

The Theology of Leadership

**A Doctrinal Statement
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**by
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What is Leadership

Christian Leadership is the process by which men and women called by God give servant direction and humble guidance to a body of believers toward a common goal using Biblical principles. Leadership is the management of heavenly resources, including people, talent, and time. Leadership is commissioned by God and should be celebrated (Number 27:15-23). Leadership should not be taken for granted; it is a privilege, not a right. Leadership is a gift and loan of responsibility. It is temporary responsibility of power which should not be abused. Leaders are replaceable (I Samuel 16:1).

The Mandate for Integrity

Biblical leaders must have Godly character (I Timothy 3). Since Biblical leadership requires submissive followers, this places the leader in a position over a vulnerable submissive staff. In this ordained relationship, the integrity of the leader is integral to the successful symbiotic operation between leader and submissive staff. A leader must be truthful, honest, and faithful (Exodus 18:21) to warrant submission from followers and to protect them from abuse.

The Purpose of Biblical Leadership

God calls and has gifted each Christian with a talent to serve in the kingdom of our Lord. God appoints leaders to utilize these skills by organizing ministry opportunities and creating job descriptions to which a gifted believer can plug in. A leader invites the Body of Christ to participate in the Great Commission (Ephesians 4:16) and in work which builds up the Body of Christ. A leader

equips the saints and enables them to fulfill their ministry. It is a leader's job to unleash the saints to the ministry of the Church. A leader must do all this in love, as a servant; not as a lord (Luke 22:25-27).

Styles of Leadership

Different leaders are gifted with different strengths in their style of leadership, but diverse occasions in ministry call for diverse leadership styles. On one end of the spectrum, and seldom necessary, a dictatorial extreme might even be what is needed in an extreme situation. This is obviously not the ideal for regular day to day ministry. A leader must not become known for always and alone making all the decisions. A softer incarnation of the first style sees the leader still making the decisions, but not overtly. The leader can often gently steer staff covertly in love. Another style which can often be useful in a healthy team is a Laissez Faire, hands off policy. If the leader has trained and raised up other leaders well, and instilled in them a common vision, often letting staff figure things out on their own can be a blessed learning experience for them and useful for continued growth and health. This style of leadership can show a leader how effective one has been in removing oneself from being the bottleneck in ministry and if the ministry is healthy enough to continue beyond the term of the leader. A leader should always remain in the trenches with staff working along side. This necessary endeavor brings the danger of enveloping the leader and taking away time from leading others. Often, when this happens, the leader will embrace a casual style of leadership resulting in unstructured, and unplanned ministry. Finally, in our society, it is also appealing to implement a democratic style of leadership.

This has the advantage of necessarily involving the team in decision making, but can bog the workers down spending unnecessary time in the management process. While most people will say they would like a vote in the decision making process, often they are not willing or do not desire to invest the time necessary researching the options to make a wise decision. This is why God has gifted some to be leaders.

Servanthood

All Christians are called to be servants; the leader is no exception. Christ commands and exemplified servant leadership (John 13:1-17). A leader should ask permission and not push. A leader should not hold on to control too tightly. Don't demand sheep follow you.

Leading and Decision Making

Decision making is a primary focus of leadership. Leading God's people will require making decisions which require sensitive preparation. Decision making inherently involves change, and in a community where religious consistency is a stronghold, change will naturally cause longtime patrons initial unease. At times, decisions will be so weighty, their result will invoke transformation of internal perspectives. These kind of decisions often take years to accomplish their objective. A leader must stay focused and not immediately chase every idea which initially seems good. Decisions must be made by goals and values driven factors. Obvious moral gates can filter out many choices immediately. The good of the unsaved and the Body of Christ must always drive decision making. Finally, cultures within the team

must be weighed. Sometimes a decision may be good for one group within the Body, but would be detrimental within another group.

Leading requires many core principles to be followed to obtain effectiveness. As stated earlier, integrity is the cornerstone of a successful leader. When the ethics of a leader are compromised, their staff will see them as their adversary. A leader must never betray anyone. Earning trust costs an enormous amount of time. Losing trust can occur instantaneously. Another pitfall to be avoided is the appearance of using one's authority to achieve personal gain. Others will often falsely perceive this when it was never the intention of the leader to do so. Jealousy for the position of the leader is easily stirred in mankind. It must never be the leader who stirs it up. It is often necessary to implement ethical safeguards in areas where a leader knows they are weak and may succumb to the temptation to abuse their power. A leader is human and at times will fail. When this happens, they must never cover up failure, but instead confess it openly and ask forgiveness. This demonstrates the behavior that the leader expects when staff fail, and demonstrated humility will help alleviate jealousy and resentment.

[Notes:

The authority of Biblical leadership--- the dark side can be addressed by this.

1. you have authority which is delegated. (Num 27:15; Eph.); not absolute.
2. Biblical authority and Lordship are 2 very different things. Do not dominate or "lord it over".

Only guide, coach, etc.

Remember **justification** for **personal value**.

Truthfulness precedes trustworthiness. (Eph 4:14-16, 25-32)

All power and authority comes from God (Rom. 13:1). Use it for His glory. Don't abuse anyone in anyway. It is an abuse of the power and authority of God. Let your holy power be guided by the integrity of God.

Many players and many gifts and all are important because they are on God's team. Don't devalue any of God's team members (1 Cor. 13-14).

The driving force of the Biblical leader is God's agenda. (Eph 4; Matt 28) Evangelism and discipleship.

Feedback is always necessary.

Servant-hood is must for everyone.

Integrity is everything. Speak the truth in love.

Leaders talk (phil 2:1-14; 1 cor 4:1-2)

Leader's communication challenge. A leader will always have more problems to deal with then they have time to address. Communication is huge!

Must always in the back of mind assume “**we** can take a step forward”

Highly value followers.

Must always foster unity of team. If not, this will violate team integrity.

When the team fragments over a lack of integrity (trust), no longer have Biblical leadership.

III. Biblical leadership is the function of leading people and resources toward a **Christ-like**

destination via a **Christ-like process**.

Get assessment.

Develop a theology of incremental change for you and others. It's a process.

Allow for God-given creativity (1 cor 12:4-7,11).

Listening is a must (1 Cor 11:17; 4:16). Receive feedback. Repeat back what they are saying to you to clarify and show attentiveness. Keep feedback confidential. Remember: search for all the necessary facts, not just one perspective.

Good, better, best assessment. Prioritize. 1) avoid all sin options; 2) “what are the possible Godly options; ranked?”; 3) What does each option cost; 4) Law of expedience; how quick can we get this done?

Exod 18:13- Moses judging all the people himself.

Management Systems

Give authority with responsibility.

3 Levels of Godly authority:

- God
- Moses
- People have authority to give respect of authority (???)

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Generating Leaders

Successful leadership ministries require the generating of new leaders. For a ministry to both have longevity and efficiency, one person cannot be the sole point of responsibility. If the leader tries to accomplish everything, burnout waits in the wings, others will not have the opportunity to exercise their gift in service for the Lord, and the ministry will die with the leader. A fully integrated mentoring/discipleship plan must be set in place. Mentoring requires caring for people. A discipler must look for the good in growing mentees. Often the zeal of a Saul can be channeled into the work of a Paul. We must be willing to come along side and encourage and affirm the positive traits in people and help them grow. We must model holy mature ministry to our team. The mentor must spend everyday life and exemplify love and sacrifice for the sheep (Philippians 2:1-30). A leader/mentor must show strong commitment in loyalty to the team (I Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:16), showing grace (II Timothy 2) in failure and conflict, disagreeing with honor and respect. Developing new leaders costs a steep invest in others. Our time is a precious thing and we must determine beforehand to spend our time investing in who God has called to work along side us in ministry. Raising up leaders often requires recruitment. We must seek to train and appoint people God has appointed. He does not call us to minister alone and we must look for those whom He is calling to lead along side us and share responsibility. We must lift up our individual team members to our Lord daily in prayer and ask God specifically for help in which individuals of our team need growth and assistance in life. This will help us grow to love our team more deeply as we consider their needs and make them part of our relationship with our Lord.

Training Leader

Every believer is Spiritually gifted. Training is a vital part of being a good leader. Some individuals are gifted for a task as a worker, and others God has equipped to lead as they perform those tasks.

These latter individuals have both the gift of service and leadership. No matter the gifting, God equally values every believer (I Corinthians 12:6) and we must honor each one as such.

[Notes:

Mentoring requires training. God commands it. Skills and character. (Act 13:1-3) Create job descriptions. Delegate: give responsibility and authority away, with accountability (Titus 1:5). Can include the responsibility (function) without the authority. ... both resp and auth. Never delegate without regular accountability. Don't assume; double check. Delegate specific boundaries.

Mentor via supervision. 1) what gets inspected will get done; 2) supervise task from a distance; give space, but not too much; 3) supervise **attitude** as well as function; 4) via affirmation

Mentor via law of encouragement: 1) words that encourage. 2) note of encouragement; 3) recognition

Make plans for others. Plan experiences and make them available to others.

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Organization

A leader must organize for the team, but for unity to exist, cooperation must be highly visible. The leader's organization should not be seen as dictating the direction for the entire group. Organization requires planning, and planning should be done openly with feedback welcome from all. The

organization process should create goals and objectives for the team.

Auditing

A leader must be intimately integrated with people and the process (Ephesians 4). As a leader serves along side, daily opportunities to audit the performance of others is a natural occurrence. Often there are occasions which lend themselves to temptation, and an official auditing system will encourage and admonish staff to remain personally holy. Internet monitoring systems and self evaluations are examples of mechanisms which can spur teammates on to love and good deeds. Inevitably, the auditing process will reveal shortcomings and sometimes sin. A leader must be wise in dealing with each specific case. A leader will benefit by staying silent when people confess.

Change

Often when ownership and time has been invested into a project, change is resisted. This resistance is a natural and good thing. Regularly, newcomers will come into a project and-- without the history and background to guide them-- suggest that things should be done differently. The leader has the intimate experience with the ministry to know most *new* suggestions have been carefully considered or tried in the past. It is a task to be undertaken with gentleness and sacrifice to take the time to explain the history of why things are not done the suggested way, and to purposely maintain an atmosphere where suggestions are still welcome. This is one of the hardest parts of leadership, to balancing the desire to

involve others and accept their contribution, and to also maintain the quality of the task. Having said this, a leader must always remember that all advancement is change. All change should not be reject, and none before a careful consideration of the suggestion, especially when the suggester offers to own the task.

Grace

Grace is the keystone of all successful ministry. Teammates must have grace with each other and more so leaders to team members.

Encouragement

Biblical leaders must demonstrate a 'top-down' compassion. Biblical leaders must always grow in their capacity to be patient. Teammates must feel valued and that their work is making a difference. It is the leaders job to acknowledge to them the value of what God has called them to do.