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ABSTRACT

A THEOLOGY OF MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP  
IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

by

Gyeongchun Choi

Adviser: Stanley E. Patterson

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A THEOLOGY OF MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Name of the researcher: Gyeongchun Choi

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Stanley E. Patterson, Ph.D.

Date completed: February 2016

Problem

Leadership styles and the attendant behavior of mission practitioners and church administrators too often demonstrate leadership attitudes and practices that reflect cultural norms while violating biblical norms. There is both historical and contemporary evidence of a predictable migration from leadership as service to leadership as control—such as autocracy, coercion, self-ascendancy, and dominance. These problems are found in leadership practices primarily informed by cultural norms apart from God’s Word. These norms vary widely and may even be practiced within the faith community thus violating biblical principles. This reality creates an urgent need for the application of biblical principles that transcend cultures and bring leadership practices into alignment with the character and behavior of the Trinity.

## Method

Since this study aims to establish a theology of missional leadership through motifs inherent in the cosmic conflict between God and Satan in the book of Revelation, I examine the Apocalypse and compare it with relevant leadership theories. I also look at Revelation in order to arrive at a theology of missional leadership by looking at terminology and context linked to leadership. As appropriate, I examine the concerns of systematic theology, for example, free-will, eschatology, and pneumatology to support the theological analysis.

## Results

The book of Revelation is a valid source of understanding pastoral and missional leadership. Revelation contains leadership terminologies and concepts and reveals the Lamb's leadership behavior and exposes the counterfeit leadership of the Dragon. Amid the crossfire of the cosmic conflict of the Great Controversy between God and Satan, the Lamb leads His people by an exemplary model of leadership in which He manifests the fundamentals of Christian leadership principles. Three dimensions of the Great Controversy worldview—cognitive, affective, and evaluative—delineate the antithetical leadership practices between the Lamb and the Dragon regarding power and authority, equality and unity, motivation of followers, humility in the sacrifice of leaders, spiritual transformation, and emotional values. Also, the song of the Lamb in Revelation details characteristics of the Lamb's leadership: unity in humility, motivation and a willing heart, transparency and trust, egalitarian relationships, and the similitude of the divine character.

## Conclusions

The Great Controversy between God and Satan highlights the role of the Lamb and the Dragon in leading the events of human history. The numerous topics of Revelation are expanded around these two antithetical characters. The purpose of this contrast is to give clear information about the reality of the Great Controversy so that people cannot be deceived by the Dragon's counterfeit reign and instead give their allegiance to God before the final judgment.

The Lamb contrasts the Dragon's leadership behavior in paradoxical ways. While the Dragon shows coercive authoritarian leadership, the Lamb presents His power in powerlessness and activeness in passivity. While the Dragon promotes self-ascension, the Lamb humbly steps down from the top to serve His people. Nevertheless, His position is not threatened as a result. While the Dragon leads people with a devouring mouth (cf. Rev 12:4; 13:2), the Lamb leads without utterance. Although His way seems to be weak and less effective, His ministry is strong and eternal.

Consequently, the Lamb's leadership is not similar to secular leadership which pursues productivity and efficiency as its main goal. In contrast with the industrial model of leadership, the Lamb's leadership manifests a relational leadership model which transcends pragmatic thinking on leadership. The Lamb's leadership demonstrates Christian leadership as (1) spiritual, (2) theological, (3) moral, (4) eschatological, (5) ecclesiological, (6) relational, and (7) missional.

Andrews University  
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

A THEOLOGY OF MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP  
IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

A Dissertation  
Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

by  
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“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing” (Rev 5:12)

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background to the Problem**

This study purposes to use the book of Revelation as a source of leadership principles to develop a theology of missional leadership that undergirds a biblical theology of mission. The relationship between mission and leadership is extremely relevant to the development of missiological models and strategies. In light of the eschatological expectations of the Church, principles of leadership drawn from the apocalyptic context of the book of Revelation can be appropriately applied to an understanding of the mission of the church immediately prior to Christ's return.

#### Leadership and Mission

Leadership is a crucial subject for mission. Without solid leadership, it is impossible to complete the *missio Dei*.<sup>1</sup> Charles Van Engen, an eminent missiologist, concludes his book, *Mission on the Way*, with the issue of leadership. He asserts "the person of the leader is a very significant part of the complex set of factors which move a

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<sup>1</sup>This terminology means "the sending of God," often in the English form "the mission of God." Originally it was used (from Augustine onward) in Western discussion of the Trinity for the "sentness of God (the son)" by the Father. John A. McIntosh, "Missio Dei," *Evangelical Dictionary of World Mission* (2000), 631.



local group of God's people toward participating in God's mission in the world."<sup>2</sup> Van Engen certainly recognizes, "the nature of leadership is incredibly mysterious and complex," but he does not hesitate to emphasize "this complexity does not minimize the importance of the qualities of the leader as leader."<sup>3</sup>

Doubts exist in some circles that leadership is an appropriate topic in mission studies. However, both a clear theology of leadership and a clear theology of mission are essential for mission practice. Recently, Craig Van Gelder and individuals of like mind have sought practical ways of realizing the concept of a "missional church" or "missional ecclesiology."<sup>4</sup> The discourse on "missional church," which was inspired by the writings of Lesslie Newbigin and David Bosch, commenced when the term "came on the scene in 1998 with the publication of the book entitled *Missional Church*."<sup>5</sup> The intention was to develop a practical missiology based on the *missio Dei* in the North America church context. This effort continued to develop with the ongoing publication of a series of books on the topic.<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, these books, without exception, include leadership

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<sup>2</sup>Charles Van Engen, *Mission on the Way: Issues in Mission Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 233.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 238-239.

<sup>4</sup>This phrase denotes that church is not the purpose or goal of the gospel, but rather its instrument and witness. This term emphasizes the *raison d'être* of the church as God's chosen people who are blessed to be a blessing to the nations. See Darrell L. Guder, ed. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 5.

<sup>5</sup>Six scholars were responsible for this publication: Lois Barrett, Inagrace T. Dietterich, Darrell L. Guder, George R. Hunsberger, Alan J. Roxburgh, and Craig Van Gelder.

<sup>6</sup>Craig Van Gelder introduces a list of literature which relates to the Missional Church. See Craig Van Gelder, ed. *The Missional Church and Denominations: Helping Congregations Develop a Missional Identity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 1-8.

issues as an important topic.<sup>7</sup> Whatever the understanding of mission theology, and wherever the mission of the Church is implemented, mission activities must be supported by sound leadership practices. Choosing, training, placing, and supporting people in mission all involve leadership practices.

### Three Challenges for Developing a Theology of Leadership

When mission theology is combined with sound leadership practices, a successful mission task can be achieved.<sup>8</sup> As James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner express it, “leadership opportunities are everywhere,”<sup>9</sup> and leadership is for all people and every

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<sup>7</sup>For example, in 2007, Van Gelder published *The Ministry of the Missional Church*. The book describes leadership issues in chapter 6, entitled “Spirit-led Leadership and Organization.” See Craig Van Gelder, *The Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 121-152. In the same year Van Gelder edited another book, *The Missional Church in Context*. This book also contains a section on leadership in chapter 4, written by Mark L. Branson and entitled “Ecclessiology and Leadership for Missional Church.” See Craig Van Gelder, ed. *The Missional Church in Context: Helping Congregations Develop Contextual Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 94-129. In 2009, the third book edited by Van Gelder on the missional church was published: *The Missional Church and Leadership Formation*. This volume focused on the issue of leadership formation as a means of realizing the missional church. See Craig Van Gelder, ed. *The Missional Church and Leadership Formation: Helping Congregations Develop Leadership Capacity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009). In 2011, Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile again emphasized the importance of leadership in their discourse on missional theology, in *The Missional Church in Perspective*. This book also includes leadership issues in the last chapter, “Missional Practice of Church Life and Leadership.” See Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 147-169. In addition, this book presents a list of the Missional Church series that have appeared, or are scheduled to appear (p.5).

<sup>8</sup>The practical areas of mission always need sound leadership practices. For instance, one of the strategic books on mission to Muslims, *From Seed to Fruit*, focuses largely on leadership issues. The title of chapter 12 is “The Equipping of Leaders,” chapter 13 is “The Gathering of Teams of Laborers,” and chapter 19 is “Expatriates Empowering Indigenous Leaders.” See J. J. Dudley Woodberry, ed. *From Seed to Fruit: Global Trends, Fruitful Practices, and Emerging Issues among Muslims*, 2nd ed. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2011), 129-138, 139-151, 215-224.

<sup>9</sup>James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 4th ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 8.

organization.<sup>10</sup> Mission is no exception. Although mission itself cannot be completed without proper leadership practices, at least three main challenges are presented when mission practitioners pursue leadership principles.

### **Differentiation of Biblical and Cultural Dimensions**

First, biblical leadership principles should be differentiated from cultural leadership traditions. Many confuse biblical leadership principles with cultural leadership styles. For instance, Korean Protestant church leaders sometimes manifest an authoritarian leadership style influenced by perspectives from Confucian hierarchy.<sup>11</sup> Although Korean churches have struggled with authoritarian tendencies that are often evident in their leadership style, these tendencies have been tolerated as cultural problems, and they have therefore not been satisfactorily addressed from a biblical perspective.

The distinction between the gospel and culture is a crucial issue because all cultures include both healthy and unhealthy aspects. As Paul G. Hiebert warns, if we do not distinguish between the gospel and culture, “we will be in danger of making our culture the message.”<sup>12</sup> He argues further, “a failure to differentiate between the biblical

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 337-338.

<sup>11</sup>Paul Yong-Suk Lee suggests that Korean leadership was influenced by authoritarianism which inherited a Confucian perspective, quoting Woo Kon Yoon’s clarifying that Korean people as a whole exhibit a high degree of authoritarianism. Paul Yong-Suk Lee, “A Review of Leadership Literature with a View toward Application to Korean Leadership Style,” (ThM thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2000) 21-22.

<sup>12</sup>Paul G. Hiebert, “Cultural Differences and the Communication of the Gospel,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999), 381.

message and other messages leads to confusion between cultural relativism and Biblical absolutes.”<sup>13</sup> Therefore, as Charles H. Kraft suggests, “we are to learn in our experience with God to reevaluate and reinterpret all events from his perspective and to make this our habit of life.”<sup>14</sup>

### **Use of Secular Principles to Define Biblical Concepts**

Second, Christian leadership has been faced with the temptation of borrowing too much from secular leadership principles. Of course, truly many secular leadership theories contain biblically appropriate elements. However, Christian leadership and secular leadership are not always the same. As Edgar J. Elliston mentions, “Christian leadership shares much with local secular leadership in terms of cultural values and patterns. However, it clearly differs from secular, business, or political leadership in terms of its biblical value base, the use of spiritual power, accountability to Christ, and goal in the *missio Dei*.”<sup>15</sup>

Christian leadership theory raises doubts about the human ability to change organizations because of its theological understanding of the sinful nature of human beings. Christians believe humans can only contribute effectively when they unite with the Holy Spirit. As Douglas McConnell asserts, this is one of the unique aspects of

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture*, 2nd ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 274.

<sup>15</sup>Edgar J. Elliston, “Leadership Theory,” *Evangelical Dictionary of World Mission* (2000), 567.

leadership in mission.<sup>16</sup> Divinely sanctioned biblical leadership was established by the Holy Spirit. Only the power of the Holy Spirit can transform depraved human beings and human organizations. Secular leadership that neglects the ministry of the Holy Spirit cannot be fully effective in Christian organizations.

### **Poorly Developed Theology of Mission Leadership**

Third, although well-developed theologies of mission serve the Church, a theology of leadership for mission has not been well developed. It is readily evident that most of the literature on Christian leadership is practical in its approach rather than theological. Very little scholarly work has focused on a theology of leadership in mission. If there are a few works on leadership theology, the methodological approach is generally based on a sociological hermeneutic.<sup>17</sup>

In 2005, Efrain Agosto published a book of leadership theology entitled *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul*.<sup>18</sup> In his book, Agosto explores the social reality and leadership qualities that led to the rise of the Christian community in New Testament times. His interpretive methodology is mainly taken from the social sciences. In 2008, Andrew D. Clarke published *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*.<sup>19</sup> Clarke defines

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<sup>16</sup>Douglas McConnell, "Leadership," *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions* (2000), 567.

<sup>17</sup> See Edgar J. Elliston, ed. *Christian Relief and Development: Developing Workers for Effective Ministry* (Dallas, TX: Word Pub., 1989); Edgar J. Elliston and J. Timothy Kauffman, *Developing Leaders for Urban Ministries* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993).

<sup>18</sup>Efrain Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2005).

<sup>19</sup>Andrew D Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008).

the leadership which was used in Paul's churches by searching the social context of each of the Pauline communities and the historical and cultural situation of first-century Roman imperial cities and towns. In 2011, Jack Barentsen used social and psychological mechanisms to define leadership development as a group phenomenon in Paul's mission.<sup>20</sup> A need remains for a much more comprehensive biblical understanding of leadership theology.

### Supra-cultural Aspects of Biblical Principles of Leadership

James E. Plueddemann asserts the need of a leadership theology through exploring the supra-cultural (above culture) process of evangelism and viewing leadership development as the heart of God's redemptive plan.<sup>21</sup> He is convinced "as we study a theology of leadership we will find many universal principles that should be applied in any culture."<sup>22</sup> Plueddemann underscores the need of searching for cosmic or crosscultural leadership principles through theological efforts from a scriptural worldview before recommending leadership practices from different cultures.

The search for a supra-cultural theology of leadership must be acknowledged as somewhat theoretical because no one studies the Bible without a cultural perspective. Also, leadership in the Bible always functions within a cultural context. Yet, the search

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<sup>20</sup>Jack Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission: A Social Identity Perspective on Local Leadership Development in Corinth and Ephesus*, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 168 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011).

<sup>21</sup>James E. Plueddemann, *Leading across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 47, 55, 59.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 157.

for supra-cultural principles is valid because it helps us escape or at least acknowledge our own cultural limitations. If this is so, where might cosmic leadership principles originate?

### Revelation as a Source for a Theology of Leadership

Elliston, emphasizing the need for mission theology, asserts, “One only has to look at the writing of Scripture to see how God’s initiative catalyzed the reflections about God and His mission in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.”<sup>23</sup> Elliston then, borrowing Van Engen’s definition, introduces the book of Revelation as a description of the *missio adventus*.<sup>24</sup> The book of Revelation is certainly a book of mission. In fact, eschatological aspects of Revelation have been a primary focus in Adventist studies.<sup>25</sup> Eschatology is one of the strong motivations for mission.<sup>26</sup> However, Revelation has not often been used as a source for leadership principles to guide mission theology. Sigve K. Tonstad agrees on this point in his examination of leadership theology from the book of Revelation. He says, “To my knowledge no one has attempted to explore this word

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<sup>23</sup>Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2011), 11.

<sup>24</sup>Elliston uses Van Engen’s definition of *missio adventus* which is “the inbreaking of God, of Jesus Christ in the incarnation, of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, of the Holy Spirit in and through the church.” Engen, *Mission on the Way*, 28.

<sup>25</sup>See the several articles which focus on Eschatology of Adventist perspectives in *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 11 (2000).

<sup>26</sup>Craig Ott, Stephen J. Strauss, and Timothy C. Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 186.

[Revelation] as a declaration of ideology, and much less as a statement that this book [Revelation] is committed to a particular form of leadership.”<sup>27</sup>

The question arises: does this book of apocalyptic literature contain foundational leadership principles that should shape the church’s role in the *missio Dei*? My answer is “yes:” the book of Revelation presents a grand blueprint of missional leadership theology. Leadership principles as demonstrated by the Lamb and the Dragon in the context of the cosmic battle can be observed (Rev 12-13).<sup>28</sup> The contrast between the two camps and the different attitudes and approaches used to win the cosmic battle illustrate an enormous leadership confrontation (Rev 13:15-17; 14:1-5). One of the remarkable instances of contrasting leadership attitudes between God and Satan is observed in the climax of the apocalyptic narrative in Revelation 12-14. The “great star” which coveted to ascend to heaven is finally fallen to the earth (Rev. 8:10; 9:1; 12:7-10; Isa. 14:12-13; Luke 10:18) while the Lamb which was killed (by His voluntary choice) recovered His position and was glorified (Rev. 13:8; 14:1). Satan demonstrates an authoritarian

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<sup>27</sup>Sigve K. Tonstad, “Revelation,” in *Servants and Friends: A Biblical Theology of Leadership*, ed. Skip Bell (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2014), 227.

<sup>28</sup>Ranko Stefanovic sees the Great Controversy between Christ and Satan (Rev 12-13) as the central segment of the book of Revelation from the chiasmic structure. Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, 2nd ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2009), 35-40. See also Peter Antonysamy Abir, *The Cosmic Conflict of the Church: An Exegetico-Theological Study of Revelation 12: 7-12*, European University Studies 23 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1995); Gregory A. Boyd, *God at War: The Bible and Spiritual Conflict* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997); Adela Yarbro Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001); Sook-Young Kim, “The Trajectory of the ‘Warrior Messiah’ Motif in Scripture and Intertestamental Writings,” (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2008); William H. Shea, “The Chiasmic Structure of Revelation 12:1-15:4: The Great Controversy Vision,” *Andrews University Studies* 38, no. 2 (Autumn 2000): 269-292; Antoninus King Wai Siew, *The War between the Two Beasts and the Two Witnesses: A Chiasmic Reading of Revelation 11.1-14.5*, ed. Mark Goodacre, Library of New Testament Studies 283 (New York: T & T Clark, 2005).



leadership attitude which mainly focuses on achieving his own goals while the Lamb exemplifies incarnate and humble leadership through voluntary sacrifice. In these passages totally different leadership attitudes are found. One longs to ascend to dominate while the other hopes to descend to serve. The book of Revelation expands these contrasting models and may be seen as an inspired case study in leadership.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Leadership styles and the attendant behavior of mission practitioners and church administrators too often demonstrate leadership attitudes and practices that reflect cultural norms while violating biblical norms. There is both historical and contemporary evidence of a predictable migration from leadership as service to leadership as control—such as autocracy, coercion, self-ascendancy, and dominance. These problems are found in leadership practices primarily informed by cultural norms apart from God’s Word. These norms vary widely and may even be practiced within the faith community thus violating biblical principles. This reality creates an urgent need for the application of biblical principles that transcend cultures and brings leadership practices into alignment with the character and behavior of the Trinity.

### **Purpose of the Research**

This research aims to develop a theology of missional leadership through a theological investigation of the eschatological confrontation between the Lamb and the Dragon (the Great Controversy motif) in the book of Revelation in order to derive supra-cultural Christian leadership principles that will be applicable in pursuing the *missio Dei*.

## Conceptual Framework

To develop a missional leadership theology, the reciprocal relationship between missiology or mission theology and leadership theology has to be understood. Missiology is a very comprehensive area of study that includes theology of mission, history of mission, anthropology, intercultural studies, mission strategy, world religions, church growth, religious demographics, and other related fields of study.<sup>29</sup> The task of missiology is “to investigate scientifically and critically the presuppositions, motives, structures, methods, patterns of cooperation and *leadership* (emphasis added) which the churches bring to their mandate.”<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Van Engen argues, “mission theology seeks to be multidisciplinary, integrative, definitional, analytical, and truthful.”<sup>31</sup> Then, he lists the cognate disciplines and includes leadership in the list.<sup>32</sup> Accordingly, it is

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<sup>29</sup>Ott, Strauss, and Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission*, xx.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup>Engen, *Mission on the Way*, 17. See also Charles Van Engen, “Specialization/Integration in Mission Education,” in *Missiological Education for the Twenty-First Century: The Book, the Circle, and the Sandals*, ed. J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen, and Edgar J. Elliston (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1997), 219-221.

<sup>32</sup>Engen, *Mission on the Way*, 19. Van Engen includes, in the mission theology sphere, biblical studies, church history, mission history, systematic theology, contextualization, cultural anthropology, linguistics and translation, sociology, the study of other faiths, dialogue with other faiths, studies of women in mission, sociology of religion, social psychology, urban studies/ anthropology and sociocultural analysis of the city, socioeconomic and political analysis, ecumenics and studies of the world church, statistics and futurology, evangelism, the history of evangelism, church growth, studies of missionary congregations, dynamics of cross-cultural communication, relief and development, discipleship, spirituality and spiritual formation, leadership formation, structures for mission, mission administration, theological education, congregational renewal, history of revivals, cross-cultural counseling, preaching, the missionary family, psychological issues of many types, ecclesiastics and the relationship of churches, mission organization, mission funding, mission promotion/ recruitment/ personnel, the relation of church and state, nominalism and secularization, and others.

clear leadership theology holds an important place in missiology and in a theology of mission.

Timothy C. Tennent indicates, “All theology is fundamentally missional because biblical theology reveals God as a missionary God.”<sup>33</sup> Without mission, theology is useless. In *Encountering Theology of Mission*, the authors note Kevin Vanhoozer “argues that theology must move beyond *theoria* (good conceptual logic) to wisdom, what he calls *phronesis* (practical reason resulting in right action).”<sup>34</sup> Therefore, a theology of mission has the task to “examine the theological foundations, guidelines, and dimensions of mission in particular.”<sup>35</sup> A theology of mission follows the methodology of “examining the history, literature, and theology of the various biblical books and authors.”<sup>36</sup> This same theological framework will be followed in developing a theology of missional leadership.

Although Christian leadership is a very practical discipline, it needs a well-crafted theological framework, i.e., Christian leadership needs to be established on a biblical and theological foundation rather than on just a pragmatic or theoretical one. A convincing theological foundation for leadership should result in more effective leadership practices. This study seeks to establish a biblical and theological framework for mission, exploring

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<sup>33</sup>Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2010), 60.

<sup>34</sup>Ott, Strauss, and Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission*, xix.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, xxi-xxiii.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, xxi.

the leadership principles of the Bible and modern leadership literature, and examination of areas that might hold similar presuppositions.

### **Methodology**

Since this study aims to establish a theology of missional leadership through the motif of the Great Controversy and seeks to discover leadership principles from the book of Revelation, I examine the book of Revelation and compare it with relevant leadership theories. I also look at Revelation in order to arrive at a theology of missional leadership by looking at terminology and context linked to leadership. As appropriate, I examine the concerns of systematic theology, for example, free-will, eschatology, and pneumatology to support the theological analysis. The following questions guide the search for biblical supra-cultural principles that may provide a means to a healthier and more God-honoring approach to leadership:

1. Do secular leadership theories and current Christian leadership discourses successfully guide the Church in joining the *missio Dei*?
2. Does the book of Revelation reveal a missional leadership that guides the fulfilment of the *missio Dei*?
3. Does the book of Revelation provide a normative worldview for missional leadership?
4. Do the apocalyptic music elements of Revelation inform Christian leadership?

### **Delimitation of the Study**

This research seeks to find Christian leadership principles and note missiological implications. This study does not deal with theological presuppositions for interpretation, though the basics of the historicist method have been applied to the interpreting of the

book of Revelation. Also, this study deals with eschatology only insofar as it is relevant to discovering leadership principles. This research is restricted to the parameters of a theological definition of Christian leadership derived from the book of Revelation and notes the impact on practical missional applications. Admittedly, in my search for supra-cultural leadership principles, I acknowledge that my own Korean cultural perspective remains a source of tension in this effort, as do all other cultural perspectives.

### **Justification**

A scarcity of literature related to supra-cultural leadership concepts in the book of Revelation inhibits the necessary knowledge base for the development of a theology of missional leadership. This study contributes to satisfying this need. A theology of missional leadership should transcend the variable nature of cultural influences on the practice of leadership. For the Christian context a theology of leadership provides common ground between the mission subject and the missionary. A theology of missional leadership also provides the necessary unity that strengthens the probability of success in accomplishing the tasks of mission. This study seeks to provide a contribution to establish a theology of missional leadership, satisfying the scarcity of scholarly literature from the book of Revelation. The outcome of this study may suggest a few relevant missional leadership principles for missionary educators, missionaries, churches supporting missionaries, and those students who earnestly seek to find appropriate guidelines for missional leadership.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Introduction**

When *Contemporary Issues in Leadership* was published, the editors pointed out some ambiguities related to the field of leadership by stating, “Scholars have been unable to establish a theoretical groundwork, and the wide range of existing training programs contribute little to supplying our society with an actual leadership base.”<sup>1</sup> Thirty years later, the 7th edition of the book also admits, “leadership is widely discussed and studied but continues to remain an elusive and hazy concept.”<sup>2</sup>

Although the term “leadership” may be universal, the task of defining it is ambiguous and complicated. While the broad scope of leadership is commonly agreed upon, the emphasis of each academic discipline on leadership varies according to its presuppositions and emphases. In order to achieve its own purpose every human group is confronted with the need to grasp the dynamics of leadership. For this reason, an overflow of extensive literature exists about leadership elucidating the concept of leadership, behavioral characteristics of leaders, dynamics of leadership, reciprocal

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<sup>1</sup>William E. Rosenbach and Robert L. Taylor, eds., *Contemporary Issues in Leadership* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 1-2.

<sup>2</sup>William E. Rosenbach, Robert L. Taylor, and Mark A. Youndt, eds., *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, 7th ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012), 1.

relationships between leaders and followers, environmental or cultural variables, and ethical and moral aspects of leadership.

Since the primary focus of the dissertation is on deriving biblical leadership principles from the book of Revelation, this chapter purposes to review current literature on secular and Christian leadership and seeks to highlight some of the critical problems in the missional communities as they attend the *missio Dei*. In order to relate leadership principles to missiological thinking, this chapter examines (1) the goal of leadership, (2) the definition of leadership, (3) the leader-follower relationship, (4) leadership and ethics, (5) leadership and culture, and (6) leadership and worldview.<sup>3</sup> The cultural and historical background of Korean Christian leadership as a case study is also explored to point out the challenge of culturally-confined Christian leadership.

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<sup>3</sup>By the levels of analysis Gardner et al., in 2010, categorize 29 leadership topics from *The Leadership Quarterly* from 2000 to 2009 as follows: authentic leadership, behavioral theories, charismatic leadership, charismatic-ideological-pragmatic model, cognitive theories, collectivistic theories, contingency theories, creativity and innovation, culture and diversity, emotions, ethical leadership, executive leadership, follower-centric theories, leader-follower relations, leader-member exchange (LMX), leadership development, leadership emergence, leadership in teams and groups, motivational theories, politics and public leadership, power and influence tactics, spiritual leadership, substitutes for leadership, trait theories, transformational leadership, vertical dyad linkage (VDL) and individualized leadership, new methods and analytic techniques, multiple theories, and general. While this list is mostly categorized by theories, this study reviews leadership theories by the selected topics which relevant to missional orientation. W. L. Gardner and others, "Scholarly Leadership of the Study of Leadership: A Review of the Leadership Quarterly's Second Decade, 2000-2009," *Leadership Quarterly* 21, no. 6 (2010): 935. See also Shelley D. Dionne and others, "A 25-Year Perspective on Levels of Analysis in Leadership Research," *The Leadership Quarterly* 25 (2014): 9, 11. In the same volume of the Journal, Jessica E. Dihn et al., in 2014, categorizes 66 different theoretical domains of leadership. Jessica E. Dinh and others, "Leadership Theory and Research in the New Millennium: Current Theoretical Trends and Changing Perspectives," *Leadership Quarterly* 25 (2014): 40.

## **Korean Leadership Culture and Its Influence on Leadership**

The purpose of this section is to provide a review that addresses the context of the stated problem being addressed by this research. Other cultures could have provided similar context and illustrations supporting the problem statement but the Korean focus provides a rich context and one familiar to me in which to explore the leadership conditions that recommend a corrective application of biblical supra-cultural principles.

The Korean Christian leadership style has been influenced by the Korean culture which is heavily influenced by traditional religions and the modern history of Korea. Richard Niebuhr defines culture as “the artificial, secondary environment which man superimposes on the natural. It comprises language, habits, ideas, beliefs, customs, social organization, inherited artifacts, technical processes and values.”<sup>4</sup> To understand the characteristics of the Korean leadership style, it is necessary to decipher Korean culture. This section purposes to examine the influence of cultural elements in shaping Christian leadership. It takes into account the impact of three dominating traditional religions—Shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism—and the three crucial events of modern Korean history—Japanese colonization (Nationalism), military rule, and economic growth (modernization). These will highlight the leadership challenges of Korean Christianity in terms of global mission.

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<sup>4</sup>Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), 32.



## Shamanism and Korean Christian Leadership

Shamanism has shaped to a great extent the worldview of the majority of Koreans. The main focus of shamanism is this-worldly matters. Donald Dean Owens argues that the good of shamanism is “to deal with the pressing concerns of health, material security, childbirth, and matters pertaining to personal guidance rather than with metaphysical issues.”<sup>5</sup> The foundational philosophy of shamanism, which is focused on this-worldly prosperity, seems to fit perfectly with the modern primary goal of achieving economic success. Thus, in the midst of rapid modernization, shamanism remains an underground value system that easily blends with Confucianism, Buddhism, and even with Christianity.<sup>6</sup>

In this regard, one of the main reasons for the rapid growth of Korean Christianity is a syncretistic blend with other traditional religious worldviews, particularly shamanism.<sup>7</sup> For instance, some scholars argue that the explosive growth of the Yoido Full Gospel Church, the world’s largest congregation, is due to its strong emphasis on a shamanistic worldview that stresses health, prosperity, and salvation—values that reflect

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<sup>5</sup>Donald Dean Owens, “Korean Shamanism: Its Components, Context, and Functions,” (PhD dissertation, The University of Oklahoma, 1975) 272.

<sup>6</sup>Byong-suh Kim, “Modernization and Korean Protestant Religiosity,” in *Christianity in Korea*, ed. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 324; Andrew Eungi Kim, “Christianity, Shamanism, and Modernization in South Korea,” *Cross Current* 50, no. 1/2 (Spring/Summer) (2000): 116.

<sup>7</sup>David Chung, *Syncretism: The Religious Context of Christian Beginnings in Korea* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 2001), 173-176; Sung-deuk Oak, “Healing and Exorcism: Christian Encounters with Shamanism in Early Modern Korea,” *Asian Ethnology* 69, no. 1 (2010): 96; James Newton Poling and HeeSun Kim, *Korean Resources for Pastoral Theology: Dance of Han, Jeong, and Salim* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 38.

typical shamanistic worldview values.<sup>8</sup> The role of the pastor is perceived as that of a shaman who experiences trances, transmits spiritual revelation, and exorcises evil spirit. Oak Sung-deuk argues that in early modern Korea “Christ was represented to Koreans as the most powerful shaman *mudang*—both a mediator and a spirit—and the missionaries and Korean Bible women were represented as his agents.”<sup>9</sup> Accordingly, Korean Christian leadership emphasizes charismatic leadership.<sup>10</sup>

Hong Young-gi discusses the background and characteristics of charismatic mega churches in Korea. With the historical, social, and cultural background of the rapid growth of mega churches, in particular Pentecostal-Charismatic churches, he asserts that Shamanism is the most powerful traditional religion that impacted the charismatic Korean mega-churches. The characteristics of Korean Shamanism—the religion of the *Minjung* (common people), supernatural experience, female leadership of shamanesses, emphasis on healing—have been adapted by charismatic Korean mega-churches.<sup>11</sup> Hong points to the fact that “charismatic pastoral leadership plays a key role in the

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<sup>8</sup>Kim, “Modernization and Korean Protestant Religiosity,” 324; Kim, “Christianity, Shamanism, and Modernization in South Korea,” 117; Andrew Eungi Kim, “Korean Religious Culture and Its Affinity to Christianity: The Rise of Protestant Christianity in South Korea,” *Sociology of Religion* 61, no. 2 (2000): 120.

<sup>9</sup>Oak, “Healing and Exorcism: Christian Encounters with Shamanism in Early Modern Korea,” 121.

<sup>10</sup>Cheul Ung Ahn, “The Effect of Traditional Religions Upon Church Growth in Korea,” (PhD dissertation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006) 141-142. See also Kim, “Korean Religious Culture and Its Affinity to Christianity: The Rise of Protestant Christianity in South Korea,” 127.

<sup>11</sup>Young-gi Hong, “The Background and Characteristics of the Charismatic Mega-Churches in Korea,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3, no. 1 (2000): 104-109.

understanding of Korean charismatic mega-churches.”<sup>12</sup> Consequently, pastors are considered as Christian shamans who pray for worldly blessings and perform ceremonies of blessing at rites of passage such as the birth of children, graduation, and marriage.<sup>13</sup> Because congregations expect their pastors to be charismatic leaders, pastors are inclined to monopolize authority and power and use spiritual gifts as the means of worldly blessing. This type of leadership, obsessed with control and numerical growth of congregation, potentially exposes church leaders to moral corruption as many of them have the view that the end justifies the means.

In summary, a charismatic leadership style has influenced the Korean Church with its focus on earthly matters, including numeral growth, personal prosperity, and economic success, rather than on spiritual blessings like the transformation of character. The mission of God has also been driven by a few high-powered individuals who have charisma and not by communities inspired by the Spirit.

### Buddhism and Korean Christian Leadership

Cheul Ung Ahn, in his doctoral dissertation, discusses the influence of Korean traditional religions upon the growth of the Korean church. In general, Confucianism and shamanism have influenced Korean Christianity with their emphasis on a moral and societal order and prayer, healing, and miracles. In particular, Korean Protestantism broadly contextualizes the religious concepts of Buddhism such as self-denial,

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 115.

<sup>13</sup>Ahn, “The Effect of Traditional Religions Upon Church Growth in Korea,” 135; Peter Jaehyeok Chin, “Toward Appropriate Leadership Patterns for the Korean Church in the Twenty-First Century,” (PhD dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2001) 91, 171.

contemplation, introspection, spirituality, holiness, gender equality, and goodness. The biblical concepts of the Trinity, church, and Savior are often understood from a Buddhist perspective. The majority of translations of the Bible into Korean incorporated many Buddhist terms. Some examples are as follows: Heaven (*Chundang*), hell (*Jiok*), devil (*Kishin*), temptation (*Yoohok*), sin (*Choi*), repentance (*Hoikei*), angel (*Chunsa*), to be born again (*Choongsaeng*), evil (*ak*), soul (*younghon*), faith (*Midum*), eternal life (*Youngseang*), praise (*Chanyang*), worship (*Yeabae*), and grace (*unhei*). In addition, Korean Christian funeral services are similar to Buddhist funeral rites.<sup>14</sup>

Although the relationship between Buddhism and Christianity in Korea has been mostly antagonistic, Buddhism strongly influences the expression of Christian theology because Buddhism was the religion of the common people with its syncretistic adaptation of shamanism. Although Buddhism emphasizes equality, Korean Buddhism experiences power struggles. Before Buddhism was suppressed by the new Choson dynasty's Confucian policy, it was an active participant in political power struggles because it was developed under royal patronage. With great wealth and power, *sangha* (a Buddhist monastic order) gradually became corrupted, stagnated, and finally declined. During the predominantly Confucian rule of the Choson dynasty, Buddhism became the religion of women and old people in the rural areas. Since the introduction of Japanese Buddhism in Korea during Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945), a power struggle between married and celibate monks over the control of temples has increased.<sup>15</sup> Even in the contemporary

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<sup>14</sup>Ahn, "The Effect of Traditional Religions Upon Church Growth in Korea," 143-149.

<sup>15</sup>Kang-nam Oh, "The Christian-Buddhist Encounter in Korea," in *Christianity in Korea*, ed. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 371-

Chogye Order, the largest sect of Korean Buddhism, which follows a celibate policy, power struggles have not ceased.

Thomas Timpert asserts that the power struggle within Buddhism results from “the great influence of Confucian social norms on the larger Buddhist tradition in northeast Asia, where vertical relations play a much larger role than in early Indian Buddhism where it was the first religion to teach the fundamental equality of all human beings.”<sup>16</sup> Although Buddhism stresses the fundamental equality of all the monks in the *sangha*, once a Korean Buddhist monk chooses his master, the allegiance to this master becomes a lifelong commitment.<sup>17</sup> Korean Buddhism is still under the influence of Confucian hierarchical and authoritarian leadership. Buddhism has also incorporated many shamanistic elements. For example, almost every Buddhist temple in Korea has a separate shrine building for shamanic deities: the *Samseonggak* (Mountain Spirit) and *Chilseong-shin* (Spirits of Great Dipper).<sup>18</sup> Both Christianity and Buddhism have clearly been influenced by Confucian and shamanistic perspectives of leadership, such as a hierarchical stratum, political power struggles, and authoritarianism. The missional mandate of the Korean Church, therefore, has been distorted by church leaders influenced by a competitive spirit.

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381; Poling and Kim, *Korean Resources for Pastoral Theology: Dance of Han, Jeong, and Salim*, 38-40.

<sup>16</sup>Thomas Timpert, “Community, Obedience, and Authority in Christian Monasticism,” in *Monasticism Buddhist and Christian: The Korean Experience*, ed. Sunghae Kim and James W. Heisig (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 150-151.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 150.

<sup>18</sup>Poling and Kim, *Korean Resources for Pastoral Theology: Dance of Han, Jeong, and Salim*, 37-38.

## Confucian and Korean Christian Leadership

In spite of the modernization of Korean society, Confucian values continue to influence leadership practices. The Korean society as a whole is built on principles of Confucian philosophy. Whether Koreans recognize it or not, the influence of Confucianism is still pervasive and persuasive. All Koreans, regardless of their religions, have been exposed to Confucian values in family circles, schools, or in churches.

Confucianism “refers to Confucius himself and the ethical teachings he transmitted . . . . It refers also to the entire development of the so-called Confucian tradition, throughout the centuries.”<sup>19</sup> Confucianism centers on its teaching of *jen* (the virtue of humanity) and emphasizes “the five moral bonds, father-son, ruler-subject, husband-wife, elder and younger brother, and between friends.”<sup>20</sup> The Korean societal structures reflect this Confucian model.

Confucianism, which emphasizes the importance of human relationship and social order, has contributed to both positive and negative aspects of Korean leadership. Wi Jo Kang asserts that “Confucianism made positive contributions in Korea by promoting high ethical standards in family and personal relationships and by emphasizing the value and dignity of human beings.”<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, “it had also created fragmented political castes

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<sup>19</sup>Julia Ching, *Confucianism and Christianity: A Comparative Study* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1977), 7.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>21</sup>Wi Jo Kang, *Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea: A History of Christianity and Politics* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1997), 30.

based on differing interpretations of Confucian teachings and their application in society.”<sup>22</sup>

Jung Sun Oh, also posits that the filial piety in Confucianism works to emphasize “human responsibility for (1) his/her salvation; (2) care of the human body, embodiment; and (3) the relationship with others, nature, and the divine.”<sup>23</sup> She posits that with its strict laws and customs Confucianism discriminates against women.<sup>24</sup> For instance, in 1446, King Sejong created the Korean alphabet, *Hangul*, but Confucian literati refused to use this alphabet because it was too easy to learn “even by women” who were not supposed to have such abilities.<sup>25</sup>

According to Chin, Confucianism creates unique leadership patterns which influenced Korean Christian leadership. First, charismatic leadership is manifested among Korean pastors following the Confucian model of a king’s authority. Because a pastor is considered as a king who is mediator between heaven and earth, Korean pastors have absolute authority and power over their followers. The second characteristic is hierarchical leadership. The hierarchical system of the Korean church emphasizes order. While it works for the growth of the Korean church, it damages communication between

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Jung Sun Oh, *A Korean Theology of Human Nature: With Special Attention to the Works of Robert Cummings Neville and Tu Wei-Ming* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 2005), 121.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 120. To get more information on the Korean women in Confucianism context, see You-Seon Kim, “A Constructive Analysis of Christian Women in a Confucian Culture,” (PhD dissertation, Drew University, 2009).

<sup>25</sup>Kang, *Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea: A History of Christianity and Politics*, 31.

leaders and followers and also creates power struggles. The third characteristic is positional leadership which leads pastors to struggle to achieve positional power and authority. Korean Christian leadership seems to have failed to adopt the high ethical standard of Confucian values.<sup>26</sup>

The strongest impact of Confucianism on Korean leadership and social system is its hierarchical system. Confucianism teaches that the king, teacher, and father are considered the same. All three leaders—king, teacher, and father—admittedly have absolute authority. Hong argues, “The emphasis on the patriarchal authority of Confucianism made it easier for Korean people to accept and follow pastoral authority in the Korean Church, especially in the charismatic Korean mega-churches.”<sup>27</sup>

Myung Seon Oh, in her doctoral dissertation, shows the impact of Confucian values on leader-follower interactions by the LBDQ (Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire) XII instrument as follows:

First, the Confucian value of benevolent authority, which includes both taking care of followers and emphasizing centralized authority, motivates followers to get along well with those in leadership position but also creates in them the desire to be in leadership position.

Second, the value of respect for tradition has an impact on representative acts and superior-orientated behavior of leaders.

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<sup>26</sup>Chin, “Toward Appropriate Leadership Patterns for the Korean Church in the Twenty-First Century,” 88-97.

<sup>27</sup>Hong, “The Background and Characteristics of the Charismatic Mega-Churches in Korea,” 107.



Third, the value of protecting one's face drives both leaders and followers to put an emphasis on goal achievement to promote or preserve a leader's dignity and prestige.

Fourth, the value of loyalty to one's superiors leads followers to accept hierarchy and carry out orders.

Fifth, the value of emphasizing chastity in women relates to leaders' actively exercising a leadership role rather than surrendering leadership to followers.<sup>28</sup>

Literature shows that Korean churches have struggled with Confucian dysfunctional societal stratum that exists between pastors and believers, the rich and the poor, in marginal churches, between men and women, and administrators and workers. Although Confucian virtues of respect and honor help give functional structure to churches, they also result in dysfunctional leadership practices in many Korean churches. Consequently, a Confucian perspective has destroyed the egalitarian relationship among believers and has hindered the mission of God.

#### Japanese Colonization (Nationalism) and Korean Christian Leadership

At the end of the nineteenth century, Korea was invaded by imperial powers. Historians allude to the relationship between Christianity and nationalism during the Japanese colonization period. Paul E. Pierson argues, "nationalism was an important factor in the rapid growth of the Christian faith in Korea."<sup>29</sup> Shin Kim asserts, "under the

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<sup>28</sup>Myung Seon Oh, "Impact of Confucian Values on Church Leaders' Leadership Styles in the Korean Assemblies of God," (PhD dissertation, Regent University, 2005) 74-76.

<sup>29</sup>Paul E. Pierson, *The Dynamics of Christian Mission: History through a Missiological Perspective* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey International University Press, 2009), 54.

occupation of Japan, Korean nationalism developed from the Christian messages.”<sup>30</sup>

According to Wi Jo Kang, when Korea was annexed by Japan, “Christian missions and churches were already strongly established.”<sup>31</sup> When Christian churches were oppressed by Japan, Korean Christians protested openly against Japanese rule.

As time went by, Japan’s violent oppression increased, compelling Koreans to worship the national Shinto shrines. As a result, Korean Christians actively participated in an independence movement. On March 1, 1919, the Independence Movement went public. Fifteen of the thirty-three signers of the declaration of independence were Christian leaders. Christians circulated copies of it, and organized rallies and demonstrations across the country.<sup>32</sup> During this colonial period, many Christians were thrown in jail or executed. Despite the oppression, Korean churches remained actively involved. With the end of World War II, on August 15, 1945, Korea received its independence from Japan

The history of Japanese colonization has affected the Korean mindset. Koreans are deeply patriotic to the point of sometimes behaving in chauvinistic ways. Koreans take pride in their country’s ability to survive the ills of colonization. Unfortunately this attitude often translates into arrogance, defiance, and contempt toward other countries.

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<sup>30</sup>Shin Kim, “Christianity and Korean Nationalism, 1884-1945: A Missiological Perspective,” (D. Miss dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2008) 104.

<sup>31</sup>Wi Jo Kang, “Church and State Relations in the Japanese Colonial Period,” in *Christianity in Korea*, ed. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 97.

<sup>32</sup>Donald N. Clark, *Christianity in Modern Korea* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986), 9-10.

Sometimes Koreans bluntly express enmity toward Japan or others who have different ideologies. Korean leadership often reflects ethnocentrism and anti-globalization. Historically, “the first missionaries to Korea were not foreign missionaries but Korean themselves who had come to Christ outside of Korea and returned as indigenous propagators of the gospel.”<sup>33</sup> Tennent argues that this is why Korean churches are reluctant to collaborate with non-Koreans and to serve with international mission agencies.<sup>34</sup>

Many Korean Christians took part in the fight against the Japanese invaders. Their participation in the movement for independence put their lives at risk. This past experience has produced a level of ethnocentrism and arrogance to which the church leaders are not immune. Though the Korean Protestant Church is one of the largest missionary sending agencies, Korean church leaders have not yet adopted many cross-cultural perspectives in their missional involvement.

#### Military Rule and Korean Christian Leadership

The military rule after the Korean War has also contributed to the unique Korean leadership style. June 25, 1950 marks the beginning of the Korean War. Three years later, on July 27, 1953, a cease-fire agreement was signed between North Korea and the United Nations’ Allied Forces. This cease-fire was the beginning of the cold war between North

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<sup>33</sup>Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 254.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 316.

and South Korea, which still continues.<sup>35</sup> Since the armistice of 1953, South Korea has built its ideology on anti-communism.<sup>36</sup> This anti-communist ideology was further fostered by successive military regimes. Under the rule of General Park Chung Hee (1961-1979), the Yusin Constitution was put in place to strengthen his authoritarian regime. Park boasted that this new constitution would promote better national security and stronger economic development. Paul Yunsik Chang argues, “through these two pillars of Park’s legitimizing discourse, authoritarian rule, economic policies detrimental to Korea’s labor class, and the harsh repression of the dissident movement were justified.”<sup>37</sup> This gave rise to the *Minjung* theology, the Korean version of liberation theology.<sup>38</sup>

Chun Doo Hwan took leadership through a military coup and ruled from 1980 to 1988. He continued with Park’s anti-communist ideology. Students were forced to bow to the Korean flag and memorize the “National Chart of Education” as a way of instilling nationalism in them. The road to democracy has been long and perilous because military governments systematically repressed all demonstrations for democracy. Ironically,

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<sup>35</sup>Heyon Ju Lee, “Remembering and Forgetting the Korean War in the Republic of Korea,” *Soumen Antropologi: Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society* 35, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 48.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 51.

<sup>37</sup>Paul Yunsik Chang, “Carrying the Torch in the Darkest Hours: The Sociopolitical Origins of Minjung Protestant Movements,” in *Christianity in Korea*, ed. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 195. See also Chin, “Toward Appropriate Leadership Patterns for the Korean Church in the Twenty-First Century,” 100-101.

<sup>38</sup>See Ilmok Kim, “A Critical Analysis of the Relationship between Salvation and Social Justice in the Minjung Theology,” (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2008).

although all Koreans rose up against the dictatorship at the governmental level, a dictatorial style of leadership is still the norm at other societal levels.

Because of the constant threat from North Korea, all male South Koreans must enroll in the army for years. As a result, the leadership style in business, companies, and even churches is a direct reflection of the coercive, autocratic, and hierarchical style of leadership in the army. Sometimes pastors exercise absolute power, forcing their congregations to follow their instruction. Even though the military is predominantly male-dominated, women also reflect military leadership styles in schools and companies. Although not all aspects of military leadership are bad, its strong influence on civilian sectors has not always been positive. Even if a military leadership style encourages unity and collaboration, its authoritarian side is undesirable to many civilians.

Unfortunately even some Church leaders sometimes have military authoritarian leadership style toward their congregations and colleagues. Such leaders use this approach as an encouraging missional involvement even though this pattern violates individual free will. The Korean Church has sometimes said, “God command us to go, so you should go.” This approach distorts Paul’s confession concerning his authority. “For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under *compulsion*; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel” (1 Cor 9:16, emphasis added).<sup>39</sup> The Korean military leadership style gives the impression that God is a military general who commands people to follow blindly. Leaders who accept this approach to leadership and who

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<sup>39</sup>In reality, Paul emphasizes his freedom in his missional journeys in 1 Corinthians 9 saying, “Am I not free” (1 Cor 9:1)? Even Paul says “is it only I and Barnabas who must work for a living (1 Cor 9:6)?

manifest a military authoritarian style hinder the Church and its mission in proclaiming “the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Col 1:13).

### Economic Growth (Modernization) and Korean Christian Leadership

For the last forty years, the modernization of Korea has resulted in its industrialization and urbanization, and rapid cultural change and upward social mobility of its citizens.<sup>40</sup> These developments have also impacted the church. According to Byong-suh Kim, “the church has been invaded by elements of secularization, materialism, and a monetary economy and has developed bureaucratic structures similar to those of large industrial complexes.”<sup>41</sup> Consequently, the growth of the Korean church began to stagnate. The membership of the Korean church is slowly declining due to constant power struggles and the immoral lives of many clergymen. Kim concludes that the Korean church is losing its preeminent role as a salvific institution and is experiencing serious problems in conjunction with modernization, commercialism, and capitalistic development.<sup>42</sup>

For Poling and Kim, modernization with its by-products has become a new religion in Korean society. Materialism proposes to satisfy people’s endless quest for significance. Shopping in its various forms has become a daily religious ritual for many Koreans. Korean Christianity has taken advantage of this trend. Poling and Kim indicate

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<sup>40</sup>Kim, “Modernization and the Explosive Growth and Decline of Korean Protestant Religiosity,” 309.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 327.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 328.

that this is the reason why the mega-churches in Korea, including the Yoido Full Gospel Church, emphasize in their preaching a prosperity gospel. By stressing prosperity, people come to church to receive God's blessings, go out to work hard, hoping and expecting to become prosperous.

The emphasis of capitalism on increased production has also had an impact on Korean Christian leadership. Hong argues that there are three factors contributing to the gig-syndrome (preference for bigness) among Koreans: (1) negative Confucian spirit, such as show-off legalism (ostentation), (2) modern rapid economic growth and materialism, and (3) American culture and church growth theology.<sup>43</sup>

Korean church leaders have been attracted to charismatic leaders because they are perceived as strong leaders who can produce quantitative success. Hong indicates that the distinctive characteristics among senior pastors of charismatic mega-churches are passion and collective mission. Also, these churches crave quantitative church growth and take pride in their senior pastor's reputation and that of their church.<sup>44</sup> After analyzing the three contributing factors to the modernization of Korea—industrialization, urbanization, and anti-communism—Chin asserts, “The dominant leadership pattern during the modernization process of Korea was authoritarian leadership.”<sup>45</sup> Chin suggests, “With the influence of the cultural leadership patterns [the Confucian leadership and the

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<sup>43</sup>Hong, “The Background and Characteristics of the Charismatic Mega-Churches in Korea,” 109.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 113.

<sup>45</sup>Chin, “Toward Appropriate Leadership Patterns for the Korean Church in the Twenty-First Century,” 104.

shamanistic leadership] and social leadership patterns [the modernization of Korea] of modern Korea, authoritarian leadership patterns with a quality of absolute authority and charisma has become common in Korean churches.”<sup>46</sup> Therefore it seems that Korean churches have sacrificed participative leadership on the altar of rapid industrialization in order to achieve visible success in mission.

### Missiological Challenges of Korean Christian Leadership

Timothy C. Tennent indicates, “Korean missionaries sometimes have been criticized for being overly preoccupied with numbers and conveying a sense of triumphalism because of church growth in Korea,” as well as for their “resistance to collaborate with non-Koreans and unwillingness to serve with international mission agencies, rather than agencies founded and directed from Korea.”<sup>47</sup>

Korean churches clearly display a deficiency in their patterns of leadership. Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk are of the view that the Korean Church “leadership is often too authoritarian. The high status of pastors hinders a biblical servant leadership and promotes division, formality, legalism and a stifling of expectation of personal guidance from God for ordinary Christians.”<sup>48</sup>

Recent empirical research on the relationship between religion and politics in Korea shows that, “Buddhists are more likely to be tolerant than Protestants in South

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 73, 106.

<sup>47</sup>Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 316.

<sup>48</sup>Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, *Operation World: 21st Century Edition*, 6th ed. (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster USA, 2001), 388.



Korea. . . . Protestants in South Korea, tend to have the lower level of political tolerance than other religious believers.”<sup>49</sup> Kyosung Keum introduces some research on the social credibility of Korean Protestant Churches in his dissertation. A survey reveals that the social credibility of the Korean Protestant Church (KPC) “is lower than any other religion with KPC at 18%, Catholicism at 35.2% and Buddhism at 31.1%.”<sup>50</sup> Other research indicates, “The trustworthiness of Protestant pastors is the lowest among religious clergy at 53.7%, while that of Catholic priests was 74.6% and Buddhism monks 64.0%.”<sup>51</sup> According to statistics, the population of Protestants in South Korea declined from 8,760,336 in 1995 to 8,616,438 in 2005.<sup>52</sup>

Although it is not easy to pinpoint the reason, the Korean Protestant Church is regressing in terms of church growth and respect. The culturally-dominated Christian leadership style needs to be corrected by biblically-shaped leadership principles.

### **Major Topics of Secular Leadership**

Because leadership impacts all areas of human societies, it is impossible to completely separate secular leadership from Christian leadership. Because every Christian lives in both realms concurrently, the secular and sacred areas cannot be

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<sup>49</sup>Junghyoun Kim, “Religion and Political Tolerance in South Korea,” *East Asia: An International Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (2010): 196.

<sup>50</sup>Kyosung Keum, “A Grounded Theory Study on the Emerging Negative Perception and Public Criticism of the Korean Protestant Church by Non-Christian Koreans,” (PhD dissertation, Biola University, 2011) 3.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>52</sup>Gil-Soo Han, Joy J. Han, and Andrew Eungi Kim, “‘Serving Two Masters’: Protestant Churches in Korea and Money,” *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 9, no. 4 (2009): 334.

considered mutually exclusive.<sup>53</sup> Paul G. Hiebert, however, insists, “The gospel must be distinguished from all human cultures.” He argues, “The failure to differentiate between the gospel and human cultures has been one of the great weaknesses of modern Christian missions.”<sup>54</sup> Likewise, the failure to separate Christian leadership from secular leadership has been one of the great obstacles in Christian mission. Elliston indicates that “Christian leaders involved in mission should be especially careful not to naively adopt local non-Western indigenous models of leadership or management.”<sup>55</sup> In *Developing a Strategy for Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Cultural Introduction* John Mark Terry and J. D. Payne wrote that, “over the past thirty years, within American evangelical circles, the church has been guilty of embracing the world of corporate America and drinking too deeply from the well of business strategy.”<sup>56</sup> Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk also

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<sup>53</sup>H. Richard Niebuhr explores five possible ways in which Christians have related to culture: Christ against culture, Christ of culture, Christ above culture, Christ and culture paradox, and Christ transforms culture. His conclusion on the relationship between Christ and culture is somewhat relative remaining the answer in a realm of “free decision of individual believers and responsible communities.” Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 233. Robert E. Webber categorizes the relationship between Christianity and culture into three models—the separational model, the identificational model, and the transformational model. His point is that although each person is given one part of a complex three-part answer, a better answer lies in delicately balancing the three responses, not in placing one over against the other. Robert E. Webber, *The Secular Saint: A Case for Evangelical Social Responsibility* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979), 30. Charles H. Kraft, in the same way, uses “the God above-but-through-culture” position as his main approach to culture. He argues, “this view sees God as transcendent and absolute, completely beyond and outside of any culture but so concerned with humans and desirous of interacting with us that he chooses the cultural milieu in which we are immersed as the arena of his interaction with us.” Charles H. Kraft, *Culture, Communication and Christianity* (Pasaden, CA: William Carey Library, 2001), 27.

<sup>54</sup>Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 53.

<sup>55</sup>Elliston, “Leadership Theory,” 568.

<sup>56</sup>John Mark Terry and J. D. Payne, *Developing a Strategy for Mission: A Biblical, Historical, and Cultural Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 2.

express concern about a way of doing mission that uncritically borrows from secular systems such as medicine, education, business, counseling, etc. They argue, “When the church borrows and applies such models to the community of God’s people it misses an opportunity to shape leadership around the biblical sense.”<sup>57</sup> In order to rightly apply Christian leadership principles to all cultures, secular leadership practice must always be distinguished from Christian leadership principle. The effort to understand the limitations and focus of secular leadership helps to recognize the value and purpose of Christian leadership.

I define secular leadership in this chapter as the scope of every leadership dominantly practiced for secular purposes apart from Christian leadership practiced in Church and missional efforts. This section examines the contemporary issues of secular leadership and the trends of current leadership studies.

### The Goals of Leadership

In order to define leadership, it is important to understand its goals. According to Joseph C. Rost, the modern discourse of leadership has been developed from an industrial paradigm which emphasizes higher effectiveness to achieve organizational goals. The main issues of leadership in the industrial era have been largely related to boosting effectiveness or productivity in various organizations. For this reason, a great leader has sometimes been considered to be an effective producer. For Rost, the industrial paradigm of leadership with its structural-functionalist view of organizations focuses on the

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<sup>57</sup>Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 5.

individual leaders who possess prominent traits, on management as the preeminent profession, and on the objective of goal achievement. This perspective reflects a male-dominant model of life, a utilitarian and materialistic ethical perspective, and a cold rational, technocratic, linear, quantitative, and scientific language and methodology.<sup>58</sup>

The industrial paradigm, according to Rost, creates the notion that “leadership is good management.”<sup>59</sup> His point is that management and leadership are essentially different without any denigrating sense toward management. He defines management and leadership respectively as “an authority relationship between at least one manager and one subordinate who coordinate their activities to produce and sell particular goods and/or services,”<sup>60</sup> and as “an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes.”<sup>61</sup> To put it succinctly, leadership pursues real change (transformation), while management produces goods and services

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<sup>58</sup>Joseph C. Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1991), 180. See also Mary Uhl-Bien, Russ Marion, and Bill Mckelvey, “Complexity Leadership Theory: Shifting Leadership from the Industrial Age to the Knowledge Era,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 18 (2007): 301-302.

<sup>59</sup>Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, 94.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 145.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 102. Rost intentionally selects “purposes” (plural form) instead of “goals” to articulate different connotations within industrial and postindustrial paradigm. He argues, “purposes are broader, more holistic or integrated, more oriented to what people ordinarily think of as a vision or mission. Purposes are often stated in qualitative terms. Goals, on the other hand, are usually quite specific, more segmental and often prioritized, and more oriented to what people ordinarily think of as objectives, Goals are often stated in quantitative terms.” Ibid., 119. Also, Rost accentuates the plural form of purposes, insisting, “when leaders and followers have several purposes, the likelihood of mutuality is enhanced because different leaders and followers can emphasize related purposes and still achieve some mutuality.” Ibid., 118.

(industrial paradigm). Thus, because his terms “leadership” and “management” are different, they cannot be used interchangeably.<sup>62</sup>

Prior to Rost’s assertion, Abraham Zaleznik distinguished leaders from managers in terms of personality—attitudes toward goals, conception of work, relations with others, and senses of self. According to Zaleznik, while managers tend to adopt impersonal attitudes toward goals, leaders adopt a personal and active attitude toward goals. Where managers tend to view work as an enabling process and act to limit choices, leaders work to develop fresh approaches to long-standing problems and make room for new options. While managers relate to people according to the role they play in a sequence of events or in a decision-making process, leaders, who are concerned with ideas, relate in more intuitive and empathetic ways.<sup>63</sup>

The characteristics of managers in Zaleznik’s classification are closely related to Rost’s contention based on his understanding of the industrial paradigm. Rost argues that “leadership as good management is the industrial paradigm of leadership.”<sup>64</sup> Rost leans toward postindustrial assumptions and values of leadership which are about the transformation of interrelationships between leaders and followers to pursue mutual

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 129-152.

<sup>63</sup>Abraham Zaleznik, “Managers and Leaders: Are They Different?,” in *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, ed. William E. Rosenbach and Robert L. Taylor (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 87-98; Abraham Zaleznik, *The Managerial Mystique: Restoring Leadership in Business*, Harper & Row (New York: 1989), 21-39. For the comparative understanding of leadership and management, see Robert J. Allio, “Leadership: The Five Big Ideas,” in *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, ed. William E. Rosenbach, Robert L. Taylor, and Mark A. Youndt (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012), 40; John P. Kotter, “What Leaders Really Do,” in *Leadership: Understanding the Dynamics of Power and Influence in Organizations*, ed. Robert P. Vecchio (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 23-30.

<sup>64</sup>Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, 94.

purposes.<sup>65</sup> The values of the postindustrial paradigm, according to Rost, include: “collaboration, common good, global concern, diversity and pluralism in structures and participation, client orientation, civic virtues, freedom of expression in all organizations, critical dialogue, qualitative language and methodologies, substantive justice, and consensus-oriented policy-making process.”<sup>66</sup>

Nevertheless, the industrial notion of leadership is largely referred to in contemporary discourses of leadership. For instance, the school of organization development is confronted with the urgent need to reinterpret the value of its theories and practices in the contemporary internal and external challenges of organizations. Despite the effort to accommodate current societal changes under postmodernism and constructionism and to renew the philosophy, values, theories, and practices of organization development, the definition of organization development itself reflects the industrial connotation of leadership by focusing on practical managerial skills and strategies in order to mobilize people to produce greater results.<sup>67</sup> Richard Beckhard defines organization development as “an effort (1) *planned*, (2) *organization-wide*, and (3) *managed from the top*, to (4) increase *organization effectiveness and health* through (5) *planned interventions* in the organization’s ‘processes,’ using *behavioral-science*

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 118-126.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 181.

<sup>67</sup>See Ellen Van Velsor, Cynthia D. Mccauley, and Marian N. Ruderman, *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010); Joan V. Gallos, ed. *Organization Development* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006); Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*; Richard L. Hughes and Katherine Colarelli Beatty, *Becoming a Strategic Leader: Your Role in Your Organization’s Enduring Success* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2005).

knowledge” (emphasis in original).<sup>68</sup> This definition contains an industrial notion of hierarchical and managerial perspectives of leadership.

A danger of the industrial concept of leadership (if the main emphasis of leadership is on achieving organizational goals of producing benefits and effectiveness) is that the other important aspects of leadership such as process, relationships, environment, ethics, and even leadership itself become mere instruments of the goals. The direction of contemporary leadership studies apparently goes toward the postindustrial paradigm, focusing on the values of common good, eclectic traits and behavior, interpersonal dynamics of leadership, humanistic and spiritual values, and ethical and moral powers.<sup>69</sup>

The current published theories of leadership reflect this tendency toward postindustrial values. For instance, transforming or transformational leadership emerged from the recognition of the reciprocal process between leaders and followers. According to James M. Burns, the higher goals have to be mutually held by both leaders and followers. Therefore, the role of leaders is to stimulate the motives, values, and goals of followers. The emphasis is on the collective purpose which unites leaders and followers beyond self-interest and organizational goals.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Richard Beckhard, “What Is Organization Development?,” in *Organization Development*, ed. Joan V. Gallos (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 3.

<sup>69</sup>Robert K. Mueller, “Leading-Edge Leadership,” in *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, ed. William E. Rosenbach and Robert L. Taylor (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 330-338; John W. Gardner, “The Antileadership Vaccine,” in *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, ed. William E. Rosenbach and Robert L. Taylor (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 325.

<sup>70</sup>James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 425-426.

Servant Leadership also emphasizes more radically the valuing of others more than one's own self. For Robert K. Greenleaf, "the servant-leader is servant first" which means he/she serves another's highest priority.<sup>71</sup> Thus, Servant Leadership is in agreement with postindustrial values.

Meanwhile, transcendent leadership which purposefully combines three levels of leadership—self, others, and the organization—propounds the value of self-awareness and self-regulatory capacities. Transformational and authentic leadership behaviors are understood as those which promote the interests of followers. The leadership of an organization includes the activities of leaders such as setting strategy, managing the non-human elements of the firm, and ensuring they fit with the external context. However, the proponents of transcendent leadership argue that all three levels of leadership—self, others, and organization—have to be integrated to achieve holistic leadership.<sup>72</sup> Transcendent leadership, which gives attention to the most important but much ignored aspect of self-leadership, is a rebuke to some leaders' lack of morality. Self-interest is too often exalted in leadership literature.<sup>73</sup>

In summary, while the understanding of leadership during the industrial era focused on the goals of organizations, the contemporary concept of leadership includes

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<sup>71</sup>Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2002), 27-28.

<sup>72</sup>Mary Crossan and Daina Mazutis, "Transcendent Leadership," in *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, ed. William E. Rosenbach, Robert L. Taylor, and Mark A. Youndt (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012), 53-65.

<sup>73</sup>James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, "Leadership Begins with an Inner Journey," in *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, ed. William E. Rosenbach, Robert L. Taylor, and Mark A. Youndt (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012); Richard L. Daft, "First, Lead Yourself," in *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, ed. William E. Rosenbach, Robert L. Taylor, and Mark A. Youndt (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012).



the value and purposes of people in addition to organizational goals. Although the industrial paradigm contains relevant values such as the competence or traits of leaders, a more egalitarian notion of leadership is being called for in current scholarly research. Moreover, this industrial notion of leadership has influenced Christian leadership to emphasize quantitative productivity such as number of baptism, church buildings, budgets, systems, and programs. The industrial approach also contains a few dangers for Christian leadership regarding relational values, motivational innocence, transactional issues, and the like. Because the Church has accepted the industrial or entrepreneurial approaches to achieve missional goals without seriously considering its dangers, the industrial paradigm of leadership has to be reevaluated according to biblical principles of leadership.

#### Definition of Leadership

What is leadership? No unanimously agreed-upon definition of leadership exists.

The emphasis of leadership varies according to the socio-cultural contexts and needs.

Bernard M. Bass contends,

Leadership has been conceived as the focus of group processes, as a matter of personality, as a matter of inducing compliance, as the exercise of influence, as particular behaviors, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument to achieve goals, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, as initiation of structure, and as many combinations of these definitions.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Bernard M. Bass, "Concepts of Leadership," in *Leadership: Understanding the Dynamics of Power and Influence in Organizations*, ed. Robert P. Vecchio (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 16; Bernard M. Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*, 3rd ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 11-18.

In the 2008 edition of his book, Bass adds that leadership is also perceived as an attribution, as a symbol, as the making of meaning, as discretionary influence.<sup>75</sup> Robert J. Allio summarizes the main stream of leadership research into five important research hypotheses: (1) good leaders have good character, (2) there is no best way to lead, (3) leaders must collaborate, (4) adaptability makes longevity possible, and (5) leaders are self-made.<sup>76</sup> The first two hypotheses reflect a “leader-centric” definition. The next two hypotheses imply that good leadership depends on the level of relationships between leaders and followers and the ability to adapt to internal and external changes in environments. The last hypothesis implies that no one is born a leader, that is, leadership skills are learned.

Peter G. Northouse suggests that “leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.”<sup>77</sup> His definition emphasizes five elements of leadership: (1) a process, (2) an individual,<sup>78</sup> (3) an influence, (4) a group, and (5) common goals or purposes.

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<sup>75</sup>Bernard M. Bass and Ruth Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*, 4th ed. (New York: Free Press, 2008), 16-22.

<sup>76</sup>See Allio, “Leadership: The Five Big Ideas,” 37-45.

<sup>77</sup>Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication, 2010), 3.

<sup>78</sup>This element is not mentioned by Northouse because he sets apart leadership training program from leadership discourse, but I purposefully contain it because the trait or character of leaders is the start point of leadership. The recent researches pay attention to trait theory with self-leadership notions. See Peter G. Northouse, *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2011), 2-3; Allio, “Leadership: The Five Big Ideas,” 38-40; Daniel Goleman, “What Makes a Leader?,” in *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, ed. William E. Rosenbach, Robert L. Taylor, and Mark A. Youndt (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012).

Northouse particularly finds ethical ingredients in leadership saying, “Common goals give leadership an ethical overtone.”<sup>79</sup> Leadership as a process highlights the interactive event between leaders and followers. It implies a transactional or transformational event in which followers’ benefits are considered. Leadership springs from an individual’s character. The leader needs to pursue integrity, accountability, self-regulation, and overcoming self-preservation.<sup>80</sup> Leadership is an influential dynamic in which a leader exercises positive and healthy influences. Leadership needs to elevate the values of people whether in a small group, a community, or a large organization. Leadership is basically relational and should always center on people rather than profits. As an expression of ethical behavior, leadership pursues common purposes of the constituents. As such, “leadership is not hierarchical, top down, or based on power and authority.”<sup>81</sup> Rather, the essential nature of leadership is “the process of the leader and followers engaging in reciprocal influence to achieve a shared purpose.”<sup>82</sup> This emphasis is in line with Rost’s postindustrial definition of leadership as “an influence relationship

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<sup>79</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 3.

<sup>80</sup>Rosenbach et al. in their article deeply recognize the importance of a personal value in leadership. They argue, “leadership is all about character, integrity, and competence” of leaders. Leaders’ influence comes from “a high degree of self-awareness resulting from introspection and proactive reflection, which leads to self-regulation and the ability to align their values with their intentions and behaviors.” See Rosenbach, Taylor, and Youndt, eds., *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, 4.

<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*

among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflects their mutual purposes.”<sup>83</sup>

Because each theory of leadership has a different focus, it is difficult to suggest a precise definition including every aspect of leadership. However, a definition of leadership should take into account self as the starting point, the traits and behaviors of leaders as important vehicles of influence, relationships with followers as dynamics of leadership, purposes or goals as the expression of an ethical emphasis, and changes in society as a result of renovation and reformation. Nevertheless, this secular definition of leadership cannot satisfy Christian leaders who seek the transformation of character as a primary goal of Christian leadership. Though the emphasis of secular leadership successfully describes the crucial elements of leadership as influence, it depends on human ability, not on the power of the Holy Spirit as the initiator of influence. Also, Christian leaders purpose to lead people to God, while secular leaders lead people to earthly benefits. Therefore, Christian leaders cannot be satisfied with just the points emphasized by secular leadership since they must define the core values of Christian leadership from a biblical perspective.

### Leaders and Followers

This section compares self-centric leadership with follower-centric leadership. While self-centric leadership emphasizes the traits, behaviors, and styles of leaders in

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<sup>83</sup>Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, 102. Rost signifies four essential elements of leadership in his definition as follows: (1) leadership is based on influence. (2) Leaders and followers are the people in this relationship. (3) Leader and followers intend real changes. (4) Leaders and followers intend mutual purposes. *Ibid.*, 32-53.

leading a group of people, the follower-centric leadership gives weight to the role of followers.

### **Self-Centric Leadership**

The first discourse of leadership typically begins with an effort to decode the traits, qualities, and behaviors of a leader and their impact on his/her relationship with followers. The trait theory, developed in the middle of the twentieth century, posits only a few individuals have unique physical characteristics, social background, intelligence and ability, personality, and social characteristics to become great leaders.<sup>84</sup> According to this theory, leaders differ from average followers in terms of personality traits, intelligence, and ambition. No consistent consensus exists among the proponents of this approach to leadership. The trait theory has evolved to encompass task competencies, interpersonal competencies, ethical components, and emotional intelligence, and became closely interwoven with situational or socio-cultural factors of leaders.<sup>85</sup> It even relates to

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<sup>84</sup>Ralph M Stogdill, *Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of Theory and Research* (New York: Free Press, 1974), 73-81; Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*, 79-84.

<sup>85</sup>Bass and Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*, 103-135; Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 15-24; Northouse, *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practice*, 2-3.

contemporary approaches to leadership such as “The Big Five Theory”<sup>86</sup> and “Servant Leadership.”<sup>87</sup>

Self-centric leadership is not only related to individuals’ traits, but also to styles or behaviors. The styles or behavioral approaches use two kinds of behaviors: task behaviors and relationship behaviors. While task behaviors relate to goal accomplishment, relationship behaviors concern people. The challenge for leaders is to know how to combine both task and relationship behaviors to reach a goal.<sup>88</sup>

Theory X and Theory Y distinguish leaders’ style according to a philosophy of leadership. While Theory X to a great extent assumes that people need to be directed and controlled because they dislike work, Theory Y holds that people like work and are self-motivated and therefore able to take initiatives.<sup>89</sup>

Three other common leadership styles include authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles, and are related to Theory X and Theory Y. Although the authoritarian leadership style sometimes works in a specific situation, like Theory X, it

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<sup>86</sup>The Big Five theory posits the five factors in personal trait such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness/intellect. “The Big Five structure does not imply that personality differences can be reduced to only five traits. Rather, these five dimensions represent personality at a very broad level of abstraction; each dimension summarizes a large number of distinct, more specific personality characteristics.” Oliver P. John, Laura P. Naumann, and Christopher J. Soto, “Paradigm Shift to the Integrative Big Five Trait Taxonomy: History, Measurement, and Conceptual Issues,” in *Handbook of Personality: Theory and Research*, ed. Oliver P. John, Richard W. Robins, and Lawrence A. Pervin (New York: The Guilford Press, 2010), 119.

<sup>87</sup>Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*.

<sup>88</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 69-77; Northouse, *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practice*, 5.

<sup>89</sup>Northouse, *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practice*, 36-40.

encourages leaders to exercise control over group members. The democratic leadership style to some extent resembles Theory Y. Democratic leaders work with subordinates without putting themselves above them. They excel in promoting communication between group members. The outcomes are mostly positive: group member's satisfaction, commitment, cohesiveness, creativity, and motivation. The laissez-faire leaders neither try to control subordinates as Theory X leaders do, nor do they try to nurture and guide subordinates as Theory Y leaders do. Little is accomplished under this style of leadership.<sup>90</sup>

The discussion of personal attributes of leadership includes a few sensitive topics like the power and authority of leaders. It is critically important that these related terms be clearly defined. Too often synonymous shared meanings can be assumed that miss the nuance of the relationship of these two terms. Power is the “ability to act or produce an effect”<sup>91</sup> Authority is the “right [permission] to give orders or make decisions; official permission or approval”<sup>92</sup> to exercise power. By extension authoritarianism, which is often unfairly associated with authority,<sup>93</sup> is the exercise of power without the expressed right or permission of the community or person impacted. Consequently, a leader who possesses power or task competence must also have the attendant authority or permission

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid., 40-45.

<sup>91</sup><http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/power> (accessed Feb 3, 2016).

<sup>92</sup><https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/authority> (accessed Feb 3, 2016).

<sup>93</sup>Eugene Kennedy and Sara C. Charles, *Authority: The Most Misunderstood Idea in America* (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 4.

to exercise that power. This will, heretofore, be the intended meaning of the words *power* and *authority*.

Many consider someone who possesses power and authority to be a leader. Leaders in positions of power and authority are more likely to perceive power to be good. Leadership style is accordingly determined by the way one understands the concepts of power and authority. The taxonomic category of leadership style regarding power and authority varies from autocratic and authoritarian to democratic and egalitarian leadership, from directive to participative leadership, and from task-oriented to relations-oriented leadership.<sup>94</sup> Because leadership is the interaction between leaders and followers, if followers define leadership as performance, then they prefer power-motivated leaders or Machiavellians rather than people-oriented leaders, and vice versa.<sup>95</sup> This perspective may create wrong ideas concerning Christian leadership. Christian leaders cannot be designated because of their own power or competence, but because they have the power and are led by the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 1:8; Gal 5:22-23). Also, a Christian leader's first responsibility is to nurture people (cf. 2 Tim 2:2; Eph 4:12). Though God did use few powerful and prominent people as leaders, they often acknowledged their shortcomings (cf. Exo 4:10; Jud 6:15; Isa 6:5; Jer 1:6; 1 Cor 15:9),

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<sup>94</sup>Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*, 415-510. In the latest version one more category in style of leadership part is added: initiation versus consideration. Bass and Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*, 539-574.

<sup>95</sup>Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*, 139.



were fully dependent on God (cf. Exo 15:2; Isa 12:2; 2 Chr 20:12; 2 Cor 12:9), and shared their power and authority with people (cf. Exo 18:13-27; Acts 6:1-7).

The foundation of self-centric leadership depends on the philosophy or the state of human nature. As Douglas McGregor has shown in Theory X and Theory Y,<sup>96</sup> a leader's perspective on human nature is a decisive element in determining leadership style. Moreover, the self-centric leadership discourse has taken on board topics such as interpersonal competence, ethical aspect of leadership, values, self-esteem, and interrelationships with follower.<sup>97</sup>

### **Follower-centric Leadership**

In an organization, the practice of leadership is impacted by both the leader's influence and followers' reaction. If no one follows, no leadership exists. The majority of contemporary theories—Path-Goal theory, leader-member exchange theory, transformational leadership theory, and many others —of leadership take into consideration the needs of followers.

The Path-Goal theory advocates that the effectiveness of leadership comes from a leader's ability to motivate subordinates to achieve designated goals. It is called "Path-Goal" because of the leader's influence on subordinates' perception of their work goals, personal goals, and paths to goal attainment.<sup>98</sup> This theory relates to two contingency

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<sup>96</sup>Douglas McGregor, *The Human Side of Enterprise* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960).

<sup>97</sup>See Charles N. Greene, "The Reciprocal Nature of Influence between Leader and Subordinate," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 60, no. 2 (1975).

<sup>98</sup>Robert J. House and Terence R. Mitchell, "Path-Goal Theory of Leadership," *Journal of Contemporary Business* 3, no. 4 (Autumn 1974): 81. In J. Thomas Wren, Douglas A. Hicks, and Terry L. Price, eds., *Modern Classics on Leadership* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing,

factors: (1) personal characteristics of the subordinates and (2) the environmental pressures and demands.<sup>99</sup> These factors imply that “the acceptability of the leader’s behavior is determined in part by the characteristics of the subordinates.”<sup>100</sup> Also, “leader behavior will be motivational to the extent that it helps subordinates cope with environmental uncertainties, threats from others or sources of frustration.”<sup>101</sup> In spite of the fact that this theory promotes the role of followers, it falls short because a great deal of responsibility is placed on leaders, much less on subordinates, and promotes dependency, and thus fails to recognize the full abilities of subordinates.<sup>102</sup>

The leader-member exchange theory “conceptualizes leadership as a process that is centered on the interactions between leaders and followers.”<sup>103</sup> The essence of this approach to leadership is the interrelationship between leaders and followers in a vertical dyadic linkage to help subordinates expand their roles in an organization.<sup>104</sup> Dansereau *et al.* categorize employees into two groups: the in-group and the out-group. The *in-group* includes those who are interested in negotiating with the leader what they are willing to

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2004), 191-207. See Robert J. House, “A Path-Goal Theory of Leader Effectiveness,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 16 (1971): 321-338; Robert J. House, “Path-Goal Theory of Leadership: Lessons, Legacy, and a Reformulated Theory,” *Leadership Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (1996): 323-352.

<sup>99</sup>House and Mitchell, “Path-Goal Theory of Leadership,” 85.

<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>101</sup>*Ibid.*, 88.

<sup>102</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 135.

<sup>103</sup>*Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>104</sup>George Graen, “Role-Making Processes within Complex Organizations,” in *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, ed. Marvin D. Dunnette (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1983), 1205-1207.

do for the group and the *out-group* are those who are interested in taking on new and different job responsibilities.<sup>105</sup> This vertical dyadic linkage between leader and subordinates considers the value of follower more than the traditional approach to leadership. Nevertheless, the leader-member exchange theory stresses the importance of a leader's roles more than that of followers and creates an ethical issue which emerges from unfairly applied principles for the out-group.<sup>106</sup> Consequently, it fails to fully promote followers' voluntary participation because the foundation of the relationship is transactional in which the benefits of subordinates are less important than achieving organizational goals.

Transformational leadership theory elevates the value of followers more than transactional leadership theory does. Transactional leadership, to some degree, manipulates followers by supplying personal rewards and benefits. However, transformational leadership asks followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the group, organization, or society. Consequently, followers are converted into leaders.<sup>107</sup> As Bass articulates, transformational leadership influences followers to deliver performance beyond expectations through charisma or idealized influence, inspirational

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<sup>105</sup>Fred Dansereau Jr., George B. Graen, and William J. Haga, "A Vertical Dyad Linkage Approach to Leadership in Formal Organizations," *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance* 13, no. 1 (February 1975).

<sup>106</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 167-168.

<sup>107</sup>Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*, 53-54.

motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation.<sup>108</sup> Bass argues that “transformational leadership is closer to the prototype of leadership that people have in mind when they describe their ideal leader and is more likely to provide a role model with which subordinates want to identify.”<sup>109</sup> In effect, transformational leadership is currently the most widely studied theory.<sup>110</sup>

Christian leadership also shares much transformational leadership in terms of the value of followers.<sup>111</sup> This theory is in tandem with the Christian leadership emphasis on relationships between leaders and followers. The relational aspect of leadership demands an expanded study on the essence of Christian relationships. Because concepts on leadership determine the quality of relationships, further theological study on relationships is required.

### Leadership and Ethics

Leadership cannot be practiced without ethical considerations, because to lead means to impact people or organizations in a positive way. The ethical dimension of leadership is mostly demonstrated by the character and behavior of leaders and the resulting consequences which followers either embrace or reject, i.e., the ethical or moral

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<sup>108</sup>Bernard M. Bass, *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations* (New York: The Free Press, 1985), 35-118.

<sup>109</sup>Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*, 54.

<sup>110</sup>Dionne and others, “A 25-Year Perspective on Levels of Analysis in Leadership Research,” 18.

<sup>111</sup>See Robert E. Coleman, “Preparing Transformational Leadership the Jesus Way,” *Knowing & Doing* (2008); Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus' Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values & Empowering Change* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991); Ed Stetzer and Thom S. Rainer, *Transformational Church* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2010).

behavior of a leader is largely evaluated in terms of the leverage of self-interest or the interest of others. Thus, the people who impact society in a harmful way are not leaders though they greatly influence people and society. Ethics concerns individuals' virtuousness and motivation. So, ethics works with both what leaders do (behavior) and who leaders are (character).<sup>112</sup>

Every leadership theory contains ethical overtones to a lesser or greater degree. For instance, the trait theory proposes ethical characteristics of exemplary leaders such as integrity, responsibility, persistence, and tolerance. Transactional leadership theories also contain an ethical aspect of leadership although this theory is largely considered to contain ethical egoism because of the self-interest it most often displays<sup>113</sup> Transformational leadership, authentic leadership, and servant leadership have stressed the importance of ethics in leadership. Spiritual leadership has recently been proposed as a response to the quest for ethics in leadership.

Transformational leadership magnifies ethical values over transactional leadership because it does "more with colleagues and followers than set up simple exchanges or agreements."<sup>114</sup> Transformational leadership is identified with two terms, morality and motivation.<sup>115</sup> James MacGregor Burns who coined the term, "transforming leadership,"

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<sup>112</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 378. Northouse summarizes ethical leadership regarding to the six factors of the leader: character, actions, goals, honesty, values, and power. Northouse, *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practice*, 158-170.

<sup>113</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 379.

<sup>114</sup>Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness through Transformational Leadership* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication, Inc., 1994), 3.

<sup>115</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 172, 173, 179.

argues that “transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both the leader and the led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both.”<sup>116</sup> Bass and Avolio explain, “Transformational leaders behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers’ work.”<sup>117</sup> Kouzes and Posner also argue that “when people are part of something that raises them to higher levels of motivation and morality they develop a sense of belonging to something very special. This sense of belonging is particularly key in tumultuous times.”<sup>118</sup>

The four components of transformational leadership—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—infer an ethical concern. Idealized influence asks whether puffery and egoism on the part of the leader predominate and whether he/she is manipulative or not. Inspirational motivation asks whether or not true empowerment and self-actualization is provided to the followers. Intellectual stimulation enquires whether the leader’s program is open to dynamic transcendence and spirituality or is closed propaganda and a “line” to follow. Individualized consideration demands whether followers are treated as ends or means and whether their unique dignity and interests are respected or not.<sup>119</sup> In effect, the foundation of transformational leadership is ethics.

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<sup>116</sup>Burns, *Leadership*, 20.

<sup>117</sup>Bass and Avolio, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness through Transformational Leadership*, 3.

<sup>118</sup>Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 122.

<sup>119</sup>Bernard M. Bass and Paul Steidlmeier, “Ethics, Character, and Authentic Transformational Leadership Behavior,” *Leadership Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1999): 185.

With transformational leadership, authentic leadership theory resurrected the concept of self-leadership regarding the leader's self-knowledge, self-regulation, self-awareness, relational transparency, and the like. It proposed ethical aspects of leadership focused on the leader's character. Underlying both practical and theoretical approaches is the idea that authenticity requires leaders to do what is "right" and "good" for their followers and society. Authentic leaders do not merely understand their own values, but also place their followers' needs above their own, and work with followers to align interests in order to create a greater common good.<sup>120</sup> At the heart of authentic leadership is the concept of ethicality. Ethical values are an integral part of transformational leadership, transcending other aspects of leadership.<sup>121</sup>

Servant Leadership, proposed by Robert Greenleaf, presents its argumentation with strong altruistic ethical overtones.<sup>122</sup> In his book, Greenleaf strongly argues, "leadership was bestowed upon a person who was by nature a servant."<sup>123</sup> His view of a servant-leader is that the person must first be a servant. According to him, someone's ability to lead is demonstrated by his/her disposition to serve.<sup>124</sup> Thus, the characteristics of servant leadership—listening, acceptance, empathy, foresight, awareness, persuasion,

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<sup>120</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 222.

<sup>121</sup>Thomas W. Nichols, "Authentic Transformational Leadership and Implicit Leadership Theories," (PhD dissertation, University of North Texas, 2008) 12-13.

<sup>122</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 384-385.

<sup>123</sup>Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*, 21.

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*, 27.

conceptualizing, healing, stewardship, building community, and commitment to the growth of people—has an ethical connotation in terms of serving others.<sup>125</sup>

Spiritual leadership also displays characteristics of motivational theory.<sup>126</sup> Louis W. Fry defines spiritual leadership as “comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership.”<sup>127</sup> According to Fry, spiritual leadership promises higher organizational commitment and productivity through creating a sense of calling and membership among followers which results from qualities of spiritual leaders such as vision, altruistic love, and hope/faith.<sup>128</sup>

This approach, however, is embedded within pluralistic perspectives in terms of understanding of spirituality and God. Scott Thompson defines spirituality as “a state of

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<sup>125</sup>Larry C. Spears and Michele Lawrence, *Focus on Leadership: Servant-Leadership for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2002), 5-8; Larry C. Spears, “The Understanding and Practice of Servant Leadership,” *Servant Leadership Research Roundtable* (August 2005): 3-4.

<sup>126</sup>To have a comprehensive understanding of this area at a single glance, see Eric B. Dent, M. Eileen Higgins, and Deborah M. Wharff, “Spirituality and Leadership: An Empirical Review of Definitions, Distinctions, and Embedded Assumptions,” *Leadership Quarterly* 16 (2005). See also Sharda S. Nandram and Margot Esther Borden, eds., *Spirituality and Business: Exploring Possibilities for a New Management Paradigm* (New York: Springer, 2010).

<sup>127</sup>Louis W. Fry, “Toward a Theory of Spiritual Leadership,” *Leadership Quarterly* 14 (2003): 694-695.

<sup>128</sup>*Ibid.*, 695, 714. See also Laura Reave, “Spiritual Values and Practices Related to Leadership Effectiveness,” *Leadership Quarterly* 16 (2005); Louis W. Fry, Steve Vitucci, and Marie Cedillo, “Spiritual Leadership and Army Transformation: Theory, Measurement, and Establishing a Baseline,” *Leadership Quarterly* 16 (2005); Chin-Yi Chen and Chun-I Li, “Assessing the Spiritual Leadership Effectiveness: The Contribution of Follower’s Self-Concept and Preliminary Tests for Moderation of Culture and Managerial Position,” *Leadership Quarterly* 24, no. 1 (2013); Louis W. Fry and others, “Impact of Spiritual Leadership on Unit Performance,” *Leadership Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (2011); Robert A. Giacalone and Carole L. Jurkiewicz, eds., *Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Performance*, 2nd ed. (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2010).



mind or consciousness that enables one to perceive deeper levels of experience, meaning, values, and purpose than can be practiced from a strictly materialistic vantage point.”<sup>129</sup>

Spiritual leadership theory sees God as a higher power, not as a personal being, that can be found in every kind of belief system including atheism, humanism, monotheism, and pantheism.<sup>130</sup> Because even “the nature of the theistic God is defined in terms of ethical character, values, and purpose through principles of justice and/or redemptive love,”<sup>131</sup> the unique Christian value system is faced with the danger of syncretism. Spiritual value is largely connected with altruistic attitudes. Fry argues,

the spiritual survival is found in pursuit of a vision of service to others through humility as having the capacity to regard oneself as one, but not more than one: through charity, or altruistic love, as considering one’s neighbor to be as full as you are; and, through veracity, which goes beyond basic truth-telling to having the capacity to see things exactly as they are, freed from subjective distortions.<sup>132</sup>

Although this theory functions to elevate the value of ethics in a holistic way by exalting the spiritual dimension, it sacrifices Christian spirituality in leadership on the altar of pluralism.

As both Northouse and Joanne B. Ciulla indicate, theoretical formulations of ethical issues are still in their infancy and the literature on ethics and leadership is

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<sup>129</sup>Scott Thompson, “Spiritual Leadership: The Invisible Revolution,” in *Spirituality in Educational Leadership*, ed. Paul D. Houston, Alan M. Blankstein, and Robert W. Cole (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2008), 152. To get the wide range definitions of spirituality, see Robert A. Giacalone and Carole L. Jurkiewicz, “The Science of Workplace Spirituality,” in *Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Performance*, ed. Robert A. Giacalone and Carole L. Jurkiewicz (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2010), 7.

<sup>130</sup>Fry, “Toward a Theory of Spiritual Leadership,” 706-707.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., 707.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., 708.

scanty.<sup>133</sup> However, as Dinh *et al.* analyze current leadership theories, ethical/moral leadership theories have in common a core focus on altruistic behaviors. These theories of ethical leadership investigate a leader's moral priorities, including the importance and consequence of ethical leadership.<sup>134</sup> Ethics increasingly capture people's attention due to the current moral collapse of leaders and will most likely remain at the heart of leadership studies. However, because the ethics of the leadership has no absolute foundation or standard, borrowing ideas from Western philosophy or Chinese sages, leadership ethics has the possibility of creating conflict due to cultural differences. Also, due to the fact that most leadership discourses approach this topic from a consideration of visible outcomes such as higher productivity and effectiveness, the danger of manipulating ethics to profit the organization remains a possibility. Therefore, the ethical aspects of leadership have to be reevaluated by the norms of a biblically-shaped Christian worldview. Because unethical leadership is not leadership at all according to the Scripture, the ethical foundation of Christian leadership must be based on the biblical concept of ethics.

### Leadership and Culture

Culture is defined in many different ways. Northouse defines it as “the learned beliefs, values, rules, norms, symbols, and traditions that are common to a group of

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<sup>133</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 377; Joanne B. Ciulla, ed. *Ethics, the Heart of Leadership*, 2nd ed. (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 3.

<sup>134</sup>Dinh and others, “Leadership Theory and Research in the New Millennium: Current Theoretical Trends and Changing Perspectives,” 57.

people.”<sup>135</sup> Edgar H. Schein asserts culture is “the accumulated shared learning of a given group, covering behavioral, emotional, and cognitive elements of the group members’ total psychological functioning.”<sup>136</sup> Similarly, the GLOBE study defines culture as “shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations.”<sup>137</sup> Marshall Sashkin argues, “The values and beliefs shared by people in an organization are the essence of that organization’s culture.”<sup>138</sup> Considering these definitions, this section examines culture in leadership issues in two parts: (1) culture in a group or an organization and (2) relationships between different groups whether multicultural or diverse within a group or organization.

First, Schein defines the culture of a group “as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.”<sup>139</sup> Because culture in a group can be shaped by the learning

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<sup>135</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 336.

<sup>136</sup>Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 17.

<sup>137</sup>Peter W. Dorfman and Robert J. House, “Cultural Influences on Organizational Leadership: Literature Review, Theoretical Rationale, and Globe Project Goals,” in *Culture, Leadership and Organizations: The Globe Study of 62 Societies*, ed. Robert J. House et al. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2004), 15, 57.

<sup>138</sup>Marshall Sashkin, “Leadership,” in *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, ed. William E. Rosenbach, Robert L. Taylor, and Mark A Youndt (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012), 12.

<sup>139</sup>Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 17.

process, Cynthia D. McCauley, Ellen Van Velsor, and Marian N. Ruderman argue that leadership as a collective phenomenon considers the leadership culture as the target for leadership development. The goal of leadership development is to increase the degree of the collective culture. A certain culture encourages individuals to participate effectively in their leadership practices and vice versa.<sup>140</sup>

Schein posits, the “dynamic processes of culture creation and management are the essence of leadership” and “leadership and culture are two sides of the same coin.”<sup>141</sup> He distinguishes leadership from management or administration by pointing out that “leadership creates and changes cultures, while management and administration act within a culture.”<sup>142</sup> In this regard, situational contingency theories acquire importance in leadership discourses. The three factors of situations—leader-member relations, task structure, and position power—reflect organizational culture.<sup>143</sup> A leader’s effectiveness is related to a clearly identified culture, and successful leaders must be able to know the organizational culture and adapt their behavior to meet the needs of followers and a particular situation. Apart from the contingency theory, a considerable number of authors focus on theoretical and practical discourses to create organizational culture.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup>Cynthia D. McCauley, Ellen Van Velsor, and Marian N. Ruderman, “Introduction: Our View of Leadership Development,” in *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development*, ed. Ellen Van Velsor, Cynthia D. McCauley, and Marian N. Ruderman (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 23-24.

<sup>141</sup>Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 1, 10.

<sup>142</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>143</sup>Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 112-113.

<sup>144</sup>Daniel Denison and others, *Leading Culture Change in Global Organizations: Aligning Culture and Strategy* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012); Alzira Salama, *Creating and Re-Creating Corporate Entrepreneurial Culture* (Surrey, England: Gower, 2011); Martin Parker,

Second, with globalization, organizations confront the need to have cross-cultural perspectives in which leaders increase cultural sensitivity and adopt multicultural perspectives, and react against ethnocentrism or cultural prejudice everyone holds to some degree. To cross cultural barriers, leaders first have to understand their own cultural biases and preferences and at the same time define cultural differences of another culture as well as the values they are seeking to employ.

The GLOBE studies performed extensive research to define leadership preferences from 62 countries within 10 country clusters. The results show each regional cluster has a different perception about leadership in terms of levels of nine cultural dimensions—assertiveness orientation, future orientation, gender egalitarianism, humane orientation, in-group collectivism, institutional collectivism, performance orientation, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance. For example, Confucian Asia—Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, China, and Japan—exhibited high scores in performance orientation, institutional collectivism, and in-group collectivism, while the Anglo cluster—Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, United States—were high in performance orientation and low in in-group collectivism.<sup>145</sup> These results suggest that different cultures have different ideas of leadership and that leaders need to adapt their leadership style to be more effective in different cultural settings.

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*Organizational Culture and Identity* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2000); Howard W. Oden, *Managing Corporate Culture, Innovation, and Intrapreneurship* (Westport, CT: Quorum Books, 1997).

<sup>145</sup>Vipin Gupta and Paul J. Hanges, “Regional and Climate Clustering of Societal Cultures,” in *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The Globe Study of 62 Societies*, ed. Robert J. House et al. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2004), 193.

The GLOBE quantitative survey also affirms universal attributes of leadership across cultures. It is noticeable that both positive and negative attributes relate to ethical attitudes of leaders. Positive attributes such as being trustworthy, just, honest, encouraging, motive arouser, communicative, and team builder, assert strong ethical leadership, while negative attributes such as asocial, non-cooperative, irritable, egocentric, ruthless, and dictatorial reflect lack of consideration of others or the common good.<sup>146</sup> Nevertheless, these attributes can be interpreted only from a relative viewpoint because the emphasis is on cultural differences. Therefore, the effort to define common foundations of cultural leadership is definitely necessary.

### Leadership and Worldview

To fulfill the purpose of this study it is necessary to understand worldview issues in relation to leadership is because a leader's belief systems as the foundation of culture impact attitudes and behaviors. Though the term, "worldview," is not commonly used in leadership discourse and only a few researchers focus on worldview and leadership, the connotation of worldview occurs with different terminologies such as belief system, basic assumption, paradigm, or philosophies like materialism, utilitarianism, or constructivism.

Spiritual leadership is unavoidably determined by the leader's religious or philosophical assumptions. McGregor's Theories X and Y develop their assertion based on the beliefs about human nature. The belief about the motivation of employees operates

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<sup>146</sup>Peter W. Dorfman, Paul J. Hanges, and Felix C. Brodbeck, "Leadership and Cultural Variation: The Identification of Culturally Endorsed Leadership Profiles," in *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The Globe Study of 62 Societies*, ed. Robert J. House et al. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2004), 677-678.

to determine either Theory X or Theory Y. Therefore, Theory X and Theory Y are embedded in a certain worldview.<sup>147</sup> Meanwhile, “transactional leadership models are grounded in a worldview of self-interest.”<sup>148</sup> As Rost asserts, many leadership theories have been developed from the industrial paradigm. Bass and Steidlmeier argue the importance of worldview in the moral aspects of leadership. For them, “the pivotal issue in making moral judgments is the legitimacy of the grounding worldview and beliefs that grounds a set of moral values and criteria. Depending upon such worldview and beliefs, a religious leader may morally justify a holy war and a Marxist may justify class warfare and dictatorship of the proletariat.”<sup>149</sup>

In fact, it is impossible to think about leadership without an underlying worldview. The worldview of leaders determines their behavior. Therefore, the effort to define the worldview of leaders or society has to be a primary task before attempting any course of action. Also, every theory of leadership has to be examined through its worldview framework to evaluate its validity and relevance and how it adjusts its presupposition to different cultural contexts. However, insufficient systematic studies on leadership theories based on worldview analysis exist so the study of worldview on the practice of leadership needs further study.

Based on my examination, the focus on the impact of worldview on leadership will enhance cross-cultural leadership. For instance, Mark Kriger and Yvonne Seng

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<sup>147</sup>Dent, Higgins, and Wharff, “Spirituality and Leadership: An Empirical Review of Definitions, Distinctions, and Embedded Assumptions,” 642.

<sup>148</sup>Bass and Steidlmeier, “Ethics, Character, and Authentic Transformational Leadership Behavior,” 185.

<sup>149</sup>*Ibid.*, 182.

attempt to derive an integrated contingency theory of leadership by extracting common spiritual values from five major religious traditions: Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Islamic spirituality is treated in parallel with Christian and Hindu spirituality. Consequently, the authors present a non-dual worldview in these five religions. They argue,

Within all of the preceding spiritual sources there is an underlying non-dual orientation and belief that a human being can reach Self-realization, a state of non-separation with the Ultimate Truth or God. In this state, it is posited by all five spiritual traditions that the experience of separation can diminish, or even dissolve, through spiritual contemplation, prayer, and meditation.<sup>150</sup>

It is fine to find common factors across cultures and religions, but syncretism, which mixes Christian beliefs and secular principles and by so doing blurs the uniqueness of Christian leadership principles is one of the most serious concerns among Christian missionaries. In attempting to derive general principles from different worldviews, Christian mission practitioners need to clearly define a biblically-shaped worldview, separating it from secular worldviews and keeping its core and unique values of Christian beliefs separate from syncretic influences. Therefore, this study purposes to develop missional leadership principles from a biblically-shaped worldview.

### **Major Topics of Christian Leadership**

Volker Kessler indicates two pitfalls in using non-Christian leadership theories to address biblical leadership. The first pitfall is the attitude representing Niebuhr's types of 'Christ against Culture' which totally rejects secular theories. The second pitfall is in the

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<sup>150</sup>Mark Kriger and Yvonne Seng, "Leadership with Inner Meaning: A Contingency Theory of Leadership Based on the Worldviews of Five Religions," *Leadership Quarterly* 16 (2005): 796.



attempt to accept, assimilate, and finally standardize a secular model of leadership as compatible with a biblical model of leadership. His position is that we should neither separate biblical principles from secular knowledge nor affirm any form of secular leadership as part of a biblical model. Because the Bible is not a handbook on leadership, “leaders should check which leadership models are applicable within the Biblical framework (theology, Christology, pneumatology, anthropology, and ecclesiology) and can be of help in the context of church leadership.”<sup>151</sup> Considering Kessler’s argument, this section explores Christian leadership literature to highlight common arguments shared with secular leadership theories. The uniqueness of Christian leadership will also be defined under the following subtitles: goals, definition, leader and follower relationship, ethics, culture, and worldview.

### Goals of Christian Leadership

From the very beginning of the Early Church, Christian leadership has been practiced in an effort to spread the gospel across the world. In the process, the Church has engaged in ministries of choosing, training, and sending missionaries in order to plant the seed of the gospel. Because the Church exists with and for people, the range of Christian leadership, therefore, reaches from the personal roles of leaders and followers to ministerial activities such as evangelism, discipleship, mentorship, empowerment, administration, and church planting. In a nutshell, the church itself is an entity of

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<sup>151</sup>Volker Kessler, “Pitfalls in 'Biblical' Leadership,” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 34, no. 1 (2013): 6.

leadership practice because “pastoring a church is a leadership-intensive enterprise.”<sup>152</sup> Christian leadership influences every aspect of the church’s activities. Furthermore, Christian leadership often borrows relevant methodologies and theories from secular leadership; no clear boundary exists between them, and thus the need to define Christian leadership.

What is the goal of Christian leadership? One may perceive the goal of Christian leadership in at least three ways. First, if a person perceives gaining people or saving souls as the goal of Christian leadership (evangelism), then the function of Christian leadership could be mostly attached to the role of providing methods and encouraging a soul winning environment. However, if one believes the goal is to transform people into Christ-like character (transformation), then the role of leadership is to make people depend on the work of the Holy Spirit within and to show an exemplary model of the Christian life.<sup>153</sup> Third, if one considers both evangelism and transforming people as the goal of Christian leadership, then both internal and external efforts should be taken into consideration in the leadership practices.

Some literature reflects a pragmatic approach to leadership in tune with the industrial paradigm presented by Rost.<sup>154</sup> A polemic between Church Marketing proponents, who employ organizational management strategies, and opponents who call attention to this trend is one of the typical examples of the debate regarding the goal of

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<sup>152</sup>Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21st-Century Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 8.

<sup>153</sup>Regarding to transformation as the goal of leaders’ influence, see Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 114-117.

<sup>154</sup>Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, 180.

Christian leadership. Church Marketing proponents propose that churches today have to consider a more realistic and pragmatic way of doing church to satisfy their constituents. They argue that marketing concepts help to identify and satisfy the needs and wants of a specific group which an organization is trying to attract. Allegedly, a marketing orientation helps churches to clearly identify target people they wish to attract. Also, a marketing-oriented church is able to be more in touch with its environment and to address specific problems, issues, or opportunities within the community it serves.<sup>155</sup>

Philip D. Kenneson and James L. Street, however, react to Church Marketing strategies by exposing the potential dangers of distorting the identity, character, and mission of the church. They view this movement as a transactional approach that can be “an exchange between human beings and God that is rooted in the satisfaction of our untrained needs.”<sup>156</sup> Also, “Christianity is meaningful just to the extent that what Christians believe depends for its intelligibility on satisfying or resolving some account of the human condition.”<sup>157</sup> They outline twelve kinds of churches as follows: the entrepreneurial church, the instrumentalist church, the relevant church, the self-interested church, the full-service church, the therapeutic church, the forgetful church, the

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<sup>155</sup>John J. Considine, *Marketing Your Church: Concepts and Strategies* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1995), 8. See other insists of proponents of Church Marketing in Yvon Prehn, *Ministry Marketing Made Easy: A Practical Guide to Marketing Your Church Message* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2004); Richard L. Reising, *Churchmarketing 101: Preparing Your Church for Greater Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006).

<sup>156</sup>Philip D. Kenneson and James L. Street, *Selling out the Church: The Dangers of Church Marketing* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997), 12.

<sup>157</sup>*Ibid.*, 13.

ephemeral church, the engineered church, the pragmatic church, and the Christendom church.<sup>158</sup>

A practical approach itself is not wrong at all. Since the emergence of William Carey's 87-page "Enquiry" in 1792,<sup>159</sup> more systematic and scientific ways of developing mission strategies have been initiated and used. The core issue in Christian leadership is differentiating between the primary task and secondary ones. The core foundation of leadership has to be rooted in the theology of *missio Dei*. "Mission is God's prerogative and undertaking."<sup>160</sup> Therefore, Christian leadership has to begin with God and expand to people and organizations or a group of people. In this regard, the goal of Christian leadership is not merely a means of gaining people, rather it is a process of partaking in the mission of God. Because the goal of missional leadership is not merely an entrepreneurial practice, any missional leadership style should be judged based on the degree it agrees with a biblically-shaped worldview. The goal must reflect God's intention and purpose in the *missio Dei*.

#### Definition of Christian Leadership

Currently, no solid definition of Christian leadership exists with universal acceptance. Many definitions of Christian leadership borrow ideas from secular leadership "a little here, a little there" (Isa 28:10). Most literature on Christian leadership

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<sup>158</sup>Ibid., 17-22.

<sup>159</sup>William Carey, "An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens," in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 312-318.

<sup>160</sup>Ott, Strauss, and Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission*, 75.

has also copied secular leadership theories such as servant leadership, transforming leadership, and spiritual leadership. Consequently, as one reads Christian leadership literature, it often appears just like business models with no emphasis on core Christian values.

Thomas O. Scarborough attempts a definition of Christian leadership by extensively examining Christian leadership literature. First of all, he selected twenty-three Christian leadership books written by forty-six authors from the top 100 books in Amazon Books and found only thirteen definitions in them. However, only two of the thirteen books contain Christian norms. The others merely reflected secular leadership definitions.<sup>161</sup> One was Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby's definition of spiritual leadership as "moving people on to God's agenda."<sup>162</sup> The other was J. Robert Clinton's definition of leadership as "a dynamic process in which a man or woman with God-given capacity influences a specific group of God's people toward His purposes for the group."<sup>163</sup> After showing the lack of a proper definition of Christian leadership, Scarborough proposes a definition of Christian Transformational Leadership with seven characteristics—Christian, influence, persuasiveness, strategy, shared goals, character, and vision—revealed in Christian leadership literatures. He argues, "Christian Transformational Leadership is leadership which declares a Biblical or Christian

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<sup>161</sup>Thomas O. Scarborough, "Defining Christian Transformational Leadership," *Conspectus* 10 (2010): 67-68.

<sup>162</sup>Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 20.

<sup>163</sup>J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988), 14.

foundation, or is specifically directed to the Church. It holds that a leader’s vision, character, persuasiveness, and ability to strategize guarantee that he or she will be influential (or transformational) to achieve shared goals.”<sup>164</sup> Scarborough’s definition is a good attempt, but it still lacks many core elements of Christian leadership values such as spirituality and character.

Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini define a Christian leader as “a servant who uses his or her credibility and capabilities to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction.”<sup>165</sup> In this definition they emphasize six characteristics—servant, credibility, capabilities, influence, context, and impact on followers.<sup>166</sup> Malphurs further defines Christian leaders as “godly persons (character) who know where they are going (direction) and have followers (influence).”<sup>167</sup> Malphurs emphasizes the leader’s character, vision (direction), and influence. Though these definitions are simple and precise, they are similar to secular leadership definitions and only add the expressions of “God-given direction” or “godly persons.” Malphurs, in his book *Being Leaders*, successfully conveys the distinctiveness of Christian leadership with eight core characteristics of Christian leaders:

- (1) A Christian leader is a Christian.

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<sup>164</sup>Scarborough, “Defining Christian Transformational Leadership,” 77-78.

<sup>165</sup>Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for Developing Leadership at Every Level of Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), 20. See also Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 10.

<sup>166</sup>Malphurs and Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for Developing Leadership at Every Level of Your Church*, 20-23.

<sup>167</sup>Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), 97.

- (2) A Christian leader is a committed Christ-follower.
- (3) A Christian leader's source of truth is divine revelation.
- (4) A Christian leader emphasizes godly character.
- (5) A Christian leader understands the importance of motives.
- (6) A Christian leader serves through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- (7) A Christian leader practices godly servant leadership.
- (8) A Christian leader may have the gift of leadership.<sup>168</sup>

Malphurs touches core aspects of Christian leadership showing the power of the Holy Spirit, the concept of spiritual gifting, godly character, and motivational value. He thus defines Christian leadership as “the process whereby servants use their credibility and capability to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction.”<sup>169</sup>

Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby also offer a relevant definition of Christian leadership by stating, “Spiritual leadership is moving people on to God's agenda.”<sup>170</sup> They emphasize five elements of spiritual or Christian leadership:

- (1) The spiritual leader's task is to move people from where they are to where God wants them to be.
- (2) Spiritual leaders depend on the Holy Spirit.
- (3) Spiritual leaders are accountable to God.

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<sup>168</sup>Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 14-22.

<sup>169</sup>*Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>170</sup>Henry T. Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: The Interactive Study* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 20.

(4) Spiritual leaders can influence all people, not just God's people.

(5) Spiritual leaders work from God's agenda.<sup>171</sup>

This definition, in harmony with Malphurs' definition, emphasizes the unique aspect of Christian leadership focusing on God's prerogative or initiative. They stress, "Leaders seek to move people on to God's agenda, but all the while they are aware that only the Holy Spirit can ultimately accomplish the task."<sup>172</sup>

The crux of Christian missional leadership is to admit the initiative of the Holy Spirit who inspires, guides, transforms, and finally leads people. The task of defining Christian leadership in terms of the unique aspects of Christian values is necessary and essential for keeping and applying Christian values of leadership. I define Christian missional leadership as the process of influence to expand the kingdom of God cross-culturally by leaders who welcome the prerogatives of the Holy Spirit, reflect a Christ-like character, and join the *missio Dei* to give glory to the Trinity God.

#### Christian Leaders and Followers

In many ways Christian leadership discourses share the same ideas with secular leadership theories. Christian leadership literature often uses the same terminologies used by secular leadership, so sometimes it is impossible to know who developed a certain

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<sup>171</sup>Ibid., 20-23.

<sup>172</sup>Ibid., 21.



idea. The most typical examples are servant leadership,<sup>173</sup> transformational leadership,<sup>174</sup> and spiritual leadership.<sup>175</sup> In spite of the fact that much of the literature reflects secular leadership connotations, Christian leadership definitely has different concepts and understanding of leadership.

One of the distinctive characteristics of Christian leadership regarding relationships between leaders and followers is an emphasis on leader-centric leadership styles. C. Peter Wagner suggests that church planting pastors have to be more equippers than enablers. In his definition an equipper is “a leader who actively sets goals for a congregation according to the will of God, obtains goal ownership from the people, and sees that each church member is properly motivated and equipped to do his or her part in accomplishing the goals.”<sup>176</sup> His pastor-initiative model is similar to Elmer Towns’ position of pastor-led churches. Towns argues that “committee-run churches (those

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<sup>173</sup>See Loren Kekes Poli, “Cross-Cultural Servant-Leadership for the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Papua New Guinea,” (D.Min. dissertation, Andrews University, 2012); Youngsoo Chung, “Toward a Paradigm of Servant Leadership for Seventh-Day Adventist Ministers in Korea,” (D.Min. dissertation, Andrews University, 2004); James C. Hunter, *The World's Most Powerful Leadership Principle: How to Become a Servant Leader* (New York: Crown Business, 2004); James R. Hawkinson and Robert K. Johnston, eds., *Servant Leadership: Authority and Governance in the Evangelical Covenant Church*, vol. one (Chicago, IL: Covenant Publications, 1993).

<sup>174</sup>Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus’ Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values & Empowering Change*; Noelle F. Scouderi, “Servant Leadership and Transformational Leadership in Church Organizations,” (PhD dissertation, The George Washington University, 2010).

<sup>175</sup>Blackaby and Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: The Interactive Study*; Blackaby and Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda*; John Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1967).

<sup>176</sup>C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 131-132.

controlled by the deacons) rarely experience the growth of pastor-led churches.”<sup>177</sup> This leader-centric emphasis is frequently found in recent literature. Malphurs asserts that “a strong leader” model is biblical and fits the church planters’ leadership style. Using the functional subordination of women to men (1 Cor. 11:3) and of Christ to God (1 Cor. 11:3), he asks a question concerning the co-leadership concept.<sup>178</sup> “Co-leadership isn’t characteristic of biblical leadership and most commonly results in no leadership” and, “co-leadership is probably the reason why these churches are small and aren’t growing.”<sup>179</sup>

Though both Wagner and Malphurs use the terms “servant leadership” and “servant-leader,”<sup>180</sup> their notion of a servant-leader emphasizes the leader-first model in contrast with Greenleaf’s “servant-first” leadership model. Malphurs asserts that Jesus “proved to be both a strong leader and a servant-leader. No one would question the fact that he was in charge. His entire ministry was characterized by a personal, spiritual strength. Yet the Savior also displayed a servant’s heart.”<sup>181</sup> Thus, Scarborough points out that “most Christian Transformational leadership authors emphasize the one-way

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<sup>177</sup>Elmer Towns, *Getting a Church to Growth* (Lynchburg, VA: Church Growth Institute, 1985), 123-124.

<sup>178</sup>Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century*, 104-105.

<sup>179</sup>*Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>180</sup>Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*, 132; Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century*, 113.

<sup>181</sup>Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century*, 113.

influence of a leader on followers.”<sup>182</sup> The consequence of emphasizing leader-centric approaches leads to a recapitulation of trait theories.<sup>183</sup>

Nonetheless, strong voices emphasize sharing team leadership in Christian leadership literature.<sup>184</sup> When churches grow and settle down they give much more emphasis on organizational equilibrium with co-leadership values. However, when churches recover mission-oriented perspectives they emphasize leader-centric leadership.<sup>185</sup> Consequently, mission-oriented churches naturally pursue trait approaches.

Here are a few examples. Allan Hirsch and Tim Catchim propose missional entrepreneurialism as *the* way of church leadership. Identifying apostles as dynamic entrepreneurs by nature, Hirsch and Catchim articulate a number of essential characteristics of Apostolic or missional leaders who are indomitable pioneers in missional vocation. Missional entrepreneurial people are characterized by an internal freedom to explore, a sense of holy dissatisfaction, a capacity for ideation, an ability to

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<sup>182</sup>Scarborough, “Defining Christian Transformational Leadership,” 73.

<sup>183</sup>Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 87-89.

<sup>184</sup>Robert D. Dale, “Leadership-Followership: The Church’s Challenge,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 29, no. 2 (Spring, 1987). Dale examines values of both leadership and followership through the case of Twelve Apostles’ interrelationship with Jesus. He argues that all Christians as leading followers need to share both leadership and followership opportunities and responsibilities simultaneously. See also Malphurs’ “Building a Ministry Team” in Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21st-Century Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, 209-235.

<sup>185</sup>See Malphurs’ discussion on centralized or decentralized ministry structures. Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 112-114.

take on risk, a willingness to give people permission to experiment, a high risk-taking intensity, and dogged resiliency.<sup>186</sup>

Stephen Gray and Trent Short emphasize thirteen essential characteristics of church planters: visionary capacity, intrinsically motivated, creates ownership of ministry, relates to the unchurched, spousal cooperation, effectively builds relationship, committed to church growth, responsive to community, utilizes giftedness of others, flexible and adaptable, builds group cohesiveness, resilience, and exercises faith.<sup>187</sup>

Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, in their book *The Missional Leader*, suggest a few characteristics of the missional leader including personal maturity, authenticity, self-awareness, conflict management, personal courage, and trustworthiness or trusting.<sup>188</sup> Malphurs introduces the characteristics of “turnaround pastors” who are appropriate for Church Planting. Turnaround pastors are clear, passionate vision casters with clarity and passion. They are outgoing, innovative, energetic, focused, and skilled at conflict resolution and communication.<sup>189</sup>

In this regard, the literature about church planting and mission-oriented churches mostly follows the trait approach. Though lay leadership as followership is crucial in

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<sup>186</sup>Alan Hirsch and Tim Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution: Apostolic Imagination and Practice for the 21st Century Church* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 162-170.

<sup>187</sup>Stephen Gray and Trend Short, *Planting Fast-Growing Churches* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2007), 58-59. See Charles Ridley, *The Church Planter's Assessment Guide* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2002), 1-32.

<sup>188</sup>Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 125-141.

<sup>189</sup>Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A 21st-Century Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, 25.

Christian leadership discourse, in many cases the main focus is placed on leaders. Such leader-centered leadership often causes authority or power issues. A leader who has authority and power will often fail if he or she minimizes the influence of the Holy Spirit who is the real initiator of Christian leadership. This leader-centric approach also needs a solid ethical foundation. The missional leaders should align their leadership attitudes with Jesus' exemplary leadership. Although Jesus as the leader came to save people, He voluntarily subordinated Himself to God the Father and empowered His disciples as a team. Particularly, the book of Revelation projects the Lamb as the prototype of a missional leader who leads the 144,000 (Rev 7:17; 14:1). One of the purposes of this study is to discover the importance relations in Christian missional leadership.

### Christian Leadership and Ethics

Christian leadership is not immune from ethical challenges. Christian leaders also struggle with ethical issues because Christianity calls for the highest standard of morality and genuine motivation. Morality and ethics are not synonymous. Morality concerns the concrete manner in which people act and order their lives, while ethics refers to articulating the explanations and justifications of why and how people do what they do.<sup>190</sup> However, in most Christian leadership literature both morality and ethics are used interchangeably.<sup>191</sup> Thus, this section examines ethical issues including personal morality, relational ethics between leaders and followers, and finally motivational issues.

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<sup>190</sup>M. Daniel Carroll R., "Ethics," *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions* (2000), 319.

<sup>191</sup>See the titles of following books. Joe E. Trull and James E. Carter, *Ministerial Ethics: Moral Formation for Church Leaders*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004); Kyle D.

Ethics in Christian leadership is mostly related to personal character. The character of a leader is the foundation of Christian leadership. Trull and Carter assert, “Character is basic to all ethical decisions. Who you are determines what you do.”<sup>192</sup> Malphurs also argues that a “godly character is the essential ingredient that qualifies Christians to lead others.”<sup>193</sup> A leader’s credibility, whether Christian or not, mostly rests on his or her character. Although competence, clarity of direction, communication, conviction, courage, care, and composure contribute to build a leader’s credibility, the foundation of a Christian leader’s credibility is a godly character.<sup>194</sup> Therefore, as Kenman L. Wong and Scott B. Rae argue, “From a Christian perspective ethics is grounded in God’s character, expressed in his commands and enabled by his Spirit.”<sup>195</sup> Because the Holy Spirit is the enabler, a Christian leader’s character depends on his/her surrender to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Ethics has a relational connotation. Good relationships between ministers and congregations and also between members are essential in Christian ethics.<sup>196</sup> For Wong and Rae, good ethics is more important than profit generated by a business. Christian business ethics considers trust as the engine of the economic system rather than greed

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Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics: Biblical Foundations for Morality* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006).

<sup>192</sup>Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics: Moral Formation for Church Leaders*, 47.

<sup>193</sup>Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 19.

<sup>194</sup>Ibid., 56-57.

<sup>195</sup>Kenman L. Wong and Scott B. Rae, *Business for the Common Good: A Christian Vision for the Marketplace* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 188.

<sup>196</sup>Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics: Moral Formation for Church Leaders*, 89-90.

(self-interest).<sup>197</sup> Christian ethics requires leaders to pursue the highest standard of ethics for the common good. One of the sensitive issues regarding the relationship between leaders and followers is power and authority. Power or authority itself is neutral and amoral in that it is neither good nor evil. What makes it good or evil depends on the one exercising it.<sup>198</sup>

Trull and Carter perceive four models of how power is used in ministerial leadership: a CEO model, a political dictator model, a hired-hand model, and a servant model. In the CEO model, the leader holds active ownership and directs the ministry by command rather than by cooperation with the congregants. The political dictator model for ministry is characterized by the term *authoritative*. This type of leader makes his/her desires known to the congregation presuming his/her desire reflects the will of God. The hired-hand model for ministry is best described as being *passive*, that is, leaders simply do what they are told and go where directed. The servant model is described by the word *responsive*. This type of leader responds to the needs of the people, the directives of God, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>199</sup>

A danger associated with Christian leadership sometimes comes from the leaders' strong charisma. This may contribute to their becoming authoritarian. Walter E. Wiest and Elwyn A. Smith argue that "the authoritarian minister fits the model of business that

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<sup>197</sup>Wong and Rae, *Business for the Common Good: A Christian Vision for the Marketplace*, 170-175.

<sup>198</sup>Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 104.

<sup>199</sup>Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics: Moral Formation for Church Leaders*, 90-92.

allows a strong and able person to run the show.”<sup>200</sup> According to Trull and Carter, this authoritarian type of leadership reflects the political dictator model for ministry. Such leaders are diligent and their agenda is genuine. Consequently, they make things happen. However, they are not ethical because they downplay the value of good interpersonal relationships. By their passion, they may kill the essence of Christian virtue and destroy their followers’ motivation.

Power and authority can be deceitfully practiced when a leader manipulates people. According to Wiest and Smith,

All manipulation is wrong because it uses and demeans persons. The most radical doctrine of sin should never obscure the basic Christian affirmation of the intrinsic worth of persons and of God’s purpose to restore them to the “glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. 8:21), not to dependence of the clergy. The redemptive process is hindered when the manipulative pastor intrudes.<sup>201</sup>

A tragedy of Christian leadership comes from non-ethical or non-cooperative leaders. Though a leader can propose a goal to followers, the leader must attain the followers’ cooperation and it must come from a willing and volunteer spirit. All Christian leaders have to remember, “Leaders are followers.”<sup>202</sup>

Malphurs uses three metaphors (shepherd, harvester, and apostle) to define Christian authority. All shepherds, harvesters, and apostles are also under authority.<sup>203</sup> As

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<sup>200</sup>Walter E. Wiest and Elwyn A. Smith, *Ethics in Ministry: A Guide for the Professional* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 86.

<sup>201</sup>Ibid., 90.

<sup>202</sup>Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 120.

<sup>203</sup>Malphurs and Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for Developing Leadership at Every Level of Your Church*, 85.



Wiest and Smith argue, “ethical integrity rests on a theologically sound and workable solution to the dichotomies of authority and service, of confidence and humility, of the strong selfhood of the prophet and the self-effacement of one called to serve others.”<sup>204</sup> Thus, only leader who acknowledges he or she is a follower of God is qualified to contribute to the building of God’s kingdom.

Christian ethics is also concerned about how people are motivated to follow. Because Christian leadership purposes to lead people in a certain direction, it causes tension between leaders and followers in terms of methodology. For instance, when motivational methods are based on getting rewards or on how to avoid punishment, it destroys the volunteer spirit and finally damages Christianity itself.<sup>205</sup> Christian leaders should motivate people by satisfying their needs and helping them to grow spiritually.<sup>206</sup> Christian leaders also should motivate people ethically, and not by manipulating people’s needs as the means of securing their loyalty.

Fedler presents five ethical principles in dealing with motivational issues. First, ethical egoism says that decisions should be based on people’s own benefit. However, “ethical egoism is the antithesis of a biblically formed moral life.”<sup>207</sup> Second,

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<sup>204</sup>Wiest and Smith, *Ethics in Ministry: A Guide for the Professional*, 57. See more argumentation on the ways of practicing pastor’s authority from this book under the title “Practicing the Pastor’s Authority.” The authors present various facets of false exercise of pastor’s authority including adulation and the personality cult, the pastor as dictator-controller, the pastor as factotum, the pastor as manipulator, and the watching brief. Ibid., 83-93.

<sup>205</sup>Robert D. Dale, *Pastoral Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986), 149-150.

<sup>206</sup>Ibid., 151.

<sup>207</sup>Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics: Biblical Foundations for Morality*, 15.

“*psychological egoism* says that people always act out of some degree of self-interest. . . . It simply *describes* the way people act; it does not say that people are *ought* to act in their own self-interest” (emphasis in original).<sup>208</sup> This view still focuses on self-interest. Third, “deontologists tend to focus on the nature of the act, claiming that certain acts, because of their inherent quality, are moral or immoral (or at least carry some moral weight). They therefore stress the importance of rules, because rules capture the ethical qualities of certain actions.”<sup>209</sup> Although “Rules have always played an important part in Christian morality, . . . There is a danger of following rules so slavishly that we lose sight of relationships that the rules are designed to foster.”<sup>210</sup> Fourth, “*consequentialism* argues that the consequences of an action should determine its morality.”<sup>211</sup> “The main type of consequentialism is called *utilitarianism*.”<sup>212</sup> Though it contains several strengths, Christians recognize a more comprehensive understanding of ethics beyond mere human action and consequences. Fedler finally proposes a virtue theory that focuses on the agent performing the action. The characteristics of virtue ethics are as follows:

(1) Virtue ethics shifts the focus from particular, discrete actions to the person who is performing the action.

(2) Virtue ethics places actions within the history of the person.

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<sup>208</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>209</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>210</sup>Ibid.

<sup>211</sup>Ibid., 18.

<sup>212</sup>Ibid., 27.

- (3) For virtue ethicists, acts reflect both who they are and determine who they are.
- (4) Virtue ethics focuses on motivation and intention.<sup>213</sup>

Fedler further presents the core of Christian ethics by emphasizing Christian virtues or characters such as humility, forgiveness, patience, hope, courage, generosity, sympathy, love, truthfulness, gentleness, kindness, self-control, joy, and so on.<sup>214</sup> Therefore, Christian leadership necessarily takes into account the value of leaders' and followers' traits and characters as the core ethical components of human beings. Also, Christian ethics place a strong emphasis on the motivation of leader and follower. In this regard, achieving goals without violating personal freewill is dear to Christian leadership. These ethical issues—cooperation, motivation, free will, character, and morality—are all crucial topics in the book of Revelation. The book of Revelation promises, “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near” (Rev 1:3).

### Christian Leadership and Culture

Malphurs deals with congregational culture in his book *Look before You Lead: How to Discern & Shape Your Church Culture*. He argues that “to effectively minister to people in a culture . . . we must understand culture in general and organizational culture in particular,”<sup>215</sup> that is, “the better a pastor knows his church’s culture, the better he’ll be

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<sup>213</sup>Ibid., 35-40.

<sup>214</sup>Ibid., 43-47.

<sup>215</sup>Aubrey Malphurs, *Look before You Lead: How to Discern & Shape Your Church Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 13.

able to lead his church.”<sup>216</sup> He defines congregational culture as “the unique expression of the interaction of the church’s shared beliefs and its values, which explain its behavior in general and display its unique identity in particular.”<sup>217</sup> In his definition, Malphurs underscores three elements—beliefs, values, and behavior—which displays the uniqueness of a church. His understanding of culture is in tandem with the missiological definitions of culture including the concept of worldview as the core assumptions of culture.<sup>218</sup> Also, he presents contextualization as the proper reaction to a specific congregational culture.<sup>219</sup> Malphurs argues that we need “to express the gospel in ways and forms that our focus group—unreached, lost North Americans, Asians, Javanese, and others—can understand.”<sup>220</sup> His argumentation is that every church leader has to be a transformer of culture in different situations. According to his categorization, a church planter has to be a cultural architect to create a new church culture. Some church pastors are like culture sculptors in molding their churches and other pastors are like culture blenders in merging multiple churches to form a new culture. In his perspective, the term culture is interchangeably used with situation, setting, environment, climate, or context. The urgent need of leaders is to know their leadership context, including their church’s doctrinal beliefs, core ministry values, style of leadership, capabilities, theology and

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<sup>216</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>217</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>218</sup>Ibid., 63-64.

<sup>219</sup>Ibid., 71.

<sup>220</sup>Ibid., 74.

philosophy of ministry, actual ministry circumstances, level of trust, power structure, demographics and psychographics.<sup>221</sup> In addition, the ultimate responsibility of leaders is to adjust and change the unique situation of the ministerial context. Malphurs presents cultural transformation as the crux of Christian leadership.

Some authors emphasize a situational leadership style as the solution to the need to deal with congregational contexts. Dale classifies pastoral leadership into four types—Catalyst, Commander, Encourager, and Hermit—depending on whether the focus is on tasks or people. The Catalyst, who has balance between task and people, is the exemplary leader, while the Hermit leader withdraws from people and abandons taking any organizational initiative. Encouragers emphasize personal relationships more than organizational goals, while Commanders impose their own goals on the congregation and expect others to follow. Dale suggests that the styles of leadership need to be practiced based on specific situations but also should be blended for specific purposes.<sup>222</sup>

Craig Ott and Gene Wilson assert that there are three types of church planters appropriate to different situations. First, the pastoral church planter, as the most typical model, tends to shift his or her role from the church planter to pastoral care once a core group of believers has been gathered. Second, the catalytic church planter plants a church and becomes the catalyst for mothering other churches and launching a movement. Third, the apostolic church planter seeks to follow the model of the apostle Paul who never became the pastor of a church he planted, but rather focused his attention on empowering

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<sup>221</sup>Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 137-144.

<sup>222</sup>Dale, *Pastoral Leadership*, 40-53.

local believers to carry on and expand the work after his departure.<sup>223</sup> After describing each model, Ott and Wilson argue that “any of the three models might be the best model depending on the church planter, the setting, and God’s sovereign working.”<sup>224</sup> Then they presume that the pastoral model works best in moderate to highly responsive settings and among relatively affluent populations, the catalytic model is best suited for urban areas, and the apostolic model is the best in cross-cultural ministry settings.<sup>225</sup>

Hirsch and Catchim, arguing in favor of an apostolic ministry, emphasize a situational leadership approach. They draw two models from the apostleship from Paul and Peter. The Pauline model represents those who are called to pioneer outreach to unreached people groups as itinerant preachers. Pauline apostles thrive in wide-open frontiers and will likely resist bureaucratic constraints that are imposed by institutional contexts and centralized organizations. In contrast, the Petrine model has a more internal ecclesiocentric focus and primarily aims to serve established congregations. The Petrine types exhibit a greater tolerance for more traditional contexts and flourish in reframing and reinterpreting an existing institution and its organization.<sup>226</sup> After exploring the Pauline-Petrine distinctions, Hirsch and Catchim suggest four metaphors—pioneer, miners, networkers, and mobilizers—by cross-referencing the distinctions with that of an

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<sup>223</sup>Graig Ott and Gene Wilson, *Global Church Planting: Biblical Principles and Best Practices for Multiplication* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 90-100.

<sup>224</sup>*Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>225</sup>*Ibid.*, 100-101.

<sup>226</sup>Hirsch and Catchim, *The Permanent Revolution: Apostolic Imagination and Practice for the 21st Century Church*, 121-124.

outwardly pioneering mission (explorer) and that of an innovative organizational development (catalyst).<sup>227</sup> Their point is that whatever the style employed, apostolic ministry confronts the challenge of bringing the biblical text and cultural context into a dynamic relationship so that the gospel can be expressed meaningfully within a culture. They stress that an apostolic ministry has to deal with both culture and gospel.<sup>228</sup>

James E. Plueddemann, in his book *Leading across Cultures*, also emphasizes a situational approach of Christian leadership. He argues the “Multicultural leaders must be flexible, able to shift their leadership approach according to expectations of the situation.”<sup>229</sup> Christian leaders, like the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 9:22), minister in situations in which their leadership style has to be flexible. However, he posits cultural relativism is a danger to the situational approach by arguing that “biblical leaders must learn to live with the paradox of cultural relevance without cultural relativism.”<sup>230</sup> Then he asserts the urgent need for developing supra-cultural or universal principles for a sound theology of leadership, because “Christian theology places the authority of the Bible above culture.”<sup>231</sup> Ultimately, a study of supra-cultural leadership principles leads to the task of exploring a biblically-shaped worldview. Therefore, Christian leaders who are called to transform local cultures will follow these essential steps: (1) recognize the good and bad

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<sup>227</sup>Ibid., 125-136.

<sup>228</sup>Ibid., 195.

<sup>229</sup>Plueddemann, *Leading across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church*, 152.

<sup>230</sup>Ibid., 156.

<sup>231</sup>Ibid., 157.

aspects of their culture in the light of biblical values, (2) decode the culture in which they minister, (3) understand the biblically-shaped worldview of the *missio Dei*, and (4) encode the biblically-shaped worldview in the host culture.

In summary, Christian leadership is not practiced in a cultural vacuum. On the basis of innate and developed leadership styles, Christian leaders have to serve meaningfully within specific cultural contexts and at the same time endeavor to transform each culture by means of supra-cultural Christian leadership principles. Thus, the task of defining supra-cultural leadership principles has to be conducted prior to contextualizing leadership behaviors. This study premises that the book of Revelation is a valid source book to derive supra-cultural leadership principles due to its eschatological characteristics.

### Christian Leadership and Worldview

The aforementioned cultural issues necessitate a discussion of the impact of worldview on leadership practices. Because of the nature of cross-cultural leadership challenges, Christian leadership is faced with the task of developing supra-cultural leadership principles which can be applied in any cultural setting.

Lingenfelter argues that “all Christian leaders, regardless of their cultural background, carry their personal histories and cultural biases with them wherever they serve . . . [and] in fact are locked into ‘traditional behavior,’ derived from their life histories and social context.”<sup>232</sup> Plueddemann also asserts that Christian leaders see

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<sup>232</sup>Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 15.



leadership principles in the Bible through the filters of their cultural theories about leadership.<sup>233</sup> Unavoidable conflict continues in dealing with both cultural values and biblical leadership principles. Because the Bible is above every culture, supra-cultural leadership principles must be developed through a survey of the whole of Scripture.<sup>234</sup> In his discourse of Christian ethics, Fedler asserts that to understand “humility” as a virtue of Christianity we have to explain its value by the grand narrative which tells about God, Jesus, creation, human sinfulness, and redemption on the cross. To define a “good person” is part of a much larger set of convictions and beliefs about how one sees the world. Any characteristic of a Christian value system can have validity and persuasion only to the extent people understand and buy into a biblically-shaped worldview.<sup>235</sup>

Likewise, Christian leadership has to be established on the foundation of a biblically-shaped worldview. The characteristics of Christian leaders needs to be defined by a worldview derived from their beliefs about the world. Therefore, ethically sound leadership must be based on a biblically-shaped worldview, not on a personal cultural worldview. As such, the task of Christian leaders to transform human cultures also rests on a sound understanding of scriptural principles and how they relate to leadership. Kraft argues, “Christian transformation of a culture is primarily a matter of transformational

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<sup>233</sup>Plueddemann, *Leading across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church*, 27.

<sup>234</sup>*Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>235</sup>Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics: Biblical Foundations for Morality*, 36-37.

change in the worldview of that culture.”<sup>236</sup> He further points out, “Christian transformational culture change seeks to be guided by a supracultural point of reference as understood through the Bible and to involve the Holy Spirit in bringing about the reinterpretations and consequent transformations.”<sup>237</sup> Consequently, cross-cultural mission is a matter of worldview conflict. Without having a sound biblically-shaped worldview, missional efforts can degenerate to cultural relativism and syncretism. Plueddemann asserts that “the purpose [of leadership] and the worldview of leadership are intertwined.”<sup>238</sup>

Each culture and religion has a worldview. Worldview consists of the underlying assumptions and the observable aspects of culture. Unlike a philosophical or theological definition of worldview,<sup>239</sup> missiologists generally understand cultures as multi-layered entities like an onion or artichoke with the core being the worldview.<sup>240</sup> The function of

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<sup>236</sup>Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, 2nd ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 275.

<sup>237</sup>*Ibid.*, 276.

<sup>238</sup>Plueddemann, *Leading across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church*, 165.

<sup>239</sup>Ken A. McElhanon, “Worldview,” *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions* (2000), 1032-1033.

<sup>240</sup>Plueddemann, *Leading across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church*, 69. Harvie M. Conn explains this concept of worldview with the surface level and the deep level. He says, “cultures are also multilayered models of reality. Like a spiral, they move from the surface level of what we call customs through the cognitive, affective, and evaluative dimensions to the deep level of Worldview” Harvie M. Conn, “Culture,” *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions* (2000), 253. Hiebert defines worldview as “fundamental cognitive, affective, and evaluative presuppositions a group of people make about the nature of things, and which they use to order their lives” Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 15, 25. See also Hiebert, *Anthropological*

worldview is to integrate various aspects of each culture by organizing ideas, feelings, and values into a single unified design.<sup>241</sup> Worldview encompasses three dimensions of a culture: the cognitive, affective, and evaluative dimensions. The literature on the impact of worldview on leadership practices is still very scanty.<sup>242</sup> This reality calls for prompt action to develop a missional leadership theology based on a biblically-shaped worldview.

### Summary

This chapter has argued that Korean Christian leadership has been informed by Korean culture and history. Shamanism has been the most powerful underlying worldview value among Koreans, both Christian and non-Christian. The fundamental philosophy of shamanism with its focus on this-worldly prosperity has infiltrated Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity. These external influences on Christian leadership open the door to power struggle, moral corruption, and a focus on achieving goals in many congregations. The Korean Christian church situation illustrates the urgent need for Christian communities to heed the cultural influences that impact their leadership style and to align their leadership behaviors with sound biblical leadership principles.

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*Insights for Missionaries*, 42; David W. Shenk, "The Gospel and Culture," *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions* (2000), 401-402.

<sup>241</sup>Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 48.

<sup>242</sup>The book *Leading across Cultures* written by Plueddemann is of fewer literatures on this issue.

This chapter has also examined the contemporary issues of secular leadership and the vital issues of Christian leadership under the following subtitles: goal, definition, leader and follower relationship, ethics, culture and worldview. The result of this overview indicates that leadership theories have evolved from traits to relationship with followers and developed in regard to ethical values and cultural sensitivity. Though Christian leadership shares many common principles with secular leadership, Christian leadership has to find its unique characteristics from the Bible. Missional leadership must be practiced in a way to transform each culture by means of supra-cultural Christian leadership principles derived from the Scripture. The meaning of sound leadership and ethical leadership is to be constituted from a biblically-shaped worldview. The focus of the next chapter is to review the validity of the book of Revelation as a source book for pastoral and missional leadership principles.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE BOOK OF REVELATION AS A LEADERSHIP CASE STUDY

#### **Introduction**

The literary genre of the book of Revelation cannot be captured by a single viewpoint.<sup>1</sup> While many aspects of Revelation are similar to Jewish apocalyptic literature, the characteristics of the book of Revelation are prophetic, pastoral, and missional. First, this book is a clearly prophetic book: “[T]he Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place....Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this *prophecy*, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near” (Rev 1:1, 3, emphasis added).<sup>2</sup>

Second, Revelation is certainly pastoral. This letter is written “to the seven churches” (Rev 1:4). Revelation concludes, “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the *churches*” (Rev 22:16, emphasis added). In this epistolary structure

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<sup>1</sup>For the discussion on the genre, see Sigve K. Tonstad, *Saving God’s Reputation: The Theological Function of Pistis Iesou in the Cosmic Narratives of Revelation* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 17-18.’

<sup>2</sup>Bible texts are quoted from the NASB, unless otherwise noted.

John delivers the messages which came from Jesus. In fact, the whole purpose of the book is to give pastoral exhortation.<sup>3</sup>

Third, Revelation is a missional book. The purpose of the book is not only to help God's people prepare for last day events, but to also to encourage "every nation, tribe, tongue, and people" (Rev 14:6) to repent and be saved. Johnny V. Miller argues, "the missiological approach is [the] key to understanding Revelation in relationship to the rest of the scriptures, and to the interpretation of the book itself."<sup>4</sup> While the missiological viewpoint of Revelation is easily ignored, a few scholars, particularly in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, have read the book of Revelation with a missiological focus.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Derek Tidball uniquely sees Revelation as the description of pastoral leadership by the role of the prophet in the book. He argues, "the mysteries that surround the book of Revelation mean that it is rarely considered too deeply as a pastoral document, even though its pastoral purpose in preparing the church for persecution is readily recognized. It is not usually thought to be a source of wisdom about the nature of pastoral ministry.... Yet Revelation unconsciously reveals much about the nature of ministry required when the church faces hostility and even the threat of annihilation. In particular, the author has much to say about the role of the prophet as pastor." Derek Tidball, *Ministry by the Book* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 222-223. He draws the fact that the two witnesses of 11:1-14, referred to as prophets, symbolize the entire community of the church and not two individuals. Therefore, the church receives "prophecy so they may be equipped and ready 'to bear their own prophetic witness to the world,' inspired by the same Holy Spirit who inspired those who spoke to them." (ibid., 226.)

<sup>4</sup>Johnny V. Miller, "Mission in Revelation," in *Mission in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach*, ed. William J. Larkin Jr. and Joel F. Williams (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 227.

<sup>5</sup>Bertil Wiklander, "The Mission of God and the Faithfulness of His People: An Exegetical Reading of Revelation 14:6-13," in *Exploring the Frontiers of Faith: Festschrift in Honour of Dr. Jan Paulsen*, ed. Børge Schantz and Reinder Bruinsma (Lueneberg, Germany: Advent-Verlag, 2009); George R. Knight, "Remnant Theology and World Mission," in *Adventist Mission in the 21st Century: The Joys and Challenges of Presenting Jesus to a Diverse World*, ed. Jon L. Dybdahl (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1999); Ekkehardt Mueller, "Mission in the Book of Revelation," in *Message Mission and Unity of the Church*, ed. Ángel Manuel Rodríguez (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2013); Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, ed. *Toward a Theology of the Remnant: An Adventist Ecclesiological Perspective* (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2009); Lester Merklin, "Mission Themes in the Apocalypse," in *A Man of Passionate Reflection: A Festschrift Honoring Jerald Whitehouse*, ed. Bruce L. Bauer (Berrien Springs, MI: Department of World Mission, Andrews University, 2011).

Revelation contains crucial mission subjects. It describes the *missio Dei* in which God in Trinity proactively leads the Church amid the crossfire of cosmic conflict between God and Satan. Revelation depicts missional topics such as worship (cf. Rev 5:9-10; 15:3-4),<sup>6</sup> power encounter (cf. Rev 13:13-14; 15:1; 16:13-14),<sup>7</sup> worldview conflict (cf. Rev 2:23-24),<sup>8</sup> King and Kingdom theology (cf. Rev 11:15; 12:10),<sup>9</sup> and cross-cultural mission (cf. Rev 14:6-12).<sup>10</sup>

As one reads Revelation from a missiological perspective, leadership issues emerge from both the pastoral and missional emphasis of the book. The readers are able to see how God leads His church and people into the New Jerusalem and what the characteristics of God's work are for the accomplishment of the *missio Dei*. Because Revelation gives urgent messages to the Church, the leadership of God is clearly visible. By studying God's leadership in Revelation, readers can find sound biblical leadership practices in connection with the *missio Dei*. This chapter aims to establish the validity of

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<sup>6</sup>See Ott, Strauss, and Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission*, 52-53, 80-84. Ott et al. define "*Doxology*, the glorification of God, as the highest and most overarching *purpose* of mission to which all others flow" (ibid., 80., Italics original). And they present, "[T]he book of Revelation is full of Christ-exalting worship (e.g., Rev. 1:17; 5:6-14; 7:9-10)" (ibid.).

<sup>7</sup>See ibid., 238-262. Although Ott et al. do not fully develop spiritual warfare from the spiritual conflict between God and Satan which described in Revelation, they grasp the importance of this topic from the whole Scriptures. They argue, "Because mission is the front line in the attack on Satan's kingdom, spiritual warfare is a central feature of mission." Ibid., 244.

<sup>8</sup>The author sees a worldview conflict from the phrases such as "He who searches the minds and hearts" (2:23) and "the deep things of Satan" (2:24).

<sup>9</sup>See Ott, Strauss, and Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission*, 86-88. Ott et al. contend, "[T]he kingdom of God is the center of mission in the sense that it is the orientation point of mission" (ibid., 86.).

<sup>10</sup>See ibid., 93-94. Ott et al. argues the necessity of cross-cultural mission, "The church cannot cease from sending cross-cultural messengers of the gospel to the many yet-unreached peoples until the heavenly vision of worshippers from "every tribe and language and people and nation" (Rev. 5:9; 7:9) has been fulfilled" (ibid., 221.).

the task to find supra-cultural leadership principles from Revelation by exploring major leadership terminologies and issues in relation with the books' pastoral and missional characteristics.

### **Pastoral Leadership in the Book of Revelation**

Revelation is clearly a pastoral book. It contains terms which depict pastoral leadership. Also, the messages to the seven churches contain leadership principles in which the Son of Man examines the shortcomings of the churches and offers appropriate solutions. Particularly, the appearance of the Son of Man reveals exemplary leadership behaviors. This section reviews key leadership terms—the churches, revelations, the Lamb shepherd, servants and prophets, fellow servants, angels—and leadership behaviors of the Son of Man in the letters to the seven churches.

#### **Key Leadership Terminologies**

The focus in this section is on terms which imply leadership dynamics in Revelation. Six terms or phrases are selected for a specific reason. Two terms—the churches and revelation—overarch the whole book, and four other terms—the Lamb shepherd, servants and prophets, fellow servant, and angel—are beings who perform the ministry of God in Revelation.



## **The Churches**

The book of Revelation was originally written as a letter<sup>11</sup> in which the seven churches in Asia (Rev 1:4, 11, 20; 22:6) were rebuked, encouraged, and revived. The recipients of the letter were confronted by both external and internal problems. Externally, the seven churches struggled with persecution from the Romans and the Jews. Internally, nominalism and immorality invaded the churches.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, the churches had to be instructed by the Word of God to prepare them for the immanent second coming of Jesus (Rev 1:7; 22:20). In the midst of the raging world “the Son of Man” (Rev 1:13), with His priestly role and royal dignity,<sup>13</sup> practices His leadership among the seven golden lampstands which symbolize the seven churches (Rev 1:12, 20). The churches, as the light of the world, had to be transformed to carry out their mission successfully in the world. In this regard, Revelation is not merely an explanation of last day events, but basically a pastoral exhortation for the churches in Asia in all ages. Thus, the pastoral leadership of Jesus is depicted in His interrelation with the churches.

## **Revelation**

The book begins with the prologue: “[T]he Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to *show* His servants” (Rev 1:1, emphasis added). This Revelation came directly from God to Jesus Christ, then to “His servant John” “by His angel” (Rev 1:1).

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<sup>11</sup>W. M. Ramsay recognizes, “the book of Revelation, as a whole, except the first three verses, is cast in the form of a letter.” William Mitchell Ramsay, *The Letter to the Seven Churches*, 2nd ed. (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1906), 36.

<sup>12</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 6-9.

<sup>13</sup>The robe of Jesus refers to priestly ministry and also royal dignity. See *ibid.*, 101-101.

The purpose of this revelation is to show “things which must shortly take place” (Rev 1:1; cf. 22:6). “To show” (*deiknumi*, aorist active infinitive) is translated ‘to reveal,’ ‘to make known,’ ‘to tell (what happened),’ ‘to share (the revelation),’ ‘to point out,’ and ‘to explain or to make clear.’<sup>14</sup> God’s purpose is to make known the whole process of redemptive history from the beginning to the end.

Tonstad finds transparency or transparent leadership from the word “revelation” [*apokálypsis*]. He perceives a tension between concealment and transparency in the cosmic conflict between God and Satan from the root of the word *kalyptō* [to conceal, hide, cover], and *apo-kalyptō* [uncovering]. His discourse of transparency expands with the open door (Rev 4:1), a voice speaking “like a trumpet” (Rev 4:1), and the breaking of the seals (Rev 5:5-6; 6:1-8:1). Tonstad argues, “[I]n leadership terms, God chooses the road of painstaking and principled openness. Secrecy is out, transparency is in. What has been concealed, obfuscated, and misrepresented by the opponent in the cosmic conflict is revealed, explained, and made right in God’s revelation of his ways through Jesus.”<sup>15</sup>

As a result of God’s transparent leadership, the saints are finally able to sing the song of Moses with a clear understanding of redemptive history and shout “judgments have been revealed” (Rev 15:4).<sup>16</sup> The word “revelation,” therefore, implies leadership. A few leadership principles such as mutual communication, authenticity, integrity, openness, involvement, and sharing authority can be derived from the word revelation.

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<sup>14</sup>Ronald L. Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 1-11*, 2nd ed. (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2008), 11.

<sup>15</sup>Tonstad, “Revelation,” 232.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 227-235.

One clear leadership characteristic of Jesus is openness as described by the prophet Amos, “Surely the Lord God does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).

### **The Lamb Shepherd**

Rev 7:17 says, “The Lamb at the center of the throne will be their *shepherd*; he will *lead* them to springs of living water” (NIV, emphasis added). The Greek word ‘ὁδηγέω’ (*hodegeo*, lead) implies “to assist in reaching a desired destination” or “to assist someone in acquiring information or knowledge.”<sup>17</sup> The same word is used in John 16:13 to indicate the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The word ‘ὁδηγέω’ (*hodegeo*) can also be translated to “guide.” The NASB version of Rev 7:17 uses “guide” instead of “lead.” This verse indicates that the Lamb will be the church’s shepherd. If the focus of the book of Revelation is on the Lamb,<sup>18</sup> it can be called the book of leadership of the Lamb, the one who leads and guides God’s church.

The word “shepherd” is one of the leadership terms used throughout the Bible.<sup>19</sup> Psalm 23:1 says, “the Lord is my shepherd” and in John 10:11 Jesus says “I am the good shepherd.” This Shepherd gives His life for His sheep (John 10:11), knows the sheep

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<sup>17</sup>Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (BAGD), 3rd ed., rev. and edited by Frederick William Danker (2000), s.v. “ὁδηγέω.”

<sup>18</sup>Roy C. Naden asserts, “the Lamb is crucial to our understanding of the visions of the Bible’s last book.” Roy C Naden, *The Lamb among the Beasts: A Christological Commentary on the Revelation of John That Unlocks the Meaning of Its Many Numbers* (Hagerstown, MD: Pacific Press, 1996), 28.

<sup>19</sup>See Jim Van Yperen, *The Shepherd Leader* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2003), 15-28; Jr. William Bee Donelson, “Shepherd Leadership,” (PhD dissertation, Regent University, 2004) 59-108; Michael Youssef, *The Leadership Style of Jesus: How to Develop the Leadership Qualities of the Good Shepherd* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1986).

(John 10:14), seeks the lost (Luke 15:4) and shows the door (John 10:7). In the book of Revelation the Lamb Shepherd leads and guides the church to its final destination, the New Jerusalem where the throne of God and of the Lamb is located (Rev 21:2; 22:1). The book of Revelation also shows the Lamb Shepherd leading and guiding churches to the springs of the water of life (Rev 7:17). The Lamb Shepherd seems to possess no authority or power to lead because He was slaughtered (cf. Rev 5:6, 12; 13:8). However, the Lamb Shepherd reveals His authority in that He sits at the center of the throne (cf. Rev 7:17; 22:1, 3). The whole story of Revelation reveals the fact that the Lamb is the competent Shepherd who successfully leads people to the house of the Father (cf. Rev 21:3, 7).

### **Servants and Prophets**

The word “servant” [δοῦλος, *doulos*] occurs 11 times in 10 verses in Revelation (1:1 [2 times]; 2:20; 7:3; 10:7; 11:18; 19:2, 5; 22:3, 6). The word “servant” refers to John himself (Rev 1:1), the churches (Rev 2:20), the 144,000 (Rev 7:3), the prophets (Rev 10:7; 11:18), Moses (Rev 15:3), a great multitude (Rev 19:2, 5), the priests (Rev 22:3),<sup>20</sup> and believers (Rev 22:6). Regardless of its usages, all “servants” in Revelation are on God’s side. They, without exception, are strongly interrelated with God. The genitive construction between “servant” and “God” shows that the servants are “His servants” (Rev 1:1; 10:7; 19:2, 5; 22:3, 6), “My servant” (Rev 2:20), and “the servants of our God”

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<sup>20</sup>The word “serve” [λατρεύω, *latreuō*] in Rev 22:3 means ‘to serve as one’s minister,’ ‘to minister to,’ ‘to worship,’ ‘to perform religious rites,’ and ‘to venerate.’ See Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 1-11*, 179. and Ronald L. Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 12-22*, 2nd ed. (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2008), 220. The service of the servant in Rev 22:3 implies the priesthood of believers which mentioned earlier in 1:6 and 5:10, saying “And He has made us [to be] a kingdom, priests to His God and Father; to Him [be] the glory and the dominion forever and ever, Amen” (1:6) or “And Thou hast made them [to be] a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth” (5:10).

(Rev 7:3; cf. 15:3). They are not only the objects of God's redemptive history, but also the messengers and participants in the *missio Dei*. The servants are missionaries who know God's plan (Rev 1:1) because the Lord reveals it (Rev 22:6). Sometimes they experience martyrdom (Rev 19:2) and they sometimes go astray (Rev 2:20), but they are exhorted and protected by divine intervention (Rev 7:3). Consequently, the original meaning of "servant" which contains the nuance of "slavish" and "servile" is transformed with missional emphasis. They are the ambassadors who deliver divine messages.

In this regard, John describes the servants as "the prophets" (Rev 10:7; 11:18; cf. 22:9). The mission of the prophets is "εὐαγγελίζω" [*euaggelizo*] (Rev 10:7) which means "to preach," "to announce," "to proclaim," "to tell," "to declare," "to promise," "to assure," "to give the good news," "to bring good news," and "to announce the gospel or good news."<sup>21</sup> How do these servants accomplish their mission? It is only possible if they follow the example of the 'arch-servant' Jesus who left sufficient examples of servant leadership.

### **Fellow Servants**

The term "fellow servant" [σύνδουλος, *sundoulos*] in Revelation has significant implications for leadership. This expression is used three times in Revelation (6:11; 19:10; 22:9). Revelation 6:11 says, "[A]nd there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until [the number of] their *fellow servants* and their *brethren* who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also" (emphasis added). Here the "fellow servants" represent

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<sup>21</sup>Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 1-11*, 215.

martyrs “who had been slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they had maintained” (Rev 6:9), i.e., they lost their lives as a consequence of the process of carrying out the mission entrusted to them by God.

Interestingly, the martyrs are called “fellow servants” not just servants. The term σύνδουλος (*sundoulos*) can mean “fellow Christian,”<sup>22</sup> because the term “fellow servants” is always used in connection with “brethren” in Revelation. When John tried twice to worship an angel who delivered the messages, the angel said, “Do not do that; I am a *fellow servant* of yours and your *brethren* who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God” (Rev 19:10, emphasis added). In Rev 22:9, an angel with slight variation in identification, again said, “Do not do that; I am a *fellow servant* of yours and of your *brethren* the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book; worship God” (emphasis added).

This idiom, “fellow servant and brethren,” implies that Christians do not live in isolation from one another. Rather, they work with others or in groups. Also, the fellow servant concept supports the fact that the Christian leader is selected from among his brethren, not above them. The terms “fellow” and “brethren” are not merely showing the relational value of being Christians but also the intimacy within the Christian community. The term σύνδουλος in Rev 19: 10 and 22:9 can be translated as: “(I am) a servant just like you,” or “(I am) a servant of God just like you.”<sup>23</sup> Therefore, “fellow servant” infers a community of Christian fellowship as an essential element of Christian leadership.

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 161.

<sup>23</sup>Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 12-22*, 164.

## Angel

The word ἄγγελος [*aggelos*] in Revelation can be understood in several ways. For example “angels” in Revelation 1:20 can be interpreted in four ways. First, sometimes it refers to actual angels who are “heavenly messengers” (cf. Rev 1:1; 3:5; 5:2, 11; 7:1, 2, 11; 8:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13; 9:1, 11, 13, 14, 15; 10:1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10; 11:15, 12:7; 14:10, 15, 17, 18, 19; 15:1, 6, 7, 8; 16:1; 17:1, 7; 18:1, 21; 19:17; 20:1, 9; 21:12; 22:6, 8, 16).<sup>24</sup> Second, it refers to the churches themselves as a symbol (cf. Rev 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14). Third, it could refer to human messengers to the churches (cf. Rev 14:6, 8, 9). Fourth, it refers to spirits who preside in the churches.<sup>25</sup>

This word can be applied to human beings and human entities (the churches). For instance, the three angels flying in mid-heaven are a symbolic portrayal of believers proclaiming God’s everlasting gospel to “those who dwell upon the earth” (Rev 14:6). Without human involvement, the gospel usually cannot reach people.<sup>26</sup> The destiny of the seven churches and people who live on the earth depend on their ministries. Thus, the letter of Revelation was sent to “the seven churches” (Rev 1:4) and “to the angel of the church” (Rev 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14). The letter was read by the one reader who has the responsibility to read the book of prophesy and to lead the churches (cf. Rev 1:3). “The

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<sup>24</sup>Revelation 12:7 and 9 present the satanic angels who wage war with Michael and his angels.

<sup>25</sup>Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 1-11*, 43-44.

<sup>26</sup>“Revelation,” *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed. F. D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1980), 7:978-979. Miller also argues that though angels in Revelation work as agents of God’s judgments, “only human agents are channels of redemption.” (Miller, “Mission in Revelation,” 237.)

one who reads” (singular), in Revelation 1:3, implies a preacher or an elder and “those who hear” (plural) implies the assembled congregation.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, the angels of the seven churches can be applied to human beings. They, either human beings or heavenly angels, are messengers of God who participate in the *missio Dei*. If so, then, how do they conduct their mission?

Apparently, the role and function of these messengers is not the same as that of the Roman Empire’s hierarchical political system. The angel who delivered the message of God resists being worshipped by John saying “I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 19:10). The angel does not insist on leveraging celestial position. Rather, he displays the egalitarian behavior demonstrated by Jesus (John 15:15; Matt. 20:28). In reality, the mission of the messenger is not to be served, but “to serve those who will inherit salvation” (Heb. 1:14, NIV). The angels have no interest in leveraging their reputation and position; rather saving the world is their mission. Therefore, the ministry of the angels in Revelation reflects models of Christian leadership.

#### The Seven Churches and the Leadership of “the Son of Man”

The messages to the seven churches epitomize the pastoral leadership of Jesus, “one like a son of man” (Rev 1:13). This expression “the Son of Man” was Jesus’ favorite title in the Gospels. It corresponds to the description of the messenger from Daniel 10:5, 12. The “One like a son of man” (Rev 1:13; 14:14) highlights the

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<sup>27</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 61-62.



characteristics of Jesus' ministry. As the role of the Old Testament priests who trim and refill the lamps, remove the wick and old oil from the lamp, and supply fresh oil and relight them, Christ serves as the leader who understands human problems and suffering and supports human leaders.<sup>28</sup> The phrase "one like a son of man" (Rev 1:3) certainly contains important aspects of Christ's pastoral leadership because the symbolic appearance of "the Son of Man" in Revelation 1 consistently points to the sender of each letter.

The description of "His eyes were like a flame of fire" (Rev 1:14) and "His feet [were] like burnished bronze" (Rev 1:15) occurs in the letter to the angel of the church in Thyatira (Rev 2:18). The phrase "In His right hand He held seven stars" (Rev 1:16, 20) appears in the letters to Ephesus (Rev 2:1) and Sardis (Rev 3:1). "A sharp two-edged sword" (Rev 1:16) reoccurs in the letter to Pergamos (Rev 2:12). The expression of "I am the First and the Last... I am the living One; and I was dead" (Rev 1:17-18) is repeated in the letter to Smyrna (Rev 2:8). The term "keys" (Rev 1:18) is used in the letter to Philadelphia in which "He... who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens" (Rev 3:7) gives messages. The expression of "the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God" (Rev 3:14) in the letter to Laodicea is not depicted in the introduction of "the Son of Man," but the idea of "faithful" and "true" permeates all the descriptions of Him comprehensively (e.g. Rev 1:5, 17; 21:6; 22:13). These expressions contain pastoral leadership principles that will be explored in the next sections.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 103-104.

## The Church at Ephesus and the Son of Man

In the letter to Ephesus Jesus introduces Himself as the one “who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands” (Rev 2:1). The word κρατέω [*krateo*, hold] can be translated as “to hold fast,” “to have a firm grasp on,” and “to hold on to, to retain in one’s hand, to seize.” The word κρατέω denotes a firm grip.<sup>29</sup> The first part of this title indicates that Jesus embraces and cares for the churches.

Likewise, the second part, “walks among the seven golden lampstands,” refers to Christ’s close relationship with His churches. Matthew Henry argues, “Christ is present with his churches in an intimate way. He knows and observes their state; he takes pleasure in them, just as a person takes delight in walking around his garden.”<sup>30</sup> Jesus is standing close to His Church and firmly holding onto its leaders, the seven stars,<sup>31</sup> though they have gone astray from their “first love” (Rev 2:4). The language suggests Jesus takes personal responsibility for the Ephesus church, and, “accountability” in intimate relationship is one of the vital elements of Jesus’ leadership.

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<sup>29</sup>Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 1-11*, 44.

<sup>30</sup>Matthew Henry, *Revelation*, ed. Alister McGrath and J. I. Packer, The Crossway Classic Commentaries (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1999), 24.

<sup>31</sup>Revelation 1:20 says, “the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.” The word ἄγγελος implies both a human messenger serving as an envoy and a transcendent power who carries out various missions or tasks (Walter Bauer, BAGD, s.v. ἄγγελος.).

## The Church at Smyrna and the Son of Man

To the church in Smyrna, Jesus introduces Himself as “the first and the last, who was dead, and came to life” (Rev 2:8). This title emphasizes the sovereignty of God in a way similar to the title “the beginning and the end” (Rev 21:6; 22:13; cf. 3:14)<sup>32</sup> and the “Alpha and Omega” (Rev 1:8; 21:6; 22:13).<sup>33</sup> This divine title “the first and the last” (cf. Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12) or “the Alpha and the Omega” explains eternity and infinite characteristics of Jesus.<sup>34</sup> Henry posits, “it is the title of One who is the unchanging Mediator between God and man,”<sup>35</sup> because “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb 13:8). Based on His unchangeable character, Jesus is the one who fully keeps His promise. The name guarantees His “faithfulness.”

Faithfulness is one of the salient characteristics of God. The Apostle Paul presents the Gospel as, “which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scripture” (Rom 1:1). Thus, he describes the birth of Jesus as the fulfillment of God’s promise. He declares, “when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son” (Gal 4:4). This faithfulness of God occurs throughout Scripture.<sup>36</sup> The Psalms are full of songs

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<sup>32</sup>Rev 1:8 in KJV uses ἀρχή (*arche*, the beginning) and τέλος (*telos*, the ending) while Rev 2:8 uses πρῶτος (*protos*, the first) and ἔσχατος (*eschatos*, the last).

<sup>33</sup>David E. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 52 vols., Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1997), 57.

<sup>34</sup>Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1-7*, ed. Kenneth Barker, An Exegetical Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1992), 161.

<sup>35</sup>Henry, *Revelation*, 28.

<sup>36</sup>See Deut. 7:9; 1 Sam. 26:23, 110:86; Isa. 38:19, 49:7; Hosea 11:12.

about God's faithfulness.<sup>37</sup> God's faithfulness is based on His immutable character and in many cases "faithfulness" comes in tandem with ceaseless "love" or "mercy."<sup>38</sup>

Interestingly enough, this faithfulness of God depicted in His self-identification as "the First and the Last" is perfectly appropriate for the church in Smyrna which is afflicted by persecution (Rev 2:9-10). Their ultimate need is the certitude of God's endless protection. Thus, the Lord who is faithful encourages them with the words "[D]o not *fear* what you are about to suffer..., Be *faithful* until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev 2:10, emphasis added). Likewise, the faithfulness of the Son of Man was the guarantee of protection for John himself who fell as dead. The Son of Man says, "Do not be *afraid*; I am the First and the Last. I am the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore" (Rev 1:17-18, emphasis added), for "these words are *faithful and true*" (Rev 21:5; 22:6, emphasis added). One of the salient characteristics of Jesus' leadership is "faithfulness."

### **The Church at Pergamum and the Son of Man**

To the church in Pergamos, Jesus identifies Himself as the one who "has the sharp two-edged sword" (Rev 2:12).<sup>39</sup> The sword which comes out of Jesus' mouth represents

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<sup>37</sup>See Psalm 25:21; 40:10; 54:5; 71:22; 88:11; 89:1, 2, 5, 8, 24, 33, 49; 92:3, 98:3, 100:5; 119:75, 90, 138; 132:11; 138:2.

<sup>38</sup>See Psalm 88:11; 89:1, 2, 24, 33, 49; 98:3, 5; 138:2.

<sup>39</sup>This "sharp two-edged sword" contrasts to the governor's power over the "sword," the death sentence. Jon Paulien, *The Deep Things of God* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2004), 21.

the word of God (Rev 2:16).<sup>40</sup> He is “in this book a Warrior, who fights with the sharp sword of the word.”<sup>41</sup> Thus, the author of Hebrews writes, “the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Heb 4:12). The word of God has the power to penetrate everyone’s heart, so there is no sphere where God cannot reach (Ps 139:1-10). God knows where Satan’s throne is placed (Rev 2:13). He knows who, like Antipas, holds His name (Rev 2:13), and who is entangled with idolatry and sexual immorality in keeping the teachings of Balaam and the Nicolaitans (Rev 2:14-15). According to Henry, “there is no escape from the edge of this sword. If you turn to the right side, it has an edge on the side; if you turn to the left side, you fall on the edge of the sword on that side. It turns every way.”<sup>42</sup> The Lord’s weapon in spiritual warfare is the sword of His mouth (Rev 2:16). Therefore, this sharp two-edged sword means that He is equipped with the power of words or knowledge. In fact, the Son of Man is the King of glory who is “strong and mighty” and “mighty in battle” (Ps 24:8). He is the invincible warrior who fights against evil. This self-identification of Jesus to Pergamos refers to His “spiritual competence” which is another primary characteristic of pastoral leaders.

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<sup>40</sup>See also Rev 1:16; 19:15.

<sup>41</sup>Henry Barclay Swete, *Commentary on Revelation: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Indexes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1977), 38.

<sup>42</sup>Henry, *Revelation*, 32.

## The Church at Thyatira and the Son of Man

In the letter to the church in Thyatira, Jesus identifies Himself as “the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze” (Rev 2:18). Also, the Son of God is introduced as one “who searches the minds and hearts” (Rev 2.23). Outwardly, Thyatira shows “works, love, service, faith, and patience” (Rev 2:19), but inwardly, she compromises with idolatry and sexual immorality (Rev 2:20). Jesus describes the core of their spiritual illness—hypocrisy. He is never deceived by the outward pietism because “God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap” (Gal. 6:7). The eyes, like blazing fire, symbolize “his piercing, penetrating, perfect knowledge.”<sup>43</sup>

The expressions “eyes like a flame of fire” and “feet are like burnished bronze” are related to Jesus’ authority to judge.<sup>44</sup> Jesus’ eyes like a flame of fire symbolize His righteous “anger”<sup>45</sup> and “purifying judgment.”<sup>46</sup> This agrees with many biblical references regarding “fire” as the action of God’s fiery judgment.<sup>47</sup> His leadership of His

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 35.

<sup>44</sup>John F Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: A Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1966), 72.

<sup>45</sup>George Eldon Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972), 50.

<sup>46</sup>Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: A Commentary*, 72.

<sup>47</sup>See Num. 16:35; Ps. 21:9; 118:12; Isa. 10:17; Zeph. 3:8; Heb. 10:17; 12:29; Rev. 11:5; 20:9

people reveals a protective element in that the bronze feet “can stamp down the enemies of the truth”<sup>48</sup> with “strength and splendor”<sup>49</sup> or “strength and stability.”<sup>50</sup>

However, the judgment in Revelation is not mere merciless punishment or retribution. This judgment is an empathetic behavior. The expressions of “a flame of fire” and “burnished bronze” deliver an emotional aspect of Jesus’ behavior. Both “a flame of fire” and “burnished bronze” have a common image of shining or glowing or flashing.<sup>51</sup> This image reflects a kind of personal emotion.

Deuteronomy states, “for the LORD your God is a consuming *fire*, a *jealous* God” (Deut. 4:24, cf. Heb. 12:29, emphasis added). Here, a consuming fire signifies an emotional aspect of God—jealousy. According to Zephaniah, God’s jealousy is also connected with the burning fire, saying “therefore, wait for Me, declares the LORD, For the day when I rise up to the prey. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, To assemble kingdoms, To pour out on them My indignation, All My *burning anger*, For all the earth will be devoured by *the fire of My zeal*” (Zep. 3:8, emphasis added).

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<sup>48</sup>Swete, *Commentary on Revelation: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Indexes*, 42.

<sup>49</sup>Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1977), 102.

<sup>50</sup>Swete, *Commentary on Revelation: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Indexes*, 17.

<sup>51</sup>Trail suggests, synthesizing various translations of “bronze,” that the “here the stress is on the shining appearance of the metal.” Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 1-11*, 36. Henry Barclay Swete interprets the “burnished bronze” as “the name of a mixed metal of great brilliance.” Swete, *Commentary on Revelation: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Indexes*, 17. In Ezekiel “the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD” (Ezek 1:28) was like “glowing metal that looked like fire” (Ezek 1:27) from which radiance comes out. Daniel also observes similar appearance, “his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches” and “his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze” (Dan 10:6).

The Hebrew word “zeal” (זֵאֵל, qin’ah) means “ardor of jealousy, zeal, and anger.”

The word “expresses a very strong emotion whereby some quality or possession of the object is desired by the subject”<sup>52</sup> In this regard God’s jealousy has a positive sense. For instance, the Song of Songs states “[F]or *love* is as strong as death, *Jealousy* is as severe as Sheol” (Cant 8:6, emphasis added). This verse shows that love and jealousy are two sides of a coin. Therefore, God’s judgment which is expressed in burning fire does not mean God’s outrage or anger, but the full emotion of His love.

The appearance of the Son of God was shining, and glowing to the extent of causing John to fall down. In chapter 1, John could see only His eyes, feet, and face, because other parts of His body are wrapped with a robe. John encountered the dazzling and flaming appearance of Jesus just as Moses beheld God’s glory in the burning bush (Exod 3:2) and in the cleft of the rock (Exod 33:17-23). To Moses God said, “You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live” (Exod 33:20). The glory of God is too bright to see. However, “the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend” (Exod 33:11). The brilliant glory of God in fire does not simply mean His consuming judgment (cf. Hos 6:5); it manifests His full emotion of love, including friendship.

Therefore, the Son of God is introduced as the one who has “eyes like a flame of fire” and “feet are like burnished bronze” to symbolize His emotion over the Thyatira church’s entanglement with sexual immorality and idolatry (Rev 2:20). For Him these issues are of extreme importance. Thus, readers can see Jesus’s disapproval of Thyatira’s

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<sup>52</sup>R. Laird Harris, Jr. Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1980), 803.



action in the following statement: “I gave her time to *repent*; and she does not want to *repent* of her immorality” (Rev 2:21, emphasis added), “Behold, I will *cast* her upon a bed [of sickness], and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds” (Rev 2:22, emphasis added), and “And I will *kill* her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds” (Rev 2:23, emphasis added). The three verbs, “repent” (Rev 2:21), “cast” (Rev 2:22), and “kill” (Rev 2:23), have to be read in the context of Jesus’ full emotion. The aorist form of “repent” is moving toward the present form of “cast” and the future form of “kill.” The emotions of Jesus are not quenched as time goes on. The final future judgment is not merely a cold verdict, but rather full of emotional expressions, either jealousy or love. In this regard, the judgment of God can be rightly understood as His emotions are considered.

If the shining or flaming element does imply Jesus’ full set of emotion, His leadership also can be understood as having emotional considerations. He gives sympathetic attention to His followers’ shortcomings. He earnestly expects them to repent and recover. Just as parents do their very best for their wayward children, Jesus is fully involved in the challenges encountered by humans. Therefore, the Son of God in the Thyatira church is an example of leaders’ “sympathizing emotion” for the sake of God’s followers.

### **The Church at Sardis and the Son of Man**

While Jesus, in the Ephesus church, introduces Himself as the one “who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands” (Rev 2:1), to the church in Sardis, he describes Himself as the one “who has the seven

Spirits of God, and the seven stars” (Rev 3:1). The seven stars represent “the angels of the seven churches” (Rev 1:20). As in the aforementioned examination, the word ἄγγελος [*aggelos*, angel] refers both to a human messenger and a transcendent being who carries out a divine mission. The seven Spirits refer to the Holy Spirit, according to the Trinitarian greetings in the prologue of Revelation (1:4-6).<sup>53</sup> These seven Spirits of God, symbols of His willingness to empower the church, draw our attention to this additional essential element of leadership.

The work of the Spirits is implied in the call to Sardis to “wake up” (Rev 3:2), “strengthen” (Rev 3:2), “remember” (Rev 3:3, cf. John 14:26), “keep” (Rev 3:3), and “repent” (Rev 3:3, cf. John 16:8). The intention of Jesus is to prompt the Sardis church to wake up from their overconfidence, strengthen their faith, remember and keep the Word of God, and finally repent from their incomplete state. Spiritual transformation that empowers the church comes from the work of the Spirit. That is why each of the letters to the seven churches ends with the invitation to listen to the Holy Spirit, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev 2:7; 11, 17, 29; 3:6; 13, 22).

Jesus always works with the Holy Spirit and with the leaders of churches, the “seven stars” (Rev 3:1). So, He has “a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments” (Rev 3:4) and He invites them to walk with Him in white because they are worthy (Rev 3:4). In this letter, Jesus appears to be a “relationship-oriented leader” who

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<sup>53</sup>In Revelation 1:4-8, the frame of prologue introduces the Trinity: (1) “Father” (1:6) who “is and who was and who is to come” (1:4, 8). (2) “Jesus Christ” who “loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood” (1:5). (3) “The seven Spirits who are before His throne” (1:4). Stefanovic, from the Old Testament background in Isaiah 11:2 and Zechariah 4, argues that “the seven Spirits seem to refer to the fullness and universality of the activity of the Holy Spirit on behalf of God’s faithful people.” Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 64.

works with His messengers as a team. The Holy Spirit also reflects this attitude as “the Helper,” “the Counselor,” and “the Advocate” (cf. John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) of people. The reason Jesus admonishes people is that He respects His followers’ free choice. No authoritarian style exists in His leadership. Rather, He is a “relational leader.”

### **The Church at Philadelphia and the Son of Man**

To the church in Philadelphia Jesus introduces Himself as “He who is holy, He who is true, He who has the *key* of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens” (Rev 3:7, emphasis added). Here, Jesus introduces Himself as the one who has absolute legitimate authority over the church. He holds the key of David which implies the undisputed authority or the absolute power to control entrance to the heavenly kingdom.<sup>54</sup> This authority, however, is not an autocratic power. Rather, Jesus says, “I have set before you *an open door*, and no one can shut it” (Rev 3:8, emphasis added). He gives people freedom to choose their own destiny. He never forces anyone to do something against their will. Even though He has the authority to open or shut the door, He gives people the opportunity to choose to enter through the door which never shuts before people totally reject His offer. Because Jesus values people’s free will, He Himself is the opened door (John 10:7).

John looked and saw “a door [standing] open in heaven” (Rev 4:1). Through the expression of this open door, the prophetic part of Revelation (Rev 4-22:5)<sup>55</sup> begins in

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<sup>54</sup>Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 116.

<sup>55</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 14-15. Gulley, otherwise, divides Revelation into two sections: a historical section (chapters 1-11) and a section on last-day events (chapters 13-22). Norman R. Gulley, *Christ Is Coming* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1998), 65-69.

earnest and the voice like a trumpet sound is given to John, saying “Come up here, and I will *show* you what must take place after these things” (Rev 4:1, emphasis added). Later, John sees that the Holy City, Jerusalem, has the gates which will “never be closed” (Rev 21:25). The door symbolically describes that the opportunity to enter the city is given to all and the choice is widely available.<sup>56</sup> Likewise, the Philadelphia church is confronted with making a decision that either honors Jesus’ word or denies His name (cf. Rev 3:8). He gives the right of choice to leaders and motivates them to make the right decision, giving counsels and showing the rewards. He continuously encourages the church to “hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown” (Rev 3:11). Therefore, Jesus in this letter values a “voluntary spirit” based on the “freedom of choice” of His followers.

In addition to being a symbol of freedom to choose, this open door is a testimony to the efficacy of Jesus’ leadership of His people—his protective efforts have enabled absolute security for those who follow him.

### **The Church at Laodicea and the Son of Man**

To the Laodicean church, Jesus presents Himself as “the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God” (Rev 3:14). In the message to the seventh church, Jesus manifests His character. The repeated words ‘Amen,’ ‘Faithful,’ and ‘True’ reflect the faithfulness and integrity of Jesus. Here, He is associated with “the

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<sup>56</sup>Beale argues, “[T]he point of the figurative picture is that the Gentiles will never be separated from open, eternal access to God’s presence and that nothing evil can threaten such access.” Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. (Grand Rapids: MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 1099.

Beginning of the creation of God” (Rev 3:14). The Son of God is the primary participant in the work of creation (cf. John 1:1-3; Prov 8:30). He knows how the world was created (cf. Ps. 33:6-9, Isa. 64:8, Jer.10:12; 51:15) and what motivated God to create the world (cf. Isa 45:18, Mal 2:10). The world was perfect so God proclaimed that “it was very good” (Gen 1:31). His creation worked on the foundation of His faithfulness (cf. Ps 36:5; 108:4; 111:7; 146:6). Also, the foundation of faithfulness is the love of God (cf. Isa 49:15; Hos 11:8), the essence of God’s character (cf. 1 John 4:8, 16). The parental relationship (cf. Ps 89:26; Isa 63:16; 64:8; Matt 6:9; 7:11; Rev 21:7) and the conjugal relationship (cf. Hos 2:19, 20; 2 Cor 11:2; Rev. 21:2, 9) between God and human beings cannot be broken based on its covenantal relationship (cf. Gen 28:15; Jos 1:9; Ezek 16:8, 60).

This love and faithfulness of Jesus seeks Laodiceans who are entangled in a spiritual risk. His love is the main reason why Laodiceans are rebuked and disciplined by Jesus, “Those whom I *love*, I reprove and discipline” (Rev 3:19, emphasis added). Jesus’ redemptive leadership is based on His ownership of creation (cf. Isa 43:1, 7, 15-16, 21; 44:2, 21, 24; 65:17). He voluntarily gave His life for sinners because He is the Creator who created people to communicate and love. He spared nothing in His efforts for His people (cf. Matt 6:33; 7:11; Luke 11:13; John 3:16; 15:7; Rom 8:32). The worship and praise in heaven is based on the character of God which is manifested in both creation and recreation. The 24 elders worship Him saying “Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou didst *create* all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were *created*” (Rev 4:11, emphasis added). Finally, the victors sing the song of Moses and the Lamb because the Lamb’s character is “*Righteous*

and *true*” (Rev 15:3) and “All nations will come and worship before you, for your *righteous* acts have been revealed” (Rev 15:4, NIV, emphasis added). All the narratives of the book of Revelation conclude with “Amen,” in response to the promise of Jesus that “surely, I am coming quickly” (Rev 22:20-21). The strongest leadership influence, therefore, comes from the character of leaders. Jesus shows in the letter to the Laodicean church that He is the leader who leads people by His exemplarily “character.”

In summary, Jesus manifests transformational leadership for the seven churches. He fills the need of each person and group (Rev 2:23). His transformational leadership encourages the churches to make right decision by their freedom of choice. Also, He respects people’s motivation to follow providing reward and rebuke. The seven churches are invited to emulate His high standard of moral authenticity. These characteristics of Jesus’ transformational leadership present Revelation as a valid source of pastoral leadership.

### **Missional Leadership of the Book of Revelation**

The book of Revelation is not only pastoral, but it is also missional. It contains crucial missiological issues such as worship, power-encounter, cross-cultural evangelism, kingdom theology, and worldview conflict. Along with these missiological issues, two antagonistic leaders, the Lamb and the Dragon, confront one another over the allegiance of human beings. This section explores the book of Revelation as a sourcebook of missional leadership in the context of the Great Controversy (GC).<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>The term “the Great Controversy” derived from the title of Ellen G. White’s book. This term implies the great confrontation between the Dragon and the Lamb which initiated before

The Background of the Great Controversy:  
Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28

**The Typology of the Kings of  
Babylon and of Tyre**

Jose M. Bertoluci argues that Isa 14:12-15 and Ezek 28:1-19 have been used, since the times of the early Church Fathers, to explain why and how evil originated in the universe and to depict the fall of Satan from heaven. The passage of the “Guardian Cherub” of Ezekiel 28 has been connected with the “Morning Star” (Isa 14:12) which has generally been applied to Satan from the time of Origen to the Reformation.<sup>58</sup> Using this typological interpretation, Bertoluci asserts that the King of Babylon in Isa 14 is more than a human figure. The King of Babylon was portrayed to show “the beginning, the career, and the end of the originator of evil”<sup>59</sup> and “the impellent force behind the evil activities of the world nations.”<sup>60</sup> Likewise, the oracle against the Prince (נַגִּיד, *nagiyd*) of Tyre (Ezek 28:2) and the King (מֶלֶךְ, *melek*) of Tyre (Ezek 28:12) includes a kind of horizontal as well as vertical typology. Horizontally, the oracle concerning the Prince of Tyre refers to activities and matters related to human or earthly rulers. Vertically,

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creation and terminates after the second coming of Jesus. See Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911). Norman Gulley uses the term “the cosmic controversy” instead of “the great controversy.” Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2003), 387-453. Antoninus King Wai Siew introduces the different names of this motif: Holy War, Divine Warrior motif, Combat Myth, and War-in-Heaven. Siew, *The War between the Two Beasts and the Two Witnesses: A Chiastic Reading of Revelation 11.1-14.5*, 75.

<sup>58</sup>Jose M. Bertoluci, “The Son of the Morning and the Guardian Cherub in the Context of the Controversy between Good and Evil,” (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 1985) 6-8, 36-37.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 291.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

the Prince of Tyre is a kind of type of the King of Tyre in the sense that both figures or powers are hostile to God—the Prince of Tyre because of his pride and pretention to be like God; the King of Tyre because of the wickedness found in him which developed into pride on account of his beauty and wisdom.<sup>61</sup>

Bertoluci asserts, “there are enough facts which justify the interpretation of Isa 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:12-19 as applying to the chief Fallen Angel known as Satan.”<sup>62</sup> He concludes the purpose of these two passages is to show (1) that the characteristics of these two nations (Babylon and Assyria) represent a type of rebellious power—political and religious—which is hostile to God and His people and (2) that the power which is behind all wicked activities and the originator of the sins which are the source or fountainhead of every hostility against God and His government.<sup>63</sup>

### **Pride and Humility**

Bertoluci emphasizes the contrast between the supreme examples of pride and humility in Isaiah’s prophecy. While Isa 14 describes the pride of the King of Babylon, Isa 52-53 depicts the Suffering Servant’s supreme examples of humbleness.<sup>64</sup> Babylon which was a constant enemy of God’s people represents the career of a figure which is behind every self-sufficient, self-glorifying, and God-opposing power.<sup>65</sup> Consequently, the inception of the cosmic controversy results from the attitude of self-exaltation. “The Morning Star” (Isa 14:12) who already occupies his own throne insists, “I will *ascend* my

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 292.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 293.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 295-296.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 295.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 294.



throne above the stars of God” (Isa. 14:13 emphasis added). He tries to “*ascend* above the tops of the clouds” (Isa 14:14, emphasis added) and makes himself “like the Most High” (Isa 14:14). Likewise, the “Guardian Cherub” revolts against God because his “heart became proud” (Ezek 28:17, NIV) on account of his beauty and splendor.

The general approach to quench a fire of revolt is armed intervention using military force. However, the way used by God to defeat the proud ones is the humility of the Suffering Servant. While Satan desires to ascend above God’s throne, the Suffering Servant willingly descends to the extent of dying for sinners (cf. Isa 53:11).<sup>66</sup> By this paradoxical way God recovers his damaged reputation and at the same time Satan’s treacherous deception is publically exposed. Gulley summarizes this powerful contrast between the pride of the rebel (Isa 14:12-14) and the humility of Christ (Isa 52:13-15; 53:1-12):

Satan attempts to become God, which is above his status as a created being, while Jesus becomes human, which is below his status as creator God. Here is the stark contrast that epitomizes the comic controversy, the contrast that led to one killing and the other dying at Calvary. In that ultimate crucifixion encounter the injustice of the rebel and the justice of the redeemer is revealed. Death on the cross is the lowest level of Christ’s condescension (Phil. 2:5-11); it is also where Satan’s effort to take God’s place (Isa. 14:12-15) is exposed.<sup>67</sup>

Here are two contrasting leadership styles. While one is pursuing competence through an ascending model, the other is showing character through a descending model. This contrast continues in the description of the cosmic confrontation in Revelation.

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<sup>66</sup>Stanley E. Patterson derives these contrasting characteristics of descending and ascending models of leadership from the narrative of Isa 14. Stanley E. Patterson, “Up the Down Path: Power, Ambition, and Spiritual Leadership,” *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 7, no. 1 (2013).

<sup>67</sup>Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, 429.

## The Final Destiny of the Morning Star

The final destiny of the “Morning Star” and the “Guardian Cherub” is determined. The Morning Star who once attempted to ascend above the tops of the clouds is cast “down to the earth” (Isa 14:12, NIV) and is “brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit” (Isa 14:15, NIV). The “Guardian Cherub” who once had “the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty” (Ezek 28:12) is finally thrown “to the ground” (Ezek 28:17) and turned “to ashes on the earth in the eyes of all who see you” (Ezek 28:18). The final judgment is public and destructive. Gulley posits, “[A]t the end of the cosmic controversy there will be no sympathy for Satan in his demise. That is why the controversy can conclude, rebellion be no more, and eternal peace be restored.”<sup>68</sup>

According to Stefanovic, the time of the end begins from the day of Christ’s death on the cross: “Revelation 12:10 refers to the enthronement of Christ after his death and resurrection and subsequent ascension to the heavenly places, which took place at Pentecost (Acts 2:32-26), as portrayed in Revelation 4-5.”<sup>69</sup> “Now” (Rev 12:10) Satan is expelled from the heavenly places (cf. 12:31), the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our god replaces Satan’s usurping rule and abuse of power, and “the great dragon was hurled down” (Rev 12:9) to the earth. Though the final destruction against Satan remains, “Satan was forever excommunicated from the heavenly places; and since then, there was no longer any place for him and his angels in heaven.”<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 428.

<sup>69</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 397.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 396.

## The Great Controversy in the Book of Revelation

Sook-Young Kim examined “the warrior messiah” motif from the whole scriptures including intertestamental writings. According to her research, the warrior messiah motif is present throughout the whole of Scriptures. Especially, “the book of Revelation, as well as the rest of the biblical writings, depicts the conflict between the dragon power and Christ, light and darkness, truth and error, right and wrong, or between good and evil, as a cosmic reality.”<sup>71</sup> The entire book of Revelation dramatically depicts the GC between God and Satan.

### **The Great Controversy Terminologies**

The terms relating to the GC occurs throughout all the chapters of Revelation, whether the historical part (Rev 1:9-3:22) or the prophetic part (Rev 4-22:5).<sup>72</sup> Although the battle scenes are dramatically described in the second part of the book, the first three chapters, which contain the messages to the seven churches, also depict this battle in the repeated phrases such as “to him who overcomes” (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). These three chapters also expose the adversary Satan (Rev 2:13, 24; 3:9. cf. 12:9; 20:2, 7) and introduce Jesus as the warrior having “the sword” (Rev 2:16) and “a rod of iron” (Rev 2:27. cf. 12:5; 19:15).

The prophetic part gives more evidences of the GC by using terms of war. For example, the image of “horses” in the depiction of the seven seals (Rev 6) describes a

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<sup>71</sup>Kim, “The Trajectory of the ‘Warrior Messiah’ Motif in Scripture and Intertestamental Writings,” 377.

<sup>72</sup>See footnote 55.

war in which military weapons such as a “bow” (Rev 6:2) and a “sword” (Rev 6:4, 8) are mentioned. The “crown” (Rev 6:2) of the rider on the white horse is a crown of victory which was conferred to winners (cf. Rev 2:10; 3:11; 4:4, 10; 6:2; 12:1; 14:14).<sup>73</sup> The devastating condition of the earth as a consequence of this war is expressed as follows, “to kill with sword and famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth” (Rev 6:8). “A great multitude” in Revelation 7:9 refers to an army. Doukhan argues, “white robes and palms were part of the ritual celebrating military victory.”<sup>74</sup>

The prophecy of the seven trumpets followed by the seven seals also depicts the GC motif. For instance, the demonic locusts appear “like horses prepared for *battle*,” (Rev 9:7, cf. 9:9, emphasis added) from the abyss and two hundred million of “the *armies* of the horsemen” (Rev 9:16, emphasis added) describe the enemies of God’s people. “The beast that comes up out of the abyss will make *war* with” (Rev 11:7, emphasis added) the two witnesses. Finally, the cosmic controversy between Michael and the dragon is illustrated as follows: “the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make *war* with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 12:17, emphasis added). The seven bowls of God’s wrath (Rev 16) also present the GC motif: “Three evil spirits like frogs” (Rev 16:13) coming out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophets gather together “for *the war* of the great day of God, the Almighty” (Rev 16:14, emphasis added). The dragon

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<sup>73</sup>Stefanovic presents, “the Greek word *stephanos* used here is not the royal crown but the crown of victory—a garland given to winner in the Olympic games.” Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 233.

<sup>74</sup>Jacques B. Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse through Hebrew Eyes* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002), 72.

“wage[s] war against the Lamb” (Rev 17:14) and usurps the authority of the Lamb who is “Lord of lords and King of kings” (Rev 17:14).

### **The Warrior Son of Man**

The protagonist Son of Man comes on the stage as a warrior. The Son of Man (Rev 1:13-16) is the leader of the heavenly armies who defeats the camp of the Dragon (Rev 19:11-16). The characteristics of the Son of man—“eyes were like blazing fire” (Rev 1:14; cf. 19:11, NIV) and “out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword” (Rev 1:16; cf. 19:15, NIV)—are repeated in the description of the rider of a white horse in chapter 19. Furthermore, “the Word of God” (Rev 19:13), who rides “a white horse” (Rev 19:11) and leads “the armies in heaven” (Rev 19:14, NIV) shares common characteristics with the One who is described in the introduction of each message to the seven churches. He who is called “Faithful and True” (Rev 19:11) is the same as the One who appears in the message to the church in Laodicea (Rev 3:14). The One whose “eyes are like blazing fire” (Rev 19:12, NIV) is also presented in the letter to the church in Thyatira (2:18). The expression of “out of His mouth comes a sharp sword” (Rev 19:15, NIV) is found in the message to the church in Pergamum (Rev 2:16). Therefore, the Son of Man is the warrior and the commander of God’s people against Satan’s provocation.

### **The Great Controversy Structure of Revelation**

The structure of the book of Revelation shows that its central theme is the GC between the Lamb and the Dragon. Stefanovic sees the GC (Rev 11:19-13:18) as the central segment of the book of Revelation from his understanding of the chiastic

structure.<sup>75</sup> William H. Shea and Jon Paulien agree that the central part of the book of Revelation is Revelation 12:1-15:4 based on the seven parts of the chiasm.<sup>76</sup> George Rice also sees Revelation 12 as the thematic center of the book of Revelation.<sup>77</sup> Peter Antonysamy Abir presents Revelation 11:15-15:8 as the center of Revelation, while Antoninus King Wai Siew considers Revelation 11:1-14:5 as the main section of Revelation based on the chiastic structure.<sup>78</sup> Gulley strongly asserts, “[T]his passage on the defeat of Satan at Calvary (Rev 12:9-11) is central in the Book of Revelation, and is the hermeneutical apex for interpreting its history and eschatology.”<sup>79</sup>

This central part (Rev 11-15) describes the battle between the Lamb and the Dragon. For example, Revelation clearly says “war broke out in heaven” (Rev 12:7, NKJV). And Revelation 12:11 introduces the weapons to overcome the Dragon: the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and the willingness to follow until death. In the opposite side of the Lamb, a beast from the sea “was granted... to make war with

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<sup>75</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 35-40.

<sup>76</sup>Shea, “The Chiastic Structure of Revelation 12:1-15:4: The Great Controversy Vision,” 269. William H. Shea, “The Central Prophecy of Revelation as the Transition from Apocalyptic History to Eschatology,” in *Christ, Salvation, and the Eschaton: Essays in Honor of Hans K. Larondelle*, ed. Daniel Heinz, Jiri Moskala, and Peter M. van Bemmelen (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 2009). Jon Paulien, “Seals and Trumpets: Some Current Discussions,” in *Symposium on Revelation: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, Book 1*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 187-188. Kenneth A. Strand divides the Book of Revelation with eight visions. Kenneth A. Strand, “The Eight Basic Visions,” in *Symposium on Revelation*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1992), 35-49.

<sup>77</sup>George Rice, *Revelation and the Great Controversy* (Brushton, NY: TEACH Services, 2009), 9.

<sup>78</sup>Abir, *The Cosmic Conflict of the Church: An Exegetico-Theological Study of Revelation 12: 7-12*, 54; Siew, *The War between the Two Beasts and the Two Witnesses: A Chiastic Reading of Revelation 11.1-14.5*, 75-76.

<sup>79</sup>Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, 435.

the saints and to overcome them” (Rev 13:7, NKJV). From the summit of the Great Controversy the major topics of the book are systematically contrasted in chiastic structures as shown below:

- A. Prologue (1:1-8)
- B. Promises to the overcomer (1:9-3:22)
- C. God’s work for humanity’s salvation (4-8:1)
- D. God’s wrath mixed with mercy (8:2-9:21)
- E. Commissioning John to prophesy (10-11:18)
- F. Great controversy between Christ and Satan (11:19-13:18)
- E’. Church proclaims the end-time gospel (14:1-20)
- D’. God’s final wrath unmixed with mercy (15-18:24)
- C’. God’s work for humanity’s salvation completed (19-21:4)
- B’. Fulfillment of the promises to the overcomer (21:5-22:5)
- A’. Epilogue (22:6-21)<sup>80</sup>

The book of Revelation must be understood from the perspective of the GC framework for the GC motif permeates all parts of the book. Therefore, the book of Revelation has to be read through the lens of the GC between God and Satan. When readers read the book with the GC motif, they can more easily grasp the whole history of redemption in which God takes leadership or initiative or the prerogative to lead the entire universe.

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<sup>80</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 14-15. See also Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, 435.

## The Great Controversy and Missional Leadership

According to Louis W. Fry et al., “[T]he military is a human laboratory for testing different methods of leadership.”<sup>81</sup> The military is a representative entity of human dynamics and when soldiers are under fire leadership qualities are more readily seen. In this respect the leadership of the Lamb is clearly demonstrated in the battle with the dragon.

### **The Great Controversy and Leadership Confrontation**

John saw the Lamb and 144,000 who were “standing on Mount Zion” (Rev 14:1). The 144,000 “are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who *follow* the Lamb wherever He *goes*” (Rev 14:4, emphasis added). The 144,000 are the followers of the Lamb and the Lamb is “their shepherd” (Rev 7:17) who “*leads* them to springs of the living water” (Rev 7:17, NIV).

These two prominent leadership verses (Rev 7:17; 14:4) occupy the center of the Great Controversy narratives. Before breaking the seventh seal (Rev 8), the Lamb is presented as the Leader of the 144,000 (Rev 7:17). Although the Lamb does not appear in the sequence of the seven trumpets (Rev 8:6-11:18) which are blown after the breaking of the seventh seal, the Lamb, the opener of the seven seals (5:9), works as the Leader of His people. Stefanovic argues, “the 144,000 sealed saints are portrayed as an organized army under the leadership of Jesus Christ. Their number stands for the totality of Israel

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<sup>81</sup>Fry, Vitucci, and Cedillo, “Spiritual Leadership and Army Transformation: Theory, Measurement, and Establishing a Baseline,” 854.



ready to enter the battle of the great day of God Almighty against Satan and his army.”<sup>82</sup>

Apparently, the Lamb comes on the stage in chapter 7 to encourage the 144,000 to endure while the wrath of God is poured out.

The second leadership verse (Rev 14:4) is located in the central part of Revelation between the description of the GC (Rev 11:19-13:18) and God’s final wraths (Rev 15-18:24) on the earth (Rev 16:1). Amid severe disasters, the 144,000 “follow the Lamb” (Rev 14:4) without being distracted by the evil forces. As a result, they stand “on Mount Zion” (Rev 14:1) with their Leader the Lamb and sing “the song of the Lamb” (Rev 15:3). When the war ends, the Lamb finally sits on His throne (Rev 22:1, 3).

In the opposite camp, the dragon counteracts the leadership of the Lamb by his counterfeit leadership. A beast from the sea leads “the whole world” (Rev 13:3, NIV) to worship “the dragon who gave his authority to the beast” (Rev 13:4). This beast exerts leadership by miraculous signs so “the whole earth was amazed [and *followed*] the beast” (Rev 13:3, emphasis added). The beast from the sea shares the same characteristics with the beast from the earth (Rev 13:11-12). They all work in federation with the Dragon. The beast out of the sea receives power and a throne and great authority from the Dragon (Rev 13:2) to lead “every tribe and people and tongue and nation” (Rev 13:7). Also, the beast out of the earth receives authority (Rev 13:12) and power (Rev 13:15, NIV) and “spoke as a dragon” (Rev 13:11). The beast uses coercive power to make the world follow him (Rev 13:12-17). It is apparent that this leadership is totally different from the Lamb’s leadership. While the Lamb is the one who was killed for His followers (Rev 5:6,

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<sup>82</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 268.

9), the dragon and his followers (beasts) kill people (Rev 13:15). While the Lamb goes and the 144,000 follow (Rev 14:4), the Dragon and the beasts command and coerce (Rev 13:14-17) and those who dwell on earth “worship” the beast out of the sea (Rev 13:8, 12) and the image of the first beast (Rev 13:15). Therefore, the final issue for people on earth is the question of who their leader is and who they choose to follow (cf. Josh 24:15).

### **The Centrality of the Lamb**

The central figure of Revelation is the Lamb.<sup>83</sup> The first occurrence of the Lamb is found in chapter 5 where the Lamb is praised and worshipped by the four living creatures and elders (Rev 5:5-10). They confess, “You [the Lamb] are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Rev 5:9, NIV). After their praise, myriad angels acclaim, “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength” (Rev 5:12, NIV). Afterward, every creature “in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea” (Rev 5:13) sing “to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, [be] blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever” (Rev 5:13). In chapter 7, the praise is continued by “a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and [all] tribes and peoples and tongues” (Rev 7:9), saying, “salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (Rev 7:10).

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<sup>83</sup>Naden, *The Lamb among the Beasts: A Christological Commentary on the Revelation of John That Unlocks the Meaning of Its Many Numbers*, 20-23. Naden presents the centrality of the Lamb in Revelation by a chiasmic structure. He argues that the coordinating principle or symbol integrating the whole book is the Lamb of God.

The Lamb is the one who is worthy to open the seven seals, who is praised by the creatures, and who is capable of saving people on the earth. Without His death and blood, the whole history of redemption cannot be completed. Thus, the ultimate target of Satan is the Lamb Himself. Revelation 17 states, “a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns” (Rev 17:3) “will make war against the Lamb” (Rev 17:14). However, “the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings” (Rev 17:14).

Revelation ends with the event of “the marriage of the Lamb” (Rev 19:7-9), and a description of a Lamb-centered new heaven and new earth. On the twelve foundation stones of the wall of the holy city, the New Jerusalem, are “the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (Rev 21:14). The Almighty God and the Lamb are the temple of the city (Rev 21:22). And “the glory of God has illumined it [city], and its lamp [is] the Lamb” (Rev 21:23). Because the New Jerusalem is constructed by the ministry of the Lamb, only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life shall come into the city (Rev 21:17). The final description of the Lamb comes in the last chapter of the book. John sees “the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Rev 22:1, NIV). Eventually, all nations (Rev 21:26; 22:2) serve God and the Lamb who regained the sovereignty from the devil who once usurped the authority of God. Everything is recovered so, “there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him” (Rev 22:3). Therefore, an understanding of the GC between God and Satan depends on an understanding of the character of the Lamb and His leadership model.

## **A Missional Leadership of the Great Controversy**

Miller argues, “The object of mission is to establish his [Jesus] lordship over all nations through voluntary submission of faith in his divine person and his redeeming work.”<sup>84</sup> The GC between God and Satan is not just local, but is global and universal. The battlefield extends over the whole earth. Satan invaded heaven and achieved some success by deceiving “a third of the stars of heaven” (Rev 12:4). After he was expelled to the earth (Rev 12:9, 13), his target was on “those who dwell on the earth” (Rev 13:14. cf. 6:10; 8:13). Satan won many followers including “the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man” (Rev 6:15. cf. 18:3, 9, 11, 15, 23). Literally, “all the nations” (Rev 18:3) have drunk of the wine of Babylon which makes them drunk, causing them to commit fornication with her. They have become rich by the wealth of her luxury. Satan’s mission continues until the final battle (Rev 20:7-10).

Amid these relentless attacks of Satan, God undertakes His missional project, called the plan of redemption. Miller finds missional urgency in the cosmic warfare motif in Revelation. Using military terms, he describes the mission of God as follow:

Mission is the invasion of Babylon, Satan’s territory, in search of God’s chosen (13:8). God’s agents of invasion invite the earth’s inhabitants to change sides, to profess a different loyalty, to submit to a different master. Mission is not the redemption of the system but the calling of people out of the system before the system is judged.<sup>85</sup>

Miller again emphasizes the role of the church on the earth, stating that:

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<sup>84</sup>Miller, “Mission in Revelation,” 232.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., 235.

One agent of mission is the embattled church. The church is the true people of God (2:9-10), followers of the Lamb, entrusted with the exclusive message that offers eternal life, provoking the wrath of Satan (12:17). The church is God's outpost in enemy territory and therefore a target of Babylon. The seven churches in Asia Minor (2:1-3:22) experienced spiritual warfare because of their calling and placement.<sup>86</sup>

The ultimate purpose of God's mission is to recover His sovereignty over every territory of the universe, including heaven, the earth, and under the earth (Rev 5:3, 13) and to prove His justice throughout the universe (Rev 15:4; 16:5, 7. cf. Rom. 3:3-8, 25-26).<sup>87</sup> The entity, which pursues the mission of God, is the remnant of the woman on the earth (Rev 12:17). The remnant has the mission to "prophecy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings" (Rev 10:11) who face the immanent wrath caused by Satan's deception. The remnant, represented as the three angels, has "an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people" (Rev 14:6). Finally, by their deeds and toil and perseverance (Rev 2:2) all the nations will come and worship God Almighty (Rev 15:4; 19:1-2). They follow the leading of the Lamb (Rev 14:4) and sing the song of the Lamb (Rev 15:3). Therefore, the leadership of the Lamb demonstrates missional leadership and the GC depicts missional leadership confrontation between the Lamb and the Dragon. A reader who expects to grasp the meaning of the *missio Dei* from Revelation has to pay attention to the leadership model of the Lamb.

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<sup>86</sup>Ibid.

<sup>87</sup>Gulley argues, "God's justice is central in the metanarrative of the cosmic controversy, and all doctrines of systematic theology must be understood in relation to this issue, for, properly understood, God's revelation manifests His justice in every truth of Scripture." Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, 442.

## **Supra-cultural Leadership Principles in Revelation**

Although Revelation addresses the time and place of first century Asia Minor, the leadership of the Lamb highlights supra-cultural leadership principles. Every leadership practice is naturally shaped by its own cultural situation. No one avoids cultural bias. Hiebert discusses cultural barriers such as cross-cultural misunderstandings (cognitive level), ethnocentrism (affective level), and premature judgments (evaluative level).<sup>88</sup> These attitudes challenge missionaries as they enter other cultural contexts. Missionaries without a global perspective cannot effectively transmit the Gospel and cannot transform cultures. Thus, missionaries must use supra-cultural leadership principles which may be applied to every culture. Revelation addresses this need for supra-cultural leadership principles.

First, the messages to the seven churches show that Revelation was not given only to one local place, but to a variety of places. The sender of the letters is the one “who is and who was and who is to come” (Rev 1:4). This self-disclosure is repeated in different ways in the first chapter. Jesus introduces Himself as “the Alpha and the Omega... who is and who was and who is to come” (Rev 1:8) and identifies Himself as “I am the first and the last” (Rev 1:17). Also, He is “the ruler of the kings of the earth” (Rev 1:5). The second coming of Jesus will be a supra-cultural event: “every eye will see Him...and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him” (Rev 1:7). Thus, His leadership in mission reaches beyond time and space.

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<sup>88</sup>Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 92-104.

Second, “the Lord’s day” (Rev 1:10) gives a hint of a supra-cultural event. Although John was locally confined “on the island called Patmos” (Rev 1:9), he had a revelation on “the Lord’s day” (Rev 1:10) which is certainly conceived as a permanent supra-cultural Sabbath day (Exod 20:8-11).<sup>89</sup> The reason to worship God is that He “created all things” and by His will “they were created and have their being” (Rev 4:11). The scope of Creation reaches “heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it” (Rev 10:6, NRSV). So, the message to the church in Laodicea has a global focus because the sender is “the ruler of God’s creation” (Rev 3:14). Therefore, the Lord’s day, the seventh-day Sabbath, implies that Revelation is given in a supra-cultural context.

Third, “the testimony of Jesus” carries a supra-cultural connotation. John was confined on the island because of the supra-cultural characteristics of God’s people which is “the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 1:9). “God’s Commandments” (Rev 12:17) exist for all the people of the world who “are blameless” (Rev 14:5) without any lie in their mouth. Likewise, “the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 12:17), “the spirit of prophecy” (Rev 19:10), is a supra-cultural gift to God’s people. The Holy Spirit is

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<sup>89</sup>Stefanovic, after he presents the five main proposals—(1) Sunday, (2) Easter Sunday, (3) the Emperor’s day, (4) the seventh day, Sabbath, and (5) the eschatological day of the Lord—on “the Lord’s day,” argues that it has a double meaning including the Sabbath, the seventh day, and the eschatological day of the Lord because the Sabbath would be an important focus in the eschatological events in Revelation. Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 94-98. Naden also sees the meaning of the Lord’s day in terms of the eschatological Sabbath which will be given to “those who keep the faith will be part of the eternal kingdom in an unending Sabbath of peace.” Naden, *The Lamb among the Beasts: A Christological Commentary on the Revelation of John That Unlocks the Meaning of Its Many Numbers*, 61. Jacques B. Doukhan, by his understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures, sees the dual-foci of the Lord’s day. He argues, “the Sabbath has always had eschatological overtones in the Bible (Isa. 58:14; 61:1-3), as well as in Jewish tradition, which understands the Sabbath as the sign of the day of deliverance and “the foretaste of the World-to-come.”” Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse through Hebrew Eyes*, 22.

granted to “anyone who wishes to take the water of life as a gift” (Rev 22:17, NRSV. cf. John 7:37-39; Acts 2:38-39; 8:18-20; 10:44-48; 11:17-18; 15:8; 19:1-7).<sup>90</sup> These two characteristics of the remnant point to the fact that the whole of Revelation sends a supra-cultural message to the inhabitants of the globe.

Fourth, the adversary Satan also works supra-culturally. His leadership expands “over every tribe and people and tongue and nation” (Rev 13:7). The great harlot “sits on many waters” (Rev 17:1) which “are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues” (Rev 17:5). She seduces “the kings of the earth” (Rev 17:2) to commit adultery and “those who dwell on the earth” (Rev 17:2) to drink the wine of her immorality. She, as “the great city,” has formidable leadership influence so that she “reigns over the kings of the earth” (Rev 17:18). Her leadership is very effective to the extent “all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed [acts of] immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality” (Rev 18:3). The great harlot is judged because she “was corrupting the earth with her immorality” (Rev 19:2). Satan exerts supra-cultural leadership by using supra-cultural weapons such as immorality, sensuality, wealth, luxury, splendor, cargoes and self-exaltation (cf. rev 18:3, 7, 9, 11-14).

Fifth, the descriptions of heaven in Revelation imply a supra-cultural aspect of missional leadership. The prophetic part begins with the eyewitness in heaven (Rev 4:1-2) and ends with the scene of “a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev 21:1). The prophetic

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<sup>90</sup>Doukhan argues, “[T]he concluding statement of each letter, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches,” seems to address a larger audience. The letters speak to all the churches, and anyone may benefit from their content.” Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse through Hebrew Eyes*, 27-28.



voices come from heaven (Rev 10:4, 8; 11:12, 15; 12:10; 14:2, 13; 16:1; 18:4; 19:1). John sees the prophetic scene opened in heaven (Rev 10:1; 11:19; 12:1, 3, 7; 14:6, 14, 17; 15:1, 5; 18:1; 19:11, 17; 20:1; 21:1-2, 10). John watched and heard the prophecies which developed in heaven (cf. Rev 8:13). The prophecy of Revelation is not local, but cosmic. The scenes of Revelation start on the earth (Rev 1-3), move to heaven (Rev 4-20), and then back to earth (Rev 21-22).<sup>91</sup> The scope of the prophecies expands to heaven and the whole earth. The story of Revelation is a story of God's leadership under which His people march into "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev 21:1). Therefore, the principles which can be derived from it are supra-cultural.<sup>92</sup>

Lastly, the eschatological characteristics of Revelation highlight supra-cultural lessons. The prologue of Revelation introduces the reader to "the things which must shortly take place" (Rev 1:1).<sup>93</sup> Then, the prophecy is specifically unfolded when John is told to "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things" (Rev 4:1). Finally, the epilogue is a reaffirmation of "the things which must shortly take place" (Rev 22:6). Every detailed description in the body of Revelation is eschatological. All the lessons of Revelation are global and cosmic, transcending cultural boundaries. The conclusion of Revelation shows that the recipient of the letter is "the churches" (Rev

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<sup>91</sup>Paulien, *The Deep Things of God*, 126-132; Paulien, "Seals and Trumpets: Some Current Discussions," 187-188.

<sup>92</sup>Paulien argues, "the ultimate reason to study Revelation is that this strange book offers us a glimpse of heaven that you can't get anywhere else." Paulien, *The Deep Things of God*, 7.

<sup>93</sup>Gregory. K. Beale sees the entire book of Revelation is eschatological. He argues that Revelation 1:1 has to be understood in the light of eschatological context of Daniel 2 because of textual, contextual, and thematic commonality. He asserts, "John views the death and resurrection of Christ as inaugurating the long-awaited kingdom of the end times predicted in Daniel 2." Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text.*, 154.

22:16). The churches represent “all” of God’s people (Rev 22:21) coming from “every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev 5:9; cf. 7:9; 13:7; 14:6). The leadership principles and lessons from the book of Revelation are supra-cultural in nature.

### **Summary**

Revelation is a book of pastoral leadership. A few terms such as “the churches,” “Revelation,” “the Lamb Shepherd,” “servants and prophets,” “fellow servant,” and “angels” contain leadership connotations. The messages to the seven churches certainly show that the book’s purpose is to give pastoral exhortation in which “the Son of Man” leads churches confronted by spiritual challenges. “The Son of Man” (Rev 1:13-16) shows the characteristics of pastoral leadership such as accountability, faithfulness, spiritual competence, sympathizing emotion, relational leadership, voluntary spirit, and character.

Revelation is also a book of missional leadership. Revelation calls “every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Rev 14:6) to repent and be saved. It describes the *missio Dei* in which God proactively leads His Church amid the battles of the cosmic conflict between God and Satan. The GC introduced in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 occupies much of Revelation. The protagonist, the Son of Man, is described as a warrior (Rev 1:13-16; 19:11-16). The structure of Revelation itself emphasizes the GC motif. Two prominent leadership texts (Rev 7:14; 14:4) occupy the center of the GC narratives. The GC motif is embedded in the leadership confrontation between the Lamb and the Dragon. While the Lamb leads the 144,000 with a commendable leadership approach, the Dragon merely counterfeits the Lamb’s leadership. Revelation outlines a model of missional leadership deduced from the conflict between the Lamb and the Dragon. This cosmic conflict

reveals the book of Revelation as a biblical source that presents supra-cultural leadership principles for mission. The next chapter will explore more specific supra-cultural principles from the GC motif. The theological examination will be used to derive crucial topics relevant to the missional leadership.

## CHAPTER 4

### A LEADERSHIP THEOLOGY FROM THE GREAT CONTROVERSY WORLDVIEW

#### **Introduction**

This chapter purposes to explore a leadership theology based on the GC worldview in Revelation. A common problem of Christian leadership is that it is practiced according to the leaders' own cultural assumptions without seriously considering biblical leadership principles. Although biblical leadership principles have to be applied to each cultural context and situation, while respecting cultural preferences and differences,<sup>1</sup> some leaders assume, "their limited culture-bound assumptions about leadership are both biblical and universal."<sup>2</sup> The first task in doing missional leadership is to understand the supra-cultural principles of biblical leadership to prevent an implantation of cultural relativism in cross-cultural mission.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Plueddemann exemplifies Paul's situational leadership. At times Paul was powerful, charismatic speakers. But in cases of 1 Corinthians 9 he shows a situational style. Plueddemann argues, "Certainly there are biblical absolutes, but we must look at all of Scripture through the eyes of several cultures." Plueddemann, *Leading across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church*, 156.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 155.

<sup>3</sup>The author basically follows Plueddemann's argumentation on the need of theology and worldview of leadership prior to practice leadership in different cultures. See *ibid.*, 157-165.

A theology of leadership has to be defined prior to practicing leadership in cultures. A well-developed biblical worldview can be applied across cultures avoiding cultural relativism, because the Bible has the authority over every culture. Inherent in the foundations of a culture are beliefs from which the ultimate purpose and nature of leadership are defined.<sup>4</sup> A leader's worldview inevitably affects his/her behavior. So, a biblically-shaped worldview is a foundation of Christian leadership theory and practice from which Christian leadership behaviors emerge.

Plueddemann emphasizes the importance of doing a theology of leadership for the purpose of discovering universal principles that could be applied to any culture. He argues, "cultural insights describe what the leadership values *are*, but theology tells us what they *should* be" (Italics in original).<sup>5</sup> He recognizes the importance of a biblically-shaped worldview as an essential element in preparing effective missional leaders for the global church.<sup>6</sup> This study premises that the GC narrative is a biblically-shaped worldview supplying a foundation of leadership theology.

The GC motif provides a biblically-shaped worldview through which the reality of the world can be adequately understood. The GC metanarrative looks at the entire sweep of human history as the spiritual conflict between God and Satan. This motif is a grand metanarrative in which Satan initiates a cosmic war and attempts to usurp Christ's authority (cf. Isa 14:12-14; Ezek 28:14-17; Rev 12:7-9) and in which God vindicates his

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 159.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 157.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 165.

character and the sovereignty of His kingdom founded on love and justice (cf. Ps 89:14; 97:2).<sup>7</sup> This spiritual battle is conducted at the worldview level—a deep level of assumptions basic to cultural behavior<sup>8</sup>—in which God and Satan clash to win the loyalty of people on the earth, i.e., the battle is taking place at the cognitive, affective and evaluative levels of human thought and belief systems. People’s behavioral patterns result from their worldview assumptions. A group’s perception of the world is the most significant element affecting their behavior and even their destiny. Thus, people are deceived by “the deep things of Satan” (Rev 2:24), while God “searches the minds and hearts” (Rev 2:23).<sup>9</sup> To see the GC as a worldview paradigm has great value for Christian mission and missional leadership, for it helps Christians to clearly understand the *missio Dei* at the existential or ontological level.

Boyd argues, “The New Testament is thoroughly conditioned by a warfare worldview. In this view the whole of the cosmos is understood to be caught up in a fierce

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<sup>7</sup>Dan B. Allender sees, in Psalm 62:11-12, two words—strong and loving—as the essence of God’s character which all Christian leaders should follow. Dan B. Allender, *Leading Character* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 17.

<sup>8</sup>The term worldview can be defined in the anthropological viewpoint, according to Charles H. Kraft, as “underlying perspectives” on the basis of which the cultural concepts and behavior or “deep level of assumptions basic to cultural behavior.” Kraft, *Culture, Communication and Christianity*, 51, 79. Hiebert defines worldview as “fundamental cognitive, affective, and evaluative *presuppositions* [emphasis added] a group of people make about the nature of things, and which they use to order their lives.” Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*, 15, 25. David W. Shenk defines, “worldview is the cultural core.” Shenk, “The Gospel and Culture,” 401-402. Those scholars commonly define worldview as “core value” of culture.

<sup>9</sup>Paul also recognized the worldview dimension of God’s wisdom. He proclaimed, “God has revealed it [God’s secret wisdom, verse 6] to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God” (2 Cor. 10).

battle between two rival kingdoms.”<sup>10</sup> Then, he insists, “When we accept the warfare worldview of Scripture, the *intellectual* problem of evil is transformed into the *practical* problem of evil, just as it was in the New Testament (emphasis added).”<sup>11</sup> The warfare worldview has the advantage of drawing our attention to the practical issues in real Christian life and alerts us against the evil force invading from every direction.

Boyd’s insight is greatly relevant to the issue of worldview transformation in missiological discourses. For instance, Hiebert argues that in the course of conversion a person’s worldview must be transformed because religious allegiance involves a clash of worldviews.<sup>12</sup> To accomplish worldview transformation, the biblical worldview at first has to be defined. Thus, Hiebert introduces a biblically-shaped worldview using anthropological insights. In his book, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*, Hiebert includes diachronic themes—cosmic story/human history, shalom/warfare, and marriage—in which he infers the GC worldview. He argues, “central to a biblical worldview are its views of God’s cosmic story and human history. The Bible is not a set of theological treatises or devotional meditations, although both are found in it. It is basically the story of God and his relationship to humans.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Boyd, *God at War: The Bible and Spiritual Conflict*, 290.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 291.

<sup>12</sup>Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*, 315.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 268-305.

A few Adventist scholars, like Hiebert and Boyd, present the GC as a basis for a biblically-shaped worldview.<sup>14</sup> However, most of them have made their proposals based on a philosophical or religious approach along with a predominantly Western mindset. As a result, their cognitive understanding can hardly respond to the affective and evaluative dimensions of culture.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, the GC motif needs to be worked on to also satisfy the cultural needs in various mission fields. The main value of a biblically-shaped worldview is to prepare Christians to competently engage in spiritual battles in every aspect of life. The GC metanarrative can supply sufficient answers to help people develop a biblical worldview encompassing the cognitive, affective, and evaluative aspects of life.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Norman M. Gulley is the one who sees the GC as a worldview dimension. He depicts the GC in terms of the centrality of Christ and he recognizes that all fundamental beliefs are not merely placed in Scripture to give knowledge, but to provide practical help in discerning the contours of the principles that shape the biblical worldviews. He suggests that all the fundamental beliefs should be rearranged by the order of the GC. Norman R. Gulley, "The Cosmic Controversy: World View for Theology and Life," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 7, no. 2 (1996): 89. Richard M. Davidson also sees the GC and the Sanctuary as "the dual foci of the grand metanarrative of Scripture" which has relevance in presenting the gospel to postmodern and non-literate societies. Richard M. Davidson, "Cosmic Metanarrative for the Coming Millennium," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 11, no. 1 and 2 (2000): 102-103, 105, 119. Humberto M. Rasi presents the GC as a metanarrative which explains all the issues of God's salvation history. Humberto M. Rasi, "The Challenge of Secularism," in *Adventist Mission in the 21st Century: The Joys and Challenges of Presenting Jesus to a Diverse World*, ed. Jon L. Dybdahl (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1999), 68. Larry L. Lichtenwaller reads the book of Revelation from the perspective of a worldview conflict drawing his ideas from David K. Naugle's book, *Worldview: The History of a Concept*. However, he mentions that his argument concerning worldview conflict is based on a moral spiritual frame rather than on an anthropological definition of worldview. Larry L. Lichtenwaller, "Worldview Transformation and Mission: Narrative, Theology, and Ritual in John's Apocalypse," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 21, no. 1-2 (2010): 220.

<sup>15</sup>Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*, 15.

<sup>16</sup>For the discussion of three dimensions of worldview, see Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 45-49; Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*, 50-65.



However, although Revelation depicts the GC between God and Satan, can the GC worldview in Revelation be explained from an anthropological perspective? Doukhan suggests that Revelation may be read from a three dimensional perspective. Although he may not recognize anthropological concepts, he implies the first beatitude of the book contains three aspects of worldview: “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near” (Rev 1:3). First, Doukhan emphasizes the affective aspect of the book from the liturgical practice of the synagogue, saying,

The nature of the reading of this book is essentially religious. Interestingly, the verb “to read” is the only one in the singular form: “*he* who reads.” The other verbs are in the plural form: “*those* who hear,” *those* who keep.” The reader has an audience—he is not alone. The words he reads must be heard by the multitude—“those who hear,” according to the liturgical practice of the synagogue. We are in the sacred context of corporate worship. The Apocalypse is to be read as a liturgy; as an emotional and mystical experience; as poetry, with its rhythms, symbols, and spiritual lessons (*Italics original*).<sup>17</sup>

This liturgical characteristic clearly presents an affective element of Revelation. Doukhan also finds a cognitive aspect of Revelation. He points out, “[W]e have to “hear” the prophecy, which means in the context of Hebrew thinking, that we have to *understand* it (1 Kings 3:9; Neh 8:3; Jer 6:10; Rev 2:7; 3:22) (*Italics in original*).”<sup>18</sup> Lastly, he sees an evaluative aspect of Revelation arguing, “The Hebrew conception of ‘hearing’ also implies a willingness to live up to what one has understood. The *Shema Israel* (Deut. 6:4-9) is more than a pleasant melody to enjoy. In Hebrew, the verb ‘to

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<sup>17</sup>Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse through Hebrew Eyes*, 12.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 13.

hear' (to listen, to understand) is synonymous with the verbs 'to keep' and 'to obey' (Italics in original).<sup>19</sup>

Therefore, the first beatitude suggests that Revelation has to be read, heard, and understood from a cognitive, affective, and evaluative perspective. The entire content of Revelation reflects three aspects of the GC worldview.<sup>20</sup> As one approaches Revelation from a worldview level, it will convey new meanings in which the concept of *missio Dei* and missional leadership occupy a vital place.

### **The Cognitive Aspect of the Great Controversy Worldview and Leadership Principles**

The cognitive aspect of the GC worldview has already been addressed by some Adventist scholars.<sup>21</sup> Although numerous concepts may be used to explain the GC worldview,<sup>22</sup> three themes—the throne of God, God the Trinity, and people—which

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Hiebert defines worldview as “fundamental cognitive, affective, and evaluative presuppositions a group of people make about the nature of things, and which they use to order their lives.” Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*, 15, 25.

<sup>21</sup>See footnote 14. See also Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, 430-453.

<sup>22</sup>For example, the words “Father in heaven,” “name,” “kingdom,” “will,” “power,” “glory,” etc. in the Lord’s Prayer [LP] construct the crucial elements of the GC metanarratives in Revelation. Roy Hammerling argues, “Early Christian authors assumed that the LP was both a summary of the essence of gospel teaching, which includes essential Christian doctrines, and a worthy summation of ethical and virtuous behavior.” Roy Hammerling, *The Lord’s Prayer in the Early Church: The Pearl of Great Price* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 1. Tertullian asserts that “the whole Gospel is to be found in the prayer.” Tertullian, Cyprian, and Origen, *On the Lord’s Prayer*, ed. John Behr, St Vladimir’s Seminary Press Popular Patristics Series (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2004), 42. He connects the phrase “May your Kingdom come” with the petition of the souls of the martyrs beneath the altar in Rev. 6:10. (ibid., 46.) Also, he concludes his treatise on prayer that “Prayer is the buttress of faith, our armor and weaponry against the enemy that watches us from every side.” (ibid., 64.)

overarch the entire description of the GC, are used to compare different aspects of God and Satan and to draw some theological issues in relation to leadership.

### The Throne of God

The topic of the throne of God provides learning opportunities for Christian leaders who would know how to practice power with authority in Christian communities.<sup>23</sup> The GC worldview in Revelation describes the leadership confrontation between God and Satan. This cosmic conflict originated before the creation of the earth when Satan rebelled and sought to establish his throne in place of God's (cf. Isa 14:12-14, Ezek 28:16).<sup>24</sup> Revelation says, "There was war in heaven" (Rev 12:7)<sup>25</sup> between Satan (Rev 12:9) and Christ (referred to as Michael in Rev 12:7) and that this war has revolved around the throne of God, the symbol of the sovereignty of God,<sup>26</sup> which Satan attempted to occupy (cf. Isa 14:13-14). The throne belongs to the Father (Rev 3:21), but the Lamb is also enthroned with the Father (Rev 22:1, 3). Moreover, the throne is

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<sup>23</sup>Daegeuk Nam comprehensively studied the throne of God from both the Hebrew Bible and ancient Near Eastern literature and concluded the throne of God represents the kingship of God, the judgeship of God, the creatorship of God, authority of God, God's victory, the guarantee of individuals and national safety, and divine attributes. Daegeuk Nam, "The "Throne of God" Motif in the Hebrew Bible," (ThD dissertation, Andrews University, 1989) 460-465.

<sup>24</sup>Laszlo Gallusz argues, "Every detail of the vision—all beings, objects and activities—are directly related to the heavenly throne as the focal point of John's cosmology and find significance only in their placement around this center of the universe." Laszlo Gallusz, "Throne in the Book of Revelation Part 1: Throne of God," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 23, no. 2 (2012): 41-42.

<sup>25</sup>Stefanovic presents, "the war in heaven" in Revelation 12:7 was takes places after the cross and ascension of Jesus (12:5; cf. John 12:31) by examination of textual evidences. Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 395-399. Gulley also agrees on this position. Norman R. Gulley, "Revelation's Throne Scenes," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 8, no. 1-2 (1997): 218-219; Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, 434-435.

<sup>26</sup>Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 284.

promised as a reward to the saints who overcome evil (Rev 3:21; 20:4). The throne of God is where the worship of the living creatures, the twenty-four elders, and the 144,000 takes place (Rev 4:9-10; 14:3; 19:4-5). Dominion assigned to mankind at Creation is also restored after the conclusion of the GC and is affirmed by offer to sit with Jesus on the throne (Gen 1:26, 28; 2:19; Rev 1:4, 6; 3:21). Also, the authority to judge comes from the throne (Rev 20:12).

When Satan failed to take God's throne in heaven (Rev 12:8), he set up his own throne on the earth (Rev 2:13; cf. 12:4). The Dragon, Satan (cf. Rev 12:9; 20:2), imitates God's sovereignty in giving "his power and his throne and great authority" to the beast coming out of the sea (Rev 13:1-2), but the fifth bowl of God's wrath "poured out on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness" (Rev 16:10). In contrast, the throne of God which was once attacked by Satan "endures forever and ever" (Ps 45:6. cf. Ps 9:7; 92:2; Lam 5:19; Rev 21:3, 5).

The GC, therefore, is a leadership confrontation over the throne of God which stands for the place of worship, judgment, and sovereignty. Satan seeks to usurp God's throne by undermining God's authority. However, God reestablishes his damaged reputation by the ministry and leadership of the Lamb (cf. Rev 5:6-7; 7:9-10, 17). Finally, the throne of God is rebuilt in a new heaven and a new earth (cf. Rev 21:1-3, 5; 22:3). The Lamb's role in restoring the throne of God represents not only the importance of God's sovereignty, but also an exemplary leadership pattern.

The GC contrasts God's leadership with that of Satan by focusing on their approaches to power and authority. The throne of God which is the place of worship and

judgment was challenged by Satan's self-lifting spirit and behavior. Although God could have exterminated Satan, He chose a longer process to restore His damaged kingdom.

God lets the Lamb enter into the fierce battlefield. The Lamb seems to have no power and authority to fight against the Dragon who wields force and might arbitrarily. However, the result of the confrontation proves that the way of the Lamb is more powerful than that of the Dragon. The Lamb has triumphed as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David" (Rev 5:5).<sup>27</sup>

The distinctive characteristic of the Lamb is summarized in the phrase "the Lamb who was slain" (Rev 5:12; cf. 5:6, 9).<sup>28</sup> The Lamb conquered the Dragon by His crucifixion and resurrection, i.e., He overcame the Dragon without coercive power. He demonstrated that love and sacrifice are the primary values in the kingdom of God. The Lamb did not hold on to His power and authority, but rather laid His life down so that many could be saved. As a result, He won people's hearts (cf. Matt 5:3). The Lamb's voluntary sacrifice helped to reestablish God's kingdom. This example sets humility as a key element in Christian leadership.

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<sup>27</sup>Sook-young Kim argues, "The image of the Lion gives the assurance of the warrior's final victory, whereas the Lamb suggests the manner of the fighting: how the Messiah prevails." Kim, "The Trajectory of the 'Warrior Messiah' Motif in Scripture and Intertestamental Writings," 345-346. Stefanovic explains, "While the Lion shows what Christ did (he 'has overcome'), the Lamb shows how he did it." Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 210. According to Aune, "the two complementary aspects of this apocalyptic metaphor, namely, Jesus as the conquering Messiah (v5) and Jesus as the atoning sacrificial victim (v6)" or "This dual presentation of the salvific function of Jesus as the crucified Messiah, i.e., in terms of a *theologia cruce*s, "theology of the cross," and a *theologia glorie*s, "theology of glory," pervades various phases of early Christianity including the Gospel of Mark, the letters of Paul, and the Fourth Gospel" (cf. 1 Cor. 1:23-24, Italics original). Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 352.

<sup>28</sup>Aune explains, "The slaughtered Lamb" contains two theological motifs of death and resurrection from the comparative particle "as, like" (5:6). "A Lamb standing, as if slain" (5:6) "does not mean that the Lamb only *appeared* to have been slaughtered but rather that the Lamb had been slaughtered and was now alive" (emphasis original). Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 353.

Because of His sacrificial love, the saints follow “the Lamb wherever He goes” (Rev 14:4). He won sinners’ loyalty back to Him. The Lamb also expects the same self-sacrificial spirit from His followers. He will be satisfied as he will see “a result of the anguish of His soul” (Isa. 53:11).

The power and authority in Christian leadership have to be understood in the light of the Lamb’s sacrificial behaviors. The Christian leader’s power and authority are to be used to positively influence people’s loyalty toward God. The Dragon’s attitude shows that he failed to get people’s hearts by the use of power and authority (cf. Rev 16:10). He misunderstood the purpose of power and authority and consequently misused them. He wielded power and illegitimate authority for his self-exaltation.

However, the Christian leaders are those leaders who follow the Lamb’s paradoxical attitude. They know the Lamb’s genuine motivation of sacrifice. Paul states the following: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich” (2 Cor. 8:9). In the same manner Christian leaders commend themselves “by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; [regarded] as deceivers and yet true; as known yet well-known, as dying yet behold, we live; as punished yet not put to death, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things” (2 Cor. 6:8-10).

In this regard, it is a dangerous thing for Christian leaders to believe they are “rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing” (Rev 3:17). Whenever this situation exists, they will not be able to touch other’s hearts. They cannot genuinely lead people into the kingdom of God where power and authority exist not for self but for

others. The kingdom of God is the place operating by power invested in the powerless. No dictatorship exists. Rather, the throne of God is shared with the Lamb (cf. 7:10, 17; 22:1, 3) and the redeemed saints (cf. 3:21; 20:4).

Christian leadership, therefore, can effectively work only when leaders share power and authority with other leaders and voluntarily lay down their power to serve others (cf. Matt. 20:26; 23:11; Mark 9:35; 10:43; Luke 22:26, 27). Leaders imitate the Dragon whenever they monopolize power and authority instead of sharing them with others. Christian leaders follow the pattern of the servant leadership model of the Lamb.

### God the Trinity

The relationship between God and the Lamb and the Holy Spirit in Revelation shows the model relationship between Christian leaders and followers. The participation of the Trinity in the cosmic confrontation between good and evil is a model of unity and cooperation in Christian leadership (cf. Rev 1:4-6; 4:1-5:14; 14:6-13; 22:1-17). The redemptive ministry of Jesus in Revelation focuses on “His God and Father” (Rev 1:6). The Father is worthy and deserves “the glory and the dominion forever and ever” (Rev 1:6). The Son is mindful of the source of His authority: “I also have received [authority] from My Father” (Rev 2:27). He has the permission from the Father to exercise power.

In spite of the fact that the Father has the prerogative, the Son is not subjugated to the Father’s sovereignty. Rather, Revelation reveals, “the Son of God” (Rev 2:18) who is “one like a son of man” (Rev 1:13; 14:14) and “the Lamb” (Rev 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16, 7:9, 10, 14, 17, 12:11, 13:8; 14:1, 4, 10; 15:3, 17:14; 19:7, 9; 21:9, 14, 22, 23, 27; 22:1, 3) is the center character of the GC narrative. The description of the relationship between the Father and the Son shows that the Lamb’s position is equal with Father. The Lamb

“took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne” (Rev 5:7, NKJV). Then every creature praises both “Him who sits on the throne, and *to the Lamb*” (Rev 5:13, emphasis added). Likewise, a great multitude cries out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and *to the Lamb*” (Rev 7:10, emphasis added). Both the Father and the Lamb are worshiped by the redeemed.<sup>29</sup>

In spite of their functional differentiation, both the Father and the Lamb show unity in the redemptive ministry. The relationship between the Father and the Son is not based on power and authority. Although the Son of God seems to be under the authority of the Father (cf. Rev 1:6; 5:7), the text shows no hint He is subordinated to Father (cf. Rev 22:1, 3).<sup>30</sup> Rather, He sits on the throne with the Father and has the authority to identify the 144,000 by both “His name and the name of His Father” (Rev 14:1).<sup>31</sup>

Additional evidence of their equality is found in the Revelation 22:4: “They will see *his* face, and *his* name will be on their foreheads” (NIV, emphasis added). The

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<sup>29</sup>Though the Lamb is the proactive leader (cf. Rev 7:17; 14:4) who is directly sacrificed (cf. Rev 5:6, 12; 7:14; 13:8) for sinners, the conqueror (cf. Rev 14:1; 17:14), and “Lord of lords and King of kings” (Rev 17:14), so it is lawful for us to sing “the song of the Lamb” (Rev 15:3) and to participate in “the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev 19:9), the final authority and throne belong to both the Father and the Lamb (cf. Rev 5:13; 21:1; 22:3).

<sup>30</sup>The apostle John recognizes that Jesus was equal with God (John 10:30, 38; 14:11, 20; 16:15; 17:5, 10, 11, 21, 22) while He was under the authority of Father (John 7:16; 8:42; 12:49, 50; 14:28; 17:2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 18). Thus, the relationship between Jesus and Father is in equality and in hierarchy. However, this vertical relationship does not mean any sense of servility, rather intimate closeness. Because Jesus was one with Father, He was sent by God (John 14:10; 17:21, 23), i.e., His obedience and dispatch could possible because He was perfectly one with Father. Amazingly, this relationship between Father and the Son is the same one between Jesus and human beings (John 20:17, 21, 23). John articulates the final words of Jesus, “I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God” (John 20:17). In the same manner in which Jesus was sent by God in perfect equality Jesus “also send” us (John 20:21) and gives authority to “forgive anyone” (John 20:23).

<sup>31</sup>The NKJV mentions only “His Father’s name” (Rev 14:1).



pronoun genitive singular masculine αὐτοῦ (his) could refer to both God and the Lamb. The antecedent to “his” can be derived from the phrase “the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Rev 22:1, 3).<sup>32</sup> This singular pronoun denotes the equality between God and the Lamb.

The work of the Holy Spirit is crucial in revealing and leading prophecy (cf. Rev 1:10; 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:1, 6, 13, 22; 4:2; 14:13; 17:3; 21:10). The Holy Spirit symbolized as the seven Spirits, presides before God’s throne (Rev 1:4; 4:5). The seven Spirits are so closely connected with the Lamb that the Lamb appears “*having* seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth” (5:6, emphasis added).<sup>33</sup> While the seven horns signify the complete and absolute power of the Lamb, the seven eyes symbolize the omniscience and omnipresence of the Holy Spirit who participates in the ministry of the Lamb.<sup>34</sup> Christ’s entire ministry on the earth was in partnership with the Holy Spirit.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Because of this grammatical disaccord, Aune opens a possibility that the pronoun “his” could refer to either God or the Lamb, or (less plausibly) to both. David E. Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 52C vols., Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1181.

<sup>33</sup>The Greek word ἔχω (echo, “to have,” “to hold,” “possess,” “to adhere or cling,” “to be closely joined to a person or a thing”) emphasizes the inseparable relationship between the Lamb and the Holy Spirit.

<sup>34</sup>Robert Mounce affirms, “[T]he seven horns of the Lamb symbolize his irresistible might. His seven eyes speak of that completeness of vision which leads to perfect knowledge.” Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 145-146.

<sup>35</sup>Larry L. Lichtenwaller, “The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit in the General Epistles and the Book of Hebrews,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 23, no. 2 (2012): 106. Lichtenwaller articulates, “[W]herever the Lamb goes, whatever the Lamb does, the Spirit is present at work. The Spirit qualifies essential features of the Lamb’s being and work. Likewise the Lamb qualifies essential features of the Spirit’s being and work. The ‘sevenfold Spirit’ is so closely identified with Christ that they are as if they are one.... Christ and the Spirit work in the same way and do the same things in relation to the world even when the emphasis and role is different.” *Ibid.*, 107.

The Holy Spirit is “sent out” (Rev 5:6) to the earth (cf. John 16:7). The Greek word ἀποστέλλω (“to send forth,” “to send out”) “was a technical term among the Jews for sending out an official representative with a special task.”<sup>36</sup> Thus, the role of the Holy Spirit is not passive, though He was sent. He has “a mission to carry out on earth.”<sup>37</sup> The invitation of the Holy Spirit in Rev 22:17 shows that He actively participates in the redemptive ministry, saying “come” (22:17). He earnestly calls people who are thirsty and wish to take “the free gift of the water of life” (22:17, NIV). The purpose and will of the triune God is perfectly the same.

Satan also works with a counterfeit trinity.<sup>38</sup> According to Rev 16:13, “[coming] out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs.” Thus, Satan also known as the Dragon (Rev 12:9; 20:2) and the beast and the false prophet compose the allied forces and perform “signs” (Rev 16:14) and “gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty” (Rev 16:14). However, their relationship is not permanent. For instance, the beast and the ten horns “will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn up with fire” (Rev 17:16). The coalition between the beast and the harlot endures only to the extent that the relationship is beneficial to them. Thus, their “common purpose” (Rev 17:17) merely endures “until the words of God should be fulfilled” (Rev 17:17).

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<sup>36</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 204.

<sup>37</sup>Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 146.

<sup>38</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 499-500.

To sum up, the triune God is connected by the central role of the Lamb in the Cosmic Confrontation. The Lamb begins His ministry by breaking the seals and opening the scroll (Rev 5:2) through the authority conferred to Him by the Father (Rev 5:2, 7). Also, He works with the Holy Spirit in an inseparable relationship (Rev 5:6). Equality and unity in diversity are key dynamics in the relationship in the Godhead. This relationship between God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is the model relationship that should exist between Christian leaders and followers.

### People

Two classes of people appear in the Revelation—the ones who dwell on the earth and the ones who dwell in heaven—both reflect motivational issues of Christian leadership. The original warfare in heaven over the issue of the sovereignty of God escalated into a territorial issue. Since Satan successfully deceived Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, the people on the earth are divided into two groups—the ones who dwell in the heavens (Rev 12:12; 13:6) and the ones who dwell on the earth (Rev 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 17:2, 8)<sup>39</sup>—according to their allegiance.

The main issue in this cosmic warfare revolves around the question of whether God is worthy to receive allegiance from creatures.<sup>40</sup> Those creatures who give total allegiance to Christ are called “to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father” (Rev 1:6, NRSV. cf. 5:10). The kingdom of God is not a literal territorial nation, but the people

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<sup>39</sup>Stefanovic presents that the phrase “those who dwell on the earth” is “a technical expression for the wicked, namely, those who resist the gospel and persecute God’s faithful people.” “The redeemed saints in Revelation, however, are depicted as “those who dwell in heaven” (Rev. 13:6) and reign in the heavenly places (cf. Rev. 1:6; 5:9-10).” *Ibid.*, 245.

<sup>40</sup>Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, 432.

on the earth. They come from “every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev 5:9; cf. 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; 17:15), but they existentially belong to the heavenly realm (Rev 12:12; 13:6).

The identity of this group is clearly depicted in Revelation 7. The apostle John looked at a great multitude and described them as coming “from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb” (Rev 7:9, NIV) and “they were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands” (7:9, NIV). At that moment, John was asked a question by one of the elders, “These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and from where have they come?” (7:13). John replied, “My lord, you know.” The elder identified the group of people as “the ones who come out of the great *tribulation*, and they have washed their *robes* and made them white in the *blood* of the Lamb” (7:14, emphasis added).

These passages highlight the characteristics of the saints<sup>41</sup> with three elements: perseverance before the great tribulation, wearing white robes, and the blood alliance with the Lamb. First, overcoming the tribulation is a prerequisite of being the people of God (Rev cf. 7:14). The seven churches were faced with severe persecution (cf. Rev 2:10, 13; 3:10). Their salient attitude was perseverance (cf. Rev 2:2-3, 10, 18; 3:10). Confronting severe persecutions, they had to fight for their faith and to overcome tribulations (cf. Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). Thus, the distinguishing mark of the saints is patient endurance (cf. Rev 13:10; 14:12). As such, the redeemed are described as

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<sup>41</sup>The term “the saints” occurs from chapter 5 (5:8; 8:3, 4; 11:18; 13:7, 10; 14:12; 17:6; 18:20, 24; 19:8; 20:9). The usages of the term show that they are martyrs (13:10; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24) who are waiting for righteous judgment (5:8; 8:3, 4; 11:18; 18:20). Also, they are the representatives of God who manifest perseverance (13:10; 14:12) and obedience (19:8).

ones “who come out of the great tribulation” (7:14). The ones called to lead are prepared for leadership by their endurance in suffering through tribulation as was Jesus (Heb 2:10).

The second characteristic of the saints is wearing white robes (cf. 3:4, 5, 18; 4:4; 7:14). Their clothes are “fine linen, bright [and] clean” (Rev 19:8). The twenty-four elders (Rev 4:4), the seven angels with the seven plagues (Rev 15:6), the armies in heaven (Rev 19:14) are also described as wearing white robes. The white robe symbolizes “a person’s moral and spiritual condition” or “a person’s behavior or conduct”<sup>42</sup> as the qualification of heavenly beings (cf. Rev 21:26-27; 22:14-15). The white linen of the saints signifies “the righteous acts” (Rev 19:8). Thus, “nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying shall ever come into it [New Jerusalem]” (Rev 21:27). Only “those who wash their robes...have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city” (Rev 22:14). Christian leaders are qualified not only by their competence, but also by their godly character.

The third characteristic of the saints relates to the blood of the Lamb (Rev 7:14). Like their leader, the Lamb, the saints are subjected to blood shedding by their enemies (cf. Rev 16:6; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2). The saints “did not love their life even to death” (Rev 12:11). Particularly, entire chapters of Revelation unfold around the petition of the saints under the altar (Rev 6:9-10).<sup>43</sup> The question of the souls “who had been slain” (Rev 6:9), “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth

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<sup>42</sup>Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 1-11*, 89.

<sup>43</sup>Paulien, *The Deep Things of God*, 118. Stefanovic identifies the altar of Revelation 6:9 and 8:3 as the altar of burnt offering. Then, he argues, “the scene of 8:3-5 builds on the preceding scene of 6:9-11.” Ranko Stefanovic, “The Angel at the Altar (Revelation 8:3-5): A Case Study on Intercalations in Revelation,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 44, no. 1 (2006): 86.

and avenge our blood (Rev 6:10, NIV),” is answered when the seven angels with the seven trumpets are ready to hurl judgments down to the earth: “And another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel’s hand” (Rev 8:3-4). Finally, as the seven bowls of God’s wrath are poured out on the earth, those under the altar respond, “Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments” (Rev 16:7, NIV). Revelation’s narrative, therefore, can be called the story of the saints who have suffered and shed their blood and God’s response and judgment against their oppressors.<sup>44</sup> Christian leaders maintain their sacrificial attitude and endure their sufferings.

These three characteristics of the saints—perseverance before tribulation, wearing the white robe, blood shedding—have something in common with the Lamb. The saints of God follow the way of the Lamb’s behavior. First, the Lamb Himself overcame Satan’s temptation and persecution (Rev 3:21). Second, He wears the white robe (Rev 1:13).<sup>45</sup> Third, the most significant description of the Lamb is that He “was slain” (Rev 5:6, 9, 12).<sup>46</sup> So John the apostle emphasizes the Lamb’s sacrifice in the introduction of

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<sup>44</sup>In a sense, the whole story of Revelation is developed around the manifestation of the blood (cf. 1:5; 5:9; 6:10, 12, 7:14; 8:7, 8; 11:6; 12:11; 14:20; 16:3, 4, 6; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2, 13).

<sup>45</sup>The white horse rider “is dressed in a robe dipped in blood” (19:13, NIV). Although the color of the robe is not clear, the image of the divine warrior with blood soaked garments “would be understood as a reference to the death of Christ.” Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1057.

<sup>46</sup>Ingo Willy Sorke argues that the term ‘slain’ grants “the periscope a linguistic cohesion that centers on the sacrificial aspect of the lamb. The vision thus focused on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ” Ingo Willy Sorke, “The Identity and Function of the Seven Spirits in the Book of Revelation,” (PhD dissertation, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009) 264.

Revelation by stating that He “loves us, and released us from our sins by *His blood*, and He has made us [to be] a kingdom and priests to His God and Father” (Rev 1:5b-6a, emphasis added). The Lamb’s sacrifice is the foundation of His redemptive ministry. The saints follow the same example

Here, we have a crucial question in terms of leadership. “Why do they follow the Lamb’s example, i.e., what is their utmost motivation for following the way of the Lamb? What enables them to endure severe persecution, even to death, and to produce righteous acts?” An answer will be that the saints do so because they have experienced His love. The blood of the Lamb was shed as the result of His love (Rev 1:5). This loving relationship motivates the saints to follow the Lamb and endure severe tribulations. Thus, the failure to love God leads to the failure to serve Him. In contrast, love leads people to endure even death (Rev 12:11).<sup>47</sup>

These three characteristics of the saints are the crucial contact points in the spiritual battle. The evil ones show three counterfeit characteristics of the saints. First, they “fear the torment” (Rev 18:10, 15) in contrast to the saints who endure persecution.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>One of the key terms in the letters to the seven churches is “love.” The most dangerous risk comes from the situation when churches abandon the love of God (Rev 2:4). All spiritual fruits—faith, service, and patient endurance—yield on the foundation of love (Rev 2:19). So, love is always located in the first position in explaining the spiritual fruits (cf. Gal. 5:22-23, 1 Cor. 13:13). Also, every exhortation is given based on the love of God (cf. Rev 3:19).

<sup>48</sup>The beast coming from the sea receiving authority from the Dragon, rules people by force and coercion and compels people to worship. So “all who dwell on the earth will worship him whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain” (Rev 13:8). Also, as the beast coming from the earth forces others to worship the image of the first beast and kills all who refuse to worship, everyone who dwells on the earth confronts severe persecution and economic disadvantage (Rev 13:12, 15-17). In front of these tribulations the evil ones avoid it instead of confronting it. The most fearful experience for them is experiencing torment. However, they receive “torment” by burning sulfur as the final wrath of God is poured out (Rev 14:10-11).

Second, they are materialistic (Rev 17:4; 18:12).<sup>49</sup> Third, they participate in the persecution of the saints (Rev 12:13; 13:15; 17:1, 3, 6).<sup>50</sup> In reality, the evil ones follow the example of the Dragon who persecutes the woman (Rev 12:4, 13), is materialistic (Rev 18:16), and sheds the blood of the prophets and the saints (Rev 18:24; 19:2).

Here is one of the unique aspects of Christian leadership. Christian leaders are the ones who love their leader the Lamb and at the same time love people who dwell on the earth to be saved (Matt 22:37-39). Love for the Lamb and love for people is the essential motivation of Christian leaders. For them “love never fails” (1 Cor 13:8).

### **The Evaluative Aspect of the Great Controversy Worldview and Leadership Principles**

The GC provides an evaluative aspect for worldview. Hiebert argues, “evaluative assumptions provide the standards people use to make judgments, including their criteria for determining truth and error, likes and dislikes, and right and wrong.... Evaluative assumptions also determine the priorities of a culture, and thereby shape the desires and allegiances of the people.”<sup>51</sup> Hiebert’s insight for the evaluative aspect of worldview supplies a foundation to compare the behavioral discrepancy between the Lamb’s followers and the Dragon’s in terms of ethical and moral issues. The purpose of Christian

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<sup>49</sup>The evil ones dress in “purple and scarlet” (Rev 17:4) decorating themselves with cargoes such as “gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every [kind of] citron wood and every article of ivory and every article [made] from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble” (Rev 18:12).

<sup>50</sup>The evil ones participate in unleashing the persecution of Satan (Rev 12:13; 13:15), shedding the blood of the saints (cf. Rev 6:9). The great harlot sitting on “many waters” (Rev 17:1) and “a scarlet beast” (Rev 17:3) was “drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witness of Jesus” (Rev 17:6).

<sup>51</sup>Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 46-47.



leadership is to transform sinful people and to lead them into Christ-like life just as Jesus came to the earth to forgive sin (cf. Matt 1:21; John 1:29) and to lead sinners into sinless life (cf. John 5:14; 8:11). So, one of the crucial issues between Jesus and His adversaries relates to the authority for forgiving sins (cf. Matt 9:2-8; Mark 2:5-10; Luke 5:20-24; 7:47-49). Later, this authority is assigned to the believers so they can forgive others (cf. Luke 11:4; John 20:23).

Likewise, this moral issue occupies a crucial position in Revelation. Jesus was introduced as the One who “released us from our *sins* by His blood” (Rev 1:5, emphasis added). Each of the letters to the seven churches is composed of the exposure of their shortcomings and the attendant exhortation. The central part of Revelation (Ch. 12-14) focuses on exposing the sins of Satan and his followers (cf. Rev 12:3-13:18) and the invitational exhortation of God (cf. Rev 14:6-13).<sup>52</sup> The final warning is given in the same manner: “Come out of her [Babylon], my people, that you may not participate in her *sins* and that you may not receive of her plagues” (18:4, emphasis added). The sins of Babylon are so apparent that they “have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her *iniquities*” (Rev 18:5, emphasis added). The final adjudication is related to ethical and moral aspects of people: “Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and let the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy” (Rev 22:11).

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<sup>52</sup>While the subject of Revelation 12 and 13 is mainly to expose the power and activities of the Dragon and his followers, Revelation 14 focuses on the final invitation for those who live on the earth—every nation, tribe, language and people before outpouring of the seven bowls which do not mixed with the mercy of God (Rev. 16).

This evaluative aspect of Revelation leads us to consider the essence of Christian leadership in terms of spiritual transformation. The four topics—justice of God, character of the saints, the counterfeit spirituality of the evil ones, and free will—highlight the concept of behavioral and spiritual transformation of Christian leadership which is derived from the evaluative aspect of the GC worldview.

### Justice of God

The Lamb's contributions to reestablishing the justice of God give lessons for Christian leadership in terms of the transformational ministry of leaders. The GC between God and Satan revolves around God's treatment of sin. Rev 12:9 discloses the main instigator of sin: "the great Dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world." The ancient foe of God's people functioned as a *slanderer* and *deceiver*. He "claims that God's command to Adam and Eve in Gen. 2:16-17 is not true (Gen. 3:1, 4) and that God has deceptive motives in forbidding them to eat of the tree (Gen. 3:4-5)."<sup>53</sup> He slanders "the character of God" and "the serpent utilizes this slander to deceive the woman and the man."<sup>54</sup> Likewise, the Dragon's main task was the accusation of God's people "before God day and night" (Rev 12:10). Since he was thrown to the earth (Rev 12:9), he never ceases his slandering (Rev 13:6-7) and deception (Rev 13:14; 18:23) even after the second coming of Jesus (Rev 20:8).

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<sup>53</sup>Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text.*, 656.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

Moreover, this deceptive slander is aggravated with the delayed judgment of God. So, the souls under the altar “who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained” (Rev 6:9, NIV) called out in a loud voice asking “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood” (Rev 6:10, NIV)? Their satisfied answer appears in chapter 16 as “Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments” (Rev 16:7, NIV) as the last plagues of God are poured out without mercy. Previously, the acknowledgement of the righteous judgment of God was presented by the angel in charge of the water that “You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One, because you have so judged” (Rev 16:5, NIV).

Here, we confront a crucial question regarding judgment. How can the angel and the altar satisfy the suffering ones with the judgment of God? If the judgment of God is simply a way to avenge the saints, how then can God establish His justice? If so then, God would be accused by Satan that He is not different from Satan who has been accused for his unrighteous attack, i.e., if God punishes Satan without securing His justice, His behaviors would forever be suspect. These issues and behaviors alert Christian leaders who struggle to solve conflict in a God-honoring manner.

What is the reality of the judgment of God? It is true that an apparent answer comes from the consecutive drastic and dreadful revenges for the ones who dwell on the earth by means of malignant sores (Rev 16:2, 11), blood (Rev 16:3-4), and scorching fire (Rev 16:8). According to the expressions of Revelation, it is certainly the wrath of God (cf. Rev 11:18; 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19; 19:15). However, if this aspect is necessary to explain the justice of God, how can it harmonize with His love and mercy? If the

outpouring of the severe punishment is the only way to recover the distorted relationship between God and people, then something is omitted from our understanding of God's character. If God executes His judgment without showing any other aspect of His character, the original rationale of Satan's slander—God is autocratic and tyrannical—can be validated, i.e., if the GC fails to explain the love of God, God's way of treating sin remains a question related to His character.

According to Gulley, an answer comes from “the hermeneutical apex” (Rev 12:9-11).<sup>55</sup> Here, another confession of the saints<sup>56</sup> appears in Revelation 12:11: “And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death.” The justice of God was best manifested by the sacrifice of the Lamb. The blood of the Lamb is the crux of victory by which God and the saints overcome Satan's deception and slander. Without knowing the essential meaning of the blood of the Lamb, it is impossible to understand the essence of God's leadership in which He transforms our sinful lives. In this regard, the victory of the saints always depends on the relationship with the Lamb. Revelation 17:14 says, “the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who

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<sup>55</sup>Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, 435.

<sup>56</sup>Beale argues, “a loud voice in heaven” (12:10) refers both angels and humans in heaven as in 5:12. He sees, “the first three lines of the praise in 12:10 are parallel with 11:15. He confirms that the voice “should be identified as that of the multitude of saints in heaven...from the fact that the voice refers not only to ‘our God’ but also to ‘our brothers.’” Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text.*, 657.

are with Him [are the] called and chosen and faithful.” The victory of the Lamb assures the victory of His followers.<sup>57</sup>

Then, what are the Lamb’s behaviors and functions in reestablishing the justice of God? First, the essence of the behavior of the Lamb relates to the Lamb’s sacrifice. To occupy legal superiority in a lawsuit a plaintiff has to appear as a victim without accusing the defender arbitrarily. If a plaintiff retaliates against his opponent in the same way as that of the opponent, then the lawsuit cannot be established because both are in the position of attacker. Although it is the most painful situation for the victim, the justice of the victim only can be appealed when he/she sustains the condition of loss. Therefore, the death of the innocent Lamb is the strongest accusation against Satan who forcefully usurped God’s authority and kingdom.

Second, the sacrifice of the Lamb confirms the humility of God. As the Lamb was slain without legitimate accusation on the cross, the humiliation of God was apparently manifested in the cosmos. Anyone who watches the process of interrogation before the crucifixion finds that Jesus is so humble that He never defends Himself in front of the false accusation, though He could call “more than twelve legions of angels” (Matt 26:53). Perhaps the Lamb knows that His defense would be useless before the frenzied crowds. The Lamb’s suffering and death evidently manifests the humility of God so the justice of God can be advocated.

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<sup>57</sup>The sequence of the description of Revelation is expanded with the centrality of the Lamb from the first appearance of the Lamb (Rev. 5) to 144,000 and the three angels messages (Rev. 14), to the song of the Lamb (Rev. 15), and to the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7, 9; 21:9).

Third, the reality of God's love was manifested by the specific behavior of the Lamb, not by mere words. The Lamb who was slain expresses His love for the sinners or accusers by His action. Interestingly, the Lamb does not make a single speech in the book of Revelation. The Lamb keeps silent as the suffering servant "did not open his mouth" (Isa 53:7; cf. Matt 12:19) like a sheep that is silent before its shearers.<sup>58</sup> Although His attitude before the crucifixion would seem passive, the reality of His suffering and death proclaims that His love is active. The Lamb is not passively sitting on the throne, but stands (Rev 5:6; 14:1) and leads the people (Rev 7:17; 14:4).<sup>59</sup> Thus, his defensive

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<sup>58</sup>Kendra Jo Haloviak also recognizes silence as a characteristic of the Lamb comparing to the utterance of the beast from the earth (Rev 13:11-18). Kendra Jo Haloviak, "Worlds at War, Nations in Song: Dialogic Imagination and Moral Vision in the Hymns of the Book of Revelation," (PhD dissertation, Berkeley, 2002) 100.

<sup>59</sup>The Lamb seems not to be sitting on His throne until the restoration of the New Heaven and New Earth (cf. Rev 22:1, 3). Although Revelation 22:1 and 3 describe the presence of God and the Lamb's thrones, it does not definitely depict the fact that the Lamb is sitting. Rather, the One who sits on the throne is always the Father (Rev 4:2, 3, 9, 10; 5:1, 7, 13; 6:16; 7:10, 15; 19:4; 20:11; 21:5). Even Rev 5:13 and 7:10 does not give an allusion that the Lamb is sitting on the throne. The term κάθηναι (sit) in Rev 5:13 (λέγοντας τῷ καθήμενῳ ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ καὶ τῷ ἁρνίῳ), "saying, 'To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb'" and 7:10 (ἡ σωτηρία τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν τῷ/ καθήμενῳ ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ καὶ τῷ ἁρνίῳ, "salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb") is designated to the Father, not the Lamb. The throne symbolizes power and authority to judge (cf. Ps. 9:4, 7; 122:5; Matt 19:28; Rev. 20:4, 12) so the position of sitting signifies the behavior of judgment. Thus, the judgment scene in Revelation is processed in a sitting position on the throne (cf. 20:4, 11). However, the Lamb, though He has His own authority and throne, does not practice His power by His sitting position. Rather, He works at first hand. Only three cases show that Jesus sits on. First, Jesus promised with the church of Laodicea, "I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne" (3:21). Second, one like a son of man is "sitting on the cloud" (14:14, 15, 16) as He reaps the harvest of the earth by a sharp sickle. Third, a messianic figure is described as seated on a white horse (19:11, 19, 21). However, the Lamb is standing (5:6; 14:1) as "a warrior prepared to destroy his enemies" Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 803. In contrary, the great harlot "sits on many waters" (17:1; cf. 17:15) and is "sitting on a scarlet beast" (17:3; cf. 17:9). And Babylon boasts in her heart saying, "I sit as queen, I am not a widow, and I will never mourn" (18:7, NIV). This contrary position between the Lamb and the great harlot or Babylon shows different attitudes in terms of leadership behavior and self-identification. While the Lamb reveals Himself as the One who was slain, the great harlot or Babylon insists her existing dominance. See Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 284; Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 803; Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1084-1085.

reaction against Satan is the strongest active aggression to prove his character and the love of God.

Fourth, the Lamb's humiliation and sacrifice demonstrate God's justice in the long-term strategies. One thing God has to endure in this process is the issue of time. This process takes a longer time to convince of the legitimacy of the justice of God than to punish immediately. In the consecutive judgments the Dragon and the evil ones' spirit and attitudes are clearly exposed. In spite of the seven trumpet's disasters "the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not *repent* of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not *repent* of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts" (Rev 9:20-21, emphasis added). Likewise, the evil ones "*blasphemed* the name of God who has the power over these plagues; and they did not *repent*, so as to give Him glory" (Rev 16:9; cf. 16: 11, 21, emphasis added) as they confront the seven bowls of God's wrath. In the consecutive judgment the cruelty of Satan and his followers is revealed. They blaspheme God's "name and His tabernacle, [that is], those who dwell in heaven" (Rev 13:6) and kill "all who refused to worship the image" (Rev 13:15). In the long-term sequence of God's judgment, God does not only expose the atrocity and tyranny of Satan but also reveals the legitimacy of His own judgment in mercy.

Does God really overcome the accusation of Satan by the behaviors of the Lamb? Can God really win people who suspect God's character because of His severe wrath and judgment? The answer is "yes!" As previously stated, both the angel in charge of the waters and the altar confess that God's judgment is true and just (Rev 16:5, 7). The

overcomers sing, “Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty. *Righteous* and *true* are Thy ways, Thou King of the nations!” (Rev 15:3, emphasis added). Later, a great multitude in heaven shouts “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; because His judgments are *true* and *righteous*” (Rev 19:2, emphasis added).

The essence of the behavior of the Lamb in transforming people is related to His crucifixion. The most typical descriptions of the Lamb are “He was slain” (5:6, 9, 12; 13:8) and “the blood of the Lamb” (7:14; 12:11). The followers can see the justice of God through the sacrifice of the Lamb in which God keeps His faithfulness and satisfies the consequence of sin—death. Also, they are convinced of God’s love which allows the Lamb to be sacrificed for sinners. Consequently, the confession of the Psalmist can be more apparent: “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you” (Ps. 89:14, NIV).

Christian leaders experience the most powerful means of solving conflicts by embracing the Lamb’s conflict behaviors. Just as God proves His righteousness by the sacrifice of the Lamb in a long-suffering process, Christian leaders can transform people’s behaviors in showing exactly the same attitudes of the Lamb—sacrifice, humility, behavior in silence, and willingness to submit to a long-term approach.

### Character of the Saints

Leadership is about character. Being of a leader is more important than competency and behavior. The character of the saints in Revelation reveals the essence of spiritual leadership. The GC between God and Satan is, in a nutshell, moral and ethical confrontation. For instance, Babylon makes “all the nations drink of the wine of the



passion of her immorality” (Rev 14:8). The great harlot makes the kings of the earth commit adultery with her and makes them drunk “with the wine of her immorality” (Rev 17:2). Her behaviors are summarized in the name on her forehead “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (Rev 17:5). The kings and the merchants of the earth are involved in adultery with her and share her luxury (Rev 18:9, 15). So, the final sentence is given to “the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars” (Rev 21:8).

In contrast, the rider on a white horse named “Faithful and True” judges and wages war in righteousness (Rev 19:11). The souls under the altar were “given a white robe” (Rev 6:11, NIV).<sup>60</sup> A great multitude “are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev 7:14; cf. 7:9). The 144,000 “are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These [are] the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless” (Rev 14:4-5). Finally, they are “the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus” (Rev 14:12).

Here, we have a crucial question regarding Christian leadership principles. What is the motivation of the saints to keep the commandments of God and faith of Jesus, i.e.,

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<sup>60</sup>Aune argues, white robes, the characteristic garb of heavenly beings, “are used as a polyvalent metaphor for salvation, immortality, victory, and purity” Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 410.

what is their impetus to keep their ethical or moral standard even in the threat of death?<sup>61</sup>

What is the core value for Christian leaders to make people follow the leaders and to transform their character like Jesus? An answer comes from the characteristics of “the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus” (Rev 14:12). This distinctive expression emphasizes the crucial role of the Holy Spirit for moral transformation of leaders and the uniqueness of Christian leadership which is characterized by the work of the Holy Spirit who leads people in an invisible way in human hearts.

These two characteristics of the saints are covered by several chapters of Revelation and even constitute the main structure of it. The apostle John states the revelation of Jesus Christ (Rev 1:1) is on “the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev 1:2, NIV). His confinement on the island of Patmos comes from his witness “of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 1:9). The souls under the altar “had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained” (Rev 6:9). The reason the Dragon was enraged with the woman and the rest of her offspring is because they “keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 12:17). This phrase in tandem with the profound identification of the saints in Rev 14:12: “Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.” Now the testimony of Jesus (Rev 1:9; 12:17) is paralleled with the “faith in Jesus” (Rev 14:12). Lastly, the reality of “the testimony of Jesus” is revealed in Rev 19:10: “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

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<sup>61</sup>Revelation depicts the GC as the matter of life and death (cf. 2:10, 13, 22-23; 6:9; 12:11, 13-17; 13:15).

Our question is “what is the essence of these two characteristics? How do these two elements relate to Christian leadership in terms of moral transformation and motivational issues? Also, how can those two characteristics of the rest of the woman’s offspring in Revelation 12:17 be juxtaposed with the description of the saints in Revelation 14:12?” To get right answers readers have to return to the thinking of John which is permeated in his writings on Jesus and the gospel. My premise is that John understands the gospel on the fundamental understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in terms of spiritual transformation. If the readers see the gospel of John through the lens of the Holy Spirit, it will be profound that the focus of John is on the transforming ministry of the Holy Spirit. This topic contains an essential fundamental characteristic for Christian leaders.

First of all, the public appearance of Jesus begins with His baptism by the Holy Spirit (John 1:32-34). Here, in this event the term “testify” or “witness” (μαρτυρέω) is revealed twice (John 1:32, 34). John the Baptist—after he baptized Jesus—“*bore witness* (μαρτυρέω) saying, ‘I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him’” (John 1:32). Then he said, “I have seen, and have *borne witness* (μαρτυρέω) that this is the Son of God” (John 1:34). Next, the story of Nicodemus’ visit to Jesus was that of being born again of water and the Spirit (John 3:5, 8). The idea of “born of the Spirit” (John 3:8) is clearly repeated in the first letter of John. Particularly, the word γεννάω (to be born) is used to describe the children of God (1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18).

The contextual evidences point to the fact that the experience of being born again as the children of God is firmly related to the work of the Holy Spirit. John affirms, “No

one who is *born of God* practices sin, because *His seed* abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is *born of God*” (1 John 3:9, emphasis added). Then, he connects the seed of God with the presence of the Holy Spirit by stating, “the one who keeps His commandments *abides* in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He *abides* in us, by *the Spirit* whom He has given us” (1 John 3:24, emphasis added). What is the seed of God? Broadly speaking, it is God the Trinity Himself, but specifically, it is God the Holy Spirit who dwells among His people.<sup>62</sup> The term “abide” (μένω) is the link between the seed and the Spirit in both passages (1 John 3:9, 24).<sup>63</sup> Therefore, John asserts, “by this we know that we *abide* in Him and He in us, because He has given us of *His Spirit*” (1 John 4:13, emphasis added). Accordingly, “He who is in you” (1 John 4:4) refers to the Spirit. So, if the Holy Spirit is not spiritually internalized, one cannot be qualified as a Christian leader (cf. Rom 8:9).

John uses the term “bear witness” or “testify” (μαρτυρέω) relating to the work of the Holy Spirit. He indicates, “it is *the Spirit* who *bears witness* [μαρτυρέω], because *the Spirit* is the truth” (1 John 5:7, emphasis added). Then, John presents, “the one who believes in the Son of God has the *witness* [μαρτυρία] in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the *witness* [μαρτυρία] that God has borne concerning His Son” (1 John 5:10). The ministry of witness is of the Holy Spirit (1 John 5:7) and the Holy Spirit works in the person who is born of the Spirit

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<sup>62</sup>Lichtenwaller, “The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit in the General Epistles and the Book of Hebrews,” 91.

<sup>63</sup>The usages of this term μένω [abide] is most frequently used in the Gospel John and 1 John. Of 118 times occurrences are sixty-eight times used in John’s writings—forty times in the book of John, twenty-four times in 1 John, three times in 2 John, and one time in Revelation.

(1 John 5:10).<sup>64</sup> Therefore, the one who holds to “the testimony of Jesus” in Revelation 12:17 apparently refers to the one who is born again of the Holy Spirit. The leader who is born in the Spirit is thus enabled to bear witness. From the point at which the Spirit lives in them they qualify to begin their ministries as spiritual leaders.

This spiritual new birth experience secures the moral life of the Christian leaders. According to John the person who is born of God does not sin and even cannot sin (1 John 3:9) because “the one who was born of God keeps him safe” (1 John 5:18). Thus, Revelation connects two characteristics of the saints as they, “keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 12:17). Therefore, the leaders’ new-born experience must be sustained as they lead others.

The Gospel of John refers to these two characteristics of the saints in the narrative of Jesus’ teaching on true worship to a Samaritan woman. Jesus says “those who worship Him must worship in *spirit* and *truth*” (John 4:24, emphasis added). In Revelation 19 the angel rejects being worshipped by John saying, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold *the testimony of Jesus*” (Rev 19:10, emphasis added). Apparently, the testimony of Jesus is the Holy Spirit given to the individuals including the angel and John and the saints. Thus, the angel explains the reason he cannot accept being worshiped by John: “*For* [γὰρ] the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev 19:10, emphasis added). In Revelation 22 John once again tries to worship the

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<sup>64</sup>Lichtenwaller summarizes the complement relationship between the Word and Spirit: “It is the Spirit who abides in the believer (cf. John 14:17). It is the Spirit who teaches the truth (cf. John 14:26; 16:13; 1 John 4:6). It is the Spirit who enables one to continue in Jesus’ word and confess Him as the Christ (cf. John 6:60-71; 1 John 3:24-4:2, 6)...The proclamation of the gospel is an objective exercise (cf. 1 John 1:1-3, 5), whereas the anointing of the Spirit is subjective, personal, inward—but also objective in that it is real.” Lichtenwaller, “The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit in the General Epistles and the Book of Hebrews,” 92-93.

angel. In the same manner the angel says “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed *the words of this book*; worship God” (Rev 22:9, emphasis added). Thus, keeping the commandments (12:17) is related to the truth element (John 4:24) while the testimony of Jesus (12:17) is related to the Spirit (John 4:24).

Therefore, truth and spirit can easily be equipped as essential qualifications of a spiritual leader (John 4:23). The moral transformation of the Christian leader only comes from the work of the Holy Spirit on a very practical, interior level—heart, thought, motivation, conscience (cf. Heb 10:15-17; Ezek 36:23-27; 37:1-28).<sup>65</sup> Without knowing the power and influence of the Holy Spirit or without relating to the work of the Holy Spirit, people cannot achieve genuine spiritual transformation. This moral transformation is the result of relationship with God. John uses the term μένω [abide] as he describes the relationship between the vine and the branch (John 15:4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16). John clearly connects two words—keep and abide—, “if you *keep* My commandments, you will *abide* in My love; just as I have *kept* My Father’s commandments, and *abide* in His love” (John 15:10). Therefore, the moral transformation in which people keep the commandments is the result of a relationship with God, particularly with the Holy Spirit. Christian leaders naturally demonstrate the Holy Spirit through the spiritual gifts and fruits—Christ-like relational standards (1 Cor 12:4-11; Gal 5:22-23).

Later, this relational aspect is presented in relation with the tabernacle. In Revelation 7:14-15 a great multitude “have washed their robes and made them white in

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 102.

the blood of the Lamb” (Rev 7:14). That is why “they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne shall *spread His tabernacle* over them” (Rev 7:15, emphasis added). Here, the moral innocence of a great multitude (white robe, Rev 7:14) closely relates to the term “spread His tabernacle” (σκηνώω). This term is used in the description of the incarnation of Jesus: “the Word became flesh, and dwelt [σκηνώω] among us” (John 1:14). This term is also used in the description of a New Heaven and New Earth. A loud voice from the throne says, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall  *dwell* [σκηνώω] among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them” (Rev 21:3). The foundation of the kingdom of God is based on a relationship between God and people. Without this relational bond any kind of moral effort is counterfeit to God. Christian leaders know that their body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. They speak and behave by the leading power of the Holy Spirit within them.

This moral transformational experience was empirically presented whenever Jesus restores sinners. For instance, after Jesus healed a man who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years, He instructed him saying “Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse may befall you” (John 5:14). Similarly, Jesus encouraged a woman who committed adultery, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again” (John 8:11, NRSV). How can this happen? How can Christian leaders lead people into spiritual transformation following the model of Jesus? According to John, the person who is born of the Spirit does not sin and even cannot sin (cf. 1 John 3:9). The mission of Jesus to “save His people from their sins” (Matt 1:21) can only be achieved when people are born again in the Spirit and in the recovered relationship with

God. Moreover, the life of Jesus itself shows the model for this sinless life of the Christian by the power of the Spirit. For instance, He was conceived from the Holy Spirit (Matt 1:20), baptized by water and the Spirit (Matt 3:16), and led to be tempted by the Spirit (Matt 4:1). Also, He began His ministry with the reading of the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me” (Luke 4:18) and conquered the evil spirits by the Spirit of God (Matt 12:28). The Christian leader’s success is assured by relying fully on the indwelling Spirit of God.

The mission of Jesus, therefore, is to prepare the way for the promise of the Holy Spirit. John 14 addresses the fact that the moral transformation works in the presence of the Holy Spirit. The disciples’ love for Jesus will enable them to obey His commandments (John 14:15). Love always precedes obedience.<sup>66</sup> For this purpose, the Father will give them another Counselor to be with them forever (John 14:16). In the next version, the term μένω [abide] appears: “the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, [but] you know Him because He *abides* [μένω] with you, and will be in you” (John 14:17, emphasis added).

Comprehensively, Jesus summarizes the experience of spiritual transformation, “If anyone *loves* Me, he will *keep* My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come

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<sup>66</sup>Scripture suggests the orderly importance between “to love” and “to keep.” The Old Testament clearly presents, “but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments” (Exod. 20:6, NIV; cf. Deut. 5:10; 7:9; Josh. 22:5; Neh 1:5; Dan. 9:4). The description of John 14:21, “He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me,” also has to be read with the priority of “love.” Love leads obedience, and obedience is confirmed by love (cf. John 15:10; 1 John 5:2, 3; 2 John 1:6).



to him, and make Our *abode* [μονή]<sup>67</sup> with him” (John 14:23, emphasis added). Here, the relationship with God the Trinity is the foundation of moral and spiritual transformation.

Although several possible answers to the question may be given about the purpose of the Incarnation, one apparent thing is that Jesus came to give the Holy Spirit to those who are seeking moral transformation. According to the apostle John, Jesus invited people on the last and greatest day of the Feast, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink” (John 7:37, NIV). This living water means “the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive” (John 7:39, NIV). With the completion of the redemptive sacrifice Jesus met His disciples, breathing on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20: 22). Thus, the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus prepares people to receive the Holy Spirit, i.e., believers in Jesus have the qualification to receive the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal 3:2, 5, 14). In this regard, the structure of “those who obey God’s commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 12:17, NIV) can be paralleled with “the saints who obey God’s commandments and remain faithful to Jesus” (Rev 14:12, NIV). The Holy Spirit leads leaders to obey God’s commandments and to be faithful to Jesus. Success in pursuit of the mission of the Gospel is by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (cf. Ezk 36:26-27).

The interrelation between the descent of the Holy Spirit and the redemptive ministry of Jesus accomplished on the cross is indispensable. Because people are corrupted by the non-presence of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gen 6:3) or God (cf. Rom 1:28), God knows that people can be redeemed only if they accept the Holy Spirit (cf. Luke

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<sup>67</sup>The root of *monh*, [home, room] is *me,nw*. This term only appears in John 14 (v. 2, 23).

11:13; John 7:39). As salvation is the gift of God (cf. Rom 5:15; Eph 2:8), God bestowed the Holy Spirit as the gift of God (cf. John 4:10; Acts 8:20; 11:17). This gift given as the result of a recovered relationship enables people to bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). Because “those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires” (Gal 5:24, NIV), they live and walk “by the Spirit” (Gal 5:25). Thus, Paul emphasizes the outcome of Christ’s crucifixion that “He redeemed us in order that *the blessing* given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive *the promise of the Spirit*” (Gal 3:14, emphasis added). Here, we find a missiological mandate in the outpouring of the Spirit as a consequence of the sacrifice of Jesus.

Therefore, as we consider John’s writings and Paul’s understandings on the faith in Jesus and the Holy Spirit, the two characteristics of the saints in Revelation—obey God’s commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus—absolutely relate to the work of the Holy Spirit. Moral transformation is the result of a recovered relationship with God which is conceived by the gift of the Holy Spirit, not the result of ethical duty or obligation. Focusing on ethical duty without dwelling in the Spirit is always counterfeit and deceptive. The foundation of Christian leadership—whether transforming character or involving ministry and mission—is a relationship with God and Christian community. Accordingly, Revelation 12:11 presents the relational closeness between the Lamb and the saints: “And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death.” The saints love their leader to the extent that they do not love their life because they know the love of the Lamb who was slain for them. Their testimony comes from their love for the Lamb.

Therefore, Christian leaders basically have the born again experience of the Spirit and also can lead people into the spiritual transformation in the same manner by which they participate in *missio Dei*.

Taking a step forward, the essence of the seal of God has to be considered in order to define the moral transformation of the saints. Revelation 7 introduces the 144,000 who were sealed [σφραγίζω] on the forehead (Rev 7:1-8). As Stefanovic argues, “The 144,000 sealed saints are portrayed here as an organized army under the leadership of Jesus Christ.”<sup>68</sup> They are a spiritual army in battle against immoral influences of Satan and his army. This sealing ministry is firmly related to the moral life of the saints because the 144,000 are those “who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure” (Rev 14:4, NIV). And “[N]o lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless” (Rev 14:5, NIV). Also, they wear “white robes” (Rev 7:9, 13, 14).<sup>69</sup>

Then, what is the essence of the seal of God?<sup>70</sup> What seals the people as the possession of God? What distinguishes God’s people from the evil ones? As previously mentioned, it is the born again experience by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit” (John 3:5; cf. John 3:3). John the Baptist uses the term seal [σφραγίζω] in John 3, “He who has received His *witness* [μαρτυρία] has *set his seal* [σφραγίζω] to [this], that God is true” (John 3:33, emphasis added). Further, John the Baptist explains, “For He whom God has sent speaks

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<sup>68</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 268.

<sup>69</sup>The 144,000 and the great multitude are the same group according to a special literary technique in the structure of “hears” and “sees.” Ibid., 269-270.

<sup>70</sup>Aune argues, “The significance of this marking is that it indicates both divine protection and divine ownership.” Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 455.

*the words* of God; for He gives *the Spirit* without measure” (John 3:34, emphasis added). These two verses point to the fact that the Spirit helps Jesus to speak the words of God (testimony), and Jesus’ testimony is approved by the sealing of the Spirit. Thus, Jesus connected His identification with the concept of seal, saying “[D]o not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, [even] God, has *set His seal* [σφραγίζω]” (John 6:27, emphasis added).

The apostle Paul also sees the seal of God as the seal of the Holy Spirit. He says, “Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also *sealed* [σφραγίζω] us and gave [us] *the Spirit* in our hearts as a people” (2 Cor 1:21-22, emphasis added). In the letter to the Ephesus church Paul asserts, “In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were *sealed* [σφραγίζω] in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise” (Eph 1:13, emphasis added). Also, Paul instructs, “[A]nd do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were *sealed* [σφραγίζω] for the day of redemption” (Eph 4:30, emphasis added). It is impossible to consistently function as a servant leader without being born again. Christian leaders have the marking of the Holy Spirit inscribed in their lives.

The sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit (Rev 7:2-4), therefore, prepares the Christian leaders—the embattled saints—to be morally innocent until the end of time. The Holy Spirit is the one who invites and motivates people to follow the instruction of God’s word. The Holy Spirit is the operational leader who guides and directs all Christian leaders. So, the messages to the seven churches are always ended with the invitation of the Holy Spirit, saying “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the

churches” (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). Also, Revelation itself is concluded with the invitation of the Holy Spirit which is based on the invitation of Jesus in John 7:37-39, saying “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost” (Rev 22:17). Without the work of the Spirit, spiritual transformation is impossible. In this regard, the definition of Christian spirituality is fundamentally different with the secular idea of spirituality. Christian spirituality is the fruit of the work of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 8:9; 13-17; Gal 5:16, 18, 22-23, 25). The work of the Holy Spirit is why the saints are the ones who “keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus” (Rev 12:19). Therefore, spirituality of leaders without the Holy Spirit is counterfeit. In Revelation John describes the genuine spiritual characteristics of the saints comparing the counterfeit moral emphasis of the Dragon and his followers who are involved with the evil spirits (Rev 16:13-14; 18:2). It is essential that Christian leaders be and remain born again in the Spirit (cf. John 3:5). They follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 8:14) and participate in the spiritually transformational ministry of the Holy Spirit. Because they know Jesus’ love demonstrated in redemptive history, they love those being led as Jesus loved us (2 Cor 5:14). No coercive demanding comes from the Holy Spirit or Christ’s love. Rather, the love of Christ compels them (2 Cor 5:14). Christian leadership must be relationally based and coercion banned. This truth is the touchstone of genuine Christian leadership (cf. Rom 8:9).

### The Evil Ones and Their Counterfeit Spirituality

The evil ones in Revelation manifest the characteristics of counterfeit leadership. The GC metanarrative discloses Satan’s counterfeit strategies by comparison with the

Lamb and His followers' behaviors and attitudes.<sup>71</sup> Satan's counterfeit is so skillful, "the whole earth was amazed [and followed] after the beast" (Rev 13:3). The Dragon's deceitful tactics are very effective and powerful that "the number of them is like the sand of the seashore" (Rev 20:8). The kings of the earth (Rev 18:9), the merchants (Rev 18:11, 15), and "all who had ships at sea" (Rev 18:19) were entangled in the way of the Dragon. Although the description of the Dragon (Ch. 12-13) and Babylon (Ch. 17-18) clearly shows their negative behaviors and attitudes (cf. Rev 13:15), "all the nations were deceived" (Rev 18:23) because the essence of the Dragon's spirit is concealed (cf. Rev 2:24), i.e., the Dragon imitates almost every element of the Lamb so that no one easily finds counterfeit aspects in him. In fact, the beast coming out of the earth looks like "a lamb" (Rev 13:11).

First, the Dragon imitates the divine sovereignty. He competes with the name of God by his name (cf. Rev 13:1, 17; 15:2; 17:3, 5) so that he blasphemes the name of God (Rev 13:6; cf. 16:9, 11, 21). He has his own throne from which he practices his power and assumed authority (Rev 13:2). He wields super power saying "Who can make war against him?" (Rev 13:4, NIV) competing with Michael's name (Rev 12:7, cf. Dan. 10:21). His authority is ultimately spiritual so it makes people to worship him (Rev 13:12) and "the image of the beast" (Rev 13:15). He usurps the glory of God. The glory only belongs to God (Rev 1:6; 4:9, 11; 5:12, 13; 7:12; 11:13; 14:7; 19:1, 7). The elements

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<sup>71</sup>While Revelation 12 describes the cosmic confrontation between God and the Dragon, Revelation 13 depicts "the way the Dragon moves in his final attempt to wage war against Christ and his followers at the time of the end." Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 409.

of God's kingdom—name, throne, authority, and worship—are imitated by the Dragon (cf. 2 Thess. 2:4).<sup>72</sup>

Second, the Dragon copies the system of the Triune God and confuses the work of the divine strategies by his counterfeit devices. Satan expands his influence based on his own trinity—the Dragon, the beast, and the false prophet (Rev 16:13). He is accompanied by his angels (Rev 12:9). He has his own synagogue (Rev 2:9; 3:9). He uses “spirits of demons” (Rev 16:14) who perform miraculous signs imitating the work of the Holy Spirit. The beast coming out of the earth validates his authority by “great signs” (Rev 13:13). He compels people to have the mark (Rev 13:16-17) imitating the seal of God (Rev 7:3-8). The great harlot who sits on a scarlet beast (Rev 17:1-6) is Satan's powerful instrument in the form of a religious entity. She mimics the elements of the high priests in the Old Testament sanctuary ritual.<sup>73</sup>

Third, the Dragon's behaviors show that he uses moral and religious elements. He seems to be a democratic leader because he shares his authority with his followers. He gives his authority, power and even throne to two of his allies—the beast coming out of the sea (Rev 13:2, 4, 5, 7) and to the beast coming out of the earth (Rev 13:12, 15)—

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<sup>72</sup>Beale indicates the reason that the two beasts are “described with so many traits borrowed from the acts of OT prophets and God and from descriptions of God, the Lamb, and Christians elsewhere in the Apocalypse” is, “the beasts attempt to validate their divine authority in a manner similar to that of true prophets” Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text.*, 710.

<sup>73</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 517-518. Stefanovic notices that her attire imitates the high priests, the cup that she holds in her hand reminds the drink offering, and the inscription on her forehead is an antithesis to the title “Holy to the Lord” engraved on a plate on the high priest's miter.

similar with God's way of bestowing authority to the two witnesses (Rev 11:3).<sup>74</sup> The Dragon orders the inhabitants of the earth "to make an image to the beast that had the wound of the sword and has come to life" (Rev 13:14). This construction of the image [εἰκών] is essentially a religious action, because the beast forces people to worship the image (Rev 13:15). The action "to give breath [πνεῦμα] to the image of the beast" (Rev 13:15) is the apparent counterfeit action of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of creation (cf. Gen 2:7) and recreation (cf. John 3:5, 8; 20:22).

The behaviors of the Dragon and that of his followers show that they are not anti-religious. Rather, they are very religious and spiritual. As the apostle Paul says, "Satan disguises himself as an angel of light" (2 Cor 11:14). So, no one easily knows that they are "false apostles, deceitful workmen" (2 Cor 11:13) because they masquerade as apostles of Christ. Although "we are not ignorant of his [Satan] schemes," (2 Cor 2:11), the reality will be fully known when their deeds are disclosed on the Day of Judgment (2 Cor 11:15, cf. Rev 2:23; 18:6; 20:13).

Since the behaviors of people can be disguised, the true and the false can be determined by the hidden inner motivation. Revelation exposes the evil ones' essential motivation as well as the real spirit of the Dragon and his followers. Then, how does the description of the end-time judgment of God (Ch. 16-18) expose their inner motivation?

First, confronting the consecutive expressions of the wrath of God, the evil ones reveal that their central value was not God, but self. They immediately "blasphemed the

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<sup>74</sup>The original Greek text does not use the word "authority" in Revelation 11:3. The term "power" or "authority" is supplied in several translations such as KJV, NIV, NLT, NET, NRSV, REB, TNT, etc. See Ronald L. Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 1-11*, 2nd ed. (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2008), 224.



name of God who has the power over these plagues; and they did not repent, so as to give Him glory” (Rev 16:9; cf. 16:11, 21). Their first objective is to spare their lives and possessions. They did not trust God or repent despite the crisis with which they were confronted.

Second, the attitude of the allies of the Dragon shows their self-centered spirit. The great harlot exists for her glory, decorating herself with purple and scarlet clothes, gold, precious stones and pearls (Rev 17:4). And the kings of the earth sought to satisfy their desire by committing adultery (Rev 17:2) and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of adulteries of the great harlot (Rev 17:2). Their “one purpose” (Rev 17:13) or “common purpose” (Rev 17:17) is motivated by their own desire. Their power and authority is only used for their own benefit, so that their allegiance would be broken when there was no reason to sustain the relationship (cf. 17:16).

Third, Babylon manipulates religion as an instrument to satisfy her own desire. Babylon “has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird” (Rev 18:2). Her motivation is disclosed as she “glorified herself and lived sensuously” (Rev 18:7). The spirit of self-glorification is so powerful that it is enough to seduce the kings of the earth to commit immorality with her and the merchants of the earth to become rich by the wealth of her sensuality (Rev 18:3), i.e., secular people are easily involved in this counterfeit spiritual movement to satisfy their desires.

Fourth, the list of cargoes and the items of wealth disclose the fact that the evil ones’ purpose for their lives focuses on self-satisfaction. The merchants of the earth who

once successfully traded their cargoes weep and mourn when they cannot find anyone who will buy their cargoes (Rev 18:11). They have traded

cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble; cargoes of cinnamon and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and bodies and souls of men (Rev 18:12-13, NIV).

They are those “who sold these things and gained their wealth from” (18:15, NIV)

Babylon. However, when there is nothing remaining to depend on since Babylon is fallen, they could not find solutions and consequently weep and mourn.

Fifth, the vanished music (Rev 18:22) and the foods (Rev 18:14) in which Babylon delighted herself shows the fact that her motivation was to please herself. She has listened to music for herself and satisfied her appetite. When Babylon is fallen, her pleasure immediately loses meaning and value. Thus, “the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard ... any longer” (Rev 18:23).

Sixth, the evil ones' moral standard is compromised for the sake of their benefit. So they could shed the blood of prophets and the saints (Rev 16:6; 17:6; 18:24). They killed the saints for their spiritual reasons (Rev 13:15) and forced people to compromise moral standards for achieving their own benefits (Rev 13:17). They committed adultery (cf. Rev 2:20-22; 9:21; 14:8; 18:3, 9; 19:2; 21:8; 22:15), murders (cf. Rev 9:21; 21:8; 22:15), sorceries (cf. Rev 9:21; 18:23, 22:15), thefts (cf. Rev 9:21), and idol worship (cf. Rev 2:14, 20; 9:20; 13:14, 15; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4; 21:8; 22:15), but they did not repent. (cf. Rev 9:20, 21). Consequently, they deserved to be called “the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying” (Rev 22:15).

In summary, the GC in Revelation exposes the inner motivation of two camps by the comparison of their moral assumptions. The Dragon and his followers love themselves, so they do not love the Lamb and cannot follow Him because He never considers His own advantages. The direction of the Dragon is far from the direction of the Lamb. The evil ones achieved material success (Rev 18:3), but failed in moral standards. They violated the commandments of God, while the saints obeyed God's commandments. Also, they considered self-exaltation as the prime value following the spirit of the Dragon, while the saints lift self-humiliation up as the supreme value following the behavior of the Lamb (cf. Rev 1:5). The key question for Christian leaders is this: who do you love (cf. Rev 12:11) and who are you willingly follow (cf. Rev 7:17; 14:4)? While the relational closeness with the Lamb is crucial for the saints, the self-exaltation without sound relationship with others is the fundamental spirit of the evil ones. Thus, genuine Christian leadership cannot be evaluated from outward appearance, but from inner motivation. Christian leadership is a love relationship which comes from the experience of God's sacrificial love between friends (cf. John 15:13-14), while the counterfeit of leadership is a commanding relationship between an abusive master and servants (cf. John 15:15).

### Free Will

The issue of "freedom to choose" needs to be explored to understand biblical leadership principles in terms of the evaluative dimension of worldview. God does not want to have mere lip service from His people (cf. Isa 29:13; Matt 15:8; Mark 7:6). He hates hypocrisy (cf. Matt 23:13, 14, 15, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29). Since He expects them to give willingly, He never uses coercive ways to attain their hearts. In this regard, God engages

the GC in a fair manner, not manipulating people's hearts, but touching their hearts with love in the context of freedom.

Revelation fairly concludes with the invitation of the Holy Spirit and the bride, saying “come” (Rev 22:17). The invitation of the Holy Spirit in Revelation 22:17 manifest the reality that God considers the voluntary spirit by proper use of the free will. “The free gift of the water of life” (Rev 22:17, NIV) is granted to “whoever is thirsty and to “whoever wishes.” No single allusion indicating coercion exists. Only the one who is touched or moved or affected is expected to react on this invitation.<sup>75</sup>

This invitation reminds us of Jesus' invitation to give the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-38). The Holy Spirit is given to anyone who is “thirsty” (John 7:37-38) as the gift of God (cf. Luke 11:13; John 4:10; Acts 8:20). He prepared every condition which encourages sinners to ask for the Holy Spirit. As Jesus forgave sinners by His sacrifice, by proclaimed, “It is finished [τετέω]” (John 19:30) and promised the Holy Spirit to those who “ask” [αἰτέω] (Luke 11:13), Revelation begins with the description of the sacrifice of Jesus (Rev 1:4) and concludes with the proclamation of “He who was seated on the throne” (Rev 21:5), “It is done [γίνομαι]” (Rev 21:6) and with invitation for one who is “thirsty” (Rev 21:6; 22:17) and “*wishes* [θέλω] to take the water of life without cost” (Rev 22:17, emphasis added). The purpose of Revelation is not to create fear, but to invite “those who live on the earth” (Rev 14:6) into a restored relationship with God.

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<sup>75</sup>In Korean Version of the Bible always describes the phrase “in the Spirit” (Rev. 1:10; 4:2; cf. Matt. 22:43) as a condition of heart be touched or moved (Gamdong) as the same manner of willingness in constructing the tabernacle or temple (cf. Exod. 35:21, 26, 34; Ezra 1:1, 5; Hag. 1:14).

God's invitation does not have any sense of coercion. An invitation can only be a genuine invitation when the receivers' freedom of choice is respected. Thus, the final sentence of God is based on the decision of each person, saying "[L]et the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and let the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy" (Rev 22:11). The proclamation shows that God respects each person's decision.

The next verse also has to be understood based on the concept of the free will. "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward [is] with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done" (Rev 22:12). The phrase "according to what he has done" is not merely the description of moral behaviors, but the expression which emphasizes decision-making (cf. Rev 2:23; 18:6). However, this attitude which respects each person's choice is not a laissez-faire attitude. Rather, it contains the fervent love of God who expects people to repent. Revelation emphasizes God's own motivation in which He wants to lead people from the way of death to the way of salvation. The description of the seven churches (Rev 2:5, 16, 21, 23; 3:3, 19, 20), seven trumpets (Rev 9:20, 21) and seven bowls (Rev 16:9, 11) focuses on the repentance of people before these disasters are poured out. Because God respects an individual's free-will decision, He leads quite a long human history despite the misunderstanding and blame heaped upon Him.

God's long-suffering patience and love are revealed in the Lamb's actions and leadership. The Lamb, during the process of breaking the seven seals, protects the saints from the sun and any scorching heat (Rev 7:16) and leads them into springs of living water (Rev 7:17). He neither pushes them nor uses coercive ways. Responding to the Lamb's respectful attitude, the 144,000 "follow the Lamb wherever He goes" (Rev 14:4)

and keep their virtue. If someone follows a leader wherever He goes, there are only two options whether that person is coerced by the leader or he/she willingly loves the leader. Also, if someone keeps their moral innocence, then there is only one option that they follow the leader wholeheartedly. Without giving hearts there is no genuine morality. The close relationship between the Lamb and His followers is the result of trust and love which springs out of free decision making.

In contrast, Satan violates the gift of free-will and conscience. He gets people's allegiance either by accusing (Rev 12:10), deceiving (Rev 2:10; 13:14; 18:23; 19:20; 20:3) or coercing (Rev 13:15, 17) them. He destroys the image of God by violating this core value of humanity. His kingdom is constructed according to ego-centered hierarchy so there is no respect for individual opinion. Rather, the beasts in Revelation 13 commonly command and order their followers to achieve their (the beasts') own goals. The beast coming from the sea has a mouth like that of a lion (Rev 13:2) and his voice is always strong and loud (Rev 13:4, 5, 6). Also, the beast coming from the earth speaks like a Dragon (Rev 13:11). He "ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast" (Rev 13:14, NIV). And he commands to kill "as many as do not worship the image of the beast" (Rev 13:15). The followers of the Dragon do not speak and follow without question (Rev 13:3, 8, 12). Their freedom of choice is infringed. Therefore, a major difference between biblical leadership and satanic leadership rests on the respect or denial of people's free-will.

### **The Affective Aspect of the Great Controversy Worldview and Leadership Principles**

While the modern world emphasizes cognitive truth for the sake of objectivity, affective truth has been easily overlooked in the spiritual life. With the influence of the

modern worldview, Christian truth largely stresses doctrinal understanding in the process of conversion. However, feelings and emotions are essential not only for ordinary lives but also for religious lives. Elliot asserts that reason and emotion work interdependently in us to enable us to make moral decisions, i.e., a person's morality is the result of cooperation of feelings and rational control.<sup>76</sup> Thus, "emotion may provide a good indication of the level of a person's moral development"<sup>77</sup> Because emotion is part of morality, "[e]motion and reason must be seen to function together in any viable ethical system, both serving to enhance and correct the other."<sup>78</sup> Hiebert also argues that both cognition and affectivity have to be balanced in Christian life in order to escape from being captured by merely cold head knowledge.<sup>79</sup> Scripture fairly stresses the three dimensions of the Christian life—the cognitive, the affective, and the evaluative. These are not separated, but intertwined in receiving the gospel.<sup>80</sup> The GC in Revelation is full of emotions—awe, fear, shame, anger, weeping and crying, suffering, singing, and rest, as examples. However, these affective elements are often ignored in dealing with the GC

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<sup>76</sup>Matthew A. Elliot, *Faithful Feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2006), 46-55.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 52.

<sup>79</sup>Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*, 60.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 291.

perspectives. This section explores affective elements of the GC to understand the role of emotions in Christian leadership.<sup>81</sup>

### Fear

The emotion of fear in Revelation demonstrates the importance of emotion for Christian leadership. Revelation plainly contrasts the emotional response of the saints and the evil ones as they confront the eschatological events. First, fear is manifested differently. Since Adam and Eve were afraid of God and hid from Him, fear is a basic emotion for all human beings (cf. Gen 3:10). However, the saints overcome fear by the comfort of the Lord. When the apostle John encountered Jesus, he was afraid of Jesus and fell at His feet as if dead. At that moment Jesus told him: “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last” (Rev 1:17). Also, in the letter to the church in Smyrna, Jesus encourages them: “Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer” (Rev 2:10). Despite the fact that the saints also cannot avoid fearful circumstances, they have the comforter, encourager, and helper who can soothe their fear. Thus, the fear of God for the saints has new meaning in Revelation. In Revelation 11:18 the term φοβέομαι [to fear] is translated “to honor, to revere, to worship, to reverence, to show great respect/reverence for.”<sup>82</sup> Also, in Revelation 14:7 the term has the same meaning: “Fear God, and give Him glory.”<sup>83</sup> Therefore, the saints are those who fear God (Rev 15:4; 19:5). For them this is not an

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<sup>81</sup>Elliot recognizes the importance of emotion in leadership, “The stronger the emotion the greater influence it will have.” Elliot, *Faithful Feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament*, 51.

<sup>82</sup>Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 1-11*, 241.

<sup>83</sup>Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 12-22*, 63.



emotion which comes from a sense of guilt but the reflection of respect and impetus to worship God.<sup>84</sup>

For the evil ones, however, this emotion carries only a negative sense. They fear the coming torment so they weep and mourn (Rev 18:10, 15). Fear is the fundamental emotion of the evil ones (cf. Gen 3:10). So when the final judgment comes, they call to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb” (Rev 6:16; cf. Hos 10:1-3, 8; 11:2; Jer 4:23-30; 5:7).<sup>85</sup>

In fact, the phrase “the wrath of the Lamb” (Rev 6:16) is not coined by the Lamb,<sup>86</sup> but by the evil ones. Though Revelation talks about “your [God] wrath” (Rev 11:18), “God’s wrath” (Rev 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1), “His fierce wrath” (Rev 16:19), and “the fierce wrath of God” (Rev 19:15), this wrath does not mean the uncontrolled rage of God.<sup>87</sup> The evil ones had sufficient opportunities to avoid the final judgment of God. In reality, the Lamb has been working as the Savior on the side of sinners. In the previous chapter the Lamb is introduced as one who sacrificed Himself for sinners waiting for

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<sup>84</sup>Hiebert uses the term *mysterium tremendum*, the holy awe, to explain the emotion when we enter into the presence of God. “In his presence, we will fall flat on our faces, shielding ourselves from his glory and majesty.” Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*, 291.

<sup>85</sup>Beale sees the language of “one sitting on the throne” implies the final judgment because this phrase occurs again only in the final judgment scene in 20:11. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text.*, 400.

<sup>86</sup>This expression only occurs here in Revelation and in all of scripture.

<sup>87</sup>The “consuming fire” (cf. Heb. 12:29) or “raging fire” (cf. Heb. 10:27) regarding the God’s judgment has to be understood in tune with the character of God. The fire of God contains a meaning of His unceasing and strong love (cf. Deut. 4:24; Song of Sol. 8:6).

their voluntary response (Rev 5:6, 9, 12; cf. 13:8). Sinners' fear comes from the result of their wrong decisions, behaviors and consequent guilt which resulted from refusing His free invitation, i.e., their fear comes from the absence of the Lamb who can comfort them. The Lamb does not magnify sinners' fear, but only the weight of their sin amplifies their fear. Consequently, the final judgment day is only recognized as "the great day of their [God and the Lamb] wrath" (Rev 6:17) for them according to their unbelief.<sup>88</sup> "The wrath of God" in Revelation, therefore, is the eschatological wrath of God which intensifies the reality of God's wrath being manifested in judgment. This wrath is a righteous indignation.<sup>89</sup>

Here, one of the biblical leadership principles is manifested in terms of its emotional dimension. God is the one who comforts people saying "Do not be afraid."<sup>90</sup> Likewise, God's servants participate in the ministry of comforting people by giving the same message, "Do not be afraid."<sup>91</sup> In contrast, the evil ones' fear results from their broken relationship with God (cf. Matt 25:25). Their relationship with the Dragon imposes fear and anger because the Dragon uses these emotions as his instrument for

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<sup>88</sup>First two categories of the evil ones in Revelation 21:8 are described in connection: "the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars."

<sup>89</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 460.

<sup>90</sup>This specific encouragement—"do not be afraid"—occurs throughout the whole scriptures. There are numerous persons who heard this voice of God: Abraham (Gen. 15:1), Hagar (Gen. 21:17), Isaac (Gen. 26:24), Jacob (Gen. 46:3), Joshua (Joshua 1:9; 8:1; 10:8; 11:6), Gideon (Judges 6:23), Solomon (1 Chron. 28:20), Daniel (Dan. 10:12, 19), John (Rev. 1:17), Paul (Acts 27:24), etc.

<sup>91</sup>One of the missions of the prophets was to give people confidence when they encountered risk and dangers. For instance, Moses (Exod. 20:20; Deut. 1:21, 29; 3:22; 7:21; 20:1, 3; 31:6, 8), Samuel (1 Sam. 12:20), Isaiah (Isa. 10:24; 35:4; 37:6; 41:10, 13, 14; 43:1, 5; 44:2, 8; 51:7; 54:4) and Jeremiah (Jer. 1:8, 17; 10:2; 30:10; 42:11; 46:27, 28; 51:46) were participated in the ministry of giving comfort and confidence by delivering the God's message, "do not be afraid."

leading people. He coerces and threatens with death (cf. Rev 13:15-17). Because they have no relationship with the one who keeps them safe at the final judgment, their fear is permanent and fatal. The quality of relationship with God determines the kind of emotions.

### Shame

The emotion of shame in Revelation exhibits the vanity of the transactional way of leading people. An exploration of the emotion of shame is crucial to the GC worldview. Revelation exhorts people to cover their shame by the cloth of righteousness. The letter to the church in Laodicea strongly advises them to wear white garments to cover their shameful nakedness (Rev 3:18). Amid the fierce judgment God invites people thus, “Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame” (Rev 16:15). The saints wear “fine linen, bright and clean” which signifies “the righteous acts of the saints” (Rev 19:8). Although God addresses the reality of people’s nakedness (cf. Rev 3:17), His utmost ministry is not to expose their nakedness but to cover them by the righteousness of the Lamb (cf. Gen 3:21).<sup>92</sup>

In contrast, the Dragon instigates the evil ones to commit shameful adultery (cf. Rev 2:14, 20; 17:2, 4; 18:3, 9) and idolatry (cf. Rev 9:20; 13:14, 15; 14:9, 11; 16:2;

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<sup>92</sup>For instance, Psalm is filled with petitions of the saints who ask God to cover their shame or to escape shameful situation (cf. Ps. 22:5; 25:3, 20; 69:6; 71:1, 119:31, 46, 80) and a petitions to punish their enemy by shame (cf. Ps. 35:4, 26; 40:14, 15; 44:7; 53:5; 69:19; 70:2, 3; 71:13, 24; 83:16; 17; 97:7; 109:28, 29; 119:78; 129:5; 132:18). Also, the prophet Isaiah manifests both God’s concealing ministry for His people (cf. Isa. 25:8; 49:23; 50:7; 54:4; 61:7) and punishment His foes by shame (cf. Isa. 19:9; 20:4; 41:11; 42:17; 44:9, 11; 65:13; 66:5). Particularly, the prophet Jeremiah gives Israelites and neighbor nations warning messages to reveal their shameful evils (cf. Jer. 2:26, 36; 3:3, 25; 10:4; 11:13; 12:13; 13:26; 15:9; 17:13; 22:22; 23:40; 44:8, 12; 46:12; 24; 48:1, 13, 20, 23; 50:2, 12; 51:17, 51).

19:20), and to pursue excessive luxury (cf. Rev 18:3, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19). Two manifest sins—adultery and idolatry—which ultimately bring the evil ones’ shame usually come together in Revelation (cf. Rev 2:14, 2:20) because their characteristic is to satisfy people’s own sensuality without considering moral standards. Also, the luxury which the evil ones accumulate purposes to please their sensuality.<sup>93</sup> Their wealth, not God, is what they trust (Rev 18:3).

The evil ones satisfy their feelings to the extent that they ignore their shameful condition. According to Paul, “their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things” (Phil 3:19, NIV). In fact, all the depraved things come from the absence of the knowledge of God in their mind (cf. Rom 1:28). The emotion of shame is the consequence of the broken relationship with God. The way of the evil ones is totally different from that of the saints. While the saints cry today and delight tomorrow (cf. Rev 7:17; 21:4),<sup>94</sup> the evil ones enjoy today with luxuries and cry and weep tomorrow (cf. Rev 18:15, 19). The evil ones’ slogan is in line with “let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die” (Isa 22:13).

This contrast reveals the Dragon’s strategies in terms of the emotional aspect. The Dragon uses people’s sensuality or material satisfaction in a transactional way. While he supplies emotional satisfaction, people have to give their hearts to him and to taste the shameful result. Every ethical perversion follows this simple mechanism. Satan seduces

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<sup>93</sup>The Greek word *strh/noj* (18:3) means “luxury, wealth, sensuality, sensual living, sensual behavior, lust, wantonness, evil desire, delicacy, etc.” Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 12-22*, 133-134.

<sup>94</sup>This characteristic of the saints harmonizes with those who sow seed weeping and rejoice tomorrow (Ps. 126:6) and those who wife women who smile “at the future” (Prov. 31:25).

people to exchange their loyalty to God with self-satisfaction with its shameful consequences. This transactional way of the Dragon successfully deceives all the nations (cf. Rev 18:23). The kings of the earth who drink “the wine of the passion of her immorality” (Rev 18:3) allow them to commit adultery with her and the merchants of the earth who become rich by the wealth of her sensuality have to confess, “in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste” (Rev 18:17).

In contrast, the Lamb leads people to keep their purity by avoiding defilement with women (Rev 14:4). His way is not transactional, but He rather transforms people to be blameless (Rev 14:5). The saints are ready to follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Rev 14:4). They choose to exactly follow the way of the Lamb’s behaviors. One may ask “Why are they willing to follow the Lamb’s way of behaviors, i.e., what is their utmost motivation to follow the way of the Lamb?” Although this question is one of the grand topics, readers find a clue from the end of chapter 7: “for the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every *tear* from their eyes” (v.17, emphasis added; cf. Rev 21:4).

What we find as an answer that explains the motivation of the saints is the presence of “tears.” It explains an emotional closeness between the Lamb and the saints. The saints follow the Lamb not because of material blessings, but because of emotional closeness, a positive relationship. The saints know well about the love, sacrifice, and expectations of the Lamb. The Lamb’s behaviors are not transactional in the secular theory sense. The saints know the apparent historical event in which the Lamb in shame willingly died to cover sinners’ shame. Also, He experienced the same situation the saints face. So He understands and sympathizes with their trials and temptations. This relational

intimacy which is produced from genuine love urges the saints to follow the Lamb until death (Rev 12:11). Thus, the saints endure every hardship by avoiding temporal satisfaction. They keep themselves from shameful behaviors. Their characteristics are perseverance, longsuffering, and endurance (cf. Rev 13:10; 14:12). The Lamb is the leader who considers the emotional satisfaction of followers.

### Worship and Praise

The worship and praise of the saints reveals the power of genuine emotion of Christian leaders. One of the most profound descriptions regarding the emotional aspect of the GC in Revelation comes from the scenes of worship and praise by the saints. The congregation of the Lamb is a choir which sings “a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders” (Rev 14:3a). They sing a very unique song because “no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth” (Rev 14:3b). Revelation 15:2-4 depicts the saints as a chorus who praise the work of God. The title of the song is “the song of Moses the bond-servant of God and the song of the Lamb” (Rev 15:3a). The content of the song exclaims, “Great and marvelous are Thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the nations” (Rev 15:3b).

The emotion of the saints is so great that the sound is like “the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder” (Rev 14:2a). At the same time, the voice is so beautiful that it is “like the sound of harpists playing on their harps” (Rev 14:2b). Their emotion is mixed with joy, excitement, love, and gratitude. They are deeply moved by the gift of salvation which is freely given to those who are thirsty. They have the triumphant

joy which is finally given to those who overcome every deceitful temptation of the Dragon.

Here, the source of their emotion is revealed. The singing of the saints is the result of being in right relationship with God and the Lamb. Their full emotion is the result of the Lamb's sacrifice (cf. Rev 7:10, 14) and leadership (cf. Rev 7:17; 14:4), not of the impetus of sensuality (cf. Rev 18:3, 22), i.e., the emotion of the saints comes from the fact that the Lamb achieved their salvation. Their emotion is interrelated with the profound cognitive truth, relationship with God, and spiritual transformation. In reality, their singing is the comprehensive expression—physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual—of their salvation.<sup>95</sup> Their joyful emotion is permanent because the Lamb who is the reason of their joy dwells among them forever (cf. Rev 14:1; 22:1). Their emotion is fully satisfied that they can “rest from their labor” (Rev 14:13).

The emotional competencies of leaders are the most important factors in pastoral and missional effectiveness. The increased emotional intelligence helps Christian leaders to serve people effectively—enabled to know their own emotions (self-awareness), manage their emotional responses (self-management), understand others' emotion (social awareness), and so manage relational conflict (relational management).<sup>96</sup> The relationship between the Lamb and the followers are fully secured so that the followers successfully accomplish their mission with emotional communion. Thus, they sow in tears and they

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<sup>95</sup>For the dimensions of the music, the next chapter will explore more comprehensive meanings.

<sup>96</sup>See Roy M. Oswald and Arland Jacobson, *The Emotional Intelligence of Jesus: Relational Smarts for Religious Leaders* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 2-3.

reap with songs of joy (cf. Ps. 126:5-6). The full expression of emotion of the saints is the result of a strong interrelationship between the Lamb and his followers.

While the Christian leader addresses the future as well as the present, the evil ones only sing in the present. They have no song for the future. They have satisfied their lustful emotions by the help of various instrumental sounds (cf. Rev 18:22). Their focus is to only satisfy their own emotional satisfaction in the present. In fact, they worship themselves. Consequently, only a sorrowful lament is theirs in the final judgment (cf. Rev 18:9, 15). They face fear and dread instead of awe and respect. They failed to choose the right leader. The strategies of the Dragon are to break the balance of emotion with the other part of the human essences—cognition and morality. He seduces people to the extreme level of emotion. He adds immorality upon idolatry (cf. Rev 2:14, 20). He adds homicide upon threat (cf. Rev 13:15). He adds the “bodies and souls of men” (cf. Rev 18:13) upon the list of merchandises. Thus, the great harlot is intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries (Rev 17:2) and the blood of the saints (Rev 18:6). His devouring greed is not satisfied until he confronts the final step.<sup>97</sup> Consequently, the evil ones and their leader receive restless torment (cf. Rev 14:11-12).

This contrasting expression regarding worship and praise manifests the emotional satisfaction of followers that comes from right relationship with God. Their emotion is maximized because they know God and His works. Their relationship with God creates the fullness of emotion. Thus, Christian leaders are the ones who enjoy the source of full

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<sup>97</sup>While the message of the gospel invites people to be content in whatever the circumstances (cf. Phil. 4:11; 1 Tim. 6:6), the evil ones are those who cannot satisfy their circumstances (cf. Prov. 30:15-16).



and genuine emotion—the right relationship with God—and lead people to experience healthy emotions in following the Lamb.

### Familial Relationship

The genuine emotions of Christian leaders come from a right relationship with God. Familial relationship between God and the saints is one of the basic concepts of Revelation employed to explain the GC worldview in terms of the affective dimension. The whole narrative of Revelation can be summarized in a sentence, “He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be God and he will be My *Son*” (Rev 21:7). The horrific accounts of anger in previous chapters may easily distract people from seeing the reality of a right relationship between God and people. On account of the terrific disasters upon the wicked, God can be unjustly recognized as a tyrant who wields his power and authority arbitrarily.

However, the Son of God who reveals “the words of the prophecy” (Rev 1:3) has the profound purpose to deliver the prophecy that God is the Father of “every tribe and language and people and nation” (Rev 5:9). He is leading people as a loving parent in the midst of an enraged world (cf. Rev 12:6, 14-16). The 144,000 are those who have the name of the Lamb and the name of His Father (Rev 14:1). As the Lamb shepherd leads to the springs of living water, “God shall wipe every tear from their eyes” (Rev 7:17). His attitude shows a typical paternal love reminding us of the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15). In this story, the father saw the son and “was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him” (Luke. 15:20, NIV). In the sight of the father, the son was not a miserable servant but the heir who inherited all the possession of the father. Likewise, as the Father is King (Rev 11:17; cf. 15:3) and the

Lamb is “King of kings” (17:14; cf. 19:16), people who overcome will be also kings (cf. Rev 5:10; 20:4, 6; 22:5) because they were originally created as the sons of God.

This family atmosphere in Revelation can be reinforced in a word, “σκηνώω” [spread tent, live, dwell, made his dwelling].” This verb occurs four times in Revelation (Rev 7:15; 12:12; 13:6; 21:3). Remarkably, Revelation 7:15, in connection with the description of the Lamb shepherd’s leadership, says, “they [a great multitude] are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne shall *spread His tabernacle* [σκηνώω] over them” (emphasis added).

The verb σκηνώω contains familial connotations. The crucial evidence comes in the description of Revelation 21:1-8. Revelation 21:3 states, “Behold, *the tabernacle* [σκηνή] of God is among men, and He shall dwell [σκηνώω] among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them” (emphasis added). This verse describes the close relationship with God. The tabernacle is prepared to live with God. The preposition μετὰ [with] is used in this verse three times to emphasize the inseparable relationship with God. This intimate relationship with God is reinforced with the conjugal expression in verse 2: “And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.” Also, the paternal relationship is revealed in the promise of God, “He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be God and he will be My *Son*” (Rev 21:7, emphasis added). This relationship between God and the saints is specified in God’s action which wipes “away every tear from their eyes” (Rev 21:4). The emotion of the saints is full of consolation. The one who is seated on the throne (Rev 21:5) is not merely God who judges people but also is One who is a loving Father.

Moreover, the rest of Revelation 21 and 22 firmly clings to the concept of family. First, Revelation 21 introduces “the bride, the wife of the Lamb” (Rev 21:9).<sup>98</sup> The bride of the Lamb, New Jerusalem, is depicted in brilliant appearances (Rev 21:10-21). Then, Revelation 21:22 uses the term “temple [ναός]”: “And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple.” Revelation 7:15 uses the term ναός [temple] with the verb “σκηνώω” [dwell]. The temple of God was originally designed for the dwelling of God (cf. Exod 25:8). Thus, Revelation 15:5 states, “*the temple of the tabernacle* [ὁ ναός τῆς σκηνῆς] of testimony in heaven was opened” (emphasis added). The temple of God is the house of God (cf. Ps 23:10; 26:8; 27:4; 92:13; 93:5; 118:26; 122:1, 9; 135:2).<sup>99</sup> The house of God is not simply a space to dwell in, but the place where familial relationship is set up (cf. 1 Chron 17:12-13). So, when all the history of the GC is completed and all the broken relationships are recovered, there is no temple in the city of God (Rev 21:22) because every corner of the city is the house of God and everyone in the city are His children.<sup>100</sup>

Therefore, the final invitation of Revelation 22 has to be understood in the light of familial concepts (cf. Rev 22:17). The invitation can be understood as the calling of people to come into the house of God and enjoy the familial relationship with God. The children of God will see the Father’s face every day (22:4) and be comforted by the gifts

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<sup>98</sup>Doukhan argues, in the exegesis on the pure virgin (Rev 14:4), “Scripture employs the conjugal metaphor to indicate the intimate relationship between God and His people.” Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse through Hebrew Eyes*, 121.

<sup>99</sup>NRSV translates the term σκηνή as “home” (Rev 21:3).

<sup>100</sup>The cube shape of the city manifests that the city itself is the temple of God in similar with the shape of original temple or tabernacle. See Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 600.

of God—the tree of life (22:2), the water of life (22:17). The GC will be ended in full emotion which comes from the restored familial relationship.

In contrast, no hint of a familial relationship exists between the Dragon and his followers. The evil ones emerge with the positional titles such as “the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man” (Rev 6:15). Their relationship is established by their status or positions. For instance, Babylon denies her familial condition as a widow, but insists upon her positional status as a queen (Rev 18:7). They consider their competence as the most important element in establishing a relationship. They evaluate people with the leverage of utility. They give great value to material things (cf. Rev 18:12-13). They see even people as merchandise (cf. Rev 18:13), so their weeping and crying is not because of the loss of people, but loss of material (Rev 18:15-19). They reveal an attitude of the industrial model of leadership which emphasizes productivity and effectiveness.<sup>101</sup> Satan profoundly demonstrates this worldview.

As a result, their emotion is perverted and unbalanced. They show extreme emotional outbursts. The kings of the earth who committed adultery with Babylon and shared her luxury begin to weep and mourn for her when they see “the smoke of her burning” (Rev 18:9). The reason is, “no one buys their cargoes any more” (Rev 18:11). Their weeping is not because of regret for the loss of immortality, but because of the broken transactional relationship with Babylon. Their pleasure which they once enjoyed

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<sup>101</sup>The mark of the beast is related to the economic activity. No one can trade without the mark (13:16-17). The fact that the merchants of the earth could be involved in trade (18:11, 15, 17) shows that they had the mark of the beast. They successfully bought and sold the various merchandises with the mark. Thus, the mark of the beast contains the connotation of the commercial or industrial paradigm.

in distorted relationship will be over (cf. Rev 18:22). Even “the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard” (Rev 18:23). Their familial relationship was sacrificed on the altar of productivity. Only anger and regret which come from the tardy recognition of deceit will be theirs (cf. Rev 18:23).

To sum it up, the worldview in Revelation shows biblical leadership is practiced on the basis of familial relationship. The Revelation perspective teaches a right relationship with God creates a right emotional response and appropriate leadership behavior. In practice, Christian leadership which fails to deal with emotional response will not be appropriate for any mission and ministry. Every relationship in the church has to be reinforced by the concept of familial relationships. The paternal, maternal, conjugal relationships must be in tune with the relationship between God and His people. Then, the ministry of Christianity will be a most pleasant work in a healthy emotional atmosphere.

### **The Lamb’s Leadership**

This section summarizes the Lamb’s leadership in Revelation. The GC in Revelation magnifies the role of the Lamb and the Dragon in leading the process of human history. The numerous topics of Revelation are expanded around two antithetical characters. The purpose of this contrast is to give clear information about the reality of the GC so that people cannot be deceived by the Dragon’s counterfeit reign and give their allegiance to God before the final judgment. This section rearranges the Lamb’s leadership based on the frame of the GC worldview.

## The Fundamental Structure of the Lamb's Leadership

The first description of Jesus in Revelation supplies the basic structure of the Lamb's leadership. Rev 1:5-6 invites us to give glory and power to Jesus who "loves us" and "has released us from our sins by His blood" and "has made us to be a kingdom and priests to His God and Father." It summarizes Jesus' ministry in three elements: (1) love, (2) salvation, and (3) ministry of the redeemed. These three descriptions on Jesus' mission compose the fundamental framework of Jesus' ministry and also of leadership. This frame supplies a lens to read the attitude and the spirit of the Lamb's leadership in Revelation.<sup>102</sup>

First of all, these three elements of Jesus' ministry for people are harmonized with the preceding three descriptions of Jesus Himself: "and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth" (1:5a). First, "the faithful witness" (1:5a) can be linked with the phrase "loves us" (1:5b). The central characteristic of Jesus is manifested in these two expressions. His faithfulness cannot be separated from His love.<sup>103</sup> Love is the foundation of His kingdom (cf. Col 1:13). Thus, His faithfulness is revealed as the final guarantee of all promises of Revelation (Rev 21:5; 22:6).

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<sup>102</sup>For instance, Revelation 5:9-10 also follows this framework. The Lamb was slain and purchased men with His blood. Next, He has made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve God. Revelation 7:14-15 describe the saints who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Then, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple. The redemption is the result of the Lamb's sacrifice, and His sacrifice is the result of His love.

<sup>103</sup>These two characteristics of God—love and faithfulness—is firmly interrelated in describing God's character in the Old Testament (cf. Exod. 34:6; Ps. 36:5; 86:15; 89:14; 108:4; 115:1; 117:2). Also, the book of Hebrew describes Jesus as "a merciful and faithful high priest" (Heb. 2:17).

Second, “the first-born of the dead” (Rev 1:5a) is clearly connected to the phrase “has released us from our sins by His blood” (Rev 1:5b). Jesus’ loving character leads Him to be slain and die and be resurrected for sinners. His death and resurrection are indispensable conditions for the salvation of sinners (cf. 1 Cor 15:15-17, 22). However, the core motivation of sacrifice is His love.

Third, “the ruler of the kings of the earth” (Rev 1:5a) is associated with the phrase “has made us to be a kingdom and priests to His God and Father” (Rev 1:6) in terms of ministry. The final purpose of His love and sacrifice is to involve people in His redemptive ministry as Jesus rules the universe as the King of kings.<sup>104</sup> This connection shows the fact that the life and ministry of Jesus itself is the epitome of the life and ministry of the redeemed people.

Meanwhile, this frame is also in tune with the meaning of the Sanctuary which is revealed in the structure and function of the Sanctuary. First, the Most Holy Place of the Sanctuary is linked with the faithful and loving character of God. The Most Holy Place is the heart of the tabernacle. The Ark of the Covenant which is located in the center of the Most Holy Place signifies the presence of God while the stone tablets of the covenant inside the Ark symbolize the character of God. Thus, the presence of God is referred to as “the throne of grace” (Heb 4:16).

Second, the altar which is positioned in the center of the courtyard is associated with Jesus’ sacrificial ministry. As a Lamb was offered as a burnt offering at the altar, Jesus was sacrificed as “the atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 2:2, NIV; cf. 4:10) at

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<sup>104</sup>This missional aspect is correlated with the purpose of creation (Gen. 1:27-28) and the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:3; 17:5).

the altar (cf. Heb 10:10-14). This self-sacrifice of the Lamb proves the love of God for sinners (Eph 5:2). The love of God is the foundation of His sacrifice; Revelation states that God “loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood” (Rev 1:5).

Third, the service of the high priest in the Most Holy place points to Jesus’ heavenly service as the “mediator between God and men” (1 Tim 2:5, NIV; cf. Heb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). The ministry of Jesus as the high priest continues in heaven after His death and resurrection (cf. Heb 2:17; 8:1, 6; 9:11-12, 15, 24). The fact that He sacrificed the Lamb again leads Him to serve people epitomizes the life and mission of the redeemed Christians: to love God calls for sacrifice, and sacrifice calls for ministry.<sup>105</sup>

In summary, this basic mechanism of the sanctuary system is closely related to the ministry of Jesus as follow:

**Table 1. Comparison of Jesus’ ministry and sanctuary system**

	<i>Identification of Jesus (Rev 1:5a)</i>	<i>Ministry of Jesus (Rev 1:5b-6)</i>	<i>Sanctuary</i>
<i>Character</i>	The faithful witness	Loves us	The mercy seat (the Most Holy place)
<i>Behavior</i>	The firstborn from the dead	Has freed us from our sins by his blood	The burnt offering (the inner courtyard)
<i>Mission and Ministry</i>	The ruler of the kings of the earth	Has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father	The ministry of the high priest (the Most Holy place)

Christ’s incarnation and sacrifice are the result of His love. Again, His sacrifice and resurrection invites people to become His kingdom and priests to serve God. This

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<sup>105</sup>Structurally, the altar of burnt offering and the ark of covenant occupy the two center positions of Sanctuary.



simple diagram shows a model of Christian leadership. The root is character. The stem is behavior. The fruit is mission and ministry.

In contrast, there is no voluntary humiliation and sacrifice in the Dragon's world. While Jesus descends from the throne to the earth, the Dragon attempts to ascend above God. While Jesus sacrifices Himself for the sake of sinners, the Dragon exalts himself to achieve his own power and authority.<sup>106</sup> While Jesus continues His ministry after His ascension, the Dragon wields his coercive leadership (cf. Rev 13:4, 7, 12, 15).

The core issue is at the beginning point: love. Wrong motivation leads Satan to the extreme of self-exaltation. Without the right motivation which comes from a response to the love of Jesus, every behavior, business and ministry will be revealed as counterfeit. The Dragon and his followers try to exalt their own authority by achieving luxury and pleasure, because their first motivation is totally different from that of the Lamb and His followers. Therefore, the Lamb's behavior and attitude in the GC has to be understood by His loving character which creates a core motivation of His incarnation, sacrifice and ministry. If not, counterfeit behaviors of the Dragon which are not motivated by love will invade and occupy the Christian community.

### The Characteristics of the Lamb's Leadership

The Lamb's leadership in Revelation shows a few distinctive characteristics. Sometimes paradoxical expressions can be only understood by the foundational frame of

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<sup>106</sup>Stanley E. Patterson clarifies two models of leadership by comparing Lucifer's ascendant model with Jesus' incarnational model. Patterson, "Up the Down Path: Power, Ambition, and Spiritual Leadership," 8-15.

Jesus' ministry which is revealed in Rev 1:5-6. This section compiles the characteristics of the Lamb's leadership portrayed in the GC worldview.

### **Activeness in Passivity**

The Lamb's leadership shows an attitude of activeness in passivity. The Lamb seems to show passivity in His death. Revelation does not hesitate to use the passive phrase "the Lamb was slain" (cf. Rev 5:6, 9, 12). He kept silent and was dragged to the cross (cf. Isa 53:7; Matt 12:19). The image of the Lamb in the sacrificial system is very passive. However, the death of the Lamb is the most powerful voice of God's love and justice. It strongly condemns Satan's cruelty and at the same time reveals one of the profound characteristics of God—humility.<sup>107</sup> Therefore, the activeness of God's love is revealed in His seemingly powerless passivity. Consequently, He died actively, not passively.

Calvin Miller sees Jesus' leadership in the word "meek" (Matt 11:29). He argues, "Jesus was called meek, not weak. Meekness is not a lack of power but the confidence that issues from it."<sup>108</sup> Miller posits that the word meek can be best translated "power under control." Thus, "Christ was meek (Matt 11:29), but He was no weakling. In all relationships, He must be seen as a man of empowered leadership."<sup>109</sup> The Lamb's

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<sup>107</sup>The humility is one of the characteristics of God's world. God is on the humble (cf. Ps. 10:17; Prob. 15:33; 18:12; 22:4; Isa. 29:19; 57:15; Mich. 6:8; Zeph. 2:3; Jam. 4:6). Scripture emphasizes humility of the saints (cf. Eph. 4:2; Phil. 2:3; Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 3:8; 5:6) following the example of Jesus (cf. Zech. 9:9; Matt. 11:29; 21:5).

<sup>108</sup>Calvin Miller, *The Empowered Leader: 10 Keys to Servant Leadership* (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 1995), 6.

<sup>109</sup>*Ibid.*, x.

leadership is strong (cf. Rev 7:17; 17:14), because His power is under control and He is empowered by Father and the Spirit.

Redemptive history could be achieved by God's activeness in passivity. The prophet Isaiah prophesies about God's activeness by stating that the "Lord was pleased to crush Him [Jesus], putting [Him] to grief" (Isa 53:10). Thus, Jesus knew, "the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners" (Mark 14:41), but He "is going as it has been determined" (Luke 22:22) in his activeness. In Revelation the Lamb is worthy "to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise" (Rev 5:12) because He actively "purchased men for God" (Rev 5:9) with his blood. In this regard, Jesus' character might be compared to that of a "lion" (Rev 5:5) and a "lamb" (Rev 5:6). So, the Lamb, "looking as if it had been slain" (Rev 5:6, NIV) in passive form, is "standing in the center of the throne" (Rev 5:6, NIV) in an active way.<sup>110</sup>

This paradoxical character of the Lamb shows one of the profound attitudes in terms of leadership. Christian leaders are those who respond to the call of God and go anywhere He sends them. They could be faced with severe persecution as the ancestors of faith were faced (cf. 2 Cor 11:23-27; Heb 11:35-37). However, this passivity does not mean that the leaders eradicate their activeness. Rather, they actively respond to the calling of God following the model of the Lamb who showed His fervent love by His activeness. Thus, Christian leaders are so active in participating in God's mission, "the world was not worthy of them" (Heb 11:38). Although Christian leaders have to have

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<sup>110</sup>Aune examines, "References to Christ seated on a throne in Revelation are rare. In the interim, the Lamb is apparently depicted as standing before the throne of God (5:13; 6:16; 7:9-10, 15, 17)." Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 262.

passivity, they ultimately show activeness in obeying God. So, the strongest activeness in a genuine sense is found in absolute passivity which springs out of genuine love for God.

### **Horizontality in Verticality**

The relationship between the Lamb, and the Father, and the Holy Spirit shows the kinds of relationships to be formed among Christian leaders. The Lamb is voluntarily subordinated to the Father. Revelation 5, where the Lamb is presented, follows chapter 4 where God is being worshiped by heavenly beings. The Lamb receives “the scroll from the right hand of Him who sat on the throne” (Rev 5:7). However, chapter 7 immediately presents the doxology of a great multitude for both Father and the Lamb: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (Rev 7:10, NIV). Afterward, the merit of redemption is attributed to both the Father and the Lamb (cf. Rev 14:1; 22:1, 3). It, therefore, shows horizontality in verticality in terms of the relationship between the Father and the Son.

This mysterious relationship is shown in the last scene of judgment. Only one who is seated on a great white throne gives a final sentence to the dead (Rev 20:11).<sup>111</sup> There is no occupancy of the Lamb in spite of His profound role and function in the GC. Aune argues, “the absence of any mention of the Lamb in this judgment scene is striking.”<sup>112</sup> However, the throne of the Lamb finally appears in the last chapter of Revelation. Here the throne is shared by both the Father and the Lamb (Rev 22:1, 3) as

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<sup>111</sup>“The One who sits on the throne” (Rev 4:1, 3, 9; 5:1, 7, 13; 6:16; 7:10, 15; 19:4; 21:5) is a frequent designation of God in Revelation. The phrase “the One seated on the throne” is a circumlocution that avoids direct mention of the divine name. Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1100-1101.

<sup>112</sup>*Ibid.*, 1101.

the throne is shared with the overcomers (Rev 3:21).<sup>113</sup> The sovereignty of God is also shared with the Lamb through the sharing the throne of God.<sup>114</sup>

This paradoxical relationship shows a system of God's kingdom. God's kingdom does not follow the Greco-Roman hierarchical system. Despite the profound verticality between God and creatures (cf. Rev 4:8, 10), the twenty-four elders are exalted to their own thrones (cf. Rev 4:4). Moreover, the authority of God is distributed to the saints (cf. Rev 20:4). Nevertheless, it seems that there is no single risky movement to threaten God's sovereignty. The saints have learned how the sinful desire to lift position up caused the tragedy in the Dragon's leadership (cf. Isa 14:12, 13). They also learned how self-denial led people to love the Lamb. The stability of heaven seems to be based on this horizontality in verticality found in the relationship between the Trinity God.

### **Humility in Equality**

The Lamb displays His humility in the context of perfect equality with the Father. The image of the Lamb in Revelation shows two aspects of His position in the GC. One is that the Lamb occupies supremacy and dominion in the GC narratives. He is exalted by the praise and worship which is given only to God (cf. Rev 5:8, 12, 13; 7:9, 10; 15:13). The final conclusion of Revelation confirms His permanent sovereignty (cf. Rev 21:14, 22, 23, 27; 22:1, 3).

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<sup>113</sup>The throne is familiar with the image of a *bisellium*, a "double-throne" in the ancient world. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 262.

<sup>114</sup>Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1177.

The other aspect is that the Lamb diligently moves down and labors in redemptive ministry. He begins His ministry by receiving the scroll from the right hand of God (Rev 5:7). Recognizing the prayers of the saints (Rev 5:8) the Lamb actively becomes involved in the ministry of breaking the seven seals (Rev 6:1-8:5). While he breaks the seals on the scroll, He leads people as the shepherd (Rev 7:17). Also, amid the horrific attack of the Dragon, He is on the side of the 144,000 and leads them (Rev 14:1, 4). In reality, He is the warrior against the Dragon and his followers (cf. Rev 17:14). He is an exceptional negotiator to the extent that He purchases sold people with His own blood (Rev 5:9).

These two aspects of the Lamb show that His leadership is based on the recognition of equality with God. His leadership begins from the equal status with the Father. It is true that the Lamb does not achieve His leadership by His contribution. Rather, the Lamb contributes to the redemptive ministry because the position between the Father and Him is perfectly equal. This egalitarian relationship is the foundation of the Lamb's leadership.<sup>115</sup>

### **Action in Silence**

One of the most impressive attitudes of the Lamb is His silence. Leadership is usually exerted by a persuasive address or a strong voice. However, the Lamb does not speak a single time with voice in Revelation. There is no hint that the Lamb commands people. One of the big differences between the Lamb and the Dragon has to do with speech. The Dragon might devour the child of a woman (Rev 12:4). The beast coming

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<sup>115</sup>For John's understanding the relationship between Father and the Son, see footnote 28 of Chapter 4.

out of the sea has “a *mouth* like that of a lion” (Rev 13:2, NIV, emphasis added) to “*utter* proud words and blasphemies” (Rev 13:5, NIV, emphasis added). And the beast coming out of the earth “*spoke* as a dragon” (Rev 13:11, emphasis added). The beast “was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could *speak* and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed” (Rev 13:15, NIV, emphasis added).

In contrast, the Lamb is just standing on Mount Zion (Rev 14:1) without utterance. There is no single voice of the Lamb in Revelation. This image is perfectly harmonized with the prophet Isaiah’s expression on the suffering servant: “Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth” (Isa 53:7). This servant “will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets” (Isa 42:2; cf. Matt 12:19).

Why does the Lamb keep silent? One apparent answer is that He respects mankind’s free decision making. The trustful relationship between the Lamb and His followers resulted from the Lamb’s faithful behaviors, not by forceful threat. He knows that trust cannot be commanded. The Dragon and his followers wield might and power with strong voices and commands to get attention. However, the Lamb expects to get the hearts of the followers so He proves His love by His exemplary actions. The expressions regarding the Lamb usually relate to His ministry: “the blood of the Lamb” (Rev 7:14; 12:11), “the song of the Lamb” (Rev 15:3), “the marriage of the Lamb” (Rev 19:7), “the book of life of the Lamb” (Rev 13:8; 21:27), “the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (Rev 21:4), the temple of the Lamb (Rev 21:22), the lamp of the Lamb (Rev 21:23), and the throne of the Lamb (Rev 22:1, 3). These expressions are linked to the actions of the Lamb. The focus of the Lamb is on the salvation of people, not Himself.

This shows that leadership is not produced by threat, but by genuine love. Thus, silence is a more powerful behavior than speaking. According to Doukhan's insights on silence in heaven (Rev 8:1), "Silence expresses what even words, music, and art cannot. Only silence can communicate the unutterable. And only silence may express the infinite God."<sup>116</sup>

### **Anticipation in Patience**

The impending judgment seems to be delayed in the consecutive order of the seven seals and the seven trumpets. The voice of the souls under the altar is climaxed when the fifth seal was broken by the Lamb saying "How long ... until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" (Rev 6:10, NIV). Then, "there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for *a little while longer*, until [the number of] their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also" (Rev 6:11, emphasis added). Here, the judgment seems to be really delayed.

The ministry of the Lamb in the GC is not completed in a stroke. There is a twofold reason to that. First, the judgment is to be delayed on the side of the saints. The answer was given for the petition of saints, "the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed" (Rev 6:11, NIV). Then, chapter 7 describes the sealing ministry of four angels. Four angels hold back "the four winds of the earth" (Rev 7:1) until "the seal of the living God" (Rev 7:2) have been sealed "the bond-servants of our God in their foreheads" (Rev 7:3). The judgment is

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<sup>116</sup>Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse through Hebrew Eyes*, 73.



delayed for the sake of the saints. Therefore, the Lamb has to maintain His leadership until He leads the saints to the final destination, springs of living water (Rev 7:17). While the saints manifest “the perseverance of the saints” (Rev 14:12), the Lamb keeps His leading position (cf. Rev 14:1).

The other reason is found in the description at the end of the sixth trumpet: “And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not *repent* of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not *repent* of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts” (Rev 9:20-21, emphasis added).<sup>117</sup> The reason of delayed judgment is that God expects people to repent (cf. 2 Pet 3:9). The genuine reason of delay is love.

These two aspects of delaying judgment present God’s paradoxical attitude in dealing with the final judgment. He hastens the final stage of judgment to repay the blood of the saints (cf. Rev 6:9-10), but He still anticipates for the repentance of those who dwell on the earth (cf. Rev 6:11). Thus, between the sixth and the seventh trumpets there is another mighty angel who says “[T]here will be no more delay” (Rev 10:6, NIV) and at the same time “You must prophesy again” (Rev 10:11, NIV). Also, the exposing of the arrogant rebellion of the Dragon in chapters 12 and 13 precedes the three angels’ messages “to those who live on the earth” in chapter 14. In the same manner the invitation of salvation is given in chapter 18 after describing the seven bowls of wrath (Ch. 15-16) and exposing the judgment for the great harlot (Ch. 17).

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<sup>117</sup>The term *repent* was used in three cases: (1) the messages to the seven churches (2:5, 16; 21, 22; 3:3, 19), (2) the seven trumpets (9:20, 21), and the (3) seven bowls of God’s wrath (16:9, 11).

At least three times a merciful invitation (cf. Rev 10:11; 14:6; 18:4) is given to people before the determined destruction (cf. Rev 10:6; 11:18; 15:1). The judgment seems to be delayed by the insertion of a missional invitation. In this long running combat, the Lamb as Michael (Rev 12:7) fights for His “called, chosen and faithful followers” (Rev 17:14, NIV). Though the goal is already set up, the process needs a longer time in God’s strategy because the ultimate purpose of Revelation is to make people to read and hear and take to heart (Rev 1:3). Thus, Revelation concludes, “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with *all*. Amen” (Rev 22:21, emphasis added).<sup>118</sup> In reality, patience is an attitude which manifests the love of God.

### Summary

When the narrative of Revelation is explained by an anthropological definition of worldview, it enables one to grasp the full understanding of Christian leadership in which leaders can participate in the course of conversion with the goal of spiritual transformation of the three dimensions of worldview—cognitive, affective, and evaluative. The GC between God and Satan proceeds at the worldview level. This worldview confrontation of the GC delineates the antithetical leadership practices between the Lamb and the Dragon. Amid the raging warfare, the biblical leadership thoughts and principles are derived from the definite contrast between the two camps:

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<sup>118</sup>Though the term *all* means the saints, the opportunity of hearing is still opened to everyone whether in churches or out of churches. Beale states: “Scribes were uncomfortable with the general ending of “all” (πάντων), perhaps thinking it could be construed as including outside the true church, thus suggesting universal salvation.” Therefore, some tried to clarify with “all of the saints” or substituting “the saints.” The term *all* certainly refers to churches gathered to “hear” the word as Revelation 21:18 presents: “I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book.” Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text.*, 1157.

power and authority, equality and unity in diversity, motivation of followers, humility in sacrifice, spiritual transformation, self-denying, motivation of volunteer spirit, and genuine emotional value.

Christian leaders follow the model of the Lamb's leadership by laying down their power and authority. They believe the relationship between leaders and followers has to be in equality and unity in diversity. The only motivation of followers can be expected from the sacrificial love of leaders. The humility of leaders has the power to lead people into the spiritual transformation which is only possible by the work of the Holy Spirit. In contrast to the evil ones, Christian leaders are willing to forsake their own positional and materialistic benefits following the self-denial attitude of the Lamb. Because God only accepts the volunteer spirit, they do not use any kind of coercive ways to lead people. Christian leaders invite people to experience the familial relationship with God and finally to praise and worship the Lamb who shows the perfect model of leadership.

The Lamb provides the example of genuine Christian leadership in paradoxical ways. His leadership stands in contrast to the secular manner of leadership. While secular leaders seek and often abuse power, the Lamb presents His power in powerlessness and activeness in passivity. While secular leaders pursue promotion and ascendance, the Lamb humbly steps down from the top. Nevertheless, His position is not thus threatened. He leads people without utterance. Instead, He acts. Although His way seems to be weak and ineffective, His ministry is more powerful and eternally influential. Consequently, His leadership is not consistent with secular leadership which mainly pursues productivity and efficiency. He considers the attitude of full submission to God as the

primary characteristic of spiritual leadership. Because He reveals the truth of God, only His way can be sustained.

## CHAPTER 5

### DOXOLOGY: THE CLIMAX OF THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

#### Introduction

This chapter aims to find leadership principles from the songs of the saints, particularly the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb in the Book of Revelation<sup>1</sup> in order to detail characteristics of the Lamb's leadership in Revelation. Some studies about the issues of worship and music in the Book of Revelation exist,<sup>2</sup> but no attempt to derive leadership principles from the song of the Lamb is known. However, the song of the Lamb offers Christian leadership principles, because the singers are the followers of the Lamb (Rev 7:9-10; 14:1-5). The attitude and character of the singers infer both leadership and followership. This chapter will examine Christian leadership principles from the song of the Lamb by exploring possible musical elements in the Book of Revelation.

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<sup>1</sup>This study premises that the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb are identical in context. Hereinafter, the article uses the song of the Lamb representatively to imply both the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb in Revelation 15:3. If necessary the song of Moses can be used independently. See Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 486.

<sup>2</sup>See Thomas Allen Seel, *A Theology of Music for Worship Derived from the Book of Revelation*, Studies in Liturgical Musicology, No. 3 (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1995); Jeremy S. Begbie, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 72-73; Lilianne Doukhan, *In Tune with God* (Hagerstown, MD: Autumn House Publishing, 2010), 102-103; Joshua Waggener, "Music in the Bible: From Human Sounds to Heaven's "New Song",” *MISHKAN: A Forum on the Gospel and the Jewish People*, no. 68 (2011): 37-38; C. Raymond Holmes, *Song a New Song: Worship Renewal for Adventists Today* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1984), 18-24.

## **The Great Controversy, Music, and Leadership**

This section verifies the relationship between the GC and music to derive leadership principles from it. Music is deeply related historically to not only religious ritual, but also to military confrontation in Scripture and occupies an essential role in the Christian life (Heb 13:15). Revelation uses musical elements in the description of the GC. Both musical performance and combat circumstances share commonality in terms of leadership. This section explores the validity of establishing a relationship between music and leadership in the GC based on the concept of the Hebrew sanctuary service.

### **Music in the Bible**

God is a Musician. Music played a crucial role in both God's creation and redemptive ministry. When the earth was created, the grand chorus of creatures rang throughout the universe (Job 38:7). When the temple, the center of redemptive work, was constructed, King David prepared a four thousand member orchestra for praising God in the temple (1 Chr 23:5). He also appointed the sons of Asaph, Herman, and Jeduthun for the ministry of music (1 Chr 25:1). Particularly, 288 members were trained and skilled in music for the Lord (1 Chr 25:7). Music was one of the significant parts of the continual ministry before the Ark of the Covenant (1 Chr 16:37). The Levite, Asaph, was a singer, a songwriter, a conductor and a spiritual leader (1 Chr 15:9; 16:5; 2 Chr 29:30).

The New Testament story of Jesus begins with Mary's song when she conceived the baby Jesus and received the greeting from Elizabeth (Luke 1:46-55). The good news of great joy of Jesus' birth was delivered to the shepherds by the angels' singing (Luke 2:13-14). Jesus sang a hymn at the last supper with his disciples and soon thereafter went to the cross (Matt 26:30; Mark 14:26). Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns to God in

the prison of Philippi (Acts 16:25). According to Paul, music is an essential part of the Christian life (1 Cor 14:15; Eph 5:19; Col 3:16). Finally, the Book of Revelation is filled with grand choruses and majestic music sung by heavenly crowds (Rev 4; 5; 7; 14; 15; 19).

Songs and music were also used in military events in the Old Testament era. Before and after battle the Israelites sang a song as a means of both motivation and paean. Moses and the Israelites sang a song that came to be known as “the song of Moses” after they crossed the Red Sea (Exod 15). They sang, “The LORD is my strength and my song. And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father’s God, and I will extol Him” (v. 2). In other instances the prophetess Deborah and Barak sang a song of victory after defeating Sisera and his troops (Judg 5). People sang and danced to praise David’s brilliant exploits (1 Sam 21:11).

Music occupied a crucial position in the history of Israel. The writing of 2 Chronicles 20 depicts an interesting event wherein the Israelites sang a special song while they were engaging in war against the Moabites and the Ammonites. Jahaziel, a Levite and descendant of Asaph encouraged King Jehoshaphat with the words, “Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God’s” (2 Chr 20:15). Then, Jehoshaphat consulted with the people and appointed men to sing to the Lord. The result was marvelous: “And when they began singing and praising, the LORD set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed” (2 Chr 20:22). The reaction of the people of Judah and Jerusalem is summarized in vv. 27, 28: “And every man of Judah and Jerusalem returned with Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had made

them to rejoice over their enemies. And they came to Jerusalem with harps, lyres, and trumpets to the house of the LORD.”

Interestingly, the song of the Lamb in Revelation also reflects descriptions of military combat. The people of God, who are engaging in war against their enemies, sing and march with the heavenly hosts toward the New Jerusalem, the restored temple. They are not afraid of suffering and persecution, rather they joyfully sing and follow the Lamb (Rev 7:9-17; 14:1-5; 15:2-4).

This raises several questions regarding the topic of this study. Does music really occupy an important position in the GC? Do musical elements in Revelation contain leadership connotations? What kinds of leadership principles can be found from the music in Revelation? To arrive at the correct answers to these questions the relationship between the GC and the singing of the saints in Revelation needs to be explored.

### The Great Controversy and Singing

The Book of Revelation portrays the singing of a great multitude (Rev 7:9-10; 14:1-5; 15:2-4; 19:1-2) in its description of the GC.<sup>3</sup> The songs occupy crucial positions in the progress of the description. The praise of a great multitude (Rev 7:9-10) is presented “before the throne and before the Lamb” (Rev 7:9). Also, the 144,000 sing a new song “before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders” (Rev 14:3). As previously stated, the throne of God and the Lamb are the heart of the GC. The singing of the saints is magnified during the final stage of the GC (Rev 15:2-3; 19:1-2).

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<sup>3</sup>This study accepts the premise that all the people who emerged from Revelation (7:9-10; 14:1-5; 15:2-4; 19:1-2) are identical groups.



Why does singing occupy such an important place in the book? I believe the answer is found in the relationship between the GC and the sanctuary system.

### **The Great Controversy and the Sanctuary**

Revelation connects the heavenly sanctuary with the GC theme. A few scholars such as Kenneth A. Strand, C. Mervin Maxwell, Richard M. Davidson, and Jon Paulien see Revelation through the lens of the temple setting and as such, they divide the structure of Revelation based on the sanctuary scenes in the book.<sup>4</sup>

Paulien divides the book into seven major parts according to its chiastic structure. He notices, “at the beginning of each is an introductory section that contains recollections of the sanctuary.”<sup>5</sup> Stefanovic summarizes the understanding of Paulien, “there is a definite progression of form in the inauguration of the heavenly sanctuary—intercession, to judgment, to the cessation of the sanctuary function, and finally to its absence”<sup>6</sup> in the structure as listed below:

This analysis shows that the sanctuary theme is deeply related to the GC in Revelation. The Apostle John sees “the ark of His covenant” (Rev 11:19) in the most

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<sup>4</sup>See Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 30. C. Mervin Maxwell, *God Cares: The Message of Revelation for You and Your Family*, vol. 2 (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1985), 162-167; Richard M. Davidson, “Sanctuary Typology,” in *Symposium on Revelation: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, Book 1*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992); Kenneth A. Strand, “The Eight Basic Visions,” in *Symposium on Revelation: Introductory and Exegetical Studies, Book 1*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 46-49; Davidson, “Cosmic Metanarrative for the Coming Millennium,” 102-103, 105, 119; Paulien, *The Deep Things of God*, 124-133.

<sup>5</sup>Paulien, *The Deep Things of God*, 126.

<sup>6</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 31.

holy place; afterward the scene of the GC is depicted in Revelation 12. After the description of the battle between the Lamb and the Dragon (Rev 12-14), John states again, “the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened” (Rev 15:5). Therefore, the GC revolves around the elements of the temple in terms of worship, judgment, restoration, etc.

**Table 2. Progression of form in the heavenly sanctuary<sup>7</sup>**

<i>Introduction</i>	<i>Main Vision</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Direction</i>
Rev 1:12-20	1. Seven Churches (Rev 2; 3)	Church = Temple	Earth
Rev 4:1-5:14	2. Seven Seals (Rev 6:1-8:1)	Inauguration	Heaven
Rev 8:2-6	3. Seven Trumpets (Rev 8:7-11:18)	Intercession	Heaven
Rev 11:19	4. The Wrath of the Nations (Rev 11:19-15:4)	Judgment	Heaven
Rev 15:5-8	5. The Seven Bowls (Rev 16:1-18:24)	De-inauguration	Heaven
Rev 19:1-10	6. The End of Evil (Rev 19:11-20:15)	Absence	Heaven
Rev 21:1-8	7. The New Jerusalem (Rev 21:9-22:5)	City = Temple	Earth

If this is so then, why does the temple appear in the GC? One of the answers comes from the issue of worship. Satan is eager to receive praise and to lift himself up upon the throne of God (Isa 14:13-14; cf. 2 Thess 2:4). He stole worship that belongs only to God. The Prophet Ezekiel depicts Satan’s profanity from the pride of the prince of Tyre, “I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods” (Ezek 28:2). Satan destroyed and trampled on

<sup>7</sup>Paulien, *The Deep Things of God*, 126-132; Paulien, “Seals and Trumpets: Some Current Discussions,” 187-188.

the heavenly sanctuary (cf. Dan 8:11-14). Since the GC occurs with the issue of worship, it can be said that the GC and the worship issues are paralleled.

### **The Great Controversy and Music**

The GC and the temple in Revelation are closely interrelated with musical elements. Music, especially singing, appears in all the progressions of Revelation. The prophetic part (Rev 4-22) begins with worship in heaven (Rev 4-5). Before the seven trumpets blow, the scene of worship and praise of a great multitude takes place (Rev 7:9-17). After the bloody scene of the battle is described (Rev 12-13) John “heard a voice from heaven” (Rev 14:2), “the sound of harpists playing their harps” (v. 2) and “a new song” (v. 3) sung by “one hundred and forty-four thousand” (Rev 14:1). And in chapter 15 people who have the victory “sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb” (v. 3). Lastly, a great multitude worships and sings (Rev 19) after the description of the judgment for evil. In table 3 singing in Revelation is added to the divisions used by Paulien to explore musical elements to illustrate leadership characteristics.

These three elements (the Great Controversy, the temple, and music) are inextricably linked. Music in worship in Revelation takes place with a cosmic dimension. The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders worship and praise God with their voices with each having a harp (Rev 4). The host of angels is involved in this worship of the Lamb with a loud voice (Rev 5). A great multitude (Rev 7:9), one hundred and forty four thousand (Rev 14:1), sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.

**Table 3. Music and the structure of Revelation**

<i>Introduction</i>	<i>Main Vision</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Music</i>
Rev 1:12-20	1. Seven Churches (Rev 2; 3)	Church = Temple	
Rev 4:1-5:14	2. Seven Seals (Rev 6:1-8:1)	Inauguration	Rev 4-5
Rev 8:2-6	3. Seven Trumpets (Rev 8:7-11:18)	Intercession	Rev 7
Rev 11:19	4. The Wrath of the Nations (Rev 11:19-15:4)	Judgment	
Rev 15:5-8	5. The Seven Bowls (Rev 16:1-18:24)	De-inauguration	Rev 14-15
Rev 19:1-10	6. The End of Evil (Rev 19:11-20:15)	Absence	Rev 19
Rev 21:1-8	7. The New Jerusalem (Rev 21:9-22:5)	City = Temple	

They praise their leader God and the Lamb and they sing of the work of God in the past, present, and future. Although the battle is fierce, they nevertheless sing a new song as a chorus. Music had an essential role in the temple ministry. Lilianne Doukhan discusses the way sacrifices were offered and the role musicians played during the Second Temple Period (536 BC-70 AD): “The trumpet players were placed west of the altar, whereas the singer/instrumentalists were placed east of the altar. Thus the musicians, as they performed their music, were physically oriented toward the sacrifice, indeed playing and singing *to the Lord*”<sup>8</sup> (Italics original). The musicians were placed around the altar. Music occupied a significant place in the sacrificial ceremonies. However, music in the temple was not played for the people, but for God.

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<sup>8</sup>Doukhan, *In Tune with God*, 92.

In summary, music had a significant role in the temple ministry, because the worship and praise has to belong to God. However, Satan invaded the temple ministry to monopolize worship and praise. In this regard, music is not a simple sound, but it occupies a crucial position in the GC surrounding the temple and worship issues. In short, to worship is to sing and to sing is to worship.<sup>9</sup>

### **The Song of the Lamb and Leadership**

Lastly, the relationship between music in the Book of Revelation and leadership needs to be considered. Music was not just a vague sound but social action combined with aesthetic expression in the temple ministry. Begbie explains, “for the Israelite, music was part of life. It was interwoven with the fabric of community living, playing a huge range of social roles—to help people work, celebrate, rest, fight, eat, and sleep.”<sup>10</sup> Moses was given instructions from God to teach the Word of God to the Israelites using a special song (Deut 31:19-22).<sup>11</sup> People recalled the work of God in their behalf by singing in the midst of trouble. They expressed their love and devotion to God in music. They sang in separate groups but in unity under selected leaders. Singing itself was a mentally and emotionally delightful experience. Thus, it is possible to derive leadership principles from the song of the Lamb in Revelation because singing includes social and spiritual elements.

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<sup>9</sup>Holmes, *Song a New Song: Worship Renewal for Adventists Today*, 24.

<sup>10</sup>Begbie, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music*, 60.

<sup>11</sup>Edward Foley states, “the Mishnah gives the impression that the song of Moses (Exod 15:1-18) was employed in temple worship.” Edward Foley, *Foundation of Christian Music: The Music of Pre-Constantinian Christianity* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 38.

The most definite evidence regarding leadership principles in the song of the Lamb is that a direct reference to leadership is embedded in the section of the singing of a great multitude. Revelation 7:17 says, “for the Lamb who is in the center of the throne shall be their *shepherd*, and shall *guide* them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes (emphasis added).” Revelation 7:14 explains the characteristic of people in white robes as “the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” The people who follow the Lamb are those who sing a song wearing white robes and holding palm branches (Rev 7:9-10). They are the followers of the Lamb and at the same time singers.

In the same manner, Revelation 14:4 says, “these are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These [are] the ones who *follow* the Lamb wherever He goes (emphasis added).” These 144,000 are the followers of the Lamb, their leader. At the same time Revelation 14:2-3 introduces these followers of the Lamb as the singers or the choir: “And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard [was] like [the sound] of *harpists playing on their harps*. And they *sang a new song* before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn *the song* except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth (emphasis added).” Therefore, the followers of the Lamb are singers.

Beside these two passages, Revelation 15:2-4 supplies additional evidence to identify the people as singers of the song of the Lamb. The people who sing the song of the Lamb in Revelation 15:2-4 are the same as those mentioned in Revelation 14. Both passages refer to harps (Rev 14:1; 15:2) and the name of the Lamb (Rev 14:1, 4; 15:3).

And both groups sing in a standing position (Rev 14:1; 15:2). Revelation 14:1 describes these people as the 144,000 and Revelation 15:2 portrays them as victors. Therefore, the victors from the GC are the singers and at the same time followers of the Lamb.

In summary, the followers of the Lamb are the singers of the song of the Lamb and the victors in the GC. Why do they sing amid battle? Who is their leader? What are the characteristics of the leader and singers? And are there really principles of leadership and followership from the music in the Book of Revelation? The next section will focus on leadership principles by analyzing the content and attitude of their singing. This section will focus solely on the leadership aspect within the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb to examine the relationship between singing and the GC in the Book of Revelation.

### **The Great Controversy and the Song of the Lamb**

As the previous section mentioned, the people who sing the song of the Lamb (Rev 15: 2-4) are identical to the 144,000 (Rev 14:1-5). Also, they are identical to “a great multitude” in Revelation 7 and 19 (7:9-10; 19:1-8). Stefanovic states, “this multitude [Rev. 19:1] is probably the same ‘great multitude’ who are in heaven shouting: ‘Salvation to our God sitting on the throne and to the Lamb’ (Rev. 7:9-10); it also brings to mind ‘the new song that the Lamb’s followers sing on Mount Zion’ (Rev. 14:1-3; 15:2-4).”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 448, 554.

**Table 4. Characteristics of the songs of Revelation**

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>19</i>
Singers	A great multitude (v. 9)	144,000 (v. 1)	[Victors (v. 2)]	A great multitude (v. 1)
Title of the song	[the Lamb]	A new song (v. 3)	The song of Moses/ the song of the Lamb (v. 3)	[Hallelujah]
Place to sing	Before the Throne (v. 9)	Mount Zion (v. 1) Before the Throne (v. 3)	On the sea of glass (v. 2; cf. 4:6)	In heaven (v. 1) Throne (v. 5)
Sound	A loud voice (v. 10)	The voice of many waters/ The voice of loud thunder/ the sound of harpists playing their harps (v. 2)		A loud voice (v. 1) The voice of many waters/ The sound of mighty thundering (v. 6)
Instrument	White robe (v. 9) Palm branches (v. 9)		Harps (v. 2)	

They all share common characteristics. All sing in front of the throne of God (Rev 7:9; 14:3; 19:5), although the victors in Revelation 15 sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb standing on the sea of glass (Rev 15:2).<sup>13</sup> However, the sea of glass is located before the throne of God (Rev 4:6). The volume is described as “a loud voice” (Rev 7:10; 19:1), like “the voice of many waters” (Rev 14:2; 19:6), and “the voice of loud thunder” (Rev 14:2) or “the sound of mighty thundering” (Rev 19:6). Revelation 14 and 15 both mention “harps” (Rev 14:2; 15: 2). Moreover, in all the songs the Lamb appears (Rev 7:10, 14, 17; 14:1, 4; 15:3; 19:7, 9). Despite the fact that the song is called “a new song” (Rev 14:3) or “the song of Moses” or “the song of the Lamb” (Rev 15:3), the theme of their song is “the Lamb.” Therefore, all the songs in Revelation 7, 14, 15, 19

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<sup>13</sup>Siew concludes from the exploring of biblical references, “the temple, the holy city, Jerusalem, Mount Zion are all closely related lexemes.” Siew, *The War between the Two Beasts and the Two Witnesses: A Chiastic Reading of Revelation 11.1-14.5*, 187.



by the redeemed can be referenced as “the song of the Lamb.” The characteristics of the songs are summarized as follows in Table 3.

This study premises that all the songs of the redeemed can be called “the song of the Lamb,” because their leader is the Lamb and the theme of their singing is also the Lamb. This section analyzes the song of the Lamb and the attitudes of the singers in Revelation 7, 14, 15, 19 before examining leadership principles.

### The Background of the Song of the Lamb

To examine the characteristics of the song of the Lamb in Revelation, the original background of this song are looked at from the Old Testament perspective and are built on Joel N. Musvosvi’s analysis.<sup>14</sup>

### **The Song of Moses**

The Apostle John mentions “the song of Moses” and “the song of the Lamb” together (Rev 15:3). Where is the song of Moses in the Old Testament? Two songs are attributed to Moses. Exodus 15:2-19 is a song that is sung by Moses and the Israelites to celebrate their deliverance from Egypt after crossing the Red Sea. Deuteronomy 32 also has a song composed by Moses to teach the Israelites the commandments of God before his death.<sup>15</sup> Musvosvi suggests, “Exodus 15 seems to have the strongest links with Revelation 15”<sup>16</sup> based on the thematic parallels.

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<sup>14</sup>Joel N. Musvosvi, “The Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb,” in *The First International Jerusalem Bible Conference* (1998).

<sup>15</sup>To get commentary on the song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32, see George A. F. Knight, *The Song of Moses: A Theological Quarry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995).

<sup>16</sup>Musvosvi, “The Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb,” 1.

The reason why two leaders are mentioned in Revelation 15 is that both contexts are similar. As Musvosvi explains, “One feature of Revelation is that of taking local Old Testament events and replaying [them] on cosmic scale.”<sup>17</sup> Both are linked with the exodus motif. One is the local exodus, and the other is the cosmic exodus. Moses is the leader of the Israelites as they left Egypt. The Lamb in Revelation is the cosmic leader who leads the saints from the sinful world. These two songs are both sung within a battle context. The song of Moses (Exod 15) is sung after deliverance from Egypt and the song of the Lamb (Rev 15) follows the central part of the Book of Revelation (Rev 12-14) where the GC theme is emphasized.

### **The Song of the Lamb and the Song of Moses**

Musvosvi unpacks the elements of both the song of the Lamb (Rev 15) and the song of Moses (Exod 15) and compares them. The elements are summarized in Table 5:

**Table 5. Elements of the songs of the Lamb and of Moses<sup>18</sup>**

<i>Revelation 15</i>	<i>Exodus 15</i>
1. Plagues of judgment (v. 1)	1. Plagues of judgment (v. 4-10)
2. Sea of glass (v. 2)	2. The Red Sea (v. 4)
3. Theme of divine deliverance (v. 2)	3. Theme of divine deliverance (v. 13, 17)
4. Song of deliverance (v. 2)	4. Song of deliverance (v. 2)
5. Song by the sea (v. 2)	5. Song by the sea
6. Fire in the sea (v. 2)	6. Pillar of the fire through the sea (14:24)

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 2.

The similarities are that both texts focus on worship. The song of Moses ends with the phrase “You will bring them in...the *sanctuary*” (Exod 15:17, emphasis added), while the song of the Lamb ends with the phrase “all nations shall come and *worship* before you” (Rev 15:4, emphasis added). This phrase shows a typical pattern of ancient combat by Israel against the surrounding nations in terms of the relationship between wars and worship.<sup>19</sup> After the war with the Ammonites and Moabites, the Israelites marched toward the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem “with stringed instruments and harps and trumpets” (2 Chr 20:28). Similarly, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem and carried the articles of the house of God to the house of his god (Dan 1:2). Likewise, the GC between the Lamb and the Dragon began and will be terminated with the issue of worship. It is a war regarding worship.

Musvosvi, based on the recognition of a similarity between the song of Moses (Exod 15) and the song of the Lamb (Rev 15), analyzes these two songs in three-dimensions: the past, the present, and the future.<sup>20</sup> He argues that the first dimension of the song of Moses is celebrating God’s mighty deed in the past (Exod 15:1, 4-10, 12). God defeated Pharaoh’s army and triumphed over the enemy. The second dimension is affirming faith in God in the present (Exod 15:2-3, 11).<sup>21</sup> The third dimension is

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<sup>19</sup>Adela Yarbro Collins suggests a mythic pattern of combat commonly discovered in Exodus 15 and the ancient East myths. In the *Enuma elish* temple element is founded. Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, 207-211.

<sup>20</sup>C. Raymond Holmes also suggests the three activities characteristic of celebration from the Revelation 4 and 5: remembering (past), thanksgiving (present), and dedicating (future). Holmes, *Song a New Song: Worship Renewal for Adventists Today*, 21.

<sup>21</sup>Musvosvi pays attention to the usage of first person pronoun used to describe the relationship with God and utterances of praise to God.

anticipating the future divine guidance of His people (Exod 15:13-19). Musvosvi asserts, “it anticipates the movement into Canaan, the victory over their future enemies, and the settlement there.”<sup>22</sup>

In the same manner, Musvosvi describes the song of the Lamb. The victors sing, “great and marvelous are Thy works” (Rev 15:3) and “Thy righteous acts have been revealed” (v. 4), recalling God’s past mighty deeds. Next, the people sing concerning the present relationship with God, “righteous and true are Thy ways” (v. 3) and “for Thou alone art holy” (v. 4). Finally, “the song focuses on the future and celebrates God’s final victory”<sup>23</sup> saying, “all nations shall come and worship before you” (Rev 15:4, NKJV).

These two songs both celebrate God’s leadership of His people. The song of Moses (Exod 15) directly depicts God’s leadership: “You in Your mercy *have led forth* the people whom You have redeemed; You *have guided* them in Your strength to Your holy habitation” (Exod. 15:13, NKJV, emphasis added). Also, “You *will bring* them in and *plant* them in the mountains of Your inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which You have made for Your own dwelling, the sanctuary, O LORD, which Your hands have established” (Exod. 15:17, NKJV, emphasis added). The Israelites recall God’s past work in dealing with their troubles and trust in God’s future leading. In this song God’s leadership is announced. God has guided them (v. 13), will bring them (v. 17) and will reign (v. 18) for ever and ever.

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<sup>22</sup>Musvosvi, “The Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb,” 4.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 5.

The Apostle John also describes God's leadership in the song of the Lamb. John sees the future through the lens of the past. The Lamb was a powerful leader (Rev 15:3), is a just leader (Rev 15:3), and will be the everlasting leader for all nations (v. 4).

### The Great Controversy and the Paean

The Book of Revelation dramatically depicts the outbreak, the development, and the termination of the GC between the Lamb and the Dragon. In this process singing is not just a decoration in the story, but the essential element. Borrowing Siew's question, "Is it likely to be a depiction of war on Mount Zion, since the Lamb's entourage is accompanied by singing of a new song with [a] musical chorus as the text of 14:1-5 explicitly states?"<sup>24</sup> Siew answers "yes" with strong evidences from Old Testament imagery of warfare. He mentions Isaiah 30:32: "And in every place where *the staff* of punishment passes, which the LORD lays on him, it will be with *tambourines and harps*; and in battles of brandishing He will fight with it" (NKJV, emphasis added). Siew states, "we have the juxtaposition of two images of the LORD in warfare—one accompanied by music (Isa 30:32) and the other on Mount Zion (Isa 31:4-5)."<sup>25</sup> He also presents Psalm 149 in which the people of God are called upon to sing a *new song* (Ps 149:1; cf. Rev 14:3) as evidence of the use of music in warfare, especially as an eschatological hymn. Psalm 149:6 reads as follows: "Let the high *praises* of God be in their *mouth*, and a *two-edged sword* in their *hand*" (emphasis added). Here, the praises in their mouth and a two-

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<sup>24</sup>Siew, *The War between the Two Beasts and the Two Witnesses: A Chiastic Reading of Revelation 11.1-14.5*, 190.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 191.

edged sword in their hand are paralleled. Psalm 149:7, 9 indicates the reason for using the praises and a two-edged sword: “to execute vengeance on the nations, and punishments on the peoples...to execute on them the written judgment.” Siew clearly states, “the 144,000 under the *leadership* of the Lamb engage in warfare accompanied by *music and singing of a new song*”<sup>26</sup> (emphasis added).

The Book of Revelation shows that the content and the attitude of singing determine the destination of people, because singing denotes the singer’s character and life. Revelation contrasts two kinds of singing in the GC.

### **The Paean**

To derive leadership principles from the song of the Lamb, a question has to be answered: When is this song sung? All the songs are sung by the redeemed (Rev 7; 14; 15; 19) and performed in front of the throne of God (Rev 7:9; 14:3; 15:3; 19:5). The song in Revelation 19:1 is heard “in heaven.” Therefore, this singing definitely will be sung in the future. However, the reason for singing in Revelation 14 is not because the warfare is completely terminated, but because the Lamb is standing on Mount Zion (Rev 14:1).

Stefanovic states,

while in Exodus the song comes after the plagues were inflicted upon Egypt and the Israelites were liberated from bondage, in Revelation 15 the song of Moses and the Lamb is placed before the manifestation of the seven last plagues, showing that the positive element of redemption in Revelation 15-16 comes before the negative element of the judgment.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 192.

<sup>27</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 486.

Therefore, the reason for singing in Revelation 14 and 15 is that the victory is confirmed by the emergence of the Lamb, their great leader.

In reality, the saints who believe in Jesus are already the victors. The Apostle John clearly writes concerning Jesus' declaration, "in the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I *have overcome* the world" (John 16:33, emphasis added). John bravely assures God's people, "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that *has overcome* the world—our faith. And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5, emphasis added). John describes the promises for the overcomer in Revelation (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). George Eldon Ladd also mentions "this age" and "the age to come,"<sup>28</sup> making it clear the tension between the present and the future. In this tension the redeemed sing the paean in the present looking to the future. In this regard, the Apostle Paul exhorts believers to "be filled with Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord" (Eph 5:19) because "the days are evil" (v. 16). Also, Jesus sang a hymn before He went out to drink the cup of sacrifice (Matt 26:30; Mark 14:26). Thus, the redeemed celebrate their victory in the present "because your [the Lord's] righteous acts have been revealed" (Rev 15:4, NIV). According to Musvosvi's three dimensions of the song of the Lamb, the song describes the saints' present relationship with God and anticipates God's final victory in the future.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, although the song of the Lamb will be sung in the

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<sup>28</sup>George Eldon Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1959), 26-27.

<sup>29</sup>Musvosvi, "The Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb," 5.

future, God's redeemed people are the victors already so they sing the song in the present.

### **The Singing of the Hedonist**

In contrast, the wicked in Revelation only sing in the present. For the wicked no song exists for the future. The end of the wicked is described as: "The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore" (Rev 18:22, NKJV). Instead, "the kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will *weep and lament* for her, when they see the smoke of her burning" (Rev 18:9, NKJV, emphasis added). Also, "the merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, *weeping and wailing*" (Rev 18:15, NKJV, emphasis added).

Begbie introduces an interesting fact regarding musical instruments. According to him, archaeological excavations show "very little evidence of instruments during the biblical period, and compared to some surrounding societies—Mesopotamia, for example—the range of instruments discovered is meager."<sup>30</sup> The reason is, "for most of Israel's history, the use of instruments seems to have been fairly marginal. This fact is probably due mainly to the prominence of words in the Jewish faith, divine and human, and to Israel's attitude towards its neighbors. In the Canaanite cult, for example, with its strong sexual orientation, instruments seem to have played a significant role."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Begbie, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music*, 64.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.



According to Seel, “the early church fathers from the second century C.E. considered vocal music more pleasing to God than instrumental music.”<sup>32</sup>

The wicked in Revelation use many instruments for their hedonic purposes. They never confess loyalty to God. They enjoy music for themselves in the present. Isaiah accuses the wicked of the following hedonic behaviors: “Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may follow intoxication of drink; who continue until night, till wine inflames them! The harp and the strings, the tambourine and flute, and wine are in their feasts; but they do not regard the work of the LORD, nor consider the operation of His hands (Isa 5:11-12).”

Amos reproaches the leaders of Israel who “sing idly to the sound of stringed instruments, and invent for yourselves musical instruments like David” (Amos 6:5).<sup>33</sup> Consequently, the wicked lose the chance to sing in the future.

Begbie notices, “music is fundamentally something *done* and done in a social context”<sup>34</sup> (emphasis original). In Revelation, music contains a social importance regarding the GC. The singing of the song of the Lamb is the paeon played by the saints in the present and the future, while the singing of the wicked is used for hedonistic pleasure in the present. The reason, attitude, and influence of singing are different for each group. The song of the Lamb describes the saints’ loyalty and love for their leader.

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<sup>32</sup>Seel, *A Theology of Music for Worship Derived from the Book of Revelation*, 19. See also Begbie, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music*, 64.

<sup>33</sup>See Amos 5:23.

<sup>34</sup>Begbie, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music*, 61.

The song of the wicked denotes their submission to Satan. Therefore, it is possible to define leadership and followership within the song of the Lamb.

### **Leadership Principles from the Song of the Lamb**

This section analyzes the song of the Lamb on the basis of musical characteristics as a means of exploring leadership principles. As the previous part mentioned, this article accepts that the song of the Lamb includes all the songs sung by the saints in Revelation 7, 14, 15, and 19. After analyzing musical elements from these four chapters, leadership principles are suggested.

#### **Influence of Music**

Music has a special power to help those who hear or make music recall a personal, social, and cultural setting. Begbie argues,

when we hear music, a whole range of elements are pulled together—in particular, our state of mind and body, memories and associations, social and cultural conventions, and other perceptions that come along with the musical sounds. Together, these elements greatly affect the meaning the music will have for us.”<sup>35</sup> Thus, “music sounds do not exist in a vacuum; they are made and heard by real people in real life.”<sup>36</sup>

The song of the saints in Revelation works to recall personal, social, and spiritual experiences lived throughout the GC. The complex emotions are mixed into the paean. Music in Revelation is a means of delivering salvific joy and gratitude and is a specific and powerful way to describe the victory in the GC in complex dimensions.

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 57.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 56.

Begbie explains the importance of Christian music by asking a question:

Why should music be a significant or important matter for Christians to think about? Theologically, the most general and basic reason is simply the *lordship of Jesus Christ*. For the follower of Christ, there is no “exclusion zone,” no “secular” territory outside the scope of his saving work, no value-free or neutral area of human life. This applies as much to music as to any other cultural activity (emphasis original).<sup>37</sup>

The reason music plays such a crucial role in the Christian life is that music has tremendous power to influence. Lillianne Doukhan summarizes the influence of music in worship.

1. Music making affects the mental development of the individual by intensifying the memory process.
2. Music making affects the spiritual well-being of the individual.
3. Music is a valuable tool in character building.
4. Music promotes social skills.<sup>38</sup>

The reason Revelation describes the GC with musical performance is because all aspects of music impact the human being. Music affects the emotional, the mental, the social, and the spiritual aspects of life. Thus, it is possible to presume to understand the singers’ attitudes and character from the music. The song of the saints effectively depicts the relationship between their leader [the Lamb] and followers.

#### Five Musical Characteristics of the Song of the Lamb and Leadership Principles

According to Seel, music has a strong influence at five levels.

Ritual ties “speech, gesture, rhythm and agreed ceremonial” into the activity of humankind worship. It results in uniting humankind’s physical, mental and emotional components in a socially unifying response to its focus. Within this entirely balanced

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>38</sup>Doukhan, *In Tune with God*, 85-87.

system exists music which appeals to all levels of animate and inanimate consciousness: *mental, emotional, physical, social and spiritual* and others which humanity cannot presently fathom (emphasis added).<sup>39</sup>

Using Seel's definitions this section explores leadership principles through the musical characteristics of the song of the Lamb in five dimensions: physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual.

### **Physical Characteristic and Unity**

First, the physical characteristics of the song of the Lamb maximize the importance of unity in Christian leadership. The songs of the saints in Revelation are mainly vocal, although they have harps (Rev 15:2). The volume of the song is so "loud" (Rev 7:10; 19:1) that it is like the voice of many waters and a mighty thunder (Rev 14:2; 19:6). Despite the high volume and the large choir, the song can be clearly understood. The Apostle John "heard the sound of harpists playing their harps" (Rev 14:2). The song has a clear melody produced in such a way that the lyrics are discernible.

The volume and the size of the chorus denote that the song is highly organized and unified as a single voice.<sup>40</sup> The singers have a unified spirit. Their team spirit is so strong that no one can destroy their unity. Why do the singers have this attitude? It is because their will and purpose are the same as what is implied by Amos: "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" (Amos 3:3, NKJV). Unity is a characteristic of heaven (John 17:11, 21-23). Disunity is the spirit of Satan. The singers are united in one body, one Spirit, and one hope (Eph 4:4). They have endeavored "to preserve the unity of the

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<sup>39</sup>Seel, *A Theology of Music for Worship Derived from the Book of Revelation*, 127.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 83-84.

Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3). The reason the song is so loud but discernible is that they are in unity.

The basic characteristic of leadership in the song of the Lamb is unity as it is sung by over 144,000 members simultaneously. The 7th World Choir Games, the world’s biggest choir competition, was held in Cincinnati, Ohio from July 4-14, 2012 with 362 choirs from 64 countries and 15,000 participants taking part in the event.<sup>41</sup> In the 6th World Choir Games, 472 choirs and jurors from 83 nations—comprising well over 20,000 active participants—took part in the event.<sup>42</sup> Compared to this event, the song of the Lamb is sung as a single group. Amazingly, without any visible conductor, the singing begins and pauses in unity and harmony. The chorus proceeds in perfect order. Where is stronger leadership and followership than this scene?

Doukhan describes this perfect unity in the song of the saints:

Music in the book of Revelation is predominantly a corporate undertaking. Hosts of angels sing and play instruments, and groups of people shout acclamations and proclamations (Revelation 4:10, 11; 5:8-14; 7:9-12). The way the music is organized appears as a combination of symmetry and spontaneity. The singers and musicians are gathered around a throne in concentric circles (4:4; 5:6, 11; 7:11, etc.) and sing, shout, or cry in the manner of spontaneous acclamations (4:11; 19:1, etc.). There is a great array of sounds—we hear singing (4:11; 5:9, 12; 15:3, etc.), shouting of acclamations (19:1,6), sounds that remind of roars of rushing water or peals of thunder (14:2; 19:6), harps playing (5:8; 15:2), trumpet sounding (8:6ff.), and the sounds of powerful natural happenings, such as earthquakes and hailstorms (11:19). In spite of this variety, however, there remains a strong sense of unity. The singing and sound making are generally done by a group that is united by a common cause and fate.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup><http://www.cincyusa.com/2012worldchoirgames> (accessed July 1, 2014).

<sup>42</sup><http://www.interkultur.com/competitions-festivals/past-events/world-choir-games/shaoxing-2010/> (accessed July 1, 2014).

<sup>43</sup>Doukhan, *In Tune with God*, 102, 103.

The song of the Lamb presents a perfectly realized leadership in its unity. Christian leadership must pursue unity under the Lamb's leadership. The Apostle Paul also stressed the need for unity: "now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10, NKJV). In the NIV translation, the last part of this verse reads: "you may be perfectly united in *mind and thought*" (emphasis added).

In another place, Paul explains the reason to be united: "there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph 4:4-6, NKJV). Wherever unity is, there is the lordship of Jesus. As a great leader Jesus prayed for unity; as the followers of Jesus the disciples had to learn the way to be united (John 17:20-23).

John Stott indicates the seriousness of division from his examination of 1 Corinthians 1:13: "Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" If the church is divided, it means Christ is divided. If the church follows a human leader, it means blasphemy against Jesus who was crucified for us. If we are baptized into another name without Jesus, it means we have no relationship with Jesus. "Thus the effect of the Corinthian divisions was to undermine the essentials of gospel. Clearly, the person of Christ, the cross of Christ and the name of Christ are all at stake when the church is divided."<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>John Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel and Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 27-28.

Unity is a required aspect in Christian leadership. All the members of the choir singing the song of the Lamb share a common vision, aspiration, and values. Their singing is a manifestation of their unity with God and the other choir members. Christian leaders are expected to lead people in a united faith and work. However, where does such unity come from? The song of the Lamb gives a hint. Revelation 14:1 states, “a Lamb [was] standing on Mount Zion, and *with* Him one hundred and forty-four thousand” (emphasis added). The Lamb shows the spirit of compassion and humility. He is not only sitting on the throne, but also standing with people in an incarnated state. Jesus came down from heaven to unite God and sinners. He is a proactive leader, not just a commanding general. His followers have also learned and practiced the spirit of humility according to their leader’s teaching: “let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as the servant. For who is greater, the one who reclines [at the table] or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines [at the table]? But I am among you as the one who serves” (Luke 22:26-27). Whether the singers were leaders or followers on earth, those who dwell in heaven manifest a humble spirit in unity.

Unity, therefore, implies an egalitarian attitude. Seel indicates that the congregational singing of the Early Church, “as normative choral singing, included all worshipers equally.”<sup>45</sup> As Paul declares, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28) even in terms of worshipping God. The members of the chorus have also unity in diversity. Unity is distinct and different from uniformity. Although all the saints are

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<sup>45</sup>Seel, *A Theology of Music for Worship Derived from the Book of Revelation*, 77.

clothed in “white robes” (Rev 7:9), they are from every kindred, tongue, and nation and are united because of their shared experience with the Lamb. The song of the saints epitomizes an ideological form of unity.

### **Emotional Characteristic and Motivation**

The song of the saints also has an emotional climax. This emotional characteristic of the song of the Lamb gives an answer for the motivational issue of Christian leadership. The loud voice (Rev 7:10; 19:1, 6) implies excitement for their salvation. The emotion is so strong that they are “standing before the throne and before the Lamb” (Rev 7:9) and “crying out with a loud voice” (Rev 7:10, NKJV). The palm branches they hold symbolize “joy” (Rev 7:9).<sup>46</sup> Their conviction of salvation is steadfast. They confess, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (Rev 7:10). They are victors who overcame Satan’s attack (Rev 15:2). So, there is nothing to hinder them from singing and shouting.

The sound is like “the sound of many waters,” “the sound of loud thunder” and the sound like “harps” (Rev 14:2). The feelings are mixed with joy and happiness, excitement and exhilaration, and love and gratitude. The singing bursts out from their deep emotional feeling that the song of the saints is the doxology consisting of triple “Alleluia” (19:1, 3, 6).<sup>47</sup> They encourage each other saying, “Let us *rejoice and be glad*

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<sup>46</sup>See John 12:13. Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of Revelation 12-22*, 176.

<sup>47</sup>This word “Aallelujah” appears only four times in Revelation 19 (v. 1, 3, 4, 6) throughout whole New Testament. Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 552.



and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready” (Rev 19:7, emphasis added).

To describe the great joy and happiness of the saints is impossible. Only one thing is possible, that is, the level of emotional expression might be beyond the level of ecstasy. The emotional feeling undergirds all their confession and singing. George A. Buttrick states that Revelation 7:10 is the anthem of redemption.

All those from every nation and language who have entered into the happy consummation realize that they owe their felicity to the regnant God and to the Christ who died upon the Cross. So they sing the glorious song of the redeemed. These outbursts of song are characteristic of the book of Revelation. Indeed, in spite of all the tragedy which it describes, it may be said to be one of the very happiest books ever written. The music of eternity sends its triumphant joy back into the life of time.<sup>48</sup>

Seel rightly argues, “human beings exist of two components: mind and emotion. To separate them would detract from the balance which God intended.”<sup>49</sup> Nobody can be forced to produce authentic feelings. Although people try to put on smiling faces as they take pictures, nobody, apart from the sociopath, can conceal his or her genuine feelings. Feelings are honest whether positively or negatively. The song of the saints conveys purely positive emotions: joy, gratitude, excitement, and love. The victory and reward is beyond imagination, for “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Cor 2:9, NKJV;

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<sup>48</sup>George A. Buttrick, ed. *The Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 12 (Nashville: TN: Abingdon Press, 1982), 420.

<sup>49</sup>Seel, *A Theology of Music for Worship Derived from the Book of Revelation*, 125.

cf. Isa 64:4; 65:17). Their singing is voluntary for “the music of Revelation is full of emotion.”<sup>50</sup>

The strongest point of leadership found in the song of the Lamb is the spirit or willingness to voluntarily sing before their God as free men and women. They gather by choice! The singing of the saints comes from genuine love for their God. They are filled with love and dedication portrayed through music. Music comes alive when emotions accompany it. Perhaps, the author of Revelation intended to express the emotions of the saints through music. Although love is not just feeling, genuine love always goes together with feeling.

Christian leaders must also consider the emotional motivation of those with whom they deal. Nobody can force someone to follow without a willing spirit. Only genuine non-coercive motivation is acceptable to God. Jesus teaches, “Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them” (Matt 6:1; cf. 6:5, 16). This spirit of showcasing themselves before God is abhorred by Him (Isa 1:12-14). This allows readers to understand the reason God prepared the tree of knowledge of good and evil in Eden (Gen 2:17). He expects love and obedience to spring from voluntary choices. His love is hot as a consuming fire and He is a jealous God (Deut 4:24). Superficial love is as worthless as noise (cf. 1 Cor 13:1). Therefore, Christian leaders have to refrain from manipulating people.

Mission adopts many pragmatic approaches from secular leadership theories, demographic statistics, sociology, and management to achieve maximized results.

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 141.

Plueddemann indicates the problems of dependency on methodologies and goal setting strategies:

1. They tend to aim for what is easily measurable than heart change in people and churches.
2. They tempt us to count activities rather than eternal outcomes.
3. They assume that quantity is an accurate reflection of quality, when in fact, often the opposite is true.
4. May lead to a missionary becoming incorrectly encouraged when only external goals are met, or becoming wrongly discouraged by ignoring the subtle hints of blessing.
5. Aim at what is predictably achievable rather than anticipating visionary, yet unpredictable outcomes.
6. Lead to insignificant or even trivial goals.<sup>51</sup>

Christian leadership practiced in mission has to use genuine motivation rather than focusing on objectives or a measurable methodology. Leaders have to win their followers' hearts.

Realize that God loves you unconditionally. Good parents love their children whether or not they are successful, so why should we expect less of God? Imagine what would happen inside our spirits if we accepted that unconditional love for ourselves? Make sure your self-worth is grounded in the knowledge of God's unconditional love for you, and remember that God doesn't make junk. When I, as a leader, start with "God confidence," I can be a servant leader to others because my heart is full of unconditional love.<sup>52</sup>

The singers of the song of the Lamb have recognized and experienced the love of God so they can sing with willing hearts. Why do they sing? The answer is, "because they want to."

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<sup>51</sup>James E. Plueddemann, "Missionary Objectives, St. Paul's or Ours: Rolland Allen & the Church Growth Movement," in *Evangelical Missiological Society* (2012),8.

<sup>52</sup>Ken Blanchard, "Reflections on Encourage the Heart," in *Christian Reflections on the Leadership Challenge*, ed. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 106.

## Mental Characteristic and Transparency

The songs of the saints are mainly vocal. They “sing” (Rev 14:3; 15:3) and at the same time are “saying” (Rev 7:10; 15:3; 19:1, 6) cognitive lyrics. Seel suggests based on the references to the verbs “sing” (αδο) and “say” (λέγο) in Revelation, “λέγο (lego) can be interpreted broadly to include ‘to sing.’”<sup>53</sup> Although the worshipers use instruments, the Revelation shows that the “Godhead is most satisfied with the vocal sounds produced by the creaturely device known as ‘speech’ (including song).”<sup>54</sup> Seel concludes, “music should be a means, not an end, to relate the revealed Λόγος (Logos), i.e., Jesus Christ, in worship.”<sup>55</sup>

The mental characteristic of the song of the Lamb posits the significance of transparency in Christian leadership. The singers follow the Lamb because they know the word of God. In Revelation the secret of salvation is opened, nothing remains concealed. Transparency is the character of God.<sup>56</sup> God’s people trust in the Lamb who has the specific goal and necessary competence to defeat the Dragon. They know the process and the final rewards of their journey (Rev 2-3). They have the strategies and weapons needed to be victorious over the Dragon. Rev 12:11 says, “And they overcame him [the Dragon] because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the *word* of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death” (emphasis added). Paul encourages the

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<sup>53</sup>Seel, *A Theology of Music for Worship Derived from the Book of Revelation*, 109-110.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 124.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 138.

<sup>56</sup>See Tonstad, “Revelation.”

reader to “take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph 6:17).

Although “no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth” (Rev 14:3), the singers understand the meaning and reason of their singing, which is totally different than “a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal” (1 Cor 13:1). This song comes from their vivid experience in the battle against Satan. Each has a unique experience on the road toward the New Jerusalem, but all their experiences can be shared and acceptable within their singing.

In contrast with other books, the Book of Revelation is an apocalyptic work of literature. This book begins with the clear statement that the book contains “the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place” (1:1, NKJV). After examining the meaning of the word revelation [*apokálypsis*], Tonstad asserts, “in leadership terms, God chooses the road of painstaking and principled openness. Secrecy is out, transparency is in.”<sup>57</sup>

The Lamb hides nothing from His followers. God makes known His plan (Amos 3:7), revealed His love through Jesus (John 3:16), and showed the way of salvation (John 14:6). In heaven there is no conspiracy or doubt. God did everything He said He would do. Trust between the Lamb and His followers is based on God’s transparency. Tonstad finds this principle in Revelation 14:4: “follow the Lamb wherever he goes.” He argues,

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 232.

“the followers cannot follow unless they know where to go, and they know because the leader has led the way by personal example.”<sup>58</sup>

The Apostle John noticed the close relationship between Jesus’ word and life. John ate, walked, slept, and traveled with Jesus, and could trust Him because Jesus allowed people easy accessibility. Jesus’ life was so transparent that He could get into peoples’ hearts.<sup>59</sup> John knew this value when he used “the light” statements in his Gospel. He mentioned “the light” more than any other Synoptic gospel.<sup>60</sup> John wrote of Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus who visited Him by night, “For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be *exposed*. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deed may be *clearly seen* that they have been done in God” (John 3:20, 21, NKJV, (emphasis added)).

Notice Paul’s exhortation: “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather *expose* them” (Eph 5:8-11, NKJV, (emphasis added)). Transparency is another foundation principle of leadership.

Transparency is crucial in teamwork. Nancy Ortberg argues, “teamwork and collaboration can only happen when people trust each other. Trust is the foundational

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 234.

<sup>59</sup>See Bill Robinson, *Incarnate Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 39-57.

<sup>60</sup>See John 1:1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9; 3:19, 20, 21; 5:35; 8:12; 9:5; 11:9, 10; 12:35, 36, 46. Cf. 1 John 1:5, 7; 2:8, 9, 10.

element of any good leader, and it has to be earned.”<sup>61</sup> Jesus could be trusted because of His openness and accessibility. Ortberg mentions, “Jesus was open to influence. He made himself vulnerable to others and was transparent.”<sup>62</sup> Trust, emanating from the transparency of Jesus, results in clear and harmonious song of the Lamb. The singers confess, “just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints” (Rev 15:3, NKJV). Christian leaders desiring the trust of their followers must emulate the Lamb’s transparent leadership.

### **Social Characteristic and Relationship**

The social characteristic of the song of the Lamb teaches the value of relationship in Christian leadership. The singing of the saints is also a chorus in which “a great multitude from every nation and tribes and peoples and tongues” (Rev 7:9) participate. This chorus, the number of which exceeds 144,000 (Rev 14:1), is the largest ever revealed throughout human history. The song of the Lamb says, “all nations shall come and worship before you” (Rev 15:4, NKJV). Twenty-four elders, four living creatures (Rev 19:4), and “all the angels” (Rev 7:11) join in the chorus. All the cosmic creatures and the saints manifest harmonious unity in their social diversity.

One of the characteristics of the song of the saints is antiphonal or responsive singing (Rev 19:5-8). Seel describes antiphonal singing as “the simple idea of expressing

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<sup>61</sup>Nancy Ortberg, “Reflections on Enable Others to Act,” in *Christian Reflections on the Leadership Challenge*, ed. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 89.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

a common thought through repetition by a large group of people which occurred from the earliest times in the Jewish culture as well as other ancient groups, primarily the Orientals.”<sup>63</sup> Antiphonal singing can be found in the Jewish liturgy in the temple.<sup>64</sup> This type of singing “met the sociological needs for groups of people to bond.”<sup>65</sup> Seel explains this sociological bond from Franz Lietner’s statement, “this trend is manifest wherever religiously bent people are grouped together in a common social environment. If religion is to be considered one of the strongest cementing powers of collective life and communal consciousness, singing in joint religious manifestations must be adjudged the same binding force.”<sup>66</sup>

Music has the ability to promote corporate participation. Seel points to this characteristic from LeRoy Evert Wright’s dissertation as follows: “The ultimate purpose for both music and worship is communion between a person and God. This is accomplished through the social characteristics of music and the intensely ‘corporate’ character of worship.”<sup>67</sup> Music is a relational activity in which people experience social intimacy and interdependency. Paul connects this oneness of the believers and the Spirit, saying “there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all,

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<sup>63</sup>Seel, *A Theology of Music for Worship Derived from the Book of Revelation*, 111-112.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 114.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 112.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid. Quoted from Franz Lietner, *Der gottesdienstliche Volkgesang im jüdischen und christlichen Alterum*, trans. By Alfred Sendrey (Freiburg: i. B., 1906), 38.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 132.



and through all, and in you all” (Eph 4:4-6 NKJV). Therefore, the singing of the saints springs from unity in the Spirit. Paul declares, “I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with understanding” (1 Cor 14:15 NKJV). Holmes asserts, “Revelation’s vivid words certainly do not portray a static worship service! They describe much activity and participation on the part of heavenly worshipers, in scenes filled with dramatic action together with responsive singing and proclaiming. Such is the worship that God’s faithful people will enjoy and experience in heaven.”<sup>68</sup>

The song of the saints sung antiphonally illustrates a model of social relationship which is necessary for good leadership dynamics. In harmony and order a great multitude creates a close relationship with heavenly beings as a part of their chorus. In singing all the barriers between people and other heavenly beings are broken down. Everyone shows the spirit of participation and cooperation in the sense of full equality. Kouzes and Posner repeatedly emphasize, “The outcome of leadership is a result of relationship.”<sup>69</sup> “Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow.”<sup>70</sup> The relationship found in the song of the Lamb transcends all kinds of social, racial, and national barriers. The singers are from “every nation and tribes and peoples and tongues” (Rev 7:9). The intimacy of the singers is manifested in their ability to sing

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<sup>68</sup>Holmes, *Song a New Song: Worship Renewal for Adventists Today*, 19.

<sup>69</sup>James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, “Leadership Is a Relationship,” in *Christian Reflections on the Leadership Challenge*, ed. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 119.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

in harmony. They show no discord, and they do not exalt themselves, rather they humble themselves (cf. Luke 14:11).

The song of the Lamb expresses the egalitarian relationship among the singers. It is harmonized with the proclamation of Jesus, “I have called you friends” (John 15:15). He discarded position in favor of friendship. The King of the universe chooses to be friends with sinners rather than lord his position over them. Although Jesus and human beings have fundamentally different origin, the reward for the Laodiceans implies an egalitarian relationship between Jesus and the saints: “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Rev 3:21). Jesus shares His authority with His people to the extent that He invites people to His throne. Heaven is the place where everyone has the same privilege, where humility is everywhere present. Christian leaders also must realize the value of egalitarian relationships in churches and in mission.

John Stott, however, painfully exposes the reality of many churches:

Unfortunately, we see the same power-hunger in the church: in top-level ecclesiastical power struggles, in denominational disputes, in some local churches driven by market forces and others in which the clergy hold all the reins of power and refuse to share it with the lay people (and especially the young people), in parachurch organizations that dream of expanding into world empires and even in the pulpit, which is an exceedingly dangerous place for any child of Adam to occupy. Power is more intoxicating than alcohol, more addictive than drugs.<sup>71</sup>

Stott does not merely point out the problem, but also suggests the Lamb’s humility in Revelation as a healing source for the problem.

According to Revelation 4-7, at the very center of God’s throne (symbol of power) stands a slain Lamb (symbol of weakness). In other words, power through weakness, dramatized in the Lamb on the throne or God on the cross, lies at the very heart of

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<sup>71</sup>Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel and Ministry*, 36.

ultimate reality, even of the very being of God himself. So may this mind be in us which was—and still is—in Christ Jesus. The Christian leaders needed in the world and the church today are those who have seen the Lamb on the throne and are determined to follow him wherever he goes (Rev. 14:4); they know that God’s power will be exhibited not in displays of power but in their weakness.<sup>72</sup>

The Lamb’s spirit of humility is the foundation of Christian community. The singers of the song of the Lamb are people who follow the example of the Lamb. They love to sing the song of the Lamb because they have experienced the power in humility. Why and how do the followers of the Lamb follow Him until death? (cf. Rev 12:11). They saw the love of the Lamb who humbly descended into human flesh and accepted the cup of death for them. Their heart are transformed and filled with a spirit of humility. Thus, they can follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

For Christian leaders, of course, one’s voice is also part of a choir—a choir of shared values. Behind the melody there is a beat, and that beat comes from a deeply held set of beliefs about living with integrity, feeding the hungry, serving the poor, aiding the afflicted, and spreading the gospel. It’s about doing God’s work whatever your calling.<sup>73</sup>

The power of Christian leadership comes from the recognition that every person has equal value (cf. 1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:28) on the basis of a relationship which is established by the blood of the Lamb (cf. Rom 3:25; Eph 1:7; 2:13; Col 1:20; Rev 1:5-6; 5:9).

### **Spiritual Characteristic and Divine Character**

The spiritual aspect of the song of the saints is one of the most apparent characteristics. This characteristic indicates that the divine character is the foundation of

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 51, 52.

<sup>73</sup>Kouzes and Posner, “Leadership Is a Relationship,” 121.

Christian leadership. First, it is a song of salvation in which the saints express the countless joy of salvation received by the grace of God. Revelation 7:10 introduces the lyrics of the song, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” Revelation 19:1 also emphasizes, “Salvation and glory and power belong to our God.” As previously mentioned, the song of the Lamb in Revelation 15:3-4 echoes God’s marvelous work of the past, the present, and the future. Because the salvation of the saints and the judgment of the wicked are already manifested, God’s justice and truth is steadfast, and thus worship will be recovered. The reason to sing is that they cannot keep silent because they have an unchangeable salvation that no-one can negate. They are “filled with the Spirit” so they speak “to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody” in their heart to the Lord (Eph 5:18-19).

Second, another spiritual characteristic is the song’s emphasis on everlasting life. All the woes have passed away (cf. Rev 11:14) and the Dragon, who led people to death, was seized and bound (Rev 20:2). All the martyrs and saints who died before have come back to life (v. 4) and “the second death has no power” over them (v. 6). Their names are found in the book of life (v. 15). Their song is filled with life because “there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Rev 21:4, NIV). The common experience of redemption holds them together as a people. They have authority to reign with Christ for a thousand years (Rev 20:4, 6), to drink from the spring of the water of life (21:6), and to go to the tree of life (22:14). The book of life, the tree of life, and the spring of the water of life are characteristics of the song of the saints. Therefore, nobody could learn the song except the 144,000 who have been redeemed from the earth (Rev 14:3). This is a totally “new song” (14:3) and thus a paean.

Third, this song is not about any human works, but totally about the works of God. It is impossible to find even a bit of human-oriented expression. The followers absolutely depend on their leader. Thus, the singers are “the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes” (Rev 14:4). In the singing of the saints the trust between the leader and followers is unbreakable because they belong to each other so they are one in terms of the same divine character (cf. John 15:4-6). The characters of both are melded as bride and bridegroom are united and become one flesh (cf. Gen 2:24). Thus, the saints sing: “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready” (Rev 19:7). They wear clean, bright, fine linen which symbolizes “the righteous acts of the saints” (v. 8). The statement concerning the saints’ character, “in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God” (Rev 14:5, NKJV), originally referred to God’s character (cf. Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Rom 3:4). Now, the saints and their Holy God are united in perfect character. They are not “double-minded” people (Jas 1:8; 4:8) but have consistency between their words and deeds (cf. Matt 23:3), and between faith and work (cf. Jas 2). This perfect character “does not refer to absolute moral perfection, but rather to their fidelity to Christ.”<sup>74</sup>

The singers are represented as the “first fruits to God and to the Lamb” (Rev 14:4). According to Paul the first fruits refer to the resurrected Jesus (1 Cor 15:20, 23). The first fruits are the choicest product (Isa 5:2). Therefore, the singers are God’s representatives to show His character to the universe in a perfect way. The song by the

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<sup>74</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 450.

singers who possess the perfect character of God alludes to God's love (1 John 4:8, 16) in the deepest relationship with God.

The leadership principles derived from the song of the Lamb do not exist separately. Unity, motivation, transparency, and egalitarian relationships are intertwined and complement each other. The spiritual dimensions of the song describe the comprehensive nature of Christian leadership.

The song comes from the conviction of salvation and describes the character of God. The singers have the "Father's name written on their foreheads" (Rev 14:1, NKJV). Stefanovic argues, "This reception of a name on the forehead signifies 'conformity to the character of Satan or God.'"<sup>75</sup> Thus, moral purity is mentioned in the description of the "new song" (Rev 14:3): "These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they kept themselves chaste. And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless" (Rev 15:3, 4). The singers delight in following their leader who has consistency between word and behavior. They also manifest God's character through their life. The leadership of the Lamb and the followership of the saints are all connected to the divine character.

John Maxwell sees "respect" as the pinnacle of leadership and believes the leader's character is the strongest leadership influence.<sup>76</sup> Steven R. Covey concludes his research on American leaders by stating that the foundation of success is an ethical character—things like integrity, humility, fidelity, temperance, courage, justice, patience,

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 448.

<sup>76</sup>John Maxwell, *The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize Your Potential* (New York: Center Street, 2011).

industry, simplicity, modesty, and the Golden Rule.<sup>77</sup> Kouzes and Posner compare secular leaders and Christian leaders to define genuine leadership:

In the secular world of leadership, people are so accustomed to saying “leader” and “CEO” in the same breath that they’ve come to assume the two are equivalent. The same could be said of the church hierarchy. The old command-and-control style of leadership still haunts the corridors of power, and the ghost of ancient practice still has a grip on our psyche. Certainly, CEOs should act like leaders, but the title is not what makes a CEO a leader. Leadership is not about position. It’s about practice. Leadership is not conferred. It’s earned.<sup>78</sup>

According to Kouzes and Posner, “leaders are their organizations’ ambassadors of shared values. Their mission is to represent the values and standards to the rest of the world, and it is their solemn duty to serve the value to the best of their abilities.”<sup>79</sup> Thus, credibility is the foundation of leadership. Leadership is about doing what leaders say they will do.<sup>80</sup> So, setting an “example is all about execution.”<sup>81</sup>

However, it is impossible to fully comprehend the value of character in Christian leadership apart from experiencing the divine character because the foundation of Christian leadership is God Himself. Stott describes the core of Christian leadership through use of the Trinitarian perspective:

We urgently need a healthy, biblical understanding of the church, for only then shall we have a healthy, biblical understanding of Christian leadership. We must not define the church in terms of its leaders but rather define leaders in relation to the church. There is no boasting about human beings, but all boasting is directed to God the Holy

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<sup>77</sup>Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 18.

<sup>78</sup>Kouzes and Posner, “Leadership Is a Relationship,” 123.

<sup>79</sup>Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 78.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 86.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., 75.

Trinity: to God the Father, who alone gives growth to the seed, to God the Son, who alone is the foundation of the church, and to God the Holy Spirit, who alone indwells and sanctifies the church.<sup>82</sup>

The Book of Revelation describes a Trinitarian leader with a divine character who leads the church to everlasting life. The water of life “flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Rev 22:1) runs down “the middle of the great street of the city” and “on each side of the river stood the tree of life” (Rev 22:2, NIV). In the midst of the throne of God and of the Lamb “His servants will serve Him” (Rev 22:3). The Spirit will live with people in the dwelling of God (Rev 21:3; 22:17. cf. Exod 25:8, John 1:14; 3:5, 33, 34; 7:37-39; 14:16, 17, 23). Finally, with the name of God on their foreheads (Rev 22:4), “they shall reign forever and ever” (Rev 22:5). Christian leadership must also reflect the attitude of the Trinity who give everlasting life to all nations, tribes, tongues, and people. The song of the Lamb, which praises the divine character of God, resonates throughout Revelation (Rev 15:3-4).

### **Summary**

The song of the Lamb occupies a crucial position in the book of Revelation. A close relationship between the GC and the song of the Lamb exists. The followers of the Lamb are the singers and the victors in the GC. The song of the Lamb contains leadership principles because this song is sung by the victors and followers of the Lamb. The song of the Lamb is the paeon which praises their leader, the Lamb, while the hedonistic music is the song of self-satisfaction.

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<sup>82</sup>Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel and Ministry*, 93.



Christian leadership principles can be found in the musical characteristics of the song of the Lamb: unity in humility (physical), motivation and heart (emotional), transparency and trust (mental), egalitarian relationship (social), and divine character (spiritual). Christian leadership is a joyful and dynamic celebration. Christians are people who enter the kingdom of God with singing. The song of the Lamb is resonated deeply with the saints' voluntary spirit and love. Christian leadership should result in their followers having unity, transparency, participation, and reflecting the divine character. These characteristics might also found among secular leaders, but Christian leadership is fundamentally different in terms of giving everlasting life to people. To give everlasting life to followers, Christian leaders have to learn to sing the song of the Lamb in the present.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

Leadership is not practiced in a vacuum. The philosophy or concept of leaders affects their leadership behavior and patterns.<sup>1</sup> The literature review in chapter 2 shows how the socio-cultural context affects the thinking and behavior of leaders. According to Rost, the industrial paradigm creates an idea that leadership exists for productivity and efficiency in order to achieve organizational goals.<sup>2</sup> In reality, modern leadership theories, even spiritual leadership theory, have emerged in the efforts to enhance institutional efficiency and productivity.<sup>3</sup> This industrial paradigm provides great influence to Christian leadership thinking and behavior. Because Christian leaders are eager to achieve quantitative success in mission and church growth, they also draw “from

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<sup>1</sup>Peter G. Northouse, *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2009), 35.

<sup>2</sup>Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, 180.

<sup>3</sup>Reave, “Spiritual Values and Practices Related to Leadership Effectiveness.”; Fry, Vitucci, and Cedillo, “Spiritual Leadership and Army Transformation: Theory, Measurement, and Establishing a Baseline.”; Chen and Li, “Assessing the Spiritual Leadership Effectiveness: The Contribution of Follower’s Self-Concept and Preliminary Tests for Moderation of Culture and Managerial Position.”; Fry and others, “Impact of Spiritual Leadership on Unit Performance.”; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, eds., *Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Performance*.

the well of business strategy.”<sup>4</sup> This pragmatic way of leadership makes people ignore the guidance of the Holy Spirit in favor of their dependence on personal and cultural preferences.

Korean Christianity provides a vivid example of the impact of cultural practices on Christian leadership. Korean Christian leadership practices have struggled with limited success to free itself from the influence of traditional religions and the modern history of Korea. The unique worldview of Koreans molded by cultural and religious ingredients has shaped Korean Christian leadership behaviors. The shamanistic form of leader-centric or charismatic leadership was reinforced by the emphasis of modern capitalism. Korean society accepts an authoritarian leadership style to achieve rapid economic growth. By the same token, Korean Christianity also accepts an authoritarian leadership style. These influences open the door to power struggles, moral corruption, and the exclusive focus on achieving goals in many congregations apart from qualitative growth.

Chapter 3 approaches Revelation as a book of leadership to suggest biblically-shaped leadership principles. Revelation portrays how God leads His church and people. “The Son of Man” (Rev 1:13-16) shows the characteristics of the pastoral leadership as accountability, faithfulness, spiritual competence, sympathizing emotion, relational leadership, voluntary spirit, and Godly character. The GC in Revelation depicts a leadership confrontation between God and Satan. Two antagonists, the Lamb and the Dragon, confront one another over the allegiance of human beings. The GC in Revelation

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<sup>4</sup>John Mark Terry and Payne J. D., *Developing a Strategy for Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Cultural Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 2.

shows that while the Lamb leads the 144,000 with a commendable leadership approach, the Dragon merely counterfeits the Lamb's leadership and corrupts it with ungodly elements such as self-ascendance and coercion leading to dominance.

Chapter 4 explores a leadership theology based on the GC worldview in Revelation. This chapter uses an anthropological definition of worldview to delineate the antithetical leadership practices between the Lamb and the Dragon. This spiritual battle is conducted at the worldview level—a deep level of assumptions basic to cultural behavior. Thus, Satan deceives people by “the deep things of Satan” (Rev 2:24), while God “searches the minds and hearts” (Rev 2:23). People's behavioral patterns are a result of their worldview assumptions. A group's perception of the world is the most significant element that affects their behavior and even their destiny. Revelation gives a clear understanding of supra-cultural leadership principles by the Lamb's behavior and practice.

The Lamb's leadership can be summarized in the paradoxical way. First, the Lamb's leadership shows an attitude of activeness in passivity. Though the Lamb seems to show passivity in His death (cf. Rev 5:6, 9, 12), God's love is actively revealed in the Lamb's powerless passivity (cf. Isa 53:10; Luke 22:22).

Second, the relationship between the Lamb, the Father, and the Holy Spirit shows a model of relationship between leaders and followers in a paradoxical way. Though the Lamb is subordinated to the Father (cf. Rev 5:7), He is not subjugated to Him. Rather, the Father and the Lamb are both praised by a great multitude (Rev 7:10). The merit of redemption is attributed to both the Father and the Lamb (Rev 14:1; 22:1, 3). This shows horizontality in verticality in terms of the relationship between the Father and the Son.

This relationship expands to humans. Jesus confirms, “I am in the Father and the Father in Me” (John 14:11) and the Spirit abides in the believers (John 14:16-17). Thus, He includes humans saying, “I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you” (John 14:20). This paradoxical relationship shows a system of God’s kingdom. God’s kingdom does not follow the Greco-Roman hierarchical system. The authority of God is distributed to the saints (cf. Rev 20:4) and the throne is shared with the overcomers (Rev 3:21). Yet, God’s sovereignty is never threatened.

Third, the Lamb, who has demonstrated His humility, is equal with the Father. The image of the Lamb in Revelation shows two aspects of His position in the GC. One is that the Lamb occupies supremacy and dominion in the GC narratives (cf. Rev 5:8, 12, 13; 7:9, 10; 15:13; 21:14, 22, 23, 27; 22:1, 3). The other aspect is that the Lamb diligently moves down and labors in redemptive ministry. These two aspects of the Lamb show that His leadership is based on the recognition of equality with God. This egalitarian relationship is the foundation of the Lamb’s leadership.

Fourth, the Lamb acts in silence. The Lamb does not speak a single time with voice in Revelation. No hint exists that the Lamb commands people. The Lamb is just standing on Mount Zion (Rev 14:1) without utterance in conformity with the image of the prophet Isaiah’s expression on the suffering servant (Isa 53:7; 42:2). In contrast, the beast coming out of the sea speaks loudly as a dragon (Rev 13:11). The Lamb respects humans’ freedom of choice. The trustful relationship between the Lamb and His followers resulted from the Lamb’s faithful actions, not by forceful threat. The Lamb clearly communicates in silence.

Fifth, the delaying judgment in Revelation shows God's paradoxical attitude in dealing with the final judgment. He hastens the final stage of judgment to repay the blood of the saints (cf. Rev 6:9-10), but He still waits for the repentance of those who dwell on the earth (cf. Rev 6:11). The genuine reason of the delay is love. Thus, the ministry of the Lamb in the GC is not completed in a stroke. While the saints manifest "the perseverance of the saints" (Rev 14:12), the Lamb keeps His leading position (cf. Rev 14:1). The leader Lamb is waiting in patience. Though the goal is already set up, the process needs a longer time in God's strategy because the ultimate purpose of Revelation is to make people to read, hear and take to heart (Rev 1:3).

The Lamb's approach to leadership contrasts with the main issues of Christian leadership such as power and authority, unity and equality, followership, spiritual transformation, spiritual leadership, motivation and volunteerism, and emotional leadership: (1) Christian leaders should be the people who love to forsake their privilege and priority for the sake of community. (2) The equality between the Father and the Lamb and the Holy Spirit demonstrates that the egalitarian spirit encourages people to voluntarily follow leaders. (3) The Lamb's leadership teaches that force and coercion have no power to create genuine motivation. Also, self-exaltation by material or sensual satisfaction cannot be a permanent motivation. Followership comes only from friendship (cf. John 15:15). (4) The purpose of Christian leadership is to create spiritual transformation in people. (5) The spirituality, produced by the born-again experience of the Holy Spirit, draws people to follow the arch-leader, the Lamb. (6) Revelation shows God truly accepts the voluntary spirit. No single connotation of coercion is present. (7) The invitation of Revelation is the calling of people to come into the house of God and

the familial relationship with God. This fundamental relationship creates a healthy emotional atmosphere in which people can be involved in the reconciliation ministry of God.

Chapter 5 highlights Christian leadership principles from the singing of the saints in Revelation. The song of the Lamb occupies a crucial position in the Book of Revelation (Rev 7:9-10; 14:2-3; 15:2-4; 19:1-8). A close relationship is evident between the GC and the song of the Lamb (cf. Isa. 30:32; Ps 149:6-9). The followers of the Lamb are the singers of the song of the Lamb and the victors in the GC. The song of the Lamb is the paean which praises their leader, the Lamb (cf. Rev 14:1), but the hedonistic music is the song for self-satisfaction (cf. Rev 18:22).

The song of the Lamb can be understood with five musical characteristics.<sup>5</sup> Physically, this song is mainly a vocal sound in which the unity of singers can be found (Rev 14:2; 19:6). Emotionally, the joy, gratitude, and excitement which come from the conviction of salvation and love to God in voluntary spirit resonate (Rev 7:9-10; 19:1, 3, 6, 7). Mentally, the song clearly delivers the word of God revealed to the saints (Rev 7:10; 15:3; 19:1, 6). Socially, the responsorial or antiphonal characteristics of the song show the spirit of participation and cooperation in the sense of full equality (Rev 19:5-8). Spiritually, this song is the song of salvation (Rev 7:10; 19:1), the song of life, and the song of God (Rev 19:7). The core subject of the song is God's divine character.

Christian leadership principles can be found in the musical characteristics of the song of the Lamb: unity in humility (physical), motivation and heart (emotional),

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<sup>5</sup>Seel, *A Theology of Music for Worship Derived from the Book of Revelation*, 127.

transparency and trust (mental), egalitarian relationship (social), and divine character (spiritual). Christian leadership is joyful behavior. Christians are the persons who enter the kingdom of God with singing. The song of the Lamb shows the singing leadership which gives intensified voluntary spirit and power. Christian leaders are to urge followers to sing with heart in the unity, transparency, participation, and divine character. These characteristics might be shared with secular leadership, but Christian leadership is fundamentally different in terms of giving everlasting life to people. To give everlasting life to followers, Christian leaders have to learn to sing the song of the Lamb in the present.

### **Conclusion**

The Church exists for mission (Acts 1:8; Matt 28:18-20). Jesus emphasizes the urgent need for mission in his eschatological teaching (Matt 24:14) and the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20). The early church experienced explosive growth. The early leaders, including the Twelve disciples, the Seven (Acts 6:1-6), and the apostle Paul, practiced leadership under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit in decision making, training, organizing, distributing materials, and solving problems. From the beginning Church leaders revealed an exemplary leadership attitude and behavior without knowing modern leadership theories. Though leaders were not educated in leadership apart from the teaching and example of Jesus (cf. Phil 2:5-11), however, through guidance of the Holy Spirit they knew how best to lead people (cf. Phi 2:1-4). The number of believers quickly grew. This growth led to problems and challenges both inside and outside of local congregations. The Church subsequently followed the way of the Roman Empire to lead people and drew a secular leadership pattern—hierarchical system, authoritarian



leadership—into the Church. From that time the Church compromised its unique leadership principles learned from Jesus with a corrupted secular concept of leadership.

The industrial spirit which emphasizes quantity has invaded the Church. The spirit of productivity occupies the throne of Christian leadership. Churches mimic the methods and techniques of the industrial model of leadership. Consequently, while churches can sing a song of victory in terms of quantitative growth, the core attitudes of the Lamb being replaced with conquering terms such as target, crusades, and strategies. And this industrial paradigm manipulates human freedom of choice and damages the voluntary spirit. Transaction and reward are considered more relevant and convenient ways to draw people into churches. The conscience is threatened as a result of borrowing from the industrial model of leadership.

Doukhan highlights the core spirit of the corrupted church in the explanation of “the four horses” in Revelation 6 by stating that:

Its [the Church] conquest of the world had started with the triumph of peace. The scene had opened on a white horse, whose rider, Yeshua the Messiah, bore an empty bow. From the second horse, however, the momentum turned into violence. Whereas the Messiah had fought for the church, the church now considered it its duty to wage war for the Messiah. The religious wars and Crusades testify to a shift in the church’s mentality. Action from below replaces revelation from above. The church assumed the prerogative to speak and act on God’s behalf. Intolerance always stems from this type of usurping attitude, when God’s witness comes to identify himself or herself with God; when success obliterates the revelation from above; when an imperialistic mentality replaces an evangelical concern; when statistics and the number of baptisms prevails over the genuineness of conversion; and when the church seeks the answers to its problems in strategies and marketing plans rather than in spiritual guidance. When humanity replaces God, anything goes. The reason is simple. The need for security always opts for the visible and concrete versus a humble trust in the incomprehensible and invisible God. The success of worldly achievements then leads

only to pride and intolerance. Violence and oppression are the natural consequences when we usurp God's role.<sup>6</sup>

The Church in the last age of the world has another opportunity to learn the biblically-shaped leadership from the description of the Lamb's leadership in Revelation. Although the Lamb's leadership in Revelation is presented in mysterious and paradoxical ways, the message regarding leadership practice is clear. The Lamb's leadership shows that Christian leadership is (1) spiritual, (2) theological, (3) moral, (4) eschatological, (5) ecclesiological, (6) relational, and (7) missional.

First, Christian leadership is spiritual. The foundation of Christian leadership is the work of the Holy Spirit in individuals' hearts. Christian leadership cannot be treated as a methodological concept. The Lamb presents His leadership as the spiritual power to move people's hearts to follow Him (Rev 7:17; 14:4).<sup>7</sup>

Second, Christian leadership requires a theological base provided in the Scriptures. What one believes affects the way he/she acts. How one understands the GC determines behavior. Christian leaders must submit and adjust their leadership style by searching biblical principles.<sup>8</sup>

Third, Christian leadership is moral. The Holy Spirit works in the believers to yield the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). The followers of the Lamb are the ones who are virgins (Rev 14: 4). Also, "in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault

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<sup>6</sup>Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse through Hebrew Eyes*, 63-64.

<sup>7</sup>See R. Scott Rodin, *The Steward Leader: Transforming People, Organizations and Communities* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 13-15.

<sup>8</sup>See Plueddemann, *Leading across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church*, 157.

before the throne of God” (Rev 14:5). They are “firstfruits” to God and to the Lamb (Rev. 14:4). Leadership is all about character.<sup>9</sup>

Fourth, Christian leadership is eschatological. Christian leaders focus on the last day judgment. Their efforts and leadership involves the last call of the three angels (Rev 14:6-12). They urgently call people who dwell on the earth before the wrath of God is poured out. Their leadership cannot be considered as a mere administration or business. It is the urgent work of *missio Dei*.

Fifth, Christian leadership is ecclesiological. A great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues” stand before the throne and before the Lamb (Rev 7:9). The eschatological *ecclesia* join together to praise God and the Lamb for the salvation provided. The Lamb’s leadership succeeds in leading the eschatological *ecclesia* and their followers triumph against the counterfeit leadership of the Dragon. All the followers of the leader Lamb are citizens of the New Jerusalem city.

Sixth, Christian leadership is relational. The saints are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:6, 9). Revelation proclaims, “They will be His people” (Rev 21:3) and He will “wipe away every tear from their eyes” (Rev 21:4). “He who overcomes shall inherit all things” and he shall be His son (Rev 21:7). Christian leaders call people to God’s loyal family

Seventh, Christian leadership is missional. The Lamb is the shepherd who leads people to living fountains of waters (Rev 7:17). The Lamb exists for *missio Dei*. He begins to open the scroll and to loose its seals (Rev 5:1-7). The Lamb who had been slain

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<sup>9</sup>Allender, *Leading Character*, 46.

redeems people to God by His blood (Rev 5:6, 12; 7:9, 11). And He is standing on Mount Zion (Rev 14:1). The followers of the Lamb who are saved stand with the Lamb singing a new song (Rev 14:1-3). The title of the song is the song of the Lamb which is sung by the victors against the Dragon (Rev 15:3). The Lamb's leadership is a missional leadership.

### **Recommendations**

After a careful study of leadership principles from the book of Revelation, I would like to make the following seven recommendations:

1. *Follow the Lamb's leadership.* I recommend to church leaders at every level of organization to follow the Lamb's leadership in recognition of the GC between God and Satan. To practice a sort of leadership behavior that reflects what one believes and who one follows. Leadership must not be treated as merely a personal or cultural matter, but as a spiritual issue. The revealed relationship among the Trinity must be the model adopted between leaders and followers in churches. The equality among them should be secured. Though few representatives work as leaders, leaders must remember that the Lamb is the real leader.

2. *Move down.* I recommend to church pastors eager for success in church growth for leaders to pursue the incarnational path. The best Christian leaders are the ones who intentionally deny themselves and are surrendered to the power and authority of God.<sup>10</sup> The genuine success of evangelism and church growth has to come from the character of leaders. When the leader's character is secured, the evangelistic results are truly realized.

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<sup>10</sup>See Rodin, *The Steward Leader: Transforming People, Organizations and Communities*, 15-16.

Pastors have to be careful from being deceived by a counterfeit way of leading the church. Sometimes heresy can grow as a result of failing to follow the principles of biblical leadership. The genuineness of Christian faith cannot be always tested by quantity. The spiritual quality of pastors and members determines real church growth.

3. *Transform worldview.* Additionally, I recommend to the missions community to intentionally work toward transformation of the worldviews of the people the church attempts to reach. The goal of missional leaders on earth is to respectfully transform people's worldview. Revelation shows that the GC is conducted at the worldview level.<sup>11</sup> Thus, Christian leadership should be evaluated by a leader's worldview including cognitive, affective, and evaluative dimensions.

4. *Help church members be leaders.* The main task of church leaders is to nurture people as leaders. The light of Revelation manifests that all believers are called to be leaders, not just followers. The Saints have the authority to rule the world. God shares His divine authority with the saints. It is not the way of discipleship to make people perpetually subordinate to leaders. Sound discipleship always grows followers to produce healthy leaders.

The ultimate goal of missional leadership is for all humankind to worship God, not a few human leaders. Though secular leadership praises a few great leaders who have distinctive traits, the real leader is the Great God, not Great Man. All the glories of human leaders vanish in the presence of the glory of God manifested on the Cross and on

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<sup>11</sup>Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*, 10-12, 315.

the throne. Therefore, Christian leaders should lead people to be leaders who reflect the glory of God by their humble leadership.

5. *Emphasize the Trinitarian model of relationship.* I recommend that all of the faith community reflect the Trinitarian model of relationship among believers.<sup>12</sup> As the Lamb reveals, the most successful strategy for Christian leaders is to leverage the quality of relationship between leaders and followers. The shared power and authority based on equality among people makes an impact on the people who are entangled in the hierarchical subordinate system of society. The descending direction of Christian leadership will successfully draw people's attention to the life and words of Christ. The egalitarian relationship among Christians provides an answer for the people who struggle with the dried institutionalism in modern society. The quality of the relationship among leaders determines the quality and effectiveness of the mission.

6. *Provide instruction about leadership theology.* I lastly recommend our theological institutions to develop courses on leadership theology offered for students and leaders. The Bible teachers should give attention to theological exploration on leadership as much as they give attention to biblical research in other areas. Leadership, sometimes, has been considered as a technique or methodology. Although communication skills, management skills, and conflict resolving skills are subjects of leadership, the knowledge must not directly come from the secular perspectives. Because leadership is about

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<sup>12</sup> See Shelley Trebesch, "Theology for Transcending Culture in Leadership: The Mission of God in Conversation with the Cultural Dimension of Power Distance," *Journal of Religious Leadership* 1, no. 12 (2013); Alex Golovenko, "Trinitarian Leadership as a Seventh-Day Adventist Perspective on Empowerment Leadership in Local Churches in Western Ontario," (Dmin dissertation, Andrews University, 2013).

leaders, Christian leadership principles should be derived from considerable exploration of Scripture which “is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16) so, “the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim. 3:17). The GC influence worldview will supply a concrete foundation for missional leadership theology. The continuing study on leadership theology will lead people to recognize leadership issues as a spiritual warfare matter between God and Satan with a primary goal of bringing all of the peoples of the earth under the saving lordship of Jesus Christ.

7. *Read the book of Revelation with a missional focus.* Revelation contains crucial missional topics such as worship (cf. Rev 5:9-10; 15:3-4), power encounter (cf. Rev 13:13-14; 15:1; 16:13-14), worldview conflict (cf. Rev 2:23-24), King and Kingdom theology (cf. Rev 11:15; 12:10), and cross-cultural mission (cf. Rev 14:6-12). As a leader studies the book from missiological perspectives, he/she will find numerous insights for their missional issues. The continuing study will give readers abundant divine blessings as they accept the prerogative of God who leads the history of redemption and give glory to God who allows us to join the *missio Dei*. Readers who seek the way of God in their missional efforts will finally sing the song of the Lamb on the sea of glass shouting, “Great and marvelous are Thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the nations” (Rev 15:3).

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