

4. A Servant Who Leads by Focusing on Biblical Goals

Leadership is a subject that many people are discussing today. However, most of them are discussing leadership from a worldly perspective rather than a Biblical perspective. As a result, we see few leaders who have developed Biblical priorities for their leadership. That will be the focus of our topic today.

The greatest leader in the history of the world was Christ. However, at the same time, He was also the One who most perfectly demonstrated what it means to be a servant who leads. In Philippians 2:5-8, Christ demonstrated some of the things that are necessary to become an effective servant who leads. Those verses tell us, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross.” These verses tell us the things Christ did to become a servant who leads:

- ◆ He made Himself of no reputation
- ◆ He took the form of a bondservant
- ◆ He came in the likeness of men
- ◆ He humbled Himself
- ◆ He became obedient to death
- ◆ He submitted to death on a cross

First, we see that Christ made Himself of no reputation. The word translated “no reputation” means *to empty Oneself*. Although Christ is God and equal with the Father, He chose to lay aside the independent exercise of His divine attributes so that He could carry out the will of the Father. This was demonstrated throughout His ministry. In John 6:38, Christ said, “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” Then, as Christ prayed in the garden the night before His crucifixion, we read, in Matthew 26:39, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You *will*.” Worldly leadership seeks to do its own will because it does not recognize God’s authority. In contrast, Godly leadership will not seek to do one’s own will but rather the will of the Father.

Second, we see that Christ took the form of a bondservant. The fact that Christ took the form of a bondservant points out that He made a conscious choice. In the same way, we will only be a servant who leads if we make the conscious choice to be the bondservant of God rather than a servant of people. To be a bondservant of God means to make His priorities our priorities. That often means rejecting popularity for obedience. In Mark 1:37-39, we read, “When they found Him, they said to Him, ‘Everyone is looking for You.’ But He said to them, ‘Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.’ And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.” We keep focused on the goals that God has for us even when the world offers popularity as a substitute.

Third, we see that Christ came in the likeness of men. The word that is translated “likeness” speaks

of becoming like something or taking on its identity. Christ took on the identity of man to the point that He identified with human needs and weaknesses. Hebrews 2:17-18 tell us, “Therefore, in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.” Here, we see that to be a servant who leads, we have to identify fully with the people that we are leading. We cannot use titles, clothes, or anything else that would cause others to think we are better than they are.

Fourth, we see that Christ humbled Himself. If we are going to be a servant who leads, we must choose to humble ourselves rather than force God to humble us. James 4:6-7 says, “But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: ‘God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.’ Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” Today, the world places a strong focus on rights. People are demanding their rights. Christ did not demand His rights, but rather submitted Himself to the Father, even though that meant suffering a cruel death. A servant who leads focuses on obedience to the Father rather than any personal rights, even if that includes suffering or even death.

Fifth, we see that Christ became obedient to the point of death. A servant who leads makes the choice to replace his own desires with the desires of God for his life. Christ gave us our example, in Hebrews 10:9, when it says of Him, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” We all need to ask ourselves the question, “Am I here on this earth to do my own will or am I here to do the will of God.” Our answer to that question will determine our effectiveness as a servant who leads. If we are here to do the will of God, we will lead others to also do the will of God.

Sixth, we see that Christ submitted to death on a cross. A servant who leads makes the choice to be obedient to the Lord, whatever that may mean, including death. We might call it learning to die to self. In John 12:24, we read, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.” We see that in learning to die to self, the Lord is able to produce a great harvest that brings glory to Him.

When we make it our goal to be a servant who leads as Christ led, we are then able to effectively do the will of God by carrying out the work of God. In John 17:4, Christ said, “I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.” In the same way, we will glorify God as we finish the work that He has given each of us to do. That work is defined in the Great Commission where we are told to: Make Disciples. That will only happen as we depend on the power of the Holy Spirit instead of depending on our own strength. However, as we yield to the Holy Spirit and depend on His power to work in and through our lives, He will give us His power to make disciples.

The Great Commission points out that the Biblical goal God has for every Christian is to make one or more disciples. Those disciples will imitate us, and become like us, whether that is good or bad. Paul told the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 11:1, “Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.” Then, in 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7, we read, “And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to

all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.”

A servant who leads will:

- ◆ Make disciples who are servants who lead – 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7
they will become examples to others
- ◆ Develop godly reproducing leadership – Mark 1:16-20
they will become fishers of men
- ◆ Develop godly character in that leadership – Mark 3:13-14
they will spend time with Christ, so that they will become like Him
- ◆ Develop the ability to teach in that leadership – Acts 5:28
they will fill their world with the doctrine of Christ
- ◆ Develop a vision of what the will of the Father is in that leadership – Mark 1:35-39
they will seek the will of the Father in prayer
they will develop a vision for the next towns and the world
they will be able to show others how to minister in those towns
- ◆ Develop a dependence on the Holy Spirit – John 15:5; Acts 1:8
they will realize that in their own strength they can do NOTHING
they will realize that in the power of the Spirit, they can help reach the world
- ◆ Develop empowered and commissioned leaders – John 20:21-23
they will realize that they have been sent and commissioned by Christ
 - ◆ Develop leaders who have a goal to finish the work that God has given them – John 17:4;
2 Timothy 4:7-8
they will seek to glorify the Father by obedience
they will seek to finish the work the Father has given them
they will seek to follow the example of Christ and do as He did

The Lord has given us a great privilege as we seek to be a servant who leads by focusing on Biblical goals. The Lord will multiply our ministry as we Make Disciples who also have a desire to become servants who lead because they are obedient to the commands of Christ. May the Lord richly bless you, as you become a servant who leads.