

Sexual Sin and Leadership In The Church, II

**A Reaction Paper
Submitted to Dr. Justin Smith
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**by
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Being skilled is not enough to qualify one for leadership ministry. God has gifted every Christian with a gift to use in service of the body of Christ. Being gifted is common to all Christians. For leadership, God has called us to impose a higher standard. In God's prescription for leaders in the Church (I Timothy 3, Titus 1), His primary concern is not leadership skills; instead, His focus is on *integrity* and *holiness*. Suppose a man is observed to have good skills with people, and is gifted in facilitating learning in a small group. Suppose those involved with him on a regular basis have decided to recommend him for leadership on the basis of the skills they have observed, and also on their observation of his spiritual growth over the past several years. What might disqualify this person from being promoted into a leadership role? If another leader in your Church brought up complaints to you about this individual, citing recent sexual misconduct, questioning his integrity, would this be a cause to reconsider our potential leader for ministry? The answer should be an unequivocal, "for now." It seems those involved in small group ministry over the past few years, and who deal with our potential leader on a regular basis, are encouraged by his spiritual growth. When another of our leaders brings concerns to us, which were brought to her by members of the Church, we need to take these concerns seriously. Not even considering future leadership ministry, complaints of sexual misconduct in the Church need to be followed up on. Those involved should sit together privately before the Church leadership and accusations and defense should be heard and a judgment made. After due process is given to all parties, and resolution of the misconduct accusations have been finalized, then we might be able to more clearly consider our candidate for leadership, but with outstanding accusations still

pending, no promotion to leadership should be made. If the accusations are true, normal processes for healing and restoration should be implemented. If the accusations are of a reoccurring nature and serious, then we must consider whether or not this individual meets the requirements mandated by God for Christian leaders. For now, all we can do is faithfully follow up on the outstanding accusations.