

Character of Christian Leadership

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Contents

Preface.....	9
Purpose of the book:	10
Summary of contents:	10
Objectives:	11
Lesson One: What is a Leader?.....	13
Definitions of a Leader.....	13
Characteristics of a Leader.....	16
Characteristics of a Biblical Leader.....	20
Beginning with Character	21
Lesson Two:	31
Character—the Big Picture	31
Godly Character	32
Setting an Example	34
Paul’s Advice to Timothy.....	35
Watch Your Life and Doctrine.....	39
Lesson Three:.....	49
Integrity and Credibility	49
Integrity and Credibility Defined	50
Integrity and Credibility through Trust.....	52
Building Trust.....	53
Nehemiah—Builder of Trust	54
Regaining Lost Credibility.....	55
Lesson Four:.....	61
Humility: True Greatness.....	61
Paul’s Example: In Weakness Strength	61

Driven by What?63

Pride—Our Greatest Enemy.....64

Redefining Leadership65

Our Greatest Pursuit.....71

Lesson Five:79

Relational Leaders.....79

 God’s love for His people81

 The Motivation of Love83

 The Relational Leader as a Shepherd.....85

 Investing in People through Various Types of Relationships87

Lesson Six: Servant Leaders95

 Jesus the Servant Leader95

 Jesus' Teaching on Servant Leadership.....97

Lesson Seven:109

The Leader’s Call and Passion109

 Calling110

 Self-Assessment: Knowing Yourself114

 Your Statement of Calling121

Lesson Eight:125

The Making of a Leader125

 Six Phases of Leadership Development125

 Phase 1: Sovereign Foundations.....127

 Phase 2: Inner-Life Growth127

 Phase 3: Ministry Maturing.....128

 Phase 4: Life Maturing129

 Phase 5: Convergence130

 Phase 6: Afterglow or Celebration130

 Pitfalls of Leadership130

Leaders Who Finish Well	133
Bibliography	141
A Spiritual Gifts Survey	149

Preface

General Norman Schwarzkopf has been credited to say, "Leadership is a combination of strategy and character. If you must be without one, be without strategy."¹ While we want leaders in the church to have both, many struggles in the church have come when leaders were lacking character. This impacts how we select, recruit and train emerging leaders and current for service in ministry.

When studying the topic of Christian leadership, it is especially necessary to focus on Christ-like character. This becomes the core of biblical leadership. I do not write this book as one who has arrived, but as one who is saved by the grace of God and striving to lead as Christ led, by the grace of God. As Paul states,

¹²Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:12-14).

If you are called to leadership in the church then you, too, need to have this passion to grow as a leader of character.

We do not want to just apply the current leadership strategies and practices, although they may be very beneficial. This book will discuss the biblical elements of Christian leadership. Early in the book the student will write their own description of a biblical leader from

numerous resources. This will be reviewed and revised at the conclusion of the book.

Then characteristics of a biblical leader in general will be addressed. After these lessons we will explore six key characteristics for biblical leadership: 1) Integrity and Credibility, 2) Example, 3) Humility, 4) Relationships, 5) Servant leader, and 6) Calling and Passion. While these do not encompass all the character traits of a biblical leader, they represent a significant core.

The book concludes with how God prepares leaders (the making of a leader) and gives the student the opportunity to develop their own leadership time-line and set goals for growth as a biblical leader.

Purpose of the book:

Effective Christian leadership requires both biblical character and good practices or skills. However, if you were only able to have either character or ability as a leader, it would be best to choose character. Christian leadership is especially built upon the Christ-like character. Therefore, this book will focus on the character of an effective Christian leader.

Summary of contents:

This book will explore the question, what is a biblical leader? This will be done through studying essential characteristics of a Christian leader through the combination of reading, inductive Bible study, learning activities and developing a personal plan for growth in response to the materials.

Objectives:

There will be opportunity to explore the following topics as it pertains to the student's personal life and ministry. As a result, the student will...

1. Investigate the characteristics of an effective and biblical leader: Influence, Integrity, Character—example, Values, Purpose and passion, Servant leadership and the making of a leader.
2. Explore how God develops leaders and then, write his own time-line of events that God has brought into his life that has shaped him as a leadership up to this point.
 3. Learn to evaluate areas where he needs to grow and develop a plan for maturing in leadership?

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Lesson One: What is a Leader?

Definitions of a Leader

Definitions of a leader are almost as diverse as the plethora of books written on the subject. There are numerous characteristics that are listed as crucial for the effective leader. The definitions and quotes that follow demonstrate the complexity of answering, "*What is a leader?*"

For example, Warren Bennis and Joan Goldsmith state, "A leader is someone who has the capacity to create a compelling vision that takes people to a new place, and to translate that vision into action. Leaders draw other people to them by enrolling them in their vision."¹ Or, as James Burns says, "Leadership is leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations—the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers."²

The following quotes come from Taken from *Basic Quotations*.³

A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled. They will say: we did it ourselves.

- Lao Tzu

A leader is someone who helps improve the lives of other people or improve the system they live under. - Sam Houston

Be the chief but never the lord.- Lao Tzu

Example is leadership. - Albert Schweitzer

Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things. - Peter Drucker

No man will make a great leader who wants to do it all himself, or to get all the credit for doing it. - Andrew Carnegie

Nothing so conclusively proves a man's ability to lead others as what he does from day to day to lead himself. - Thomas J. Watson

One of the tests of leadership is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency. - Arnold H. Glasow

So much of what we call management consists in making it difficult for people to work. - Peter Drucker

The difference between a boss and a leader: a boss says, 'Go!' - a leader says, 'Let's go!'. - E. M. Kelly

The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant. - Max de Pree

The great leaders are like the best conductors - they reach beyond the notes to reach the magic in the players. - Blaine Lee

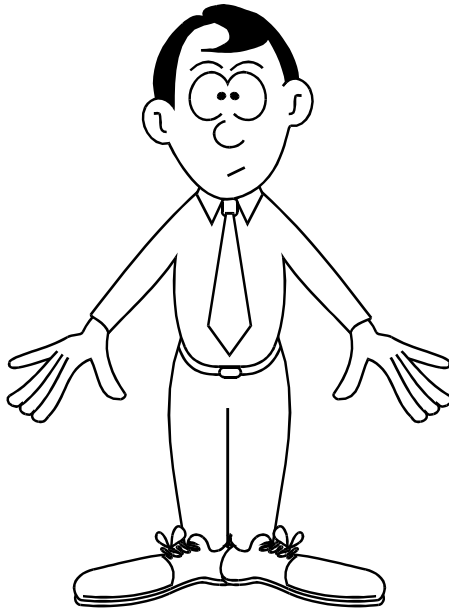
To command is to serve, nothing more and nothing less. - Andre Malraux

Learning Activity

To get you thinking about characteristics of a leader, complete the following activity. This can be done individually or in a group.

A Leader is...

Think of different characteristics of a leader and connect them to different parts of the body. The characteristic can be external or internal (e.g. Pointing the way to the future and setting a vision for the ministry—the eyes or fingers or Listens well—the ears). Connect a line from the characteristic to the drawing.



Characteristics of a Leader

As we consider the various characteristics of a leader (or biblical leader), we notice that there are various categories, in which they can be placed, such as: *knowing* (content, information), *being* (spiritual, character, heart) and *doing* (skills, abilities). The following lists come from the table of contents of various books on leadership. Scan the lists and place the 'characteristics' in the chart on the page that follows. You might need to be creative in determining characteristics.

From *Empowered Leaders*, by Hans Finzel

1. The Leader: who can fill the shoes?
2. The Task: the leader's work
3. The Person: the leader's character
4. Encouragement
5. Conflict and Criticism
6. Vision
7. Change
8. The Leadership team
9. Creativity
10. Life cycle of leaders:

From *The Perfect Leader*, by Kenneth Boa

1. Integrity
2. Character
3. Values

4. Purpose and passion
5. Humility
6. Commitment
7. Vision Casting
8. Innovation
9. Decision-making
10. Problem solving
11. Team building
12. Communication
13. Encouragement
14. Exhortation
15. Building relationships

From *21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader*, by John C. Maxwell

1. Character
2. Charisma
3. Commitment
4. Communication
5. Competence
6. Courage
7. Discernment
8. Focus
9. Generosity
10. Initiative
11. Listening
12. Passion
13. Positive attitude

14. Problem solving
15. Relationships
16. Responsibility
17. Security
18. Self-discipline
19. Servanthood
20. Teachability
21. Vision

From *The Book on Leadership*, by John MacArthur (appendix)

1. A leader is trustworthy
2. A leader takes the initiative
3. A leader uses good judgment
4. A leader speaks with authority
5. A leader strengthens others
6. A leader is optimistic and enthusiastic
7. A leader never compromises the absolutes
8. A leader focuses on objectives not obstacles
9. A leader empowers by example
10. A leader cultivates loyalty
11. A leader has empathy for others
12. A leader keeps a clear conscience
13. A leader is definite and decisive
14. A leader knows when to change his mind
15. A leader does not abuse his authority
16. A leader doesn't abdicate his role in the face of opposition
17. A leader is sure of his calling

18. A leader knows his limitations
19. A leader is resilient
20. A leader is passionate
21. A leader is courageous
22. A leader is discerning
23. A leader is disciplined
24. A leader is energetic
25. A leader knows how to delegate
26. A leader is Christ-like

From *Leadership Essentials* by Greg Ogden and Daniel Meyer

1. Holy: developing a vision for Christ-like character
2. Habitual: cultivating spiritual disciples
3. Humble: keeping watch over our souls
4. Kneeling: embracing servant love
5. Teaming: building teams to accomplish the mission
6. Stewarding: stewarding our gifts, passions and personality
7. The Compelling Christ: loving passionately
8. The Embracing Kingdom: engaging people in mission
9. Helping Others See: lifting people out of lethargy
10. Taming Temptations: facing the dangers of money, sex and power

Knowing (Content)	Being (Spiritual/attitude)	Doing (Skills/Abilities)

Characteristics of a Biblical Leader

When we discuss biblical leadership there are distinguishing characteristics from the definition and practice we find in the world. “It is folly for Christians to assume (as these days many do) that the best way for Christians to learn leadership is from worldly examples. Leadership for the Christian always has a spiritual dimension. The duty of leading people carries with it certain spiritual obligations.⁴ Therefore, we need to understand just what is biblical leadership.

It is understandable, then, that definitions from Christian authors would have additional elements. Henry and Richard Blackaby center their attention on spiritual leadership. "Spiritual leadership is moving people on to God's agenda."⁵ Robert Clinton defines a biblical leader as a person with a God-given capacity and a God-given responsibility to influence a specific group of God's people toward His purpose for the group.⁶ In addition, "Christians leaders are servants with the credibility and capabilities to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction."⁷

Notice the different focus these definitions have from the previous quote. Leaders are, therefore, concerned about following God's direction and purpose for God's people. In a ministry context, the actions taken by leaders are aimed to intentionally and strategically facilitate positive life transformation that enables people to become more Christ-like. Biblical characteristics are the outgrowth of a Christian leader having the determination to serve God through leadership (calling), being in tune with God and thus knowing where to lead His people (vision), attracting followers through a demonstration of God's work in his/her life (character), and striving to provide people with the direction and tools they need to facilitate God-honoring change and growth.⁸

Beginning with Character

We focus on the character of a leader for one simple reason: this is where the Bible concentrates. Greg Ogden and Daniel Meyer remind us that the Bible is more concerned about who a leader is than what a leader does.⁹

Consider the story of Samuel anointing David as king of Israel.

Samuel had been grieving over God's rejection of King Saul. But God instructed him to fill his horn with oil and prepare to anoint the future king. As Samuel was preparing to identify the future king from among the sons of Jesse, God reminds him what God finds important in a leader. Eliab, the oldest son, must have been an outstanding man in appearance, for when he was brought forward, Samuel said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him" (1 Samuel 16:6).

Being a biblical leader, however, is a matter more of the heart than outward appearance. "But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart'" (1 Samuel 16:7).

Charles Swindoll comments on the selection of David. He states, "It's as if God says, 'I don't care about all the slick public image business. Show me a person who has character, and I'll give him all the image he needs. I don't require some certain temperament, I don't care if he has a lot of charisma, I don't care about size, I don't care about an impressive track record. I care about character!'"¹⁰

What does it mean to be a man after God's own heart? It seems to mean to be a person whose life is in harmony with the Lord. What is important to God is important to David. David's heart was completely God's. To be a man after God's own heart also means to be a man of faith. "I would fain begin David's shining graces by saying that faith in God is the true and living root of them all."¹¹ It was David's faith in God that protected him as he defended his father's sheep from the lion and bear. It was this same faith that propelled David to fight Goliath the Philistine (1 Samuel 17:32-46). God is looking for men and women whose hearts are completely His.

Later, during the time of King Asa, Hanani the seer, comments that King Asa did not rely on the Lord, but on King Aram. He states what the Lord is seeking. "For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war" (2 Chronicles 16:9).

David is described as one who was chosen by God and who led his people with integrity. "From tending the sheep he brought him to be the shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance. And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them" (Psalm 78:71-72). While David led God's people with a skillful hand, he first was a man of integrity.¹²

When God scans the earth for potential leaders, He is not looking for perfect people, since there are none. "But He is also looking for certain qualities in those people, the same qualities He found in David"—those whose hearts are completely God's, and people of integrity.¹³

The attention given to the character of a leader is also highlighted in the New Testament. While Paul was visiting Lystra, the brothers there spoke well of Timothy. As a result of his character, Paul desired to take him along on the journey (Acts 16:1-3). Timothy is described as the 'right person' for Paul's mission. Timothy would be useful for the mission because he was a disciple and a man of good character (Philippians 2:20-22), spiritually fruitful and morally faithful.

Consider the passages focused on the qualities for church leaders (elders and deacons). Where is the attention given? Look over the requirements of an elder and deacon and indicate if the characteristic falls under knowing, being or doing.

Underline phrases regarding requirements, and indicate in the margin beside them: "Knowing," "Being," or "Doing."

Acts 6:1-5

¹In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ²So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." ⁵This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit;....

1 Timothy 3:1-10

¹Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's

church?) ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. ⁸Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁹They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacon.

Reflective Questions:

1. According to the definitions and quotes listed in this lesson, what are vital characteristics of a leader? _____

2. How does a definition of a biblical leader differ from a leader in general?

3. What are additional attributes needed for a biblical leader? _____

4. When describing the characteristics of a leader, why is it important to consider the various categories of knowing, being and doing? _____

5. Why should we not arbitrarily accept and apply the latest 'leadership' fads? _____

6. In your own words define a biblical leader.

A Biblical Leader
is... _____

7. What separates spiritual or Christian leadership from leadership in the world?

8. Think about the life of David. In response to David's example, Chuck Swindoll states, "When you have a servant's heart, you're humble. You do as you're told. You respect those in charge. You serve faithfully and quietly."¹⁴ Read 1 Samuel 24 & 26. How does David reflect the characteristics in this quote?

9. What does it mean to be a leader after God's own heart?

10. What qualities does Acts 6:1-5 and 1 Timothy 3:1-10 highlight for church leaders?

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Lesson Two:

Character—the Big Picture

The lack of character in leaders can nullify any advances they may make. The book *The Sea of Glory* plainly illustrates this.

The U.S. Exploring Expedition of 1838-1842 was one of the most ambitious undertakings of the nineteenth century and one of the largest voyages of discovery the Western world had ever seen—six magnificent sailing vessels and a crew of hundreds that included botanists, geologist, mapmakers, and biologists, all under the command of the young, brash Lieutenant Charles Wilkes.

They discovered a new southern continent, which Wilkes named Antarctica. They were the first Americans to survey the treacherous Columbia River; the first to chart dozens of newly discovered islands all across the Pacific. They returned with hundreds of samples of plants and animals that had not been discovered before. These items became the beginning of the National Museum of Natural History.

Unfortunately, in spite of all these accomplishments, the controversy surrounding Charles Wilkes' court-martial made it impossible for his own country to take any pride in his accomplishments. He was court-martialed for his abusive style of leadership. While he was gifted in many ways of the sea and science, his character traits—anger, cruelty, abuse, self-importance and top-down authority, tarnished his accomplishments.¹

Godly Character

Godly character is the foundation of Christian leadership. Character is the essential qualifying element, because it earns people's respect and, most importantly, produces trust, character is the most crucial factor in all relationships. Only after people are convinced that you're a person of good character who is worthy of leading will they follow the mission and vision. "To be a leader, you don't have to be the sharpest pencil in the drawer, but you do have to display godly character."²

Paul reminds Timothy of the need for godly character. He states, "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come" (1 Timothy 4:8). Godly character, according to John Calvin, is the beginning, the middle, and the end of the Christian life and therefore we should apply ourselves altogether to piety³ (character development). It brings value to all things—especially Biblical leadership.

Character is the foundation of Christian leadership and is foundational to each of the other capabilities (spiritual and natural gifts, passion and temperament). "Each capability is only as effective as the character that under girds it. It can be strong only as the leader's character is strong, and it will be weak if character is weak."⁴ The word '*character*' is derived from the Latin word that means '*a mark*' or '*a distinctive quality*'. In other words, a person of good character is a person of moral excellence that distinguishes him from others.⁵

As Paul instructs Timothy, we need to train ourselves in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7). Training in godliness, according to Aubrey Malphurs, is soul work. He encourages leaders-trainers to develop character audits.⁶ Character assessments are to help you determine

your character strengths and weaknesses so that you can know where you need to develop and grow (At the end of this lesson you will complete the *character audit*.)

In his book, *Empowered Leaders*, Hans Finzel elaborates on eight qualities of character based on his experience as a leader and his observations of other leaders. Consider the positive qualities as they contrast with the problems of leadership.

Eight Qualities of Character

Purity of heart, mind, and hands	...the problem of sin
Posture of servant-hood	...the problem of pride
Perseverance	...the problem of follow-through
Predictability and sustainable trust	...the problem of integrity
Promises kept and confidences held	...the problem of confidence
Partnership and parenthood	...the problem of being faithful at home
Prayer	...the problem of intimacy with the Almighty
Passion for Christ	...the problem of sincerity ⁷

Some of these pairs will be dealt with in the following lessons, but for now we need to acknowledge the importance of character and how it impacts our leadership and lives. In order to grow in Christ-like character we need to strive to develop these qualities of character as well as manage the problems. "Filling the shoes of leadership is always a big job. At times we may get so confused about our priorities that a list

like is a good reminder. Keeping the main things the main things is important for leaders."⁸ One of the two projects for this book will give you the opportunity to write a "Growing in Character Development Plan". In all our efforts to grow in Christ, and to work out our salvation, we rely on the work of God in our lives. As Paul states, "¹²Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose" (Philippians 2:12-13).

Setting an Example

Leaders in the church are called to set an example for the church. Peter instructs leaders to be shepherds, servants and examples.

¹To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ²Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; ³not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:1-3).

Paul's instruction to Titus is comparable—"In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness" (Titus 2:7). He likewise gives the same instructions to Timothy. "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith

and in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12). This is the same standard he held for himself. Paul says, "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you" (Philippians 4:9). He can make such a statement because he is following Christ's example (1 Corinthians 11:1).

One of the most powerful ways to lead others is by modeling the Christian life for them. The Bible gives us numerous examples to follow, especially the example of Jesus. Leaders need to provide people with a living example to follow.

The word *'tupos'* used in the New Testament means a type, pattern or model. It can mean to *'make an impression on something.'*⁹ Our lives make an impression on others around us.

The Apostle Paul's spiritual son, Timothy, was a young man and a leader in the church. Paul gave Timothy some advice on how to lead. This advice for Timothy is good for us today. We too need to lead through our example.

Paul's Advice to Timothy

(1 Timothy 4:12-16)

¹²Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. ¹³Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. ¹⁴Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that

everyone may see your progress. ¹⁶Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

According to 1 Timothy 4:12 things like age, title, and position don't mean as much as... _____.

Set an Example in...

SPEECH: “Our degree of ability to communicate will evoke either trust or distrust in those we attempt to lead. It will instill either confidence or fear. It will determine to a large extent how eagerly others will be to hear us, and follow us.”¹⁰ Do your words provide life and encouragement? Do they instill confidence, hope and trust?

What do the following verses teach us about the use of speech?

Proverbs 12:18 _____

Proverbs 16:24 _____

Ephesians 4:29 _____

2 Corinthians 12:20 _____

LIFE: The word life is used in reference to the ‘*way of life or conduct and behavior*’. In other words, it is about the living out of your life—the application of biblical truth in day-to-day living. Our lifestyle impacts our relationships, our decisions, our actions and our leadership.

How do these verses say we should live?

Galatians 2:20 _____

Colossians 1:10 _____

Hebrews 3:15 _____

What happens to those we lead when our actions do not match our words?

LOVE: The word used is *agape* or unconditional love—Christ-like love. The concept of setting an example in love deals with motivation and the heart. Are we serving the church out of love for God and others?

What importance does love have in our ministry?

Romans 12:9-10 _____

Romans 13:8-10 _____

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 _____

FAITH: Faith is the foundation of the Christian life. The key, however, is where one puts his trust and confidence. Biblical leaders need to show what it means to trust in Christ in all areas of life and ministry.

How does the faith of people, past and present inspire us in our Christian life?

Romans 1:17 _____

1 Timothy 6:11-12 _____

PURITY: Leaders are as susceptible as others to temptation, and yet when they fail it seems to have a greater impact on the body of Christ.

What is the connection between the previous ways of setting an example and remaining pure?

In what areas of your life do you need to pay special attention for keeping yourself pure?

Psalms 24:4 _____

1 Timothy 5:22 _____

Titus 2:5 _____

DEVOTE YOURSELF TO USE YOUR GIFTS: Spiritual gifts are given for the good of the body and are intended to be used (1 Corinthians 13:7). The NIV renders this phrase in a positive manner of—"devote yourself." The Greek, however, is in the negative, meaning—"do not neglect." Both these renderings suggest that the gift is already given and employed. The idea then is to continue in the same manner, but not to get sidetracked. A leader must be aware of their spiritual gifts if he is not to neglect them. If you cannot list your spiritual gifts, take the spiritual gifts survey at the end of the book.

Acts 6 gives an example of this. The Apostles were being sidetracked by the needs of widows. They did not want to neglect the ministry of the Word and prayer, so they elected deacons.

How can Timothy's example of 'devoting himself' to public reading of Scripture, to preaching and teaching motivate us?

1 Timothy 4:13-14 _____

BE DILIGENT and give yourself wholly to them (*character building*): The idea of this word is to cultivate or attend to. Someone who works with flora knows that pruning and cultivating the flowers or plants is vital for continued growth. Leaders need to cultivate their character development so others may see their growth (vs. 15).

2 Peter 1:5-9 reinforces the need to continue growing in character. Peter instructs believers to 'make every effort' to add to their faith... (vs. 5). The end result of doing so is continued effectiveness. "For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:8).

Watch Your Life and Doctrine

The word '*watch*' means to take great care of something. Paul is challenging Timothy and us to give consideration of the relation between our life and doctrine, because they are connected. How we live our lives reflects what we truly believe. Leaders' words (doctrines taught) will have greater weight with those he leads, when his life (example) matches his words.

Paul continues with the instruction to '*persevere*' in them. The Christian life requires a long obedience in the same direction. Paul concludes by saying, "If you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers" (vs. 16). Those who persevere are God's true elect (2 John 8-9). Each of us needs an example of someone who has gone before us to show what it means to persevere in the faith. Each of us in leadership need to trust the Holy Spirit to continue working in us, so that we too can persevere in these things—for the glory of Christ's name.

Questions and Activities for Application:

1. What happens if someone has a title or position, but is lacking as a positive example?

2. Review 1 Peter 5:1-3, Titus 2:7 and 1 Timothy 4:12. What do these verses stress concerning Christian leadership?

3. Think of one person who has made an impact (*tipos*—a type, pattern or model) on your Christian life. How did he impact you? How was he an example to you? In our lives many different people will be used to provide living models for us.

4. What connection is there between a leader's life and doctrine? How should a leader's doctrine influence his life? And how does a leader's life validate his doctrine?

5. What are the spiritual gifts you have been given by the Holy Spirit? If

you cannot list your spiritual gifts, take the spiritual gifts survey. (See at the end of the book.)

6. What does it mean for you to *devote yourself* to (or 'not to neglect') the gifts you have received? (be specific)

7. Consider the five characteristics cited in 1 Timothy 4:12: Speech, life, love, faith and purity. What does it mean to '*give yourself wholly*' to them or to '*cultivate*' them in your life?

8. Since our character is our most valuable asset for leading, it should

receive our attention. In *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader*, John Maxwell addresses the importance of character. He suggests four actions to improve your character:

Search for the cracks: Spend time looking at the major areas of your life (work, marriage, family, service, etc.) and identify anywhere you might have cut corners, compromised, or let people down. Write down any instances you can recall from the past two months.

Look for patterns: Examine the responses that you just wrote down. Is there a particular area where you have a weakness, or do you have a type of problem that keeps surfacing? Detectable patterns will help you diagnose character issues.

Face the music: The beginning of character repair comes when you face your flaws, apologize, and deal with the consequences of your actions. Create a list of people to whom you need to apologize for your actions, then follow through with sincere apologies.

Rebuild: It's one thing to face up to your past actions. It's another to build a new future. Now that you've identified areas of weakness, create a plan that will help you avoid making the same mistakes again (by the grace of God and the help of the Holy Spirit).

9. Complete the Character Audit below and answer the questions that follow.

Character Audit for Ministry

Directions: Circle the number that best represents how you rate yourself in each area.

1. I am "above reproach." I have a good reputation among people in general. I have done nothing that someone could use as an accusation against me.

True 1 2 3 4 False

2. I am the "husband of one wife." If married, I not only have one wife, but I am also not physically or mentally promiscuous because I am focused only on her.

True 1 2 3 4 False

3. I am "temperate." I am well-balanced. I do not abuse my freedom in

Christ. I am not excessive or given to extremes.

True 1 2 3 4 False

4. I am "sensible." I show good judgment in life and have a proper perspective regarding my abilities and who I am (humility).

True 1 2 3 4 False

5. I am "respectable." I conduct my life in an honorable way, and people have and show respect for me.

True 1 2 3 4 False

6. I am "hospitable." I use my residence as a place to serve and minister to Christians and non-Christians alike.

True 1 2 3 4 False

7. I am "able to teach." When I teach the Bible, I show an aptitude for handling the Scriptures with reasonable skill.

True 1 2 3 4 False

8. I am "not given to drunkenness." I conduct every area of my life in moderation.

True 1 2 3 4 False

9. I am "not violent." I am under control. I do not lose control to the point that I strike other people or cause damage to their property.

True 1 2 3 4 False

10. I am "gentle." I am a kind, meek (not weak), forbearing person who

does not insist on my rights or resort to violence.

True 1 2 3 4 False

11. I am "not quarrelsome." I am an uncontentious peacemaker who avoids hostile situations with people.

True 1 2 3 4 False

12. I am "not a lover of money." I am not in ministry for financial gain, but I seek first His righteousness, knowing that God will supply my needs.

True 1 2 3 4 False

13. I "manage my family well." If I am married and have a family, my children are believers who obey me with respect. People do not think of or accuse them of being wild or disobedient.

True 1 2 3 4 False

14. I am "not a recent convert." I am not a new Christian who is struggling with pride and conceit.

True 1 2 3 4 False

15. I have "a good reputation with outsiders." Though unsaved people may not agree with my religious convictions, they still respect me as a person.

True 1 2 3 4 False

16. I am "not overbearing." I am not self-willed, stubborn, or arrogant.

True 1 2 3 4 False

17. I am "not quick-tempered." I am not an angry person, and I do not lose my temper quickly and easily.

True 1 2 3 4 False

18. I am "not pursuing dishonest gain." I am not fond of or involved in any wrongful practices that result in fraudulent gain.

True 1 2 3 4 False

19. I "love what is good." I love what honors God.

True 1 2 3 4 False

20. I am "upright." I live in accordance with the laws of God and man.

True 1 2 3 4 False

21. I am "holy." I am a devout person, whose life is generally pleasing to God.

True 1 2 3 4 False

22. I "hold firmly to the faith." I understand, hold to, and attempt to conserve God's truth. I also encourage others while refuting those who oppose the truth.

True 1 2 3 4 False

Review your answers and list your strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths

Weaknesses

10. Goals for Cultivating Christ-like Character

After completing this character assessment, note the characteristics with the lowest rating. These are the character goals you need to work on most. Also consider the qualities addressed in this lesson.

“Our life example is the greatest reflection of the extent of our sanctification, our likeness to Christ. As we consider the challenge of exemplary leadership, we will realize that growth requires us to face the truth about ourselves and our character, without distortion—no matter how painful such a confrontation might be.”¹⁴

Choose one or two areas that you want to improve in your life, so that you can grow as an example-leader. List the areas and suggest practical steps that you will take to grow in each area.

Character trait:

Steps for growth:

Character trait:

Steps for growth:

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Lesson Three:

Integrity and Credibility

Leadership is all about influence and how leaders affect followers. Without influence leadership won't happen.¹ In Lesson One the following definitions of a Christian leader were cited:

"Spiritual leadership is moving people on to God's agenda."²

"A biblical leader is a person with a God-given capacity and a God-given responsibility to influence a specific group of God's people toward His purpose for the group."³

"Christians leaders are servants with the credibility and capabilities to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction."⁴

Notice how these definitions illustrate the concept of influence—to move people on to God's agenda, to influence a specific group, and to influence people in a particular group. The book of Judges is an example of God using leaders to move God's people towards God's agenda. Throughout Judges there is a cycle: 1) The Israelites do evil, 2) God gives them over to their enemies, 3) the Israelites cry out to God, and then 4) God raises up a leader who delivers them from their enemies. 5) They have peace as long as God's leader lives. Here is the

example of Othniel:

- 1) The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD; they forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs.
- 2) The anger of the LORD burned against Israel so that he sold them into the hands of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram Naharaim, to whom the Israelites were subject for eight years.
- 3) But when they cried out to the LORD,
- 4) He raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, who saved them. The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war. The LORD gave Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram into the hands of Othniel, who overpowered him.
- 5) So the land had peace for forty years, until Othniel son of Kenaz died (Judges 3:7-11).

One of the leader's greatest assets for influencing others towards God's agenda is their character. Leaders need skills and abilities to lead, but without integrity and credibility others will not follow for long.

Integrity and Credibility Defined

Stephen Covey describes four cores to credibility: 1) Integrity, 2) Intent, 3) Capabilities and 4) Results. He illustrates these four cores through the metaphor of a tree. Integrity is essentially below the surface. It is the root system out of which everything else grows...it is absolutely vital to the nourishment, strength, stability, and growth of the entire tree.⁵

Integrity in a Christian leader is a life-long commitment to follow Christ.

The Bible uses the illustration of a tree to describe someone who trusts in the Lord, lives by the Word of God, and flourishes by the grace of God, even in difficult times.

Jeremiah 17:7-8 "But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

Psalm 1:2-3 "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers."

The spiritual health and strength of a leader is rooted in his character, integrity and credibility, and it is centered in his relationship with Jesus Christ. In the words of Paul, "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness" (Colossians 2:6-7).

Covey continues to define integrity as including *honesty* (telling the truth and leaving the right impression), *congruence* (when there is no gap between intent and behavior), *humility* (recognizing principle and putting it ahead of self) and *courage* (doing the right thing even when it's hard).⁶

Integrity means being consistent in one's behavior—no matter the circumstances. A person of integrity honors his commitments and promises. Integrity for a Christian leader involves consistently applying biblical truth in all he does, so that his actions, motives and relationships reflect Christ-like character. It is through integrity that a leader has credibility and is able to lead God's people to God's agenda.

Credibility in a leader creates trustworthiness and believability. He obtains credibility through his integrity. Credibility is critical to leadership because without it leaders, and the people they lead, won't trust one another and the ministry will flounder.

Integrity and Credibility through Trust

It is clear that integrity and credibility result in trust. Trust is added when a leader's words and actions are tested and found trustworthy. And trust is lost when the leader fails the test. "Trust is so important to leadership because people won't follow leaders they don't trust."⁷

Through studying many leaders and companies over the years, Warren Bennis and Joan Goldsmith have identified three elements for generating and sustaining trust: 1) *Constancy*—Whatever surprises leaders face themselves, they do not create any for the group. They maintain continuity and security. 2) *Congruity*—Leaders walk their talk. There is no gap between the theories they espouse and they practice. 3) *Reliability*—Leaders are there when it counts; they are ready to support their co-workers in the moments that matter.⁸ Leaders need to take a credibility audit to evaluate how they are leading. Aubrey Malphurs has developed a *self-assessment for a leader's credibility*. Are these statements true about you? Then you have high leadership credibility.

If they do not represent you, then you have poor leadership credibility. Here are the statements:

Self-Assessment for a Leader's Credibility

- I've been a leader in this ministry long enough for people to learned to trust me.
- I have the general knowledge of what I need to do as a leader.
- I have the necessary skills to be a competent leader.
- I'm a person of godly character.
- I try to communicate with my followers regularly so that they know generally what is taking place in the ministry.
- My people know me as a leader of strong convictions.
- I have the courage that it takes to lead followers.
- My people know that I care about them.
- As a leader, I'm an emotionally strong and healthy person.
- My people tell me that I'm a passionate leader.⁹

If you really want to get a true reading of your credibility level, ask several of your key followers to evaluate you on these statements. What can do you do to built trust among your followers?

Building Trust

According to John Maxwell, "Trust is the foundation to leadership. To build trust, a leader must exemplify these qualities: competence, connection and character. People will forgive occasional mistakes based on ability, especially if they can see that you're still growing as a leader.

But they won't trust someone who has slips in character. Character makes trust possible. And trust makes leadership possible.¹⁰ Malphurs also lists eight ingredients for building leadership credibility and, therefore, trust as a leader: 1) *Character*, 2) *Competence* (effective leadership practices), 3) *Clarity of direction* (knowing where you are leading others), 4) *Communication*, 5) *Conviction* (passion and commitment to the ministry and the people), 6) *Courage* (leading in difficult situations), 7) *Care* (the leader's demonstration of concern for the well-being of his followers that flows from a love for them), and 8) *Composure* (a consistent display of appropriate emotions that sets a positive ministry mood, especially in difficult or crisis situations).¹¹

You need to grow in your competence as a leader, in ingredients such as clarity of direction and communication. Notice, however, that the other leadership credibility flows from your relationship with Christ and (your relationship with others). Character is foundational.

Nehemiah—Builder of Trust

Nehemiah was used by God to move His people to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and put the gates in place. However, in order for Nehemiah to complete the task God had given him, he needed to show the people he was trustworthy.

Read the following passages from the book of Nehemiah and list the ways he built trust in his followers. Use the terminology from the ingredients for building trust listed above.

Nehemiah 1:4-11

Nehemiah 2:11-20

Nehemiah 3

Nehemiah 4:6, 13-16

Nehemiah 6:15-16

Nehemiah 7:1-2

Nehemiah 9:1-2

Nehemiah 12:27, 43

Regaining Lost Credibility

What can you do when there is an integrity gap between what you say and the actions you take? This impacts the trust of your followers and

your credibility. How do you regain your credibility? “Even when you make bad decisions that result in major crises, you can regain some lost trust and regaining credibility as a leader.”¹²

Here are five steps developed by Aubrey Malphurs for recovering lost trust and regaining credibility as a leader.

Admit the Mistake

Acknowledge Responsibility

Apologize

Accept the Consequences

Act to Correct the Situation¹³

These steps demonstrate humility in a leader, which we will address in the next lesson. For now, however, if leading God’s people towards God’s agenda is important to you, you will be quick to repent and confess your mistakes to those you lead. Repentance is the posture of grace. Paul Kooistra teaches in *Living in Grace* that there is a three-fold formula for repentance: 1) There is a problem, 2) I am the problem and 3) I need God’s help.¹⁴ The biblical leader who demonstrates repentance—the posture of grace in his relationships—will provide a model of leading that is needed today, even in the church.

Questions and Activities for Application:

1. What should be the source of a biblical leader’s influence of his followers?

2. *Integrity*: Burk Parson writes in *Table Talk*, "What will people say about me after I die? Have you ever asked yourself that question? It is a question that has haunted me for years, and it is one of the most captivating questions anyone can ask himself. In truth, it would do us good to ask ourselves these questions with some frequency: what will I contribute to the world, the church, and the kingdom of God before I die?"¹⁵

"A good character is the best tombstone. Those who loved you and were helped by you will remember you when forget-me-nots have withered. Carve your name on hearts, not on marble."¹⁶

Think about what description of your character (integrity lived out) you would like inscribed on your tombstone. Write it on the picture below.



3. How important is credibility to your leadership? Who are some leaders that you believe have high credibility or low credibility?

4. If credibility is the root system out of which everything else grows...it is absolutely vital to the nourishment, strength, stability, and growth of the entire tree. What happens when a leader does not establish credibility?

5. Take the "Self-Assessment for a Leader's Credibility". What areas need your attention?

6. Why is a leader's character so important to developing trust with followers? If you were prioritizing the eight requirements for developing credibility, where would you *place* character? Why?

7. How do you go about regaining credibility?

8. Have you ever lost credibility? If so, did you gain it back? How?

9. Go through the five steps of regaining credibility. Use a personal leadership situation when you failed someone (we all do) and how you would apply these steps.

Admit the Mistake

Acknowledge Responsibility

Apologize

Accept the Consequences

Act to Correct the Situation

10. Have you ever experienced the principle that if your people do not trust you, they won't follow you? If so, what was the situation? How could you resolve it now?

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Lesson Four:

Humility: True Greatness

What does a humble leader look like? “No competent leader is going to be anxious to impress people with his *credentials*. Leaders who are truly able are qualified because of their *character*. They are easily identified, not by letters of commendation, but because of the influence they have on others. They are people who are confident of their calling, and yet at the same time, they know they are utterly dependent upon God as the source of their true power.”¹

Can you think of someone from your experience that reflects this statement? Leaders who minister as described above do not have to prove themselves. They are able to maintain a balance of confident-dependence. Their aim, like that of the Apostle Paul, is to serve God and not man (Galatians 1:10)

Paul's Example: In V

Paul did not imagine himself adequate for the task to which God had called him. “And that realization kept him dependent on divine grace in every aspect of his leadership. Paul, by contrast, drew strength from remembering his own weakness, because those things made him more dependent on the power of God.”² This is evident from his letters to the churches. For example:

“Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you?”

You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. Such *confidence as this is ours through Christ* before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but *our competence comes from God'* (2 Corinthians 3:1-5 *Italics mine*).

"To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

"I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13).

"But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10).

Paul's example reminds us that leaders are not effective because of their giftedness or the ability to communicate or draw people and motivate them towards a goal. If that is all a leader relies on, his strengths will be his limitations. Paul led with his weakness and the Lord used him because his trust was not in himself, but in the power of the Gospel.

"When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power" (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).

Driven by What?

Paul's example suggests the question, what drives a leader? In *Ordering Your Private World*, Gordon MacDonald contrasts called persons and driven people.³ Greg Ogden and Daniel Meyer reference MacDonald's work. They summarize it as follows: "Called people live from the inside out, whereas driven people live from the outside in. Called people order their private world and thereby engage their world from a centered existence. Driven people are externally focused because success standards of this world shape their motivation."⁴

The focus of either the called or driven person affects their

motivation, expectations, desired outcomes, and relationships. The called person leads out of a relationship with Christ and an awareness of his limitations and weakness. The driven person leads out of anxiety and stress.

Ogden and Meyer put forth seven signs of a driven person to use for self-evaluation. They are: 1) Gratified by accomplishments—love affirmation, 2) Gratified by the symbols of accomplishment—position, material possessions), 3) Uncontrolled pursuit of expansion, 4) Limited regard for integrity—success at any cost, 5) Limited or undeveloped people skills, 6) Volcanic anger, and 7) Abnormally busy.⁵ A leader should examine himself and ask whether any of these danger signs are manifest in his ministry. We are all susceptible to these enticements.

There is nothing wrong with wanting to be used by the Lord, as long as your motivation is to build God's kingdom and not your own. God says through Isaiah, "I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols" (Isaiah 42:8). And yet, so many of His people long for recognition and honor. These are signs of a prideful person.

Pride—Our Greatest Enemy

I am grateful to C.J. Mahaney for his writing *Humility: True Greatness*. He gives us a clear picture of what a biblical leader should look like, and yet discusses an area, which is seldom addressed. In discussing humility, we must also deal with our pride.

C.J. Mahaney states, "None of us are immune to the logic-defying, blinding effects of pride. Though it shows up in differing forms and to differing degrees, it infects us all. The real issue here is not if

pride exists in your heart; it's where pride exists and how pride is expressed in your life. Scripture shows us that pride is strongly and dangerously rooted in all our lives, far more than most of us care to admit or even think about. John Stott has clearly thought about this and wrote the following: *At every stage of our Christian development and in every sphere of our Christian discipleship, pride is the greatest enemy and humility our greatest friend.*"⁶

The ravages of pride manifest and impact every area of our lives. Pride brings our downfall. "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom" (Proverbs 11:2). Or "A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor" (Proverbs 29:23). God hates pride (Proverbs 8:13) because everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the Lord (Proverbs 16:5). Quoting Proverbs 3:34 James states, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6, also see 1 Peter 5:5). Why does God hate pride so strongly? *"Pride is when sinful human beings aspire to the status and position of God and refuse to acknowledge their dependence upon Him."*⁷

The Gospel answers the problem of pride. This is done through the humility of Jesus Christ—He who had no sin became sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Redefining Leadership

Jesus not only addresses the issue of pride by taking on the punishment that was ours through His perfect sacrifice, He also redefines what is true leadership by His teaching and by His example—the ultimate example of humility.

Jesus on Biblical Leadership

³⁵Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."

³⁶"What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.

³⁷They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."

³⁸"You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"

³⁹"We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, ⁴⁰but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared."

⁴¹When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. ⁴²Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:35-45).

How patient Jesus was with His disciples! On the other hand, it was not surprising to hear of how indignant the others disciples were

then they heard about James and John's request. It is "fascinating and instructive" that in His next words "Jesus does not categorically criticize or forbid the desire and ambition to be great. Instead, He clearly redirects that ambition, redefines it, and purifies it."⁸

First, Jesus contrasts His teaching with that of the Gentiles who rule by lording it over them—exercising their authority over them. Clearly this is a picture of top-down leadership. It is a picture of oppression. And those who lead expect to be served. Second, He redefines leadership by saying "Not so with you. Instead, *whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all*" (vs 43-44 *Italics mine*). Here Jesus presents two equations of the same idea: 1) Great=Servant and 2) First=Slave.

Lastly, Jesus presents Himself as the antithesis to prideful leadership. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (vs. 45). Here is the example of true greatness and true leadership.

The Apostle Paul challenges the believers in Philippi (and us today) through the true greatness of Jesus. First, Paul takes them to the benefits of grace and their mutual relationship to Christ.

"If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion" (Philippians 2:1).

James Boice states that there are four solid legs for Christian unity: 1) because there is *encouragement*, 2) because there is *comfort from Christ's love*, 3) because there is *fellowship with the Spirit*, and 4)

because there is an *experience of the tenderness and compassion of God*.⁹ Because of these things, Paul continues...

²then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.

We are united in Christ—and members of God's family. Therefore, we must live in peace and unity with one another. Unity is demonstrated in three aspects: 1) being like-minded, 2) having the love of Christ, and 3) being one in spirit and purpose. "The fellowship that exists between Christians is a fellowship created by God. It exists, not because we may have much in common, but because by grace we have been made mutually dependent members of Christ's body."¹⁰

³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Philippians 2:3-4).

These words are contrary to the natural way of relating with others. Paul is saying that to understand the Gospel and apply it in our lives will result in denying ourselves and thinking about others before we think about our needs.

Then Paul tells them that to live out the Gospel is to have the attitude of Christ. It requires the practice of humble living—thinking of others before oneself.

⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

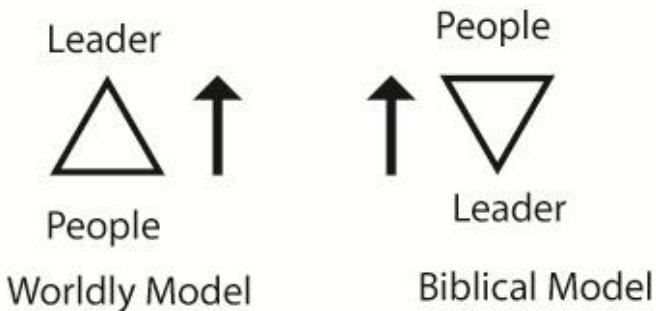
⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with

God something to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, *he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross*” (Philippians 2:5-8 *Italics mine*).

James Boice remarks, “What a contrast we have when we look at Jesus Christ. Instead of exalting himself, which he had every right to do, Jesus emptied himself of all outward aspects of his glory and became man for our salvation.”¹¹

We live day in and day out with the tension that comes from living in a world that promotes and applauds a leadership that contradicts the biblical model taught and demonstrated by Jesus. “So we have two opposing definitions: greatness as sinfully and culturally defined versus greatness as biblically defined. The battle rages in our very hearts.”¹²

The illustration below shows the contrast between these opposing definitions. On the left, the people are expected to serve the leader. The leader has a top-down attitude. In contrast, Jesus turns the model upside down, and the leader is there to serve the people.



As we strive to apply the biblical model in our life and ministry we need to understand the perils of pride and the fruit of humility. But that is not enough. Mahaney states, "If there is ever to be meaningful transformation in our lives, if we are to make progress in restraining pride and manifesting humility, *there must be the purposeful application of truth*—an effort and pursuit on our part that God will use for sanctifying transformation in our lives."¹³

The cross of Christ is the first source for leading us to humility. Martyn Lolyd-Jones said, "There is only one thing I know of that crushes me to the ground and humiliates me to the dust, and that is to look at the Son of God, and especially contemplate the cross. Nothing else can do it. When I see that I am a sinner...that nothing but the Son of God on the cross can save me, I'm humble to dust."¹⁴

Of all the wonderful hymns, the one that constantly keeps my focus on the cross is, '*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*' by Isaac Watts.

When I survey the wondrous cross, on which the Prince of glory
died,
My richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my
pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ my
God!

All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His
blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet, Sorrow and love flow
mingled down!

Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a
crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too
small;

Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

Galatians 6:14 is attributed as being the text Watts was reflecting upon when he wrote the hymn. "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." I noticed that the stanzas could be viewed in two pairs (not perfectly, but I think it works) of praise and response. The first stanza focuses on the wonder of the cross and our gain. It is followed by the second, which is a response to God's grace by only boasting in the cross. Then the third stanza again reflects on the nature of Christ's sacrifice. Finally, the fourth stanza is another response—the response of giving everything to the Lord for the wondrous cross. It reminds me of Romans 12:1, which states, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship."

Our Greatest Pursuit

If our attitude is to be the same as that of Christ Jesus, then we are to display humility in our life, relationship and ministry. We are humbled by the grace of the Gospel. The cross humbles us, as well as all that Christ

has done for us. We are humbled because of our sinfulness contrasted with His mercy.

In conclusion to his study on humility, C.J. Mahaney provides a practical guide to weakening pride and cultivating humility. These suggestions might seem logical or obvious, but in the midst of ministry and our struggle with pride, they could be a lifeline to true greatness and biblical leadership.

*A List of Suggestions*¹⁵

Always:

1. Reflect on the wonder of the cross of Christ.

As Each Day Begins:

2. Begin your day by acknowledging your dependence upon God and your need for Him.
3. Begin your day expressing gratefulness to God.
4. Practice the spiritual disciplines—prayer, study of God’s Word, worship. Do this consistently each day and at the day’s outset if possible.
5. Seize your commute time (to work or school) to memorize and meditate on Scripture.
6. Cast your cares upon Him, for He cares for you.

As Each Day Ends:

7. At the end of the day, transfer the glory to God.
8. Before going to sleep, receive this gift of sleep from God and acknowledge His purpose for sleep.

For Special Focus:

9. Study the attributes of God.
10. Study the doctrines of grace.
11. Study the doctrine of sin.
12. Play golf (or something enjoyable) as much as possible.
13. Laugh often, and laugh often at yourself.

Throughout Your Days and Weeks:

14. Before going to sleep, receive this gift of sleep from God and acknowledge His purpose for sleep.
15. Encourage and serve others each and every day.
16. Invite and pursue correction.
17. Respond humbly to trials.

Questions and Activities for Application:

1. What are the characteristics of a humble leader?

2. Paul did not feel adequate for the task the Lord had given him. In what did he find his confidence and strength?

3. Review the signs of a driven person/leader. Check the signs which are true for you and give an example from your life to support it.¹⁶

___ Driven people are gratified by accomplishment.

___ Driven people are gratified by the symbols of accomplishment.

- ___ Driven people are caught in the uncontrolled pursuit of expansion.
- ___ Driven people tend to have a limited regard for integrity.
- ___ Driven people often possess limited or undeveloped people skills.
- ___ Driven people often possess a volcanic force of anger.
- ___ Driven people are abnormally busy.

As you review these signs of a driven person, what conclusions can you draw about yourself?

How might you pursue living more from the inside out than the outside in?

4. What does Proverbs say about the results of pride?

5. How does Jesus redefine leadership through his teaching and his example?

6. Think of one person from your experience who has demonstrated true greatness or true leadership as defined by Jesus? Briefly describe how

they demonstrated humility.

7. In Philippians 2:1-5, Paul appeals to unity. On what does Paul base his appeal?

8. In Philippians 2:3-4 Paul gives us the definition of humility in two parts. What are the two parts? And what would this look like in your life?

9. Respond to the following quote from the information in this lesson. "Ultimately, there can be no effective expansion of your life's mission and ministry, no fulfillment of the specific purpose He's called you to, apart from the cultivation of humility in your heart and the weakening of pride in your life."¹⁷

10. Kouzes and Posner state, "Humility and grace make up the antidote to the poison of excessive pride and the rapacious harm that it does in our lives. It would serve us all well to keep a dose of it handy as we deal with the complex challenges and lurking temptations of our modern organizations."¹⁸ How does humility act as an antidote to the poison of pride? What steps will you take to keep pride away and humility close?

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Lesson Five:

Relational Leaders

Think of one person that God has used in your life to impact and shape you. How did he invest in you? Ministry is about relationships. A leader can have a clear and dynamic vision statement, all the resources needed to fulfill the vision. He might have the gifts and skills to accomplish the goals, but if ministry does not flow from a love for God and others it is like a noisy cymbal.

In the investing world you always need to investigate the “get rich quick schemes” that promise a return that seems almost too good to be true. Some leaders try to take short cuts in ministry to success, which does not include investing in people. Effective leadership has an attitude and focus on investing in people for the long haul. In finance, for example: ‘Rule 72’ states that the percentage of return divided into 72 determines the length of time it will take to double your money (i.e. investing \$1000 at 6%, will yield a total of \$2000 in 12 years). It takes time to disciple believers, equip others for works of ministry (Ephesians 4:12) and develop leaders.

Paul traveled from place to place. Most of the time he could not spend extended periods of time with the church. However, his focus was on investing in people. In writing the church in Thessalonica Paul reflects on his time with them. Consider how he describes his relationship with the church.

“But we were gentle among you, like a *mother caring for her*

little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God *but our lives as well,* because you had become so dear to us" (1Thessalonians 2:7-8 *Italics mine*).

"For you know that we dealt with each of you *as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging* you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory" (1Thessalonians 2:11-12 *Italics mine*).

"Leadership is a relationship," says James Kouzes and Barry Posner, "between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow. There may have been a time when leaders commanded commitment but those times are long past. People follow people, not positions."¹ Therefore, the ability to work with people and develop relationships is indispensable to effective leadership.²

Leaders should be relational, not merely because it is effective and pragmatic but because it is biblical. John Maxwell lists three things to help cultivate good relationships as a leader: 1) Understand people and how they feel and think, 2) Love people, and 3) Help people.³ Jesus modeled the relational leader in many ways. He stated it simply in the Gospel of Mark. "He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach."

There are numerous biblical principles for relational leadership. In this lesson we will explore two vital roles of a biblical leader: 1) A lover of people and 2) A shepherd.

Biblical leadership flows from a love for God and others.

The greatest motivation for ministry is understanding and

reflecting on how the Lord has lavished His love upon His people. It is out of His abundant, unconditional love and acceptance that you can properly lead others. Love is the essential ingredient for Christian service and leadership. Love is the fragrance, the glory and the power of Christ-like leadership.

God's love for His people

We cannot effectively love others, and minister to them until we understand and experience God's love for us. The Apostle John makes an incredible statement that should give us an unshakeable confidence in who we are in Christ. "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" (1 John 3:1).

Loving others is a mark of a believer. We are enabled to love others, because God loves us. God showed His love for us by sending His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 1 John 4:7-21 addresses all these thoughts. In this passage believers are called to love one another. But that is not the focus of the passage. This passage is about God's love for us, and the impact love should have on us.

⁷Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends,

since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. ¹³We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. ¹⁶And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. ¹⁷In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. ¹⁸There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. ²¹And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother (1 John 4:7-21).

There are several truths that this passage clarifies. First, love comes from God (4:7). Second, loving others is an indicator that someone has been born of God and knows God (4:7-8; 20-21). Loving one's brother is the fulfillment of Christ's command (4:21). The heart of the passage, however, is focused on God's love for us—because God is love (4:16). Love comes from God (4:7), who showed His love by sending His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins (4:9-10). Paul puts it this way, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we

were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). God's love is made complete and casts out fear from punishment, because Christ has already paid the price (4:17-18). Lastly, here is the summation of the passage: we love because he first loved us (4:19). Therefore, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another (4:11).

The Motivation of Love

God's love for us is our motivation for ministry and the source for loving others. The Apostle John is only restating in 1 John 4 what Jesus taught His disciples. We can only obey Jesus' command to love each other when we remain in His love.

⁹As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other" (John 15:9-17).

Jesus has loved us with the greatest of loves. Jesus declares His love for us, expresses the extent of His love and then the *challenge of love*. "If we continue in his love, then we will be remaining in Him and

prove fruitful.”⁴ The fruit is displayed in how we love God and love others in our ministry.

Paul also shows that love should be our motivation for ministry. In writing to the believers in Corinth, Paul is addressing numerous issues in the church. One is the misunderstanding of spiritual gifts, the motivation and use of gifts. Without love ministry is meaningless.

“¹If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

Love for those we are serving needs to be the motivation of ministry. Years ago I worked with a junior high ministry. The students didn't care much about the program or the teaching. All they needed to know was whether they were loved and accepted by the leader. If leaders serve without love they will be perceived as a *resounding gong or a clanging cymbal*, they *are nothing* and *have no gain*. This should cause all leaders to pause and examine their motivations.

Up to this point we have seen at least five principles for the relational leader:

- God loves us unconditionally and He demonstrated this by sending Jesus to die for our sins thereby making us his children.
- God's love empowers us to love others.

- Jesus commands us to love one another as He has loved us.
- Ministry without love is like a noisy gong—meaningless.
- Love for God and others should be our motivation for ministry.

The Relational Leader as a Shepherd

A 'Shepherd' is a key biblical term used for a leader who empowers others in the church. The imagery is strong. Jesus is described as our Good Shepherd (John 10) and even the Great Shepherd (Hebrew 13:20). He leads and cares for each one of us. He laid down His life for His sheep (John 10:11). As leaders in the church we are under-shepherds of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we need to learn how to shepherd others. As we study the Bible, we will learn how to lead as a good shepherd-leader.

How does a shepherd-leader care for the people in the church? Using Jesus as our model we can conclude that a good shepherd:

- A Good Shepherd knows each sheep by name (John 10:3, 14, 27)
- A Good Shepherd is always with his sheep (Luke 22:27b)
A Good Shepherd leads his flock (John 10:3b-4)
- A Good Shepherd displays deep concern for those who are lost (Matthew 18:12-14; Luke 15:4-6)
- A Good Shepherd protects his sheep (John 10:10)
- A Good Shepherd is prepared to die for his sheep (John 10:11, 15, 17-18)

The Bible not only defines what is a good shepherd, which is ultimately reflected in Christ. Ezekiel prophesies against the spiritual leaders of Israel (shepherds of Israel), because they have not been the

leaders God called them to be (*The Good Shepherd*: Psalm 23, John 10:3-16; *The Bad Shepherd*: Ezekiel 34:2-16, 23).

When the spiritual leaders of Israel failed, God declared that He would shepherd His people: *I look after my sheep, I will rescue them, I will bring them out, I will tend them, and I will search for the lost* (Ezekiel 34:11-16). Leaders in the church are called to follow Jesus as their Great Shepherd and to lead in the same manner—as shepherds of God’s flock.

“²Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; ³not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:2-3).

It is no wonder that Peter presents the key role of leaders in the church as that of a shepherd. “When Peter calls elders to be shepherds of the flock, he certainly alludes to his own calling. At an unforgettable breakfast by the Lake of Galilee, the risen Lord Jesus had restored Peter to his apostolic office and charged him to feed his sheep and tend them, the two major tasks of the shepherd.”⁵

Edmund Clowney explains 1 Peter 5:2-3 through the following observations. First, love for Christ (as our Good Shepherd) will kindle compassion for Christ’s scattered sheep. Second, love for the Lord will motivate leaders to imitate the care of the Good Shepherd. Third, a good shepherd feeds his sheep with the Word of God and protects them from false teaching. Lastly, as Jesus gathered His sheep, so leaders in

the church are under-shepherds. Therefore, Christ the Chief Shepherd calls elders to exercise a shepherd's oversight and care. But the under-shepherd cannot stand in for the Lord.⁶

The charge from Peter suggests that motivation for serving could be misguided and unbiblical. Serving as a shepherd of God's flock should flow from a willing heart that reflects one's calling as a shepherd. It should not be motivated by greed or power, but model Jesus as the Good Shepherd.

Peter is convinced that elders must have nothing domineering in their attitude. Rather, they should make themselves examples of the flock (lesson two), take the lead in displaying humility (lesson four) and possess an implicit integrity and credibility (lesson three) in their motivation to serve.

Investing in People through Various Types of Relationships

The relational leader can impact the lives of followers by investing in them through various types of relationships. Paul Stanley and Robert Clinton define mentoring as "a relational experience in which one person empowers another by sharing God-given resources."⁷

All leaders, therefore, should be mentors as defined here. In *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life*, Stanley and Clinton define different kinds of relationships that can empower others. The central thrusts of these are shown on the next page.⁸

A relational leader should be encouraged to invest in and impact others through these different relationships. Sometimes your relationship with a follower will change over the years. You might be involved as a discipler/spiritual guide relationship with new believer. As

the years go by others might look to you for coaching or counseling. Consider various possibilities for investing in people as a relational leader.

	Intensive Mentoring	Central Thrust of Empowerment
1	Discipler	Enablement in basics of following Christ.
2	Spiritual guide	Accountability, direction, and insight for questions, commitments, and decisions affecting spirituality and maturity.
3	Coach	Motivation, skills, and application needed to meet a task, challenge.
	Occasional Mentoring	
4	Counselor	Timely advice and correct perspectives on viewing self, others, circumstances and ministry.
5	Teacher	Knowledge and understanding of a particular subject.
6	Sponsor	Career (ministry) guidance and protection as a leader moves within the organization.

Questions and Activities for Application:

1. Effective leadership has an attitude and focus on investing in people for the long haul. Review 'Rule 72' and suggest some

ways that this can impact how you relate with others.

2. Review 1 John 4:7-21 and look for statements that talk about loving others. Write them down.

What connection is there between receiving God's love and loving others?

3. What command does Jesus give us in John 15:17? What impact does this have on being a relational leader?

4. What are the roles of a shepherd-leader?

5. How does a shepherd-leader reflect the qualities and duties of The Good Shepherd?

6. Read and compare the following passages (*The Good Shepherd*: Psalm 23, John 10:3-16; *The Bad Shepherd*: Ezekiel 34:2-16, 23). Look for qualities of a good and bad shepherd. Complete the following chart by listing the information according to the appropriate category.

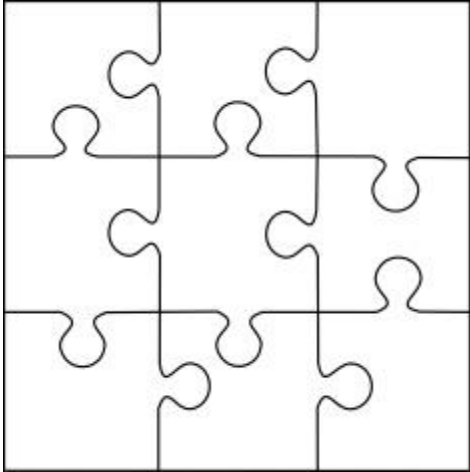
Good Shepherd	Bad Shepherd

7. Kenneth Boa makes the statement, "Relationships are the currency of

God's kingdom."⁹ How would you support this statement using information from this lesson?

8. From what has just been covered, list at least three motivations for leading in ministry.

9. God is at work in our lives. He usually works in us through Christian leaders who are investing in us and impacting our lives. Complete the "Puzzle Activity" below. One way we can learn to be an effective relational leader is to see how God has used others in our own life. Think about the people God has used in your life to shape you and impact you in a positive way. Write one of their names and which type of relationship they played (from Stanley and Clinton) in each of the puzzle pieces in this diagram.



10. Think of different people in your life in which you could invest as a relational leader. List their names below with the type of relationship (from Stanley and Clinton) you think you could use to empower them, and an occasion for relating.

Name	Type of Relationship	Occasion for Relating

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Lesson Six: Servant Leaders

Any talk of servant leadership takes us directly and immediately to Jesus. Paul pens one of the most familiar Christological passages in the epistles. He states,

⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with
God something to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking
the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness”
(Philippians 2:5-7).

We have already examined these verses under humility, and rightly so, for humility is the heart condition of a servant leader. Pride, position, power or authority cannot motivate a servant leader.

Jesus is the ultimate servant because of who He is. Jesus is very God of very God. He both demonstrates and teaches what it means to be a servant leader. As a model and a teacher Jesus challenges the normal way of thinking and leading for His time and our time. The relevance of His teaching on leadership is a constant issue, because man in his fallen nature will always go the way of the flesh in how he leads.

Jesus the Servant Leader

In the upper room with His disciples, Jesus did something that was radical and counter to the idea of leadership. They were there to celebrate the Feast of the Passover, but Jesus had much more in store for them. It would be here that Jesus would give them His last

discourse, He would institute the Lord's Supper, and He would be betrayed. In John 13:2-15 Jesus does more than teach with words, He gives His disciples an example of servant leadership.

Jesus gets up from the dinner, takes off His outer garments, ties a towel around His waist and begins washing His disciples' feet. To clarify what Jesus has done He said, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I Am. Now that I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" (John 13:12-15). Jesus took this opportunity given to Him to teach an important lesson. "When there was no servant to carry out the customary task of foot washing, Jesus assumed the role. The Master became the servant. The greatest and highest became the least and the lowest. In one stunning act, Jesus demonstrated that in the kingdom of God, service is not the path to greatness; service is greatness."¹

In this occasion, the focus of Jesus' teaching was not focused on the action of washing feet, but on the attitude behind it. Not one of the disciples volunteered to take on the role of the servant, and yet the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords became their servant. Jesus wasn't showing them necessarily 'what to do', but 'what to be'.

How could Jesus do this? First He loved those He was serving. Second, Jesus knew where He had come from and why He was there. And although His hour had come to depart from this world, He was returning to the Father (John 13:1-3).

The disciples were not called to be 'feet washers' literally, but they were called to be servants. "Christ means for us to live a life of love, and of humble and sacrificial service."² Or as John Maxwell has

said, "It is true that those who would be great must be like the least and servant of all."³ And lastly, "Jesus led in such a way that no one who came into contact with him remained unchanged. In turn, he insisted that his followers lead as he did: by serving. No one could—or can—argue with his command, because he modeled the kind of service he was advocating. And he certainly models greatness. Jesus Christ is the ultimate servant leader."⁴ This is the message that Jesus lived. This is the message that He taught.

Jesus' Teaching on Servant Leadership

On several occasions when Jesus taught on leadership, he challenged the status quo of the day. In Matthew 23 a positive example of leadership is unveiled in the midst of addressing worldly leadership.

Jesus confronts the teachers of the law and the Pharisees for their negative example of leadership. The Pharisees were the religious leaders, and were very legalistic and zealous for the law. On one hand, Jesus honors their role and tells the crowd to obey them, but on the other hand, He condemns their motivation and instructs people not to follow their example.

⁵Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; ⁶they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues, ⁷they love to be greeted in the marketplace and to have men call them 'Rabbi'" (Matthew 23:5-7).

What were the motivations and attitudes of the Pharisees that Jesus exposed? They demanded the highest of respect from others and to be followed without question. They did everything to be seen by men. In Matthew 23:13-32 Jesus pronounces seven woes upon the teachers of the law and the Pharisees. In His attack on their leadership, Jesus calls them hypocrites, blind guides, whitewashed tombs, snakes and vipers. He gives examples of how the spiritual leaders of the day were abusing their position and power by creating man-made laws that were actually contrary to God's Word. Their teaching missed the meaning of Scripture and demanded what even they could not uphold, enslaving their followers more and more to their sin because they were not dealing with the real issues—the motives of the heart.

What do we learn about their leadership style or attitudes? They were demanding. They abused their position. They practiced top-down, authoritative leadership. They were not concerned with the true spiritual condition of the people, but only the practice of their 'religion.'

In the midst of Jesus' confrontation He gives a positive example of leadership.

"But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and He is in heaven. Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted" (Matthew 23:8-12).

What important lesson about leadership does Jesus teach his

disciples? The greatest will be your servant. Jesus did not see servant-leadership in the teachers of the law and the Pharisees. On the contrary, he saw abuse and concern for position and recognition. A biblical leader, therefore, is not eager for titles, positions and power. He only wants to serve others. The posture of servanthood focuses on serving the needs of followers. "A servant leader sees his or her role quite differently from the traditional top-down dictator type. The servant leader is there to make the worker successful, not vice versa."⁵

In Mark 9:35, Jesus confronts the disciples who were arguing who among them was the greatest. He answered their heart issue of pride with these words, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all. Our role as their leader is to facilitate their effectiveness in any way we can, much as a coach tries to get optimum performance out of his team players."

Once again (Mark 10: 35-45), Jesus needs to confront the disciples' pride. John and James made the request to sit at the right and left of Jesus in glory. They wanted the positions of power and honor (see also Matthew 20:26-28). When the other disciples heard this they became indignant—maybe because they did not think of it sooner themselves. How does Jesus correct them? He teaches them about servant-leadership.

⁴²...You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever want to be first

must be slave to all. ⁴⁵For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:42-45)

Great leaders are not known by their title, position or power—rather by being a servant. Malphurs shows that in Matthew 20, in order for Jesus to make His point, He uses two words that he most frequently used to express servant leadership: *diakonos* and *doulos*. In other words, *diakonos* + *doulos* = *service*. *Diakonos* means to serve others voluntarily while *doulos* means someone in a position of service. Therefore, we are obligated to serve Him, but at the same time, we must be willing to serve others. “In other words we willingly obligate ourselves to serve.”⁴⁶

Think of the Apostle Paul. He considered his pedigree as rubbish compared to knowing Christ. He put no confidence in his heritage, his training, roles or religious zeal (Philippians 3:4-7). As a new creation in Christ, Paul took on the role and title of a servant (Romans 1:1 and Colossians 1:23).

The heart of a servant leader is different from worldly leadership. Blanchard & Hodges in *The Servant Leader* make constructive observations about servant leadership.

“All great leaders have a specific leadership point of view that defines how they see their role and their relationships to those they seek to influence. In particular, we want you to first understand the servant leadership point of view modeled and taught by Jesus, and then learn what changes in thinking are required to align your own

thinking about leadership with His.”⁷

“Servant leaders understand that everyone needs to be heard, praised, encouraged, forgiven, accepted and guided back to the right path when they drift off course. As leaders, we need to practice these behaviors. Why? Because Jesus did!”⁸

According to what we have studied to this point:

- A servant-leader is more concerned about others.
- A servant-leader takes on the attitude of a servant even though he is a leader.
- A servant-leader is not concerned about position, power, or recognition, but changing lives.
- A servant-leader does not use his power, authority, or position for his/her own gain.
- A servant-leader possesses the confidence to serve (the real heart of servanthood is security).
- A servant-leader serves out of love.

Aubrey Malphurs’ remarks on servant leadership are helpful. He states, “A biblical image that is most common and dominant for leaders is that of a servant. And this is the image I use in my definition of Christian leaders: Christian leaders are servants with credibility and capabilities, who are able to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction.”⁹ He developed a chart under the topic of servant leadership that captures the key points of several of our

lessons on biblical leadership.

Servant Leadership ¹⁰

Characteristic	Biblical Directive	Contrasts
Manner of Leadership <i>Humble</i>	How? <i>"not lording it over"</i>	 <i>humility, not ego</i>
Essence of Leadership <i>Service</i>	What? <i>"servant and slave"</i>	 <i>giving, not receiving</i>
Recipients of Leadership <i>Others</i>	Who? <i>"for many"</i>	 <i>others, not self</i>
Motive of Leadership <i>Love</i>	Why? <i>"the full extent of his love"</i>	 <i>a towel, not a throne</i>

Servant leaders lead with humility. The ever-present temptation of leaders is to allow their position to become an ego thing. The reality is that followers quickly recognize prideful, egocentric leadership. Since Jesus defines greatness as service, Christian leaders should be servants of others. Notice that the orientation of a servant leader is towards others. We will serve others humbly only to the degree that we love them. And the dirt on their feet will test our love for them—we won't mind a little dirt.¹⁰

In summation, biblical leadership is more about the heart and

attitude of the leader, then position or authority. Leading biblically means being a servant. The heart of a biblical leader properly uses any position, power or authority he has for the good of the followers, for the strengthening of the church and for the glory of Christ.

Questions and Activities for Application:

1. Reflecting on Servant Leadership: Where is your heart when it comes to serving others? Do you desire to become a leader with position and power? Or are you motivated by a desire to help others?

2. Think through the Gospel accounts. Aside from John 13 when Jesus washed the feet of the disciples, how else does He demonstrate servant leadership? List the action with the reference.

Action of Servant Leadership

Reference

3. Give five examples of how a leader in the church today could 'wash

the feet' (serve others) of the church members.

4. If you were to contrast the information from Jesus' teaching on leadership, you would have both negative and positive characteristics. List the differences between the leadership of the teachers of the law, the Pharisees and Gentile rulers with the leadership endorsed by Jesus and complete the chart below.

Pharisee/Gentile Leaders	Christian/Servant Leaders

5. Review the following passages: Matthew 23, Mark 9:33-35, and 10:35-45.

How would Jesus define a leader?

6. In Jesus' teaching *diakonos* + *doulos* = *service*, what meaning does this implicate and how should it affect our motivation?

7. Audrey Malphurs defined Christian leaders as "*servants* with credibility and capabilities, who are able to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction."

How is being a servant leader imperative to fulfilling the rest of the definition?

8. Review Philippians 3:4-7 and Paul's pedigree and resume (confidence in the flesh). Is there anything in your background (education, position, family name, nationality, etc.) that you might be using to promote yourself as a leader, rather than considering them 'loss? If so, what are they? How can you consider them lost (nothing) for the sake of Christ?

9. In conclusion to the article "Servants of the Servant: Portrait of a Servant-leader," Dr. Howard states, "Servant-leaders must undergo daily

spiritual surgery under the Spirit-illuminated exposure to God's word, under girded by earnest prayer for God to search one's thoughts and meditations."¹¹ What could you do to ensure *daily spiritual surgery* by the Holy Spirit be important for us as leaders?

10. "Each of us must allow the greatest servant leader the world has ever known to serve us by teaching us to lead through service."¹²

Write a prayer (reflecting what has been taught in this lesson) asking Jesus to lead you and teach you about servant leadership.

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Lesson Seven:

The Leader's Call and Passion

A calling from God for the biblical leader is essential. The heart of this book has focused on the character of a biblical leader. A central element recognizing and confirming biblical leaders is their character. Therefore, character development is a key to your development as a leader and a part of your calling to cultivate Christ-like character. In Psalm 138:8 David states, "The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your love, O LORD, endures forever—do not abandon the works of your hands." James Boice compares this verse with Philippians 1:6 which assures us that "he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ." In this light, "God's purpose is to make us like Jesus Christ and to bring us to glory (see Romans 8:28-30)."¹

Calling keeps a leader going when things become difficult. It serves as a compass pointing to the direction God has for him and those he leads. The leader that understands his calling, his capabilities and his character will also make him more effective in serving Christ. When there is a match between a person's calling, capabilities and character and his role, there is good leadership placement. According to Audrey Malphurs, "Good placement results in maximum kingdom effectiveness. Good placement results in more influence and ministry effectiveness for the Savior. Poor placement, however, results in less influence and limited spiritual effectiveness."²

I am sure you can think of leaders who were in a role that did not match his gifts and capabilities. In this situation God can and does

work, in spite of His people. However, almost everyone is frustrated and can become discouraged. Therefore, it is beneficial for a leader to know himself and serve Christ in concert with his calling and gifts.

Calling

David was anointed as king by Samuel as a young man, but did not take the throne for many years. Even when David had an opportunity to kill Saul in the cave he did not succumb to his soldiers' encouragement (1 Samuel 24:2-4). Rather, he cut off a corner of his robe to demonstrate his integrity and character. David puts his hope in God's calling for his life and not in his circumstance. David states, "1Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in you my soul takes refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed. 2I cry out to God Most High, to God, who fulfills {his purpose} for me" (Psalm 57:1-2).

In the midst of waiting for God to fulfill his calling and anointing, David found his refuge in God Most High. Notice that his character was tested in the meantime. Sometimes God calls us to a ministry or position and while waiting for that fulfillment He is working on our character. Like David, God has a unique design for each of us. In the eighth lesson we will study the stages God can use to develop leaders according to their calling.

In *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life*, Oz Guinness addresses the importance of calling. First, God's calling in our lives gives purpose to everything—God's purpose. "Calling is the truth that God calls us to Himself so decisively that everything we are, everything we do, and everything we have is invested with a special

devotion, dynamic and direction lived out as a response to his summons and service."³

A biblical leader is a servant leader. The leader's calling, then, is for others. The gifts given by the Holy Spirit are for the good of others—for service. Concerning spiritual gifts, Paul states, "⁴There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:4-7).

Our calling is a part of our life-response to God. There is a special calling God gives. Oz Guinness explains a special calling in relationship to the ordinary call. "A special call refers to those tasks and missions laid on individuals through a direct, specific, supernatural communication from God. Ordinary calling, on the other hand, is the believer's sense of life-purpose and life-task in response to God's primary call, 'Follow me,' even though there is no direct, specific, supernatural communication from God about a secondary calling."⁴

Our calling will usually match our giftedness. "Whatever is the heart of our calling is work that fulfills us because it employs our deepest gifts."⁵ But there is a danger to use the word 'calling' only for the core of our giftedness. You could get spoiled if you only focus on the core of your giftedness and neglect to remember that calling has a multiple dimension and includes all your relationships.

Os Guinness also warns of the distinction between the clarity of calling and the mystery of calling. "To the extent that through worship, listening to God, and discovering our giftedness we grasp what God is calling us to be and do, there will be a proper clarity in our sense of

calling. Can you state your identity in a single sentence? No more should you necessarily be able to state your calling in a single sentence. At best you can only specify a part of it."⁶

Soon, you will be asked to state your calling in a sentence or two. In living out your calling, however, you need to remember that it is broader than your gifts and specific ministry. Your calling also encompasses your organization, your family, your church, your community and the world. Your 'calling' should not isolate you, but rather connect you with the world around you.

Questions and Activities for Application:

The questions and activities begin at this point, although they will be intermixed with more content. The remainder of this lesson requires hands-on application.

1. From the discussion so far, what are the benefits of understanding your calling?

2. What is the vertical and horizontal aim of discovering and fulfilling one's calling?

Vertical:

Horizontal:

3. How does a special call compare to a general call?

4. Ordinary calling is the believer's sense of life-purpose and life-task in response to God's primary call, 'Follow me.' In your life, what would this comprise?

5. "A *special call* refers to those tasks and missions laid on individuals through a direct, specific, supernatural communication from God." Choose two leaders from Scripture that experienced God's *special call* in different ways and briefly describe them.

Biblical Leader:

Biblical Leader:

The following exercises are designed to provide you with resources for contemplating how God has been working in your life. Before you can chart a development plan (the second project) you need to understand the specifics of your calling and where you are presently. In other words, you need to identify the gap between where you are and where you need to be in order to lead more effectively—for the glory of God.

Self-Assessment: Knowing Yourself

At no time in this process should you isolate yourself from God's work in your life. This process could be seen as a monument of God's grace at work in your life.

These three resources or activities are tools that will provide information during your time of praying and writing your statement of calling. While they move from general or open-ended to more specific, you need to be as specific as possible throughout all the activities.

My Passion Worksheet

My Monument—"To the Glory of God" Worksheet

Knowing Yourself Worksheet

6. *My Passion Worksheet*

John Maxwell states, "I believe that each of us has a dream placed in the heart. I'm not talking about wanting to win the lottery. That kind of idea comes from a desire to escape our present circumstances, not to pursue a heartfelt dream. I'm talking about a vision deep inside that speaks to the very soul. It's the thing we were born to do. It draws on our talents and gifts. It appeals to our highest ideals. It sparks our feelings of destiny. It is inseparably linked to our purpose in life."⁷

To help understand your purpose in life, answer the following questions:

What is so important to me that I must do it in order to fulfill my purpose in life? List three primary activities that are central to your life purpose or calling.

What would other people say you are passionate about? What evidence is there to support their views?

In what areas do you need to grow (knowing—*information*, being—*spiritual*, or doing—*skills*), in order to put your life purpose into action?

Adapted from *Your Road Map to Success: Workbook* by John Maxwell ⁸

7. A Monument—"To the Glory of God" Worksheet

Success is...
knowing your purpose in life,
growing to reach your maximum potential, and
sowing seeds that benefit others.⁹

The first question to the Westminster Shorter Catechism presents us with the foundation for all of life: *Question 1*. What is the chief end of man? *Answer 1*. The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

G.I. Williamson remarks, "According to the Catechism, there is a reason for the existence of human beings. And this reason cannot be found in man himself!"¹⁰ Our purpose is found in our relationship with God as our Creator and Christ our Redeemer.

We are called to glorify God in all that we do (1 Corinthians 10:31) in all of our life and ministry. Imagine that you are at the end of your life and a monument is being constructed in honor of your life and ministry, which gives God the glory.

On the next page draw a monument that represents the fulfillment of your calling—success as defined by John Maxwell. It could be a statue or plaque that would express what you want your life and ministry to show at the end of your life, that which would glorify God.

Think about...

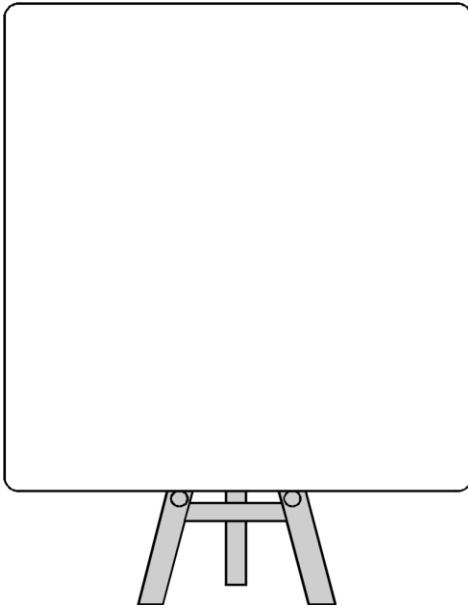
What would it look like and what would it say?

What material would it be made of?

Where should it be placed?

Who will be affected by it?

MONUMENT TO MY SUCCESS:



"To the Glory of God!"

8. Know Yourself: Ask the following questions and then complete the chart on the next page.

What are your strengths, gifts, and abilities?

How has God been developing you in the past concerning your ministry, your family, and your personal growth?

What have you accomplished this year regarding your ministry, your family, and your personal growth?

In what areas has God been showing you that need growth, development, or change into areas of ministry, family, and personal growth?

Knowing your Skills, Abilities and Gifts

Think through your time of ministry and service and complete the chart below. As you list your skills, abilities and spiritual gifts, think about how they have been used in ministry through (ministry experiences) and the confirmation you have received.

AREA	MINISTRY EXPERIENCE	CONFIRMED by others (How?)
SKILLS/ABILITIES		
GIFTS (Spiritual)		

9. Knowing Your Weaknesses and Limitations

It is just as important to understand your weaknesses and limitations, as it is to know your strengths. List your weaknesses and limitations below that have an impact on fulfilling your calling.

WEAKNESSES AND LIMITATIONS:

Your Statement of Calling

One of the most productive exercises in this process is creating a written statement of your calling. This statement describes God's unique purpose for your life, according to your gifts, abilities, experiences and circumstances. This statement of calling serves as a compass for your life and ministry.

Writing Your Statement of Calling

Your statement of calling should draw from the previous steps and activities, and time of prayer and reflection. This statement will focus mostly on your ministry, but remember that there are other circumstances that influence the reality of your calling. For example, if you are married, you are called to be a godly and encouraging spouse. If you have children, you are called to be a faithful father or mother. These are biblical mandates. These God-given responsibilities cannot be ignored. Other circumstances that influence your calling are health (or the health of a family member), resources (spiritual gifts, weaknesses, financial support), or obstacles and barriers beyond your control.

Try to reduce your calling to several sentences or a paragraph. For example, the author's statement of calling is as follows:

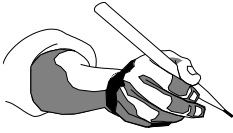
*I am called to develop leaders
through teaching and mentoring
in the context of a team.*

While this statement is primarily focused on ministry it also encompasses my role as a husband, father, friend, church and community member. In my role as a father I believe I'm called to help my children understand God's calling in their lives and provide whatever resources available to me to help them fulfill this calling. As a member of every church I have attended, I have taught God's Word and mentored other men in the faith.

Your statement of calling should naturally grow out of your dreams, values, and convictions/passions. Therefore, this statement should not be a quick, one-time event. Instead, most people develop and then refine their statement of calling over the course of a lifetime. Write it the best you can (for where you are now), and make plans to adjust your statement of calling as God brings different circumstances and opportunities into your life.

Your vision is a portrait of the future to which you can commit. It articulates your values. It empowers and inspires you to do your job. Your vision will be uniquely your own. In creating it, take a risk; be daring and reach for what you truly want for your organization and your own role in it.¹¹

10. Your Statement of Calling



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Lesson Eight:

The Making of a Leader

How do people become leaders? A biblical leader is defined by Robert Clinton as “a person with *God-given* capacity and a *God-given* responsibility to influence a specific group of *God’s people* toward His purposes for the group (italics mine).”¹ With such an emphasis on God’s role in a biblical leader, the next question is, “How does God develop leaders?”

God uses people’s life experiences to affect the kind of leaders they become. Henry and Richard Blackaby show that God uses influences such as, home life, failures, crises, personal struggles, and success through hardships to shape us.² Blackaby and Blackaby continue, “there is an added dimension to the growth of a spiritual leader that is not found in secular leadership development. That dimension is the active work of the Holy Spirit in leader’s lives.”³ God doesn’t squander people’s life. He doesn’t ignore their pain, but brings healing and growth out of even the worst experiences. God is sovereign over every life and every situation.⁴ Blackaby and Blackaby refer to Robert Clinton’s six-stage model in the *Making of a Leader*, as how God uses relationships and events in life as two primary means for growing people into leaders.⁵

Six Phases of Leadership Development

Phase 1: Sovereign Foundations

Phase 2: Inner-life Growth

Phase 3: Ministry Maturing

Phase 4: Life Maturing

Phase 5: Convergence

Phase 6: Afterglow or Celebration

Robert Clinton's theme in *The Making of a Leader* is that God develops a leader over a lifetime. Development is a function of the use of events and people that impress leadership lessons upon a leader (processing), time, and the leader's response. Processing is central to the development of a leader. All leaders can point to critical incidents in their lives where God taught them something very important that was used to move them on to the next level (Boundary Events).⁶

YOU WILL BE EVALUATING YOUR OWN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TIME-LINE. SO THINK ABOUT THESE PRINCIPLES AS THEY ARE EXPLAINED. LOOK FOR *BOUNDARY EVENTS* THAT ACT AS A TRANSITION FROM ONE PHASE TO ANOTHER.

Leadership is a lifetime of lessons. While there are patterns, processes and principles, each person's time-line is unique. A developmental phase is a unit of time in a person's life. The six developmental phases are not absolute, but they are helpful in understanding how God is doing in any given time in a person's life.⁷

When identifying development phases look for, 1) different kinds of process items to occur in different phases, 2) a specific boundary event that terminates the phase, and moves you on to the next phase, and 3) different spheres of influence. God uses providential events, people and circumstances to develop leaders.⁸

As a leader you can recognize God's hand in your life and developing you over a lifetime. His priority is to conform you to the image of Christ for ministry with spiritual authority.⁹

Phase 1: Sovereign Foundations

When God providentially works foundational items into the leader-to-be. This occurs in the formative years. God works through your family life, your environment, people of influence and even difficulties.

These can be experiences good and difficult, building blocks of skills and abilities and character traits. These can occur before and/or after conversion to Christ. "The potential leader has little control over what happens in this phase. His primary lesson is to learn to respond positively and take advantage of what God has laid in these foundations."¹⁰

Phase 2: Inner-Life Growth

The emerging leader usually receives information and training in the basics of the Christian faith and ministry. During this stage they receive a model. This often occurs through relationships (mentoring, modeling and discipleship). The real training ground is in the heart of the leader. Through their experiences God teaches them more specifically what it means to be a spiritual leader.¹¹

During this phase God uses the following to build the emerging leader's character: 1) *Integrity Checks*: A test God uses to evaluate intentions and gives and opportunities to strengthen character¹², 2) *Obedience Checks*: A process item through which a leader learns to recognize, understand, and obey God's Word¹³, and 3) *Word Checks*: A process in which the leader understands how to apply God's Word in

life.¹⁴

God works through these processes. For example, Word checks are frequently combined with integrity checks and obedience checks. As we stated from the beginning, the core of biblical leadership is character. These checks test the emerging leader's intentions and character and prepare him for ministry and usefulness (A Boundary Process of character). Three principles flow from these processes:

- 1) Integrity is foundational for effective leadership; it must be instilled early in a leader's character.
- 2) Obedience is first learned, and then taught.
- 3) Leadership gifts primarily involve word gifts, which initially emerge through word checks.¹⁵

Phase 3: Ministry Maturing

Ministry maturing begins with steps of faithfulness. Jesus taught, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much" (Luke 16:10).

The emerging leader gets into ministry and develops skills and gifts to enhance his effectiveness. He will get further training (formal and informal). Robert Clinton suggests that God develops the leader by taking him through four stages: 1) *Entry into ministry*: Calling, encouragement from others, and gift recognition, 2) *Training*: Developing spiritual gifts and skills for ministry, 3) *Relational learning*: Loving others, conflict resolution, backlash, how to motivate and influence others and servanthood leadership, and 4) *Discernment*: Application of biblical principles in life and ministry.¹⁶ Ministry maturing doesn't happen immediately, but occurs over an extended

period of time, through these four stages. Through this phase spiritual principles are connected with the ministry practices.

Through the 'Ministry Maturing' phase the majority of activities are ministry focused. The leader encounters numerous challenges. They are Prayer *challenges* (incidents that draw a leader to prayer and dependency upon God), Faith *challenges* (incidents that require the leader to take steps of faith in ministry), and Influence *challenges* (Instances when a leader is prompted by God to expand his sphere of influence).¹⁷

During 'Ministry Maturing' the leader receives periodic affirmation from others and results, called *Ministry affirmation*. God shows His approval of the leader through others which confirms God's guidance or resulting in a renewed sense of calling.¹⁸ There should also be a growing development of one's personal *philosophy of ministry*. The Philosophy of ministry involves ideas, values, and principles that guide the ministry for decision-making, exercising influence or for evaluating the ministry.¹⁹

The Boundary process, which leads to 'Life Maturing' is the shift from ministry as *doing* to a ministry as *being*.

Phase 4: Life Maturing

During this phase the leader identifies and uses his gift-mix with power. There is maturing fruitfulness. God is working through the leader. He becomes a model to imitate. One recognizes that part of God's guidance for ministry comes through establishing ministry priorities by discerning gifts. "God does not stop working on character after moving someone into leadership. God continues to form character throughout the

ministry of a leader."²⁰

Key principles are played out in the ministry, which reflect a deepening character. First, ministry *flows out of being*. Second, the process of isolation from normal ministry involvement, which leads to a deeper or new relationship with God. Third, *conflicts* lead to greater faith and trust in God. Fourth, *life crises* lead to greater faith and trust in God. During 'Life Maturing' there is a deeper awareness of *life-long goals* and *life-long calling*.²¹

Phase 5: Convergence

Convergence occurs when God moves a leader into a role that matches his or her gift-mix, experience, temperament and calling. The role enhances and uses the best that the leader has to offer. Convergence is a leader's "response to God's guidance must be to trust, rest, and watch as God moves him toward a ministry that embodies all the development of preceding phases. Convergence manifests itself as he responds consistently to God's work in his life."²² Clinton acknowledges that the majority of Christian leaders never experience convergence, let alone *Afterglow* or *Celebration*.

Phase 6: Afterglow or Celebration

Some leaders, however, who experience convergence, also get to see a lifetime of ministry culminating in an era of recognition and influence or *Afterglow* or *Celebration*.²³

Pitfalls of Leadership

Anywhere along the journey a leader can get disqualified. Most of us know personally people who began with great promise but sadly crashed

due to one issue or another. Henry and Richard Blackaby present ten of the most common pitfalls.

The first is *pride*. We dealt with pride in lesson four on humility. "Pride is an offensive trait in secular leaders, but it is even more repulsive in spiritual leaders. Pride causes Christian leaders to take credit not only for what their people have done but also for what God has accomplished."²⁴

The second pitfall is the most notorious—*sexual sin*. Spiritual leaders must place safeguards in their lives to avoid sexual sin: accountability, heed your own counsel, consider the consequences, develop healthy habits and pray and ask others to pray for them.²⁵

Cynicism is the next pitfall. Leaders who concentrate on the negative lose their zeal and optimism required to overcome difficulties. *Greed* is another pitfall. "The hunger for wealth and possessions can destroy spiritual leaders. When leaders hunger for wealth, they can also be tempted to act unethically."²⁶

Mental laziness is the fifth pitfall. Leaders need to be life-long learners. A commitment to learn and to change creates a growing level of leadership competence and influence.²⁷ Every leader receives criticism and are second-guessed. "Constructive criticism is good for leaders."²⁸ Therefore, *oversensitivity* to criticism will not allow a leader to grow where he needs to grow.

When leaders allow ministry and people to crowd out their time with Christ, they are cutting themselves off from nourishment for sustained growth. As Paul states, "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness" (Colossians 2:6-7). *Spiritual lethargy* is a pitfall avoided by

being rooted and built up in Christ. "Nurturing a strong relationship with almighty God allows leaders the freedom to follow their God-given convictions and to bring glory to God through their efforts."²⁹ *Domestic neglect* is the eighth pitfall. Most spiritual leaders love their families. However, many also get so focused on their ministry that they neglect their families. "Conscientious leaders take their God-given responsibilities for their families seriously. They do this because they love God; they do it because they love their families."³⁰ Noticing how a leader handles his family responsibilities should be a focus for evaluating emerging leaders, as well as established leaders (See Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 1 Timothy 3:4).

Leaders influence a specific group of *God's people* toward His purposes for the group. They need to ensure the organization is healthy. A significant element for avoiding the ninth pitfall (*administrative carelessness*) is practicing biblical conflict resolution and clear communication. They enlist others to handle many of the aspects of ministry operations. A temptation of some leaders is to micro-manage the ministry, instead of trusting people, even if they fail.

How long should a leader stay in his position? Have you known a leader who had stayed too long in his role? "The problem for some leaders is that they gradually come to see their identity as intrinsically linked to their position."³¹ Christians should find their identity in Christ. One way to steer clear of the pitfall of *prolonged position holding* is to plan for your replacement and train the next generation of leaders.

Avoiding these pitfalls is directly connected to finishing well as leaders. Think about the purpose of guardrails on a twisting road. The pitfalls lie below, and the guardrail helps those who lose their footing, but cannot stop those plowing over the edge. Spiritual leaders need to

examine their own lives and attest that they are susceptible to these pitfalls. Observe that many of these pitfalls are dug because of weak character. It is just as dangerous to think you are not vulnerable to these pitfalls. "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity" (Proverbs 11:2-3).

Leaders Who Finish Well

In *Empowered Leaders*, Hans Finzel shows that those who have finished well displayed six qualities. First, they *maintain a vibrant relationship with God*. Our relationship with God is first in our priority for lifelong effective leadership. This quality is the foundation of the rest that follow.

Second, they maintain a *lifelong posture of learning and growing*. They never think they have arrived! Third, *they exhibit Christ-like character*, the fruit of the Spirit. They allow the Spirit to work in them and through them. God is shaping their lives. Fourth, they *live out their convictions in real life*. They walk their talk. Fifth, they leave behind one or more ultimate, lasting contribution to the church or ministry. Sometimes these contributions are not known, but they still make an impact. Lastly, leaders who finish well *walk with a growing sense of destiny*. "Those who make it to the end have a sense of God's call on their lives throughout their lives. They are convinced that God has a plan for their lives, and they are determined not to falter in seeing that plan through the end."³²

Our determination is fueled by the grace of God in our lives and in the work of Christ. As Paul reminds us, ¹²"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to

take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12-14).

It is our joy to serve the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Whether you are beginning your adventure as a leader in the church or have served a long time, we need to focus on growing in Christ-like character. “He has chosen to use us, His imperfect vessels, in the great adventure of accomplishing His perfect will on planet Earth. To serve as a leader in that quest can be a profoundly rewarding pursuit.”³³

Questions and Activities for Application:

1. According to Clinton, what is God's role in developing spiritual leaders? What attitude should result from understanding this?

2. What is the added dimension of growth for spiritual leaders?

3. List the six phases used by Robert Clinton to describe the leadership time line

4. During the *Inner-Life Growth* phase what should you look for in an emerging leader?

5. What is a *Boundary Event* and how does God use it to direct His

people? Explain one you have experienced.

6. In *Ministry Maturing* what would be some expected fruit from this phase?

7. What is the key shift in *Life Maturing* concerning ministry? How does this shift affect ministry?

8. What crucial elements are necessary for a leader to experience *Convergence*?

9. List the pitfalls you can connect directly with character/heart issues.

10. Review the qualities for finishing well. Support the following statement with your own words: "Our relationship with God is first in our priorities for lifelong effective leadership. This quality is the foundation of the rest that follow."

11. In light of the teaching of this book, and in your own words, define a biblical leader.

A Biblical Leader is...

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A Spiritual Gifts Survey

The following survey can be used as a beginning point or a means of confirming your spiritual gifts. For a definition of the various gifts see the end of this survey.

Directions:

1. Ask the Lord to guide you and allow you to answer the questions clearly.
2. Read and answer each question as quickly and accurately as possible.
3. Put the answer in the "Scoring Sheet" found several pages below. The question you are answering is...

"This statement reflects experience in my Christian life (or for the person I am surveying) frequently, ...not frequently, ...or somewhere between?"

3=frequently

2 or 1=in-between (2 is stronger than 1)

0=not frequently

4. If you have no knowledge or experience in a certain area, simply place an X in the box.
5. For example, for question #1, you may score yourself as "frequently," so you put a "3" in the corresponding box, as follows:

A Spiritual Gifts Survey

GIFT	QUESTION NUMBER					TOTAL SCORE
Helps	1	22	43	64	85	
Score	3					

As you proceed, if you have given yourself a "2" for question #22, a "1" for question #43, a "3" for question #64, and an "x" for question #85, then your score for the "Helps" gift would appear as follows on the score sheet:

GIFT	QUESTION NUMBER					TOTAL SCORE
Helps	1	22	43	64	85	
Score	3	2	1	3	x	9

6. After completing the survey, total each row, then circle your 3 strongest gifts.

Spiritual Gifts Survey

Answers reflect my experience in the Christian life.

Frequently	Not Frequently			No Knowledge
3	2	1	0	X

1. ...puts away chairs or tables after a meeting or helps clean up.
2. ...regularly spends large amounts of time praying for others.
3. ...sees life as an adventure and desires to be involved.
4. ...communicates messages based on God's Word that are received as helpful and relevant.
5. ...spends time regularly reading and studying Christian literature.
6. ...appreciates the opportunity to provide food and fellowship for visitors.
7. ...takes the Gospel to the un-churched.
8. ...is able to understand clearly the long-term and short-term goals of a Christian group.
9. ...is used by God to deliver others who are oppressed by demons.
10. ...invests time and energy to help, guide, and counsel new Christians.
11. ...is used by God to help those weak in faith to grow.
12. ...is able to effectively build up people when they are down.
13. ...enjoys bringing God's love to those in hospitals, jails, etc.
14. ...finds that Christ has great meaning in his life and frequently shares that in a personal way with others.
15. ...enjoys serving the church doing little tasks that many would consider necessary but less important.
16. ...makes profound and difficult Christian principles seem relatively easy to learn.

17. ...accurately recognizes whether or not an action is in harmony with God's Spirit/Word.
18. ...is willing to give generously to a variety of Christian needs.
19. ...finds it challenging and enjoys finding practical answers to difficult problems in the church.
20. ...feels comfortable among people of a different culture/language.
21. ...gives others confident directions and feels a sense of accomplishment from seeing them followed.
22. ...is happy to be a helper behind the scenes at a church function.
23. ...feels that being a part of a prayer ministry/group would be exciting and rewarding.
24. ...is regularly involved in dreaming of things that would be accomplished by God's power.
25. ...proclaims God's Word boldly even if it upsets people.
26. ...is more excited than most for the opportunity to attend a workshop to learn more about teaching God's Word.
27. ...enjoys hosting small group functions in the home.
28. ...is expected to exercise God-given authority among Christians.
29. ...is able to set goals and plan effective strategies for action.
30. ...ministers effectively against supernatural forces.
31. ...likes the task of shepherding Christians over a long period of time, helping them to grow spiritually.
32. ...prays for those who are sick or injured and on occasions people are healed.
33. ...comforts and encourages other Christians who are depressed or hurting.
34. ...shows compassion to those who are suffering by visiting them and helping them with their needs.

35. ...is used effectively by the Holy Spirit to lead others to respond to God's gift of salvation through faith in Christ.
36. ...gets excited about clean-up service days at the church.
37. ...is used by God to communicate biblical truths to others in a way that is relevant and exciting.
38. ...can properly identify a person who is teaching false doctrines even when others are not aware of it.
39. ...finds great joy in contributing material resources for the Lord's work.
40. ...is known for helping to choose from several choices the one that can be best applied to meet the needs of the church/group.
41. ...is excited about making disciples in another culture.
42. ...gives guidance for helping the church grown and others willingly follow.
43. ...assists other workers in the church.
44. ...keeps a prayer list.
45. ...is considered by others to be a "visionary" who sees the possibility behind every problem.
46. ...is used to reveal something God will be doing in the future.
47. ...is more attentive than most in a Bible study.
48. ...is asked to provide lodging for visitors of the church.
49. ...is interested in representing the church.
50. ...is regularly getting others involved in the present task.
51. ...uses the Word of God to combat supernatural powers of evil.
52. ...helps Christians by guiding them to relevant portions of the Bible, praying with them and giving counsel.
53. ...is effectively used by God to bring health to those who suffer from sickness or injury.

54. ...is recognized as an encourager of others.
55. ...finds fulfillment from helping those who suffer from physical, emotional or mental problems.
56. ...appreciates the opportunity to take part in regular calling on the unchurched.
57. ...enjoys being asked to do special jobs around the church.
58. ...effectively trains Christian to growth in their relationship with Christ.
59. ...is able to make correct judgments about what is pleasing to God and what is not.
60. ...greatly appreciates being asked to donate money to a Christian cause.
61. ...is able to bring practical information to a difficult subject so that decisions prove to be good for the church.
62. ...enjoys learning and speaking foreign languages and eating food from other cultures.
63. ...guides and directs others to move forward following God's will.
64. ...works to help leaders do their jobs better.
65. ...would be more interested in being invited to a prayer meeting than most Christians.
66. ...trusts and relies on God, even when the situation looks difficult.
67. ...proclaims God truths from the Bible.
68. ...appreciates the opportunity to browse in a Christian bookstore to see what new literature is available.
69. ...is known to have an open-door policy where visitors can drop in anytime and feel welcomed.
70. ...has the desire to see new churches planted.
71. ...is able to put other Christians to work using their gifts and talents.

72. ...recognizes the presence of evil in a person or place and deals with it through the power of Christ.
73. ...works to reclaim persons who have strayed from the Christian faith or have been inactive in the church.
74. ...is used by God to cure diseases.
75. ...is used by God to challenge delinquent Christians to see their spiritual needs.
76. ...gains satisfaction by working with those who are poor or disadvantaged.
77. ...actively seeks out unbelievers in order to share the Gospel with them.
78. ...likes to help as a follower rather than a leader of a project.
79. ...enjoys the opportunity to share and explain God's Word in Bible studies or Sunday school classes.
80. ...tends to look beyond the human reasoning of an issue to discover whether it is God's will in accordance to His Word.
81. ...gives time, talents or money generously for the Lord's work.
82. ...is recognized as one who can apply practical insights for working out challenges, which face the church.
83. ...prefers living in a multicultural or cross-cultural community.
84. ...motivates others to develop strategies and plans for growth of God's kingdom.
85. ...does little jobs around the church that often go unnoticed by others.
86. ...has experienced God answering prayers.
87. ...displays more confidence that others that God can accomplish the impossible.
88. ...gives messages of God's judgment on those who don't repent.

89. ...has the ability to study the Bible regularly to learn new insights.
90. ...is good at making visitors feel at ease.
91. ...is viewed as an expert who influences other Christians.
92. ...is an organizer of resources to get God's work done.
93. ...finds deep satisfaction from helping a person to be freed from the forces of Satan.
94. ...serves and guides others, developing close, personal relationships.
95. ...is used by God to bring healing to people with damaged emotions.
96. ...confronts inactive or uninvolved Christians to encourage their participation.
97. ...shows compassion to those hurting, and recognizing what they need.
98. ...proclaims God's message in a way that clearly introduces Christ to those who don't know him.
99. ...appreciates the opportunity to serve the Lord's work when a need arises in the church.
100. ... helps people to learn spiritual concepts in a way that helps them to grow.
101. ...is sought by others for spiritual advice to determine a decision according to God's will.
102. ...finds joy in giving large percentages of income to the Lord's work.
103. ...easily applies biblical theory to daily life in practical ways.
104. ...would enjoy working with Christians who speak a different language or represent a different culture.
105. ...guides others through the temporary challenges in the church or Christian life that leads them on towards long-term accomplishments.

Spiritual Gifts Score Sheet

Write the score below the corresponding question number.

GIFT	QUESTION NUMBER					TOTAL SCORE FOR GIFT
	1	2	3	4	5	
Helps	1	22	43	64	85	
Score						
Intercession	2	23	44	65	86	
Score						
Faith	3	24	45	66	87	
Score						
Prophecy	4	25	46	67	88	
Score						
Knowledge	5	26	47	68	89	
Score						
Hospitality	6	27	48	69	90	
Score						
Apostle	7	28	49	70	91	
Score						
Administra- tion	8	29	50	71	92	
Score						
Deliverance	9	30	51	72	93	
Score						
Pastoring	10	31	52	73	94	

A Spiritual Gifts Survey

Score						
Healing	11	32	53	74	95	
Score						
Exhortation	12	33	54	75	96	
Score						
Mercy	13	34	55	76	97	
Evangelism	14	35	56	77	98	
Score						
Service	15	36	57	78	99	
Score						
Teaching	16	37	58	79	100	
Score						
Discernment	17	38	59	80	101	
Score						
Giving	18	39	60	81	102	
Score						
Wisdom	19	40	61	82	103	
Score						
Missionary	20	41	62	83	104	
Score						
Leadership	21	42	63	84	105	
Score						

Description of Gifts

Administration: The gift of *administration* is given from God to some members of the church to understand and communicate clearly the immediate and long-range goals for the local church and to implement plans to reach these goals.

Apostle: The gift of *apostleship* is given from God to some members of the church to assume and exercise general leadership over a number of churches with authority in spiritual and practical matters.

Deliverance: The gift of *deliverance* is given from God to some members of the church to cast out demons and evil spirits through the authority of Christ given to believers.

Evangelism: The gift of *evangelism* is given from God to some members of the church to be able to clearly communicate the message of the Gospel to unbelievers of their time and culture, which often results in spiritual conversion.

Exhortation: The gift of *exhortation* is given from God to some members of the church to minister words of comfort, encouragement and counsel to believers which results in healing and strengthening.

Faith: The gift of *faith* is given from God to some members of the church to discern with confidence the will of God for the future of His work, and to act with expectation that God will do great things.

Giving: The gift of *giving* is from God to some members of the church to contribute generously of their time, energy, and finances freely and cheerfully, in order to advance the kingdom of God.

Healing: The gift of *healing* is given from God to some members of the church to bring healing power of God to bear upon the sickness of people to whom it pleases God to cure illness and restore health apart

from the use of natural means.

Helps: The gift of *helps* is given from God to some members of the church to use their gifts and abilities to build up other believers.

Hospitality: The gift of *hospitality* is given from God to some members of the church to welcome people into their homes, especially those who are in need of food and housing.

Intercession: The gift of *intercession* is given from God to some members of the church to pray on the behalf of others for long periods of time on a regular basis and see frequent and specific answers to their prayers.

Knowledge: The gift of *knowledge* is given from God to some members of the church to discover, accumulate, analyze and clarify information and ideas (particularly biblical and theological ideas) that are helpful for the growth and well-being of the church.

Leadership: The gift of *leadership* is given from God to some members of the church to set vision, direction and goals for the church in accordance with God's purpose for the future and to mobilize others in such a way that they work together to accomplish those goals for the glory of God.

Mercy: The gift of *mercy* is given from God to some members of the church to feel genuine empathy and compassion for individuals who suffer physical, emotional, economic or mental problems, and demonstrate the love of Christ to them in some way.

Missions: The gift of *missions* is given from God to some members of the church to be able to minister whatever spiritual gifts and abilities they have in another culture, with emphasis on communicating the Gospel cross-culturally.

Pastor: The gift of *pastoring* is given from God to some members of the

church to be a shepherd over the people and to assume personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a group of believers.

Service: The gift of *service* is given from God to some members of the church to identify the unmet needs involved in a task related to God's work and to make use of available resources to meet those needs and help accomplish the desired goals.

Teaching: The gift of *teaching* is given from God to some members of the church to communicate the Word of God to other believers in a practical and relevant way.

Wisdom: The gift of *wisdom* is given from God to some members of the church to receive insight into matters and issues of the church and how to address them.