

A Church Leader's Expectations

Basic to any ecclesiastical-related program are the opportunities afforded leaders under a lead pastor in the church. Occasionally these church leaders express their needs in cogent programmatic terms, but more frequently their demands emerge as general statements related to decision-making processes rather than to the specific contents of their ecclesiastical environment.

To assist in the overall development of these leaders, the lead pastor should assist in facilitating opportunities and experiences that will prepare them for future developments in the field. These leaders deserve as many alternative experiences as possible to give them insight into potential problems and to help engender a critical attitude toward theoretical problems within their fields of endeavor. The last thing they need is a narrowly defined training program that would stunt their professional development.

Leaders should expect a professional program guided by the lead pastor. The greatest source of misunderstanding between pastor and leaders is the difference between being a member of the congregation and being a leader in that congregation. Pastors do not advance all members of the congregation into leaders, but the pastor does select men and women in the congregation to be leaders in the church, and is tasked with an edification process for these leaders. The pastor is tasked with the overall development of these leaders; development that requires a high degree of professionalism in their training program. This professionalism includes opportunities to assist on research projects, to attend meetings, to be informed of controversies within the profession, intellectual and

otherwise, and to be accountable for professional judgements and conclusions through publishing and other means of communication.

Finally, these church leaders should be afforded the opportunity to a self-definition of career goals and aspirations. This entails a need for opportunities to explore the diversity that characterizes the church and to participate in the various field and laboratory experiences that are at the heart of the ecclesiastical inquiry. They should expect as part of their development a system that will encourage intellectual exploration and enhancement of self-confidence. To accomplish this, the pastor should perceive their role as providing alternatives, which not only satisfy professional goals but also promote a perceptive understanding of the world at large and the work of the kingdom.