Linchpin Leadership

Segment 2

Becoming a Leadership Discernment Community

Discussion Guide

**Intro: Before watching Segment 2**

Getting Started…

When you think of a great team, who do you think of?

Have you ever been part of a great team/group?

What was it?

What did it feel like?

**Watch Segment 2 of Linchpin Leadership**

In this segment, we heard from Pastor Kevin Myers, pastor of 12Stone Church in Atlanta, GA; one of the largest churches in America. Here are notes from what Pastor Kevin shared:

Pastor Kevin spoke of a “defining moment” they had as a board when together they practiced “Mutual Voluntary Submission (MVS). It’s based out of Ephesians 5:21: *Submit to one another out of reverence to Christ.”*

**Mutual** – It’s for everyone. It’s what it means to be part of a team of leaders.

**Voluntary** – Everyone demands it of themselves, its not forced. No one is demanding it of you and therefore no one is “lording it over” anyone.

**Submission to Christ**- Evidenced in the humble ability to have an opinion without having to win a personal agenda. A desire to find the mind of God instead of my way.

Every board member is recognized for the greatest contribution they bring to the board.

For the church to grow, the pastor has to hand off things he/she once led. In the same way, for the church to grow, the board has to hand off things they once led. Each year we review the role of the board and what they will no longer carry in order to give attention to more important things.

When a board can discipline their leadership and let go of things that grow with the church, they free the church up to grow. When they can’t, they create sideways energy, small thinking and help shut the church down.

Discussion Questions:

What are some board functions or agenda items the board has been giving themselves to that are keeping the board from the most important board work?

What are some ways this board might be micromanaging the staff?

Is our board using a “Consent Agenda?” Consent Agendas can significantly help to streamline governing board work. If you are unfamiliar with the concept of “Consent Agenda” here’s a working definition: “The consent agenda is a SINGLE ITEM that encompasses all the things the board would normally approve with little comment. The minutes. The financials (yes, the financials!). Program reports or CEO reports. Perfunctory items such as formal approval of a contract that has already been talked to death at past meetings.

All those items combine to become one item for approval - The Consent Agenda.” (Accessed at: <http://www.help4nonprofits.com/UseItToday/UseItToday-Consent_Agenda.htm>

At the bottom of this document is an actual copy of a Consent Agenda that allowed a board to pass 71 agenda items in less than 90 seconds! You read that correctly, 71 actual agenda items were voted on in less than 90 seconds.

**Leadership** – Discernment – Community

In this segment, Chris mentions several ways that we set the tone for leadership in the church; from where we park to the attitude we have when we walk in the doors of the church on a Sunday morning.

Discussion Questions:

In what ways are you compelled to set an example of servant leadership in the life of our church? How can you increase your servant leadership example?

Why do you think it’s important to have a humble yet accurate picture of yourself as a leader within our congregation?

There is a continuum as it relates to providing leadership within a congregation.

Leadership Abdicated-------------------------------------------Church Boss

On one side are those who abdicate all leadership responsibility and do not set an example of Christ-like behavior in their church.

On the other side of the continuum are individuals who are tempted to bring too much control over the life of their church. They are the reason the term “church boss” was created.

In a moment of true honesty, where do you tend to lean on one side of this continuum or the other? What are the potential negative connotations to that tendency?

Leadership – **Discernment** – Community

One of the most critical functions of a church governing body is to make key decisions in the life of the church. Decisions that will directly impact the effectiveness of the church and its ability to accomplish our God-given mission to “seek and save those who are lost” (Luke 19:10) and help them reach their full-redemptive potential as Christ-followers.

Chris uses various scriptures (Proverbs 28:26; Isaiah 55:8-9; Matthew 16:18) to point out that God’s ways are not necessarily our ways.

In John 9, there is a fascinating story of an entire community of faith who failed to discern what God was doing in their midst when Jesus healed a blind man. The disciples missed it (v. 2), the man’s neighbors missed it (v. 8ff) the Pharisees missed it (v. 16ff), the parents missed it (v. 22-23), This story accentuates the ability of people with godly intentions to totally miss what God wants to do in their midst.

Discussion Questions:

Can you think of a time when you personally or a group of leaders you know made a decision that, looking back on it now, appears to have been based on “man’s” wisdom and not God’s and therefore cost them momentum and effectiveness?

In your opinion, what does it cost a church when they fail to discern the will of God?

One of the hardest jobs of competent leaders is to rely on their competence and not on God’s clear direction. No military leader on the face of the earth would have suggested that the best military strategy was to walk around a city once a day for six days and then march around it seven times on the seventh day in order to experience military victory – but that’s exactly what God wanted to see happen in the case of Joshua and the people of Israel (Joshua 6).

Discussion:

How do you seek to grow in your attempts to listen for and hear promptings of the Holy Spirit in your personal life?

How do you attempt to discern His will as it relates to decisions we make as a church governing body?

How do you fight the temptation to settle for your own wisdom instead of fully pursuing and discerning His wisdom?

What are some very practical things you can do to grow in the area of Godly discernment in your life for the sake of you personally and for the governing body of the church?

Leadership – Discernment – **Community**

Can you think of a time in your life when you have been part of a community of friends that breathed life into each other? Perhaps you were part of a sports team or you were actively involved in a healthy small group. If you’ve been part of a group like this, share about it briefly.

Discussion Questions:

What are some of the attributes of a healthy-functioning community?

What are the negative ramifications when a church governing body has not taken the time to get to know each other’s:

Background

Personality style

Leadership bent

What do you believe are the payoffs when a governing body does the time-consuming work of moving past just being a group of individuals to actually becoming a **community** of leaders who come together to discern God’s will?

Why is spending time developing community important board work?

What are some key decisions on the horizon of our church that could directly impact the health, vibrancy and effectiveness of our church going forward? How important is it for us to learn to discern God’s will together?

**Other Resources:**

*Hearing God* – Dallas Willard

*Pursuing God’s Will Together* – Ruth Haley Barton

Read Acts 15 - How important was it for the leaders in the Jerusalem church to discern correctly God’s will in this matter?