

BIBLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION: PHILOSOPHY AND LEADERSHIP
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR GLOBAL
INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY-MALTA

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December 2013

INTRODUCTION

A Maltese Pentecostal pastor informed the writer, that his claiming that one must be academically qualified in ministry is unbiblical, and all one needs is God's calling (personal correspondence, email dated September 30, 2011). This was a comment replying to the writer's constant appeals to Maltese Evangelical and Pentecostal leaders to train teachers and preachers in an accredited institute. This statement enforces the writer's observation that the Evangelical and Pentecostal Church is engulfed in a leadership crisis. It also insists on his philosophy of ministry that pastors, teachers and other ministries should be trained and proved before given the title or position of ministry (Agius 2010, 2).

Leaders, such as pastors, elders and teachers have one colossal responsibility. They have to *be* of positive influence to their followers. They are to be the models to their followers because modeling provides them the archetypal example of what is expected from them (Maxwell 1995, 183). Unlike what the above pastor stated, "Ultimately, education and leadership shade into each other to become almost inseparable..." (Page 1994, 116). Ironically, the said pastor leads a Bible college in his own church.

In order to lead, the leader, and, in this case, the Bible School administrator, must serve those under him to help them reach their maximum efficiency and give their total output. Being a Christlike leader provides the best imitation of Christ (Ephesians 5:1). Administrators must help their students to become what God wants the students to be while under their care. Therefore, Bible School administrators, must be the persons leading the students to commit towards their goals, working in unity with others, and have the best effective communication possible (Rush 7, 2003) to further the Kingdom of God.

*SECTION ONE**PHILOSOPHY OF ADMINISTRATION
IN A BIBLE SCHOOL*

Philosophy of Administration: A Basic Assumption

Before universal history began, the cosmos knew of One and Perfect Leader, who created the heavens and the earth. Paul states that all creation displays God's eternal power and divine nature (Romans 1:20). This statement leads the writer to believe that God's influence is in His creation. This is supported by the fact the humans, the crown of God's creation, (Psalm 8) were created in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:27). He created mankind in His holiness and purity, and therefore His total influence was upon them.

Since the fall of man distorted this holy image, God began to execute His divine plan known as the *Missio Dei*. To further His plan, the Lord used various people to lead towards the fulfillment of this plan. These were leaders who led Israel which was the nation which God chose to bring the ultimate Leader on earth, Jesus Christ. Jesus showed the world that mankind was created to function on God's behalf on earth and bring glory to Him (Page, 130). The Bible teaches this wonderful truth, and therefore, today, mankind will do well to study the leadership styles of these great leaders and especially, the leadership of Jesus Christ. Therefore, any philosophy of administration in a Bible School must be built upon God and His Word. This is the only way God reveals His will to mankind. In fact, it is fundamental to build this kind of thinking in an institution where teachers and ministers of God's Word are being molded.

Philosophy of Administration: A Description

Administration is defined as, "the guidance, leadership and quality control of the efforts of a group of individuals toward some common goal (Durasoff 2005, 13)." Consequently, a Bible School is a "factory" which molds students into disciples of Christ and shapes them as servants and ministers of God's Word. This is the writer's statement of how

he perceives the role of a Bible School. Alton C. Smith supports this principle. He concurs by stating that a Bible School is the place where students are to reflect the capacities of the most successful teaching pastors (1991, 3). However, if this goal is to be reached, the school needs to have its administrators who are disciples of Christ and servants and ministers of God's Word. Their influence will guide the students into being what Christ wants them to be. This concept must be the top priority of the administrators and included in the mission statement of any Bible School. The administration has to be credible in every aspect as it gives it moral authority for quality control. This requires integrity, because integrity builds trust (Maxwell 1993, 38). The reason integrity builds trust is because Jesus can be trusted because of His excellence of character. Consequently, the character of the Bible school administrators will determine the character of the school. In the writer's cultural context this is called, "quality assurance."

The Scripture describes a significant number of leadership styles exercised by Israel's leaders. Some were very wrong because they were based on worldly principles. They used power and authority to lord it over people in an effort to do what pleased them. One example is that of Rehoboam. His authoritarian approach to management stimulated discontent, frustration and negative attitudes toward leadership. He enjoyed the advice of his peers instead of older experienced and probably holy counselors. The latter advised the king that he must be a servant; and if he is so, his subjects will serve him forever (1 Kings 12:7). Instead, Rehoboam chose to be an autocratic administrator. As a result, people were used as a tool and a source of income. People had no value to him as persons. As a result, the kingdom was divided. Some educational institutions have this same spirit. They see students as a source of income instead of future ministers of God's Word.

In comparison, Jesus rebuked the sons of Zebedee, who sought positions of authority, just like many worldly people today, including some Christians. Jesus reminded them how

the kings of the world act on their subjects. Jesus declared to His disciples, that anyone wanting to be a leader, must be a servant of those who he or she is leading. In other words, if one wants to be in administration, he must wait (διδάκονος) on his people like a servant (δοῦλος). As a result, the Kingdom of God experiences growth and unity. The focus of the Bible school is to serve the students and concentrate on their needs. The writer believes that with this philosophy, the Bible school will be able to help the students reach their goals, enjoy unity with the students and have effective communication between the all levels of administration. Thus, the school will be able to focus on doing God's work (Page, 9).

SECTION TWO

Servant Leadership: Foundational in Bible School Administration

The theme of servant leadership is developed throughout the Bible in a variety of ways, one of which is the use of the Hebrew, עֶבֶד (ebed) and its Greek equivalent, διακονία (diakonia). The meaning of these words is the crux of any Christian leadership. The reason being, Christ was characterized as a servant, putting the needs of others before His own (Philippians 2:5--11). On this premise, Paul encouraged the church to exhibit the same kind of attitude (Philippians 2:1-4). He also regarded his own work, and also that of all the apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, and pastors, as serving others in a humble and self-giving way. Leaders are co-workers with their followers and have no special status or privileges (Gangel 1997, 59). Jesus said that "whoever wants to be first must be your slave" (Matthew 20:27).

True leadership puts service before power and honor. By putting service first, one can become a true leader. A servant leader is a person who does not exercise his own will but rather submits it in order to please others. He also demonstrates the importance of serving

another without any assurance of reward (Scott 1985, 27). By putting power and honor first, one loses true leadership.

The administration of a Bible School's goal is to bring the best out of the students attending it. Students come from various levels of society and cultures. The influence of the student's culture determines the sum total of his behavior. However, this may not always be Christlike. A culture, strong or weak, is a learned behavior. Therefore, those behaviors which are not Christlike, must be unlearned and replaced. The mission of the Bible School is to teach the students to teach the church to become a New Testament church by fulfilling the twofold mission of the Great Commission. In itself, to fulfill the Great Commission, one needs to be dedicated to serve others.

The Bible School administration must be that serving influence which guides the students by example and integrity into excellency. The administration meets the needs of the students as they work at accomplishing their goals. It provides the loving care necessary to imprint Christ into the heart of the students. With the combination of sound teachings and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, the students will become trustworthy, serving-stewards of God's Word and ministry. As in all Christian education, the Bible school administration is primarily interested in making the Bible relevant to the students in order to produce the next generation of Christian educators protecting the Word of Truth from contemporary secularism, relativism and pluralism. The students will have the opportunity to save many from the grip of egocentrism, authoritative and selfish behaviors which are destroying mankind.

SECTION THREE

Reflection and Conclusion

The writer has already referred to secular leadership's behavior in this paper. For the sake of space, he will discuss insights gained from reflections in his ministry as National Director of Global Institute of Theology (GU) in the Island of Malta.

Three years ago on the month, the writer was given the responsibility to direct GU in Malta. Unfortunately, he inherited a non-functional office and was instructed to start the office from its foundation. He knew that the previous directorship caused the collapse of the office because it was administered purely with secular, not-Christian, style of management vis-a-vis autocratic and self-gaining attitude. Students suffered and so did the GU office.

The first thing the writer did was to use team-leadership style. He chose other leaders from different churches to be part of the local GU office administration. Then, he called all pastors and leaders from Malta to explain the goal and vision of GU and how it can serve their church. On the same day a statute was adopted and signed before all those present, including Paul Trementozzi, from the Southern European Assemblies of God World Mission¹. The statutes were later notarized according to Maltese law². GU is an institution which stands for integrity, therefore the Board decided to be above reproach also in the area of finances. Consequently, a bank account was opened with three signatories.

The office quickly gained the reputation of being student oriented. The Board dedicated itself to serve the students. Therefore, it met with pastors and other Christians on an individual basis informing them how Christian education can benefit their spiritual life and ministry. A monthly news letter is sent to keep pastors and others informed with the progress. The director and the Board members are GU students themselves. Therefore, slowly but surely, members of the said Board members' churches started to study GU materials as well.

The GU Board also has the vision to serve current leaders by guiding them to study for accreditation for the sake of integrity in Ministry. Until recently, leaders in Malta took positions on the basis of "calling" without any training in leadership and theology. The Board saw this was not appropriate, and therefore, provided group leadership training and other

¹ Since then, Paul Trementozzi was given the responsibility to be Regional Director for Europe.

² <http://www.git.edu.mt/board%20of%20directors.htm>

related courses. The next step of their vision was to provide an undergraduate certificate in Bible Interpretation. Since then, GIT provided the first graduates in undergraduate certificates and a number of students are proceeding towards Bachelor of Arts degrees.

This paper addressed the philosophy of administration in a Bible school and its leadership. The administration and its leadership are to be based on the nature of God as revealed in His Holy Scripture. The main purpose of the school is not only to teach Bible, theology and missions, but to mold the students into the image of Christ. In order for the school to have this effect, the administration, who are also of the faculty, are Christians of distinguished character. It is essential that the teachers have godly characters by which they influence their students. Working as a team, the school is in the process of producing a band of Christian leaders, who in turn influence churches and other Christian organizations.

Christian leaders must be servants. In fact, the higher the Christian leader is in the organization, the more he or she must serve (Rush, 4). By servanthood leadership, the administrators will have a stronger rapport with the students, than being authoritative. They will be able to discern God's calling on the students and guide them in that calling. They will be able to provide opportunities for their students to use their creativity to improve themselves in the areas of ministry the Holy Spirit trusted them with.

That Bible School, which focuses on using the Christlike creativity of its students, will discover a workable environment to reach its goals and enjoy the desired results. The Bible School is a "factory" which molds students into disciples of Christ and shapes them as servants and ministers of God's Word. Its administration is responsible to see that this goal is reached.

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