

The Heart of **Leadership:**

Embracing Christ-centred influence
in Today's World



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Content:

1. The Heart of a Shepherd – Leading with a heart that cares, protects, and guides like Jesus, the Good Shepherd (John 10:11). 3
2. Serving Over Status – True leadership is servanthood, not position or power (Mark 10:45). 8
3. Leading with Love – Love as the foundation of leadership, reflecting Christ’s love for His people (John 13:34-35). 12
4. Humility and Brokenness – God lifts up leaders who surrender their pride and walk in humility (James 4:6). 17
5. Hearing God’s Voice – Developing spiritual sensitivity to lead according to God’s direction (John 10:27). 22
6. Integrity in Leadership – A leader’s strength comes from walking in truth and righteousness (Proverbs 11:3). 27
7. Faithfulness in the Small Things – Being trustworthy in the little so God can entrust the greater (Luke 16:10). 32
8. Enduring Through Trials – Leading with resilience and unwavering faith in challenges (James 1:2-4). 37
9. Raising Sons and Daughters – Discipling and empowering the next generation of leaders (2 Timothy 2:2). 42
10. Finishing the Race Well – Staying faithful to the call and leaving a lasting legacy (2 Timothy 4:7). 47

Chapter 1: The Heart of a Shepherd

*"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."
– John 10:11*

Leadership in the kingdom of God has never been about titles or authority; it has always been about the heart. Jesus, our ultimate example, did not come as a military general or a political ruler. He came as the Good Shepherd, one who intimately knows His sheep, calls them by name, and lays down His life for them. His leadership was never self-serving but entirely sacrificial. This is the model of leadership that every Christian leader is called to follow.

David's journey to kingship did not begin in the courts of power but in the solitude of the pastures. While his older brothers trained for battle, he spent his days tending sheep, learning patience, protection, and provision. When Samuel was sent to anoint Israel's next king, he naturally assumed it would be one of David's stronger, more experienced brothers. Yet God reminded him, "Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). Leadership in God's kingdom has never been about external qualifications; it has always been about the condition of the heart.

The shepherd's heart is not one that seeks position but one that seeks the welfare of the flock. It is a heart that stays up at night to guard against predators, that searches for the one lost sheep even when ninety-nine are safe. It is a heart that rejoices over the return of the wayward, that mourns over the wounded, and that never grows weary in doing good. This is the heart that God looks for in a leader.

William Booth, the founder of The Salvation Army, once sent a telegram to a large gathering of his leaders. They eagerly awaited his message, expecting

profound wisdom. When they opened it, they found only one word: “OTHERS.” Booth understood that Christian leadership is not about the leader; it is about the people they serve. In a world where leadership is often measured by influence and prestige, the kingdom of God measures leadership by sacrifice.

Many leaders today are tempted to measure success by the number of followers they have, the size of their ministries, or the recognition they receive. Yet Jesus never once measured His ministry by those metrics. He often withdrew from crowds, choosing instead to pour into a few faithful disciples. He reminded them that the Good Shepherd leaves the ninety-nine to go after the one, showing that true leadership values the individual over the masses. A leader with a shepherd’s heart understands that their greatest responsibility is not to build a platform but to care for the people God has entrusted to them.

Leadership is not about being served but about serving. Dallas Willard once remarked, “You can tell whether you are becoming a servant by how you act when people treat you like one.” The true test of a shepherd-hearted leader is not how they handle honor but how they handle humility. Jesus, the King of Kings, knelt to wash the feet of His disciples—an act so shocking that Peter initially resisted. Yet Jesus told him, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me” (John 13:8). If our Lord and Master could stoop so low, how much more should we as leaders embrace a posture of servanthood?

A good shepherd does not run away when the wolves come; he stands firm and fights for his sheep. Leadership comes with battles—some seen, some unseen. There will be spiritual attacks, personal disappointments, and moments of deep discouragement. Yet a shepherd-hearted leader does not abandon their calling when the road gets hard. The Apostle Paul, who endured beatings, shipwrecks, and imprisonment, declared, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the

race, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7). Faithful leaders do not quit when things get difficult; they press on because their calling is greater than their comfort.

One of the greatest lessons in leadership is learning to lead with both authority and tenderness. A shepherd carries a rod to protect the sheep from harm but also a staff to gently guide them. Leadership requires both strength and compassion. Some leaders lean too heavily on the rod, ruling with harshness and control, while others rely solely on the staff, avoiding difficult conversations or corrections. A good shepherd understands that both are necessary. Jesus displayed this balance perfectly—He was bold in confronting sin but gentle with the broken. He turned over tables in the temple, yet He knelt beside the woman caught in adultery. He rebuked the Pharisees, yet He restored Peter after his failure. True leadership is not about exerting power but about walking in wisdom, knowing when to correct and when to comfort.

A shepherd-hearted leader also understands that they are not the ultimate leader—Jesus is. Every pastor, every ministry leader, every Christian in a position of influence is merely an under-shepherd, entrusted with God's people for a time. The moment we begin to see the flock as our own rather than God's, we risk leading from pride rather than humility. Augustine once said, “If you aspire to great things, begin with little ones.” The greatest leaders are not those who chase after greatness but those who faithfully steward the small.

In an age where leadership is often associated with visibility, we must remember that some of the greatest leaders are the ones who labor in obscurity. The shepherd who faithfully cares for his small flock is just as valuable in God's eyes as the one who leads a global ministry. Jim Elliot, the missionary who gave his life for the gospel, wrote, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he

cannot lose.” The heart of a shepherd does not seek personal gain but eternal impact.

The call to shepherd is a call to love, to protect, and to lay down one's life for the sake of others. It is not an easy calling, but it is a high one. Jesus promised that He would be with us always, even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). The Good Shepherd, who laid down His life for us, will strengthen and sustain every leader who follows in His footsteps.

Leadership Points to Remember

1. A true shepherd knows their flock, not just their position. Leadership is relational, not transactional.
2. A shepherd-hearted leader values the individual, not just the crowd. Every person matters.
3. Leadership is sacrificial. The greatest leaders serve without expecting recognition.
4. Strength and gentleness must coexist. A leader must protect with firmness and guide with grace.
5. Leadership success is measured by faithfulness, not fame. God honors those who serve in obscurity.

Reflection:

1. In what ways can you develop a shepherd's heart in your leadership?
2. How can you demonstrate greater care and sacrifice for those you lead?
3. What steps can you take to grow in patience and compassion as a leader?

Simple Prayer

Lord, give me the heart of a shepherd. Teach me to love as You love, to serve as You serve, and to lead with humility, wisdom, and strength. Help me to protect and care for those You have entrusted to me, not out of obligation but out of love. Let my leadership be marked not by position but by sacrifice, not by status but by service. May I always remember that my highest calling is to follow You, the Good Shepherd. Amen.

Chapter 2: Serving Over Status

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." – Mark 10:45

Leadership in the world often revolves around power, recognition, and prestige. The higher one climbs, the more privileges they expect. But in the kingdom of God, leadership is not about being served—it is about serving. Jesus, the Son of God, the King of Kings, the One through whom all things were created, did not come to demand service but to lay down His life for others.

The disciples struggled with this concept. At one point, James and John, along with their mother, came to Jesus with a request: they wanted the best seats in His kingdom—one on His right and the other on His left. They desired status, recognition, and authority. The other disciples were indignant, likely because they, too, desired the same positions. But Jesus responded with a radical teaching: *"Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave"* (Matthew 20:26-27). In His kingdom, greatness is not measured by power but by humility, not by how many people serve you but by how many you serve.

William Booth, the founder of The Salvation Army, understood this deeply. One year, when he was too ill to attend an international conference, he sent a one-word telegram to encourage his officers. The message simply read: **"OTHERS."** That one word encapsulated the heart of servant leadership. Booth's ministry was built on the principle that true leadership is about meeting the needs of others, not advancing oneself.

Many leaders today are tempted to believe that leadership is about climbing the ladder of success, but Jesus calls His followers to descend the ladder instead. Dallas Willard once observed, “*The test of a servant is how he reacts when he is treated like one.*” Servant leadership is not just about what we do—it is about the posture of our hearts. It is easy to serve when it is noticed and appreciated, but true servanthood is revealed when no one is watching, when no one applauds, and when the task is mundane or difficult.

Jesus modeled this when He knelt down to wash the feet of His disciples. Foot-washing was a task reserved for the lowest servant in the household. Yet, on the night before His crucifixion, Jesus took a basin of water, wrapped a towel around His waist, and washed the dirty, calloused feet of men who would soon abandon Him. Peter was so uncomfortable with this act that he initially refused, saying, “*You shall never wash my feet*” (John 13:8). He could not comprehend why the Lord would lower Himself to such a position. Yet Jesus replied, “*I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you*” (John 13:15). Leadership is about taking the towel, not the throne.

Many struggle with servant leadership because they fear being overlooked or taken advantage of. But Jesus reassures us that God sees every act of faithfulness, even those done in secret. He said, “*Your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you*” (Matthew 6:4). The reward for a servant leader is not earthly recognition but the joy of knowing they are following the example of Christ.

Leadership is tested not in moments of honor but in moments of humility. When Jesus stood before Pilate, falsely accused and mocked, He did not demand His rights or assert His authority. He remained silent, trusting the Father’s plan. Servant leadership requires surrender. It requires trusting that God exalts the humble in His perfect time (James 4:10).

In today's culture, where leaders often seek visibility, we must remember that some of the greatest acts of leadership happen in hidden places. Jim Elliot, the missionary who gave his life to reach the unreached, famously wrote, "*He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.*"

Leadership is not about building personal empires; it is about laying down our lives for the sake of others.

The Apostle Paul, one of the greatest leaders in church history, constantly referred to himself not as a ruler but as a servant. He declared, "*I am the least of the apostles*" (1 Corinthians 15:9) and "*a bondservant of Christ*" (Galatians 1:10). His authority did not come from self-promotion but from self-sacrifice.

A true leader does not seek position but embraces responsibility. Leadership is not about recognition but about stewardship. It is not about climbing higher but about going lower. It is about taking the towel, kneeling to wash feet, and following the example of Christ.

When we lead this way, we reflect the heart of Jesus, the greatest servant of all.

Leadership Points to Remember

1. True leadership is measured by service, not status.
2. Servant leaders prioritize others above themselves.
3. The greatest test of servanthood is how you respond when no one notices your efforts.
4. Leadership requires humility—taking the towel, not the throne.
5. God sees and rewards every act of faithfulness, even those done in secret.

Reflection:

1. Do you find yourself desiring recognition in leadership, or are you content serving quietly?
2. How can you cultivate a heart that prioritizes others above personal ambition?
3. In what practical ways can you embody servant leadership in your daily life?

Simple Prayer

Lord, make me a servant. Teach me to lead with humility, to serve without seeking recognition, and to love others as You have loved me. Help me to follow Your example, to take the towel, and to lay down my life for those You have called me to lead. Let my leadership reflect Your heart, bringing glory to You alone. Amen.

Chapter 3: Leading with Love

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

– John 13:35

Love is the foundation of Christian leadership. Without love, leadership becomes nothing more than management. Without love, authority turns into control, and influence becomes manipulation. Jesus did not say that people would recognize His disciples by their knowledge, their eloquence, or even their spiritual gifts. He said they would be known by their love. Love is not an accessory to leadership—it is the very essence of it.

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he described the most powerful attributes of leadership: prophecy, wisdom, faith, generosity, and even martyrdom. Yet he followed with a shocking statement: *"If I have not love, I am nothing"* (1 Corinthians 13:2). Leadership without love is empty. A leader may accomplish great things, but if their heart lacks love, their ministry will be hollow.

Jesus exemplified this in every aspect of His leadership. He loved the crowds, but He also loved the one. He had compassion on the multitudes who were hungry, healing their sick and feeding them miraculously. But He also noticed the woman at the well, the blind man by the roadside, the tax collector hiding in a tree. Love is not just about leading many; it is about caring for the one.

One of the most profound stories of leadership in love is found in the life of Mother Teresa. Her entire ministry was built on one simple principle: *"Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love."* She did not build an empire or seek positions of influence, yet she changed the world because

she led with love. She cared for the dying, the forgotten, the unloved. Her leadership was not loud, but it was powerful.

Many leaders are tempted to focus on strategies, goals, and efficiency, but Jesus always prioritized love. When Peter denied Him three times, Jesus did not rebuke him harshly. Instead, He asked a simple yet piercing question: “*Do you love me?*” (John 21:15). Before Jesus entrusted Peter with leadership, He tested his heart. True leadership is not built on ambition but on love.

Love in leadership is not just about kindness—it requires patience, endurance, and sacrifice.

Paul describes love as “*patient and kind... not self-seeking, not easily angered, keeping no record of wrongs*” (1 Corinthians 13:4-5). This kind of love is not always easy. It means loving people even when they are difficult. It means choosing forgiveness when you’ve been wronged. It means walking with people through their failures instead of casting them aside.

Jesus displayed this kind of love when He washed the feet of Judas, the very man who would betray Him. He did not withhold love even from His enemies. This is the radical love that marks a true leader. To lead like Jesus is to love without limits. It is to love when it’s inconvenient, when it’s undeserved, when it’s costly.

In the early church, this kind of love was what set believers apart. Tertullian, an early Christian writer, recorded that pagans were astonished by the way Christians loved one another. They would say, “*See how they love one another!*” This was their greatest witness—not their buildings, not their programs, but their love.

Leadership that is rooted in love also transforms those who follow. A leader who genuinely loves their people creates an environment of trust and unity. People do not follow leaders because of their charisma; they follow because they know they are loved. John Maxwell once said, *“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”* The best leaders are not those with the most impressive credentials, but those whose love is evident in every decision they make.

This kind of leadership also requires humility. Love is not about power; it is about laying down one’s life for others. Jesus said, *“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends”* (John 15:13). True leaders do not seek to be served, but to serve. They do not use their position for personal gain, but for the good of others.

One of the greatest challenges of leading with love is learning to love through pain. Every leader will experience betrayal, rejection, and disappointment. Jesus did. He was abandoned by His closest friends, misunderstood by His followers, and crucified by the very people He came to save. Yet He continued to love. Even from the cross, He prayed, *“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing”* (Luke 23:34).

Leadership requires a heart that is willing to be broken for others. Henri Nouwen wrote, *“The great illusion of leadership is to think that man can be led out of the desert by someone who has never been there.”* A leader who loves deeply will also feel deeply. They will bear the burdens of those they serve, weep for their struggles, and rejoice in their victories.

A shepherd does not love his sheep only when they are obedient. He loves them even when they stray, even when they bite, even when they wander. Love is not

conditional upon performance; it is rooted in the heart of the leader. Love does not give up when people fail. Love does not quit when things get hard. Love endures.

At the end of his life, the Apostle John, who had walked with Jesus and witnessed His miracles, reduced his entire message to one simple truth:

“Dear children, let us love one another” (1 John 4:7).

This is the essence of Christian leadership. When all else fades—titles, accomplishments, positions—what will remain is the love we showed.

Leadership Points to Remember

1. Love is the foundation of true leadership. Without love, leadership is empty.
2. Love is patient and kind, even in difficult situations. A leader’s love must be steadfast.
3. The greatest leaders serve in love, rather than seek power or recognition.
4. Love is not just for those who are easy to lead—it must extend even to those who betray or hurt you.
5. A leader’s legacy will not be measured by their achievements but by how well they loved the people entrusted to them.

Reflection:

1. How does love shape the way you lead others?
2. Are there any areas in your leadership where love needs to be strengthened?
3. How can you practice leading with both truth and grace?

Simple Prayer

Lord, teach me to lead with love. Let my leadership be marked not by ambition, but by deep, selfless love for those You have placed in my care. Help me to love even when it is difficult, to serve without seeking recognition, and to reflect Your love in every decision I make. May I be known not for my position, but for the way I love. Amen.

Chapter 4: Humility and Brokenness

"God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." – James 4:6

True leadership is not built on power or status but on humility and brokenness. The world celebrates strength, ambition, and self-promotion, yet God exalts the humble. A leader in the kingdom of God does not climb the ladder of success but descends into servanthood. Jesus, the greatest leader of all time, was also the humblest. Though He was God, He emptied Himself, taking on the form of a servant and submitting to death on a cross (Philippians 2:6-8).

Pride is the greatest enemy of leadership, and humility is its greatest safeguard. Many leaders begin with a heart to serve, but as success grows, so does the temptation to believe they are indispensable. Yet Scripture warns, *"Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall"* (Proverbs 16:18). God does not tolerate pride in His leaders. King Nebuchadnezzar learned this lesson the hard way. After boasting about his accomplishments, God humbled him, making him live like a wild animal until he acknowledged that all power comes from the Lord (Daniel 4:28-37). No matter how gifted or influential a leader is, God will not share His glory with another.

Moses, one of the greatest leaders in history, was described as the most humble man on earth (Numbers 12:3). Despite leading millions of Israelites, performing miracles, and speaking with God face to face, he never exalted himself. He constantly interceded for the people, even when they rebelled against him. When criticized by his own siblings, he did not defend himself—he let God vindicate him. This is the mark of a humble leader: they do not seek recognition or fight for their own reputation; they trust God to lift them up in His time.

Brokenness is the pathway to true humility. Before God can use a leader greatly, He often allows them to be broken deeply. David, anointed as king at a young age, spent years in the wilderness, fleeing from Saul before he ever sat on the throne. His leadership was forged in caves, in loneliness, and in betrayal. The Psalms are filled with his cries of desperation, yet in his brokenness, he became a man after God's own heart. God does not use unbroken vessels. A.W. Tozer once wrote, *"It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply."* True leadership is birthed in the refining fire of trials.

Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less. Many misunderstand humility as weakness, but true humility is strength under control. Jesus did not lack confidence—He knew exactly who He was—but He never used His authority for self-promotion. Instead, He humbled Himself, even washing the feet of His disciples. This act was not just symbolic; it was a rebuke to their pride. They had been arguing about who among them was the greatest, yet Jesus, their Master, knelt to perform the task of a servant. He then commanded them, *"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you"* (John 13:15). True leadership embraces humility as its highest virtue.

One of the greatest tests of humility is how a leader handles correction. A prideful leader resents feedback, but a humble leader welcomes it. David, despite being king, repented immediately when the prophet Nathan confronted him about his sin with Bathsheba. Saul, on the other hand, made excuses when confronted by Samuel.

The difference between a leader after God's heart and one rejected by God is how they respond to correction. A humble leader recognizes that they are always learning and growing.

C.S. Lewis once said, “*A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.*” Pride blinds a leader to their need for God, while humility keeps them dependent on Him. A leader who walks in humility does not take credit for success but gives glory to God. They recognize that every gift, every opportunity, and every accomplishment is a result of God’s grace.

Paul, despite his incredible revelations and influence, kept himself humble by acknowledging his weaknesses. He wrote, “*I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me*” (2 Corinthians 12:9). Rather than exalting his strengths, he embraced his limitations, knowing that God’s power is made perfect in weakness. A leader who boasts in their own strength will eventually crumble, but one who boasts in their weakness will stand firm in God’s power.

One of the most beautiful examples of humility is found in John the Baptist. Though he had a powerful ministry and drew large crowds, he was not swayed by his popularity. When people tried to elevate him, he responded, “*He must increase, but I must decrease*” (John 3:30). This is the heart of a true leader—to point people to Jesus, not to themselves.

A leader’s humility is also tested in how they treat those with no power to benefit them. Jesus taught, “*When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind*” (Luke 14:13). A humble leader does not serve only those who can elevate their status but values every person equally. They do not seek the praise of men but the approval of God.

Leadership is a continual journey of dying to self. Every day, a leader must surrender their pride, their ambitions, and their desire for control. Henri Nouwen

wrote, *“The great temptation of leadership is to be pulled away from the One who calls us by name.”* A leader who walks in humility stays close to God, never forgetting that they are merely a steward of the influence He has given them.

In the end, the only leadership that matters is the one that reflects Jesus. On the day of judgment, titles and accolades will fade away, but humility will remain.

Those who humbled themselves on earth will be exalted in heaven. The greatest reward of a humble leader is not recognition but the joy of hearing, *“Well done, good and faithful servant.”*

Leadership Points to Remember

1. Humility is the foundation of godly leadership; pride leads to destruction.
2. True humility does not seek recognition but trusts God for promotion.
3. Brokenness is often the pathway to greater leadership; God refines His leaders through trials.
4. A humble leader welcomes correction and learns from their failures.
5. Leadership is about decreasing so that Christ may increase in us.

Reflection:

1. How do you respond to correction and humility in leadership?
2. In what areas of your leadership do you need to surrender pride and embrace brokenness?
3. How can you ensure that humility remains a central value in your leadership journey?

Simple Prayer

Lord, keep my heart humble. Let me never seek recognition over faithfulness. Break any pride in me that hinders Your work. Teach me to embrace brokenness, knowing that You use humble vessels for Your glory. May my leadership always point others to You, not to myself. I surrender my ambitions, my desires, and my need for control. Let me lead with a heart that seeks only to glorify You. Amen.

Chapter 5: Hearing God's Voice

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." – John 10:27

A leader who does not hear God's voice will lead from human wisdom, and human wisdom is not enough to navigate the complexities of spiritual leadership. Every great leader in Scripture was one who listened intently to God. Moses did not move unless the Lord directed him. Samuel learned to discern God's voice as a child. David inquired of the Lord before battle. Jesus Himself often withdrew to lonely places to pray and hear from the Father. If the Son of God needed to hear His Father's voice, how much more do we?

Hearing God's voice is not a mystical experience reserved for a few; it is the birthright of every believer. Jesus declared, *"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me"* (John 10:27). The key to recognizing His voice is relationship. Sheep follow their shepherd not because they see him but because they know his voice. A leader who does not cultivate intimacy with God will struggle to discern His guidance.

Many times, leaders get so consumed with responsibilities that they neglect time alone with God. Yet, leadership without communion with God leads to burnout and confusion. One of the greatest mistakes King Saul made was acting without waiting for God's direction. When the prophet Samuel delayed in coming, Saul took matters into his own hands and offered a sacrifice he was not authorized to give. His impatience cost him his kingdom (1 Samuel 13:8-14). Leadership must never be driven by urgency at the expense of obedience.

One of the clearest ways God speaks is through His Word. A leader who does not love the Scriptures will struggle to discern God's will. David wrote, "*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path*" (Psalm 119:105). Just as a lamp only illuminates the next few steps, God's Word guides us one step at a time. Many leaders want the entire blueprint before they obey, but God often speaks in whispers, requiring trust.

Elijah experienced this when he was hiding in a cave, discouraged and afraid. He expected God to speak through fire, wind, or an earthquake, but instead, God's voice came in a gentle whisper (1 Kings 19:11-12). Leaders often look for dramatic signs, but God's voice is often quiet, requiring stillness to hear. Henri Nouwen wrote, "*Without solitude, it is virtually impossible to live a spiritual life.*" A leader who does not make time for solitude will struggle to recognize God's voice amid the noise of life.

One of the greatest lessons in listening to God is obedience. God does not speak just to give us information; He speaks to call us to action. When Jesus called His disciples, they did not wait for further details. They dropped their nets immediately and followed Him (Matthew 4:19-20). Many times, God's guidance will not come until we take the first step of obedience. Delayed obedience is disobedience.

One of the most powerful stories of listening to God comes from George Müller, a man known for his radical faith. He ran an orphanage in England without ever asking for financial support—he simply prayed and trusted God to provide. One night, there was no food for the children's breakfast. Instead of panicking, Müller prayed. Moments later, a baker knocked on the door, saying God had prompted him to bring bread. Then, a milkman's cart broke down outside, and he offered

his milk to the orphanage. Müller's leadership was built entirely on hearing and obeying God's voice.

A leader who hears God's voice does not rely on human reasoning alone. Jim Cymbala, the pastor of Brooklyn Tabernacle, once said, *"The greatest need beyond all our programs, buildings, and strategies is for men and women to be filled with the Spirit and to hear His voice."* Strategy is important, but no strategy can replace divine direction.

Hearing God's voice requires discernment, as not every voice we hear is from Him. Satan masquerades as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14), and our own desires can cloud our judgment. John instructed believers to *"test the spirits to see whether they are from God"* (1 John 4:1). Leaders must weigh every impression against Scripture. God will never contradict His Word.

Sometimes, God's voice comes through the counsel of wise, godly people. Proverbs reminds us, *"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed"* (Proverbs 15:22). A leader who isolates themselves is in danger of deception. God often confirms His voice through spiritual mentors, so humility in leadership means being willing to listen.

Hearing God's voice also requires patience. God's timing is not our timing. Abraham was given a promise but had to wait decades for its fulfillment. Joseph had prophetic dreams as a teenager but spent years in slavery and prison before stepping into his calling. A leader who rushes ahead of God's voice may end up in unnecessary hardship.

God speaks, but the real question is: Are we listening? Many leaders struggle not because God is silent, but because their lives are too noisy. The constant demands

of leadership, the expectations of people, and the distractions of the world drown out His voice. Jesus frequently withdrew to pray, showing that solitude is not a luxury but a necessity.

A leader who listens to God's voice leads with confidence, not fear. They do not make decisions based on pressure but on divine direction. Samuel Chadwick once said, *"The man who has learned to listen to God will never mistake the voice of man for the voice of God."* The greatest safeguard in leadership is knowing that you are following God's voice, not just the expectations of others.

A leader who listens to God builds their leadership on a firm foundation. When storms come, they stand firm, knowing they are walking in obedience. Jesus compared this to the wise builder who built his house on the rock (Matthew 7:24-27).

Leaders who do not prioritize hearing from God build on sand, and when trials come, their leadership collapses.

At the end of the day, success in leadership is not measured by how much we accomplish but by how well we follow God. A leader who listens and obeys will leave a lasting impact, not because of their talent, but because they walked in alignment with God's will.

Leadership Points to Remember

1. Hearing God's voice is the foundation of effective leadership. Without His guidance, leaders rely on human wisdom.
2. God's voice is often a gentle whisper, requiring stillness to discern.
3. Obedience is the key to hearing more from God. Delayed obedience is disobedience.

4. God speaks through His Word, through wise counsel, and through His Spirit.
5. Leaders who make time for solitude will recognize God's voice above the noise of the world.

Reflection:

1. How often do you intentionally seek God's guidance in your leadership decisions?
2. What distractions or barriers prevent you from clearly hearing God's voice?
3. What practical steps can you take to create a lifestyle of listening to God?

Simple Prayer

Lord, teach me to hear Your voice. In the midst of leadership demands, help me to slow down and listen. Let me not be driven by urgency but by Your direction. Give me discernment to recognize Your voice and the courage to obey. May my leadership be guided not by my own wisdom but by Your Spirit. Speak, Lord—Your servant is listening. Amen.

Chapter 6: Integrity in Leadership

"The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity." – Proverbs 11:3

Integrity is the cornerstone of godly leadership. It is what separates those who lead for personal gain from those who lead with a pure heart. While talent may open doors, only integrity will keep a leader standing. A person may be charismatic, gifted, and have all the right credentials, but without integrity, their leadership is destined to collapse.

The world has seen many leaders rise quickly, only to fall just as fast because they compromised their character. A leader without integrity is like a house built on sand—when storms come, it crumbles.

Scripture makes it clear that integrity is not optional for a leader. King David declared, *"I will conduct the affairs of my house with a blameless heart. I will not look with approval on anything that is vile"* (Psalm 101:2-3).

Integrity is not just about public actions; it is about the state of one's heart. A leader's character must be the same in private as it is in public. Hypocrisy is the greatest enemy of integrity. The Pharisees were outwardly righteous, but Jesus rebuked them harshly, calling them *"whitewashed tombs"*—clean on the outside but dead on the inside (Matthew 23:27).

True integrity is not about appearance but about consistency in righteousness. Joseph is one of the greatest examples of integrity in the Bible. Sold into slavery, falsely accused, and imprisoned, he never compromised his character. When

Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him, he refused, saying, *"How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?"* (Genesis 39:9). He chose integrity over immediate gratification, even though it cost him his freedom. But because he remained faithful, God elevated him to second-in-command over Egypt. Integrity may not always bring immediate rewards, but in God's timing, it leads to honor.

Leaders today face countless temptations to compromise. The desire for success, recognition, or financial gain can lead to small compromises that eventually erode character. Billy Graham, one of the most respected Christian leaders of the 20th century, established strict personal guidelines to maintain integrity. He refused to meet alone with any woman who was not his wife, ensuring that no accusations could ever arise. His commitment to integrity kept his ministry untarnished for decades. He once said, *"When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; when character is lost, all is lost."*

Integrity requires accountability. A leader who isolates themselves is in danger. Proverbs 27:17 reminds us, *"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."* Leaders need people in their lives who will challenge them, hold them accountable, and speak truth even when it is uncomfortable. King David had the prophet Nathan, who confronted him after his sin with Bathsheba. A lesser leader might have dismissed or punished Nathan, but David humbled himself and repented (2 Samuel 12:13). A leader's response to correction reveals the true condition of their heart.

One of the greatest dangers for a leader is believing they are above accountability. King Saul started well but ended in disaster because he let pride and disobedience consume him. When instructed to destroy the Amalekites completely, he kept the best livestock for himself, justifying it as an offering to God. When confronted,

he made excuses instead of repenting (1 Samuel 15:13-23). His partial obedience revealed a lack of integrity, and it cost him his kingdom. Obedience to God must be complete—there is no room for half-truths or hidden compromises in leadership.

A leader with integrity does not manipulate or deceive. Paul wrote, “*We have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God*” (2 Corinthians 4:2). Honesty is a non-negotiable trait of godly leadership. The temptation to exaggerate successes, cover up failures, or twist the truth for personal benefit must be resisted. Integrity means choosing truth even when it is inconvenient.

Integrity also means being faithful with what has been entrusted to us. Jesus said, “*Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much*” (Luke 16:10). How a leader handles small matters reflects how they will handle greater responsibilities. It is not enough to have integrity in major decisions; it must be present in the small, daily choices as well. A leader who cuts corners in minor areas will eventually compromise in greater ones.

John Wooden, the legendary basketball coach, once said, “*The true test of a man’s character is what he does when no one is watching.*” This statement rings true for leaders of all kinds. A leader with integrity does not change their behavior based on who is present. They are the same whether they are speaking on stage, behind closed doors, or in moments of solitude. Their faithfulness is not dependent on applause but on their commitment to God.

One of the most devastating consequences of a lack of integrity in leadership is broken trust. A leader who fails morally or ethically damages not only themselves but also those they lead. The fall of a leader often results in disillusionment, hurt,

and even the loss of faith for some. Nehemiah understood this well, as he prayed, *“I was cupbearer to the king”* (Nehemiah 1:11). His position required absolute trust because any compromise could cost the king his life. Leadership is the same—when a leader lacks integrity, those under their care suffer.

Integrity is not just about avoiding failure; it is about building a life that reflects Christ. Paul exhorted Timothy, *“Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers”* (1 Timothy 4:16). A leader’s personal integrity has a direct impact on those they lead.

God honors leaders who walk in integrity. Daniel refused to bow to the pressures of Babylon, even when it meant being thrown into a den of lions. His integrity set him apart, and God not only protected him but exalted him before kings. A leader who remains steadfast in righteousness will find that God is their ultimate defender.

Integrity is costly. It may mean losing opportunities, facing opposition, or walking away from tempting offers. But in the end, a leader who values integrity over personal gain will have something far more valuable—an unshakable foundation built on righteousness. Jesus said, *“What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?”* (Mark 8:36). No position, wealth, or recognition is worth losing one’s integrity.

A leader’s legacy is not measured by accomplishments but by their character. When all is said and done, people will not remember how much a leader achieved, but they will remember whether that leader was trustworthy, honest, and faithful.

Leadership Points to Remember

1. Integrity is the foundation of lasting leadership—without it, everything crumbles.
2. A leader's private life must match their public life; hypocrisy destroys credibility.
3. Accountability is essential. Every leader needs people who can challenge them and speak truth.
4. Small compromises lead to major failures. Faithfulness in little things leads to faithfulness in greater things.
5. Integrity is costly, but it is always worth it. God honors those who remain steadfast in righteousness.

Reflection:

1. Are there any small compromises in your life that could affect your integrity as a leader?
2. How can you remain accountable to God and others in maintaining your integrity?
3. What steps can you take to ensure honesty and transparency in your leadership?

Simple Prayer

Lord, keep my heart pure. Help me to walk in integrity, not seeking recognition but living to honor You. Guard my heart against compromise, and give me the courage to stand for truth even when it is difficult. Let my leadership reflect Your righteousness, and may I be found faithful in all that You have entrusted to me. Amen.

Chapter 7: Faithfulness in the Small Things

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much." – Luke 16:10

Faithfulness is not tested in grand moments of leadership but in the hidden, ordinary tasks that seem insignificant.

Many people desire a platform, a ministry, or a position of influence, but God is looking for those who will be faithful in the little before He entrusts them with more. Leadership does not begin on a stage; it begins in the unseen, in the moments where no one is watching, in the willingness to serve where no recognition is given.

David was anointed to be king as a young shepherd, but his journey to the throne did not begin in the palace. It began in the fields, tending sheep. Before he ever faced Goliath, he had spent years protecting lambs from lions and bears (1 Samuel 17:34-36). If he had neglected his small responsibilities, he would not have been prepared for the greater assignment. Faithfulness in small things prepares a leader for greater things.

Many leaders want to do great things for God, but few are willing to do the small things with excellence. Mother Teresa once said, *"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."* It is in the unnoticed acts of faithfulness—showing up, serving diligently, and stewarding what is in front of us—that God finds a leader He can trust. The world measures leadership by visibility, but God measures it by faithfulness.

Jesus reinforced this truth in the Parable of the Talents. The servants who were entrusted with talents and multiplied them were commended, “*Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things*” (Matthew 25:21). Their reward was not just acknowledgment but greater responsibility. God promotes those who steward well what they already have.

A leader’s faithfulness is tested not in moments of excitement but in seasons of waiting. Joseph had dreams of greatness, but before stepping into his destiny, he endured years of slavery and imprisonment. Instead of growing bitter, he remained faithful wherever he was placed—managing Potiphar’s household, overseeing a prison, and interpreting dreams. When the time was right, God elevated him to a position of power in Egypt. His faithfulness in the small led to his influence over nations.

Many leaders fall into the trap of waiting for a “bigger opportunity” while neglecting their current responsibilities. They dream of leading thousands but are unwilling to disciple one. They desire a larger platform but resist the discipline required to steward it well. Jim Elliot once said, “*Wherever you are, be all there. Live to the hilt every situation you believe to be the will of God.*” A leader who embraces the present moment with faithfulness will find that God opens doors in His perfect timing.

Faithfulness in small things also means being trustworthy in the unseen. Jesus warned against hypocrisy—doing good only when people are watching. He said, “*Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them*” (Matthew 6:1). A leader with integrity does not need an audience to be faithful. They serve diligently whether they are noticed or not.

Daniel exemplified this kind of faithfulness. Though he held a high position in Babylon, he remained consistent in his devotion to God. His daily prayers were not for public show but were an established discipline long before the decree was made against them (Daniel 6:10). When the time of testing came, he did not need to fabricate a reputation of faithfulness—it was already part of who he was. Leaders who are faithful in private will stand strong when challenges arise.

One of the greatest dangers in leadership is the temptation to cut corners. A leader who compromises in small areas will eventually compromise in bigger ones. The enemy does not always attack with blatant temptation; often, he starts with small, seemingly insignificant decisions. A little dishonesty here, a small neglect there, and before long, character is eroded. Billy Graham once said, *“Integrity means that if our private life was suddenly exposed, we’d have no reason to be ashamed.”* Faithfulness in the small requires consistency in character.

Faithfulness also means enduring through seasons of difficulty. Jesus taught, *“Whoever puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God”* (Luke 9:62). A leader who is easily discouraged or constantly seeks greener pastures will never bear lasting fruit. Every great leader in Scripture faced seasons of hardship, but they remained faithful to their calling.

Jesus Himself modeled this. For thirty years, before beginning His public ministry, He lived in obscurity, working as a carpenter. The Son of God, the Savior of the world, spent years in the simplicity of daily work before stepping into His mission. If Jesus embraced the process of preparation, how much more should we?

Faithfulness in small things leads to supernatural breakthrough. The disciples were ordinary fishermen, but Jesus called them because they were faithful in their

daily work. When He told them to cast their nets, they obeyed, even after an unfruitful night (Luke 5:4-6). Their willingness to follow Jesus in the small things led them to be part of the greatest movement in history.

Leaders who are faithful in small things are positioned for greater influence. But faithfulness is not about earning promotion; it is about obedience.

Oswald Chambers wrote, *“It is inbred in us that we have to do exceptional things for God—but we have not. We have to be exceptional in the ordinary things.”* A leader who learns to be faithful in the mundane will be ready for whatever God entrusts them with.

The temptation to chase after significance often leads leaders away from their true calling. But Jesus warned, *“Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant”* (Matthew 20:26). Greatness in the kingdom is not about platforms but about faithfulness in what God has already given. The leader who serves diligently, whether in a small church, a quiet workplace, or an unnoticed ministry, is just as valuable in the eyes of God as those who lead thousands.

God is not looking for impressive resumes; He is looking for faithful hearts. Those who are faithful with what they have now will find that, in God’s perfect timing, He will entrust them with more. But even if the “more” never comes, faithfulness itself is the reward. Paul wrote, *“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain”* (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Leadership Points to Remember

1. Faithfulness in small things prepares a leader for greater responsibilities.
2. God promotes those who steward well what they already have.
3. Private faithfulness matters more than public recognition.
4. Cutting corners in small areas leads to compromise in greater areas.
5. Obedience in the ordinary is what makes a leader exceptional.

Reflection:

1. How do you respond when your efforts go unnoticed?
2. Are you being faithful with the small responsibilities God has given you?
3. How can you cultivate patience and trust in God's timing for greater opportunities?

Simple Prayer

Lord, teach me to be faithful in the small things. Help me to embrace the ordinary with diligence, knowing that You see every act of obedience. Keep me from chasing recognition and instead focus my heart on serving with integrity. May my leadership be marked not by ambition, but by unwavering faithfulness to You. Amen.

Chapter 8: Enduring Through Trials

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance." – James 1:2-3

Every leader will face trials. It is not a question of if but when. Challenges, opposition, and suffering are inevitable in leadership, but how a leader responds to these trials determines the depth of their character and the endurance of their calling.

Scripture does not promise that leadership will be easy; in fact, Jesus warned His followers, *"In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world"* (John 16:33). Trials are not signs of failure; they are opportunities for refinement.

Paul, one of the greatest leaders in church history, endured relentless trials—imprisonment, beatings, shipwrecks, and betrayal. Yet he never wavered in his mission. He wrote, *"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed"* (2 Corinthians 4:8-9). Paul understood that trials were not obstacles but stepping stones to greater faith. Leaders who endure trials develop resilience, and resilience produces spiritual maturity.

Joseph is another example of a leader who endured unimaginable hardship. Betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery, falsely accused, and imprisoned—his life was marked by suffering. Yet he never lost faith. Years later, when he was second-in-command of Egypt, he told his brothers, *"You intended to harm me,*

but God intended it for good” (Genesis 50:20). Leaders who trust God in the midst of trials will see Him transform their suffering into purpose.

Many leaders quit too soon. They assume that difficulty means they are not called or that opposition is a sign to retreat. But trials are often confirmation that a leader is exactly where they need to be.

Nehemiah faced intense opposition while rebuilding Jerusalem’s walls, yet he remained steadfast. When his enemies tried to distract him, he replied, *“I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down”* (Nehemiah 6:3). Leaders must refuse to be discouraged by adversity, staying focused on their mission.

Endurance in trials is not about self-sufficiency; it is about dependence on God. Jesus, in His greatest trial—the night before His crucifixion—prayed in agony, *“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done”* (Luke 22:42). His endurance was not fueled by human strength but by surrender to the Father’s will. A leader who tries to endure in their own power will quickly burn out, but a leader who leans on God will find supernatural strength.

C.S. Lewis wrote, *“Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny.”* Every leader God has used mightily has walked through seasons of deep pain. Moses spent forty years in the wilderness, David ran for his life before becoming king, and Elijah battled deep discouragement after great victories. God allows trials not to break leaders but to mold them. A leader refined in the fire of trials emerges stronger, wiser, and more compassionate.

One of the most dangerous mindsets a leader can have is the belief that suffering is a mistake. Many modern teachings promote the idea that following Christ

should lead to a trouble-free life. Yet Jesus said the opposite. He declared, *“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me”* (Luke 9:23). Leadership in the kingdom is not about comfort; it is about sacrifice. Those who embrace the cross will experience the resurrection power of Christ in their lives.

When Corrie ten Boom and her family hid Jews during World War II, they were arrested and sent to concentration camps. She lost her father and sister, yet she endured with unwavering faith. She later wrote, *“You can never learn that Christ is all you need until Christ is all you have.”* Leaders who endure trials learn to rely completely on God, discovering that His grace is sufficient.

One of the greatest temptations in trials is to seek an easy way out. When faced with difficulty, many leaders are tempted to compromise their convictions, take shortcuts, or abandon their calling. But endurance requires steadfast faith.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow to the king’s idol, even when threatened with death. They boldly declared, *“The God we serve is able to deliver us... But even if He does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods”* (Daniel 3:17-18). Their endurance in trial led to God’s miraculous intervention.

Leadership requires a long-term perspective. Many trials feel overwhelming in the moment, but leaders must remember that seasons of hardship do not last forever. Paul wrote, *“Our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all”* (2 Corinthians 4:17). When a leader keeps their eyes on eternity, temporary suffering loses its power to discourage.

Endurance also requires community. Even the strongest leaders need others to hold them up. When Moses’ arms grew tired during battle, Aaron and Hur held

them up, ensuring victory (Exodus 17:12). Leaders who isolate themselves in trials will struggle to endure, but those who surround themselves with godly support will stand firm.

Jim Elliot, the missionary who gave his life while trying to reach the unreached Auca tribe, famously wrote, *“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”* True endurance is not about holding on to temporary comfort but about surrendering everything for the sake of Christ. A leader willing to endure for the sake of the gospel will leave a lasting impact.

Trials do not define a leader; how they respond to trials does. Leaders who remain steadfast in the face of suffering demonstrate faith that inspires others. Hebrews 12:1-2 encourages believers to *“run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus.”* A leader who fixes their eyes on Christ rather than their circumstances will endure to the end.

Paul, at the end of his life, could confidently say, *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”* (2 Timothy 4:7). His life was filled with hardship, but he never quit. This is the legacy of a true leader—not that they never faced trials, but that they endured them faithfully.

Leadership Points to Remember

1. Trials are not signs of failure; they are opportunities for refinement.
2. Endurance is built through dependence on God, not self-sufficiency.
3. Suffering is not a mistake—it is part of the journey of leadership.
4. A leader who stands firm in trials inspires others to do the same.
5. Keeping an eternal perspective helps leaders endure temporary hardships.

Reflection:

1. How do you typically respond to trials and challenges in leadership?
2. What lessons has God taught you through difficult seasons?
3. How can you develop greater resilience and dependence on God in times of difficulty?

Simple Prayer

Lord, strengthen me to endure through every trial. When I face hardship, let me stand firm in faith, trusting that You are working all things for good. Help me to fix my eyes on You, not my circumstances. Give me the resilience to keep going, the wisdom to rely on You, and the courage to remain steadfast. May my endurance be a testimony of Your faithfulness. Amen.

Chapter 9: Raising Sons and Daughters

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." – 2 Timothy 2: 2

Leadership is never about one generation; it is about passing on the mantle. A leader's greatest legacy is not what they accomplish but whom they raise. Jesus did not establish an organization; He disciplined twelve men who would carry the gospel to the world. Paul invested in Timothy, Elijah mentored Elisha, and Moses prepared Joshua. The kingdom of God advances through spiritual fathers and mothers who invest in sons and daughters.

Many leaders focus on building structures, platforms, or reputations, but the most effective leaders build people. Jim Wideman once said, *"Success is not measured by what you accomplish, but by whether you have trained someone to carry on after you."* A leader who does not raise up others is leading for themselves, not for the kingdom. True leadership is measured by succession, not success.

Jesus exemplified this in His ministry. Though He preached to thousands, His greatest investment was in a small group of disciples. He ate with them, walked with them, corrected them, and empowered them. Before ascending to heaven, He gave them the Great Commission, entrusting them with the mission He started. He did not leave behind a church building or a theological institution—He left behind trained leaders.

Paul followed this model with Timothy. He referred to him as his "true son in the faith" (1 Timothy 1:2) and poured his life into equipping him for ministry. When Paul neared the end of his life, he did not panic about the future of the church—

he had confidence that Timothy and others would continue the work. Paul's legacy was not just in his letters but in the lives he shaped.

Leadership is not about control; it is about releasing others into their calling.

Many leaders fail to raise up successors because they fear being replaced. But a secure leader celebrates when others rise. John the Baptist understood this when he said, "*He must increase, but I must decrease*" (John 3:30). True leadership is about stepping back so that others can step forward.

One of the most powerful stories of spiritual succession is Elijah and Elisha. When Elijah knew his time was coming to an end, he asked Elisha what he desired. Elisha boldly replied, "*Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit*" (2 Kings 2:9). Elijah did not withhold the anointing—he passed it on. Because of his willingness to raise a successor, Elisha performed twice as many miracles as Elijah. A leader's impact multiplies when they invest in others.

Many leaders struggle with raising up others because they fear being overshadowed. King Saul is a tragic example of this. When David began to gain favor, Saul became jealous instead of mentoring him. Instead of equipping the next generation, he tried to destroy him. His insecurity led to his downfall. A leader who clings to their position will never leave a lasting legacy.

In contrast, Moses intentionally prepared Joshua to lead Israel. When the time came for Moses to pass away, there was no crisis of leadership because Joshua had been trained and anointed. "*Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him*" (Deuteronomy 34:9). Leaders who invest in others create a smooth transition, ensuring the work of God continues.

Spiritual fathers and mothers are needed now more than ever. Many young leaders desire mentorship, but few are willing to take the time to pour into them. Paul wrote, *“Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers”* (1 Corinthians 4:15). The church needs more than teachers—it needs fathers and mothers who will walk alongside the next generation.

Mentorship is not about giving advice from a distance; it is about living life together. Jesus did not merely teach His disciples; He showed them how to pray, how to minister, how to serve. A mentor’s life is the greatest lesson they can offer. Henri Nouwen wrote, *“We need people who are willing to enter into our lives, not just advise us from a distance.”*

Raising sons and daughters requires patience. Young leaders will make mistakes. They will need correction, encouragement, and second chances. Jesus did not abandon Peter when he denied Him; He restored him. A leader must be willing to walk with people through their failures, believing in them even when they struggle.

One of the greatest challenges in mentorship is knowing when to release. Some leaders mentor well but struggle to let go. They want to keep their spiritual sons and daughters under their control rather than sending them out. But Jesus told His disciples, *“As the Father has sent me, I am sending you”* (John 20:21). The goal of mentorship is not dependency but empowerment.

Billy Graham, one of the most influential evangelists in history, always emphasized the importance of raising others. He once said, *“The greatest legacy one can pass on is not money or material things but rather a legacy of character and faith.”* He trained and empowered countless leaders who continued his work, ensuring that the gospel message lived on.

Leaders who fail to raise successors limit the reach of their influence. But leaders who invest in others leave a generational impact. One of the greatest joys of leadership is seeing those you have mentored surpass you. Jesus declared, *“Whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these”* (John 14:12). A true leader wants their disciples to go further than they ever did.

Raising sons and daughters is not just about ministry—it applies to every area of life. Parents raise children, business leaders mentor employees, and pastors train young ministers. The principle is the same: invest in people, and they will carry the vision forward.

A leader’s greatest success is not what they build but whom they build. When their time is done, what will remain are the lives they have shaped. Paul’s words to Timothy serve as a reminder for every leader: *“And the things you have heard me say... entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others”* (2 Timothy 2:2).

The work of God does not stop with one generation; it is meant to be passed on.

Leadership Points to Remember

1. A leader’s greatest legacy is not what they accomplish but whom they raise.
2. True leadership is measured by succession, not success.
3. A secure leader celebrates when others rise, rather than fearing being replaced.
4. Mentorship is about walking alongside, not just giving advice.
5. The goal of mentorship is not control but empowerment—leaders must know when to release.

Reflection:

1. Are you intentionally mentoring and discipling others in leadership?
2. What are some ways you can invest in and empower the next generation of leaders?
3. How can you shift from a mindset of personal success to a legacy of raising up others?

Simple Prayer

Lord, give me a heart to raise up sons and daughters. Help me to invest in others selflessly, to mentor with wisdom, and to release with joy. Let my leadership not be about building my own legacy but about advancing Your kingdom through the lives of others. May I always remember that true success is not what I accomplish but whom I disciple. Amen.

Chapter 10: Finishing the Race Well

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." – 2 Timothy 4:7

The greatest test of leadership is not how well one starts but how faithfully one finishes. Many begin their leadership journey with passion, zeal, and a clear vision, but not all endure to the end. Paul's final words in his letter to Timothy reveal what truly matters: not the size of one's ministry, not the influence gained, but the faithfulness maintained. Leadership is a marathon, not a sprint. The call is not just to lead but to finish well.

History is filled with leaders who started strong but fell before reaching the finish line. King Saul was anointed by God, chosen to lead Israel, but his insecurities and disobedience led to his downfall. Solomon, blessed with divine wisdom, allowed his heart to turn away from God in his later years. Demas, once a companion of Paul, abandoned his calling because he loved the world more (2 Timothy 4:10). Leadership requires endurance—without it, even the most promising leaders can drift away.

Finishing well requires unwavering commitment to God's purpose. Jesus, in His final prayer before the cross, declared, *"I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do"* (John 17:4). His success was not measured by numbers or public approval, but by completing the assignment given by the Father. Leaders must constantly ask themselves: Am I staying faithful to what God has called me to do?

Billy Graham, one of the most respected Christian leaders of the 20th century, was once asked what he feared most. His answer was simple: *“That I might do something before I die that would bring dishonor to my Lord.”* His concern was not about reputation but about faithfulness. Many leaders begin well but lose their way because they stop guarding their hearts. Proverbs 4:23 reminds us, *“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”* A leader who does not protect their heart will eventually fall into distraction, discouragement, or compromise.

Paul compared the Christian life to a race, urging believers to run with perseverance (Hebrews 12:1). A marathon runner does not focus only on the start but paces themselves for the entire journey. Leaders must develop spiritual endurance. This means staying committed when enthusiasm fades, pressing forward when obstacles arise, and remaining steadfast when seasons change.

One of the greatest temptations for leaders is to prioritize results over faithfulness. In a world that measures success by numbers, influence, and recognition, it is easy to drift from God’s standards. But Jesus warned, *“What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?”* (Mark 8:36). A leader who compromises their integrity for temporary success will find that, in the end, it was not worth it.

Faithful leaders are those who prioritize their relationship with God above their ministry.

The greatest danger in leadership is becoming so busy working for God that one forgets to walk with Him. Jesus told Martha, *“You are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better”* (Luke 10:41-42).

A leader's first responsibility is not to their work but to their worship.

Finishing well also requires humility. Many leaders fall because they begin to believe they are indispensable. They stop listening to wise counsel, they isolate themselves, and they neglect accountability. Moses, despite leading Israel for decades, was not allowed to enter the Promised Land because of one act of disobedience (Numbers 20:12). No leader is beyond the need for correction and accountability.

Hudson Taylor, the great missionary to China, once said, *"God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply."* A leader who relies on their own strength will burn out, but one who depends on God will find that His grace is sufficient. Paul acknowledged this when he wrote, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness"* (2 Corinthians 12:9). Leaders who finish well are those who recognize their dependence on God every step of the way.

Finishing well also means leaving a legacy that outlives you. Jesus poured His life into His disciples so that the gospel would continue after His ascension. Paul mentored Timothy, ensuring the next generation was equipped. Leaders must ask themselves: Am I raising up others to continue the work? Am I passing on wisdom, knowledge, and spiritual maturity to those who come after me? A leader's impact is not measured by what they accomplish alone but by how they equip others.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, did not measure success by the size of his following but by the discipleship of his people. He believed that leadership was not about building large crowds but about creating deep, transformed followers of Christ. He famously declared, *"Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not*

whether they be clergymen or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell.”

His focus was not on numbers but on faithfulness.

One of the greatest obstacles to finishing well is discouragement. Many leaders face seasons where they feel like quitting. Elijah, after his great victory on Mount Carmel, fell into deep despair and wanted to die (1 Kings 19:4). God’s response was not to condemn him but to restore him. He gave Elijah rest, food, and a renewed sense of purpose. Leaders must remember that even the strongest grow weary, but God is always ready to restore.

A leader who finishes well does not seek applause but seeks to hear one phrase from the Lord: *“Well done, good and faithful servant”* (Matthew 25:21). In the end, human recognition fades, but God’s approval lasts forever.

The race of leadership is not about speed but about endurance. It is about faithfulness in every season, integrity in every decision, and dependence on God in every step. Leaders who finish well are those who remain rooted in Christ, who prioritize obedience over success, and who pass the baton to the next generation with joy.

Paul’s final words to Timothy remain the ultimate goal for every leader: *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”* (2 Timothy 4:7).

The greatest testimony of a leader is not how they started, but that they endured to the very end.

Leadership Points to Remember

1. Finishing well is more important than starting strong—leadership is a marathon, not a sprint.
2. Faithfulness is the true measure of success, not numbers or recognition.
3. Leaders must prioritize their relationship with God over their work for God.
4. Accountability and humility are essential for lasting leadership.
5. The ultimate reward is hearing, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

Reflection:

1. What steps are you taking to ensure you finish your leadership journey with faithfulness?
2. Are there any distractions or temptations that could hinder you from finishing well?
3. How can you maintain a long-term perspective that prioritizes faithfulness over immediate success?

Simple Prayer

Lord, help me to finish well. Keep my heart pure, my focus steadfast, and my faith strong. Let me not be distracted by success or discouraged by trials, but may I remain faithful to the calling You have placed on my life. Teach me to depend on You, to lead with integrity, and to leave a legacy that honors You. When my race is done, may I hear You say, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’ Amen.

Special Thanks;

Dear friends,

As we conclude this journey together, I encourage you to deepen your relationship with God and embrace the path of leadership He has set before you. True leadership is rooted in love, humility, and service.

As the Apostle Paul reminds us: “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

Reflecting on the essence of leadership, John C. Maxwell wisely noted: “The measure of a leader is not the number of people who serve him but the number of people he serves.”

By aligning your heart with God’s will and serving others selflessly, you not only grow closer to Him but also inspire those around you.

May your leadership be a beacon of hope and faith, guiding others toward God’s everlasting love.

Blessings,

Rev. Dr . Isaiah Fadzlin