



Strand: AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP	Subject: <i>Developing Authentic Leadership - WWJD?</i>	Lesson: TWO
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Developing Authentic Leadership - WWJD?

Introduction

Jesus Christ spent a lot of time intentionally developing leaders to continue His work on earth. He chose and called people from the “marketplace”. He taught, mentored, commissioned and empowered them. In doing so, He transformed a group of (ordinary) followers into a nucleus who would turn society upside down in just one generation.

We can learn from Jesus’ example how to develop the next generation of Christian leaders godly men and women who will be qualified and equipped to lead the church and in the community the way He led. This is a previous mandate.

Christian leadership has been politicised, secularised, commercialised and compromised over many centuries. But Jesus Christ remains at the centre and is determined to build His church. That’s why I have hope that the baton will be passed successfully as we move forward, and the Body of Christ will grow and increasingly reflect Him for who He is: Saviour, Lord and King in our daily affairs. Now is the time to understand the principles He applied when developing those who helped Him plant the world Christian movement.

It is easy to dismiss Jesus’ leadership strategies as belonging to “another time” and “another culture”. However, what Jesus had to say (and do) about leadership is good for every generation of Christians, and applies to every generation (the human family has not fundamentally changed all that much). No one else has achieved what He effected in world history. He is the beginning and the end, the final word in transformative leadership that we need to see evidenced in the church.

The following pages take a few of Jesus’ examples of leadership that worked and put down a challenge for the Christian community to follow in His footsteps in developing new leaders. Don’t lament, “We lack leaders”. Instead, ask the Holy Spirit to help you to develop your own life, and then strategically plan to develop emerging leaders around you and see God’s work multiply in the lives of countless others.

Jesus as Leader

“As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. Come, follow me, Jesus said, and I will make you fishers of men. At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. (Matthew 4:18-22, NIV)

“Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might

send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. These are the twelve he appointed....” (Mark 3:13-19, NIV)

“One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.” (Luke 6:12-16, NIV)

1. He Prayerfully Selected Them:

The call to Christian leadership comes from God and will be evident.

- Jesus prayed before He selected even the first disciple
- His purpose was that they be “with Him”, that they might share in His public ministry, with genuine spiritual authority
- He chose unlikely candidates, with big differences (character, political bias, social status, age - some, eg Simon & Matthew, were natural enemies); not one religious leader among them; they all came from the marketplace and spoke its language
- He established a core team (Peter, James, John).

Lessons for Us

- have confidence in the call of God in your life, regardless of external appearances (John 7:24)
- grow in Christ ahead of your desire for leadership (1 Timothy 3:6)
- do not be in a hurry to select and train other leaders, no matter how urgently you need such a person (1 Timothy 5:22) - hear from God first and make the choice in an attitude of reliance on His guidance, gifting and timing (not just to plug a gap)
 - choose those with a proven track record as Christians (Acts 6:3; Titus 1:6-9)
 - choose on the basis of their authentic relationship with God (ahead of their talents)
 - cherish their distinctiveness (even if they are not your mirror image) and work with them individually; work out who needs a lot of individual coaching, who does not
 - do not allow favouritism or personal obligations to drive your decisions (Luke 20:21, 1 Timothy 5:21)

2. He Called Them

In order to be effective, the man or woman of God must be totally surrendered

“Follow me” (Mark 1:7) - this is an absolute call - to die to self and follow Him (because He would first die for them) - and an immediate call (Matthew 8:20, 21) - a deferred response is a negative response

➤ *“We have left all and followed you” (Luke 18:28)*

Lessons for Us

- take the call of God in your life seriously
- recognize that your call comes from Him, not people or position (Hebrews 5:4)
- prayerfully and intentionally process the “cost “ of commitment to Christian leadership/service
- take time to understand the “why” of Christian ministry (Matthew 17:1)
- learn how to hear from God regularly and respond in willing obedience

- understand that Christian ministry has eternal goals not defined by human measures of “success”
- allow other leaders to be involved in your life
- seek to understand the benefits of team dynamics/synergy (and the blessing God promises where there is unity), and how to develop such relationships

3. He Taught Them

Christian leadership must be based on the truth. Jesus “spoke” to many crowds but He “taught” the disciples:

- how to pray, with discipline, based on dynamic relationship with God
- the true meaning of His public teaching, eg in the parables
- the true meaning of the life of faith
- the nature of the church and His redemptive mission
- the spiritual nature of leadership (sacrifice, not control - Matthew 20:25-27)
- to be tolerant of other ministries
- how to manage relationships the right way
- Jesus balanced private instruction with on-the-job training “in the field”

Lessons for Us

- get hold of good teaching material, from a wide variety of sources
- learn all you can, be patient and generous, because you are investing in your life
- seek to understand how to “rightly divide the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15) and discern between truth and error; do not always take what others say at face value
- get involved as often as you can in ministry situations, and understand the work
- embrace all learning “opportunities” in practical ministry and grow from the experiences

4. He Mentored Them

Christian leadership must be based on the character of Christ

- “Watch me as I do the work, then copy me”; modelled by practical example - relationship with the Father (personal relationship, dependency, obedience) - supernatural ministry - godly character - humility (Matthew 11:29; John 13:4-10)
- called the disciples to live and travel with Him - they experienced His life first-hand for several years
- expected them to be surrendered to Him; He was a “friend”, but also “Master” (John 13:13)
- mentored the life of faith and godly values in daily living

Lessons for Us

- first and foremost, keep an eye on your own spiritual life and ensure your Christianity (quite apart from your ministry position or role) is worth following
- share often about how God is shaping you as a Christian leader - then you will have impacts in the lives of others
- seek out regular encounters with others leaders, where you can share your ideas, programs, style, dreams & challenges and learn theirs
- have ongoing personal conversations with every member of the leadership group
- talk with other leaders often (in both planned and unplanned ways), pray with them, help them deal with set-backs, challenge them to go above and beyond, care for them, be open with them, be interested, trust them, help mould their perspectives (around Jesus Christ); all of these actions will produce fruit in your own life

5. He Tested Them

God will test leaders before (and after) using them to full effectiveness

- after three years of close contact with Jesus, during which they saw His power and authority, life and message, there was no guarantee the disciples were ready to take over from Him
- Jesus did not put confidence in people (John 2:24, 25)
- He knew one of the team would ultimately betray Him (John 6:64)
- Jesus was redemptive to those who struggled but repented (Luke 22:31, 32)
- when the disciples acted true to their individual quirks, he used this to teach and develop them

Jesus tested their motives: - attitudes re possessions (Matthew 8:20) - notions of power - He modelled “service” (Mark 10:44-46; Luke 22:26, 27); He inverted secular models; not hierarchical; showed leadership is a “calling”, not something to be “grasped”, that godly leadership is not merely “Christian” badging of secular models - self-preservation (Luke 8:22-25; the storm calmed at sea was not an accident) - rewards - must come from God (John 12:26)

Lessons for Us

- channel discussions about position, power, or privilege > service, sacrifice and giving
- do not lower the spiritual qualifications or Scriptural standards for your personal life
- seek to understand the part that testing and trials play in the development of every leader
- try to identify learning opportunities in every situation
- be patient, forgiving, redemptive as you experience discipline in your personal life
- never give up never ... ever ... no matter how much you may feel like quitting (read 1 Corinthians 15:58)

6. He Commissioned Them

- spiritual authority and release mark genuine Christian leadership; its source is God
- Jesus called His disciples to “become” ministers, eg fishers of men
- imparted His vision to them - “This is where we are going”
- taught them that true spiritual authority comes from God alone
- gave them permission, authority (Mark 6:7), spiritual power (called them “apostles”, ie “sent ones”)
- sent out of the 70, to do what He had been doing (Matthew 10)
- final command before His ascension: “Go into all the world and make disciples” (Matthew 28)
- commissioned them to look after His church

Lessons for Us

- get involved in active ministry - take advantage of opportunities for on-the-job training, opportunities to stretch and test your gifts, to make mistakes, but remain on track
- as often as you can get involved in planning and decision-making of people of influence
- look for opportunities to be exposed to great men and women of God
- seek to manage conflict with humility and confidence
- “keep your eye on the ball” and operate within your call (you will find that there are many distractions)

- if you have been delegated/empowered to do certain things, run with them to the full extent you can

7. He Anointed Them with the Spirit

Without the anointing of the Holy Spirit, Christian leadership lacks purpose & power

His initial and ongoing anointing was visible to all

- He modelled reliance on his anointing by the Spirit (Matthew 12:28; Luke 4:14)
- He taught them to depend on the Holy Spirit as their sole source of power

Lessons for Us

- do not rely (in your own ministry) on your experience, contacts, wisdom, intuition, or force of personality, but on the Holy Spirit; He will give you everything you need to do the work
- actively learn how to listen to the Holy Spirit and live in obedience to Him
- allow the Holy Spirit to do God's work in and through you; give Him permission
- seek to understand how to walk in the Spirit (and not be high-jacked in your thinking by secular values and models)
- learn how to exercise the gifts of the Spirit, in the power of the Spirit; this will involve lots of small steps at the start, but you *will* learn as you go

8. He Led Them into World Mission

- the goal of authentic Christian leadership is to fulfil Christ's global mission
- adapted the application of His message to the times (without compromising underlying truths) and to the world at large (Acts 1:8)
- Jesus had a theology of mission -He emphasized the need to take the message out to the world and not be bogged down by tradition, place, or structures (Mark 1:38)
- He was aware of what was going on in the world around Him - He did not shut himself off from society or contemporary events

Lessons for Us

- be actively involved in God's purpose in the world - ask the Holy Spirit to develop a heart for mission in your life - do not allow yourself to be side-tracked or frozen in time, place, methodology or status (eg full-time/part-time, mono/multi-culture, denominational structures)
- instill a similar broad/specific missions vision in others in your sphere of influence; (get involved in mission within the community and beyond)
- develop strategies to keep aware of what is occurring in the world around you, and how the unchanging message of the Gospel and respond to changing circumstances and events - help emerging leaders around you learn how to do likewise
- get outside your comfort zone as often as you can and take your team with you

9. He Taught Them to Develop Others

Authentic Christian leaders will invest their lives in NextGen leadership

- Jesus built solid disciples, filled them with the Spirit, then released them as leaders and teachers, so that the work would continue long after them
- His teaching was reproducible in other people

Lessons for Us

- make sure that you keep growing as a healthy Christian (you can't give what you do not have)
- understand that development of others is part of your call
- multiply your skills, ministry ("service") principles and life experiences = teach those you teach how to teach others to do the same (2 Timothy 2:2)
- work with those in your team who have a leadership call till you have confidence in their ability and integrity (see 2 Corinthians 7:13-16)
- ensure that you leave a legacy (unlike Joshua's generation, see Judges 2:10)

