

Spiritual Leadership

(Sanders)

Study Guide

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Spiritual Leadership

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Principles of excellence for every believer

1-An Honorable Ambition

God calls all believers to develop the talents He has given them. The only worthy ambition is to center that development on the glory of God and the welfare of His church [**1Tim 3:1** and **Jer 45:5**].

True greatness is in giving yourself in service to others [**Mark 10:42-44**].

Discussion

- Why is it a challenge to wholeheartedly agree with Paul that spiritual leadership is an honorable ambition [**1Tim 3:1**]?
- Where do you need to exhibit an attitude of selfless service?

2-The Search for Leaders

[**Psa 75:6-7**].

God searches for leaders who are:

- Spiritual: Without a strong relationship with God, even the most competent person cannot lead people to God.
- Authoritative: Know where they are going and confident of getting there.
- Sacrificial: Follow the model of Jesus who calls us to follow in His footsteps.

If those who hold influence over others fail to lead toward the spiritual uplands, then surely the path to the lowlands will be well worn.

Discussion

- What is the role of leadership training if God is the one who selects spiritual leaders?
- When it comes to selecting an apprentice, what is God's role compared to your role?

3-The Master's Master Principle

Evaluate yourself on your attitudes and inner motives regarding servanthood ([Isa 42:1-4](#)).

Key Time	never<.....>always
I depend on God for how I lead.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I delight to do God's will.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I give credit to God for any success.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I am kind and patient with others.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I am optimistic and confident in God.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I stay close to God and wait for Him.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

Discussion

- Compared to a year ago, are you more of a servant leader or less of a servant leader? What has contributed to the change?
- What are some practical ways to help those around you become servant leaders?

4-Natural and Spiritual Leadership

People without leadership skills do not become great leaders at the moment of conversion; however, the Holy Spirit sometimes releases gifts and qualities that were dormant beforehand.

While natural and spiritual leaders may have similar skills, their character qualities and motivation are vastly different.

Spiritual leadership requires spiritual power which can never be generated by the self ([Acts 6:3](#)).

Discussion

Which of your leadership character qualities and motivation have changed most dramatically as you have grown closer to Christ?

	Natural	Spiritual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Self confident	Confident in God
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ambitious	Humble
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make own decisions	Seek God's will
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enjoy command	Delight in obeying God
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seek personal reward	Love God and people

5-Can You Become a Leader?

[Num 13:2]

Often, people's leadership qualities lie dormant. Watch for indicators of leadership qualities in yourself and others.

To bring out leadership qualities usually requires that we shake off negative elements that hold us back.

Self Assessment

Evaluate yourself on areas of leadership potential and areas of challenge

<i>Quality</i>	<i>never<.....>always</i>
I am resilient in disappointment.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I am calm in crisis.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I profit from criticism.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I am a peacemaker.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I am tactful.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I am forgiving.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I am optimistic.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I am responsible and dependable.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
I cultivate people.	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

6-Insights on Leadership from Paul

Qualifications for Spiritual Leadership

[1Tim 3:2-7]

- Social: Life and behavior above reproach.
- Moral: Sexually faithful, not addicted.
- Mental: Sound judgment, constant learner, good teacher.
- Personality: Peaceful, genial, gentle.
- Domestic: Benevolent and happy discipline at home.
- Maturity: Spiritually rooted, tested, fruitful.

Discussion

- How does Grace Church decide when someone is fit for spiritual leadership?
- Of the spheres (social, moral, mental, personality, domestic, maturity), which do you see our culture struggling with most?

7-Insights on Leadership from Peter

[1Pet 5:1-7]

- Leaders should serve because of love, not for personal gain (fame or fortune).
- Their focus should be to do things God's way.
- Leaders should be humble in relating to others and should accept God's discipline with humility.
- They should set an example by their speech, actions, life, faith, purity, and love.
- Leaders should make prayer a priority.
- They should cast their cares on God.

Discussion

- What deficiencies and failings do you most often see in leaders?
- What types of prayers do you make for leaders at Grace Church?
- Pray now for at least three leaders at Grace Church.

8-Essential Qualities of Leadership

The thing that raises some leaders above others is the degree to which they develop their gifts through devotion and discipline.

- Discipline: Lazy and disorganized people never rise to true leadership.
- Vision: Responsible leadership always looks ahead.
- Wisdom: Good leaders allow the Holy Spirit to show them how to apply knowledge correctly [Col 1:9].
- Decision: A leader must weigh evidence and make decisions on sound premises [Acts 22:10].
- Courage: Leaders always face opposition by allowing the Holy Spirit to control them [2Tim 1:7].
- Humility: Humility is the hallmark of a spiritual leader [John 3:30].
- Integrity & Sincerity: God wants His people to show transparent character, open and innocent of guile [2Cor 2:17].

Discussion

- If you could instantly and permanently acquire one leadership quality, which one would you select?
- What are you doing to continue to develop your gifts?
- What are you doing to assist others in developing their gifts?

9-More Essential Qualities of Leadership

[1Tim 3:8-10]

- Humor: The most successful leader is the one who possesses a keen sense of humor combined with a clear sense of God's grace.
- Anger: Anger must be zealous for truth and purity with the glory of God its chief objective [Eph 4:26].
- Patience: Leaders must have the courage and endurance to bear all things [2Pet 1:6].
- Friendship: Leaders must draw the best out of people by employing genuine affection [John 13:1].
- Tact & Diplomacy: Leaders must deal with people sensitively and negotiate differences in a way that leads to harmonious solutions.
- Inspirational Power: A leader should be light for others.

- Executive Ability: Leaders should reflect the orderliness of God. Poor methods and lack of organization spell doom for ministries.
- Therapy of Listening: Leaders should listen often and long.
- Art of Letter Writing: Leaders should use clear language and the right spirit when writing letters [Php 1:27-30].

Discussion

- Discuss the challenges of using humor so it helps rather than hinders.
- In what ways can patience be an active rather than a passive pursuit?
- Under what circumstances do you find it difficult to be a good listener?

10-Above All Else

- A spiritual leader must voluntarily surrender life and will to the Holy Spirit [John 7:37-39].
- New birth in Christ does not change natural qualities, but when placed under the control of the Holy Spirit, they are raised to new effectiveness. Hidden abilities are often released.

- How can a leader tell the difference between promptings from the Holy Spirit and inclination of the self?
- What is(are) your spiritual gift(s)?
- What natural abilities has the Holy Spirit expanded in you to enable you to serve God more effectively?

Discussion

11-Prayer and Leadership

[1Tim 2:1]

- Jesus often withdrew to lonely places to pray [Luke 5:16].
- Praying in the Spirit means to pray about the things that are in the realm of the Holy Spirit and to pray in the power and energy of the Spirit [Eph 6:18].
- Our capacity to know God's will is the basis for all prayers of faith [Rom 8:26-27].
- To gain God's ear, we must believe He answers us [Heb 11:6] and we must be motivated to glorify Him rather than satisfy our self-interests.

Discussion

- What obstacles keep you from prayer?
- How often do you pray?
 - Less than once a day
 - Once a day
 - More than once a day
- What can you change to begin to pray without ceasing [1The 5:17-18]?

12-The Leader and Time

[Eph 5:16]

- Each of us has the time to do the whole will of God for our lives. The struggle is to make the best use of the time we have.
- Spiritual leaders feel pressure when they assume tasks God has not assigned them. We shouldn't expect Him to supply extra strength for such tasks.
- A leader is responsible for what lies within the range of control.

Application Exercise

Consider each item on your weekly calendar.

- How sure are you that each item is one God has assigned you?
- What can you do to keep things off your calendar that God has not assigned you?

13-The Leader and Reading

Why Read?

- To refill the wells of inspiration
- To challenge the heart and conscience
- For intellectual growth
- To cultivate your speaking and writing skills
- To keep well informed
- To have fellowship with great minds

What to Read

- Read books that equip you for higher service and leadership.
- Choose books as carefully as friends.

How to Read

- Take notes or journal as you read.
- Verify facts or data.
- Look up unfamiliar words.
- Share what you read with others.

Discussion

- What was the last thing you shared from reading a book? How did you share the information: public speaking, individual conversation, in writing?
- What is the last book you read? Would you recommend it to others? Why or why not?
- What is the biggest benefit you get from reading books?

14-Improving Leadership

- Not every Christian is called to major leadership in the church; however, every Christian is a leader for we all influence others.
- If God calls you to supply leadership, do it with zeal (**Rom 12:8**). Keep your spiritual fervor at the boiling point (**Rom 12:11**).

Discussion

- In what spheres is God asking you to supply leadership now: family, church, work, other?
- From your vantage point, in which areas of leadership responsibility is Grace Church strong?

	<i>Strong</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Needs Work</i>
Administration			
Spiritual tone			
Group morale			
Personal relationships			
Problem solving			
Creative planning			

15-The Cost of Leadership

[[Mark 10:38](#)]

- Self sacrifice: No cross, no leadership ([1John 3:16](#)). Scars are the authenticating marks of true spiritual leadership ([Gal 6:17](#)).
- Loneliness: The leader must have sufficient inner resources to stand alone with God ([2Tim 1:15](#)).
- Fatigue: Leadership requires great effort ([2Cor 4:16](#)).
- Criticism: A leader turns inevitable criticism into deeper dependence on Christ ([1Cor 4:3-4](#)).

Discussion

- What sacrifices have you made as a leader?
- How do you react to just criticism?
- How do you react to unjust criticism?

16-The Responsibilities of Leadership

The true leader is concerned primarily with the welfare of others.

- Discipline: Discipline with love, seeking restoration ([2The 3:15](#)).
- Guide: Be a worthy example and lay a path ([1Cor 11:1](#)).

Discussion

Discuss how to prepare yourself to discipline someone.

17-Tests of Leadership

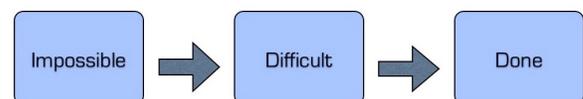
[[Gen 22:1](#) and [Mat 4:1](#)]

Leaders often face tests.

- Temptation to compromise your beliefs
- Personal ambition
- Impossible situations
- Failure
- Jealousy of others

Discussion

- When is compromise good and when is it bad?
- What is your experience with the way God handles impossible tasks? Is it like the following?



- How can you prepare for the leadership tests you will likely face?

18-The Art of Delegation

[Exo 18:23-26]

- To succeed in getting things done through others is the highest type of leadership.
- To delegate effectively, a leader must recognize abilities in others and match them to opportunities where they will do their best.
- Delegate to those who have ability, good character, and an active walk with God.

Discussion

- What can you do to be sure you set clear expectations when you delegate?
- What do you do to give adequate authority for the responsibilities you delegate?

19-Replacing Leaders

- No person is indispensable to the work of the kingdom.
- Since our Leader conducts His work in the power of an endless life, changes in human leadership should not dismay us. Our Lord is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Discussion

- What changes at Grace Church in the past year have been difficult for you?
- Looking back, how might God have used those changes to develop you as a leader?
- What can you do to develop leaders around you to be ready for the assignments God has planned for them?

20-Reproducing Leaders

[2Tim 2:2]

- If we forget the priority of service, the entire idea of leadership training becomes dangerous.
- The observant leader may discover latent talent in some quite unpromising people.

Discussion

- What can Grace Church do to be sure that our leadership development efforts emphasize servant leadership?
- Make a list of qualities that might be an indicator of leadership potential.

21-The Perils of Leadership

[1Cor 9:27]

Perils that can disqualify a leader include:

- Pride [Pro 16:5]
- Egotism
- Jealousy
- Popularity [1Cor 3:7]
- Infallibility
- Indispensability
- Elation and Depression

Discussion

- Which of the perils of leadership worry you the most?
- How do you deal with others who have fallen prey to one or more of the perils of leadership?

22-The Leader Nehemiah

[Neh 13:31]

Character

- Courage [Neh 6:11]
- Genuine concern for the welfare of others [Neh 1:4-6] also Neh 2:10
- Careful planning [Neh 2:11]
- Good decision making [Neh 5:7] also Neh 4:9
- Empathy [Neh 4:10-11] also Neh 5:1-15

Methods

- Pointed people to lean on God [Neh 2:20] also Neh 8:10
- Encouraged people [Neh 2:18]
- Harnessed the strength of the family [Neh 4:10-18]
- Confronted bad behavior [Neh 5:1-15]
- Restored the authority of God in people's lives [Neh 8:1-8] also Neh 9:3-5, Neh 13:4-9
- Organized people and projects [Neh 2:11-16] also Neh 7:1-3
- Gave recognition [Neh 3:1-32]
- Delegated wisely [Neh 7:2]
- Faced opposition with prayer and precaution [Neh 4:9-20]
- Met the objective [Neh 6:15]

Discussion

- What aspects of Nehemiah's leadership do you admire?
- What could you put on your Individual Development Plan that would help you develop one of these aspects of leadership?