

LEADERSHIP IN THE LORD'S CHURCH

Introduction

- A. Text: **2 Tim. 2:20,21**.
- B. Leadership is a *popular* subject these days — and in the Lord's work, it certainly is an *important* subject.

I. TWO QUESTIONS

- A. Is there a leadership shortage?
 - 1. This is not a subject for men only, but I believe the men of our age have uniquely failed. Why so?
 - 2. But in assessing the shortage, we need to be careful how we *define* leadership.
- B. What is leadership?
 - 1. We need to be careful not to limit ourselves to *worldly concepts* of leadership — a shortage of "leadership" (as the world defines it) in the church is not necessarily a problem.
 - 2. Jesus, the model - **Mt. 20:25-28; Jn. 13:12-17**.
 - 3. Spiritual leaders are characterized by:
 - a. *Humility*. Cf. **Mt. 18:1-4**.
 - b. *Service*. Cf. **Lk. 22:24-27**.
 - c. *Weakness*. Weakness should make a man a *better* leader - **2 Cor. 12:7-10**.

II. FIVE KINDS OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

- A. AUTHORITY.
 - 1. While this is the only kind of leadership that some people think of, it is not the only kind that is important.
 - 2. Contrary to modern egalitarian concepts, God has placed some "executive" authority in the home (**Eph. 5:22-24**) and in the local congregation (**Hb. 13:7**), i.e. responsibility to lead in "execution" of the group's mission.
 - 3. This would include decision-making, management, supervision, etc.
- B. TEACHING. Instruction - **Jas. 3:1**.
- C. ADVICE. Counsel - **Prov. 11:14**.
- D. CONTRIBUTION ("adding value").
 - 1. Helping others, especially the Lord's people - **Tit. 3:14**.
 - 2. Phoebe - **Rom. 16:1**.
- E. INFLUENCE. Having an impact for good - **Philem. 4-7**.

III. SOME QUALITIES OF THE SPIRITUAL LEADER

- A. Traits to be acquired:
 - 1. GODLY CHARACTER. Blamelessness, integrity - **Josh. 1:8**.
 - 2. SPIRITUAL-MINDEDNESS. Godly attitude, spiritual orientation - **2 Cor. 5:16**.
 - 3. WELL-SUPPLIED "TOOLBOX" OF SERVING ABILITIES. Cf. **2 Tim. 2:21**.

B. The "Big Three." Cf. **1 Kgs. 3:7-9**.

1. Knowledge.
2. Wisdom.
3. Experience.

IV. MEN AS SPIRITUAL LEADERS

A. With regard to leadership, men have . . .

1. Some special ASSIGNMENTS.
 - a. The fact is, some leadership duties have been uniquely assigned to men.
 - b. These can't be dodged or passed on to others.
2. Some special ENDOWMENTS.
 - a. God never assigns *unique responsibility* without granting *unique ability* to carry it out.
 - b. It is no coincidence that men have the traits that are characteristic of masculinity — these are needed for men's special responsibilities.
3. Some special WEAKNESSES.
 - a. Every strength has a corresponding weakness.
 - b. As an example of a weakness that goes along with masculine strength, consider men's tendency to be concerned with "who gets to be in charge." Cf. **3 Jn. 9**.
4. Some special ACCOUNTABILITY. Cf. **Hb. 13:17**; **Jas. 3:1**.

B. Should every man aspire to leadership? Yes, as long as . . .

1. We don't limit our vision to one kind of leadership - e.g. the eldership. Cf. **1 Cor. 12:17-19**.
2. We remain flexible and open to the Lord's plan.
 - a. There will often be a change in circumstances that will dictate a change in our goals.
 - b. At certain points, another direction may be indicated by God - **Ac. 16:6-8**.
3. We don't make becoming a leader an obsession — leadership is something that *comes as a by-product of focusing on God*. Cf. **Lk. 14:7-11**.

C. That said, yes, every man should aspire to leadership.

1. There is great value in goals and preparation. Cf. **1 Tim. 4:15,16**; **2 Tim. 2:20,21**.
2. We need to work to put as many tools in our toolbox as we can. "Get your tools ready; the Lord will find you work."

Conclusion

A. Spiritual leadership = *serving the Lord's glory by serving others*.

B. We should want *only that Christ be magnified* in our bodies - **Phil. 1:20**.

C. "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, *as good stewards of the manifold grace of God*. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, *that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen*" (**1 Peter 4:10,11**).