

Chapter Two

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

Effective leadership is a major key to achievement, effectiveness, and success in every area of life. This is as true in the Church as in any other realm.

This book is intended to help Christian leaders to further develop their natural, spiritual, and acquired leadership skills. It deals with spiritual aspects of leadership, and with the development of leadership skills.

God is presently training leaders in preparation for a world-wide harvest and for the emergence of His Kingdom. He is seeking to prepare them in character, obedience and authority.

1: THE CRUCIAL NEED FOR GOOD LEADERSHIP.

A: WITHOUT GOOD LEADERSHIP, LAWLESSNESS ABOUNDS.

Judges. 17:6. 18: 1-19. "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

B: WITHOUT LEADERSHIP, CONFUSION REIGNS.

C: THE PEOPLE ARE LIKE SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD.

2: SOME DEFINITIONS OF LEADERSHIP.

A: One who takes the lead and goes ahead to show the way.

A leader must be able and willing to get out in front of the people and lead the way. This takes initiative, courage, and faith. Someone has said, "***You will never get your head above the crowd unless you are willing to stick your neck out.***"

B: One who guides, directs, and commands a company.

A leader can never be an isolationist. He is part of a company for whom he is responsible as its leader. He must be clearly identified with that company, not merely as one of its members, but as the one responsible for its direction and activities.

C: One who influences the attitudes and actions of others.

A leader has the ability to inspire others to the degree that he positively and consistently influences their attitudes and actions. He gets them moving in the right direction. He inspires them to keep going even when the road is rough and there are obstacles in the path.

D: Someone that others want to follow.

A leader has characteristics which make people want to follow him. A leader is not a leader if no one is following him. This is the ultimate indication of leadership qualities — people are following him. A person may know all the theoretical principles of leadership, they may be able to lecture on the subject or even write a book about it, but the true test of leadership is follower-ship. Are people following him, and what kind of things are they accomplishing?

E: One with the ability to motivate others to achieve a goal.

An important part of effective leadership is the ability to motivate others, i.e. to get them moving in the right direction. But motivation is only effective if the ultimate objective is actually achieved. Some leaders get people moving. They get them actively involved in all kinds of programs and activities, but they never achieve the ultimate goal, they only go through the motions. True leadership gets things done. It achieves its ultimate goal.

3: SOME ASPECTS OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP.

A: Prophetic, able to anticipate the future.

A most important aspect of good leadership is the ability to read and anticipate the future. The company executive must be able to discern the market trends of the future and anticipate what people will be wanting in the coming years. If he manufactures products which no one will need or want in five year's time, he has missed the mark.

In terms of Christian leadership, we sometimes call this person a "Visionary." Not someone who is always receiving spiritual visions, but one who has the ability to correctly anticipate the challenges and opportunities which the future will present. I have known some leaders who have purchased land in an area where there were no people and then seen a population explosion in that area which has surrounded their church with thousands of homes. They "saw" the future trend and moved ahead of it.

B: Strategist, able to plan for the future.

A strategist is essentially practical. He does not only recognise the challenge of the future, he is also able to formulate plans to adequately meet that challenge. The strategist is not a dreamer. He is a realist. He recognises the opportunities before him and makes adequate, workable, achievable plans to reap the harvest of the future.

A plan is as essential to Church Planting or Church Growth as it is to erecting a building. How foolish is the builder who would begin to build without first thoroughly formulating and documenting his plans. He sits down and considers every tiny aspect of the building he plans to erect. The architect is employed to design and draw it. The estimator does a thorough costing. The surveyor examines every aspect of the proposed site. The engineer evaluates the structural soundness of the plan. All of

them reduce their findings and estimates to writing. In other words, the project is thoroughly planned and evaluated before any activity takes place. No sensible person would dream of attempting to build without a proper plan. Nor would they be allowed to do so. The local authorities would never countenance the erection of a building without the proper plans and strategy.

Nor should the Christian leader become involved in activities without first making thorough investigations and appropriate plans.

C: Communicators.

One of the reasons why all strategies and plans should be clearly defined and committed to writing is so that they can be more efficiently communicated. Every detail must be included so that the strategy in its entirety can be fully and clearly communicated to everyone involved.

The effective leader must be a clear and competent communicator. He must be able to share the vision and strategy convincingly so as to win the confidence, support and cooperation of his associates and workers.

The development of communication skills is important in this regard. The successful leader must endeavour to develop and refine his abilities to communicate in writing, speech, and by other appropriate means.

D: Motivators.

To motivate is to stimulate the interest of people and to get them to act in a positive manner towards the fulfilment of a specific goal. It includes informing and inspiring them to get moving in a certain direction. It also involves keeping them motivated and moving consistently. The motivator is able to keep inspiring the workers and to keep up the momentum of forward movement.

E: Role models and examples.

A leader must be an example and role model of what he is encouraging his followers to be. He cannot persuade them to be committed to a task to which he is obviously not fully committed. More inspiration comes from example than from exhortation. If his leadership is obviously a case of "Do what I say, not what I do," few people are likely to be motivated.

F: Someone people feel confident to follow.

A good leader wins the admiration of his followers. They want to emulate him in some way. He provides for them a pattern upon which they will want to mould their own lives. In order to accomplish this the leader needs credibility in the eyes and estimation of his followers, and such credibility must be earned over a considerable period of time.

G: Able to exercise authority.

Leaders must understand how to exercise authority. The usual manner in which this is learned is by being subject to authority yourself. This is the

reason for much of the basic training to which new recruits are subjected in the military. The main thing they have to learn is to be subject to authority and to obey orders without question. This is drilled into them for two main reasons. Firstly so that they will unquestioningly obey their leaders in battle situations. Secondly to help them understand the structure of authority so that they will be able to exercise it when they are given a role of authority.

This is beautifully illustrated in the story of the Centurion whom Jesus commended. (Matt. 8:5-13) The officer understood the principles of authority because he was subject to authority and also held a position of authority. Jesus commented that He had never seen such faith in all Israel.

H: Organisers, to achieve the desired goal.

To organise is to formulate orderly arrangements for oneself and others in order to maximise the efficient fulfilment of a goal. Organising is essential to efficient management. An effective leader must efficiently manage his resources, including people, strategies, and material resources. To do this he needs to be a competent organiser.

I: Orchestra conductors, who inspire harmony.

An orchestra conductor is an excellent example of what leadership is all about. Each musician in the orchestra must first make sure that his or her instrument is properly tuned. Then the conductor ensures that each instrument is in tune with the common note he has given. He then gives a specific score to every musician and requires that each one plays their particular part faithfully and maintains perfect harmony with all other instruments. The conductor dictates the tempo and the manner in which the piece is performed. Everyone follows his lead and the result is a glorious and harmonious rendering.

J: A General, who marshals and commands his army.

This final analogy is possibly the most accurate of all, providing the "General" always remembers that he too is answerable to the Commander in Chief. **Who is the Lord Himself.**

The General holds a high rank and has considerable authority, but he also is a "man under authority." A General is always aware of the authority he can wield but he is also aware that ultimately his authority stems from His Commander in Chief.

The General also realises that He is dependent on his fellow officers, the N.C.O's, and other ranks. Every member of the army is important. Even the lowly privates are indispensable. The effectiveness and success of the army depends on every member playing their part, in the right place, at the right time. The General is ultimately responsible to achieve this. He must ensure the morale of his troops. He must encourage their unity of purpose. He must work towards the fulfilment of the battle plan and get the whole army working as one man to achieve this.

Chapter Three.

HAVING THE RIGHT MOTIVE

"Do you seek great things *for yourself?* - Don't seek them." Jer. 45:5.

In many ways Christian leadership is quite different from all secular forms of leadership and having the right motive is much more critical and essential.

1: TRUE CHRISTIAN LEADERS SEEK GREAT THINGS FOR :-

A: THE GLORY OF GOD.

The overwhelming desire of Moses, one of the most remarkable and outstanding leaders in the Bible, was his desire to "*see God's glory.*" (Ex. 33:18) "**Glory,**" can seem to be an abstract, somewhat nebulous thing but in every-day terms it means "Exaltation," "Fame," "Praise," "Renown," and "Honour." As Christian leaders our chief desire should be to see God exalted in such a manner. We must desire to see God's Name exalted and glorified in everything we do, and be determined that we will never cause His Name to be ridiculed or brought into disfavour. We should jealously guard the Name, reputation, honour, and glory of God.

B: THE WELL-BEING OF THOSE OVER WHOM THEY HAVE CHARGE.

Christian leaders are frequently portrayed as shepherds, with Jesus as The Good Shepherd. God's people are also depicted as lambs, or sheep, for whom we as under-shepherds, must have genuine love and concern. The Good Shepherd is said to "*lay down his life for the sheep.*" (John 10:15,17) He is our supreme example whom we should determine to emulate. We should have a servant heart towards the sheep and their welfare, being willing to sacrifice on their behalf and ready to lay down our lives for them.

C: THE SAKE OF THE LOST FOR WHOM CHRIST DIED.

That same Shepherd is pictured leaving the ninety-nine sheep which are safe in the fold and going out into the night with all its potential dangers, to seek diligently until He eventually finds and brings home that sheep which was lost. Again He is our role model and example. In this analogy the Good Shepherd is seen in an evangelistic role, risking his very life in order to rescue the sheep which have gone astray into the paths of sin.

D: THE ADVANCEMENT AND GROWTH OF GODS KINGDOM.

Every Christian leader must be dedicated to the advancement, — not of himself, nor his denomination, or even his local church, — but of God's Kingdom. The primary prayer which Jesus instructed His disciples to pray was "***Your Kingdom come, Your Will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.***" We leaders are servants of that Kingdom, our main objective being the fulfilment of that prayer.

2: SOME WRONG MOTIVES.

A: THE ENJOYMENT OF POWER.

There is a potential pride and ego in many people which enjoys the opportunity to exercise power over others. For the carnal leader the Christian ministry affords opportunities to do just this and we must constantly guard against it. If we use the authority of God's Name in order to exert personal influence, we are in danger of *"using the Name of the Lord in vain,"* something for which He will not hold us guiltless.

B: DESIRE TO INFLUENCE AND CONTROL OTHERS.

Many lives have been ruined by the carnal and unwarranted influence of a fleshly control. The Christian leader must avoid such attitudes at all cost. I believe that God will one day judge all who pervert His authority in this manner.

C: DESIRE FOR PRE-EMINENCE.

Even amongst the hand-picked disciples of Jesus this desire for pre-eminence was sadly prevalent. Jesus had to rebuke it on numerous occasions. Such attitudes run completely contrary to the spirit of the Kingdom, in which ***"He who would be greatest, must be servant to all."*** (Mark 10:44)

D: TO ACHIEVE PERSONAL FULFILMENT.

There is a legitimate sense in which the ministry affords opportunity for fulfilment and satisfaction but this should never be our basic or primary goal. Our aim should be to fulfill and satisfy the Lord, — *"that He might see the travail of His soul and be eminently rewarded."* (Isaiah. 53:11)

3: CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP INVOLVES SERVANTHOOD.

In Mark 10 : 35 - 45 Jesus explained that the key to greatness in the Kingdom of God is servanthood. James and John, the sons of Zebedee, had approached Him seeking positions of prominence in the Kingdom and Jesus explained that the Kingdom of God was different from the Gentile world. In that world, leaders lorded it over their followers and exercised authority and dominion over them. ***"Yet it shall not be so among you: but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be servant of all."***

Jesus is our finest role model, and He demands that we have the same attitude as He. Phil. 2: 5. ***"Let this attitude be in YOU."***

A: HUMILITY.

Humility is firstly humbleness of mind and heart. It presumes a modest restraint, and self control befitting a servant, and is most beautifully exemplified in Jesus in His incarnational role. ***"He who knew that He was equal with God, "emptied Himself of His privileges" and took the role of a bond servant."*** (Phil. 2:7)

B: MEEKNESS.

Meekness means to be humbly docile, pliant, and obedient, and is remarkably exemplified in Jesus as the **"Sheep which was dumb before its shearers."**(Isa. 53:7) Meekness must never be confused with weakness. The two greatest biblical examples of meekness were Moses and Jesus and neither of these could ever be thought to be weak. Meekness is actually great strength under control.

C: OBEDIENCE.

Obedience is submission to the will of another. It depicts one who is humbly compliant and sweetly submissive to authority and to his Master. Obedience to God is therefore essential to salvation. Paul speaks of the **"Gentiles becoming obedient to the Gospel."** (Rom.15:18) We sometimes call this **"Conversional obedience."** Obedience is also essential to discipleship and to spiritual development and growth.