Dr. Jimmy Arthur Atkins

Leader Value Alignment: A Social Rhetorical Reading of
1 Timothy

Abstract. Beside Jesus Christ, no other New Testament leader has exerted more influence on the development of the modern Church than the Apostle Paul. A social and cultural reading of Paul's pastoral letter to Timothy reveals leadership and organizational development principles based on core values. The core values expressed in I Timothy are closely aligned with Roman society. Nonetheless, these core values provide a context for exploring values alignment in the early church and contemporary organizations. Organizational values include accountability, structure, order, and respect. By aligning these core values with leadership values such as faith, sobriety, and good behavior, new patterns of values emerge. This article argues that values alignment creates clarity of purpose, mission, and vision for leaders and followers in organizations.

Key Words: Pauline Values, Values Alignment, Leadership, Organizational Design, Social Rhetorical Criticism

* * *

A diversity of leadership and organizational models exist within the Pauline corpus describing life in the early church. In Paul's letters to the church at Corinth for example, he presupposes a leadership and organizational model based on certain gifts, or *charisma* of the Holy Spirit. Paul outlines these gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:10 as the working of miracles, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues (King James Version). Moreover, these gifts along with his doctrinal teaching concerning the Lord's Supper and baptism provided foundation for the early church.

Conversely, the Paul's letter to Timothy presents a model of the church that is more institutional than charismatic. I Timothy is considered pastoral because of its concern with leadership offices and pastoral oversight. Fitzmyer (2004) argues that I Timothy and other pastoral letters are regarded as different because they deal with the structured ministry of the early church and a concern for orthodox teaching. These letters also prescribe a church hierarchy consisting of a Bishop, Elder, and Deacon.

The shift of from a charismatic to an institutional model of the church in I Timothy is a result of social and cultural changes inside and outside of the church. Horesly and Silberman (1997) argue that as the years went by, the Roman Empire refused to vanish

and the Church began to deal with issues of justice and morality in their own communities. Brown (1997) argues that concern for orthodoxy (correct teaching) and orthopraxy (correct practices) influenced the theological discourse of the early church. The power to establish guidelines for teaching and behavior help to set Christians apart from Gnostic teachings that denied the humanity of Christ.

The diversity of Paul's writings provides important data for understanding the dynamics of Christian leadership in the 21st century. Paul's writings on marriage, spiritual gifts, the Lord's Supper, and justification by faith provide moral guidelines for how Christians ought to live today. Most important, the pastoral writings illuminate leadership and organizational design principles that are highly applicable to organizations competing in a global economy.

This essay explores I Timothy as a model for values-based leadership and values alignment in organization. Specifically, the essay explores organizational and leadership values present in the early church. To uncover these values, I use social and cultural texture analysis proposed by Vernon Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Text: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation*. According to Robbins (1996):

> "The social and cultural systems presupposed in the text may be significantly distinct from the social and cultural systems in which the interpreter himself or herself lives. Analysis and interpretation of the common social and cultural topics in a text may take and interpreter beyond his or her own presuppositions into a foreign social and cultural world of the text.

Since social and cultural texture analysis assist interpreters of sacred text to uncover the values, we will also examine the worldviews operating behind the text. The end goal is to demonstrate the use of social and cultural texture analysis to create stronger values alignment in organizations.

Paul's cultural Location

Culture refers to the values, beliefs, and attitudes that influence and shape our worldview (Henslin, 2006). Robbins (1996) asserts that cultural location is concerned with the manner in which people present their propositions, reasons, and arguments both to themselves and to other people. The cultural influence in Paul's life was his Jewish heritage. Not only is Paul Jewish, but he is a Pharisee. Philippians 3:4-5 states: "If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so…concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church"(New King James Version). Pharisees were Torah (law) abiding Jews during the days of Jesus who strictly observed the Law of Moses. Murphy (2002) explains that the Pharisees in the New Testament are very dedicated to the Torah, its interpretation, and application. "There

concerns center on Sabbath observance and table fellowship—tithing, ritual purity, and rules about with whom one may eat" (Murphy 2002, p. 232). Furthermore, the Pharisee believed in an afterlife. Acts 23:8 states: "For the Sadducees say that there is not resurrection—and no angel or spirit: but the Pharisee confess both" (New King James Version).

Since Paul, by his own admission is a Pharisee, then he also believed in the after life. The claims of early Christians on the resurrection of Jesus are not totally inconsistent with Paul's cultural heritage. Paul, on a journey to Damascus to persecute followers of Christ, was overcome by a shining light from heaven and heard a voice, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? The voice was Jesus Christ, which prompts Paul to ask the question: what do you want from me? Jesus responds by saying, "Arise and go into the City, and you will be told what you must do." From this moment on, the converted Paul became a zealous follower of Jesus Christ and perhaps his most fierce defender. In Galatians 6:17 Paul writes: "From now on, let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (New King James Version).

Pauline Authority of I Timothy

Without Paul's writings, our understanding of early church organization and Jesus Christ would be limited to the gospel accounts. Paul's letters to Timothy provides practical insight for building organizations based on core values such as accountability, respect, order, and submission. Furthermore, his writings presuppose certain values leaders should have to effectively lead based on these organizational values. These leadership values include: sound teaching, faith, patience, family, and stewardship.

However, Paul's earlier writings to the church at Corinth do not presuppose a hierarchical church structure. This raises the question as to whether or not Paul is the author of these letters. The answer to this question rests on one's view of scripture as divinely inspired and acceptance of biblical authority (Brown, 1997). While I will not argue the authenticity of Paul's letter to Timothy, I will point out the differences in these letters with Paul's earlier writings. Also, for clarity, Pauline authorship will be assumed throughout this article.

The missionary charge Paul gives to Timothy and Titus is to appoint leaders whose values are aligned with the values of the church. To Timothy, Paul writes: "Hold fast the form of sound words, which though has heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (King James Version). Titus 1: 5 states: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order, the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee" (King James Version). Titus 3:1 states: "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work" (King James Version).

Social and Cultural Criticism of Women and Wealth

Women keep silent

The shift from a generally charismatic to an institutional Church placed more limitations on the role of women during worship. Dewey (1998) asserts that in the first decades of Christianity, women and men held leadership roles irrespective of age or sex. "Paul recognized women leaders, established no leadership pattern, and preferred celibacy to marriage for Christians" (Dewey, 1998, p. 445). In Paul's early writings, women such as Phoebe and Junia appear as leaders in the Church. Romans 16:1, 7 states:

> "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea. Greet Andronicus and Junias, my relatives who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was" (New International Version).

Ephesians 4:11-12 states: "And he gave some, apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelist, and some pastor, and some teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the working of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (King James Version). This supports the premise that the early church was structured based on charisma. A charismatic person exercises power through follower's identification with and belief in the leader's personality. The leader attracts followers who believe in the vision, and the followers come to perceive the leader as extraordinary (Yukl, 2002). Thus, it is probably that women would have been entrusted with power and authority to make certain decision regarding Christian community life.

However, in the context of I Timothy the qualifications of leadership are defined narrowly in regard to women. "The Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife" (I Timothy 3:2, King James Version). In the Roman social hierarchy, women were among the most vulnerable and disenfranchised groups. According to McKenzie (1996), women had an official role in religion in the Roman Empire, but were excluded from holding the highest religious offices. "Whether the cults admitted only women or both men and women, they were ultimately controlled by men" (McKenzie, 1996 p. 9).

Furthermore, Brown (1997) argues that the instructions found in I Timothy 2:8-15 for worship are disproportionately corrective towards women. Christians needed to organize themselves to fit within the dominant culture to appear less threatening. The requirement for women, children, and slaves to submit to male authority removed suspicion that Christianity subverted the established norms and values of Roman

culture. Martin (1991) argues that these household codes function to reinforce proper household management and conformity with accepted societal norms." The Haustaflen were also used to reinforce the hierarchical, patriarchal ordering of husband-wife, father-child, and master slave relationships and justify them Christologically" (Martin 1991, p. 213). The social organizational values of the institutional church in I Timothy are non-reformist in the sense that they do not directly attack the social structures of Roman society (Robbins, 1996). Instead, Paul in I Timothy chooses to work within the established social structure of the family and household unit.

For the love of money

The negative view of money in I Timothy suggests that those with wealth continued to exercise influence in the early church. In Paul's letter to the Church at Corinth, for example, he addresses the issue of wealth and exploitation of Christians with lower social and economic status at the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:17-34). "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating this one takes before other his own supper: and one is hungry" (I Corinthians 11:21, King James Version). Brown (1997) argues that perhaps this represents a social situation where the need for a large space meant that the meetings are in the home of a wealthy person. "All Christians including the poor and slaves have to be accepted into the hospitality area of the house for the eucharist, but the owner is inviting to his table only well-off friends of status for the preparatory meal" (Brown, 1997, p. 522). Instead, Paul argues that the purpose of Lord's Supper is fellowship and not division over the sacred gathering.

Conversely, in the context of I Timothy, wealthy members of the community are viewed as evil and immoral. Tamez (2003) argues that these prescriptions concerning women's attire also underscore issues concerning wealth, power, and prestige of women in the church. Tamez states: "It is very likely that there were more wealthy women than men. Hence, the bitter criticism of the way prominent women dress and command that they are to keep silent and not teach." "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (I Timothy 2:11-12, King James Version).

This negative view of money is a conversionist response to evil in the world. Robbins (1996) states: The conversionist response is characterized by a view that the world is corrupt because people are corrupt. If people can be changed, the world will be changed" (Robbins, 1996, p. 73). Paul's conversionist response to money is stated in I Timothy 6:10; 17: "For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through many

sorrows" (I Timothy 6:10). Paul admonishes in V.17, that those with wealth should not trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who gives richly all things to enjoy.

Whereas, the love of money is a conversionist response to evil in the world, the renouncement of money is an introversionist response to evil in the world. According to Robbins (1996) introversionist view the world as irredeemably evil and considers salvation to be attainable only by the withdrawing from it. "The self may be purified by renouncing the world and leaving it" (Robbins, 1996, p. 73). I Timothy 6:11 states: "flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness." Thus, the basis of true happiness and salvation is not wealth and material possessions, but a faithful relationship with Jesus Christ.

Leader-Organizational Values Alignment

Horsley and Silberman (1997) argue that Bishops and Deacons became permanent figures of authority in many congregations. "A new generation of Christians leaders accepted and creatively adapted the main elements of the dominant milieu to their own spiritual ends" (Horsley and Silberman, 1997 p. 225). Hence the leadership of the early church followed the dominant social and cultural norms of Roman society. This alignment of values between the early church and Roman society is a radical departure from Paul's earlier writings. The freedom and liberation expressed in the Gospels and Paul's earlier writings are diametrically opposed to the hierarchical relationship proposed in I Timothy.

Table I. Organizational Values in I Timothy

Survival	**Conformity**
Order	**Structure**
Control	**Power**
Respect	**Accountability**
Submission	**Subjection**
Authority	**Rule**

Nonetheless, the contemporary church has continued to use the qualifications as outlined in I Timothy 3 as a basis for organizing and selecting leaders. When leaders select one model of leadership or organizing over another, it reflects their preferences and core value systems. Williams (1979) defines a value system as "an organized set of preferential standards that are used in making selection of objects, actions, resolving

conflicts, invoking social sanctions, and coping with needs." Based on Williams' definition, the espoused organizational values system of I Timothy may be summarized in Table I.

The above list of values underscores that the Church should select leaders whose values are aligned with the organization. When the values of the leader are aligned with the organizations values, there is a greater probability of success. Malphurs (2004) states: "you must build an organization on the values that the people already embrace, not one what you hope they will embrace in the future" (Malphurs, 2004, p. 30). If this is true, then leader-organizational value alignment is essential to building and sustaining organizations. Russell (2001) argues that position power is eroding in organizations, which means that leaders must derive influence from their values. According to Russell, certain values are essential to the values systems of good leaders. "These primarily include honesty and integrity, but also encompass other important values such as concern for others, fairness, and justice (Russell, 2001, p. 77). Using I Timothy 3 as a basis for values based leadership, the following values are summarized in Table II.

Table II. Good and Bad Leadership Values in I Timothy 3

Good Values	Bad Values
Blameless	**Drunken**
Vigilant	**Striker**
Sober	**Greedy**
Good Behavior	**Covetous**
Hospitable	**Prideful**
Apt Teacher	**Double tongued**
Patient	**Brawler**
Faithful	
Stewardship	

As mentioned previously, Paul's charge to Timothy is to appoint leaders who shared certain core values believed to be necessary for the survival of the church in Roman society. Moreover, the teachings and practices of the church were threatened by Gnostic teachings. In response, the church developed doctrine and structure to deal

with these threats. Robbins (1996) argues that a Gnostic-Manipulationist response suggest that salvation is possible in the world and evil may be overcome if people learn the right means and techniques to deal with their problems (Robbins, 1996). Hence, Paul states in 2 Timothy 2:2-3: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good solider of Jesus Christ" (King James Version).

The list of bad leadership values outlined in Table II violates the sense of honor and shame that governed social status, relationships, and behavior. Robbins (1996) argues that honor stands for ones social standing, a person's rightful place in society. "The purpose of honor is to serve as a social rating that entitles a person to interact in specific ways with his or her equals, superiors, and subordinates, according to the prescribed cultural cues of the society" (Robbins, 1996, p. 76). Likewise, shame refers to a person's sensitivity about what others think, say, and do with regard to his or her honor (Robbins, 1996). Murphy (2002) argues that in ancient societies, where most human contact was face to face, and social and geographic mobility was limited, and where physical goods and social status was in short supply, honor and shame figured prominently. Bad values such as pride, greed, and drunkenness would strip leaders of their honor and shame, which would further undermine the church's ability to manage and govern its own affairs. Most important, the practice of bad values such brawler, striker, and double tongued would do little to attract new followers of Christ and raise the credibility of the church.

Leader-Follower Values Alignment

Leadership is the exercise of influence that directs follower's behavior towards a desired end. How leaders exercise their influence and the desired ends they seek is an expression of their values. Simply stated, values are the moral and ethical compass by which a leader's actions are based. Rokeach (1973, p.13) define values as multifaceted standards that guide conduct in a variety of ways. Hackman and Johnson (2004) argue that the problem in organizations is the leaders and followers are no longer speaking the common language of values. The mismatch between the espoused values and the practiced values creates problems of disloyalty, disunity, division, and unhappiness in organizations (Hackman and Johnson, 2004).

This lack of values alignment has a major impact on a leader's ability to build and sustain relationships with their followers. For example, Kriger and Hanson (1999) argue that truthfulness is one of the most difficult personal values to enact consistently in today's rapidly changing business climate where others may or may not hold the same standard of truth. Clawson (2003) suggest that people feel that they need to withhold

the truth for a variety of reasons—bad news either from an objective, person, or imagined viewpoint of others. No matter the reasoning, the lack of leader-follower value alignment is a source of tension in organizations.

By juxtaposing the espoused values of leadership and organization expressed in I Timothy, a new pattern of values emerge that leaders should practice. Table III outlines the new corresponding values pattern.

Table III. Values Alignment in I Timothy

Organizational Values	Leadership Values	Corresponding Values
Accountability	Family	**Responsibility/Stewardship**
Authority	Sober	**Trustworthy/Honesty**
Submission	Faithful	**Loyalty/Dedication**
Respect	Good Behavior	**Service/Love**

While the new corresponding values are by no means exhaustive, they illustrate the extent to which values should be aligned between leader and followers in organizations. Furthermore, the corresponding values of responsibility, trustworthiness, loyalty, and love, reinforce Paul's charge to Timothy and Titus that they appoint leaders who will lead with integrity. The corresponding values also underscore the need for leaders who would behave ethically and morally in the face of immorality.

Values and Organizational Design

Leader-follower values alignment also impacts the structure of the organization by creating clarity of purpose, mission, and vision. The purpose of I Timothy is to create order out of chaos. The church needed a centralized doctrine and practices to help it survive in a fluid and socially complex Roman world. Rome was a culture of extremism—slave and free, rich and power, and victor and victim. The gaps between the haves and the have not created an opportunity for the church. The widows board for example, was designed to help meet certain basic needs of those who qualified. "Honor widows that are widows indeed" (I Timothy 5:3, King James Version).

In addition, leader-follower value alignment leads to clarity of mission. As mentioned earlier, Paul's charge to Timothy and Titus is to appoint leaders who would adhere to the sound doctrine and values of the church. Speaking on the office of the

deacon, Paul writes: "And let these also first be proved, then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless" (I Timothy 3:10, King James Version). Furthermore, the mission of the church is also to spread the gospel through orthodox preaching. "Preach the word; be instant in season, and out of season, rebuke, exhort, with all suffering and doctoring" (2 Timothy 4:2, King James Version).

Lastly, leader-follower value alignment leads to clarity of vision. In the context of I Timothy, Paul's vision is to build a church that could sustain herself over time. Against Gnostics claims, Paul writes: "For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured person, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine" (I Timothy 1:10, King James Version). To appease certain civil authorities, Paul writes: "For Kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Timothy 2:2, King James Version). More broadly, I Timothy is concerned with leadership behavior. Leaders should behave in such as way that would not bring reproach against the church. "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out" (I Timothy 6:6-7, King James Version).

Conclusions and future hope

Leader-follower values alignment is the highest priority for Paul in I Timothy. Moreover, the selection of leaders whose values where aligned with the core values of the church was also a priority. While the theological agenda of Paul at the time of his writings may have been to spread the gospel, he was a futurist in the sense that his work provides the foundation for leadership and organizational development in the 21st century. Moreover, his letters have been one of the primary data sources by which Christians have modeled families, ministries, and marriages. Paul's writing provides examples for building organizations based on core values: accountability, order, structure, and family. Furthermore, his writings put forth moral and ethical leadership practices that are needed to lead organizations in the global economy. Given Paul's significance to the church, a reexamination of his leadership thought is warranted to move his ideas beyond the Christian Cannon into organizational life.

References

Brown, Raymond. 1997. An Introduction To The New Testament, New York: Doubleday

Clawson, James G. 2003. Level Three Leadership: Getting Below the Surface, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Dewey, J. (1992). I Timothy, in Women's Bible Commentary, Ed, Carol A Newsom and Sharon Ringe. Louisville: Westminster Press.

Fitzmyer, J. A. (2004). The structural ministry of the church in the pastoral epistles. The Catholic Bible Quarterly, 66 (4). 582.

Hackman, M.Z, Johnson, C.E. (2004). *Leadership: a communication perspective.* Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Henslin, J.M (2005). Essentials of sociology: a down to earth approach. New York, NY: Pearson

Holy Bible (New International Version)

Horsley, R.A and Silberman N.A (1997). The message and the kingdom: how Jesus and Paul ignited a revolution and transformed the ancient world. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Kriger, M.P, Bruce, J.H (1999). A value- based paradigm for creating truly healthy organizations *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 12* (4), 302-317.

Malphurs, Aubrey. 2004. Values driven leadership: discovering and developing your core values for ministry, Michigan: BakerBooks.

Martin, C.J (1991). The haustafeln (household codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation, free slaves and subordinate women, in *Stony the road we trod.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

McKenzie, W.M. (1996). Not without a struggle: leadership development for African American women in ministry. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press.

Murphy, Frederick. 2002. Early Judaism: The Exile to the Time of Jesus, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers.

Robbins, V. K. (1996). *Exploring the texture of text.* Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International.

Rokeach, M. (1973). *The nature of human values,* New York, NY: The Free Press

Russell, R.F (2001). The role of values in servant leadership. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal, 22* (2), 76-83.

Tamez, E. (2003). I Timothy: what a problem, forthcoming in Towards a New Heaven and New Earth, Ed, Fernando F. Sergovia. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

Williams, R.M. (1979). Change and stability in values and value systems: A sociological perspective, in Understanding Human Values, Individual And Societal. New York: The Free Press.

Yukl, G., (2002). Leadership in organizations (5th ed). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.