

Series: Marks of a Healthy Church
Sermon #14: 'Raising Up Leaders'
(Selected Scriptures)

June 2, 2024
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One more—yet often neglected—mark of a healthy church is the commitment by every member to test, train, appoint and eventually send out leaders.

You may not be the one God calls to lead his people but you still have a role to play here at Calvary Baptist in recognizing and setting apart a church leader, and granting them the privilege to fulfill their calling.

Sermon Outline:

1) TESTING future leaders

You and I have the all-essential responsibility to test a man in order to see if his internal call to ministry matches what the word of God says about the character and competency of a true minister of the gospel.

There's a happy partnership between the subjective, personal, internal call of a future leader and the objective, observable, external call which a church gets to recognize.

It is wise to take as much time as needed to see whether or not the character qualifiers in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 are visibly seen in the life of a future leader.

2) TRAINING future leaders

The primary, God-ordained vehicle for training leaders and confirming their calling to the work of ministry is the local church (and not a seminary, Bible college or parachurch organization).

In Acts 11:26, Paul & Barnabas come to the church at Antioch, where they fellowshiped for an entire year before the church affirmed their call and sent them away.

3) APPOINTING future leaders

In Acts 13:1-3, an entire church (the church at Antioch), under the guidance of God and its existing leaders, approves the calling of two more leaders: Paul and Barnabas.

Only after a church has prayerfully taken time to test and train a leader can they move forward to publicly recognize and affirm his calling.

Charles Spurgeon: “It is a fearful calamity for a man to miss his calling and for the church upon whom he imposes himself; his mistake involves an affliction of the most grievous kind.”

The process of raising mature, Spirit-led, gospel-centered leaders means that sometimes the best thing you do is tell someone ‘No’.

4) SENDING OUT future leaders

We often err in thinking of the local church in the same way a king would think of his empire—the bigger, stronger and more stacked we are with leaders, the more successful we will be in the kingdom of God.

It’s certainly counterintuitive, but the church gains by losing.

God gives us the resources to raise healthy, mature leaders; and the way we steward these leaders for the glory of God is by asking them to ‘GO’!

Gospel goodbyes are never easy... but the joy of seeing biblically qualified leaders trained and recognized by us to go to places where there is no healthy gospel witness, that joy far outweighs whatever bittersweetness we experience.

Tony Merida: “In sending out our best, we should remember the fact that God sent out his own best, His own Son, for mission. So we are reflecting the very nature of our God and following in the footsteps of our Savior when we send.”