

Developing Leaders

Detailed Outline

Part 1 of 5

Introduction

My wife, Jeanette, and I have five grown children and thirteen grandchildren. We have read many Bible stories to them over the course of the years. One of the all-time favorites is the story of David and Goliath. It was in these stories we read how David was catapulted into prominence and leadership. These are wonderful stories; however, the final chapter of David is not so glorious.

In 1 Kings 1, we read about the transition of David's reign to that of Solomon. (The Chronicles writer does not give us the details, but the writer of the book of Kings does.)

I. Succession of Leaders

A. Reluctance in Appointing a Successor

David is elderly, incapacitated, and shivering with cold, so that Abishag, a Shunammite woman, is summoned to keep him warm. It was apparent that David was not physically fit to reign. It was during this time that Adonijah works in the background to appoint himself as king.

1. David was aware but did not act.
 - a) It was already known that God and even David had intended for Solomon to be appointed the next king. God had already promised that David would always have a king on his throne. So God had promised that Solomon would not only rule, but that he would rule well and that David's dynasty would continue on.
 - b) David knew these facts and now is too old and unable to lead the nation. Yet he has never taken the step of setting himself aside and installing his son, Solomon, as the king.
 - c) Consequently, Adonijah begins to install himself king.
2. What was important is now urgent.
 - a) Nathan tells of Adonijah's plot to Bathsheba and of the ensuing consequences. Bathsheba in turn reveals this to King David. As planned, the prophet Nathan enters the king's presence to confirm what Bathsheba was saying.
 - b) This is when David is faced with the need to take action promptly.
 - c) This he does, and Solomon is crowned king, Adonijah's attempts are thwarted, and the kingdom moves ahead.
 - d) The tragedy is that this had to happen at all. There was no need to delay the process.

3. Practice of appointing a successor

- a) Historically, as we look at the nations around Israel at that time, they had something called “co-regency.” Co-regency was where an old king would reign alongside a younger, usually the king's son.
- b) This would be a time of apprenticeship kingship, followed by the apprentice taking over full authority of the throne.
- c) David does not follow this. Whether he is reluctant to release the control, or whether he is doubtful of Solomon's leadership ability, David somehow fails to take action.

B. Application

This story of David's inaction is the picture of many churches today.

1. Raising leaders but not successors

- a) Often churches are seeking to raise up leaders, but they are not raising up successors. They want men to help the leader or the leaders, but are not too eager to find replacements for themselves.
- b) They have a theoretical commitment to leadership development, but not a practical commitment to develop leaders and then to step aside for them to assume leadership.
- c) The principle of leadership is vital for the church. This is because leadership must continue and churches must be proactive to raise up leaders not just to assist us but to replace us.

2. New Testament pattern

- a) We see Paul, who never stayed in a place for too long; he established leaders.
- b) In Acts 20, Paul tells the Ephesian elders that he won't be seeing them again. The baton of leadership has been passed, and Paul commends them to the Word of God and the Spirit of God to continue on as leaders.
- c) Paul was committed to the succession of leadership.

3. Lesson for us to follow

- a) Our churches need to do likewise.
- b) When we read Paul's and Peter's epistles we see them saying they are not going to be around forever.
- c) Succession is important, so that they may continue in God's Word and lead on in God's church, for the glory of God and for the good of the church.
- d) Let us be men who are committed to succession not merely in theory but in practice.

Developing Leaders

Detailed Outline
Part 2 of 5

Introduction

In the introduction to this series we referred to three principles from Oswald Sanders: sovereignty, suffering, and servanthood. We will focus on servanthood in this message as we work through the series.

II. Servant Leadership

A. Biblical Leaders

We discover that the best leaders are those who are servants. We have several examples from the Bible.

1. Moses

- a) Moses is called the servant of the Lord (Deut. 34:5).
- b) When God offers Moses to be head of a new race he declines. He even puts his spiritual future on the line, for the sake of the nation of Israel.
- c) Moses was called the meekest man on the earth, a true servant leader.

2. Joseph

- a) Joseph was a cocky man of seventeen years old. He proudly wore the mantle of authority that his father had prepared for him. His brothers were naturally upset, and we read that Joseph pays for it dearly as he is sold off as a slave.
- b) He did not use authority well, nor was he the servant to his brothers. Over the next thirteen years God prepares him.
- c) In the process, he serves Potiphar faithfully but was falsely accused and thrown in prison. Here, he serves both the master of the prisoner and the inmates—the butler and the baker.
- d) Finally, when placed in power he becomes a faithful servant to Pharaoh. It was under Joseph's leadership that Pharaoh prospered.
- e) It was only after this learning process that Joseph became a man who was able to serve his family.

3. Joshua

Joshua was called the servant of Moses (Josh. 1:1). Willing to serve faithfully, he became a great leader of his time and was called the servant of the Lord (Jude 2:8).

4. Elijah and Elisha

Elijah and Elisha were fellow prophets, but Elisha was a servant to Elijah.

5. Disciples of Jesus

- a) Disciples of Jesus were all about being leaders in Jesus' kingdom. They could only think about the positions of leadership they would have.
- b) However, Jesus tells them that spiritual leadership is not like the leadership found among the Gentiles and that spiritual leadership is about being a servant. Jesus urges them to follow His example, for He says,

"Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:28 ESV)

6. Jesus

- a) Jesus' temptation at the beginning of his ministry was about servanthood.
- b) The issue at stake during the temptation was whether Jesus would act independently and autonomously for his own sake, or faithfully serve the Father by doing the Father's will.
- c) We know the outcome, for Jesus is the great servant, the suffering servant, whose service brought about the possibility of the redemption of men's sins.

7. Paul

- a) Paul was a servant. He even speaks of himself as a slave.
- b) When Paul speaks of his associates, he never refers to them as his subordinates but as his fellow labourers. Paul was a true servant, and he speaks much about servanthood in his epistles.
- c) When Paul contrasts himself with false teachers and false leaders, he says the false teachers were those who harshly ran roughshod over the people they led. They even slapped them on their faces (1 Cor. 11:20), and unfortunately, the Corinthians seemed to love it. Paul, on the other hand, was looked down upon because of his servant spirit.

8. Stephanas

- a) In 1 Corinthians 16, Paul commends Stephanas as a leader because he "served" the church well.
- b) Servant leaders are the leaders we see in the New Testament.

B. Servanthood as a Qualification

- 1. In 1 Timothy, we read about the qualifications of elders. We read:

If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. (1 Tim. 3:1b)

2. Paul was saying that being an elder was not a matter of having an office, but was intended as a platform for service.
3. Leaders who are spiritual leaders are servant leaders. This truth applies to the relationship between elders and deacons.
4. Deacons are not to be a separate board with a different territory of work, but are rather men who serve under the elders and assist the elders in the work of the ministry and in the shepherding of the flock.
5. That is why the qualifications of the deacon are so very similar to that of the elders.

C. Deacons to Be Tested

1. In 1 Timothy 3, where the qualifications of a deacon are mentioned, Paul says, let them first be tested.
2. The question then is, "What does that test look like?"
3. We suggest that one of the tests would be the test of servanthood. It is important to see if these are men who are truly willing to serve, not willing only to lead.

D. Conclusion

There are some words of caution.

1. Servant leaders will look different from those recognized and regarded in the secular world.
 - a) Jesus made it clear that Christian leadership or spiritual leadership is very different. Christian leaders may not have the personality type of being aggressive, dominating, or authoritative as those of the secular world, and that may be a good thing.
 - b) There have been examples of how women interested in finding a good husband have said that a certain person would make a good husband because he is a spiritual leader. However, the sad truth in most cases was that these men were often authoritative leaders, not servant leaders.
 - c) Some of the people God is raising may not look like leaders according to the world's standards, but we must evaluate them according to biblical standards for their true leadership value. Personality typing is not the basis for identifying potential leaders.
2. Leadership development programs must value servanthood.
 - a) There are some who claim that if a person goes through their leadership program, they will be a leader. However, that is not how Scripture views it.
 - b) Scripture says the training program God puts us through makes us to be servants. Some of these being trained as servants may be raised up by God to be leaders. Not all will become leaders, but the goal nevertheless is to become a servant.

The church needs servants desperately—the kind of men and the programs churches need are programs that focus on servanthood.

Developing Leaders

Detailed Outline *Part 3 of 5*

III. Shared Leadership

A. Story of Elijah (1 Kings 17)

1. One of the great leaders of the Old Testament was the prophet Elijah. We remember the story beginning in 1 Kings 17 where he is summoned by God to announce to the northern Kingdom of Israel that God's judgement is upon it and that there will be no rain and no crops until the announcement is made again through Elijah.
2. Elijah is then sent east of the Jordan River to the brook Cherith, where he is fed by the ravens. When the brook is dried up, he is sent to the north and west to a city in Sidon, in fact to the very home turf of Jezebel. Here he is directed to the home of a widow who is virtually at the point of starvation. And as she ministers to the Elijah, she and her son survive, for God never allows the grain or the oil to run out.
3. Elijah after a period of time is asked to go and confront King Ahab. In that confrontation, Elijah challenges the false prophets of Israel. The prophets are asked to call upon their gods to ignite the sacrifice, which does not happen.
4. Elijah then builds the altar and has it flooded with water multiple times, and God then ignites the sacrifice in such a way that everything is consumed, including the water. Elijah then announces to the king that he must hurry home for the rains are about to come. Elijah then girds up his loins and runs to Jezreel ahead of the King Ahab.
5. Ahab reports the story to Jezebel, and rather than surrender, Jezebel threatens that Elijah will die.
6. Elijah in turn leaves his servant and heads for the wilderness and pleads with God to take his life. Elijah the great prophet is suicidal. He wants to resign from his ministry. He is depressed, he is discouraged, he feels defeated, and he wants to quit.

B. Similar Stories

1. That's an ancient story, but unfortunately it reflects the reality of what is happening in many churches and with many church leaders today.
2. Replenish provides statistics based on surveys of various groups on the well-being and attitude of pastors. Here are some of the results:
 - a) 80% of the pastors, and 85% of their spouses feel discouraged.
 - b) 70% of the pastors feel isolated and have no friend in whom they can confide.
 - c) 71% of the pastors stated they were burnt out and battled depression regularly.
 - d) 1,500 pastors every month permanently leave the ministry for these reasons.

3. These are sad statistics. The point is what we find with Elijah is what we find in the church today.

C. God's Dealing

Therefore it is important to learn from God's dealing with Elijah the one factor that provides the solution to those dilemmas: the factor of shared leadership.

1. Elijah's self-evaluation
 - a) Note Elijah's description and evaluation of his ministry. He says in effect, "I have failed and Israel has failed and that there is no hope." However, note the key statement, a statement that repeats at least three times: "I alone am left."
 - b) We know that is not the reality. As the saying goes, "A man who has tears in his eyes cannot see clearly," and this is such a case with Elijah.
 - c) We know from God's word to Elijah there are 7,000 Israelites who had not bowed their knee to Baal. Elijah is not alone and all Israel have not turned from God. There is indeed a remnant.
 - d) Elijah seems to say also that he is the last prophet and that he is the only hope and that there are no others. According to him, Israel is doomed.

2. We are not alone.

You remember however, there were 100 prophets who were hidden away. Elijah was not the only prophet; he was one of 100 if not more prophets. Elijah was wrong; his discouragement and depression were ill found.

Developing Leaders

Detailed Outline *Part 4 of 5*

Introduction

In the introduction I pointed out Oswald Sanders and his three points of leadership: sovereignty, suffering, and servanthood. In this part we will look at suffering.

Oswald Sanders spoke about the first sermon he had ever preached, which was sixty years before that day. He said after he had spoken in a little church he went to the pastor's study, a little room to the side of the sanctuary. There he couldn't help but overhear the conversation of two older women. One said to the other, "What did you think of the sermon?" The other woman thought for a second and said, "Not bad, but he will be better after he has suffered."

Sanders went on to say that it wasn't long after that that his wife got sick and he had to nurse her to her death. Sanders then remarried, and eventually the second wife got sick and he again nursed her to her death. His niece who came to help him take care of his wife became terminally ill and he had to nurse her to her death. He then said, "My preaching, my ministry, and my leadership is vastly different now than it was before I suffered."

Suffering is a very critical point to remember as we discuss leadership.

IV. Suffering and Leadership

A. Suffering is Counting the Cost.

1. In the conversations that the disciples of Jesus have, we hear them thinking of success and status but not in terms of suffering. However, over and over again we hear Jesus say to them and to all who would follow him, "Count the cost. If you are going to follow me, you must take up the cross and follow me."
2. No symbol could emphasize suffering more strongly than the symbol of the Roman cross.
3. Suffering was the price one had to pay if they were to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. We see that in the lives of the disciples. They suffered greatly for their faith.
5. Apostle Paul says:
"Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted . . ."
(2 Tim. 3:12 NASB)
6. Christians in America live a life of status and comfort, but this is changing. It won't be too long before Christians in America will suffer for their faith, similar to those around the world who have suffered through the ages.
7. Suffering is part of being a believer. If this true for Christians in general, it is especially true for those who are leaders in the church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

B. Suffering is a Leadership Issue.

Interestingly, Paul makes suffering a leadership issue in 2 Corinthians 11.

1. Difference between true leaders and false leaders
 - a) Here Paul points out that there are those who wanted a following and wanted to rise to the top by exalting themselves and putting other people down.
 - b) In this context, Paul distinguishes himself from those false teachers by saying he is a man who has the badge of suffering.
 - c) In Galatians, Paul says those who seek to impose circumcision on others in a legalistic way do so because they do not want to endure persecution.
 - d) 2 Peter and Jude talk about false teachers as those who are self-indulgent and pleasure seekers. That's their game, and suffering is when they bail out and escape.
 - e) Suffering is part of leadership, and in fact it sets leaders apart. Those who are willing to stand for their faith and suffer for the cause of Christ are the ones who will be overcomers.
2. Suffering is part of the process.
 - a) Hebrews 12 reminds us that suffering is the process that God uses for all believers. The writer tells the Hebrew sufferers that they have not suffered to blood.
 - b) He further tells them that suffering is actually an evidence and proof of sonship.
For those whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives. (Heb. 12:6)
 - c) Suffering is therefore a part of the maturing process that God uses as He raises up men and women to maturity. And those He raises up to the position of leadership.
 - d) Therefore, when we think about the subject of leadership, we must think of the category of suffering.
3. Evidence of leadership
 - a) One of the ways a leader becomes evident is through the suffering that the person has experienced and endured in a victorious way.
 - b) Suffering may set those apart who are genuine believers and leaders in the church.
4. Suffering is a gift.
"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." (Phil. 1:29)
5. Suffering produces a deeper relationship.
 - a) Suffering is a means to a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.
"... That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death" (Phil. 3:10)

- b) As we enter into His sufferings, then we find an intimacy with Christ that we have not known. And Paul calls it the “fellowship of his suffering.”

C. Suffering is a Platform for Ministry.

1. The third element we must consider is that suffering is a platform for ministry.
2. Those who have not experienced the difficulties of life and found victory in them do not have the same message as someone who has persevered and endured.

D. Suffering is a Stewardship.

1. In 2 Corinthians 1, Paul says, suffering is a stewardship.
 - a) When we suffer and we experience the grace of God with the ensuing perseverance, we are stewards of that experience. This then becomes a platform for ministry, whereby we can share with others the greatness and grace of God that we have experienced in the face of sufferings.
 - b) It is thus the sufferers who have endured suffering who can minister to others who are suffering within the body of Christ.
2. Suffering marks a leader.
 - a) As we think of leadership, let us consider the aspect of suffering.
 - b) Let us not minimize the cost of leadership. There is a cross to bear, and it those who bear it well who have the marks of a leader.

Developing Leaders

Detailed Outline
Part 5 of 5

Introduction

In the talk given by Oswald Sanders on leadership as mentioned in the introduction, Oswald Sanders shared a story on sovereignty. He recounts a time when he was actively involved in serving the Lord and was asked to take over a significant administrative responsibility. This he declined at least one or two times, and it finally came to him that in spite of all his thoughts God was sovereignly raising him up as a leader in that area. And as a result of that realization he took over that leadership task.

Sovereignty is a very significant factor when we discuss leadership. Let us look at this briefly.

V. Sovereignty and Leadership

A. Human Responsibility

1. When we look at the Scriptures, human responsibility is evident as we look at the development of leaders.
2. When we consider the Old Testament, particularly Proverbs, it becomes evident that this book was written to us generally, but more specifically to little “princes” and “princesses.” Proverbs is the work of a king who is preparing children for royalty.
3. This has implications for every one of us as believers, for our king is preparing us for royal leadership. However, there is in that instruction a very specific purpose of preparing people to serve as rulers.
4. This was a very conscious and purposeful way in which leaders were encouraged and developed in the book of Proverbs.
5. In the New Testament, we read passages like:
“The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Tim. 2:2 NASB)
6. Paul is saying to men like Timothy, he is to find younger men who are similarly gifted and to develop that gift so that they may be effective in their ministry and effective therefore as leaders.
7. All of us, especially those in leadership positions, are responsible to look for people who have similar gifting, similar functions, and we are to help and develop them grow in that regard. That is our human responsibility.

B. Sovereign Responsibility

However, we dare not overlook the sovereignty of God in the process. We may be thinking in our minds that certain people are destined to be leaders, but God may have other plans. God may raise to leadership those whom we have never imagined.

1. Paul as a leader

- a) This can be seen in the case of the apostle Paul.
- b) No one was inclined to even believe he was converted, let alone that he would become one of the great leaders in the church and in the Christian faith.
- c) We read:
"While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" (Acts 13:2)
- d) In the midst of that prayer meeting it seems that God had somehow indicated through his Spirit that these two men were now being specified for a new ministry and new leadership.
- e) It is interesting to note that in this text Barnabas is named first, followed by Saul. It is also Saul rather than Paul as we know him.
- f) It is in their first missionary journey that they encounter a false prophet, Bar-Jesus. Bar-Jesus hinders the proclamation of the gospel, and Paul realizes he must address that sin. So Paul steps forward and pronounces a curse on that man. From that time on we read it is Paul, not Saul, and his companions.
- g) Something happened in that moment. Paul did what he believed to be true, and God in His sovereignty elevated Paul to a position that he may never have dreamed about. Barnabas in turn supports Paul wonderfully in that new leadership role that God had sovereignly designated.

2. David

- a) Think about David and the selection of Israel's king.
- b) Saul stood head and shoulders above everybody else. In that sense, Saul was Israel's Goliath. He was their champion. When Goliath challenged the children of Israel to send one man to fight him, it obviously should have been Saul.
- c) Saul stayed cowering in his tent, and David steps forward—David, the one who was not even there when the sons of Jesse were asked to present themselves before Samuel the prophet.
- d) No one could even imagine that David was the candidate to become the next king.
- e) He was not great in stature but he was a man who had a heart for God, and God sovereignly raised him up.
- f) Isn't it interesting that the way in which God raises David up is by bringing Goliath,

who blasphemes the name of God? David is so fixed on God's character and sovereignty that he, in his proverbial weakness, stands before a giant. That is because David believes he serves a big God.

C. Conclusion

1. We thus see the sovereignty of God in two dimensions:
 - a) In the first dimension, it is God who sovereignly chose David when no one else would have.
 - b) In the second dimension, we see that David steps forward when no one else would have, because he believed in a sovereign God for whom Goliath was no threat.
2. This is our learning from the matter of sovereignty of God:
 - a) When we are seeking to develop leaders, we must be purposeful in the process of doing so.
 - b) We need to be active and aggressive in seeking those men who have potential and are servants.
 - c) We must seek to develop them as Paul has instructed us to do. In the process, we must remember that it is ultimately God who sovereignly raises men up.
 - d) We need to recognize that sometimes His choices and ours are not the same and that we need to go with His.
 - e) God sovereignly raises up leaders—leaders who have confidence in His sovereignty.