

LEADER NOTES
LEADERSHIP PART IV
“DEVELOPING THE SKILL TO LEAD”
APRIL 26-27, 2008

THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EXAMPLE

What is the difference between having a position of leadership and being a leader? What are the most important qualities a leader can model? Why is it so hard to serve others?

Unfortunately, there are many people who have positions of leadership, but don't really exhibit qualities of a good leader. Just because a person has the authority to tell someone what to do or make them do something doesn't mean they are really a leader, and their influence won't go beyond their job description. A true leader is someone that others would choose to follow, because of a respect that results from seeing the example they set in the way they live.

Answers will vary, but here are ten leadership qualities that people look for when hiring someone in a leadership position:

1. Character
2. Influence
3. Positive Attitude/Passion
4. Excellent People Skills
5. Evident Gifts/Talent
6. Proven Track Record
7. Confidence (Not Arrogance)
8. Self-Discipline
9. Effective Communication Skills
10. Desire To Make Things Better

There are many possible ideas that might be shared on why it is hard to serve others, but a common thought might be because of our pride. It is hard for us to serve others, when it seems to be part of our selfish human nature to want others to serve us. The more people are doing for us, the more important we feel. It might be that we don't really like or respect that person, so that makes it hard to serve them, or it could also be that we don't think they would like to be served - it might make them feel uncomfortable. It could also be as simple as being a time issue for some, as it is hard to find the time to get involved in the lives of others. Also, it could be because they are different than me, or I just am not sure how to deal with their problem.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PURPOSE

What do you think most people would say was their purpose in life? What do you feel is your purpose in life?

Most people who are not Christians would probably answer this question with thoughts of: to enjoy life, help others, make things better for the next generation, etc. These things aren't bad, they are true for us as Christians as well, but as a disciple of Christ do we have a higher calling as well?

Hopefully, people will recognize that their purpose in life is the same as God's purpose for them:

- We are here to bring glory to God through worshipping Him and becoming more Christ-like as we allow Him to work in our lives.
- We are here to help and serve others.
- We are here to serve God - to do what He has created us for.
- We are here to let others know about God's love and purpose for them.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AFFIRMATION

What is affirmation to you? What is more effective in influencing someone's behavior, correction or affirmation? How do you normally respond to correction; how can a leader best administer correction? What is your typical response to affirmation?

Affirmation can be recognizing the positive behavior/actions you see from someone and communicating it back to that person. It can also be recognizing the potential in someone and encouraging them to do whatever is necessary to achieve this potential.

If you had to choose between one or the other, most people probably respond better to affirmation than to correction. However, the truth is that both are usually needed for a person to change and grow. Since none of us are perfect, we all have room to change and grow. We need people in our lives to not only help us see what needs to change, but to help us do it.

It is very common for people when receiving correction to become defensive, or try to justify their behavior/ actions especially if the correction is done in a harsh way. One of the traits of a good leader is that they can give correction in a

positive life-giving way. A leader can't be afraid to confront when necessary or give correction when needed, but it has to be done in a way that the person knows you are for them and this is for their own benefit. It is good to be able to recognize the positive, but be able to give constructive instruction as to how it can be done better.

Most people tend to respond to affirmation in a very positive way. Not only do they feel good within themselves, that they did something well and it was recognized, but also feel good that they pleased someone else. It is typical, then, to try and repeat that behavior so they can experience those feelings again. While some people may say they don't like to be recognized or have the attention, deep down inside we all need affirmation!

He praises God first (v. 5)

He confesses his part of the problem (v. 6)

He prayed on behalf of all the people (v. 6-7)

He claimed the promises of God (v. 5; 8-10)

He brought his desires before the Lord, and he was available to do his part (v. 11)

What do you feel were Nehemiah's greatest challenges in trying to rebuild the walls?

For Nehemiah to even begin to undertake this massive task, he had to get released by King Artaxerxes from his position as cupbearer for a significant amount of time. He would also need a large amount of resources and materials from the King, and even protection in traveling to Jerusalem. Once he arrived in the city, he faced a number of other challenges. These include:

- An attitude of discouragement from the Israelites
- Lack of finances/resources
- Opposition from outside - Sanballet, Geshem, and Tobiah who mocked, ridiculed, and threatened the people
- Opposition from inside - people complaining the work was too hard and that the task was impossible
- Fear from the people
- Tiredness and laziness
- Corruption and lack of integrity in the leadership

What were some of the different roles Nehemiah played as a leader in helping rebuild the walls?

Some of the roles people may identify that Nehemiah took on for this project might include:

Intercessor	Project Manager	Cheerleader
Visionary	Laborer	Warrior/Soldier
Planner	Commander	

What were some the qualities or characteristics Nehemiah displayed that made him a great leader and enabled him to be successful in this endeavor?

The example Nehemiah was in his character and conduct gives us a great model for leadership still today:

- He was self-sacrificing (5:14-18)
- He was compassionate (1:1-4)
- He was a faith-filled, prayerful, discerning intercessor (1:5-11)
- He was a careful and practical planner (2:4-16)
- He was quick to identify with those he led (2:17)
- He was bold to confront hateful resistance (2:19-20)
- He was strategically wise in encouragement (4:10-23)
- He was undeterred by distractions (6:1-4)
- He was Word-centered and positive (8:1-12)
- He was sensitive to discern and correct confusion (13:4-31)

Four principles stand out from Nehemiah's life that made him an effective leader:

1. Compassion
2. Cooperation
3. Confidence
4. Courage

In his time as governor of Judah, Nehemiah exhibited humility, integrity, patriotism, energy, piety, and unselfishness.