



HEALTHY AND EFFECTIVE CHURCH GOVERNANCE: THE PLACE OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM



LEADERS AND ELDERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- 'Elder' is a general term with a specific usage in the early church adapted from both Israelite and communal usage
 - The term 'elder' has connotations of age and of tribal seniority, it is always plural, the elders being a collective council together
 - To watch and shepherd among the flock
(Acts 20:18ff, 1 Peter 5)
 - Pastoral teaching, pastoral guidance, pastoral care
 - Spiritual maturity, personal maturity, relational maturity
(Cf 1 Tim 3, Titus 3)

LEADERS AND ELDERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- The 'leader' terms we have in the NT carry a slightly different emphasis
 - They are used in connection to call, giftedness, and commissioning to a task or place. They have a tendency to refer to single individuals rather than a group.
 - Preparing God's people for service (Eph 4:11f)
 - Being actively engaged in teaching, mobilising, equipping the people of God
 - Giftedness and call or commissioning to ministry (Rom 12:1, 1 Cor 12:1, Tit 1:4)

THE WAY WE DO CHURCH CHANGES...

- The twin roles of leadership and governance are primarily culturally defined
 - They are always filled with character qualities articulated in the NT, the grace gifts of the Holy Spirit and are shaped by the spiritual identity and call of the church to be the people of God.
 - However the way they work reflects the organisational culture of the community, the place and time in which they operate.

TWO FORMS OF LEADERSHIP

Most communities over centuries have recognised two different forms of leadership

Leading from the front

One is concerned with change, growth, expansion, development, reform, new directions, who we can become (these are the political, social and cultural leaders or executives) *Leadership*

Leading from among

The other is concerned with community order, rules, rituals, processes of decision making, who we are, identity, justice and communal policies (tribal elders, councils, governors, parliaments) *Governance*

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

- **May be solo**
- **Often a paid full or part time vocation**
- **Vision and energy for change**
- **Appointed by the church community or governing body**
- **Doesn't often stay long term**
- **Always collective**
- **Usually voluntary**
- **Maturity and wisdom from local experience**
- **Affirmed / elected by the church community**
- **Usually long term commitment to the local church**

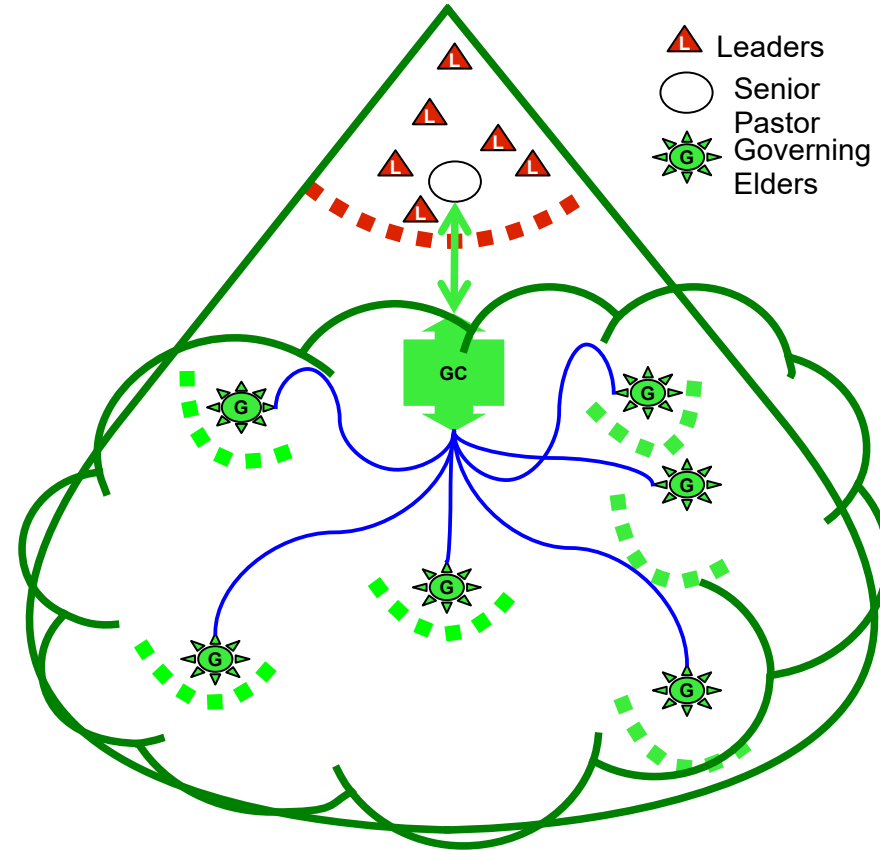
THE TEAR-DROP MODEL

Leaders lead from the front

They seek to move the group forward

They call people to change

They run the risk of disconnection



Elders lead from among the people

They seek to support leaders and hold them to account

They run the risk of resisting healthy change

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP NEEDS GOOD GOVERNANCE

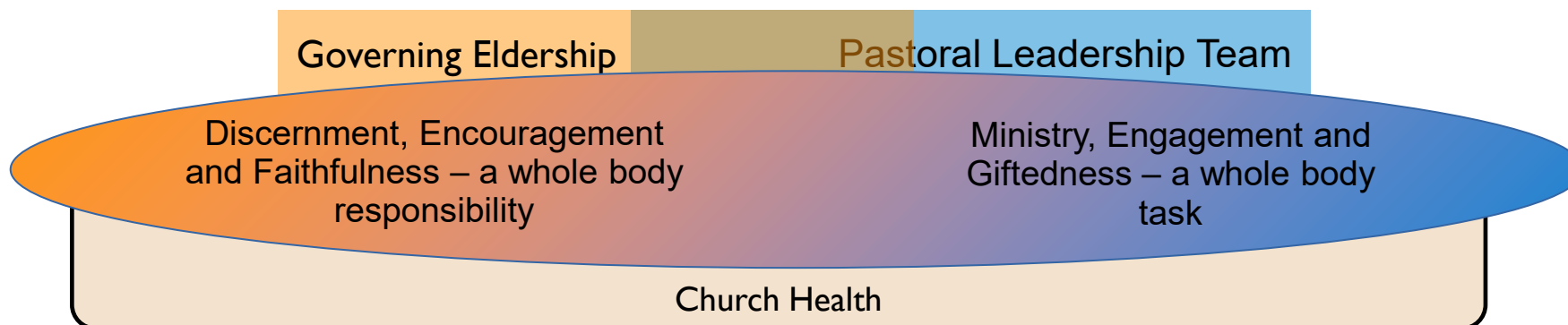
- **Effective Leadership** needs the wisdom, counsel and ultimately the support of a governance group to move a church toward growth and change. Governance validates and empowers but does not usually drive change.
- **Effective Leadership** needs to be connected to those who are listening collectively to God, to the church, to the community.
- **Effective Leadership** needs accountability and wise reflective feedback.

GOOD GOVERNANCE NEEDS EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

- **While the Governance Group** needs to be respected for its wisdom, particularly around its knowledge of the identity, history and culture of the group, it needs effective leadership for a church to move toward health and growth.
- **Governance Groups** also need to listen to the those that God has called into leadership to affirm, validate and support the shared vision that they often possess.

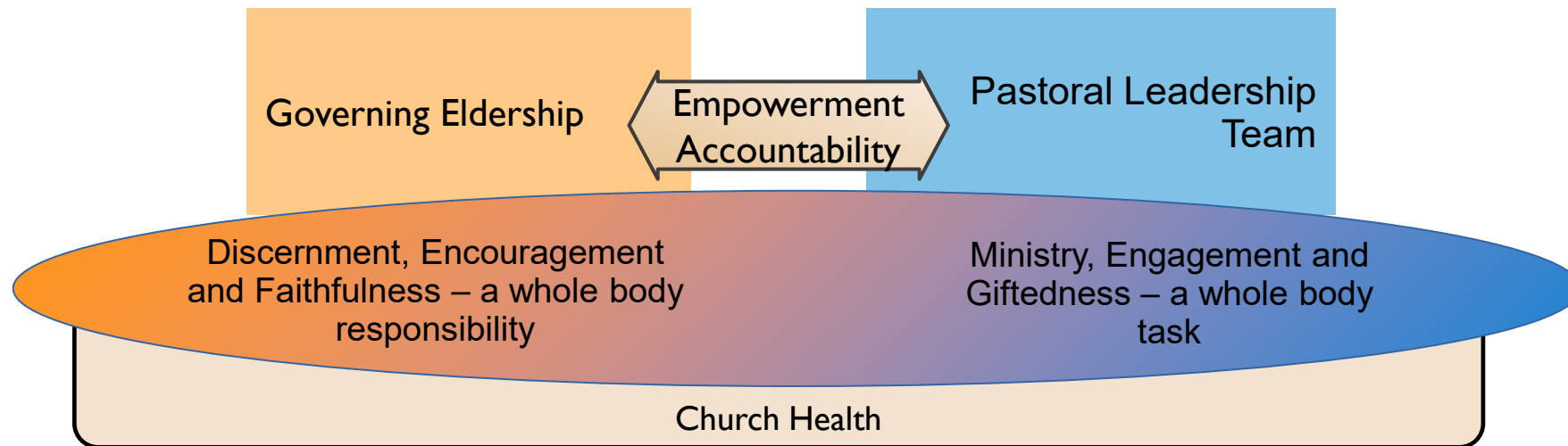
Healthy Governance and Leadership

In smaller churches the roles of elder and pastoral leader overlap however the team needs to remember that while they are the same people there are two different roles to embrace together.



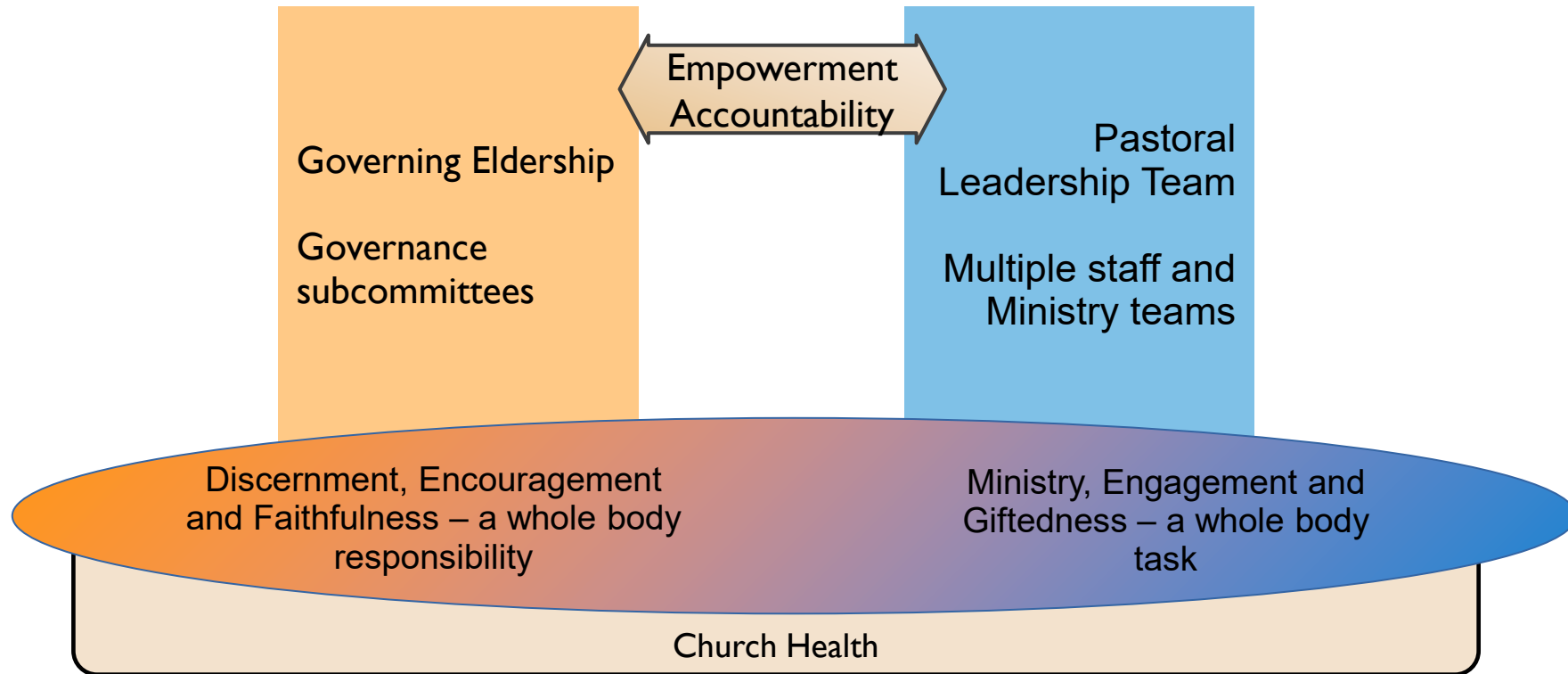
Healthy Governance and Leadership

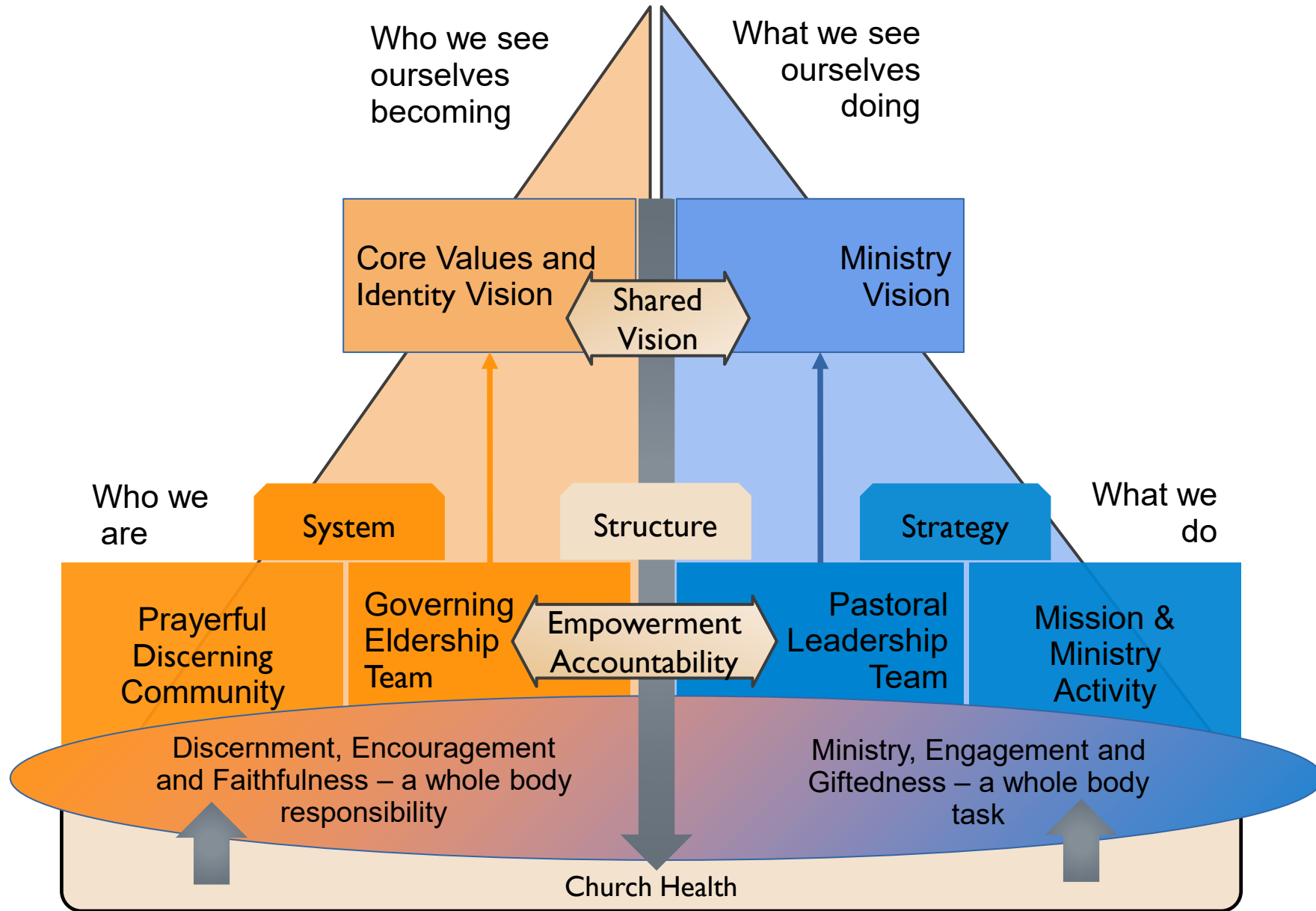
As churches grow, the need to differentiate the roles and functions of the two aspects of leadership becomes important



Healthy Governance and Leadership

In large churches, distinct pastoral leadership structures and governance structures emerge and often have their own sub-structures.





5 WAYS GOVERNING ELDERS EMPOWER PASTORAL LEADERS

- Pray for the pastoral leaders (for giftedness, courage, faith, love)
- Engage the discussion of ministry vision – where we are going together and how are we going to get there
- Work out a clear position description - expectations
- Ensure self care for pastors and leaders
 - Sabbatical rhythms
 - Support networks – mentor
 - Budget for their Professional growth
- Facilitate careful and regular reviews including a governance self review with consistent group self regulation

5 WAYS PASTORAL LEADERS EMPOWER GOVERNING ELDERS

- Pray for them (love and wisdom)
- Engage the discussion of the congregation's history, identity and values
- Communicate with them, listen to their reflections and listen with them to God and the congregation
- Keep them on the growing edge
 - Seminars and retreats
 - Teamwork development
 - Healthy church processes
- Encourage regular executive time and group self regulation