Servant Leadership from a Christian Context

A Thesis Presented to
The Honors Tutorial College
Ohio University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation
from the Honors Tutorial College with the degree of
Bachelor of Business Administration

By Austin McCarthy
May 2014
This thesis has been approved by
The Honors Tutorial College and the College of Business

Dr. Robert L. Holbrook
Professor, Management
Thesis Advisor

Dr. Raymond Frost
Director of Studies
Business Administration

Jeremy Webster
Dean, Honors Tutorial College
Part I: Introduction
Preface: A Personal Narrative on My Honors Tutorial College Experience

I have written my thesis on servant leadership. Specifically, I researched Biblical leadership with regard to the Apostle Paul’s writings in the Pastoral Epistles, which include 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus. Although I studied several topics throughout my undergraduate career, I did not find one that interested me enough to warrant thesis-level research until my final tutorial with Tim Reynolds.

Throughout my time at Ohio University, I had taken tutorials on topics related to my specialization, Management Information Systems (MIS), such as hacktivism and online marketing, but these subjects did not appeal to me by the end of each tutorial. I also studied other interests, such as the economics of charitable giving and the effects of birth order on achievement, but a lack of statistically interesting results, coupled with a lack of passion on my part limited my inquiries into those fields.

My sophomore year, I joined Select Leaders, an organization on campus that helps aspiring leaders learn more about leadership styles and attitudes through various case studies, engagements, and tools. In the organization’s weekly meetings, I was given the opportunity to interact and discuss leadership issues with my peers, not unlike the Socratic seminar-style that my early tutorials were modeled after. These meetings helped me explore my leadership style and spurred my curiosity into leadership in general. However, it was during my tutorial with Mr. Reynolds that I examined leadership in a more scholarly context.
With a newly discovered passion for leadership, I sought the help of Dr. Robert Holbrook, a management professor in the College of Business. At the end of my junior year, I approached him with the request to be my thesis advisor. I learned he had just finished a study on servant leadership and thought that his subject expertise would be a great aid to my thesis writing process. Thankfully, Dr. Holbrook shared my passion for servant leadership and pledged to see me through to my goal of completing a thesis.

In August of my senior year, Dr. Holbrook and I set a schedule for completing the thesis. The plan was to finish the literature review by November, in order to give me more time to do the research portion of my thesis. However, a lack of literature on the specific areas of leadership that I was interested in put us behind schedule. This also influenced my decision to write a scholarly article accompanied by a critical essay. After seeing the majority of the literature in the area written this way, I wanted to follow the best practices of the subject area.

As I am reaching the conclusion of my thesis, Dr. Holbrook and I have established a plan to publish my thesis. First, we will submit the article to a national conference where the paper will be reviewed by other academics that study business topics from a Christian perspective. The Christian Business Faculty Association (CBFA) exists to further “the study, integration, teaching, and application of Biblical truths in service to the academy, students, and the business community.” The CBFA will be an excellent place to receive constructive feedback on the paper. The next annual meeting will be October 9-11, 2014 at Trevecca Nazarene University in
Nashville, Tennessee. The paper submission deadline is June 1. After submitting my thesis to the Honors Tutorial College, I will continue working with Dr. Holbrook to prepare the paper for this conference. Following the CBFA conference, I will make additional changes to prepare the article for submission to the Journal of Biblical Integration in Business. The journal’s stated purpose is to “equip students to live out their Christian faith in the workplace.” I believe that my thesis aligns with this purpose, as it takes a contemporary model of leadership (Greenleaf, 1970), and examines it within the context of the Apostle Paul’s writings.

As I conclude my senior year and the writing of my thesis, I can see the progress I have made throughout my time at Ohio University in the Honors Tutorial College. I have grown professionally, academically, and personally. I am indebted to everyone that helped me during my time at Ohio University including: my tutorial advisors, Dr. Frost and Dr. Holbrook, the College of Business faculty, and the Honors Tutorial College staff and students. I look forward to using the skills I have developed here in my future career and beyond.

Introduction

Leadership theory literature has popularized a focus on ethical leadership in the past decade (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Yidong & Xin, 2013). Ethical lapses of major corporations, such as Enron and AIG, cost stakeholders unprecedented amounts. As a result, governments, educational institutions, and corporations have emphasized the importance of ethical leadership. Several studies have linked the
behavior of employees to that of leaders, which reinforces the call for ethical leadership (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Awasthi, 2008; Watson, Berkley, & Papamarcos, 2009). While traditional measures of success -- profit, revenues, efficiency -- are still important, stakeholders today are calling for more from leaders, particularly in terms of the relational aspects of leadership (Bolden & Gosling, 2006).

Ethical leadership and its subsets, contrary to the status quo, use measures such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviors, and employee optimism/morale in order to describe strong ethical leadership (Trevino Brown, & Hartman, 2003; Yidong & Xinxin, 2013). These measures are often the result of various ethical leadership models, usually involving a social exchange between leaders and followers (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005; Yidong & Xinxin, 2013). The emphasis on the relationship between leader and follower, the intrinsic values, predispositions, and beliefs of the leader and follower, as well as the leader’s influence on the follower’s personal development, has spawned new leadership theories, such as spiritual leadership.

Spiritual leadership, defined as an area of leadership addressing the four areas of the human experience (body, mind, heart and spirit), is the antithesis of the management paradigm that has slowly been eroding since the early 20th century (Ancona, Kochan, Scully, Van Maanen, & Westney, 1999; Moxley, 2000). This management paradigm, which is a fear-based, centralized, formalized bureaucracy, stifles innovation and creativity (Ancona et al., 1999). Spiritual leadership is related to ethical leadership, as the seminal work on spiritual leadership creates a linkage
between a leader’s values, attitudes, and behaviors to follower needs, and ultimately to organizational outcomes (Fry, 2003). This leadership style creates organizations that are open to change, conducive to thinking “outside the box,” and stimulate members to grow their capacity to learn and achieve desired results (Senge, 1990; Fry, 2003).

Servant leadership combines aspects of both these leadership areas, and is favored for its balanced approach to leadership, an approach that couples leadership and servanthood (Whetstone, 2001). Servant leadership is portrayed by Greenleaf (1970) as “the tension between a primary desire to serve underscored by the authority to lead.” The necessity of the followers to trust the leader is central to the concept of servant leadership. This theme of the dynamic relationship and trust between leaders and followers, evident also in spiritual and ethical leadership, is a resonating theme that illustrates a clear need in contemporary society.

Servant leadership fills a unique space, and thus this paper will explore servant leadership in addition to ethical and spiritual leadership. Because servant leadership is still being developed (Trevino et al., 2003), this paper will seek to add concreteness to the definition by providing an additional source to validate the characteristics described by Greenleaf (1970). Additionally, this paper will explore the primary motivation of servant leaders and one way that underlying motivation can be developed. With the emergence of servant leadership, several papers have been written on Biblical characters being archetypes of the servant leadership theory (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Abramson, 2007; Tidball, 2012; Holbrook, Holt, & McCarthy, 2013). St. Paul of Tarsus, author of the majority of the books in the New Testament, wrote
several letters to churches and his disciples, Timothy and Titus, on the topic of leadership. This paper will explore the Pastoral Epistles, comprised of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus, and will catalogue the characteristics of leadership that Paul writes about. This paper is based on the notion that the leadership style which Paul is describing aligns with servant leadership. Additionally, the Pastoral Epistles open a door to examine the serve-first mentality of servant leaders from a Christian perspective.

**Review of Previous Literature**

**Ethical Leadership**

In the face of numerous business scandals, the importance of ethical leadership is self-evident. After Enron and other ethical scandals dominated the news headlines, educational, governmental, and religious institutions all responded in various ways. In this section, the paper will review the current literature surrounding ethical leadership.

Ethical leadership is defined as “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making” (Brown et al., 2005). Alternatively, in their literature review, De Hoogh & Den Hartog (2008) depict ethical leadership as “the tension between altruism and egoism.” This is clarified into three distinct characteristics that make up an ethical leader. First, an ethical leader must display moral and ethical behavior and encourage ethical behavior. What this means is that an ethical leader must participate
in behaviors that benefit others without direct intent to benefit oneself and, simultaneously, must abstain from behaviors that negatively affect others (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Another aspect of an ethical leader is transparency, which, practically, is demonstrated through providing followers with clear expectations. The third characteristic that De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008) define for ethical leaders is power-sharing, or the act of giving followers a voice in the decision-making process. The antithesis of the ethical leader is the despotic leader. A despotic leader is denoted in both the motivation of the leader and the process of leading. Self-interested, power-hungry motivations are typical of a despotic leader. This type of leader would be controlling and vindictive. After establishing these definitions, the authors set up an empirical study to examine the nature of the relationship between social responsibility and ethical leadership. The study hypothesized that social responsibility will be positively linked to ethical leadership and negatively linked to despotic leadership. Two additional hypotheses were made in the study. The first positively links ethical leadership to top management team (TMT) effectiveness and followers’ optimism concerning the future; the second negatively links despotic leadership to TMT effectiveness and follower optimism. The surveys showed that all hypotheses were supported, except the linkage between despotic leadership and TMT effectiveness.

Some literature focuses on the personal characteristics of leaders. Perceptions of integrity, trustworthiness, and dependability are all antecedents of effective leadership. In Trevino et al. (2003), the interview technique revealed that many of the same attributes associated with effective leaders were linked to ethical leadership.
Perceptions of ethical leaders generalized them as empathetic, fair, and as people who model ethical behavior not only in professional contexts, but also personal ones. Trevino et al. (2003) characterize this as the moral person. The counterpart to the moral person is the moral manager. The moral manager proactively promotes an ethical climate for his/her followers by establishing an ethical vision, modeling ethical behavior in ways to be seen by followers, and holding followers accountable with a reward system. Much as the different ways a leader can be perceived, either as a moral person or manager, can be varied, the views on what makes a person moral can provide room for discrepancies. Barrile (2002) discussed a dichotomy of views on ethical obligations of leaders. On one hand, a leader has legal obligations to shareholders to maximize profit. On the other hand, a leader has an ethical obligation to stakeholders, namely society, to make decisions benefiting them without compromising his/her integrity by making unethical decisions.

Brown et al. (2005) utilized social learning theory to explain antecedents and outcomes of ethical leadership. They posit that followers learn attitudes, behavior, and values by watching and modeling trustworthy leaders. Trevino (1986) discusses how individuals often look to external sources as a model for their ethical behavior. Ethical leaders are prime candidates to become these individuals whom others follow for ethical standards because of their inherent status and power, as well as their tendency to personally invest in their followers’ lives (Bandura, 1986).

Related to the antecedents of ethical leadership are the antecedents of ethical decision-making. One of the most prevalent theories on the matter is Rest’s (1986)
four-part model of ethical decision making. Rest (1986) suggests that the four steps to making an ethical decision are: moral awareness, or the ability to recognize that the situation is a moral issue; moral judgment, or the ability to judge what action would be morally correct; moral intent, or the ability to choose the morally correct action by prioritizing moral values over others; and moral behavior, which is the outcome of an ethical decision and results from the three previous antecedents.

In addition to perceptions of personality affecting ethical decision-making, measurable personality characteristics can affect ethical decisions, as well. People who measure high in hedonism are more likely to make unethical decisions when significant rewards are introduced (Watson et al., 2009). People who score high in mindfulness, or the awareness of self and others, are more likely to make ethical decisions (Ruedy & Schweitzer, 2010). These same people also cared less about perceptions of how ethical they were, and instead placed more value on their internal perception of ethics. People who value tradition, or tend to conform, are likely to be complicit in unethical decision-making, instead of becoming a whistle blower (Watson & Berkeley, 2008).

Another factor that can have an effect on ethical decision-making is gender. Numerous studies have been conducted to deduce whether a person’s gender changes the way they approach and make ethical decisions. Craft (2013) speculates that gender is so heavily researched because it is a readily available variable. One finding on gender was that, in general, women are more likely to make ethical decisions based on the both justice and utilitarianism, whereas men rely solely on justice. This makes
women’s decisions more based on the context of the situation, as opposed to men’s
decisions which are made to be universal. There is not a huge consensus on whether
gender is a true determinant of ethical behavior. While some studies found differences
between genders, a number of studies do not. On average, women are found to be
more ethical than men, yet men tend to be more consistent in their ethical decision-
making (Craft, 2013).

Cultural values are another characteristic that has been studied in relation to
ethical leadership. While most studies find that it is not the strongest factor, the
difference between collectivist cultures versus individualistic cultures results in a
significant difference in leadership style. People from a collectivist culture tend to be
more devoted to their organization, and, ultimately, more willing to commit unethical
actions that benefit the organization, than people from an individualistic culture, who
would be more likely to question authority and decision-making (Zhuang, Thomas, &
Miller, 2005; Westerman, Beekun, Stedham, & Yamamura, 2007; Sims, 2009).

A review of over 41 related studies found that, generally, more education,
work experience, and job satisfaction were related positively to ethical leadership and
decision making (O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005). Additionally, people who take ethics
classes are more likely to have better judgment of ethical situations (Awasthi, 2008).

In Craft’s (2013) review of ethical leadership literature, religiosity was not a
consistent influencer of ethical decision-making. For example, Kurpis, Beqiri, and
Hegelson (2008) found that prioritization of moral self-improvement was a better
predictor of ethical intent and decisions than religiosity. On the other hand, Fernando
and Chowdhury (2010) reported a relationship between spiritual well-being and
idealism, a philosophy that is connected to more ethical decision-making.

Although religiosity was not a consistent predictor throughout multiple studies,
personal values were found to be a strong predictor. Altruistic values, such as social
justice, care for the underprivileged, correcting injustice, and equality, were all
positively related to ethical decision-making (Fritzsche & Oz, 2007). As would be
expected, “self-enhancement values,” such as focus on power, control over others, and
material possessions, were negatively associated with ethical decision-making.
Interestingly, the majority of world religions are known for upholding the altruistic
values and criticizing the self-enhancement values.

Overall, ethical leadership breaks the world into two types of leaders; ethical
leaders and despotic leaders, with despotic leaders behaving antithetically to most
behaviors associated with ethical leaders (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Ethical
leaders seek to encourage moral activity—that is activity that benefits others, while
abstaining from activities that harm others (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Ethical
leaders are transparent, and allow followers to participate in the decision-making
process (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Ethical leaders do not just simulate moral
behavior in their professional lives, but live morally throughout their personal lives as
well (Trevino et al., 2003). Ethical leaders are models of consistency, and seek to hold
followers accountable to their overall ethical vision (Trevino et al., 2003). Ethical
leaders have strong awareness, and as such, care more about personal standards rather
than perceptions of others’ (Reudy & Schweitzer, 2010). Additionally, there are a
number of demographic factors that are antecedents to ethical leadership (O’Fallon &
Butterfield, 2005; Zhuang et al., 2005; Fritzsche et al., 2007; Westerman et al., 2007;
Sims, 2009; Fernando & Chowdhury, 2010; Craft, 2013). Ethical leadership
ultimately leads to more effective top management performance and follower
optimism about the future (De Hoogh Den Hartog, 2008).

**Spiritual Leadership**

Spirituality is on the rise in corporate America, with a number of firms
exploring what it looks like to promote spirituality in a workplace environment
(Mitroff & Denton, 1999). Workplace spirituality is defined as: “A framework of
organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees’ experience of
transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected in
a way that provides feelings of compassion and joy” (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003).
Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) found that workplace spirituality programs lead to
many beneficial personal outcomes for employees, such as increased job satisfaction,
peace, and commitment, but also for organizations, with improved productivity and
less absenteeism/turnover.

The premise to spiritual leadership is the concept of the four dimensions that
define the human experience: body, mind, heart, and spirit (Moxley, 2000). Fry
(2003) argues that while many of the current leadership theories focus on body, mind,
and heart, they often forget the spiritual component of the human experience.
Spiritual leadership is “comprised of the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership” (Fry, 2003).

Fry (2003) makes it clear that spirituality and religion are separate concepts: “Spirituality (e.g., prayer, yoga, meditation) is the source for one’s search for spiritual survival—for meaning in life and a sense of interconnectedness with other beings.” Religion, on the other hand, is the specific dogmas, traditions, and teachings of a particular group and belief system. An individual’s spiritual journey is an active process of discovery, where the individual searches for personal purpose through a relationship with a higher power. Fry (2003) provides an explanation for this higher power as being a personal motivation for being. While many find this in God, Fry (2003) suggests that almost all people find refuge in some higher power. Horton (1950) suggests that true atheism holds nothing as higher than the individual and, thus, nothing is worth living for. Under such a definition, Fry (2003) implies that everyone can be included in his definition of spiritual leadership, so long as they find value in something other than themselves.

Fry (2003) offers two essential facets of spiritual survival: calling and membership. Calling is the embodiment of the belief of individuals that their work is purpose-fulfilling and makes an impact. People who feel called to a certain profession seek to find satisfaction and fulfillment through their work, often by making an impact on society as a whole (Pfeffer, 2003). Membership is a commonly studied social
phenomenon, which in the workplace context focuses on social groups and relationship with coworkers.

Pfeffer (2003) offers four essential aspects of what people seek in workplace spirituality: “(1) interesting and meaningful work that permits them to learn, develop, and have a sense of competence and mastery, (2) meaningful work that provides some feeling of purpose, (3) a sense of connection and positive social relations with their coworkers, and (4) the ability to live an integrated life, so that one’s work role and other roles are in harmony with his or her essential nature and who the person is as a human being.”

Ultimately, spiritual leadership requires creation of a vision that compels followers and helps followers fulfill their calling (Fry, 2003). This vision serves several purposes: “clarifies the general direction of change, simplifies hundreds or thousands of more detailed decisions, and helps to quickly and efficiently coordinate the actions of many different people” (Fry, 2003). The vision should additionally gain wide support, define objectives and goals, reflect group values, and promote hope (Nanus, 1992). Spiritual leadership also consists of an attitude of altruistic love and sincere concern for followers (Fry, 2003).

Spiritual leadership is focused on the human experience, particularly the intrinsic motivations that are created through calling and membership (Fry, 2003). Spirituality is distinguished from religion in that is more general—it is the search “for meaning in life and a sense of interconnectedness with other beings” (Fry, 2003).
Spiritual leaders help employees find calling and membership, which means helping them find meaningful work, purpose, community, and work/life balance (Pfeffer, 2003). Spiritual leaders must create and abide by a vision to set a direction and a goal to hope in (Pfeffer, 2003). Spirituality in the workplace is becoming socially acceptable, and in some instances, desirable (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Workplaces with spirituality programs have shown improvements in employee satisfaction and optimism, as well as reductions in absenteeism and turnover (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003).

**Servant Leadership**

After reviewing ethical and spiritual leadership, it makes sense to examine servant leadership, as it is comprised of elements that categorize it in either of the two broader leadership theories already elaborated on in this review. Servant leadership’s emphasis on building the community and followers, as well as the betterment of society on the whole associates it with ethical leadership. Servant leadership also follows many of the same tenets as spiritual leadership, through its inspiration of hope as well as its fulfilling nature. This section will review the literature on servant leadership, keeping in mind its relationship to both ethical leadership and spiritual leadership.

In his seminal work on servant leadership, Greenleaf (1970) opens with the story of Hermann Hesse’s (1957) *Journey to the East*. The author (Hesse, 1957) describes the character Leo, who is the servant who does a group’s chores while on a
mythical journey. Leo is noted for his spirit and presence, as well. Suddenly, Leo disappears. The group falls into chaos without Leo, and the journey fails. The narrator, after years of wandering, finds Leo, who happens to be the leader of the Order that the group was searching for. From this story, Greenleaf (1970) derives, by his own admission from intuition rather than logic, the concept of a servant leader. Greenleaf (1970) posits that more servants should become leaders, or servants should only follow servant-leaders because in a truly free society, followers would only choose to follow those who had proven trustworthy to serve.

Greenleaf (1970) argues that the most essential part of being a servant leader is the aspiration to serve first. Servant leaders foremost wish to serve, and the occupation of leading is a byproduct of their desire to serve others. When done in reverse, with a desire to lead and then serve, “because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions,” it is “sharply different.” In order to determine what the leader’s highest priority is, the author suggests looking at the results: “Do those served grow as person? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?” Additionally, Greenleaf (1970) uses the least privileged in society as a benchmark. If they are made more at a disadvantage, then the leader is likely not a servant first.

Two attributes that are common with the servant leader and other contemporary leadership theories is the idea of initiative and vision (Greenleaf, 1970). In order to lead, the servant leader must have the wherewithal to undergo the potential
for failure. In order to go, the servant leader must also have a goal, an all-encompassing purpose, with which to set his/her direction.

Servant leaders are noted for their communication skills (Greenleaf, 1970). This involves the process of listening to and engaging with followers. After listening, a servant leader must take time to withdraw. In this respite from the pressure of leadership, one must reorient oneself with the question “How can I use myself to serve best?” By being constantly in contact with followers, a servant leader is made aware. This awareness, Greenleaf (1970) implies, is what gives servant leaders the intuition to “feel out” decisions: “Servant-leaders are functionally superior because they are closer to the ground—they hear things, see things, know things, and their intuitive insight is exceptional.”

While Greenleaf (1970) introduced the idea of servant leadership, Spears (1996) illuminated it by breaking it into ten characteristics:

1. Listening – Listening to followers and to one’s “inner voice,” while also taking time for personal reflection, allows awareness.
2. Empathy – Accepting people for who they are, creating a sense of belonging.
3. Healing – In this definition, making people feel whole. Often accomplished by providing a sense of meaning and direction.
4. Awareness – The ability view situations more holistically, incorporating multiple stakeholders’ views.
5. Persuasion – Motivating people without the use of fear or threats.
6. Conceptualization – Being able to separate from the day-to-day tasks to look forward with a vision.

7. Foresight – Looking ahead and sensing outcomes before they happen (intuition).

8. Stewardship – “Holding something in trust for another,” ensuring to serve other’s needs.

9. Commitment to the Growth of People – The concept of engaging followers in the decision-making process

10. Building Community – A servant leader senses the disconnect of large centralized organizations and responds by seeking to create a more cohesive community.

One of the key reasons why servant leadership has regained popularity in recent years is the claims that it creates an ethical, trusting environment—all positive organizational characteristics. However, many of these have not been proven. Errol and Winston (2005) sought to test these hypotheses. The study showed that there is a positive correlation between employee perceptions of organizational servant leadership and leader trust and a similar relationship between employee perceptions of organizational servant leadership and organizational trust.

Reed, Vidaver-Cohen, and Colwell (2011) paint the picture of a business environment that is littered with ethical scandals. In response to this, they examine ethical leadership as a leadership trend. However, they criticize the current literature as being guidelines for ethical leadership, rather than providing a predictive or
The authors identify Greenleaf’s (1970) model of servant leadership as a framework that practically addresses the “emotional, relational, and moral dimensions of leadership.” The authors posit that a model should first be built to study the top management team, as they are the ones who set the ethical climate of an organization.

One of the biggest reasons to promote ethical leadership is because it is considered the highest influencer of code compliance (Reed et al, 2011). When management teams model ethical behaviors, it is a higher predictor of employee compliance than having a well-established code of conduct. It even outweighed financial rewards in terms of how influential it was. Ethical leadership can create many types of ethical climates. In each, organizational commitment is strengthened, which is another benefit to pursuing ethical leadership.

Reed et al. (2011) contrast ethical leadership with transformational leadership, authentic leadership, and spiritual leadership. The biggest difference with transformational leadership is that transformational leaders aren’t necessarily ethical. Additionally, the emphasis is not on the ethical climate or moral standards, but rather on the ultimate vision and values they wish to achieve. Authentic leaders differ from ethical leaders, as well. Authentic leaders focus on self-awareness, while ethical leaders shift their focus towards others. Spiritual leaders, although similar to ethical leaders, differ in their focus on vision, hope and faith.
The servant leadership framework is believed by the authors to be the purest form of ethical leadership currently available (Clegg, Kornberger, & Rhodes, 2007). Particularly of interest is the emphasis on creating more servant leaders. Reed et al. (2011) describes this concept as a “form of high quality transaction wherein modal values are exchanged through constant modeling and dialog in an attempt to actualize the needs of both parties, as well as meet or exceed organizational goals.” Through serving others and “demonstrating moral courage and integrity… servant leaders not only display the highest level of moral development, but also inspire followers to emulate their actions.” Through this, the authors argue, servant leaders can create the kind of servant institutions that Greenleaf described. Using survey methods, Reed et al. (2011) identified five factors that create the construct of a servant leader, through their survey of top managers: interpersonal support, building community, altruism, egalitarianism, and moral integrity.

Reed’s analysis of the moral element of servant leadership is in line with Graham’s (1991) study. Graham (1991) offers servant leadership as an alternative to charismatic leadership. Graham (1991) argues that charismatic leadership is dangerous because the intensified motivation that charismatic leaders inspire in their followers can cause followers to ignore their own moral determinations. Additionally, charismatic leadership offers no moral safeguards, which, when used by the wrong leader, can lead to catastrophic events. Graham (1991) focused on providing an alternative leadership model that is both inspirational and moral, and suggests that servant leadership is the answer.
Servant leadership is also characterized by the leader being a steward of the organization and followers (Reinke, 2004). Not only does the leader consider him/herself as a steward of the organization and followers, but Reinke (2004) argues that the leader also feels beholden to the community that the organization serves. This stems from a servant leader's sense of ethics and virtue, which resembles a natural moral development, rather than conformation to established rules. However, a servant leader is called to people first, as Greenleaf argues that a leader’s true test is whether followers have grown as people, in terms of freedom, wisdom, health, etc. (Greenleaf, 1970). This means that organizational goals that the servant leader advocates for are shared goals between leader and follower (Reinke, 2004). Servant leaders must then convince followers through service that the organizational goals are in the interest of all, resulting in an environment where servant leaders are perceived as being more dedicated to followers than organizations (Parolini, Patterson, & Winston, 2009).

Servant leaders are characterized by serving being their primary motivation, rather than leading (Greenleaf, 1970). Servant leaders are judged based on the growth of their followers, particularly in their personal aspirations (Greenleaf, 1970). Vision is of a primary concern for a servant leader, for it guides their service towards others (Greenleaf, 1970). Servant leaders must also take the initiative, else they face the risk of stagnating (Greenleaf, 1970). Having constant contact with followers is important as well, as it allows a servant leader to be aware of the needs of his/her followers (Greenleaf, 1970). Servant leaders also make creating and sustaining a community a priority (Spears, 1996). Often times, this means creating other servant leaders to
carry on the cause (Reed et al., 2011). Ultimately, servant leadership does result in a more trusting follower base, which leads to a more motivated, positive workforce (Errol & Winston, 2005).

**Christian Leadership**

Christian leadership is not exclusive to church leaders. Christians and non-Christians alike can learn from a Biblical leadership model. With its parallels to contemporary leadership models, Christian leadership unmistakably aims to answer the same questions as traditional leadership theories. The Bible was used as a guide for the early church, which documented one of the most meteoric rises of any belief system or organization in history. The Bible has been used to draw insights for leadership for centuries; thus, creating a model based on the Bible is reasonable.

Darmanin (2010) suggests that leadership in organizations and in the Christian faith share many of the same tenets. Both secular leadership and the Christian faith are based on the experiential and the doctrinal; are dynamic, rather than static; stress importance of a shared vision; promote organizational values and an organizational culture; use servant leadership; empower others, and utilize relationships and communication. Christian leadership is not just intended for church leaders; business, political, and non-profit leaders can learn and draw insights from Christian leadership (Wagner, 2012).

Christian leadership uses the Pastoral Epistles as a large source of knowledge. The Pastoral Epistles are 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus. A widely accepted theory
posits that the lists of vices and virtues described in these books closely resemble the
duty codes of particular occupations from Hellenistic culture (Goodrich, 2013). These
lists, which were typical of the period in which the Pastoral Epistles were written, are
qualifications for people worthy of a specific occupation. The stylistic and thematic
correspondences between the lists in the Epistles and the Hellenistic duty code lists,
particularly the duty code of an overseer, suggest that the Christian lists were based on
the culture at the time (Goodrich, 2013). Goodrich (2013) suggests that the Pastoral
Epistles used a combination of roles from Hellenistic culture, both an overseer and a
household steward. The author concludes that this role was the perfect fit for the early
church, as the moral and demographic qualifications of the household steward and
overseer fit the needs of a church leader, and it fit thematically with the familial and
domestic metaphors of other scriptures. This role described in the Pastoral Epistles
draws parallels to contemporary servant leadership (Tidball, 2012).

Literature Gap

The literature of ethical, servant, and spiritual leadership all point towards a
need for a leader that puts followers first, fulfills follower needs for acceptance and
purpose, and works within ethical boundaries. Establishing stricter laws has not
solved the ethical crisis in the American business place (Reinke, 2004). Instead, a
leader who is personally driven by a strong code of ethics is needed to start a
grassroots ethical movement (De Hoogh Den Hartog, 2008). Ethical leadership
stresses the importance of a leader’s personal and workplace values (McCuddy &
Cavin, 2008). Ethical leadership, however, does not stress much of an emphasis on
follower growth, which is the component of servant leadership that creates organizational benefits. Spiritual leadership provides a solution to this gap, by focusing on followers’ spiritual survival. (Fry, 2003). These benefits include organizational commitment, less employee absenteeism and turnover, productivity increases, and an increase in employee satisfaction overall.

Nevertheless, the impetus to inspire a leader to illustrate these traits is against typical human nature. Naturally occurring selflessness and altruism is an anomaly in a world driven by self-interest. Thus, servant leadership’s crux of a leader wishing first to serve then to lead is an enigma. This internal motivation to serve others first that is at the core of servant leadership appears to lie outside Greenleaf’s (1970) model (and future occurring models). This paper will illustrate that Christian leadership, which closely resembles servant leadership, is one explanation for this motivation to serve others. Additionally, in a world that is increasingly accepting of workplace spirituality, the need for a Christian servant leadership model that is aligned with contemporary servant leadership research is apparent (Mitroff & Denton, 1999).

**Methods**

This paper focuses dually on the motivation for the selfless behavior of a Christian leader, as well as to show the similarities between servant leadership and the leadership described in the Pastoral Epistles. The first half of the analysis examines the Christian concept of Original Sin and New Creation through a survey of the Bible. Through these two concepts, the paper establishes a framework that illustrates how
some servant leaders become the selfless people that wish to serve others, as noted in Greenleaf’s (1970) model.

Next, using Reed et al. (2011) as a guide, this paper utilizes the Executive Servant Leadership scale as a way of comparing the leadership principles taught and exhibited by the apostle Paul in the Pastoral Epistles to servant leadership. The scale has undergone a number of stringent academic tests, including construct definition via jury, exploratory factor analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis. The scale is composed of five factors. The purpose of using the existing Executive Servant Leadership scale is to provide a consistent conceptual framework to build the existing literature. Additionally, although the scale is particular to Executive Servant Leaders, Reed et al. (2011) elaborate to say it is a scale to study “servant leadership practices in the upper echelons,” making it applicable to Paul, inarguably one of the leaders of the early Christian movement. Specifically, this paper will use the scale to evaluate the Pastoral Epistles, which are comprised of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus. The Pastoral Epistles are known for their lists of leadership requirements for aspiring church leaders, and are particularly noted by scholars for their insight into the early development of the institutional church (Goodrich, 2013). As such, the Pastoral Epistles serve as the best direct look into Biblical leadership in the 1st and 2nd centuries.

Using the Executive Servant Leadership scale, the paper provides an exegetical categorization of verses in the Pastoral Epistles that relate to leadership. Through review of the servant leadership literature, in addition to the explanation of the factors
in the Executive Servant Leadership scale, I place verses containing characteristics of servant leadership into the various categories by identifying key words and phrases related to the concepts that the scale elaborates on.

**Christian Model of Servanthood Aspirations**

Paul describes the Christian doctrine of Original Sin in Roman 5: “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12). According to Paul, sin entered human nature through the fall of man, when Adam sinned in Genesis. Because of this, all of mankind has been afflicted: “They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity” (Romans 1:29).

Throughout the Bible, sin and selfishness have been seen to go hand-in-hand (Psalm 119:36; Proverbs 18:1; Romans 2:8; Philippians 1:17; James 3:16). However, throughout Paul’s epistles, the purpose of Paul’s writing is to encourage new Christians and teach them what it means to be a Christian: “But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:21–24). Christians believe that by believing that Jesus came to save them from their sins they are given a carte blanche. Christians also believe that, through Christ, they are given a new nature, a new life:
“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life… In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace” (Romans 6:1-4, 11-14).

Christians who have been reborn into this new life, while still imperfect, have new internal motivations. And, at the heart of these new motivations is a desire to serve others, just like Christ did: “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:3-4); “Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. For even Christ did not please himself” (Romans 15 2-3).

These motivations to serve others are ultimately inspired by the hope that Christians have in Christ: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope” (Romans...
It is through this hope that Christian leaders are distinguished from the prototypical ethical, spiritual, or even servant leader. Because of the hope that Christians have, they should be inspired to lead differently, in a way that sees to the interests of followers, builds community, and is committed to God’s will (a shared vision).

All five factors in the Executive Servant Leadership scale were depicted in the Pastoral Epistles, either stated through Paul’s advice to aspiring church leaders or reflected in Paul’s personal example. In total, 67 instances of Executive Servant Leadership occurred within the brief content of the Pastoral Epistles.

**Discussion**

**Interpersonal Support**

The key elements that make up interpersonal support are an awareness of follower morale and an emphasis on building new leaders. The first apparent instance of building new leaders is in 1 Timothy, with Paul building Timothy, his apprentice, up to leading, as seen in 1 Timothy 1:18-19: “Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by recalling them you may fight the battle well, holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith.”

Paul also illustrates a desire to enable other followers. He commands Titus to remain steadfast to the message that he has been taught, in order to equip others: “He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can
encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it” (Titus 1:9). His passion for the church and for all people, coupled with his awareness of the affairs of the church, even in his absence, provide evidence of his commitment to interpersonal support.

Building Community

Paul’s message in the Pastoral Epistles resonates strongly with building community, especially in relation to the Executive Servant Leadership scale. Building community in the Reed et al. (2011) definition involves promoting a shared vision and community cohesiveness. Paul immediately addresses the issue of community conflicts, things that create schisms in communities: “Command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer… Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God’s work -- which is by faith” (1 Timothy 1:3-4).

Paul also is very clear about maintaining a shared vision: “They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience” (1 Timothy 3:9); “If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain” (1 Timothy 6:3-5); “What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 1:13-14).
By insisting that sound teaching and doctrine be taught universally, Paul is creating a culture of followers that builds the community up, just like a servant leader would.

**Altruism**

The Executive Servant Leadership scale’s concept of altruism revolves around selflessness and a willingness to accept personal sacrifice in order to benefit others. Paul models this behavior well in his letters by undergoing tremendous personal suffering for the sake of others: “You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them” (2 Timothy 3:10-11).

Paul urges Christians to love one another, not with ulterior motives, but with genuine selflessness: “The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Timothy 1:5); “Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share” (1 Timothy 6:18). Paul even passionately pleads for prayers for the very governments and kings that are conspiring against the Christian movement: “I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness” (1 Timothy 2:1-2).
Egalitarianism

Christian egalitarianism appears to be similar to egalitarianism in the sense that the Executive Servant Leadership scale intends. At the heart of the concept is open dialogue, room for feedback, and inspired trust amongst followers. Paul himself was the recipient of Christian equality: “Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 1:13-14). Even though Paul persecuted Christians before his conversion, he was able to become one of the most recognized apostles in the New Testament. Paul goes on to say that Christ’s patience with him is an example for followers to adopt (1 Timothy 1:16). Paul reinforces this idea that all are equal in the Christian movement by arguing that “We brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it” (1 Timothy 6:7). Thus, regardless of wealth, status, etc., all are made equal in the eyes of God.

While the idea of dialogue and feedback are less directly stated, there are intimations that these ideas were fresh in the minds of the Christian movement. With all of the talk about quarrels and arguments, it is clear that discussion was encouraged, but only in civil manners. Also, Paul teaches Timothy not to be resentful when dealing with opponents, which builds on the idea that civil discussion was a key component of the Christian movement (2 Timothy 2:24).
Moral Integrity

Moral integrity is a fundamental aspect of living the Christian lifestyle. In terms of the Executive Servant Leadership scale, moral integrity means refusing deceit, modeling expected behavior, demonstrating honesty, and admitting mistakes. Paul is straightforward when asking for leaders to model expected behavior: “He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?)” (1 Timothy 3:4-5). But not only does Paul demand this of his fellow leaders, he demands it of himself as well: “You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance” (2 Timothy 3:10).

Paul commands Timothy not to show favoritism, clearly aligning with the concept of refusing deceit: “I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism” (1 Timothy 5:21).

Finally, Paul commands Titus to be honest, transparent, and worthy of being called a true Christian: “Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us” (Titus 2:6-8).
**Conclusion**

The leadership principles depicted in the Pastoral Epistles align with servant leadership theory. Although the picture of leadership painted in these epistles is not wholly synonymous with every aspect of the Executive Servant Leadership scale, these are only three of Paul’s letters. Additionally, the method was originally intended for questionnaires, and this study used it in an exegetical analysis of a text. Therefore, the whole of Paul’s ideas may not have been completely established on the matter of leadership.

By examining the Pastoral Epistles, this paper provides one example of how a servant leader is created. The hope that Christians have in a new life through their belief in Christ inspires a metamorphosis in their nature, creating a passion for serving others that is at the center of servant leadership theory. Future research should be conducted into other examples of how servant leaders develop their inherent sense of altruism that is required of the servant leadership style.

The Pastoral Epistles are a treasure trove of leadership insights for aspiring servant leaders. Although the Bible is a religious text, its insights can provide insights into successful leadership theories that are applicable in any context. Additional research could explore other books in the Bible for leadership insights or for insights into other areas, such as personal finance, organizational strategy, etc. Another venue for additional research could be to explore different models of servant leadership and
compare those to the Pastoral Epistles; for example, the list from the Spears (1996) article parallels a lot of the themes from Paul’s epistles as well.
Part II: Scholarly Article
Servant Leadership: Examining the Teachings of the Apostle Paul

Submitted to

Christian Business Faculty Association Conference

Submitted by

Austin McCarthy
Honors Tutorial College – Management Information Systems
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio 45701
AM118409@ohio.edu
513.562.7240

Advised by

Robert L. Holbrook
Management Department
College of Business
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio 45701
holbrook@ohio.edu
740-593-2077
Servant Leadership: Examining the Teachings of the Apostle Paul

Ethical lapses of major corporations, such as Enron and AIG, have taken their toll on stakeholders. As a result, governments, educational institutions, and corporations are emphasizing the importance of ethical leadership. Leadership theory has responded with a focus on ethics in the past decade (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Yidong and Xinjin, 2013). Several studies have linked the behavior of employees to that of leaders, which reinforces the call for ethical leadership (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Awasthi, 2008; Watson, Berkley, & Papamarcos, 2009).

While traditional measures of success -- profit, revenues, efficiency -- are still important, stakeholders today are calling for more from leaders, particularly in terms of the relational aspects of leadership (Bolden & Gosling, 2006).

Outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviors, and employee optimism/morale are used to measure strong ethical leadership (Trevino Brown, & Hartman, 2003; Yidong & Xinxin, 2013). These outcomes are often the result of the social exchange between leaders and followers (Brown & Trevino, 2005; Yidong & Xinxin, 2013). An emphasis on leader-follower relationships, intrinsic values, predispositions and beliefs, as well as the leader’s influence on the followers, has given rise to new leadership theories, such as spiritual leadership.

Spiritual leadership is related to ethical leadership through the linkage between a leader’s values, attitudes, and behaviors to follower needs, and ultimately to organizational outcomes (Fry, 2003). It addresses the four areas of the human experience (body, mind, heart and spirit) and is the antithesis of the traditional
management paradigm, which is a fear-based, centralized, formalized model that stifles innovation and creativity (Ancona, Kochan, Scully, Van Maanen, & Westney, 1999; Moxley, 2000). In contrast, spiritual leadership creates organizations that are open to change, conducive to thinking “outside the box,” and stimulates members to grow their capacity to learn and achieve desired results (Senge, 1990; Fry, 2003).

Servant leadership, which combines aspects of both ethical and spiritual leadership, is favored for its balanced approach to leadership (Whetstone, 2001). This approach couples leadership and servanthood. Servant leadership is portrayed by Greenleaf (1970) in the seminal work, “The Servant as a Leader,” as the tension between a primary desire to serve underscored by the authority to lead. The necessity of the followers to trust the leader is central to the concept of servant leadership. This theme of the dynamic relationship and trust between leaders and followers, evident also in spiritual and ethical leadership, is a resonating theme that satisfies a clear need in contemporary society.

As a subset of ethical and spiritual leadership, servant leadership fills a unique space. As the literature on servant leadership develops, several papers have been written on Biblical characters as archetypes of servant leaders (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Abramson, 2007; Tidball, 2012; Holbrook, Holt, & McCarthy, 2013). This shows that the Bible can be an important source to inform servant leadership. St. Paul of Tarsus, author of the majority of the books in the New Testament, wrote several letters to churches and his disciples on the topic of leadership. Because servant leadership is still being developed (Trevino et al., 2003), this paper will seek to add
concreteness to the definition by validating the characteristics identified by Greenleaf (1970) and others (Spears, 1996; Reed, Vidaver-Cohen, & Colwell, 2011) through the lens of the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus). This paper will explore those books and will seek to catalog the characteristics of leadership identified therein based on the assumption that the leadership style which Paul describes aligns with servant leadership. Additionally, the paper will offer an explanation for what might motivate a leader to be a servant.

**Literature Review**

**Ethical Leadership**

Ethical leadership is defined as “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making” (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005). Alternatively, De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008) depict ethical leadership as “the tension between altruism and egoism.” This is identified by three distinct characteristics: a display of moral and ethical behavior, transparency, and power sharing (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). What this means is that an ethical leader must engage in behaviors that benefit others without direct intent to benefit personally and, simultaneously, must abstain from behaviors that negatively affect others (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Overall, ethical leadership breaks the world into two types of leaders: ethical leaders and despotic leaders, with despotic leaders behaving antithetically to most behaviors associated with ethical leaders (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Ethical leaders seek
to encourage moral activity (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Despotic leaders are self-interested and power hungry.

In Craft’s (2013) review of ethical leadership literature, religiosity was not a consistent influencer of ethical decision making. On the other hand, Fernando and Chowdhury (2010) reported a relationship between spiritual well-being and idealism, a philosophy that is connected to more ethical decision making. Ethical leaders don’t just simulate moral behavior in their professional lives, but live morally throughout their personal lives as well (Trevino et al., 2003), which suggests that there may be a spiritual dimension that guides this type of behavior.

**Spiritual Leadership**

Spirituality is on the rise in corporate America, with a number of firms exploring what it looks like to promote spirituality in a workplace environment (Mitroff & Denton, 1999). Workplace spirituality is defined as: “A framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees’ experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected in a way that provides feelings of compassion and joy” (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) found that workplace spirituality programs lead to many beneficial personal outcomes for employees, such as increased job satisfaction, peace, and commitment, but also for organizations, with improved productivity and less absenteeism/turnover.

Spiritual leadership stems from four dimensions that define the human experience: body, mind, heart, and spirit (Moxley, 2000). Fry (2003) argues that while
many of the current leadership theories focus on body, mind, and heart, they often forget the spiritual component of the human experience. Thus, spiritual leadership transcends other leadership models. Fry (2003) makes it clear that spirituality and religion are separate concepts: “Spirituality (e.g., prayer, yoga, meditation) is the source for one’s search for spiritual survival -- for meaning in life and a sense of interconnectedness with other beings.” Religion, on the other hand, relates to the specific dogmas, traditions, and teachings of a particular group and belief system.

There are two essential facets of spiritual survival: calling and membership (Fry, 2003). Calling is the embodiment of the belief of individuals that their work is purpose-fulfilling. People who feel called to a certain profession seek to find satisfaction and fulfillment through their work, often by making an impact on society as a whole (Pfeffer, 2003). Membership is a commonly studied social phenomenon, which in the workplace context focuses on social groups and relationship with coworkers.

Pfeffer (2003) offers four essential aspects of what people seek in workplace spirituality: “(1) interesting and meaningful work that permits them to learn, develop, and have a sense of competence and mastery, (2) meaningful work that provides some feeling of purpose, (3) a sense of connection and positive social relations with their coworkers, and (4) the ability to live an integrated life, so that one’s work role and other roles are in harmony with his or her essential nature and who the person is as a human being.” Spirituality in the workplace is becoming socially acceptable, and in some instances, desirable (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Workplaces with
spirituality programs have shown improvements in employee satisfaction and
optimism, as well as reductions in absenteeism and turnover (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz,
2003).

**Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership exhibits elements consistent with both ethical and spiritual
leadership. Servant leadership’s emphasis on building the community and followers,
as well as the betterment of society on the whole, aligns with ethical leadership.
Servant leadership also follows many of the same tenets as spiritual leadership,
through its inspiration of hope, as well as its fulfilling nature. This section will review
the literature on servant leadership, keeping in mind its relationship to both ethical
leadership and spiritual leadership.

The seminal work on servant leadership is “The Servant as a Leader” by
Robert Greenleaf (1970). Greenleaf recounts a story in “Journey to the East” (Hesse,
1957) of a leader who acts as a servant to a traveling group. From this story, Greenleaf
derives his concept of the servant leader. Greenleaf (1970) argues that the most
essential part of being a servant leader is the aspiration to serve first. Servant leaders
wish foremost to serve with the occupation of leading acting as a byproduct of their
desire to serve others. By being constantly in contact with followers, a servant leader
is made aware. This awareness is what gives servant leaders the intuition to “feel out”
decisions: “Servant-leaders are functionally superior because they are closer to the
ground -- they hear things, see things, know things, and their intuitive insight is
exceptional” (Greenleaf, 1970).
While Greenleaf introduced the idea of servant leadership, Spears (1996) illuminated it by breaking it into ten characteristics:

- **Listening** – Listening to followers and to one’s “inner voice,” while also taking time for personal reflection, allows awareness.
- **Empathy** – Accepting people for who they are, creating a sense of belonging.
- **Healing** – In this definition, making people feel whole. Often accomplished by providing a sense of meaning and direction.
- **Awareness** – The ability view situations more holistically, incorporating multiple stakeholders’ views.
- **Persuasion** – Motivating people without the use of fear or threats.
- **Conceptualization** – Being able to separate from the day-to-day tasks to look forward with a vision.
- **Foresight** – Looking ahead and sensing outcomes before they happen; read here, intuition.
- **Stewardship** – “Holding something in trust for another.” Ensuring to serve other’s needs.
- **Commitment to the Growth of People** – The concept of engaging followers in the decision-making process
- **Building Community** – A servant leader senses the disconnect of large centralized organizations, and responds by seeking to create a more cohesive community.
As indicated in the opening paragraph of this paper, the current business environment is littered with ethical scandals. In response to this, Reed et al. (2011) identify servant leadership as a framework that practically addresses the “emotional, relational, and moral dimensions of leadership.” The servant leadership framework is believed to be the purest form of ethical leadership currently available (Clegg, Kornberger, & Rhodes, 2007). Reed et al. (2011) contend that servant leadership should serve as the basis for model building. Using survey methods, they identified five factors that create the construct of a servant leader: interpersonal support, building community, altruism, egalitarianism, and moral integrity (Reed et al., 2011).

**Christian Leadership**

Darmanin (2010) suggests that leadership in organizations and in the Christian faith share many of the same tenets. Both secular leadership and the Christian faith are based on the experiential and the doctrinal; are dynamic, rather than static; stress importance of a shared vision; promote organizational values and an organizational culture; use servant leadership; empower others, and utilize relationships and communication.

The Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus) are a primary source of knowledge for Christian leaders. The vices and virtues described in these books closely resemble the duty codes of particular occupations from Hellenistic culture (Goodrich, 2013). The virtues listed in the Epistles are stylistically and thematically consistent with Hellenistic duty code lists, particularly the duty code of an overseer, and reflect the culture at the time (Goodrich, 2013). The role of church leader
described in the Pastoral Epistles parallels contemporary servant leadership (Tidball, 2012).

Christian leadership is not just intended for church leaders; business, political, and non-profit leaders can learn and draw insights from it (Wagner, 2012). Christians and non-Christians alike can benefit from studying a Biblical leadership model. Christian leadership aims to answer the same questions as traditional leadership theories. The Bible was used as a guide for the early church and, as such, was the basis for one of the most meteoric rises of any organization (the Christian church) in history.

**Connecting the Leadership Dots**

The literature of ethical, spiritual, and servant leadership all point towards a need for a leader that puts followers first, fulfills follower needs for acceptance and purpose, and works within ethical boundaries. Establishing stricter laws has not solved the ethical crisis in the American business place (Reinke, 2004). What is needed instead is a leader who is personally driven by a strong code of ethics to start a grassroots ethical movement (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Ethical leadership stresses the importance of a leader’s personal and workplace values (McCuddy, 2008). Ethical leadership, however, does not place an emphasis on follower growth, which is the component of servant leadership that creates organizational benefits. Similarly, spiritual leadership focuses on followers’ spiritual survival (Fry, 2003). However, neither of these explanations effectively addresses the issue as to why a leader would be willing to put interests of others first.
Selfless leadership goes against human nature. Naturally-occurring selflessness and altruism is an anomaly in a world driven by self-interest. The internal motivation to serve others first, which is at the core of servant leadership, is not adequately explained by Greenleaf’s (1970) or other models. After examining servant leadership within the context of the Pastoral Epistles, this paper will offer an explanation for this motivation to serve others. In a world that is increasingly accepting of workplace spirituality, the need for a Christian-based model of servant leadership is apparent (Mitroff & Denton, 1999).

**Method**

The goal of this paper is to show the similarities between servant leadership and Christian leadership as described in the Pastoral Epistles. The Pastoral Epistles are known for their lists of leadership requirements for aspiring church leaders, and are particularly noted by scholars for their insight into the early development of the institutional church (Goodrich, 2013). Reed et al. (2011) developed an Executive Servant Leadership scale as a way of comparing the leadership principles. The scale has undergone a number of rigorous tests, including construct definition via jury, exploratory factor analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis. The scale is composed of five factors: interpersonal support, building community, altruism, egalitarianism, and moral integrity (see Figure A). Reed et al. (2011) contend the scale is a way to study “servant leadership practices in the upper echelons,” making it appropriate for examining Paul’s writings to leaders of the early Christian movement. Using the scale, each verse in the Pastoral Epistles was examined for key words and phrases relating to
the five factors of the Executive Servant Leadership scale, thus resulting in an exegetical categorization of verses that relate to servant leadership.

**Results**

All five factors in the Executive Servant Leadership scale (Reed et al., 2011) were depicted in the Pastoral Epistles, either stated through Paul’s advice to aspiring church leaders or reflected in Paul’s personal example (see Figure B). In total, 67 instances of Executive Servant Leadership occurred within the brief content of the Pastoral Epistles.

**Interpersonal Support**

Interpersonal support focuses on morale, enabling, respect and dignity, and edification. Eleven verses were identified as consistent with these themes. For example, Paul opens his first letter to Timothy by building him up in preparation for leadership. In 1 Timothy 1:18-19 (NIV), Paul states, “Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by recalling them you may fight the battle well, holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith.”

Paul also illustrates a desire to enable other followers. In Titus 1:9 (NIV), he commands Titus to remain steadfast to the message that he has been taught, “He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.” Paul’s passion for the
church and for all people, coupled with his awareness of the affairs of the church, even in his absence, provide evidence of his commitment to interpersonal support.

**Building Community**

Paul’s message resonates strongly with building community, which includes shared vision, cooperation, improvement, and awareness of the effects decisions have on others. Paul addresses the issue of conflicts, things that create schisms in communities: “Command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer… Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God’s work—which is by faith” (1 Timothy 1:3-4, NIV).

Paul also is very clear about maintaining a shared vision: “They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience” (1 Timothy 3:9, NIV). “What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 1:13-14, NIV). By insisting that sound teaching and doctrine be taught universally, Paul is creating a culture of followers that builds the community up, just like a servant leader would.

**Altruism**

Altruism revolves around sacrifice, selflessness, and putting others first. Paul models this behavior well in his letters when he talks about suffering for the sake of others: “You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings -- what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them” (2 Timothy 3:10-11, NIV).
Paul urges Christians to love one another, not with ulterior motives, but with genuine selflessness: “The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Timothy 1:5, NIV). Likewise, “Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share” (1 Timothy 6:18, NIV). Paul even passionately pleads for prayers for the very governments and kings that were conspiring against the Christian movement: “I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people -- for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness” (1 Timothy 2:1-2, NIV).

**Egalitarianism**

The Christian model of egalitarianism is similar to that in Executive Servant Leadership. At the heart of this factor are open dialogue, feedback, and trust among followers. Paul indicates that even he was the recipient of such behavior: “Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 1:13-14, NIV). Paul goes on to say that Christ’s patience with him is an example for followers to adopt (1 Timothy 1:16, NIV) and reinforces the idea that all are equal in the Christian movement by arguing that “We brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it” (1 Timothy 6:7, NIV). Thus, regardless of wealth, status, etc., all are made equal in the eyes of God.
While the idea of dialogue and feedback are less directly stated, there are intimations that these ideas were fresh in the minds of the Christian movement. With all of the talk about quarrels and arguments, it is clear that discussion was encouraged, but only in civil manners. Also, Paul teaches Timothy not to be resentful when dealing with opponents, which builds on the idea that civil discussion was a key component of the Christian movement (2 Timothy 2:24, NIV).

**Moral Integrity**

Finally, moral integrity is a fundamental aspect of living the Christian lifestyle. Moral integrity means abstaining from deceit and manipulative behavior while modeling appropriate behavior, admitting mistakes, being transparent, and demonstrating honesty. Paul is straightforward when telling leaders to model expected behavior: “He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?)” (1 Timothy 3:4-5, NIV). While Paul demands this of leaders, he also models it himself: “You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance” (2 Timothy 3:10, NIV).

Paul commands Timothy not to show favoritism, clearly aligning with the concept of refusing deceit: “I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism” (1 Timothy 5:21, NIV).
Finally, Paul commands Titus to be honest, transparent, and worthy of being called a true Christian: “Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us” (Titus 2:6-8, NIV).

**Discussion**

The leadership principles depicted in the Executive Servant Leadership scale (Reed et al., 2011) align nicely with the Pastoral Epistles. As shown (see Figure C), the most prominent factors in Paul's writings are Moral Integrity and Building Community. The servant leader must first exhibit the right character and then seek to use that by serving and uniting others. Secondary factors include Interpersonal Support, Altruism, and Egalitarianism. Once a leader unites the group, s/he must focus on their needs, putting personal needs aside, and encouraging the participation of everyone for the good of the whole. Even as alignment has been shown, it does not explain why it exists (and why the Christian version might be an exceptional model of servant leadership).

**The Christian Model and Servant Aspirations**

In earlier writings, Paul describes the Christian doctrine of Original Sin: “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12, NIV). Because of this, all of mankind has been afflicted: “They have become filled with
every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity” (Romans 1:29, NIV). Throughout the Bible, sin and selfishness have been seen to go hand-in-hand (Psalm 119:36; Proverbs 18:1; Romans 2:8; Philippians 1:17; James 3:16). Such behavior is antithetical to servant leadership.

The purpose of Paul’s writing is both to encourage new Christians – who are justified freely by God’s grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24, NIV) -- and teach them what it means to be a Christian – “count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace” (Romans 6:11-14, NIV).

Christians that have been reborn into this new life, while still imperfect, have new internal motivations. At the heart of these new motivations is a desire to serve others, just like Christ did: “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:3-4, NIV); “Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. For even Christ did not please himself” (Romans 15 2-3, NIV).

These motivations to serve others are ultimately inspired by the hope that Christians have in Christ: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in
believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope” (Romans 15:13, NIV). It is through this hope that Christian leaders are distinguished from the prototypical ethical, spiritual, or even servant leader. Because of the hope that Christians have, they should be inspired to lead differently, in a way that seeks to satisfy the interests of followers, builds community, and is committed to God’s will (a shared vision).

**Conclusion**

By examining the Pastoral Epistles, this paper was able to reinforce one example of how a servant leader is created. The hope that Christians have in a new life through their belief in Christ inspires a metamorphosis in their nature, creating a passion for serving others that is central to servant leadership theory. Future research should be conducted into other examples of how servant leaders develop the inherent sense of altruism that is required of the servant leadership style. Research could explore leadership examples in other books of the Bible to see if these are consistent with servant leadership principles. The Pastoral Epistles could also be analyzed using different models of servant leadership (e.g., Spears, 1996).

The Pastoral Epistles are a treasure trove of leadership insights for aspiring servant leaders. Although the Bible is a religious text, its message can provide insights into successful leadership theories that are applicable in any context.
References


De Hoogh, A.H.B., Den Hartog, D.N. (2008). Ethical and despotic leadership, relationships with leader's social responsibility, top management team


**Figure A**

Executive Servant Leadership Factors (Reed, Vidaver-Cohen, & Caldwell, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Interpersonal Support   | • Awareness of follower morale  
                          | • Enabler of followers  
                          | • Commands respect and dignity of followers  
                          | • Builds other leaders |
| Building Community      | • Is aware of effects of decisions on community  
                          | • Encourages cooperation  
                          | • Brings followers under unified vision  
                          | • Improves the community |
| Altruism                | • Sacrifices personal benefit  
                          | • Serves without expectation of reward  
                          | • Others’ interest over self |
| Egalitarianism          | • Encourages dialogue  
                          | • Invites feedback from all  
                          | • Inspires trust |
| Moral Integrity         | • Refuses deceit and manipulation  
                          | • Admits mistakes  
                          | • Transparency and honesty in movement  
                          | • Models expected behavior |
**Figure B**

Verses Representing Executive Servant Leadership Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Support</th>
<th>Building Community</th>
<th>Altruism</th>
<th>Egalitarianism</th>
<th>Moral Integrity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Timothy 1:7</td>
<td>1 Timothy 1:4</td>
<td>1 Timothy 1:5</td>
<td>1 Timothy 1:3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Timothy 1:18-19</td>
<td>1 Timothy 2:8-10</td>
<td>1 Timothy 2:1-2</td>
<td>1 Timothy 1:13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Timothy 3:6</td>
<td>1 Timothy 3:9</td>
<td>1 Timothy 4:16</td>
<td>1 Timothy 1:14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Timothy 3:10</td>
<td>1 Timothy 3:10</td>
<td>1 Timothy 5:3</td>
<td>1 Timothy 1:15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Timothy 3:14-15</td>
<td>1 Timothy 3:13</td>
<td>1 Timothy 5:8</td>
<td>1 Timothy 1:15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Timothy 1:3-4</td>
<td>1 Timothy 4:6</td>
<td>1 Timothy 6:18</td>
<td>1 Timothy 1:15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Timothy 2:23</td>
<td>1 Timothy 4:11</td>
<td>2 Timothy 1:12</td>
<td>1 Timothy 2:3-4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Timothy 3:14</td>
<td>1 Timothy 6:2</td>
<td>2 Timothy 1:12</td>
<td>1 Timothy 4:10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titus 1:9</td>
<td>1 Timothy 6:3-5</td>
<td>2 Timothy 2:24</td>
<td>1 Timothy 6:6-10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titus 3:9</td>
<td>2 Timothy 1:13-14</td>
<td>2 Timothy 3:12</td>
<td>2 Timothy 2:11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Timothy 2:2</td>
<td>Titus 3:1-2</td>
<td>Titus 2:24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Timothy 2:14</td>
<td>Titus 3:8</td>
<td>Titus 2:11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Timothy 2:19</td>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 3:5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 1:13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 2:1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 2:15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Timothy 1:7-11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Timothy 2:7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Timothy 3:3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Timothy 3:4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Timothy 3:11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Timothy 4:7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Timothy 5:21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Timothy 6:11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Timothy 1:7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Timothy 3:3-4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Timothy 2:22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Timothy 3:10-11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 1:6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 1:7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 1:8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 2:2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 2:3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 2:4-5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Titus 2:6-8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure C
Prominence of Executive Servant Leadership Factors

Servant Leadership Factors in the Pastoral Epistles

- Sum of Moral Integrity: 19
- Sum of Building Community: 16
- Sum of Interpersonal Support: 11
- Sum of Altruism: 11
- Sum of Egalitarianism: 10
Part III: Bibliography
Bibliography


_The Leadership Quarterly_, 2, 105–119.


