



Power,
How Will We
Use it?

crcna.org/SafeChurch



Christian Reformed Church
**Safe Church
Ministry**

Power, How Will We Use it?

In Philippians 2, we read that Jesus took on the very nature of a servant, using his power for the salvation and thriving of others. All of us who are united to Christ are called to use our power in a similar way, to serve and to love others. The Holy Spirit is with us to guide us, especially in the ways we use power. Unfortunately, we don't always reflect Jesus in the way we use power. Abuse of power occurs when people use their power to harm and/or influence another for personal gain at another's expense. It happens, even in our churches.

Power is simply our ability to have an effect or influence. It comes from various sources; for example, adults have more power than children, that's obvious and it's why we have policies to protect children. However, between adults, the lines of power can be more complicated. As people, created in the image of God, we all possess personal power. We may also be in a position or role which gives us additional power. Understanding this power differential and its impacts is the core of professional ethics. The power and authority associated with the role of pastor or ministry leader must be carefully considered in every relationship, because the way power is used has huge potential, and is associated with our Lord.

Scripture includes examples of leaders who abused their power, think of Herod exterminating Hebrew children, or King David, when he took Bathsheba and had her husband killed. Yes, even God's anointed, the "man after God's own heart," struggled with abuse of power. With more power comes more opportunity and responsibility to use it wisely.

Our denomination has done much work over the last several years regarding use and abuse of power, especially as it relates to the role of church leader. You can find resources related to Power and its impacts on relationships and ministry on The Network. (<https://network.crcna.org/safe-church/its-all-about-power>)



Christian Reformed Church

**Safe Church
Ministry**

Safe Church Ministry, 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407
616-224-0735 | crcna.org/safechurch