



# Embracing Shared Ministry: Power and Status in the Early Church and Why It Matters Today

*Joseph Hellerman*

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## Healthy church leadership based on the model of shared ministry in the early church

Social historian and pastor Joe Hellerman addresses issues of power and authority in the church—in the New Testament and in the church today—in a fresh, culturally nuanced way. The local church, Hellerman maintains, should be led and taught by a community of leaders who relate to one another first as brothers and sisters in Christ, and who function only secondarily—and only within the parameters of that primary relational context— as vision-casting, decision-making leaders for the broader church family. Unique among contemporary treatments of servant leadership, Hellerman interprets the biblical materials against the background of ancient Roman cultural values, in order to demonstrate a social context for ministry that will provide healthy checks and balances on the use of pastoral power and authority in our congregations.

*“Joseph Hellerman is one of those unique individuals who is equally a scholar and a practitioner. Not only is he an expert on early Christianity, but he is also a longtime pastor, having served in both larger and smaller church contexts. His research and writing always challenge my thinking, as well as offer fresh insights into church life and ministry. Embracing Shared Ministry presents a radical, rediscovered view of community and pastoral leadership for today’s churches. If you are seeking a fresh perspective on pastoral leadership and fellowship, read this book.”*

— Gary L McIntosh, PhD, Professor of Christian Ministry and Leadership, Biola University

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