

First Baptist Church of Progress Village
A Church Called Tov: Chapter 2
Early Warning Signs of a Toxic Culture
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Based on books: A Church Called Tov & Pivot by McKnight & Barringer

Culture penetrates, permeates and then it replicates.

I. Narcissism in leadership and members.

Narcissism can be a character trait and/or a personality disorder.

A mental condition in which people have an inflated sense of their own importance, a deep need for excessive attention and admiration, troubled relationships, and a lack of empathy for others. But behind this mask of extreme confidence lies a fragile self-esteem that's vulnerable to the slightest criticism.

A. Key Characteristics of Narcissism:

Grandiosity, Need for Admiration, Lack of Empathy, Entitlement, Manipulation and Exploitation, Self-Absorption

3 John 1:9-11 (NLT2) *I wrote to the church about this, but Diotrephes, who loves to be the leader, refuses to have anything to do with us. When I come, I will report some of the things he is doing and the evil accusations he is making against us. Not only does he refuse to welcome the traveling teachers, he also tells others not to help them. And when they do help, he puts them out of the church...*

B. Narcissistic leaders value image over humility.

Matthew 23:1-12 (NLT2) ...11 The greatest among you must be a servant. But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

C. Church leadership requires humility and sacrifice that narcissists are not willing/able to make.

Leadership is a peculiar thing. Either you do it to help others, or you do it to help yourself...rarely can it truly be both.

II. Extracting Power through Fear

If you have a question about something, don't accuse, **ASK!**

1 John 4:17-19 (KJV) *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us.*

A. The more afraid people are, the more love we must demonstrate.

John 10:11-13 (KJV) *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.*

B. A true leader **cares** about and shows **empathy** for the members.

Ezekiel 34:1-10 (KJV) *...10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.*

C. God has special requirements, expectations, and **consequences** for pastors.

III. Gain Tov **Character** not **Charisma** for pastors and church leaders.

Philippians 2:3-5 (KJV) *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*

A. **Serve** with humility, esteeming others, and following the example of Christ.

Galatians 5:22-24 (KJV) *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

B. Fruit of the Spirit is the true test of leadership, not **charisma**.

Mark 10:42-44 (KJV) *But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.*

C. God's definition of **greatness** is different from the world's authorities. Greatness = serving, not lording authority.

2 Corinthians 4:7 (KJV) *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

D. All **power** belongs to God, not us.

Amos 5:24 (KJV) *But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.*

When you know God rejects hypocrisy, you must speak up if you see it. "Silence is complicity." If you don't say anything...

You learn it, you practice it, and then you pass it on to others!