

Learning to Lead

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What does it look like or what does it mean for a man to lead (church, home, work, etc.)?

Isn't it interesting that...

- We all have different responses to this question
- We all have our own definition of what leading looks like

The reality is, the church is asking men to lead but most don't know what that means or what that looks like.

Why is that the case?

- For many the only example of leadership is from the fathers (if our fathers did not lead well)
- We lead by watching other men's examples (good or bad)
- Men lead by what the culture says is right (give examples of men in the culture)

Key Thought: Leading has to be relearned through biblical principles

Transition: With that in mind, let's take a look at a man that displayed leadership principles from the Bible: **Barnabas**.

#1: If you want to be a godly leader—then learn to serve.

Scripture: Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. ²⁶ And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. ²⁷ And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. ²⁹ Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send

relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. ³⁰This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. **Acts 11:25-30**

Scripture: And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, ³⁷ having land, sold *it*, and brought the money and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. **Acts 4:36-37**

Jesus gives us this kingdom principle when he responds to a request by the mother of James and John in Matthew 20:20-28...

When we think of leadership our natural tendency is to lord over people. Christ gives an example of this:

V.25: “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles **lord it over them**, and their high officials **exercise authority** over them.”

Then Jesus responds, “Not so with you...”

What must we do to become great in the kingdom of God? (vv.26 & 27)

- We must become a servant
- We must humble ourselves and learn to serve

No one man (or woman) is beyond serving.

- No one is too important

V. 28: Jesus goes on to give us the ultimate example of humility and servant hood.

Christ, the ultimate man is our ultimate example of servant hood: (V.28)

- God humbling himself and becoming man
- The King of heaven and earth came down to serve you and me
- The Creator chose to serve and give us his life for you and me

If you want to become a great leader, follow the example of Christ and serve:

- How can you start serving your wife?

- How can you start serving your children?
- How can you start serving your boss?
- How can you start serving the church?

Culture says, “If you want to be a leader than people need to serve you.”

The Bible says, “If you want to be a leader than learn to serve.”

- As you serve, do so with the expectancy to get nothing in return!

#2: Leaders seek to be a blessing with the blessings they have received.

Scripture: Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. ³³ And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, ³⁵ and laid *them* at the apostles’ feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need. ³⁶ And Joses, ^[a] who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, ³⁷ having land, sold *it*, and brought the money and laid *it* at the apostles’ feet. **Acts 4:32-37**

- What was happening in the church?
- Who does Luke give as an example of this generous giving? (V.36-37, Barnabas)

ASK: How many farmers are in here today? Can you imagine selling a whole field and giving it to the church so that there would be no need in the church?

We are given a kingdom principle in Luke 16:10-14 about our resources:

Scripture: He who *is* faithful in *what is* least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in *what is* least is unjust also in much. ¹¹ Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*? ¹² And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own? ¹³ “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” ¹⁴ Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. **Luke 16:10-14**

- Nothing that we have on this earth is ours

- We are simply stewards of God's resources
- We have been given resources from God to be a blessing to others

Culture says: "He who dies with the most toys wins."

The Bible says, "We simply have been entrusted by God with what we have."

Consider:

- As a leader, how are you using what God has given you?
- Are you seeking to be a blessing with the blessings of God?
- Are there needs around you today that you can respond to because of God's blessing upon your life?

Closing thought: Men, I want to encourage you to lead in this area. Our culture puts a high value on the things of this earth. God's Word challenges us to place a high value on the things of heaven!

#3: Godly leaders are birthed out of a relationship with God

Scripture: Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. ²³When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.²⁴ For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. **Acts 11:22-24**

The key verse is V.24, "He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord."

- We cannot be the leaders God is calling us to be apart from a relationship with God and the Holy Spirit's power.

Key Thought: Leadership is an outflow of what is in the inside!

We need to be fueling our heart and nourishing our spiritual life with the:

- Presence of God
- His Word

Illustration:

- When we don't eat or when we get hungry we tend to get real cranky. Our flesh feels weak and I get irritable. As soon as I eat, I feel nourished and ready to go. (Note: Snickers commercials, "You're not you when you're hungry. Eat a snickers").

Spiritually, it works the same way for us as men (or women).

If we failed to nourish our spiritual man than we will respond and do things we normally would not do.

- We may be wondering why we don't have a passion for the lost
- We may wonder why we are not treating our spouse the way they deserve to be treated
- We may be wondering why we are getting short with our kids all the time

The reality is this: Knowing God—spending time with Him makes us better men

- I am a better dad, husband, pastor, boss, worker, etc...when I am nourishing my spiritual man with good things.
- You will be a better dad, husband, etc...when you take time to build up your spiritual man.

Closing thought: Godly leadership starts in the heart—so fill it up!

- Be filled with the Holy Spirit
- Get into God's word
- Seek to know him more and more

Conclusion:

- **Men**, give yourself grace as you learn to lead
 - You will fall short—get back up
- **Wives**, give your husband grace as he learn to leads
 - Encourage him as he seeks to lead in a way that is godly

Children, give your dad grace as he learns to lead