

Leadership

Luke 22:24-27

Let's begin 2008 with a focus on leadership. I have a goal for our class – for everyone in our class – that each of us would increase our level of leadership.

Leadership is something that is often discussed in business, but not as often in the context of church and family. But leadership is crucial in all areas of life.

“Everything rises and falls on leadership.”¹ John C. Maxwell

We'll first look at two biblical descriptions of leadership and then define it.

²⁴And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest. ²⁵And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called ‘Benefactors.’ ²⁶“But not so with you, but let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as the servant.

²⁷“For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table, or the one who serves? **Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.**

Jesus is THE prototype servant leader. (Ken Blanchard training)

And in Peter's first epistle we find his instructions to the leaders in the church.

1 Peter 5:1-3 - ¹Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, ²shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; ³**nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.**

I. What Is Leadership?

Leadership is actually pretty hard to define practically. How would you define it? **Responsibility, initiative, vision, courage, accountability, persuasive, earned respect and trust, ownership, consistent, listener, organized, charisma, compassion, encourager, integrity, discretion, discernment, negotiator, thick-skinned**

What it is not:

Leadership is not management. “... management focuses on maintaining systems and processes.”²

It is not position or title.

It is not forced. It doesn't count if you have power (\$) over the follower.

What it is:

“Leadership is influence.”¹ - John C. Maxwell

“Leadership is the ability to obtain followers.”¹ – James C. Georges

“To be a leader, a person has to not only be out front, but also have people intentionally coming behind him, following his lead, and acting on his vision.”²

“Leading is doing. To lead, I must move forward.” Andy Andrews, *The Third Decision for Success* – “I am a person of action.”

Whenever you survey the most important qualities of a leader, three characteristics bubble to the top: Integrity (#1 by a factor of more than two), caring for people, and vision.

Quotes on Leadership:

“He who thinketh he leadeth and hath no one following him is only taking a walk.”¹ – Leadership proverb

“The essence of true leadership is to do what is right.” – Stephen R. Covey

“An army of sheep led by a lion would defeat an army of lions led by a sheep.”³

“Positional leadership does not work in volunteer organizations.”²

“In any given situation with any given group there is a prominent influencer.”¹

II. How Do You Develop Leadership?

First we must ask, “Can you?” Most leadership experts agree that some people are born leaders. But even born leaders must work to acquire skills, habits, discipline, and character required to be a great leader.

Read “Leadership Can Be Taught” from book #1, Introduction, page xi-xii.

The most important ingredient of leadership is integrity. – John C. Maxwell

“Leadership develops from the inside out.”⁴

Read Books. Use the list below as a great starting place.

What needs to be done? Just do it.

Conclusion:

To me, leadership is making a difference. It is standing up and doing what needs to be done, something meaningful, relevant, and significant.

So what needs to be done? What are you going to do to make a difference?

I believe that often whenever you see something and think, “Something needs to be done about that,” it is God leading you to do it.

¹Maxwell, John C., *Developing the Leader Within You*

²Maxwell, John C., *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*

³Andrews, Andy, *The Traveler's Gift*

⁴Maxwell, John C., *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader*