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# **Twelve Marks of a Healthy Board**

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Christian Leadership



## Twelve Marks of a Healthy Board

This is an online series of lectures on 12 Marks of a Healthy Board is team taught by Dr. Bert Downs, Dr. John Johnson and Dr. David Jones, all from Western Seminary. Bert has held many offices, just a few being Walk Thru the Bible Ministries, seminary chancellor and interim pastor while Dr. John Johnson was the Lead Pastor at Village Baptist Church in Portland, Oregon for 16 years and now the Interim Teaching Pastor at Grace Pointe in Milwaukee, Oregon. Dr. David Jones is Vice President of Corporate Affairs for the Luis Palau Association.

## Essential Characteristics for Every Church Leader

### A. Roles, Responsibilities and Focus - Lecture 1

*Healthy boards understand the roles and responsibilities of a board and of their individual service on the board. They are also mission focused.*

**1. Introduction:** Welcome to the Twelve Marks of a Healthy Board. My guess is that if you are watching this video at this time, you are either on a board; you are working with a board or you are about to do one of those two. So we are excited that you are here today and we think that the Twelve Marks of a Healthy Board will help you to get a real sense of how an effective board moves forward and accomplishes the mission of the board to which it is attached. I am your host for today and my name is Bert Downs and I am the Chancellor at Western Seminary. Your guides for the day though, are guys who are intimately involved with board work. We are delighted to have you with us. How about you talk to us a little about who you are, what you are doing.

John: My name is John Johnson and I have been a pastor for almost 30 years so I have worked with numerous boards. I also work at Western Seminary teaching pastoral theology, and I direct the doctoral programme.

Bert: What about you David?

I'm David Jones and I'm Vice President of Corporate Affairs for the Luis Palau Association. I've served with Luis for over 33 years. I work closely with our Board of Directors and I have served on both USA and international boards over these last 33 years.

Bert: Plus I believe you are working with evangelists around the world who are working with boards.

That's correct. The Palau Association has a network of over 400 evangelists and one of the practical things we do is to try to help them with their board development.

**2. Roles, Responsibilities and Focus is the First Mark:** Bert: When we talked earlier you said that one of the marks of a healthy board is that it had a good understanding of its roles and responsibilities. You were pretty adamant on that David.

Yes, I think the first mark is about understanding the role and the responsibilities of a board

and your service on a board. When this breaks down then all the others marks break down with it. The board of a Christ-centred organization has an enormous responsibility in the area of governance and policy setting. They have a key responsibility to preserve the integrity of the ministry, to establish strategic direction, and to support the long term future and viability of that ministry on whose board they serve. It's important too, to remember that boards do govern. They don't manage. I know that sounds simplistic but often times when boards get in trouble it is when they try to micro-manage either the church or the Christ centered organization. It is critical for a person on a board to understand that their role is to steer the organization in the right direction, to ensure they are mission focused. We will talk about that in a minute. They need to provide proper oversight, to make sure there are policies and framework in place; to ensure accountability, to ensure everything is done at the highest standard professionally –above board in money matters. That things are done not only with excellence but according to Biblical principles and so the board has a huge role to establish those policies and procedures that will make absolutely sure that the entity is governed in the most effective and efficient manner.

Bert: John, how does that look in a church?

I think a lot of times in a church, a board and a staff, in particular, have to sort out their roles and there has to be a real clear understanding. Sometimes in a church there can be assumptions made about the roles of the board and the staff. This can lead to a certain dysfunction. We need to see the roles as more together as we see the board has a shepherding role alongside the staff. We need to make sure that we don't cause confusion between the roles of staff and board as the two groups pray together and minister to people together, but what differentiates them? All those things have to be very clearly down on paper to say; 'Here's the role of staff, here's the role of board.' Also in that clarity of roles who is responsible to who? There is certain submission of board to staff but there needs to also be a certain submission of the staff to the board.

Bert: Pursue that a little bit that is a significant comment.

Well, the staff has this responsibility to help set the framework of the ministry: where it's going to go, its objectives. But when they set their strategies and their objectives they need to come to the board and get agreement that they are heading in the same direction. But more than that, they need to see themselves as responsible to the board. The board holds the staff responsible for carrying out their set objectives. This then liberates the staff in that they will know they have the board's backing. At the same time the staff can ask the board to evaluate their work.

Bert: David, is that how it looks in Christ-centered organizations?

The matter of role clarification is very important. Often people who are passionate about the mission of their church or organization don't really know what their roles are. First and foremost the board members need to recognize that they work with the senior or lead pastor or the president of their organization. That is their main point of contact with the organization so they have a very important role to bless and encourage that person, to support them and to pray for them. They may not always be in agreement with them but they need to understand that's the person they work with,

not the others members of the staff. There first point of entry into the organization is the top leader. After this one of the key responsibilities of the board is to understand and help shape the beliefs, the vision, the mission, and the core values of the organization. Too often boards approach the strategic direction by first looking at minute details instead of focusing on an overview of why the organization exists, what is its purpose, what is trying to accomplish. Too often boards will get involved with minute details which are really not important in terms of the strategic direction of the organization. Obviously boards have a responsibility in the area of finances. They have legal responsibility for the financial integrity of the organization. Therefore the staff has responsibility to the board to provide them with good financial information, but the board should be involved in the budgeting process. They need to approve the budget but they shouldn't be micro-managing the budget. Also the board should participate in fund raising and in development and in bringing the resources to the organization that are needed for it to accomplish what they believe God has called them to do.

Board members need to see themselves as ambassadors for the ministry or the church on whose board they serve. If you are an ambassador you represent your country overseas in another country. So it is with a board member. It is very important that board members help drive the planning process. It is essential that Christ-centered organizations have a strategic written plan and the board has a responsibility to be architects of that. They are not tradesmen, they are not the plumber or the carpenter they are the architects. They need to be involved at that higher level but they need to ensure that there is a strategic written plan for the organization. Obviously boards are also involved in policy setting, decision making. They have an important role in the area of providing spiritual leadership; prayer should be a very important component of their job description and responsibilities. They should be prayer warriors for the organization and they should stimulate and promote prayer among their various constituents for the ministry. They need to set a standard of excellence. Personally I believe that for every Christ-centered organization, one of their core values should be excellence. Those organizations and churches that have high reputations in their communities have adopted excellence as one of their top, core values. There are also some legal responsibilities in the area of maintaining accurate government standards, tax documents. Boards need to be in obedience to the law of the land. Where some boards fall into dysfunction is when they think that because they are Christ-centered organization they are above the law. One person told me that he was only accountable to God. I told him: "No you are not". You are accountable to the tax department, to the government, to your wife, to local media. So a requirement for the board is to make sure all the proper reporting is carried out. They need to have assurances that those things are being properly cared for.

Bert: John, you talked about the fact that at the church level, the board sometimes has a shepherding role. This feels a little different than what David has been talking about. Maybe you would like to talk about that.

There comes a point than as a church is growing you don't want the staff to be isolated and only coming to the board for certain issues. They need to feel like a team. This can be a really

healthy thing. If they are isolated it becomes “Us, and them” rather than working together as a team. Isolation of either the staff or board can lead to mistrust. There can be some risks involved in the relationships between boards and staff. I remember when I was pasturing a church in Europe we working on breaking down the barriers between board and staff. One day the board chairman (a rather high-powered individual) asked me, ‘What makes you any different from me?’ Clearly he was challenging who I was as a pastor and how he saw himself. I remember he went on to say: ‘This idea of ‘first among equals’ doesn’t make any sense to me.’ So I had to decide: ‘Where are the boundaries? Who am I? What is a senior pastor? What is a board chairman? How are their roles different?’ We had to dig down and define the difference.

Bert: So what was a couple of difference you came up with?

I remember; one is that whether you like or not, a pastor is on call 24 hours, 7 days a week whereas for a board chairman it is a secondary role. They get their notes and come to a meeting once or twice a month while the pastor is living out the ministry daily. Also part of the call of the pastor is the shepherding role which is a little bit different from the board’s role. There is also the pulpit role. Also the pastor is sorting out direction. There are clearly defined roles for the pastor and the board chairman yet there is a tension because they want to do things together as a team.

Bert: So it is a delicate balance they need to keep. It’s almost a hybrid relationship.

John: That’s right, I think the relationship of the senior pastor and the board chair starts there. As I have told almost every board chairman I have worked with: ‘Our relationship is probably the most important relationship in the church, and therefore the adversary will probably do as much damage as he can so we have to work at our relationship really hard.’

Bert: I think that is such a crucial thing. I would guess that is probably true in Christ-centered organizations too.

David: Yes, I would echo what John has said. When situations develop like he has described, typically it is because the board member does not know what his responsibilities are, and the organization has not clarified areas of accountability. For example: who has the authority for different areas. So assumptions are made or maybe in some cases nobody has authority in those areas. That’s why it so important to have roles of authority and responsibility clearly written out so as to avoid confusion, Plus when you bring on new board members you can present something to them in writing that will hopefully prevent difficult situations from occurring.

Bert: We need to move off this first mark but before we do, what are a couple of things which from your experiences are really critical to not having a board move into that realm of dysfunction? So that they are clear with their roles and responsibilities? What would be a couple of tools?

John: I would say that we have to all understand, ‘What is a Christian Leader?’. A lot of the dysfunction is when you get into issues of power and control. If we can come together to say first

and foremost: ‘We are servants, we are here to serve God first of all, we here to serve the Body and we are here to serve each other.’

Bert: So that’s not just understood?

John: No, because a lot of men I’ve worked with on boards come out of a world where many of them are leaders. That is why we elect them to our boards, because they are established leaders. But their understanding of leadership in the world where they work is different to the idea of leadership in Christian organizations. Sometimes board members find it difficult to make this switch in their thinking. Also if a leader is not experiencing success in leadership in his work he may look at the church as an easier place for him to exercise leadership and control. Foundationally we have to look carefully at our definition of leader starting with Mark 10:45.

David: I think an important tool is being extremely, extremely intentional about who you bring on a board, and then make sure there is some training. For example in the business world, people who serve on a board expect to have a job description, and before they join the company board they are told this is why you are on the board, this is what is expected of you. Often in churches and Christ-centered organizations people join the board and they are just not clear about why they are there and what they are supposed to do. They may ask: ‘How do I know if I am being effective? How do I know if I am fulfilling my responsibilities?’ So it is really important that on a frequent basis the board pause and talk about: ‘Why are we here?’

Bert: Absolutely! So spell it out and make sure we get the Biblical and theological pieces correct. Well, there is much more that we will talk about that’s a great start on the first mark which is that boards need to have an accurate understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Now kind of like the great commandments where we have one that says love the Lord, and another one that says love people we have two great commandments here. We just did the first one but the second is kind of like it. That is, that a good board, an effective board, is mission focused. So let’s take a different route for just a moment. What does a board look like when they are not mission focused?

John: I think that one of the issues is that a non-mission focused board will be focused on bringing a budget instead of a ministry plan, they will get stuck talking about less important matters and forget what the church’s ministry is really all about.

Bert: So how do we get at this ministry focus which is really highly important?

John: We need to help the board think about this by going back to asking: ‘What is our mission? What is our vision? What are our strategies?’ Thus we lift our language from the ordinary. So we are not bringing a budget, we are not having an annual budget meeting. Instead we are bringing a vision we are saying: ‘Here’s what it costs, are we onboard with the vision?’ That’s a radical departure for a lot of churches who are putting these things in front of the vision and missing the point. I don’t want people arguing with whether we can afford it or discussing what percentage increase over last year’s giving we will need. But: ‘Is this the vision we believe God has given us?’ If we believe the vision then we are going to support it. That gets back to making sure that the board is

mission /vision focused.

Bert: It sounds like that if you are not careful everything sinks to the lowest common denominator which may well be money.

John: Right. I think just about every church has a mission statement. We didn't necessarily invent it we were given it by God so we are all on the same mission. But I am surprised how many don't think beyond that to ask: 'So what is our particular vision, what is our dream, why has God put this church here for this time, for what purpose, and what are the strategies that are going to help get us there?' Most churches don't necessarily ask those questions so their language gets reduced because there is a void there.

Bert: Do the evangelists you work with struggle with this same thing David?

David: Yes I think it's a struggle for Christ centered organizations in general where the leader assumes that everybody knows what the vision and the mission is. They think that because it is in all the literature and because the person has joined the board they will know what the organization's vision and mission are. This is not always the case. I've seen that on church boards that I've served on, some people don't really understand the mission of the church. You would think that they would understand as they are a member of the church, they are there every Sunday, they are at the annual business meetings but they don't understand. Mission needs to drive everything a board does. Mission should drive the agenda of board meetings. I don't think you can repeat enough what the mission is. I agree with John that if you don't do that, boards, especially boards made up to male leaders, it seems to be more of male tendency, they want to drift into money, into budgets. I think a sign of dysfunction on a board is when the majority of a board meeting is a discussion on money.

**2. Mission, Vision, Strategy and Objectives:** Bert: Well, in our previous discussion in terms of roles and responsibilities that has the feeling of them drifting down into the management pieces instead of that higher perspective and moving the whole thing forward. So vision does what, mission does what for an organization? What does it primarily do?

John: Well I think that the mission says: 'Why are we here?' and the vision says: 'Where are we going?'. The strategies ask: 'What is our game plan /how?' and the objectives gets down into: 'Who, when and where?'

Bert: Can you take us through that again? That's very good. Take the vision and walk right through it.

John: The mission, which we don't have to create, it is given to us by God, asks the question WHY? Why is the church here? We know pieces of that: we are here to worship God; we are here to reach lost people; we are here to disciple; we are here to love one another. But the vision forces us to think beyond the obvious to where, where are we going; what do we dream; what do we want to look like in 5 years/ 10 years?



Bert: So this is God's place for us.

John: What is the reason for this church at this time? Just like in our own personal lives; we all have the same mission: to glorify God. But if I ask you what's your dream for your life? It's going to be different from my dream, which is great. We don't want to have the same dreams. But even there when we've answered that question, we shouldn't just file it away. We need to ask: 'How are we going to see that dream become a reality?' Once we start agreeing together as a board and staff those are the things that ought to drive what we are doing instead of other lesser things.

Bert: Including giving us points of assessment in terms of how we are doing.

John: Yes although you can't get to assessment until you've answered these questions.

David: Often times I think boards are good at explaining: "This is what we do." And they give you a list of activities but they can't tell you why they are doing those things. That comes back to mission. They need to answer the 'Why' question first and then discuss what it is we do. What we do is in response to the 'Why?' issue.

Bert: Now you have a particular challenge because I would guess that for you and for many of the evangelists you work with that their board members come and go. They are not in church every Sunday with the evangelist of course. So how would you keep them linked to the mission? That seems like a particular challenge.

David: I do believe that most people join the board of an evangelistic team or an evangelist because: one, they are passionate about evangelism about seeking and saving the lost. Often times they are passionate as well about the evangelist, the founder of the organization and they want to help him reach as many people as possible for Jesus Christ. Again where the dysfunction can come in is when that passion doesn't translate into helping this evangelist accomplish his mission. I've seen it with evangelists too. It's easy to drift into a discussion on money every time an issue comes up. So these twelve marks are really applicable to evangelists and to non-profit organizations. The 'Why' question which is the mission 'Why do we exist?', 'Why are we here?' It has to drive all the decision making, all the strategic plans, the strategic direction for where the organization is going. The temptation is to drift into these peripheral areas that basically are staff work. Now for some evangelists who have very small organizations, the challenge for them is that often times their board members are also volunteers. This can be a problem to work out when the individual is being a board member and when they are being a volunteer, non-paid staff member. Sometimes you might have a board member who is also an non-salaried staff member. My counsel is to move away from that as quickly as you can. Of course every organization is different and one model does not fit all. There are hundreds of thousands of non-profit organizations in America of every different size and scope. For example there are some non-profits whose annual budget is only \$50,000 per year and there are others that have a billion dollars a year coming in. Obviously board governance issues and structure, and organization are quite different in those two organizations.

I would say with churches for example a church plant, a brand new church will have quite



different board issues than in a well-established, dynamic, growing church. Obviously board issues at a church of 50 people and a church of 1500 people will be quite different. But at some point even with a start-up entity, a smaller church or a small evangelistic team, Lord willing, there is going to be a period of some growth. During that period of growth it's so important to quickly move into solid, good governance. Frankly, I think if that doesn't happen the entity, no matter what kind of entity it is, it's not going to grow. It will always stay in that start up phase, that infant, baby phase. If it really wants to see some growth and accomplish its mission as quickly as possible it has got to move towards having a board that understands that its primary function is in the area of governance and providing that missional direction, that strategic direction.

Bert: We are going to wrap up but we have 10 more points to go!

John: Make sure there is really good communication, that we have sat down and come to an understanding together. Ensure that the congregation understands that as well so they have the right expectations. Also, with mission and vision and strategies, you really give yourself to them so you can keep coming back to them. If we, as board and staff, can get our main focus around mission, vision and strategies, that will get a sense of great purpose. Otherwise if we get reduced to minor things that's when you can start getting into issues of control. For example if you are focused on resources there is a limited amount of that.

**4. Summary:** David: In summary, healthy boards are very intentional in understanding their role. They have a proper understanding of that because you can have a wrong view of what your role is too. They have a proper understanding of their role and the mission of the organization they are serving. They are committed and dedicated to making sure that everything is about mission. A healthy board will avoid dysfunction at all costs, they will avoid micro-managing, they will avoid getting involved in issues which are actually the staff's territory. Healthy boards focus on mission, mission, mission!

Bert: So healthy boards know their roles and responsibilities and healthy boards stay focused on mission, vision, strategy and objectives and in that order.

## **B. Selecting, Evaluating and Supplying Resources**

*Healthy boards are intentional in selection process of board members and have a broad manual in place. They avoid spiritual dysfunction, monitor and evaluate results, and ensure adequate resources to accomplish the mission.*

**1. Introduction:** Bert Downs: We are back into our discussion of the Twelve Marks of a Healthy Board. In our first session we talked about the need for a board to have a clear understanding of its roles and responsibilities. And also that it stays mission focused. In this session we are going to take up five more of these marks. I'm back with John Johnson and David Jones and we hope to give you some guidance as we put together what amounts to an effective, strong board that has a pathway to follow as they grow in their own abilities and excellence. We are going to look at the third mark which is that the board evaluates and monitors results. If you were a consultant to a board now taking this on, where would you begin to help them with this one?

**2. Evaluation and Monitoring:** John: Jim Collins once said that a culture of greatness is a culture of discipline. I always remember this because a good board is a disciplined board. A culture discipline requires some metrics so you know where you are. People ask me, ‘How is your church?’ I can say that it is great but what am I basing that on? Most ministries have never really tried to figure that out, so recently we sat down to try to come up with some metrics. Metrics that would establish whether we are meeting our aims, to look at what we are aiming for and what are the parts of that. Also who is going to do it, how is going to be done, how are going to report that and what will be the implications for our decision making?

Bert: How do you distinguish metrics from goals?

John: They kind of shade into one another. Metrics are where you’re saying, ‘How often do we get second time visitors?’ ‘Will people come back a second time?’ That’s a good metric. We might say that we are just interested in how many guests we get but if they don’t come back that tells you something. So I suppose that at the same time that you are looking at these metrics you are also saying what would be your goals. We might say that we would love to see 75% of first time visitors become second time visitors. So it moves naturally into that. But the first thing to establish is the non-negotiable metrics. Every church has to figure those out. We recently came up with about 12 or so. We said here are the metrics; we want to measure our church by these standards. Thus we can create a culture of discipline.

Bert: So give us a taste of just a couple of those metrics

John: Well one indicator is what percentage of people are giving. That’s an important metric. If only 30% of people are giving financially, that means that 70% are not really committed to the organization. Another indicator is attendance, also how many people are getting engaged in small groups? I talked to a pastor yesterday who pastors a church of 9,000 and he gave me an astounding figure, 90% of the people who go to his church are in small groups. The point is that when you can get people at that level; it means that they are going to stay with the church and be committed. So what he and his church establish as a key metric, is not just how many people are coming to church and what the growth rate is but how many people are staying. A big part of that is how many people are in small groups.

Bert: When you can report on those kinds of things that helps the board focus on the big picture level.

John: It also keeps them happy!

Bert: And that is important! David what does this look like in your situation?

David: I am surprised how often ministries and churches don’t have measurements of success. They might have a dynamic mission statement and if you were to ask them how they are doing towards their mission statement they would say that they are doing great. How do they know this? They can’t give you specific measurements against specific goals. It is important for the board

member to know what is being measured. I don't think the board member has to do all the measuring or get bogged down in all the little details. But at the board level the board should be aware that there are measurements of success. They should ask, 'How will we know if we are accomplishing our mission?' There should be certain, very specific things that can be quantified as progress toward achieving your mission. I don't know if we think this is not Biblical; after all there is a book in the Bible called Numbers! But it seems like we have this fear of wanting to quantify ministry. Yet having those metrics, having those measurable goals is the best way to know if you are hitting the target or not. So you know if you are moving in the right direction towards achieving your mission.

John: Sometimes I get criticism as people say that we are starting to sound like a corporation. They tell me that God wasn't into numbers to which I reply well he actually wrote a book called Numbers. Actually God pays attention to a lot of measurements. In fact one day, so it says in Scripture, we leaders will stand to give an account (Hebrews 13:17). This tells us that God must have some metric. The Bible says: 'Let not many of you become teachers knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.' So once you start looking at Scripture you see metrics everywhere. You don't want to establish artificial ones but ones that are Scripture based. So while we are interested in how many people are coming to Christ; what we really want to know is how many are becoming disciples. This is because Jesus sent us out not to make decisions but to make disciples. We've got to make sure that our metrics are reflecting what God is mandating.

Bert: In my world which is a 'work with church' world I often am accused of caring only about numbers. By the way the book of Acts is filled with numbers so the Early Church kept track of numbers. I just always say that if you can't measure it you probably aren't doing it.

John: I think sometimes it really becomes an excuse to not be held accountable. Actually as we have started to get much more serious it's scary, it's risky, because in our reporting we might say: 'You know things are really flat here.' This forces you to make some potentially hard decisions. But then again that is what we are supposed to be doing.

David: I think what you just said Bert, is so important because what you measure says a lot about your priorities. Again the board needs to be involved in setting the agenda for what we are going to measure because that says everything about the priorities of this board.

Bert: Well our third point was: evaluate and monitor results. Our next point is that a healthy board helps to ensure adequate resources to accomplish the mission. Now there is a little riskiness in getting involved in resources but let's explore that. What does a healthy board do in terms of helping get resources for an entity?

David: Well I think the budget needs to reflect what the mission is. I am amazed at often there is a disjoint between a final budget and the mission of an organization. I passionately believe boards should not be bogged down with money. Money shouldn't be the focus of a board agenda. But money is very important. You have to have resources to accomplish your mission and those resources can be cash, they can gift in kind, also people are a resource. So the board has a huge role in assuring

that this church or this organization has the resources it needs so it can accomplish the mission. Everything comes back to mission again. When you look at the budget of a Christ centered organization you should be able to quickly determine the priorities of this organization. The budget should say everything about those priorities. But the board also has a responsibility to make sure there is a proper fund raising plan, a fund development plan in place, that there are policies in place that ensure ethical behavior /professionalism. Also we must do everything properly, we need to walk in the light on money matters, and we need to be open and honest. We should be accountable to our various constituents when it comes to money. You want to make sure that you have embraced Biblical, godly principles in how you handle money and resources. But a huge responsibility of the board is to make sure that the right kind of fund development is in place so that the organization will have the resources it needs to accomplish its mission.

Bert: So we are back to that absolute connection between the mission and the resources that go with it, for it to happen. Board members: they are responsible for a lot of things that David already outlined for us, very capably. Are board members givers? What's their responsibility there?

John: They should be the prime givers. Giving is saying: 'I really believe in what we are doing.' If a board member is not sacrificial and generous you have to question whether he is really behind this ministry or behind you as a staff. This raises the question of whether we should be aware of what others give. There are different schools of thought. Probably because of my own concern, that if I know what you give, I may treat you differently from someone else. Because of this I have not historically done that. Though I unashamedly say to my board I expect you to be the example of what we are doing here in terms of giving. None of us as leaders can call our church to be sacrificial and generous if we aren't living that. A lot of the tension between staff and board tends to be when staff are saying that here is the ministry and that they have faith and can do this and we just have to believe in a big God whose arm is not too short. But the board member who is working out of his own context has to be very careful of making sure that we are responsible not reckless. Sometimes it creates tension and you want to get everybody together and say we all have to believe in a big God, that God can do anything, but we also have to be really responsible with our reporting and where we are at. But it's an ongoing tension I find in my ministry all of the time.

David: Well I tell nominating committees and the evangelists we work with: avoid putting someone on your board who has an allergy to fundraising or really odd or peculiar views or notions of money. Why would you want someone like that on your board? It's just going to create havoc on your board. Through the years I've thought a lot about this. Board members must support the solicitation efforts, the fund development efforts of the organization. There are lots of ways to do this. They can introduce the organization to other potential investors; they can provide contact information for people who they think are passionate about what the organization is doing. Board members should be willing to say thank you when called upon to call someone to say thank you for investing in what we are doing. They can host events. Village church recently did a massive capital campaign during the recession and the Lord provided. But a lot of the pledges of money were raised in house group meetings and those meetings were hosted by board members. Board members can

also go after ‘gift in kind’ revenue. The solution to every need in a Christ centered organization or church isn’t always cash. Board members can also get gift in kind; they can be involved in negotiating bids to get a cheaper price. There are lots of ways boards can be involved in generating resources for a non-profit or for a church. However boards also need to be involved in forming policies. I had the leader of a non-profit organization call me recently and ask if I would do a certain thing. He said he was pretty sure it was legal. I said that just because it’s legal doesn’t mean it’s something a Christ centered organization should be doing. So a board has a responsibility as well to correct the boundaries, to help shape some of those fund development policies and procedures. They need to make sure the organization is behaving in a very Biblical and a godly manner. Something might be fine with the tax department or the law but on closer examination you would say: ‘I’m not sure that this follows a good Biblical principle.’

**3. Avoid Spiritual Dysfunction:** Bert: So we have metrics which are those important measurements of accountability and that carries over into the fiscal area that we have been talking about. The boards are responsible to find resources to invest in this thing that they believe in. The next mark of a healthy board, I think, ties in with that only it’s a little broader it’s the mark that healthy boards avoid spiritual dysfunction at all costs. This is one that might need an example or two in the negative direction. What do we mean by that?

John: Well boards can be like a family with a lot of dysfunction going on. Maybe there are ongoing power struggles, mistrust between one another or even dislike. Some of the dysfunction I have observed is because we, as Christians, don’t know how to disagree very well and this is where it really surfaces at a board level. We don’t know how to disagree without, at times, bringing God into the issue. So a board member may say: ‘I am convinced before God, God has laid on my heart, I believe this what we must do’. This begins to paralyze the discussion because if you are seeing the issue very differently you are put into the position of arguing with God. So a lot of times people will feel strongly in terms of disagreement when what we need is a board chairman who says: ‘You know we are not all here to agree on everything.’ I remember one of our board chairmen would invite us to ‘Put our thoughts on the table, let’s disagree’. Because actually when we come and engage in discussion that is when we make some of our best decisions. But know that in disagreement it is not personal and secondly I have had to say sometimes, and it sounds awkward, ‘But can we leave God out of it’. Meaning, of course we want God in all of what we do but let’s not position ourselves to suggest God is on my side of the argument in this matter.

Bert: Well it sounds like maturity is a big deal in this thing.

David: That is where the chairman plays a really important role in making sure that non-issues or issues that are strictly a matter of taste don’t hold up board decisions. Too often non-issues are allowed to come into board meetings which have nothing to do with the agenda or with the mission of the church or the non-profit organization. The chairman has a critical role in not allowing those types of discussions to surface because they will create dysfunction. It saddens me to see how often huge strife and dysfunction can enter into a church or Christ centered organization over something that is strictly a matter of taste, something that is really a non-issue. Anyone who has



served on a board where that happens frequently knows how unpleasant that is.

John: Sometimes what you are seeing surface is deeper underneath, possibly an issue of control and who has got the power.

Bert: What might be a couple of things that are really crucial: to not just stop the dysfunction but actually invest in your spiritual leader so that they can control these sorts of circumstances? What do you do?

John: That's where your personal relationship comes in. You need to plan your calendar so that you are regularly seeing all these leaders, and building relationships. Sometimes someone will say, 'Thanks for having lunch but I'm sure you had something you wanted to talk about'. Lot of times I will say that I just want to get to know them. Because the more we get to know one another the more we can engage in trusting. I will approach something differently when I feel I know somebody's heart. But I think the reason for the dysfunction is when we get away from something boards need to become much more a part of and that is prayer. Sometimes we have had to say that we know we are going to spend the next 40 minutes talking about a deficit issue, what if we spent 40 minutes on our knees? Saying; 'God, this is far bigger than us, this is nothing to you, but we have no wisdom except to say God we need a break through we need you to do something'. I know that comes at the risk of trying to sound super spiritual but boards need to realize they are a spiritual entity. Too many times we are trying to tackle things without asking is there a word from God? We need to ask what God has been saying to us in recent weeks, from the pulpit. If two weeks ago God said, 'If you have the faith to move a mountain', that should enter into the discussions. God obviously is speaking, then we need to move to get on our knees and honestly say: 'God with all of our wisdom we are totally lost.' I think at times that is when God really does something. I always remember at Village (church) when we were wrestling through a particular issue and one board member said: 'You know I think the issue is that our egos are out of control and I think we need to humble ourselves.' We all got on our knees and we prayed and asked God for forgiveness. It was radically different after that.

**4. Have a Board Policy Manual:** Bert: We are going to move to our sixth mark and this is one where it is important to have that board policy manual in place. That seems kind of dry but that's a crucial tool, right?

David: It is crucial. I think it is part of understanding your role and responsibility as a board member. This first struck me a few years ago. I've been with the Palau Association 33 years and a few years ago our board was debating a certain policy and suddenly it occurred to me: 'I think 25 years ago we already answered that question and passed the policy! It must be in the minutes somewhere.' The great thing about having a board policy manual that clearly articulates the vision, the mission, the values, the beliefs is that we can ask if everything is lining up against those. Then we should have, in one organized place the governance policies that we have passed and adopted so we can, as a board, move towards accomplishing our mission. A board policy manual should clarify beliefs, vision, mission, objectives. But also it should clarify chain of command and who has



authority in certain matters. If that's not clarified then dysfunction can enter in when multiple constituents think that they have the authority in a certain area. There should be in the board manual a job description for the board and for the senior leader. It should talk about committees. I am a big believer in board committees. I think that a board can accomplish a lot of its work very effectively through talented, gifted people, on that board, operating either in ongoing or ad hoc committees. A board policy manual should specifically define staff responsibilities and state which is staff work and which is board work. You need to have in there your financial policy because a board has a huge fiscal responsibility for the entity that they are serving. Those financial policies should be in the manual as well as fund development policies. The great thing about having some sort of board manual is that as the board does its work; as it passes new policies it all goes into the manual and it all right there in one book. I think what happens too often without that, is that someone will have to search back through previous minutes to find out what was decided say five years ago. The manual basically helps the organization be more professional, be more efficient and be more effective. The great thing about a board policy manual is that when you bring in new board members they can be handed the manual in order to see the ground rules and the game plan and how this organization works.

**5. Being Intentional In the Selection of Board Members:** Bert: It's a huge part of a word that we have been in and out of with these five marks; and that word is intentionality. The last mark says that we are very intentional in the selection of board members; that is not something that we just do carelessly. John what is your approach to selecting board members?

John: I think there is a certain health in that selections are not made by the board itself unless there is certain amount of ingrown-ness, which can lead to mistrust. I think it is something where you invite congregational participation. So the congregation has a voice but it's also important that it is carefully led and that it is really clear what we are looking for. I try to say to our nominating group; 'It's critical first of all that there are character qualifications that match 1 Timothy 3'. A lot of times that is where the nomination process stops but I think you need to say: God obviously gave us clear gifts. Romans 12 speaks of a leadership gift. It only makes sense that this person also needs to be gifted in leadership. I've been on boards where people have wonderful character but they're not leaders and they just take up space, frankly, most of the time. But on the other hand you don't want someone with a great gift of leadership that doesn't have good character. We need to look at the values and the gifting, then that gifting in leadership also. We want to look for someone that has the gift of wisdom or discernment. I think those are so critical as pieces, along with leadership. Then I think the other matter that is very important is that the person is committed to the vision, the mission, the staff and the senior pastor. Because if someone is not committed to the pastor, even though they have all the other qualifications, it will be a disaster later on. Now when I say that; I am not looking for 'yes men' I want people who will say that they want the pastor to succeed.

Bert: Now, David, with your evangelists and non-profit groups you don't have a congregation to elect board members so how would you go about it?

David: I agree it needs to be intentional. It needs to be an extremely intentional process. In

a church you have an opportunity to see someone in action in the congregation. They may serve on another committee, they may lead a life group, they might be a Sunday school teacher. There is an opportunity for people to get to know this person and for them to decide whether or not they would be a good fit for the board. With most non-profit groups they don't have that opportunity. So you need to find ways to get to know the candidate, and to see the candidate in action. I believe you need to get to know the candidate's spouse because I believe an effective board member can be neutralized by a resentful spouse. They may think that their spouse is already over-extended and too busy and now has joined a board. I have seen it happen. So there needs to be a very intentional process, you need to be very deliberate, take your time. It is certainly easier to get rid of a dysfunctional, unproductive board member before they are brought on the board because once they are on the board you are probably going to have to wait until their term is finished and that could be three years. There should be a nominating process that the board and the nominating committee has agreed upon and follow carefully. In the non-profit world there are ways to get to know board candidates. You can get to know them through your events, through your ministry activities and volunteering. For the Palau Association most of our board members came out of our crusades and our festivals. We get to observe them for a year or two years, leading the body of Christ in a particular city. So there is a great opportunity to get really close to them and their spouse and family, to be able to know their hearts and to build team work and trust. So there are ways to get to know people before you bring them onto a board.

Bert: So the message is really know your people, take the time to get to know them.

David: I had an evangelist a while back who came to me and asked me to describe the ideal board member. I had to think about it, then as John said there is a Scriptural qualification in any Christ centered organization especially a church. But look for people that love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. Obviously they should be passionate about the mission and agree with the values of the organization. We need people who have big faith and are people of prayer. The last point: the right way to avoid dysfunction is to surround all the decisions with the right procedure but then surround it with prayer. It's amazing how often prayer gets ignored. You want people who see the 'big picture' and who are encouragers. No one wants to be around negative people on a board. We need people who think critically but don't have a critical spirit that's important. The one that I talk about with the evangelists is how the new board member is going to fit with the other board members. I know there is a lot of talk about diversity and getting people with all kinds of different backgrounds, different opinions and different life experiences. That's fine as long as the board members can work together and understand each other. If you introduce someone into this team and they don't fit together, it can create amazing dysfunction. Back to the spiritual issue you want board members who are discerning enough to know what a non-issue is. The best way to avoid unimportant issues is to recruit godly people to serve on your board who know the difference between an issue and a non-issue. Obviously you want people who bring a variety of life experiences to your board but fitting together is so important. As we mentioned earlier you don't want people on your board who are not comfortable with fund raising.

Bert: So it's: know your people, be intentional, this is an important team you are putting together and it needs to be put together very well. We've had five points in a short amount of time. We started with: a healthy board monitors their results and they ensure that there are adequate resources to keep the mission in motion and to make it work. They avoid spiritual dysfunction at all cost. We can never assume in that area; we have to be intentional there as well. Then we went to adopting the policy manual which is a critical tool in these five points we have just covered. Lastly we need to intentionally go about the business of finding those important board members who are going to move the mission forward.

## **C. Collaboration, Accountability, Discipline and Families**

Healthy boards use their meeting times efficiently to focus on priorities, and are able to objectively assess their own performance. They care enough about other churches and ministries to collaborate. They also take responsibility for overseeing the well-being of their staff and families.

### **1. Introduction**

Bert: The first session covered two very important marks: Having an accurate understanding of the role and responsibilities of board members, then making sure that we stay vision focused. The next five marks really fit in to that and filled in a lot of what we talked about. They were: evaluating and monitoring results, making sure we have metrics, help ensure that we have adequate resources to accomplish our mission, and how we do that in a right and appropriate and value driven way, avoiding spiritual dysfunction at all costs (even though we don't like to think about it, boards can face that from time to time), adopting a policy manual which is a key to caring for some of that. Then the last one we talked about is being very intentional in finding those board members in the first place.

### **2. Healthy Boards that Assess Themselves**

So with that let's step in with our eighth mark which is: healthy boards have the ability to assess their own performance and accountability. Now this is a tough job, so how do we get a board to move in to that?

David: I think that at least on an annual basis; a board should have created a safe enough environment where there is that team work and that trust, so they can assess their performance. If they have a governance committee, for example, the chairman can send out a survey. It doesn't have to be complicated but ask the question: 'How are we doing as a board? How are we performing? Are there areas where we can improve?' There are a lot of ways to survey the board. You can do something very scientific and comprehensive, or you can do something basic which is maybe just 2-4 open ended questions where the board has the opportunity to say: 'These are areas where I think we can improve, these I think we are doing well, these are our strengths that we should build upon. But maybe here are a few areas that at least as a board member, I think we've got some weakness that if we address it, we could quickly fix and turn into strength.' Boards do need to ask questions, of themselves and their members. I think in every board meeting there should be some questions

asked about their performance so they can get a healthy dialogue going. What are the questions boards should be asking? What are the trends that are impacting this ministry and how are we going to respond? Are there some threats out there to our mission that we had better deal with? Are there some opportunities that we need to seize right away?

One of the questions in performance relates to the measurables that we talked about earlier. If the board doesn't have measurables someone in the board better speak up and say: 'How do we define success and measure success on this board?' 'Are our constituents satisfied with our programs?' Most ministries, most non-profit organizations exist to meet a need in society. The board should be asking: 'How are we as a board helping this organization meet that need in society?' An obvious question for a performance evaluation (we say a board needs to be mission focused) is for the board to ask: 'Are we mission focused? If we are, why do we think we are mission focused?' I think another question a board ought to ask from time to time regarding its performance is to discuss the agendas and ask if the agendas are mission focused and if there are ways to improve our meetings by over hauling the agenda. John and I have had this discussion before. One thing I am not happy with in Christ centered organizations, is that we are more concerned about the rules of order for a meeting that we are about the Word of God. Years ago I was helping a church redo its bylaws. I wrote to several churches and I asked if they would send me copies of their bylaws and I was shocked at how many bylaws of churches said: 'This church will be governed by Roberts' Rules of Order'. I thought: 'Oh my goodness! I mean this is a document that was written back in the 1800s by a British parliamentarian, and we are saying this is how a Christ centered organization is going to be governed? So there needs to be a healthy, safe environment in a board where they can ask these kinds of questions and assess how they are doing. One of the easiest ways to do it is if they have an executive committee or a governance committee that will at least on an annual basis, send out some sort of survey of the members that will ask: "How are we doing? How are we performing?"

Bert: So this is important, you do this regularly?

David: Yes I think as a minimum it needs to be an annual exercise.

Bert: David used a word twice that seems to be important in this and it's the word safety. That there needs to be safety. How is that gained and what does it feel like in a church setting?

John: I think alongside formal assessment is getting together with people, especially when you sense something is not right. Having the kind of safe relationship where you can say: 'You know as I've watched you and your posture on the board it seems like you're not with us and there's been a mounting frustration over the last 3 months. Could we talk about that?' Hopefully you have the kind of safe relationship where a person can open up and say; 'Well frankly I feel like people don't listen to me or the direction we are going here really concerns me.' Those are things you want to know about and not allow a problem to develop. The other thing is an annual retreat as a board. I would like to see it happening twice a year. That becomes a time, without a lot of structure, when you can sit down as a board and say: 'How are we doing?' Not only doing that as a group but individually.

Bert: Now these twelve marks have grown out of your collective experiences and I'm interested as we look down to the next one that you say that a healthy board encourages collaboration with other churches and ministries. We've talked a lot about what boards do in the non-profit and the church sector, which seems to be pretty internalized, and now you are saying there is an external aspect to it. So take me there; help our viewers understand the importance of that.

John: I think one of the challenges for a church as it gets larger is that they can begin to say: 'We really don't need anyone else. We've got our men's groups, we don't need camps we've got our own camping. We don't need to be partnering in the area with Luis Palau or other organizations we are really doing pretty well.' I think a healthy board as it grows realizes: 'Actually as we grow we have the potential to play a more significant role in the community.' The only way we are going to have a significant role is to have key partnerships just as we do globally, we need to do the same thing locally. We can't be partners with everyone. By partnership we are saying: 'We can't do this without you and actually a lot of times we are going to defer to you because you know this area a lot better than we do.' But also it's coming to that mutual need, finding the select partners and saying that we are going to go with them but as we get larger we need to see that becomes actually more important not less important.

Bert: So that keeps your board in a healthy place in terms of not being too internalized, getting exposed to the ways other people operate other opportunities, and those kinds of things. Now how does that fit into your situation David?

David: Healthy boards think that way. In communities, in society there are a lot of churches and Christ centered organizations that have shared objectives. So why not work together, collaborate, you are probably more likely to be successful in accomplishing the objectives when working in partnership, in collaboration. I think there is strength in numbers obviously. But when you try to do things as an island or in isolation, it's just a tougher road. I think for churches, especially smaller churches, when they are able to partner in that work, on a shared objective, with other churches it's a great visual picture of the fact that there are a lot of people in this community that love Jesus Christ. I think it also brings down denominational barriers that are easy to have up. Here in Portland, Oregon there has been a huge effort in recent years to foster, stimulate, and promote collaboration amongst the entire faith based community. This is accomplishing some amazing things in our town to the point where we've now gained the respect and the partnership with civic leaders and with government who are now saying: 'The churches are great partners they do things well. When we reach out and work with the churches we know that the job will be done, it will be done well, it will be right, it will be done with quality.' That elevates Jesus Christ in the community. For too long we have allowed ourselves to be marginalized. Now obviously with spiritual warfare there are a lot of enemies out there who have marginalized us. But part of this is that we have allowed ourselves to be marginalized by not embracing this notion of partnership and collaboration and recognizing that we are a large faith based community and that we when work together we can accomplish a lot more, more effectively and we can accomplish a lot more in a

sustainable manner as well.

John: I think I would add that I think Portland is a pretty unique story in this. It's a great thing God is doing in bringing us all together. My observation is that you need a catalyst. It's hard for different pastors to say that they should do something as they can tend to see themselves in a bit of a competitive way. We need a catalyst like the Palau organization which asks everyone to meet together as opposed to an individual pastor asking others to come to his church. This does not work near as well. A lot of the story of what has going on here is that you have had a para-church ministry (a ministry that works alongside the church) that has really become a catalyst and it is doing some amazing things.

David: I think the key there is for the Christ centered, non-profit organizations to have the attitude and the mentality: we work with the church, through the church, and for the church, our people are church people, our staff have put roots down in a local church, we have local church ministries, we are here to serve the local church. Again where dysfunction can come into the faith based community is when you have faith based organizations who try to operate as if they are not part of the local church or they don't need the local church or they are not there to serve the local church. I think here in Portland a lot of the non-profit organizations that are faith based, are led by men and women who really are church people. They believe passionately in the local church.

Bert: There is one little piece of this that we need to surface for just a 30 second comment. It seems to me that there is a chance, particularly in the catalyst church arrangement, that you could have board members look at the collaboration potential and say: 'But that isn't going to help us grow our church.'

John: Or the other is: 'Well that might demand resources that will take away from our church. We are kind of resource starved as it is.' So part of it is that you have to go back to the mission and the vision and say if our mission is to reach the city we should be praying for Portland not just our church. We just have to go back to who we are.

Bert: It doesn't surprise me at all that we are back to where we started and that mission focus becomes so critical.

### **3. Discipline**

David: It's important for that board to understand that in those collaborative efforts, networking and partnerships, it opens up new and unique opportunities for the constituents, or church members really to be blessed. It will get them out of their comfort zone to get out there and serve the community. That does a lot for a local church because once they are on fire for that service and volunteering, Lord willing, you would hope that fire would come back into the congregation.

Bert: This takes us back to the foundational things that you have told us about. The word that comes up, and it comes up in the next mark is: that boards are disciplined. So how are boards disciplined?



John: One area that is critical, that keeps our board disciplined, is to have a clear agenda. An agenda that surfaces in a different venue, such as our executive committee. We have sorted it out, we have got the input from everyone but once you come to the board; 'This is our agenda' and we stay focused on it. The other discipline is to say we can only give so much time, sort of like we are doing here in this discussion. We can only give so much time to it here. But I was part of a board in the Netherlands. It was one of my worst experiences because we had an agenda that wasn't disciplined and because of that the meeting often went to 11, 11:30pm. Of course I have come to conclusion that anything much past 9:30pm is a worthless experience! When we got to 11 or 11:30 the board chair would say: 'Now is there anything else?' Of course that's where things would come up when people are tired and you're tired emotionally, and other issues would come that you had no rational or emotional preparation for. As I look back now it was a huge mark of an undisciplined board. I now really appreciate a board and a board chairman that say: 'Here is our agenda we are staying right on it. If another issue comes up we can look at that maybe in the future but here is where we are going', or they say: 'We have had enough time on this it's time to come to a decision.

Bert: This chairman is really an important piece of this, isn't he?

John: Huge! And this is where again that relationship with the senior pastor is so vital, where you're both approaching this together.

Bert: It's not that you are 'yes' people to each other but have a relationship that allows you to move these things together.

John: Sometimes on a board we might notice that someone is dominating the discussion. That is where a good disciplined chairman says: 'Thank you we've heard a lot, now I want to bring some of the others into this conversation.'

Bert: And don't ask the question: 'Is there anything else?' Particularly at 11 o'clock at night!!

David: Well, a disciplined board doesn't allow the meeting to be 'hijacked'. That's where the chairman plays such an important role. But the leader, the senior pastor, the lead pastor, the head of the organization can help the chairman as well in that regard. But in unhealthy boards the meetings do oftentimes get hijacked by hidden agenda, by something that is strictly a matter of personal taste that has nothing to do with the mission. Everything comes back to point number 2: the mission! A disciplined board is mission focused, the agendas are mission focused and the discussions in the board meeting are mission focused. Sometimes it's easy for boards to use 3 hours just listening to reports. I do think it's important to have reporting, boards have to know what is going on. But most board reporting could be done with written materials sent to the board members in advance so they can read. They don't need to have a 45 minute presentation on something that could be easily understood and covered in a simple one page memo read before the meeting. I think one of the reasons, often times, that boards don't get around to the 'big picture' issues, and the mission and strategic direction, and the important stuff, is because they have just spent 3 hours reading reports that could have easily been read prior to the board meeting. That is part of the discipline as well: that you are going to come to the meeting prepared, that the chairman is going to come prepared. So

there needs to be some preparation time. Some boards only meet quarterly (4 times a year). Those 3-4 hours you've got together are vital, they are critical, so you have got to come prepared.

Bert: So a couple of steps to preparing a really good agenda? It seems to me that a good agenda, like the policy manual, is a driver piece in this.

John: I think stepping back and looking at the vision and the mission we need to ask if the agenda reflects that. Then asking what are the key components that we need to cover? We need to make sure that we don't put so many things in the agenda that we don't give it the necessary time and attention. You might just have to say that we don't have time; we'll cover this next month.

#### **4. Families**

Bert: So a couple of keys: limiting the reporting part means you have more amount time for business and then you need to prioritize to make sure you are right on track there. That's powerful and I know we could say a dozen more things about this, which we will have to hold for another time! Let's move into the next mark which is related, as it involves staff and families and other kinds of things that are a huge part of this ministry that we have been talking about. Healthy boards take responsibility for the care of their staff and their families. How important is that?

John: It's critical. It's in the best interest of the board that the staff is healthy. To a certain extent it is a responsibility they need to take, to say: 'Are you getting adequate rest? Do you have someone you are accountable to? How is your wife? How is your family? Are we providing enough for you so that your wife doesn't have to work? (If we prefer she not work) or do you have to work a second job because we are not adequately taking care of you?' The board needs to pay attention to the costs of living. If the pastor or leader is getting a bit dull (low) the board needs to make sure that they are providing so the leader can get to a conference, to get away for refreshment. I think that boards that really serve their staff well watch those things and they pay attention.

David: Healthy boards need to understand that one of the responsibilities in caring for the CEO, the president, the lead pastor, the senior pastor is the compensation package. The board needs to approve the compensation of the top leaders, the officers of the organization. The board has a huge role in making sure that there is a fair pay and benefit program in place for the senior leadership and the entire staff. The board doesn't necessarily set the salaries of the staff but they create a mind set, a culture within the organization that the board expects to have a fair compensation and benefit program in place that they are going to approve. Part of that are salary surveys, seeing what is reasonable within market conditions. I am appalled when I hear that a church or Christ centered organization has made a decision to balance their budget by cutting staff salaries. They might say: 'We are going to have, across the board 30% salary cuts for the staff; we are going to eliminate benefits so as to balance the budget.' I just don't think that is the way a Christ centered organization behaves or treats its staff. I also think that the board should make sure there is some sort of salary chart in place to give some guidance to the leadership when they are setting salaries.

Personally I prefer a ranking system where certain jobs and tasks and positions have a rank;

then within that rank there is a salary range. Based on performance, and reviews, and how a person is doing, they are compensated accordingly. I also think that within Christ centered churches and organizations if you are serious about measuring what you do, if a member of staff is exceeding expectations, performing well, far exceeding metrics and measurables, there should be a bonus system in place. This encourages and blesses them and it tells their spouse and children that their family member is really valued and important. It saddens me, but I think that within the marriages of a lot of people in ministry; there are spouses who are very resentful because they see how their partner has been treated in regards to pay and even little things like expressions of appreciation. It's not all about pay; part of caring for the staff is making sure that we have a mindset, a culture where we express appreciation of one another.

Bert: So healthy boards create a healthy staff family which has huge implications for the mission.

John: If boards are operating at an elder level to a certain extent there should be 'mutual pastoring'. A lot of times people say: 'Well who pastors the pastor?' To a certain extent boards should be coming alongside the pastor (or pastors). If the boards say that they don't know if that is their role then whose role is it and actually, your role is to be an elder.

Bert: That's a great term: 'mutual pastoring' that will take place in that regard. Well we have one more measure that we promised ourselves we would talk about and it is that healthy boards generate a favorable public opinion. How do we help boards do that and why is it important? Sometimes I think this part is missed.

John: In your essential meetings as a congregation, for example your annual meeting its vital that the congregation sees the board and its staff genuinely enjoying one another. That they stand together with the feeling: 'We are so excited about the vision. We hope you are with us!' As opposed to walking in and the 'Republicans' are sitting here and the 'Democrats' are sitting here! Or the board is here and the staff is over here. But the congregation should not only see a unified posture but a genuine love for one another. It is like when you see a staff who genuinely love each other, that communicates such health and creates a lot of unity in the body. I think when you go to the extra level and see the board and staff posture that way it is huge!

## **5. Accountability**

David: I think that is important for the constituents in the church, for the congregation, for a non-profit organization to see the board serving, involved, engaged, active, leading the way, setting the example in these areas we are discussing. They have a responsibility to lift up the standards and to create an environment that is committed to service and to leading the way Jesus would lead in humility and in godliness, putting others first, crucifying their ego at the cross. I was at a convention once and someone said: 'What would you do differently if you were in charge of this convention?' I said: 'I would put a banner over the registration desk: "Check (leave) your ego in here"! Boards need to see themselves as credibility builders in the community. We see ourselves not only as ambassadors to represent the mission of this organization but we are going to do everything we can

to lift up and build the credibility of the organization in the community.

Bert: So the board is not above and outside the ministry, instead, it is really vitally linked to the ministry. In many respects it is the ministry. It embodies everything.

John: I like this word ‘champions’. The body looks at the board and the board is saying that they are champions (the ones who ‘champion’ or make famous the mission of the organization) instead of an out of sight, out of mind, nondescript group over here.

David: I think it helps if they have the attitude that they are the ‘face’ of the organization.

Bert: Well, we have had to move fast through the 12 marks but before we wrap them up let’s just do one more thing. What is a memorable thing you would want to leave our viewers with? Out of all the marks; what do you think is the most important thing we have touched on?

David: Well serving on a board of a Christ centered organization is not only a calling but it also a privilege and it should be very satisfying and rewarding. In the faith based community these organizations exist to meet needs in society. So to be part of a board that is lifting up Jesus Christ in the community should be the most satisfying thing that you do each month. So the reason that it is not always satisfying is that these twelve marks are not being embraced. So if you want board service where you really are hitting the mark and seeing the mission accomplished in your community; I think it is really important to embrace and take seriously these twelve marks we have just been discussing.

John: It’s kind of back to where we started and that is the board that needs to own the vision and strategies. This will help ensure that at the board level meetings; we will keep coming back to those things. We need to ask: ‘How are we doing with our vision? Are we getting there? Let’s keep dreaming together’. It’s not this group separate from us doing this but we are in it together. We need to keep breaking down the walls of isolation. That’s what I see happening so much in churches where we have the board here and the staff over here and they grudgingly meet together. Instead of saying: ‘You know, we can hardly wait to get together. Because when we meet: we pray together, we eat together, we serve together, we cry together, we celebrate together.

Bert: This has been very, very good. We have covered 12 marks very quickly: beginning with understanding our roles and responsibilities, followed by being mission focused. Those were two that were foundational to everything else we talked about. From there, it was: doing evaluation, making sure that the board is involved in creating adequate resources for the mission, avoiding at all costs the spiritual dysfunctions that can plague us along the way, and adopting the policy manual that helps clarify all of the above, not just for the immediate board but for generations of boards to come. Then being intentional in picking out those key people who are going to serve this ministry as part of the board, assessing performance and accountability, getting the ‘big picture’ by encouraging collaboration and not getting too inward focused, being disciplined in what we do, taking responsibility for it and generating favorable public opinion.

