

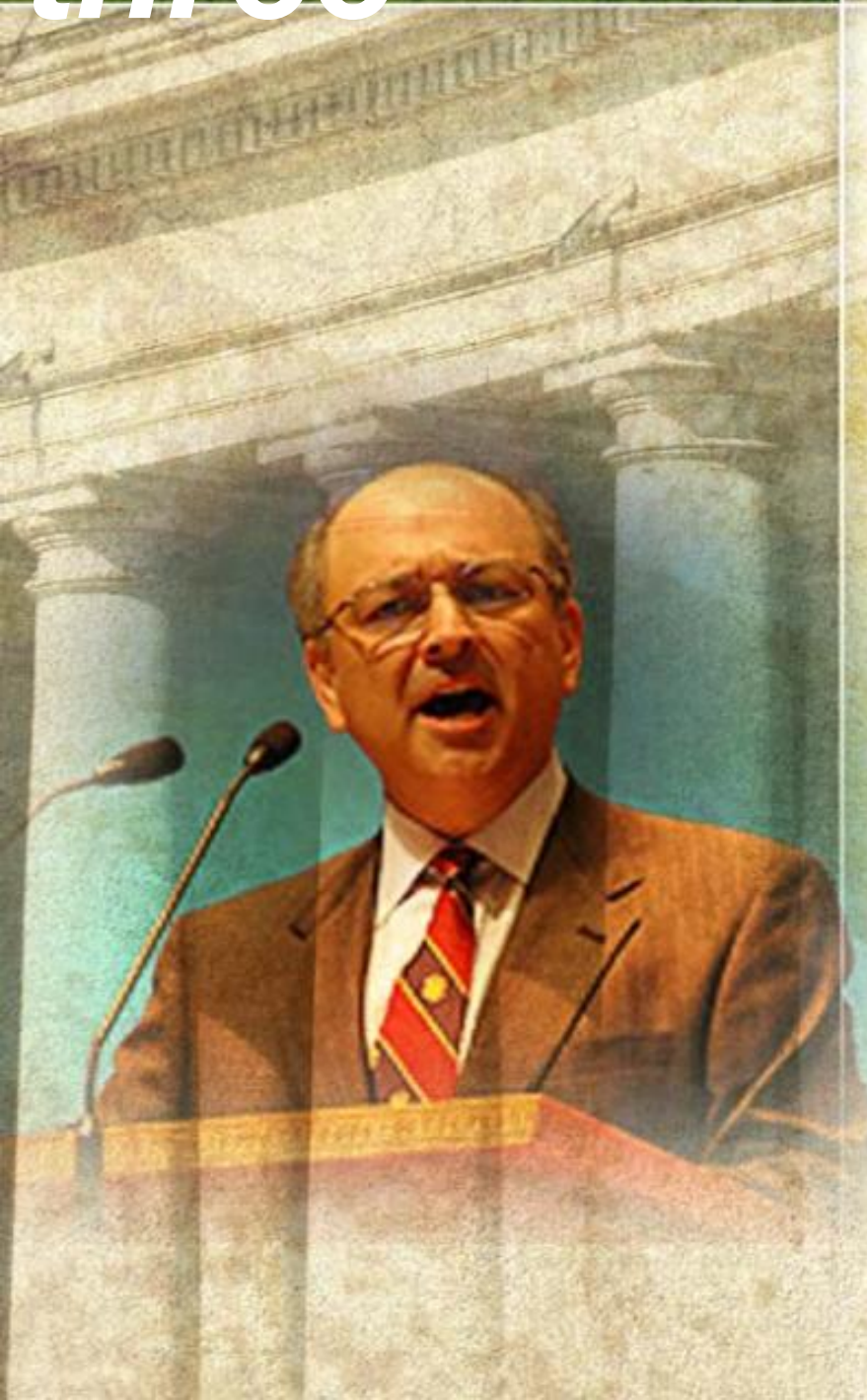
FOUNDATIONS
of
ADVENTIST
LEADERSHIP

A LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

*Based on the Collected Papers
from the Leadership Symposium
General Conference Session*

July 3-7, 2005

LECTION
three



Acting *with* Responsibility:

*Aspirations of a
Servant Along
Pathways of
Governance—*

PART 2

Based on the Presentation by

Ted L. Ramirez

Co-chair, Venable Washington
Health Care Practice

Session 3 will address *the* following questions:

1

Why should we study governance principles?

2

What are the main areas of responsibility for governors?

3

How can governors minimize conflicts of interest?

4

How can church leaders improve the quality of governance for their organizations?

5

What are some of the basic building blocks governors should consider?

6

What are some common ethical issues that leaders face from

7

How can we resolve tensions among competing values, standards, and goals?

8

How can we resolve the issue of learning curves in governance?

9

How can we deal with governance disabilities and dysfunctions?

10

~~What are the imperatives of responsible governance?~~

11

~~Describe governance bodies that act with responsibility.~~

12

How can we as individuals improve our governance practices?

IV. Opportunities, Resources, and Human Limitations *(continued)*

Principles and Evolving Standards

Core principles that Adventists believe and teach:

God so loved the world that He gave His only Son to save it. *(John 3:16)*

We are saved by grace, and not from ourselves. *(Eph 2:8,9)*

We are headed to a place where we will

Occasional reviews of governance principles will help us revisit, strengthen, and sharpen our capacity to serve.



Responsible leaders and governors

- *look for the best practices*
- *seek formal training in these practices*
- *share these practices throughout the church*

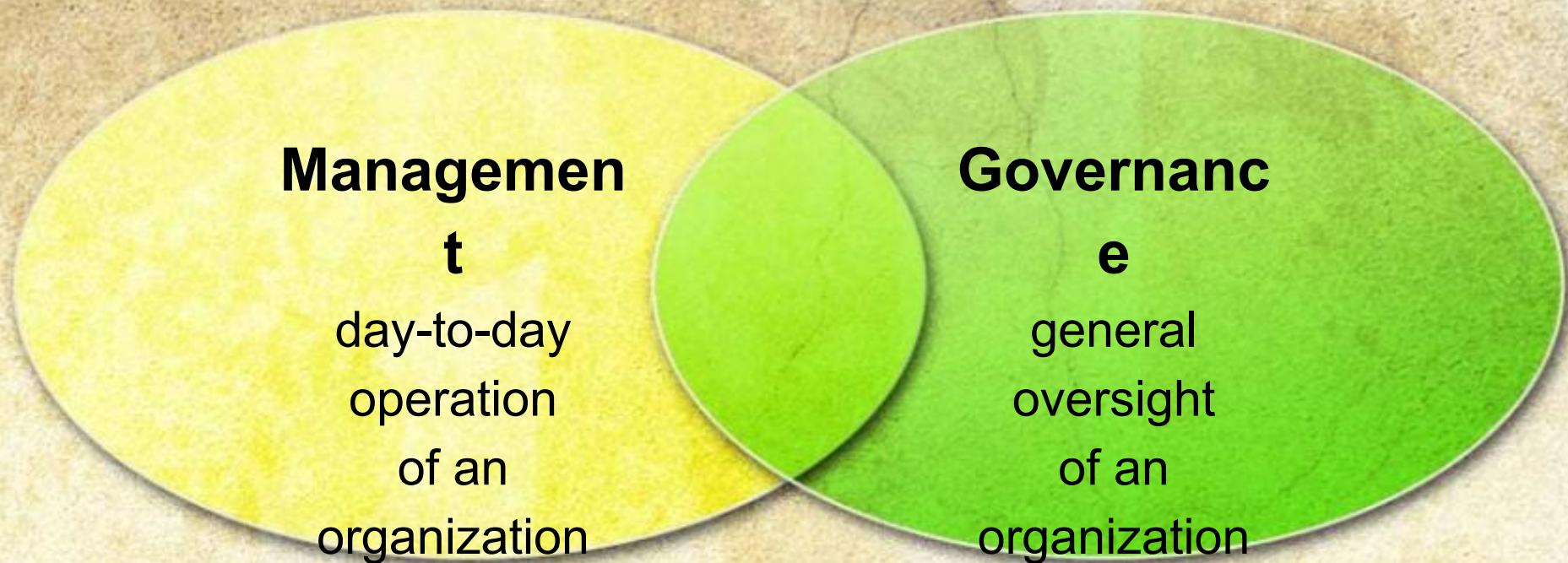
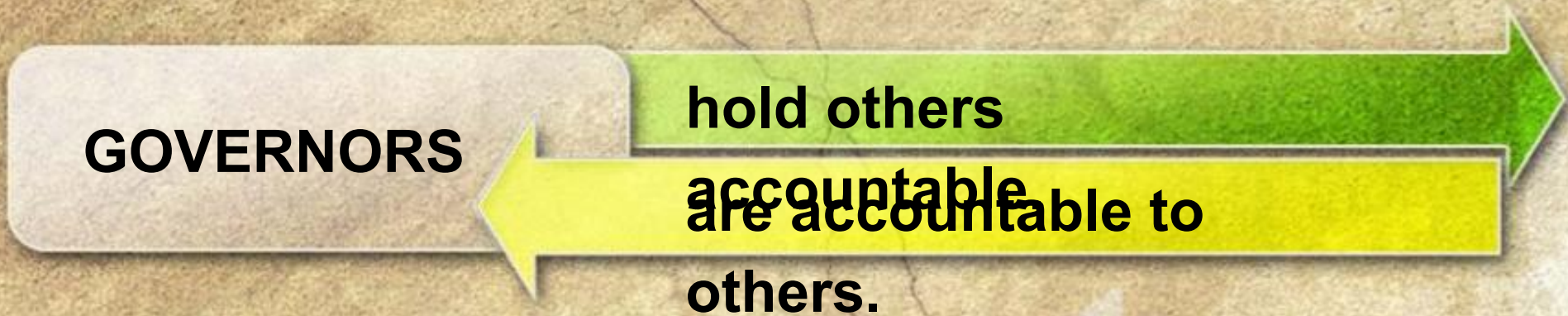
Leaders should choose practices that are right for their specific organizations. Responsible governors do not use external practices exclusively to dictate the practices of their organizations. Rather they

- *test and confirm their organization's system of governance and action*
- *examine each recommended practice to understand its ethical, legal, and operational reasons*
- *gage the potential impact of the proposed*

Privilege and responsibility are parts of an inseparable continuum of church leadership and governance.



Accountability is a two-way street.



Governance and management are not mutually exclusive; their functions overlap.

Leaders and governors must

- *improve our understanding of the terms “governance” and “management”*
 - *clarify what we expect of one another*
 - *recognize our responsibility to discuss governance issues*
 - *realize that discussions about governance are as important as those about mission and operation*
- Continued contributions of money, loyalty, and personal time from our stakeholders require
- *develop an organizational culture that we develop such a culture.*
 - *that honors discussion*

Responsible governors in a healthy organization must consider these questions in assessing the standards and objectives of church governance:

What should governance be?

What are the obligations of those who have received the call to service in governance?

Ensuring the viability and ethical integrity of an organization are among the most crucial tasks of governors

Governors are protectors. They must

- *protect the organization from external threats*
- *promote a safe and ethical working environment*
- *ensure that leaders have access to competent internal support*
- *provide leaders with external advisors*
- *grow and maintain the organization's*

~~Governors, sources, and quality~~
mission, resources, and quality

must share these responsibilities with their leaders.



Conflicts of Interest:

Complex challenges to boards

Examples of conflicts of interest:

1

A board member operates a business from which the organization purchases supplies.

2

A board member owns stock in a company with which the organization does business.

3

The CEO of one organization serves on the board of another, both of which are competing for scarce resources provided by the parent organization of both.

4

Virtually no church organization, committee, or board can be free from conflicts of interest.
Responsible governors

- *will err on the side of overdisclosing when they perceive that they have a potential conflict of interest,*
- *will abstain from voting on decisions in which they are conflicted,*
- *will recuse themselves from*

Managing conflicts of interest.

Leaders must not

- *mismanage or overreact to a conflict of interest,*

~~Assessing and managing~~ conflicts of interest for church organizations include

- *Developing systems and procedures for dealing with conflicts*
- *Fostering a culture of calm transparency*
- *Being aware of conflict*
- *Disclosing potential conflict*
- *Measuring the magnitude of conflict*
- *Reacting to conflict in a balanced way*
- *Recording abstentions and recusals for conflicted governors*
- *Avoiding surprises*

Crucial areas of responsibility for a governing body include

- *being aware of its specific nature and function*
- *determining what its nature and function should become*
- *developing and maintaining governance systems including*
 - *regular reassessment of its nature and function*
 - *potential iterations and improvements*



Sorting Values: Responsible leaders and governors will sort through the organizational principles and standards that best promote their group goals. They will

- *find methods, models, resources, and “gurus” to get things done.*
- *use these resources wisely.*
- *encourage their boards to experiment with those alternatives that best fit the needs of their organization*

In using these governance resources, leaders will counsel their governors to

- *Select a method or two at a time to read and learn about.*
- *Recognize that any method or writer may offer useful contributions.*
- *Remember that all methods contain flaws or unresolved points.*
- *Avoid undue attachment to any single system of governance.*
- *Start talking with their officers and board or committee ... patiently.*
- *Understand that the road to responsible governance is long.*
- *Avoid strong opinions on things they don't*

The Focus of Governance

Governance will always be complex, difficult work.

The focus of this work should point to our fundamental purpose:

- *renew our missions*
- *improve our effectiveness in accomplishing the missions of our organizations*



Building Blocks to Develop Effective Governance in Church Organizations



Biblical Counsel for Governors

⁶Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

⁷Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

⁸Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

⁹Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

¹⁰And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

V. Points Unresolved

We may not realize many of our hopes, dreams, and plans in governance due to

- *forces and circumstances of our human condition*
- *the continuing state of war in the Great*

Some of the unresolved points that may keep us from reaching our governance aspirations follow.

Tension among *the* Essential, Necessary, Good, and Useful

Areas of tension and
incompatibility:

Competing

- *values*
- *principles*
- *standards*
- *goals*



Points of tension among competing factors:

- *Gospel mission and its interpretation*
- *“Transparency:” what it means and how we achieve it*
- *Civil law and regulatory compliance*
- *Divergent management principles and styles*
- *Governors who are unclear about the church mission*
- *Organizational procedures and traditions*

Points of tension among competing factors (continued):

- *Unclear standards of duty*
- *Confused zones of action, responsibility, and boundaries*
- *Priesthood of all believers—everyone feels “empowered”*
- *Global multi-organization friction,*



Disagreement among leaders and governors over competing values, standards, principles, and goals requires **time, prayer and extended discussions** to resolve or learn to live with our differences and to galvanize our effectiveness.



Limited Resources

Resources often seem in short supply.

Many are needed to develop and bring to life all the dreams we see, including **time, money, people and skills, opportunity, training.**

Some are needed to keep our organizations on track: **credibility and understanding,**



Learning Curves

Time, training, and discussion are needed for the following areas of responsibility:

1

Financial statements and reports

2

Executive management reports

3

Calibrating the committee system

4

Operating history and current realities

5

External and denominational forces

6

What to change and what to keep

We are a church not a museum.

7

Building and preserving relationships

God risked all the treasure of heaven to restore our relationship with Him.

What are we investing in our horizontal relationships with one another?



8

Overcoming suspicion and misunderstanding

Jesus' last recorded prayer in the upper room
focused on trust and unity.

²²I have given
them the glory
that you gave me,
that they may be
one as we are
one: ²³I in them
and you in me.
May they be
brought to
complete unity to
let the world know

sent me and have
loved them even as
you have loved
me...

²⁶I have made you
known to them, ...*in
order that the love
you have for me
may be in them...*

John 17:22-23, 26 (NIV)

that you
How great a priority is unity
for us who claim to follow Him?

Governance Disabilities and Dysfunctions

These dysfunctions can

- *frustrate even the best leadership*
- *slow down constructive decision processes*
- *disrupt unity, communication and action*

Examples of dysfunctional people:

1

Those who openly ridicule leaders
as Shimei ridiculed David when he fled from Absalom

2

Those set in their ways as Balaam
Not even a talking donkey could get through to him.

3

**Those who use e-mail like scud
missiles to make a point**

Do they care where their “payload”
lands or whom it injures?

4

“Sheep in wolves’ clothing:”
organizations that talk and act tougher
than their hearts and the Spirit are
leading

5

**Self-appointed “watch dogs” or
“guardians of the Church”**
with teeth that cause far more damage
than any contribution to Christian
oversight or responsibility

6

One on a “lone wolf” mission
who tries to “fix” things on his own
without the authority of the organization

“Acting with responsibility” with such dysfunctional behavior involves

- *timely, and loving correction*
- *remembering that our authority is not personal; it derives from our connection to the body*

Leaders who act with
we serve
responsibility remember

- *The safest time for a governing body is during the meeting.*
- *Governors are most dangerous and inflict most damage between meetings.*

The essential point that challenges us:

Will we determine to act with responsibility as we serve our church and pursue its mission?

- *daily dying to self*
Doing so will require
 - *resolving to “press together” in unity*
 - *recognizing God’s strength through our diversity*

We stand together in Christ because He created us with differences and has chosen to make us one with God.



This side of heaven

- *our leadership styles will differ*
- *our methods will vary*
- *our policies won't be perfect*
- *we will need forgiveness and restoration*

The mission and reach of the church have exploded beyond our capacity to “administer.”



In spite of these unresolved
points, God is able to

instruct

empower

unify

His people and His leaders for

His mission.

The Son has asked it; the Father

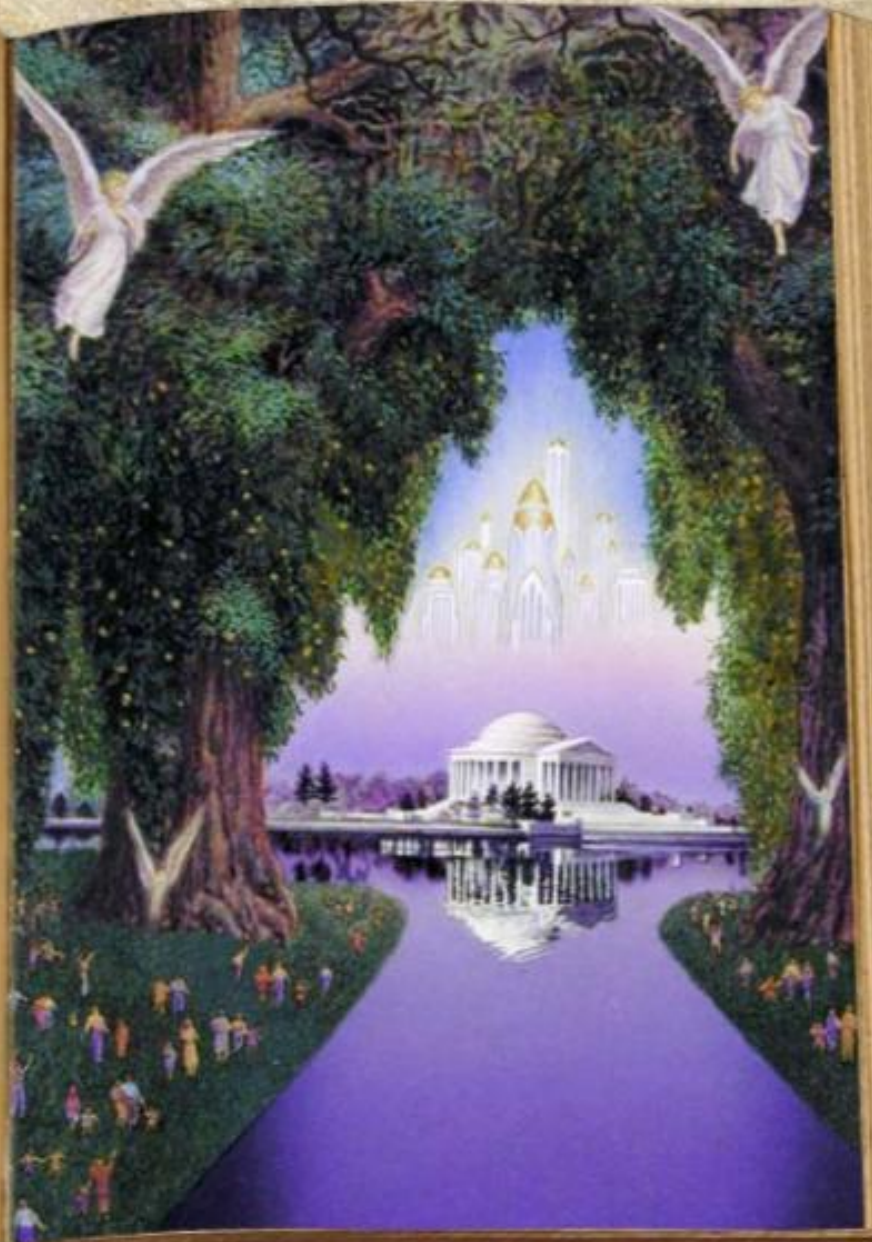
Counsel From the Pen of Inspiration

We want to press together. O, how many times when I have seemed to be in the presence of God and holy angels, I have heard the angel voice saying, "*Press together, press together, press together.* Do not let Satan cast his hellish shadow between brethren. Press together; in unity there is strength."

I repeat the message to you. As you go to your homes, be determined that you will *press together*; seek God with all the heart, and you will find Him, and the love of Christ, that passeth understanding, will come into your hearts and lives.



¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.



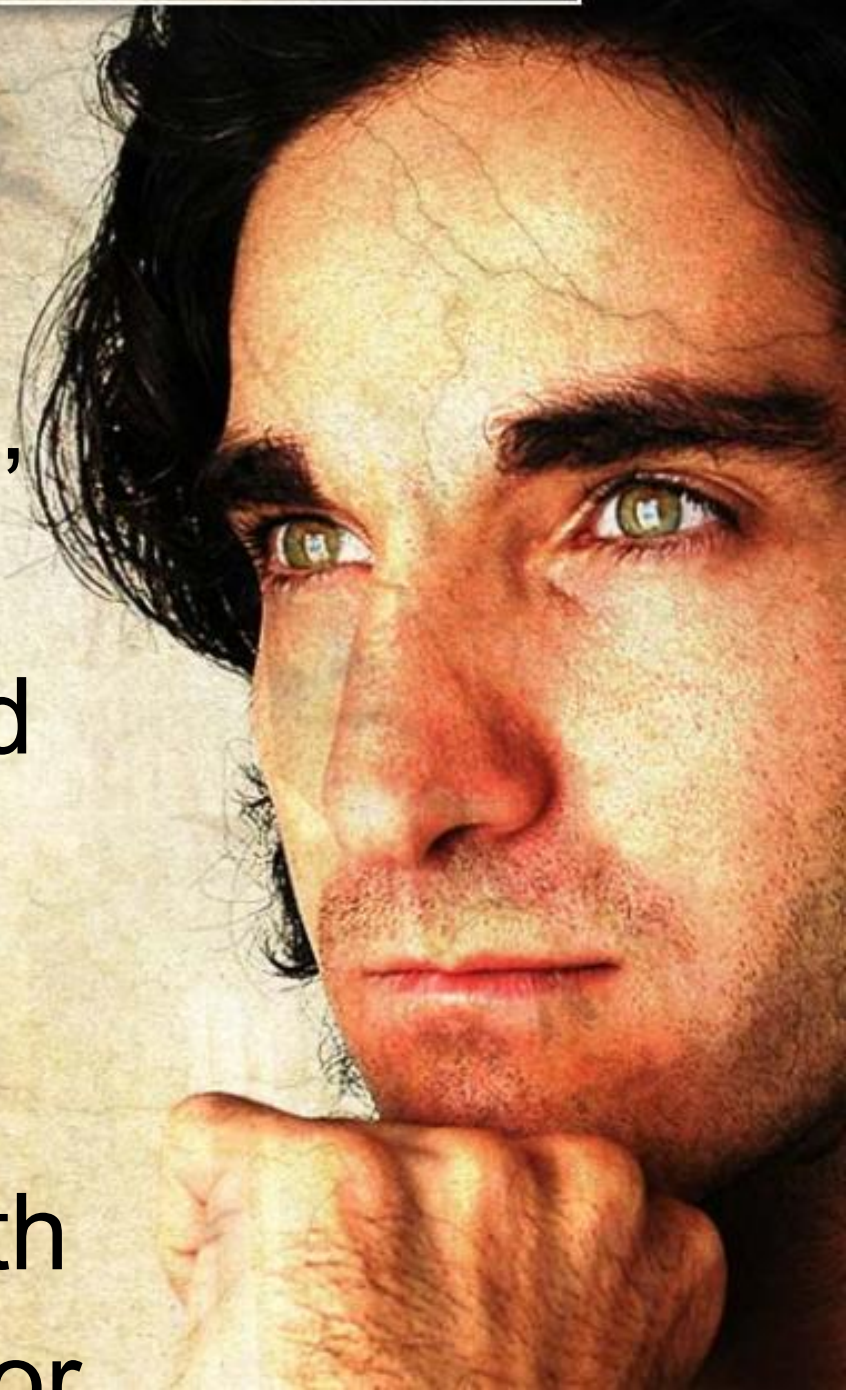


³No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, **and his servants will serve him.** ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. **And they will reign for ever and ever.** Rev 22:1-5 (NIV)

VI. Ultimate Vision

Improving the effectiveness of our organizations, boards, and committees requires reflection and change that begins with each person.

Change must start with the person in the mirror



The Ultimate Job Description

When we reach heaven, our job descriptions will be to serve and worship God.

In our work together in the church, God gives us a special privilege: to practice and prepare for that position while we serve and worship Him here.



Imperatives of Responsibility in Governance

The church wants governing bodies that

1

Recognize our responsibility for leadership and exercise it.

2

Articulate and promote the organization's mission and values.

3

Manage, delegate, and set sound policy without micromanagement.

4

Trust, empower, and support those we appoint as governors and leaders.

5

Develop and protect a culture of learning and collaboration.

6

Develop a culture and traditions of informed civility.

Remaining civil when someone

challenges

- *trust God long enough to examine all our dearly held “truths” requires that we the evidence*
- *ask, “Why has God led me into contact with this person or situation?”*



7

Pursue trust, forgiveness, and accountability.

8

Recognize that grace is not just spiritual; it's
“good business” too.

9

Respect, nurture, and challenge our leaders and officers.

10

Encourage variety in the background and development
of governors.

11

Embrace diversity as a strategic strength.

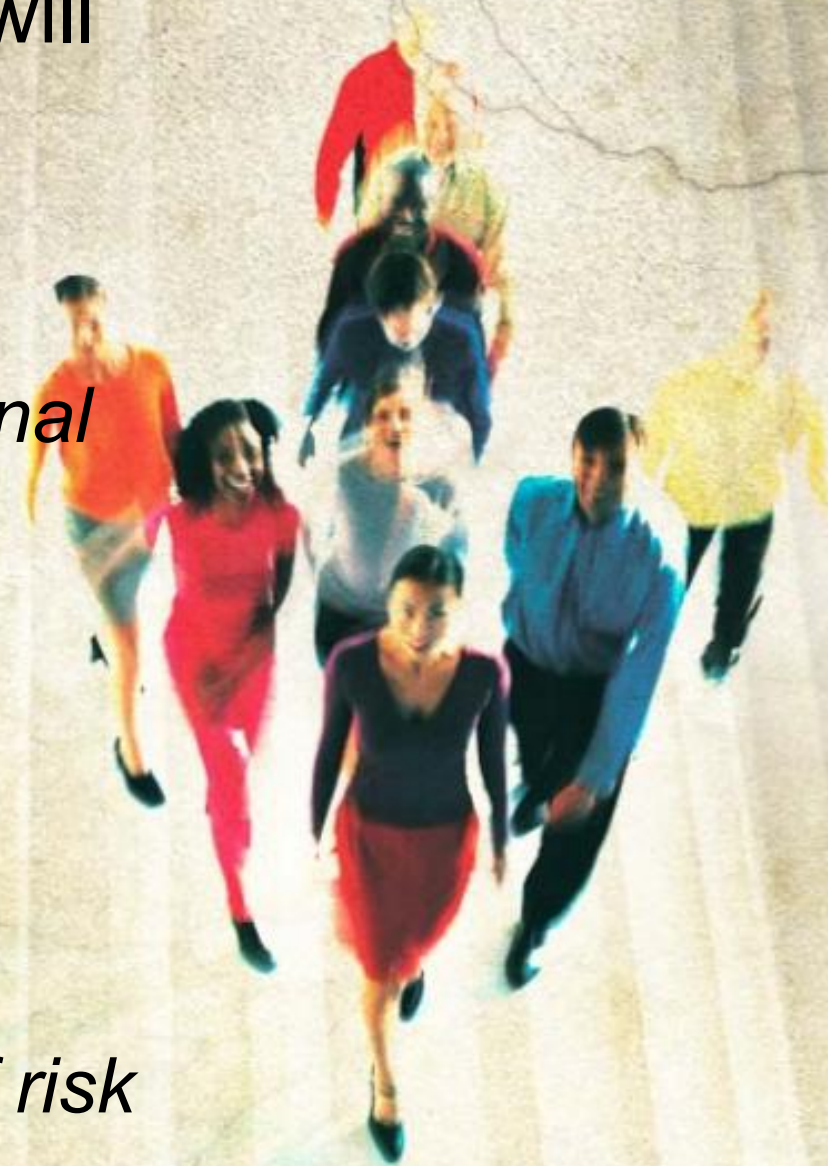
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Respect the boundaries of friendship, church membership,
and corporate governance.

Governing Bodies That Act with Responsibility

The best governing bodies will develop and display

- *timely action*
- *informed analysis*
- *effective internal and external accountability*
- *proactive communication*
- *fair, thorough deliberations*
- *orderly, peaceful, and productive processes*
- *effective use of time*
- *balanced understanding of risk*
- *the will to get something done*

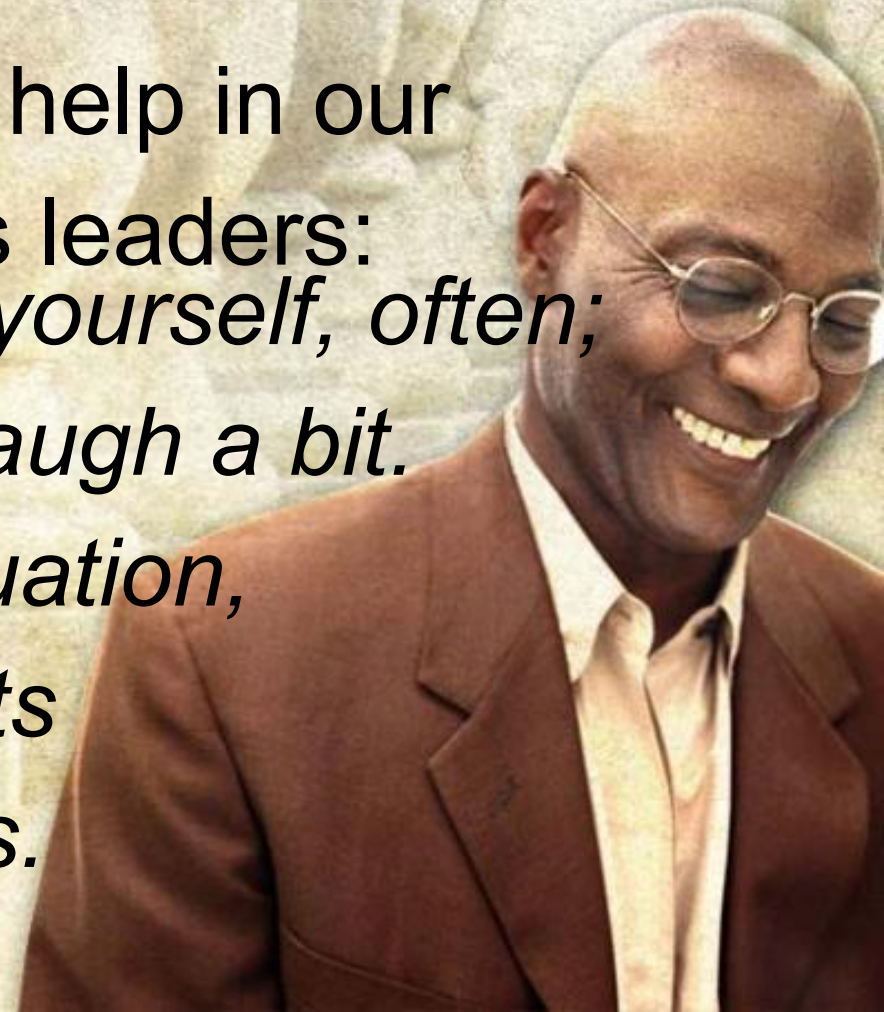


Individual Aspirations

What kind of leaders do we, as individuals, want to become?

Suggestions that might help in our continuing education as leaders:

- *Take a fresh look at yourself, often; then step back and laugh a bit.*
- *As you analyze a situation, try to connect the dots in straight, short lines.*



- *Persevere; don't quit on your church, your fellow workers or yourself . . . ever.*
- *Don't give up on anyone else.*
- *Remember the "Elijah Rule;" the problem and potential solutions belong to God.*
- *Avoid boxing yourself into entrenched positions on complex issues.*

- *Even if you think you understand, stay humble; you might be wrong.*
- *Prefer the good solution over searching for the perfect one.*
- *Relate to your fellow leaders and governors in respect, nurture, and challenge; use all three together.*
- *Make room in your heart and mind for new information and people.*
- *Don't fear to unlearn something that no longer serves a purpose*



Unity in Diversity

Philadelphia, July 4, 1776 Birth of the United States

Although John Dickerson disagreed with the vote for independence in the Continental Congress, when the delegates approved the Declaration of Independence, he led the first troops from Philadelphia to defend New Jersey against the British.

In John Dickerson's case, "acting with responsibility" meant

- *withdrawing from his colony's delegation so that they could make a decision he didn't approve,*
- *supporting the majority decision, even though he didn't agree with that decision,*

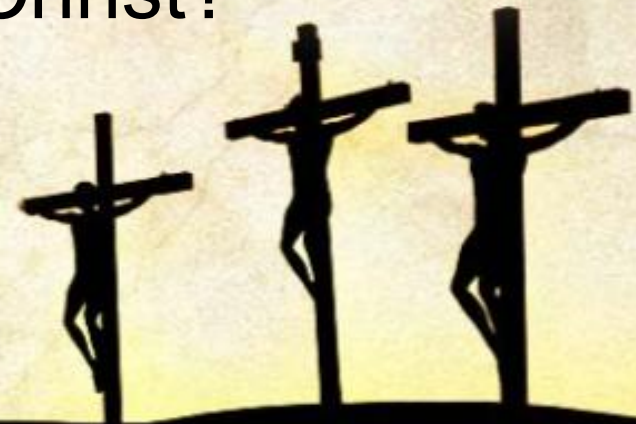
Are we willing to risk our lives or careers to

- *risking his life to defend that decision.*

support and live for the body of Christ?

Jesus has asked us to do this.

He was the supreme Example.

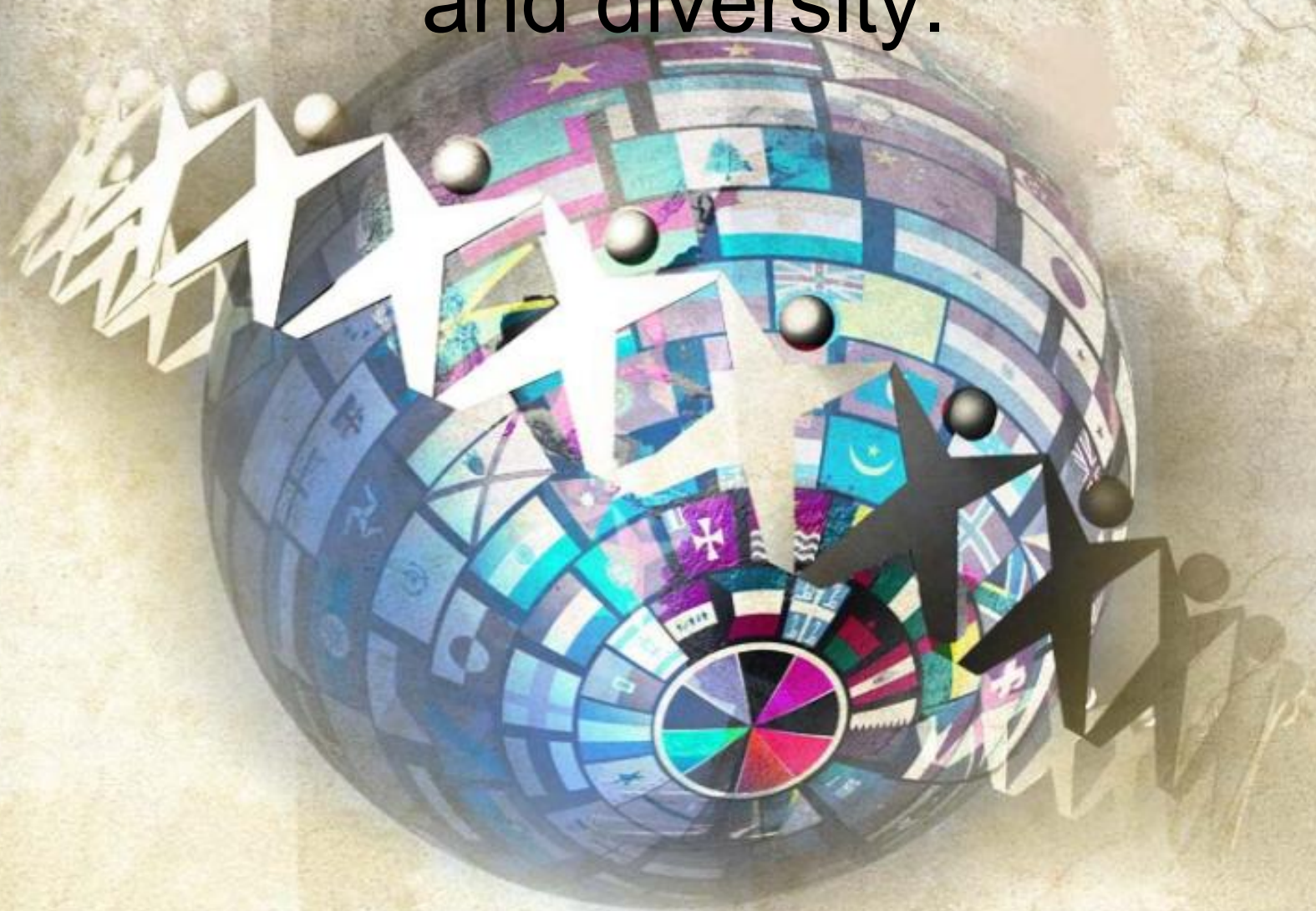


When we disagree with others in committee discussions, let us

- *wrestle with passion in support of our convictions*
- *embrace our opponent when the decision has been made*
- *support the action decided upon by the*



“Acting with responsibility”
symbolizes the paradox of unity
and diversity.



Our Prayer:

May this workshop on Adventist leadership and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit lead us to desire to “act with responsibility” as we serve our church and the millions who depend on our faithfulness to mission.

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