
HERALD

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What is the Role of an Elder?

Ben Merkle is professor of New Testament at Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary, Penang, Malaysia.

In the contemporary church, elders, or pastors, are busier than ever with so many programs, committees, and events. It is often hard to find time to meet the needs of the congregation. Some view the pastor as the CEO, while others view him as an employee. Still others view the pastor as their personal therapist who has the answers to all their problems. With so many responsibilities vying for a pastor's or an elder's time, what should take precedence? In other words, what is the main duty or role of an elder? There are at least four primary duties of an elder that should not be ignored. The elder is called to be (1) a leader, (2) a shepherd, (3) a teacher, and (4) an equipper.

Elder as Leader

First of all, an elder is called to lead the church. Paul writes that an elder "must manage his own household well," and then adds the reason, "for if someone does not know how to manage his own household how will he care for God's church?" (1 Tim. 3:4-5). The analogy Paul makes is between the role of the husband and the role of the elder. If an elder cannot manage (rule/lead/care for) his own family, then how can he be expected to take on the additional responsibilities and challenges of leading the church? Later, Paul writes, "let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor" (1 Tim. 5:17). It is evident, then, that one of the main functions of an elder is to lead the church (cf. Rom. 12:8).

Similarly, the author of Hebrews instructs the congregation, "Obey your leaders and submit to them" (Heb. 13:17;

cf. 1 Thess. 5:12). The leaders, probably the elders, thus have a certain authority. Authority in the church is not equally divided among the members. And yet nowhere are the leaders told to force the congregation to submit to them. That is because leadership in the church must be humble leadership that leads by example. A pastor should not ask people to do something he himself is not willing to do. Peter encourages the elders to lead the people in a way that is not domineering, “being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:3). The author of Hebrews writes, “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith” (Heb. 13:17).

Biblical leadership is humble, servant leadership. Jesus gave the perfect example of humility when He washed the feet of His disciples (John 13:1-20). Jesus explained this symbolic act to His disciples: “Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you” (John 13:15). What does a humble leader look like? First of all, a humble leader does not demand respect. He realizes that his position in the church is a gift from God and that the church itself is God’s church. A humble leader also is teachable. He admits that he

does not have all the answers but is willing to listen and learn from others. Furthermore, he is willing to work with others because he realizes the importance of teamwork and accountability. A humble leader is also a servant. When James and John asked if they could sit at Jesus’ right and left side in heaven, Jesus said to His disciples, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all” (Mark 10:42-44). Finally, and most importantly, a humble leader does all to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

Elder as Shepherd

The title “pastor” (see Eph. 4:11) is simply another term used to describe an elder or overseer (see Acts 20:17, 28), and “pastor” has the same meaning as “shepherd.” Because the people of God are referred to figuratively as “sheep,” those who tend to their needs and exercise leadership over them are figuratively called “shepherds.” Peter exhorts the elders to “shepherd the flock of God that is among you” (1 Peter 5:2). Thus, the elders lead the people of God as a shepherd leads a flock of sheep. This is a significant analogy. Church leaders are not cowboys who drive the sheep. Rather, they are caring shepherds who lead and protect the sheep. Furthermore, the

shepherd's primary task is not to run an organization but to care for people's souls. A pastor is not primarily a motivator, administrator, or program facilitator, but a shepherd.

In the Old Testament, the Lord rebuked the leaders of Israel for not being good shepherds. The basic charge against these leaders was that they looked after their own interests and ignored the needs of the sheep. We read in Ezekiel, "Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not the shepherds feed the sheep? You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them" (Ezek. 34:2-4).

Jesus, of course, is the perfect Shepherd. He is the Good Shepherd who "lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11; cf. John 15:13). He is the one who always feeds His sheep. He strengthens them, heals them, binds their wounds and brings back those who are straying. Peter therefore describes Jesus as "the Shepherd and Overseer" of our souls (1 Peter 2:25). He is the "chief Shepherd" (1 Peter 5:4) who is the perfect example for those who are undershepherds.

The shepherds must be willing to protect the sheep. Paul warns the Ephesians elders in his farewell speech, "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:28-29). A good shepherd will pay close attention to the flock and protect them from wolves that would seek to harm them spiritually.

Shepherding carries with it a great responsibility before God. The sheep are placed under the care of the shepherd. The sheep have the responsibility to follow the shepherd, but the shepherd has to be diligent in keeping watch over the sheep. The author of Hebrews exhorts his readers, "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account" (Heb. 13:17). Thus, the reason the members of the congregation are to follow the leadership of the elders is because they are given the task of watching over their souls - a responsibility for which they will be held accountable.

Elder as Teacher

It is clear from the New Testament that an elder is primarily a teacher. The elders' calling to lead the church through their teaching distinguishes them from the deacons. One of the

unique qualifications for an elder is that he must “able to teach” (1 Tim. 3:2). Two chapters later Paul mentions that those who rule well are worthy of double honor, that is, those who work hard at preaching and teaching” (1 Tim. 5:17). In Titus, Paul describes this role in more detail. He explains that an elder “must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it” (Titus 1:9). Paul indicates that the goal of teaching is not only to encourage believers by giving them biblical instruction but also to firmly rebuke those who oppose the truth of the gospel. The teaching role is also inseparably connected to the function of the pastor as Paul states that God has gifted the church with “pastors and teachers” or pastor-teachers (Eph. 4:11).

There are other texts that associate the role of church leaders with teaching. Although elders or overseers are not specifically mentioned in the following examples, it is likely that those who were doing the teaching were in fact elders. Paul reminds the church in Galatia that the “one who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches” (Gal 6:6). Two things should be observed from this verse. First, that which was being taught was the Word. This emphasis on the Word of God was evident from the

beginning of the church. We read that the first believers in Jerusalem “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching” (Acts 2:42). Second, some were so dedicated to the task of teaching that they required financial support. Though not named elders, these people were performing the function of elders among those in the congregation. In 1 Thessalonians 5:12, Paul exhorts the congregation “to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you.” These leaders who are to be respected are described as those who “labor,” “are over,” and “admonish” the Thessalonian Christians. Most likely, those who had such leadership to lead and teach (i.e., admonish) the congregation were the elders. Likewise, in Hebrews 13:7, the leaders are defined as “those who spoke...the word of God” to the church. This text is not likely referring to the teaching ministry of the elders.

Paul reminds his protege Timothy, “Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching” (1 Tim 4:13). The reading and subsequent exposition of the Bible was at the heart and center of the worship service. For Timothy to neglect his task would be a colossal failure on his part. In 2 Timothy, Paul’s last written letter in the Bible, Paul realizes that his death is imminent, and he senses the urgency to once again encourage Timothy, his son in the faith.

With the utmost solemnity and seriousness, Paul writes, “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season: reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Tim. 4:1-2). The importance of solid, gospel teaching in the church is vital to the church’s existence. The Word must be preached, and it is the task of elders to preach that Word.

Elder as Equipper

The role of the elder as teacher is important, not just for the health of the church in the present, but also for the growth of the church in the future. As a result, it is not enough for the elders simply to be teachers; they also must be purposefully equipping the next generation of elders to minister alongside them or to plant new churches in the community. Too often I have witnessed pastors who preach and teach year after year but, when all is said and done, they have effectively trained and equipped nobody to take their place. It is a sign of an unhealthy church if there is no one in the congregation who can step in the gap and fill the pulpit whenever the pastor is gone. Biblical eldership includes training others to do the task of preaching and teaching.

Again, Paul’s words to Timothy are instructive. He tells Timothy, “What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2). As Paul’s faithful coworker, Timothy was entrusted with the task of passing on the pure gospel as preached by Paul. He had been equipped by Paul and was now to become an equipper himself. He was to entrust what he had learned to “faithful men,” which is probably another way of describing the elders of the church. The task of raising up new leaders in the church does not belong primarily to Bible colleges or seminaries. It is the task of the elders to identify those young (or not so young) men who will be faithful to carry on the gospel message. Unfortunately, pastors are either too busy or too insecure to mentor and disciple other gifted men in the church. Thus, this role of the elder is perhaps the most neglected and therefore one that must be emphasized in the local church.

Summary

The office of elder is an important office because of the role the elders perform. Their primary task is not merely to run the church but to care for the spiritual lives of the congregation. As leaders, shepherds, teachers and equippers, elders have the immense responsibility and privilege of helping God’s people become more holy and more Christlike.

Profiles of Nominated Elders



Elder Nominee: Jim Fox

Family: Karen, Caitlyn (17), Kyleigh (15), Nate (11 - on 5/13), Candace (8 - on 5/25)

In Dubai since: June 2006

Interests: Family, travel, history, classical guitar

Conversion: I was raised in a Roman Catholic home, and attended Catholic schools. I believed that the Bible was God's word, that Jesus was God's son, and that he had died on the cross for my sins and rose on the third day. However, I had no idea why these facts were important, nor that my sin was that big a deal; after all I hadn't murdered anyone! My only "hope" was that some time in purgatory would enable me to go to heaven. I did not understand the holiness and wrath of God. Although I liked religion, I was increasingly giving way to sin in high school. At a time when I was particularly alarmed at my guilt before God as a 16 year old, my oldest brother, who was a growing Christian, shared the gospel with me and my next older brother while home from university. I eagerly responded to the promise of assurance of eternal life and the invitation to have a relationship with Christ (1980). I began rapidly growing in my faith over a year later when I started studying the Bible with a campus ministry group, and worshiping with a Bible-teaching and -obeying church (where I also got to know Karen!). I am grateful for God's mercy extended to me in Christ through the gospel, as well as through the saints who modeled for me how to walk in Christ, service, and biblical marriage and parenting.

**Elder****Nominated:** Ken Harman**Family:** Anna, Daniel (7), James (5)**In Dubai since:** December 2006**Interests:** family time, reading, travel

Conversion: I was brought up by Christian parents, and what a blessing that was! I cannot remember a time that I did not know that the God who made me, and everything in the world, was holy and all-powerful. Even as a child I knew I was far from perfect (I think the evidence was pretty clear!). As a sinner, I knew that I needed to ask God for forgiveness and to trust in Jesus who had died for my sins. I think that even then I understood that I was saved by grace, that is, by what Jesus had done and not by anything I deserved.

I now recognise that the faithful Christian witness of my parents, in particular, as well as that of believing relatives and friends was so important. It was clear that they were not perfect but they were not hypocritical. Their trust in God was genuine and they lived what they believed. I also have very fond memories of the fellowship I enjoyed as a teenager in youth group, so that ministry was also vital to my growth in the Lord.

Leaving home was a formative time as I had to move around a bit for work and take responsibility for meeting regularly with other believers. I always sought out and found a church to attend, initially for the fellowship rather than for the teaching. By God's grace I have benefited from the faithful preaching of His word from childhood up through my time here at UCCD. My walk with the Lord has been one of gradual growth and God has been faithful. I trust that with God's help I will continue to grow deeper in my understanding of His word, my own sinfulness, the wonder of Jesus' perfect sacrifice and in my desire to live for His glory.



Family: Cathy, Wezi (10); Jonathan (8); Benjamin (6)

In Dubai since: August 2008 (9 months ago), worked here for 11 months (2005/6)

Interests: Reading, spending time with the family

Conversion: I grew up attending Sunday school at Methodist church, trying to earn my own salvation. I have 4 brothers and 3 sisters, My eldest sister became a Christian. She regularly shared the gospel with me. I was often guilty about my sin and wondered what would happen to me if I died. In 1980 in my first year in high school, a close friend got saved and I immediately noticed the change in his life. When I asked him what had happened to him, he pointed me to John 3 – 'Nicodemus meets Jesus', and he explained the gospel. Having previously known the gospel and seeing the power of it in his life showed me clearly the Jesus for the forgiveness of sin and eternal life. I repented of my sin and believed in the Lord Jesus (March 1980).

I moved to a Lusaka Baptist church, where the word was faithfully preached. I was part of the Scripture Union in high school and later University Christian Fellowship. I got involved with the planting of new church for last 12 years and served as an elder for about 7 years.



Elder Nominated: Paul White

Family: Allison. We have two grown sons living and working in the UK.

In Dubai since: Alison and I have been in Dubai for 15 years.

Interests: Theology, flying & golf.

Conversion: I grew up in a Christian home. My father was a Minister. I'm not sure when I became a Christian. Somewhere between 17-19 years old. I don't remember the date. I do remember that it was on a Sunday morning, towards the close of the sermon, when I responded to his faithful preaching of the word. No lights, bells or whistles, just the sure and certain knowledge that I had asked Jesus to come into my life to be my Lord and Saviour.

A Healthy Church Member—Follows Leadership

Thabiti Anyabwile is a friend of UCCD and Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands.

The health of a local church may ride exclusively on the membership's response to the church's leadership. How the congregation receives or rejects its leaders has a direct effect on the possibilities of faithful ministry and church health. Does a congregation appreciate and accept sound preaching? Will they trust and follow a leader in difficult or unclear situations? Do they rally behind or tear apart the leadership when plans and ideas fail?

In the final analysis, church members are the people who generally make or break a local church. And making or breaking a church has a lot to do with the membership's attitudes and actions toward its leaders.

So, no serious attempt to define a healthy church member can neglect reflecting on the interaction between church members and church leaders. And not surprisingly, the inspired Word of God provides ample instruction regarding the attitudes and actions of church members who wish to contribute to the health of their local congregations by following the leadership of the church.

A HEALTHY CHURCH MEMBER'S ATTITUDE TOWARD LEADERSHIP

At least three attitudes characterize healthy church members when it comes to following a local church's leaders.

1. Honors the elders.

Several passages of Scripture instruct church members to honor the elders and leaders of the congregation. For example, 1 Timothy 5:17 tells us, "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching." What does such double honor include? The Apostle Paul brings attention to two things in the following verses. In verse 18, honoring the elders includes caring for their financial and physical needs. A congregation and a member that honor its leadership provide appropriate and sufficient wages for its leaders, particularly those whose full-time labor is ministry to the body.

In verse 19, the Apostle indicates that honoring our leaders includes protecting their reputations. We are not to "entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses." The Apostle understands better than anyone how the ministry is open to charges,

criticisms, and complaints from outside and inside the church. A healthy church member helps shelter the shepherd from unwarranted slings and arrows. Rumors and backbitings die at the ears of a healthy church member who refuses to give consideration to unedifying and uncorroborated tales.

A healthy church member honors the elder's office. He or she esteems it highly, is thankful for it, and respects those who serve the Lord's people as elders. We honor our pastors because on the day of the Lord they shall be our boast (2 Cor. 1:14).

2. "Opens heart" to the leaders.

The honor and respect a church member gives an elder is not the distant and official honor a soldier gives a commanding officer. Coupled with the honor due a shepherd is an open hearted love. Repeatedly, Paul called the Corinthian church to open their hearts to him as one who cared for them spiritually.

We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. As a fair exchange—I speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also (2 Cor. 6:11-13).

There should be a sweet exchange of affection between pastor and

congregation. As they live, grow, and labor together, their hearts are to be increasingly opened wide each to the other. A healthy church member does not "withhold" his affection from the pastor; rather, he or she gives it freely and liberally.

A healthy church member doesn't want to hear his or her faithful pastor plead like the Apostle did with the Corinthians,

make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have exploited no one. I do not say this to condemn you; I have said before that you have such a place in our hearts that we would live or die with you (2 Cor. 7:2-3).

A healthy member first gives himself to the Lord and then to the minister of the Lord, knowing that this is God's will (2 Cor. 8:5). Such a member sees how the faithful pastor will spend himself for the body in love. And they would be ashamed to hear the pastor ask, "If I love you more, will you love me less?" (2 Cor. 12:15). Unrequited love is fit for Shakespearean tragedy, not the local church. Our rejoicing in and love for our pastors should "refresh their hearts in the Lord" (Philem. 20).

3. Is teachable.

A healthy church member should also have a teachable spirit. A teachable spirit evidences humility of heart and

desire to grow in Christ. Without it, a people grow stiff-necked and incorrigible.

The leader's job may be boiled down to one task: teaching. If a member or any significant portion of the membership proves unteachable, the shepherd's task becomes a burden, even undoable, since it's opposing him at this most essential point. Writing to Timothy, Paul provides wonderful instruction for pastors which contains within it good instruction for members as well. For the elder, Paul writes, "The Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful." Paul then continues,

Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will (2 Tim. 2:24-26).

Several things are useful for church members to observe. First, the pastor's instruction is meant to be gentle, kind, and for our good. We should not take sinful advantage of that God-ordained disposition. Rather, we should accept that kind instruction as a rebuke and a call to repentance. A healthy church member doesn't mistake godly kindness for weakness in a pastor, but uses the

occasion to examine his or her own heart for areas needing repentance. Second, we should recognize how easy it is to "oppose" the pastor as he instructs us. As a regular part of our spiritual life, we should ask ourselves, "Am I in any way opposing the teaching of the pastor?" Third, we should pray for knowledge of the truth, clear-mindedness, and protection from the devil's schemes whenever we discover even a kernel of opposition to pastoral instruction. The pastor watches over our soul as a man who must give an account to God; we should then trust and accept his leadership joyfully as a gift from God for our everlasting benefit. Be teachable.

A HEALTHY CHURCH MEMBER'S ACTIONS TOWARD LEADERSHIP

In addition to these basic attitudes or dispositions, there are some specific actions a healthy church member will take in order to effectively follow the leadership of a local church.

1. Patiently participates in the selection of leaders.

Perhaps the most important decision a congregation makes—assuming a congregational polity—is the selection of its leaders. By choosing leaders, a congregation sets the spiritual tone and direction of the church, sometimes for generations. Perhaps this is why the

look for spiritual qualities and maturity in its leaders (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 3). Selecting a leader is to be done with patience and prayerful deliberation. “Lay hands on no man hastily” is the apostle’s instruction to Timothy (1 Tim. 5:22a). The first deacons were to be “full of the Spirit and wisdom” (Acts 6:3). Discerning these qualities requires prayer, observation, and patience. And if the Lord’s church is to be healthy, church members must call and ordain leaders who are spiritually minded and mature in Christ.

Healthy church members do not overlook the importance of this essential task. They may invite the prospective leader and his family to lunch or dinner in order to know him better. They will want to hear more about the man’s testimony, about his desire to serve in a leadership capacity, and about his previous ministry in churches.

2. Obeys and submits to leaders.

Here’s a good reason to prayerfully and patiently participate in the recognition of church leaders: a healthy church member must obey and submit to her or his leaders. “Obey” and “submit” are not only “bad words” at weddings, they’re “bad words” to many church members. Yet the Bible couldn’t be clearer: “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority” (Heb. 13:17). Our obedience

is to make their work “a joy, not a burden.” And our obedience redounds to our benefit, since it would “be of no advantage” for us to call men as leaders and then disobey them. A healthy church member orders himself under the leaders of the congregation as a soldier orders himself in the rank and file beneath a military general. We are to joyfully, eagerly, and completely submit to our leaders for our good, their good, and the good of the entire body.

3. Follows the leaders’ example.

One reason the Lord appoints men to leadership in the church is to provide a flesh and blood example of faithful, godly living to the congregation. Our leaders are the “motion picture” of following Jesus. They are called to be an example in everything (1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Pet. 5:3). That’s why the Apostle Paul says, “Join with others in following my example, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you” (Phil. 3:17). A healthy church member patterns his or her life after the godly lifestyle of the elders of the church. We are to follow their example with the expectation of conformity to Christ.

For many in our day, this very idea sounds cultish. There are too many personality cults where people parrot all that the celebrity pastor says or does. We’re correct to be concerned

such an unbiblical notion of example setting and mentorship. Yet the Bible's picture of following the pastor's example points to genuine godliness in "speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12) "by doing what is good" (Tit. 2:7). Pastors are called to be such models, and healthy church members wisely follow their pattern of holiness.

4. Prays for leaders.

Given all that church leaders must do and contend with, can you think of a more important thing to do than to pray for them? Even the Apostle Paul understood his need for the saints' faithful prayer:

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should (Col. 4:2-4; see also Eph. 6:19-20).

We should pray for our leaders' boldness, clarity, and consistency with the gospel message, and opportunity for them to proclaim Christ. Healthy church members are devoted to prayer on behalf of their leaders. They heed Jesus' exhortation to pray and not give up (Luke 18:1), and they do that on behalf of their shepherds.

In our local church, a faithful band of members meets every Tuesday night for the purpose of praying for leadership. Weekly they solicit prayer requests and updates on previous requests. When they meet, they lift up all kinds of prayers for the personal, public, and ministry lives of the elders. God has produced great fruit in our body through their prayers.

5. Supports outside ministry and interaction of leaders.

This is perhaps the least obvious of the actions that a healthy church member takes in following leadership. There is a great tendency among church members to be fairly possessive of their pastors—"he's our pastor." There are positive aspects to this possessiveness. It shows, for example, an open hearted attachment to the shepherds.

However, this possessiveness can become selfishness if the congregation refuses to support a pastor's involvement in ministry outside the local congregation. The persons most often hurt in such selfishness is the pastor himself, who, without outside stimulation and refreshment from fellow pastors and leaders, tends to dry and shrivel on the vine. A healthy church member contributes to the leaders' ongoing health and vigor in the ministry by encouraging participation in outside conferences, speaking opportunities, and fellowship with other church leaders.

The Bible provides ample illustration of one congregation's support of another. A local church's generosity to other churches is commended in 2 Corinthians 9:13. And such generosity, when it takes the form of "loaning" a shepherd in ministry to others, hopefully expands the regions in which the gospel is proclaimed (2 Cor. 10:15-16). A healthy church member wants to see the gospel advanced and wants to contribute to the health of other congregations if possible. Supporting a leader's outside ministry is one way to fulfill this desire.

CONCLUSION

Leadership in the local church is established by God for the blessing of his people. However, for leadership to be effective, it needs to be encouraged and supported by the members of the church. Many faithful men have shipwrecked on the rocky shoals of incorrigible and resistant members. It ought not to be so among God's people. Rather, healthy members of a local church should strive and encourage others to strive to follow their leaders with wide open hearts, eager obedience, and joyful submission.

Special Announcements:

New UCCD service time begins today! The 10:00 a.m. service has moved to 10:30.

New Friday Foundations Classes begins today! 9:30-10:30 am.

Classes offered:

1. Membership Class (May 1- May 29)
2. Biblical Marriage (May 1- June 12)
3. The Healthy Evangelist (May 1- June 26)

Marriage Conference

May 8-9th, 2009.

Join us (over 150 registered so far) for encouraging biblical teaching from Paul Tripp. Singles & Married are encouraged to attend.

Register online at

<http://uccdubai.com/paultripp>

May Calendar

May 1, 2009

8:00 & 10:30 UCCD church gathering

9:30-10:30 Friday Foundations (see left for classes offered).

6:00 pm First Friday Prayer & Praise

May 7, 2009

7:00 pm Thursday Bible Study has been **CANCELED**.

7:00 pm Oasis (Youth Ministry)

May 8, 2009

8:00 & 10:30 UCCD church gathering.

9:30-10:30 Friday Foundations

May 14, 2009

7:00 pm Thursday Bible Study

7:00 pm Oasis (Youth Ministry)

May 15, 2009

8:00 & 10:30 UCCD church gathering.

9:30-10:30 Friday Foundations

May 21, 2009

7:00 pm Thursday Bible Study

7:00 pm Oasis (Youth Ministry)

May 22, 2009

8:00 & 10:30 UCCD church gathering.

9:30-10:30 Friday Foundations

May 28, 2009

7:00 pm Thursday Night Bible Study

7:00 pm Oasis (Youth Ministry)

May 29, 2009

8:00 & 10:30 UCCD church gathering

9:30-10:30 Friday Foundations