

12. Godly Leaders Are Made, Not Born

Many people think that leadership is something people inherit from their family. However, 2 Timothy 2:2 tells us, “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” In this verse, we see that Timothy was not told to look for people who were born leaders. Instead, he was told to look for faithful men. He was told that if he invested his life in faithful men, they would be able to teach others also. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 adds, “Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.” Here, we see that the first requirement to look for when selecting people for godly leadership is one who is faithful.

In Luke 12:35-48, we see that a faithful person is one who is watching for the coming of his Lord. Verses 42-44 tell us, “And the Lord said, ‘Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* master will make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of food in due season? Blessed *is* that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has...’” In the context, we see that those who are called faithful, are those who are watching for the coming of the Lord and are prepared for His coming. Today, many Christians act as though they are giving no thought to the coming of the Lord.

In Matthew 25:14-29, we see that a faithful person is one who is already using whatever he has been given. The question is not how much a person has been given, as those in this parable were given different amounts. However, the important thing was that they were faithful in using what they had been given. A person who has a plan to serve the Lord in the future, but is not using what he has already been given, is not yet a faithful man. Instead, a faithful man is one who is already doing what he can with what he has already been given.

In Luke 16:10-13, we see that a faithful man is faithful in all areas of his life, including being faithful in his use of money. This is a key area because 1 Timothy 6:10 warns that, “For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” A person who is controlled by greed is not a godly leader because his priority is things rather than people. Such a person will drive people for his own benefit rather than lead them as a steward of God.

We also see that a person who has been unfaithful in the past can become faithful and be used greatly by the Lord. In Philemon 10-11, we read about Onesimus. “I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten *while* in my chains, who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.” Colossians 4:9 adds the following statement about Onesimus: “...with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They will make known to you all things which *are happening* here.” In the book of Philemon, we learn that Onesimus had previously been an unfaithful servant, yet we see that he had become a faithful servant of the Lord.

A second thing to look for, when developing godly leadership, is people who are available. In Luke 9:57-62, we see that Christ talked to three people who had other priorities in their lives rather than following Christ. In contrast, when Christ called the twelve, and also the larger group of

disciples, they made themselves available to spend time with Christ. In Mark 1:16-20, we see that the four fishermen left their nets and followed Christ. Then, in Mark 2:14, we see that Matthew left the tax office and followed Christ.

The disciples were available to go with Christ to a wedding, in John 2:2. They were available to go with Christ to the feast at Jerusalem, in John 2:17. They were with Jesus as He traveled through Samaria, in John 4. These things all happened before Christ said, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

You may have people who are growing Christians, but have such a busy schedule that they do not have time to spend with you at this particular time. That does not mean they are not interested in learning to become a godly leader. Instead, it is an indication that the timing may not be right. Be patient. Their schedule may change, and they will be available to go with you to minister in a few months. As a person begins to go with you, begin praying and asking the Lord if that person is one who you should start investing larger amounts of time in their preparation for spiritual leadership.

A third thing to look for, when developing godly leadership, is people who are teachable. This is often shown by the fact that they regularly ask questions because of their desire to learn. Occasionally, they may not ask questions, but try to be around when others are asking questions. This is an indication of a person who wants to learn and grow in his spiritual life.

People who have a teachable attitude have a desire to understand things that they have not understood before. They will also want to know how to follow Biblical principles in the things they do. Their desire will be to please Christ. When people have this kind of a teachable attitude, it is easy to help them grow in godly character and ministry effectiveness. The disciples of Christ showed this attitude, in Luke 8:9-10, where we read, “Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?” And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is given* in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.’”

Saul demonstrated two other attitudes when he met Christ on the road to Damascus. When Christ stopped him with the light from heaven, Saul asked two questions, in Acts 9:1-6. The first question was: “Who are you, Lord?” This question shows that Saul had a learner’s attitude. A learner’s attitude is an attitude of wanting to know Christ better. There is a great difference between learning about Christ and getting to know Christ. We learn about Christ as a historical figure as we read about Him in the Bible. However, we get to know Christ as we yield to Him and let Him work in our lives.

The second question Saul asked was: “Lord, what do you want me to do?” Here, we see that Saul had suddenly changed from the one who was trying to control his own life, to one who wanted to know and serve Christ. This is the attitude of a person with a servant’s heart. This attitude of submission to Christ is the key attitude for a godly spiritual leader. Unless a developing leader is learning to let Christ be in control, he will be a worldly leader instead of a godly leader. However, if the developing leader wants to know what Christ wants him to do, that leader will make a very

effective leader.

A summary definition that I use as I pray and look for people in whom I will invest a large amount of time is, “I look for FAT people with a learner’s attitude and a servant’s heart.” FAT stands for:

F - faithful

A - available and

T - teachable

If you are not already doing so, begin to pray that the Lord will lead you to one or more FAT people with a learner’s attitude and a servant’s heart. May the Lord richly bless you as you develop people who are becoming godly leaders.