Friends,

In recent weeks I have been spending considerable time reading and thinking about leadership. What I have discovered is that a lot of what we consider to be *leadership* in the church is in all actuality *management*. What is the difference? **Management** functions have to do with planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling and problem solving. **Leadership** on the other hand involves activities such as: establishing direction, aligning people around that direction, motivating and inspiring.

The survival concerns I hear frequently in the church and in other organizations are management functions. Vision and mission questions and concerns are leadership functions.

According to John Kotter, Harvard Business School Professor and author of “Leading Change” relates that management produces predictability and order, something struggling or threatened institutions crave. Leadership produces change, potentially extremely useful change to new customers (for the church customers are new believers.)

From my observation the majority of our churches spend 95% of their energy, thought and time devoted to management. We are good managers which is not a bad thing entirely. However, if we believe that Jesus was serious about our fulfilling the Great Commission*: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”* (Matthew 28. 19-20), why is it that so little time is devoted toward this leadership function? Why is it that so few resources are devoted to this leadership role? Why is it that pastors are not charged to spend a major portion of their time to leadership rather than management?

The path toward congregational vitality is, in my experience, leadership. Management will serve congregations well as long as there are ample resources (people and money). Where resources are lacking a management focus will lead to accelerating decline.

Something to ponder… jumpstarting leadership in our churches.

