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When Roles Change
How to manage staff transitions with
wisdom and care

One of the hardest moments in leadership is
realizing:

A role needs to change...

but the person in that role is someone you
care deeply about.

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Healthy organizations require healthy transitions

Avoiding transitions doesn't protect
people —

it prolongs pain.

Biblical Foundation - God honors both people and purpose.

Examples:

- Moses → Joshua leadership transition
- Jethro advising Moses to restructure
- Paul and Barnabas separating for mission effectiveness

Leadership change is not failure —
it's stewardship.

Why transitions are so hard

Identity

Calling

Community

Security

Ego

Purpose

Fear

Shame

Types of Staff Transitions

1. Role Refinement — small adjustments
2. Role Realignment — different seat
3. Role Reduction — scope or authority change
4. Role Exit — leaving staff
5. Role Release — mutual recognition

Transition does not equal failure.

Signs a Transition May Be Needed

- Persistent performance gaps
- Misalignment with culture or pace
- Burnout or disengagement
- Role has outgrown the person
- Person has outgrown the role
- Team impact suffering
- Feedback not integrating

Preparation before the Conversation

Ask yourself:

- What is the real issue?
- Skill, will, or fit?
- Have expectations been clear?
- Have I coached?
- What outcome am I recommending?
- What options exist?
- How can I support them?

Surprises destroy Trust.

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CARE Conversation Model



C — Clarity

A — Affirmation

R — Reality

E — Engagement

CARE

- **CLARITY**

- Be honest & direct
- Avoid vague language, over spiritualizing, delaying truth

- **AFFIRMATION**

- Genuinely honor and encourage the person.
- Character, Calling, Contribution, Faithfulness

- **REALITY**

- Explain why the change is needed.
- Role alignment, Church needs, future health, growth opportunity.
- Not - personality

- **ENGAGEMENT**

- Invite them to take next steps
 - Options, Timeline, Support, Questions

Caring for the Team

After transitions:

- Communicate appropriately
- Address uncertainty
- Reinforce mission
- Allow questions
- Protect dignity

Silence creates stories — and stories create fear.

Common Leadership Mistakes

- Waiting too long
- Being vague
- Avoiding discomfort
- Talking to others first
- Over-spiritualizing instead of leading
- Rushing the process
- Lack of documentation
- Not praying

How to support a Staff Member in Transition

- Coaching conversations
- Resume help
- Career discernment
- Counseling referral & payment
- Financial bridge (if possible)
- Volunteer pathway
- Recommendation letters

The Leader's Emotional Weight

- Guilt
- Anxiety
- Fear of hurting someone
- Self-doubt
- Spiritual burden

You are not alone in this.

Redemption Stories

Transitions can lead to:

- New calling
- Healthier alignment
- Renewed passion
- Better organizational impact

God often works through change.



Three Anchors to Transitions



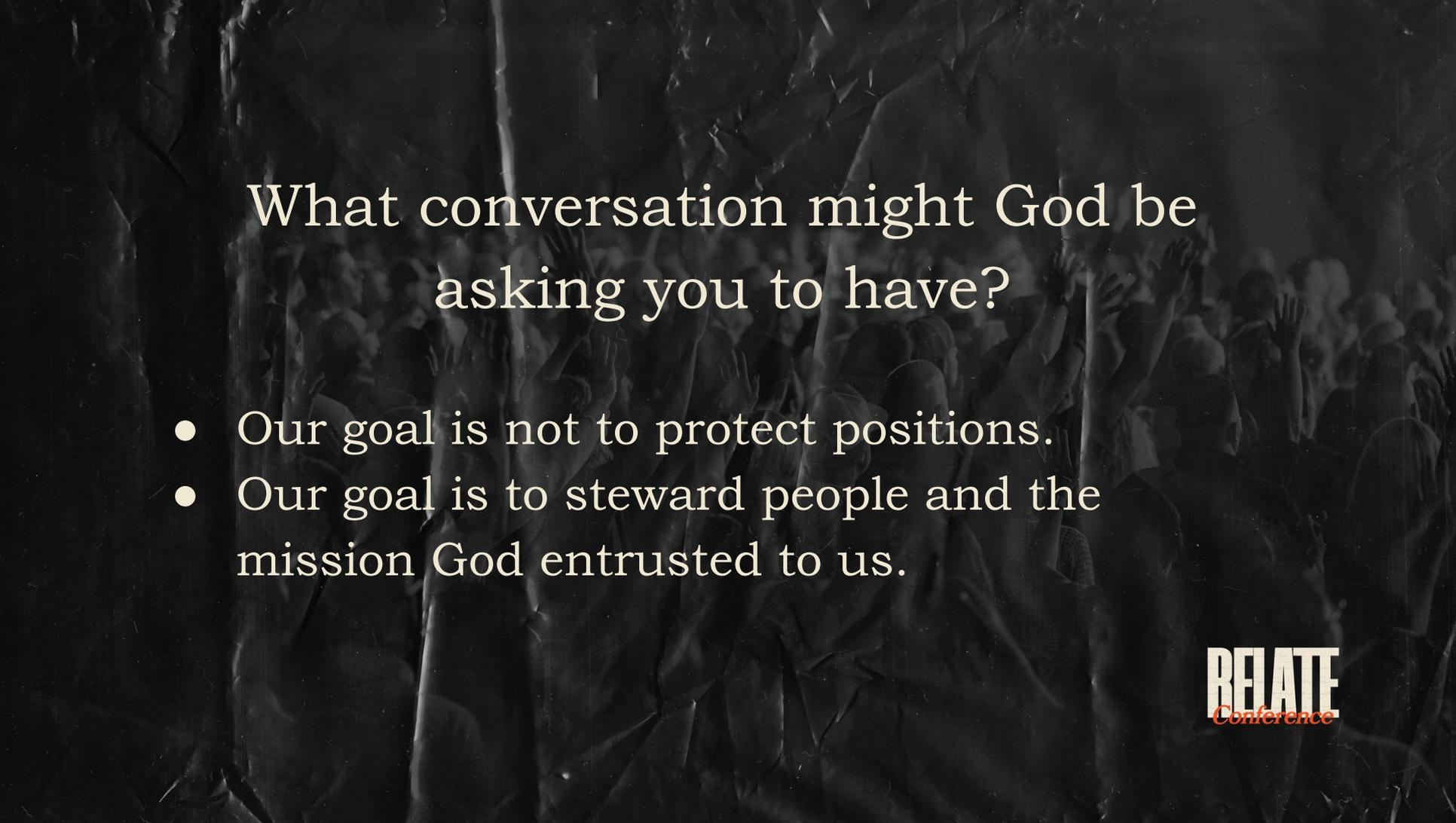
Clarity



Compassion



Courage



What conversation might God be asking you to have?

- Our goal is not to protect positions.
- Our goal is to steward people and the mission God entrusted to us.

Open Discussion Q & A