

A Leader in the Making

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Do you believe in your heart that God is calling you to be a leader? Whether it's at work, in your community, or in ministry, do you feel that tug? Some of you reading this may already be in a leadership position, but I believe there's always room for growth...especially spiritually. Wherever you are at this point in the process, I believe that God has placed this post on my heart to share these helpful nuggets with you as He makes you into the leader that He has called you to be!

Now, let's dive in! When God is making us into the leaders that He has called us to be, we have to try to wrap our minds around the fact that it takes time to make a great leader. So be patient with your leadership, yourself, and most importantly...*God*. Not only that, but it takes humility, proper training, personal growth through prayer, God's Word and various *sound* teachings, tests, trials, self-discipline, staying faithful, and so much more. What I've found over the years is that to be a great leader, we will be proven.

And this means being proven by leadership, how we handle stress, tests, trials, tasks, and God's people. In this post, I'm going to focus on certain points that I pray will be helpful to you as God shapes and molds you into a Christ-like leader. So here goes...

Servant Leadership – This kind of leadership, I believe is what God desires of us. Corporate America teaches us to lead another way, but God's way of leadership is through servant-hood. Keep in mind, Jesus came to serve, not to be served, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28-NLT). So if we are going to be Christ-like leaders, then we are going to have to learn how to lay down our lives for others and *genuinely* serve those whom we lead. If you don't really know how to do this, pray and ask God to show you when and how to implement this action. In order to be a leader, you have to be a servant. Jesus teaches us this principle in Matthew 20:26, "...Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant." (NLT)

Letting Go of Bossiness – This type of leadership gets us nowhere. God is ultimately the Boss. We work for Him. And if we don't want to be fired, demoted, or unqualified for the job, then we have to learn how to lead with humility. Humility means meekness. And meekness means being gentle, patient, mild, and not inclined to anger or resentment. Loaded right?! Sometimes, it may even look like you're weak and you may even feel embarrassed at times or hurt when being humble. But this is ultimately God's way and

His process to honor and promotion. God loves working with humble people, because their reliance is totally on Him.

First Peter 5-6 tells us, "...And all of you, serve one another in humility, for 'God sets himself against the proud, but he shows favor to the humble.' So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and his good timing he will honor you." (NLT) There it is! If we want to be great leaders and receive God's favor upon our lives, then we have to be humble. The bossiness has to go! Because in all actuality, that's pride. And God hates it. So let's practice leading with humility.

Don't Micromanage – Been there! Don't do it. All it does is aggravate people and it makes more work for you. Learn to **delegate**. I love it! It takes a load of stress off of you, and it allows you to focus more on what you need to do. Know that we're all working together to get the job done. So, if you hire someone to do a job or fill a role – by all means, follow-up with them, but don't micromanage them. Give them the opportunity and the freedom to utilize their gifting. You and I are *not* the master of all things. Only God is...so let God work through those whom you lead to get the mission accomplished. You'll be amazed at the peace you experience, the new relationship formed, and the end result.

Take Care of Yourself as a Leader- Meaning... Take care of yourself spiritually and physically. First Timothy 4:7 says, "...spend your time and energy in training yourself for spiritual fitness. Physical fitness has some value, but spiritual exercise is much more important." As leaders, we have to train spiritually. We have to study God's Word, meditate on it, memorize it, and most importantly, *do* what it says. It doesn't make sense to go to church, hear a message, or read a good article, blog, or Scripture and not OBEY what it says. That is deception according to what James 1:22 says, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

Now, let me also say here, that the Bible is not telling us that exercise is not important. Yet, it's simply telling us that spiritual fitness is much more important than it. So we still have to take care of our bodies as Romans 12:1 says and 2 Timothy 2:20-21 instructs. And we have to *rest*. Just know that with all of these, it will take self-discipline and self-control. In the end, they will work together to help us endure this race to the finish.

Managing Stress & Emotions as a Leader – No doubt, this is a tough one, especially for women in leadership. However, as a Christ-like leader, we have to be able to manage stress and our emotions better (particularly when we're on assignment or deadline). Don't let the crunch make you into a meanie cat! We still have to have fruit when we work together and when we're under immense pressure. Jesus teaches us in John 15:8, "My true disciples produce much fruit. This brings great glory to my Father." So you see, we have to lead with character. (See Galatians 5:22-23).

Actually, I believe this is when God is watching us the most. He's watching us to see how we handle stress and His people as a leader. This is crucial, because we don't want to hit the rock like Moses did in Numbers 20, right? Remember, we're "Joshua"! Our goal is to go into the promise land, not forfeit it because of the people or uncontrolled emotions. God knows how to deal with the people. Our job is to lead them through our obedience to the Father, and by extending grace, mercy, and love, while keeping our emotions at bay. When we do this, God will be glorified!

PERSONAL NOTE: I've recently discovered that managing our emotions has a lot to do with our mindset. Just think about what you're thinking about (Joyce Meyer quote). If we renew our minds with the Word of God, while setting our affections on things above and not on this earth, we'll not only experience God's amazing peace, but we'll be able to manage our emotions and stress levels a whole lot better. The next time you're in an emotional hot spot, try these biblical principles and see what happens.

Also, here are a few extra Scripture references: Romans 12:2, Colossians 3:2, Isaiah 26:3, and Philippians 4:8.

*Listen. God makes leaders. It doesn't just happen. Nothing happens by chance with God. So while we wait on those God promotions, we have to be patient through the proving and training process. I know, this is far from easy. But anything that comes easy, doesn't last. It's through God's training process that He produces fruit that will remain, an anointing that destroys the yokes, and prepares us to handle His calling for our lives. That's right...*His* calling. We have to always remember that it's *His* plan. We're just the vessels that He uses to get the job done.

Let God make you into the leader that *He* has called you to be, so when it happens, you'll be able to genuinely say, "To GOD be the glory!"

Remember, Jesus is coming back soon! And those who endure unto the end shall be saved. So let's be ready from the *Inside Out!*

*Recommended books, "A Leader in the Making" by Joyce Meyer, *"How to Enjoy Balanced Emotions" by Dr. Beverley Wolmarans (Call 210-490-2393 or visit www.christianfamilychurchsa.com for this resource), and "Leading from the Heart: Choosing to be a Servant Leader" by Jack Kahl.

~Courtney

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