, they take the task of reaching every city resident with the gospel message as a personal responsibility. Many describe themselves as "the pastor of my entire city." It is a tremendous responsibility when God calls you to a city. The best way I can describe the experience is that God channels His love for everyone in that city directly through you. Sometimes the feeling is overwhelming.

Cities are important because cities are made of people who share many things in common, not the least of which is geography.

God loves cities because God loves people, and cities are where the people are.

I believe God is laying a city on your heart today as you read this. Many cities, towns, villages, and communities in North America do not have a local church. I know God is calling someone to go to every one of them. The book of Acts tracks the apostle's movement by cities. We can only talk about reaching North America if we strategize to reach her cities.

The local church is a necessary instrument of salvation in an individual's life, and it follows that a city will be lost without a church. Our job is not done until we have planted a local church in every city in North America.

North American Missions aims to cultivate this calling to cities. We hope to expose you to the need for a church in the next town and equip you to fulfill that calling. We want to be God's "matchmaker," if you will. We pray that you will "fall in love" with a city and become an instrument of salvation for that city.

Scott Fistrank



Article No. 4

Love Beyond Regret

Being a leader is a great privilege. God has entrusted us with the work of His Kingdom on earth. With God's trust also comes our humanity and frailty. And the facts are that from time to time, we can be wrong, and we can make mistakes. I know it is shocking to admit, but true; we are not without flaws.

We must teach ourselves and train ourselves to live beyond the regrets of life and ministry.

Genesis 11 records the life of Terah, the great patriarch, and father of Abraham. We learn quite a bit about Terah, his family, and his emotional instability in the closing verses of this chapter. Terah had three sons. One of those sons, Haran, died literally in his father's arms. The cause of death in this tragedy is not immediately disclosed, but one can imagine the pain this father felt in this situation.

We can tell that Terah had a hard time processing this pain and dealing with the regret because we also see that God offers him an escape from his pain by directing him toward Canaan, a land of peace and promise. But because of his pain, Terah is instead drawn toward a city that bears the name of his fallen son. Genesis 11:32 ends by saying *Terah lived two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.*

We hear of no further accomplishments in his life. We see no joy even though he had Abraham with him and the seed of future hope. We see that he simply died in a place that God didn't intend. Furthermore, when God later called Abraham in Genesis 12, the Lord essentially told him to go away from the land he was in and from his father's (Terah's) house to a place where he would be shown. God told him that he would be made great there (Genesis 12:1-3).

We must know and plan for the fact that because we love so deeply, sometimes there will be miscalculations, misjudgments, and painful side effects to decisions that we make as leaders. But we cannot allow mistakes or fears to cloud our view of God's love for us and God's ability to love through us.

We must purpose as leaders to love ourselves, our families, and others and to do so beyond regret.

David Bryan



ISSUE 13 TOOLBOX PRACTICAL TOOLS YOU CAN USE



LOVE LANGUAGES FOR LEADERS

SGI adapted this resource article from “How To Best Communicate Your Appreciation In The Workplace” by Amy Blaschka. For more information about how leaders show love in the workplace, see *The Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace* by Chapman and White (2019) and <https://mbainventory.com>.

Gary Chapman’s classic book, *The 5 Love Languages*, suggests that each of us has a preferred “love language” and that we can improve our relationships by knowing one another’s. This concept is so universal that it was later adapted to the work environment, shifting from “love” to “appreciation.”

“Because we don’t normally think in terms of our co-workers loving us — the word appreciation fits much better — but it is meeting that deep need to feel that somebody cares about me, and somebody appreciates me,” says Chapman.

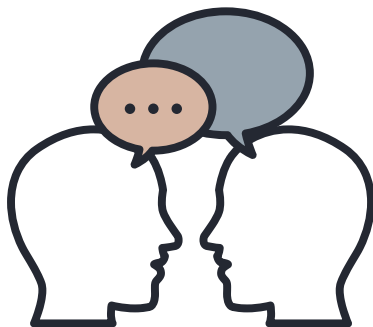
Chapman teamed up with Dr. Paul White to pen *The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace*, which aimed to improve workplace relationships simply by learning your co-workers’ language of appreciation.

“Every person is unique in the way that they feel love or express love in personal relationships, but it’s the same in how they feel appreciated and valued in work relationships,” explains White.

And when leaders, co-workers, and employees feel appreciated, says Chapman and White, you improve staff morale, create a positive workplace, and increase employee engagement.

Here’s a breakdown of the five languages of workplace appreciation, how to effectively communicate using them, actions you can take to support each style, and things to avoid.

1. Words of Affirmation



How To Communicate

As this language’s name suggests, use words to affirm, encourage, and appreciate people. Employ empathy to understand your colleagues better and actively listen to them to signal your interest.

Actions To Take

Provide verbal praise in front of others—in a team meeting or when you’re with customers, for instance. Regularly send unexpected messages, emails, or texts of encouragement to foster closer work relationships.

Things To Avoid

Offering non-constructive criticism or failing to recognize your workmates’ efforts will leave others feeling frustrated and unappreciated.



LOVE LANGUAGES FOR LEADERS



2. Quality Time

How To Communicate

The best way to use this language is to give others your undivided attention.

Actions To Take

Schedule time for one-on-one, uninterrupted, and focused conversations. Maintain eye contact. Arrange activities outside of the office to hang out together with colleagues. Each of these actions will build trust and deepen team relationships.

Things To Avoid

Four words: put away your phone!

3. Acts of Service

How To Communicate

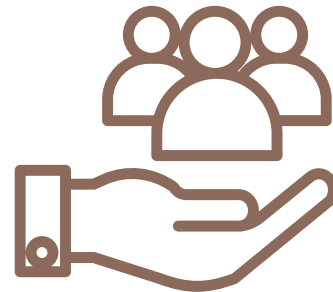
With this language, actions speak louder than words.

Actions To Take

Help alleviate a colleague's workload by offering your assistance, and then perform the service in a way the recipient wants it done. Use phrases like "I'll help..." to let them know you're with them and be clear about how much time you have to assist.

Things To Avoid

Not following through on tasks you promised to take care of.



4. Tangible Gifts

How To Communicate

Despite its name, this language is less about the "gift" and more about the thought behind it.

Actions To Take

Get to know what is important or valued by the recipient and ensure the gift reflects this knowledge. A caffeine junkie would love a gift card to her favorite coffee house, and a team working around the clock might appreciate spa gift cards to unwind.

Things To Avoid

Forgetting special milestones or giving a generic gift with no link to its recipient.



LOVE LANGUAGES FOR LEADERS

5. Appropriate Physical Touch

How To Communicate

This language uses appropriate physical touch to demonstrate appreciation.

Actions To Take

Offer a high five, handshake, fist bump, or a pat on the back when acknowledging someone for a great job. These spontaneous displays of celebration help build positive work-based relationships.

Things To Avoid

Personal boundaries are important to keep in mind with this language of appreciation, so avoid unwanted touch.



In organizations, leaders communicate appreciation and love in various ways. The best way to express gratitude starts by asking others about their preferences, so you can better relate to them and deepen your relationships.

To find out your preferred language of appreciation as a leader, you can take the quiz below.

LOVE
LANGUAGE™
QUIZ

What's Your Love Language™?

For couples, singles, teens, and children.

Take this quiz to discover your primary love language, what it means, and how you can use it to better connect with your loved ones.

When you are finished, you may print, share, or save your results for future reference - they will not be saved automatically.

Start the Quiz

CLICK HERE