

A Healthy Congregation Needs Great Leaders

Country Club Road
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“Leader” Defined

- “To take or conduct on the way; go before ... to show the way”
- “To influence or induce, cause”
- “To guide in direction, course, action, opinion.” (Random House Dictionary)

Key Ideas: Go before, guide, show the way, influence.

This Definition Is Important...

- ... because when we think of leaders we often think of “**positional leaders.**”
 - People with authority; decision makers
 - Presidents, Governors, Elders, Principals, Supervisors, Moms & Dads.
- But **true leadership** goes beyond “position” and “decision making.”

Leadership = Influence

- “Leadership is the ability to gain, guide, and influence followers.”
- Leadership Proverb: “He who thinks he leads, when no one is following, is only taking a walk.”

True Leaders Influence Others And Lead By Example

- Elders are called “**Shepherds**”
 - “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they **follow me.**” (Jn. 10:27)
 - Sheep are not “**driven,**” but “**led.**”
 - Elders are to be “**examples to the flock**” (1 Peter 5:3)
- Parents must also lead by **example!**

- This lesson is not for “**positional**” leaders only, but for **all of us**.
 - Even the most introverted individual will influence **10,000** people in his lifetime.
- A healthy congregation must have **scripturally qualified, dedicated, godly leadership**.
- A healthy home must have **loving, dedicated, godly leadership**.

Three Characteristics of Great Leaders

- Integrity
- Vision
- The Ability to Face and Overcome Problems

Leaders Must Have **Integrity**

- **Defined:** “Adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character.”
- **“Integrity is not what we do so much as **who we are**. And **who we are**, in turn, **determines what we do**. Our system of values is so much a part of us we cannot separate it from ourselves. It becomes the navigating system that guides us.”** (John Maxwell)

Integrity Is Who We Are When No One is Watching

- **Colossians 3:22** - “Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, **not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.**
23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”

Integrity Is Doing The **Right Thing** (No Matter What!)

- The story of **Daniel** – Daniel 6:10
- “Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.”

Integrity Is Having Our **Actions Square With Our Words**

- Dwight D. Eisenhower: “The supreme quality for a leader **is unquestionable integrity**. Without it, no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army, or in an office. If a man’s associates find him guilty of being **phony**, if they find that he lacks **forthright integrity**, he will fail. His teachings and actions **must square with each other.**”

Elders, Preachers, Bible Class Teachers, Parents

- Are our **actions** consistent with our teaching?
- When we call for **others** to serve and sacrifice, do **we** do the same?
- Elders need to truly be “**servant leaders,**” and not just “**positional leaders.**”

Leaders Must Have **Vision**

■ Grand Opening of **Disney World**

– Speaker – “Mrs. Disney, I just wish Walt could have seen this.”

– Mrs. Disney – “**He did.**”

Jesus Had A **Clear Vision**

- “I came not to do mine own will, but the **will of Him that sent me.**” (John 6.38)
- “I came not to call the righteous, but **sinners.**” (Matthew 9:13)
- “For the son of man came to **seek** and to **save** that which was lost.” (Luke 19.10)

Every Christian Should Have A Clear Vision

- Philippians 3:13-14 – “Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”
- What is your **spiritual vision**?

Elders Need to Have A **Vision** For The **Local Church**

- The vision must be guided by God's pattern.
- The work of the Lord's church
 - Evangelism, Edification, Benevolence
- A vision “to present every man perfect in Christ” (Col. 1:28).
- A vision for meeting the needs of every member.
- A vision for evangelism.

Great Leaders Face And Overcome Problems

- Charlie Brown to Lucy – “There is no problem so big that I can’t run from it.”
- Great leaders **do not run** from problems:
 - Neville Chamberlain (“known for his appeasement foreign policy”)
 - Winston Churchill (“known for his leadership”)

Joshua – A Leader With A Problem

- Israel defeated Jericho (Joshua 6)
 - **Achan** took of the devoted things.
- Israel defeated at Ai. (Joshua 7:1-5)
- Joshua fell before God ...
 - “**Why?**” (7:6-9)
- God to Joshua: Get up – correct the problem – and everything will be o.k. (vs. 10-13)

Congregations Need Elders Who Will Handle “Church Problems”

■ Immorality at Corinth (1 Cor. 5)

- The church had not **mourned** or **removed** the sinner from the congregation.
- They had **not handled the problem.**

■ Result

- The sinner had **not** been dealt with.
- The church was in **danger** – “A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough” (vs. 6)

To The **Elders** We Say...

- God bless you for the work you do – for your labor in the Lord – for watching after souls.
- Your work is vitally **important**, immensely **challenging**, eternally **rewarding**, tremendously **difficult**, often **lonely**, and frequently **thankless**.

To The Church We Say:

- **Obey and submit** to your elders.
- **Praise** them, **thank** them, and **honor** them for their work's sake.
- Know that they will **not be perfect** (no human being is).
- You will not always agree with **their judgment**.
- **But up hold up their hands and support them in this vital work.**

Let Us All Strive To Be Better Leaders

- Integrity
- A Vision of the Future
- The Ability to Face and Overcome Problems