



LUMP OF KOHL

Leadership, Followership, & Revitalization

From listening to people talk, I'm under the impression that change takes place slowly and incrementally at FCC. According to organizational scientists, all organizations face the threat of incrementally changing themselves to their death. But for this church to have remained alive for 277 years, there must have been several periods of significant revitalization. And I suspect that most of that significant revitalization happened with some of FCC's 31 pastoral changes.

We generally perceive the pastors who brought about great changes to have been great leaders and vice versa. But sociological research "suggests that . . . organizational conditions determine or moderate the impact of leadership on organizational outcomes." In other words, factors inside the church have a "strong effects on a leaders' ability to produce significant or enduring change." There are variables at work that are "beyond a leader's immediate control." "In established organizations, the impact of leadership is highly constrained and leadership change may not make much of a difference." And I can't think of too many organizations that are more established than FCC! Significant changes can take place, but it takes extra effort on the part of a well-established organization. "Leadership is an important activity in some situations; in others there is little that a leader can do. Most situations, of course, fall between these two extremes." Where would we, the members of FCC, place ourselves on this continuum? (Quotes are all from Tolbert and Hall's *Organization—Structures, Processes, and Outcomes*, pp.105-107).

In premarital counseling I always find the opportunity to say, "A good marriage isn't so much about finding the right person; as it is being the right person." Likewise, a good pastor-people relationship isn't just about finding the right pastor, but also being the right kind of congregation.

God's Word has something to say about a congregation's responsibility to its pastor. What the Scriptures say requires some explanation and I'll be preaching on that sometime down the road. But for now, let me just plant some seeds in your minds.

First, you are to love, respect, and appreciate your pastors for the hard work they do for your spiritual benefit. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 says, *Respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work.*

Second, you are to follow your pastor's lead. That's the meaning behind Hebrews 13:17 which says, *Obey your church leaders and yield to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. A congregation that burdens their pastor ends up also burdening themselves.*

Third, you are to join arms with your pastor in doing the Lord's work. Ephesians 4:11-13 says, *Christ himself gave . . . pastors and teachers to the church to equip God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all . . . become mature . . .*

Fourth, you are to adequately compensate your pastors for their work. 1 Timothy 5:17-18 says, *The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."*

Finally, you are to protect your pastor's reputation. 1 Timothy 5:19 says, *Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.*

When churches have a pastor who shows care, character, and competency, they are well on their way to another round of revitalization. But revitalization isn't going to happen just because a

pastor has care, character, and competency. Revitalization also requires a highly supportive congregation. That combination greatly increases the chances of life-sustaining infusion of revitalization. Are you up for that? I think you are.