



Research article

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**LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION PATTERN IN THE PASTORALS:
A MODEL FOR APPRAISING LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION IN THE
INDIAN CHURCHES**

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ABSTRACT



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While the Pauline epistles demonstrate a more cooperative and symbiotic relationship between the original itinerant and charismatic form of leadership, the pastorals are rather unique situation where there is an emerging and sedate pedestrian leadership. The pastorals, therefore, represent an emerging institutionalization and as such, an emergent shift. Consequently, it provides various helpful patterns of leadership succession in the light of which one may be afforded a framework by which to understand and appraise succession issues in the Indian church scenario. The research divulges five broad principles of succession: 1) Pro-active letting go and identification of successor, 2) Equipping, 3) Empowering, 4) Trusting amid responsibility and 5) Value-based leadership.

Keywords:

Succession, Leadership, pastorals, Indian church, intentional.



Introduction

Leadership transitions in the Indian churches have always been an onerous process. The phenomenon, far from being unique to the churches alone, seems also to be a reflection of a pervasive crisis in the broader cultural thought system. Planned leadership succession is rare and often mismanaged and thereby, most likely, revealing that basic assumptions about leadership and ministry are either tainted or flawed. The pastoral epistles (henceforth, pastorals) provide various patterns of succession in the light of which one may understand and appraise succession issues in the Indian church scenario. The common theme to the setting of the pastorals, is Paul's impending departure, which by its nature, raises concerns pertaining to leadership authority, ministerial stability and continuity. Paul's leadership role is critical to the examination of leadership succession in the pastorals and for churches today. This paper is an attempt to highlight practical and/or conceptual patterns of succession as basis to appraise succession issues in the Indian church in general.

1. Leadership Succession in the Pastorals

Although Grant¹ places the pastorals sometime after 70 AD and Ellis² before 70 AD, it is generally agreed that the pastorals were a latter development than the other Pauline epistles. Consequently, the pastorals have both similarities and the divergent emphasis on matters of leadership structure and emphasis. Grant noted that while the Pauline epistles demonstrate a symbiotic relationship between the original itinerant charismatic leadership, the pastorals are situation where there is an emerging sedate pedestrian leadership.³ The pastorals, therefore, represent an emerging institutionalization and as such, an emergent shift. First, it is a shift of emphasis from pneumatic leaders who employed the charismata of the Spirit for the edification of the church (Rom. 12:3–8; 1 Cor. 1:7; 1 Cor. 12–14; 2 Cor. 8:7) to pedestrian institutional moral qualities (1 Tim. 3:1–13; Tit. 1:5–9). Secondly, it is the shift towards increasing measure of apostolic power and authority wielded.⁴ For instance, in his Corinthian correspondence, Paul had to make deep appeals (1 Cor. 16:10–11; 2 Cor. 12:17–19 see also 2

¹ Robert M. Grant, *The Apostolic Fathers: A New Translation and Commentary*, vol. 1 (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1964), 155.

² E. Earl Ellis, "Pastoral Letters," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1993), 658–66.

³ Ellis, "Pastoral Letters."

⁴ Ellis.



Cor. 1:12–24; 2:1; 12:19–21; 13:1–3). In his letter to the Philippians, he included warm praises to encourage them (Phil.2:19–30). However, in the pastorals, the situation is different. The apostolic authority seems to be presumed, full and unchallenged; delegating the workmen and deciding the future course of ministry (cf. 1 Tim. 1:3; Tit. 1:5; see also Phil. 2:19–23; 1Thess. 3:1–3; 1 Cor.16:10–12).⁵

Further, with the (imminent) passing away of the apostles, the elders and deacons were appointed to lead the churches on the basis of their faith, character, adherence to sound doctrines and the traditions handed down by the apostles (1 Tim. 3:1–13; Tit. 1:5–9 see also Acts 6: 1-7 and Acts 15), not on kin affiliation. The pastorals, therefore, provide an alternate and divergent attribute regarding the selection and development processes employed by the early church for establishing and perpetuating competent and godly leadership.

2. Succession Pattern in 1 and 2 Timothy: Relational Succession Model (Orthodoxy to Orthopraxy)

Paul was a successful mentor to his young successor, Timothy. Not only because he was able to establish good mentor-successor relationship but crucially because he was able to see this succession in the light of the task, he himself received (επιστευθην, ‘entrusted’)⁶ from Christ (1Tim. 1.9-11). Paul the mentor, was a theologically transformed person. In his mentoring of Timothy, orthodoxy-based orthopraxy was the driving factor. Succession therefore, to him, was more a spiritual issue than institutional custom. He was a ‘successor’ of Jesus in the keeping of the gospel tradition and now, grooming Timothy to do likewise.⁷ It is this very aspect that distinguished Paul from false teachers (1Tim.1:3), gave approval over his teaching (1Tim. 6:2-4 see also 4:7-10) and authority to delegate on all ecclesiastical matters (1Tim. 1:3, 18-19; 2:12; 3:2; and 4:7-11). It is in this light and manner that the patterns of leadership succession in the pastorals unfold.

2.1 A Pro-Active Letting go and Intentional Identifying of the Successor

Realising the sacredness and also the enormity of the task at hand, the matter of succession for Paul easily could have been a paramount task especially in the light of his sunset years

⁵ J. Barber Lightfoot, *The Christian Ministry* (New York: Thomas Whittaker, 1883), 35–36.

⁶ Perry L. Stepp, *Leadership Succession in the World of the Pauline Circle* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005), 113.

⁷ Stepp, 114.



(2Tim. 4:6-7). To depart without passing over the great task received from Christ Himself would be, for Paul, unthinkable as it would have appeared to contradiction his orthodoxy; “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” 2Tim. 4:7).⁸

Paul identified Timothy early during his second missionary journey (Acts 16:1-3) and saw his potential as Timothy had a good reputation which was backed by a devout family lineage which Paul valued highly (1Tim. 3:7). The use of the phrase, ‘τοῦτον ἠθέλησεν’⁹ (*touton ethelesen*) in Acts 16:3, seem to suggest that Paul was intentional in his will let go and pass on the task of the gospel to a younger understudy in order for the work of the gospel to remain pure, effective and for it to have continuity.¹⁰ Towards that future succession, this verse seem to suggest Paul’s intentionality in identifying Timothy, as to Paul, he possessed the right qualities as a gospel worker. Paul inducted him into his mentorship and the process of the mentor-successor relationship began.

2.2 Equipping for Ministry

According to Acts 17:14, Timothy’s exposure to public ministry began while they were in Berea. Paul had to distance himself from Timothy and Silas as there was an agitation from the Jews. This gave the young mentees opportunity to sharpen their potent ministerial capabilities. According to Acts 16:2, Paul might have trusted the ‘testimony’ (μαρτυρεμ) of the ‘brothers’ in Lystra and Iconium and also the fact that he had godly heritage which could have caused Paul to charge his young mentees the task of nurturing the young congregation he had established in Berea. Providing space of opportunity for ministry to his mentees could be Paul’s initial attempt to equip them.¹¹

Paul also equipped Timothy as a person with regard to his mixed parentage and the customs attached therewith. Though he had a Jewess mother, he had remained uncircumcised. This made his status and situation religiously and culturally sensitive and therefore, Paul recommended circumcision. Had Paul condoned Timothy’s uncircumcised state, he would not have access to synagogues, his strategic point of contact in most cities and further, the underlying principle of respect for cultural identity would be compromised by the presence of

⁸ Henceforth, all Bible quotations are from the New King James Version.

⁹ For similar usage, see Luke 14:28.

¹⁰ Stepp, *Leadership Succession in the World of the Pauline Circle*, 148.

¹¹ Christopher Bryan, “A Further Look at Acts 16:1-3,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107, no. 2 (1998): 293.



a Jewish Christian who had “gentilized.”¹² Paul was equipping Timothy for a ministry unimpeded by cultural practices. On the other hand, though this move seems to contradict his stance in his letter to the Galatians, namely that, in Christ, circumcision has no value in itself (chapter 5: 6), in this unique situation, he reckoned it was vital that Timothy be prepared and equipped in his relationship to his ministerial audience.¹³ This aligned with what he had written to the Corinthians; “...to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law;” (1Cor. 9:20).

2.3 Empowering for Ministry

As true to his own life, Paul’s empowerment is more cognitive than organizational or structural. For instance, in 1Tim 1:18-19, we see Paul sharing his ‘life-story’ which he lived by and that which he hoped Timothy would imitate, “...that by them you may wage the good warfare.” According to Stepp, Paul meant, “fighting for the Pauline gospel.”¹⁴ In verse 18, Paul mentioned about, “...the prophecies previously made concerning you,” so that Timothy is mentally charged at the renewed vigour of God’s call to be the messenger of the gospel (1Thess. 3:2, Phil. 2:19-23 and Phil. 2:22). In Acts 18: 1-5, Paul exemplified this in person. When Paul, Timothy and Silas, converged again at Corinth, Paul devoted himself in preaching and witnessing to the Jews of Jesus’ messiahship. By so doing, Timothy was being empowered about what it means to be the messenger of the gospel. Paul also empowered Timothy by directing his thoughts towards the goals of the ministry, such as eternal reward (1Tim. 6:12), past promises (1Tim. 6:12b), present promises (1Tim. 6:13), future promises (1Tim. 6:14) and the sovereignty of God (1Tim. 6:15-16). These were words of a seasoned spiritual mentor. Timothy had to be strengthened most essentially from within to take up the task and withstand potential challenges of serving God.

¹² “Mission to Asia Minor and the Macedonian Call,” *IVP New Testament Commentaries*, accessed July 20, 2021, <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/?action=getCommentaryText&cid=5&source=1&seq=i.51.15.7>).

¹³ Christopher Bryan, “A Further Look at Acts 16:1-3,” (1998): 292–94. See also, Shaye Cohen, “Was Timothy Jewish (Acts 16:1-3)? Patristic Exegesis, Rabbinic Law, and Matrilineal Descent,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 105, no. 2 (1986): 25–269.

¹⁴ Stepp, *Leadership Succession in the World of the Pauline Circle*, 140.



2.4 Trusting Amidst Increased Responsibility

Paul's decision to depute Timothy in the church at Ephesus which was facing issues of doctrinal heresy was an act of big trust upon his young mentee. False teaching pertaining to food, marriage, false asceticism (1 Tim. 4:1-5) were some issues that were highly volatile and challenging which Paul tasked and trusted Timothy to oppose and correct so as to return the church to the true gospel. By offering Timothy this paramount responsibility, Paul was deliberately creating space of opportunity for Timothy to exercise his ministerial capabilities and to grow as a future leader.

However, Paul does not leave Timothy stranded, he instructs, directs and gives extensive encouragement in performing his role. He is tasked for the proper management of the situation and Paul encouraged him by reminding him of his calling to serve Christ (1Tim. 1:18), instructing him in his task to confront false teachers and erroneous teachings and to guard the flock against the threat of heresy from within (Eph. 4: 6-11 cf. Acts 20.29-31).¹⁵ In this, Paul was intentional, in that, Timothy was deployed to represent more than just a human presence on Paul's behalf. This was not temporary stop-gap solution. As being Paul's understudy, Timothy served as the very voice of Paul where his executive authority, flowed from the Apostle himself.¹⁶

2.5 Developing a Succession Movement

By virtue of Paul entrusting (παρατιθεμαι) and instructing (παραγγελιαν) Timothy to "wage the good warfare" (1Tim. 1:18-19), as his successor, Timothy received both the task and the authority for his role. From receiving the commission as well as ordination from Paul's hands (2 Tim. 1:6) the vocation is something of great power and value which Timothy must guard with integrity and employ wisely.¹⁷ As with Paul, now this becomes the 'orthodoxy' for Timothy. Just as the gospel was entrusted to him by Christ, he now bequeaths the commandment and implications to Timothy by making him a deposit (παραθηκη) and laying them into his care. This is a language and authority of succession that Timothy actualizes (orthopraxy) in various ways, such as; 1) promoting propriety (1Tim. 1:3-5; 5:3-16; 6:17-19

¹⁵ Stepp, 141.

¹⁶ Stepp, 141.

¹⁷ Gordon D. Fee, "1 and 2 Timothy, Titus," in *New International Biblical Commentary on the New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 161.



and 4: 11-16), 2) overseeing the work of other leaders¹⁸ and 3) Passing on the task and authority to other potential successors (1Tim. 5:22a).

These functions point not only to the temporal execution of ministry as commanded by Paul, but also includes Paul's vision for the purity of the gospel and its work to continue through Timothy, and through him, to other potential successors (2Tim. 2:2). Stepp claimed that if, in first Timothy, succession was necessitated by ecclesiastical heresy, in second Timothy, it is necessitated by Paul's impending martyrdom.¹⁹ Further, he stated that by this time, Timothy was no longer a mere delegate or an agent deployed by Paul, but his replacement.²⁰ Paul the mentor was therefore, giving impetus to a succession movement beginning with Timothy.

3. Succession Pattern in Titus: A Value Based Leadership Model

In comparison to first and second Timothy, in Titus there is no strong or prominent succession term to suggest Paul's apostolic authority and the mentor-mentee succession relationship. However, according to Stepp, terms such as 'entrusted' (επιστευθην) and 'command' (επιταγην) in Tit 1.1-3 and other passages such as, Tit. 1: 5; 2:15 and 3:12-15, does provide for semantic and conceptual evidence for succession.²¹ However, the succession depicted in Titus is more a 'successor as delegate' than 'successor as replacement' pattern.²²

The matter of concern in Titus is of the orderliness of the church (Tit. 1: 5). The young Cretan congregation which Paul handed over to Titus' care was still immersed in the imposing secular value system that tarnished the reputation of the church especially with their lifestyle that was aloof from the value upheld by the gospel.²³ Paul therefore tasked Titus to restore church order, organize the chaos and to prepare and establish local leadership based on the ethics and values of the gospel. The list of qualifications that Paul mentioned in this letter, are centred on ethical values; character and maturity, rather than personal skill set and capabilities. According to Bolser, Paul's idea of a leader that Titus must be, is a person who

¹⁸ For instance, regarding the Overseers: 1Tim. 3:2-7; Deacons: 1Tim. 3:8-13 and Elders: 1Tim. 5:17-20.

¹⁹ Stepp, *Leadership Succession in the World of the Pauline Circle*, 177.

²⁰ Stepp, 177.

²¹ Stepp, 179.

²² Stepp, 181.

²³ Karen D. Bolser, "Developing Values and Ethics—Preparing Leaders: A Social and Cultural Analysis of Titus 1-3," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 4, no. 1 (2012): 65.



is willing to personalize and reflect the ‘unnatural’ lifestyle of the gospel amidst an imposing culture that was dominated by overwhelming moral and ethical breakdown.²⁴ Paul therefore instructs leaders to teach sound doctrine by listing out virtues and qualities of a sound church. He ends his writing by exhorting the Cretan leaders to live under authority with submission under a willing attitude and voluntary openness to reform.

In sum, the pastorals provide particularly revealing patterns and attributes regarding the leadership structure, selection and development processes employed during the early church period. More urgently, these timeless patterns of leadership succession become for us a foundation on which to understand and appraise succession issues in the Indian church in general?

4. Leadership Succession in the Indian Churches

The Indian church has emerged strongly with regards to facing up to the leadership task and leading the work in India which was, hitherto, led by western missionaries.²⁵ The national ministers were once viewed as inferior helpers because they were a cheaper option to them in the work of missions in India.²⁶ Nevertheless, in spite of many weaknesses such as the lack of national leadership development, lack of local financial support, viewed as inferior by their own local congregation and the like, the national leaders were able to give shape to growth and the work of the gospel.²⁷

Today, the church in India have multiplied manifold, parachurch agencies and Christian NGOs have mushroomed across the land and countless independent churches and bible colleges have made significant contribution to the overall work of the gospel.²⁸ However, Christian work has often been hindered by poor health of its institutions. One of the main reasons for this, is the lack of proper, intentional leadership succession.²⁹ There is a

²⁴ Bolser, 66.

²⁵ Graham Houghton, *The Impoverishment of Dependency: The History of the Protestant Church in Madras 1870-1920*. (Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1983), 22: See also, K. Baago, *A History of the National Christian Council of India 1914-1964* (Nagpur: NCCI, 1965), 3.

²⁶ Houghton, *The Impoverishment of Dependency: The History of the Protestant Church in Madras 1870-1920*, 22.

²⁷ Houghton, 22 and 28.

²⁸ Shibu Mathew K., "The Church in India: Status, Trends and Challenges," *Ethne* 3, no. 8 (March 2004): 5–9.

²⁹ Ravi David, *Mission Possible: Challenges for Indian Christian Mission Leaders in the Twenty-First Century* (Bangalore: Primalogue Publishing, 2014), 42.



dearth of spiritually and theologically transformed leaders who dare to challenge the norm by being intentional about leadership development that result ultimately in succession.

4.1 Leadership Development for Succession

David, in his research on Indian Mission leadership, claimed that most mission leaders of today are burdened under multiple responsibilities. Further, as a result, he found that, leaders today find themselves on the verge of burning out and experienced loneliness having no one at their pedestal to share the work or have time to ground meaningful successor-focussed relationships.³⁰ This finding is remarkable and alludes to the need of successors and mentees. Over-tasked leaders contribute to ineffective leadership and inefficient work. There is therefore, an urgent need today to be intentional about identifying and grooming the next successors to continue the work with the same vision and vigour.³¹ In his research, he found that among mission leader above the age of forty, lack of personnel and second-line leadership were the biggest concern.³² His study also divulged that, young leaders often opt for other forms of coping mechanism rather than ‘sharing the life’ and relating to their senior leaders for solutions.³³

In the face of rapidly multiplying church-based ministries such as, house churches, cell groups and other independent church-based ministries, trained leaders for future direction, and leadership development leading ultimately to succession, does seem to be the need of the hour. Leadership development, on which much has been written and discussed, for the better, however, is more ‘agent’ or ‘delegate’ oriented and not ‘replacement’ based. Leadership development with an intent towards succession, involves an intentional process of identifying and inducting the mentee into the mentor’s life with singleness of purpose; to pass on leadership responsibilities. Conversely, a successor is one that undertakes the vital role of carrying forward the very bedrock of the institution’s vision and values.

Trained and groomed leaders can only be produced under a proper and systematic leadership development and mentoring mechanisms that ultimately facilitate succession.

³⁰ David, 41.

³¹ Ravi David, “India Leadership Study: A Summary for Indian Christian Leaders,” *India Church Growth Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (December 2005): 420.

³² David, *Mission Possible*, 114.

³³ David, 114., 115.



However, when succession is deemed to be a threat rather than an opportunity, the production of well-groomed leaders will remain elusive.

4.2 Factors that Prevent Leadership Succession: An Appraisal

The issue of leadership succession in the Indian church, in general, is not as straight forward an issue as it ought to have been. It does presume variety of perspectives and other social and/or cultural baggage we bring along that act as hindrances to leadership succession. In the light of the pastorals, four factors that hinder leadership succession are presented and appraised.

4.2.1 Single Person Driven Leadership

The issue of leadership succession, on hindsight, seems to be, not just a unique and episodic problem in the churches, but rather a reflection of a pervasive crisis in the very culture and spirituality of the Indian thought system in general. For instance, in the political arena in Tamil Nadu, after the death of the party leader, Jayalalitha, succession issues turned bitter, resulting in party splits because the supreme leader, Jayalalitha had not groomed her successor.³⁴ Likewise, the same could be said of many others such as Raj Thackeray and the Shiv Sena party, Jagan Mohan Reddy and the Congress party and Chandrababu Naidu and Lakshmi Parvathi where succession was mishandled. Indian political leadership has always leaned towards tendencies of one-man saviour complex.

These tendencies also seem to have been played out in the corporate arena as well. Lamont, argued that in India, rich corporate barons enjoy extra ordinary professional longevity and yet lack succession planning especially in family-owned businesses, which leaves them vulnerable upon the leader's departure. He further argued that more than 75 percent of company boards do not discuss chief executive succession.³⁵ Of late, taking a leaf out of succession problems of the past, experienced by family-owned companies such as the house of Tatas and Mahindras, corporate leaders are beginning to emphasize planned succession over against panic succession. However, leadership succession still takes a back

³⁴ Varun Singh, "The Politics of Succession," *Deccan Chronicle*, December 18, 2016, <http://www.deccanchronicle.com/opinion/op-ed/181216/360-degree-the-politics-of-succession.html>.

³⁵ James Lamont, "Indian Groups Failing to Plan for Succession," *Financial Times*, August 6, 2010, <https://www.ft.com/content/32b3c25a-a175-11df-9656-00144feabdc0>.



seat in the corporate world.³⁶ The one-man army, ‘messiah of the masses’ complex seems deeply rooted in cultural psyche which is not easy to undo. These cultural insinuations are reflected in the churches as well, promoting a ‘patron-client’ model of following where the leader receives and redistributes by virtue of positional power³⁷ instead of encouraging the creation of talent pools in the church. In this light, the pastorals set new standards and vision; a pro-active letting go. In spite of all the imposing influence, the gospel work is about transformation from the inside out. Until the leader learns to trust God enough to let go, and hand over, the race has not finished well (2 Timothy 4:7).

4.2.2 Caste Feelings

This factor that hinders succession though unbecoming of the church, however, is a reality. In his observation, David stated, “within the Indian context, there is an additional influence of caste...hierarchical worldview.”³⁸ Casteism in the church makes for a damaging reputation. On the part of the followers, this worldview roots people to their own lot in life without hope of upward mobility nor any realistic expectation. On the part of the leader, he is interested to consolidate his position and uplift only those close to him; family, relative and clan. Though this is described in its most raw form, it does play out in various forms in the higher echelons of the power ladder.

Daniel claimed that because there are 90 percent of Dalits in the Church of North India, its followers see ordained leadership as someone possessing authority and power, in caste terms. This is because, though the church structure is democratic, the leadership structure is hierarchical and the leaders are seen as their messiah.³⁹ He finds this to be disastrous as it paves way for oppression, high-handedness, corruption, hegemony, nepotism, monopolization of public resources and inefficiency.⁴⁰ This is a picture of the metaphorical ‘Bunyan tree leadership’ where caste barriers have not been transcended and leadership is

³⁶ Amogh Deshmukh, “Be Future-Ready: Developing A Leadership Pipeline Will Go a Long Way Towards Averting Organizational Crisis,” *Indian Management*, Succession Planning Matters, 56, no. 1 (January 2017): 15. See also, Suruchi Pandey and Deepesh Sharma, “Succession Planning Practices and Challenges: Study of Indian Organisations.,” *Procedia Economics and Finance* 11 (2014): 155, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212567114001853>.

³⁷ David, “India Leadership Study: A Summary for Indian Christian Leaders,” 421.

³⁸ David, 421.

³⁹ Monodeep Daniel, “Models of Leadership in the Indian Church: An Evaluation,” *Studies in World Christianity* 13, no. 1 (2007): 75.

⁴⁰ Daniel, 76.



non-reciprocal but a one-way highway; much like the roots of the Banyan tree that grow from the branches to secure the tree. Under such a living reality, leadership development for succession continue to remain elusive. As Paul desired for Titus to teach gospel values to Cretan believers, so the leaders today must lead transformative lifestyle that compliments the transformative power and work of the gospel.

4.2.3 Dynastic Succession

As true in the corporate world, so is it in many churches and para churches. Especially in a family-founded churches or mission agencies, leadership is paternalistic and therefore, identifying and inducting potential successor from outside the family bloodline is a highly sensitive matter. If not managed wisely, blood connections can influence and trump the best intentions of an institution.⁴¹ Mussolino and Calabro stated that if there is a good working relationship with the board, succession in family-owned institution can, by all means be successful even if the successor is part of the family.⁴² However, not many churches or parachurches have been able to make a successful leadership transition. This is because there is often the aura of ‘sacred distancing’ with the top leader especially in family-founded institutions. Because of this distancing, freedom to exchange meaningful mutual reciprocity is curtailed as there is no top-down initiated space for meaningful relational engagement. Ultimately, the direction and the overall outcome is determined by the patriarch, often times, at the expense of a better outside successor.

Ramachandran insisted that although succession can be complex in family-owned businesses, exercising “detached passion” by the patriarch, promotes smooth leadership transition.⁴³ Nevertheless, he concluded the article by putting culture to ransom; “...(in) India, for example, children rarely go against the parents’ wishes... (therefore, they) have to work around the cultural reality that the firm and the family live in.”⁴⁴

⁴¹ Sunil Munjal Kant, “Managing Leadership Change,” *Indian Management*, Succession Planning Matters, 56, no. 1 (January 2017): 8.

⁴² See, Donata Mussolino and Andrea Calabro, “Paternalistic Leadership in Family Firms: Types and Implications for Intergenerational Succession,” *Journal of Family Business Strategy* 5, no. 2 (June 2014): 197–210.

⁴³ Kavil Ramachandran, “The Art of Balancing,” *Indian Management*, Succession Planning Matters, 56, no. 1 (January 2017): 22.

⁴⁴ Ramachandran, 25.



Leadership succession in family-founded institutions is and always will be complex be it in the secular companies or within the church. The pastorals, however, set conceptual framework towards a relationship based on trust and putting in place an intentional and systematic succession plan. It lays patterns of value-based leadership where in Christ and through His grace we are all equals. If successions are mismanaged, it is very likely that the fundamental assumptions about ministry and leadership is faulty.

4.2.4 Personal Transformation

The leaders' personal spiritual life is, perhaps the greatest reason why many Indian churches and parachurches alike, still lack proper systematic mechanisms for leadership development leading to succession. A leader is one who have experienced brokenness and transformed spiritually to serve God's people. Commenting on the state of mission work and leaders, Athyal stated, "in evangelism and church planting, the church in India has fared poorly," his reason being, "general apathy, nominalism and the lack of mission commitment...energy and money wasted in court cases over church property."⁴⁵ The pastorals demonstrate the correlation between one's orthodoxy and orthopraxy. For Paul, it was the transformation he experienced and the call to serve Christ. His sense of direction and leadership was based solely on Christ's call and commission to preach amongst the gentiles. Remaining true to that call, he identified and passed on his task and authority which he has received from Christ, to a worthy successor. Implanting in him the vision and conviction he himself held dear. Timothy, in turn, was to carry out the work of the gospel and in due course, to pass on the same to others (2 Tim. 2: 2).

Although we speak of the values of the Kingdom, due to our unbrokenness, we rely on a person's charisma, organizational abilities and persona. Leadership development patterned in the pastorals is focused on the ability of future leaders to teach, preserve and spread the purity and power of the gospel through a process that reflected God's very character—His self-giving love. This involved training, coaching, and mentoring to provide support for both tactical application and strategic direction. The competency and value-based

⁴⁵ Saphir Athyal, "India," in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Mission* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 2000), 479.



model set high moral expectations for the experience, character, and capabilities of future leaders.

Conclusion: Self-Giving Leadership Model as Possible Way Forward?

The pattern in the pastorals is clear; orthodoxy must lead to orthopraxy and conversely, one's praxis must reflect one's belief. The theological message of the pastorals could be summarized as, 'God's divine ordering'. This ordering of reality has implications of how we behave personally, in church and in society. Our understanding of God must be exorbitant in order for our practice to be impactful. Matteson and Irving, studied two major follower-oriented leadership models, that emerged in the later part of the 20th century, namely the servant leadership and self-sacrificial leadership.⁴⁶ They concluded that the former is too follower and service centric while the latter has not been taken too seriously.⁴⁷ Perspectives from leadership as self-giving, may perhaps bridge this gap.

The self-giving leadership model is rooted in the triune God. And the closest variable to this model is the concept of generosity; the triune God making 'space' (self-giving) for the other to exist within themselves without losing their unique identities. The *perichoresis* (self-sharing) does not just demonstrate God's unity but vitally, displays God's identity and that when theological constructions of God's identity as "non-reducible" and "not self-enclosed" are situated in the biblical "narrative of divine self-donation," it does provide a social "vision" for the church.⁴⁸

The cross is the epitome of the bountifulness and providence of God, not just to correct frail aspects of material giving and taking. Rather, it demands an exuberant generosity which sees humans in utter spiritual impoverishment and seeks to remedy that completely, once and for all. At the cross, the trinitarian space is created in the person of Jesus Christ in order that human sinfulness could be 'spaced' to provide healing and forgiveness. It is the Trinitarian love that makes this translation possible (John 3:16). This is the pervading self-giving leadership model that can shape our spirituality in all its entirety.

⁴⁶ Jeffrey A. Matteson and Irving A. Justine, "Exploring Servant Versus Self-Sacrificial Leadership: A Research Proposal for Assessing the Commonalities and Distinctions of Two Follower-Oriented Leadership Theories.," *2006 Proceedings of the American Society of Business and Behavioral Sciences* 13, no. 1 (2006): 1305.

⁴⁷ Matteson and A. Justine, 1317.

⁴⁸ Miroslav Volf, "'The Trinity Is Our Social Programme': The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Shape of Social Engagement'," *Blackwell Publishing Ltd, Modern Theology*, 14, no. 3 (July 1998): 409–10.



The Self-giving leadership model demands a willingness to take risks in the process of creating meaningful ‘space’ for future leaders in order for the institution to remain alive and effective. It is also one that is willing to forgo legitimate rewards or recognition for other’s sake. The self-giving leader employs power for the sake of the other rather than his/her own. Though they have the power to be oppressive, they choose to exercise generosity. Above all, this model always seeks to create ‘space’ for the other; in the leader’s own life and within his positional and structural boundaries for the benefit of the other. The self-giving model is a life of generosity that seeks to transform and develop leaders through seeking the benefits of others without expecting anything in return, save the ultimate ‘reward’ by his creator. Our understanding of God as the self-giving God and modelling our leadership within this framework could lead us to creative ways of looking at leadership succession in India today.

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