

THIS IS CHURCH
Part Two: We Are Upside-Down Leaders
Pastor Rick Henderson January 14-15, 2023

SERIES THESIS: There is no **BACK-UP** plan.

EPHESIANS 4:11-13 *So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **to equip his people for works of service**, so that the body of Christ may be **built up** until we all reach **unity** in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become **mature**, attaining to the **whole measure** of the fullness of Christ.*

Leadership is a **DESTINATION** of discipleship.

EPHESIANS 4:14-16 *Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, **grows and builds** itself up in **love**, as each part does its **work**.*

THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS:

- Acts 19: Account of the start and early years of the church
- Ephesians: Ongoing teaching for the church
- 1 & 2 Timothy: Encouragement to their pastor and teaching for the church
- Revelation 2: Message to the next generation of the church

REVELATION 2:2-5a *I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: **You have forsaken the love you had at first**. Consider how far you have fallen! **Repent and do** the things you did at first.*

REALITY CHECK: A church can love **IMPORTANT** things while not loving the **MOST IMPORTANT** thing.

The Ephesian converts had known such a love in their early years; but their struggle with false teachers and their hatred of heretical teaching had apparently engendered hard feelings and harsh attitudes toward one another to such an extent that it amounted to a forsaking of the supreme Christian virtue of love. —George Eldon Ladd

FORSAKEN LOVE:

- It's possible to grow in love for theology while losing love for God.
- It's possible to grow in love for the Bible while losing love for Jesus.
- It's possible to grow in love for truth while losing love for the one who is Truth.
- It's possible to grow in love for the traditions, culture, and practices of church while losing love for the head of the church.
- It's possible to grow in love for theology while losing love for people.

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Maturity isn't measured by how much we **KNOW**, but by how well we **LOVE**.

HEAD OVER THE CHURCH: Jesus is the **SOURCE** of our new life, new status, love, unity, and purpose.

EPHESIANS 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

SUBMISSION:

- I defer to your leadership.
- I defer to your wisdom.
- I defer to your perspective.
- I defer to your experience.
- I defer to your needs.
- I defer to your wants.
- I defer to your strength.
- I defer to your weakness.
- I defer to your pace.
- I defer to your culture.

BOTTOM LINE: There is no **DOWNSIDE** to being an upside-down **LEADER**.

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11 *In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*