

“HOW to LEAD — and HOW to SERVE! 10 / 18 / 20

INTRODUCTION — THEY ARE CALLED “PUBLIC SERVANTS” — but they sometimes act more like “THE PRIVILEGED ARISTOCRACY!” The salary NOW of the average U.S. SENATOR (Lamar Alexander and Marsha Blackburn for Tennessee), and members of the U.S. HOUSE of Representatives (John J. Duncan for Knoxville, and Charles Fleischmann for this area) — their SALARY is: \$ 174,000. The HOUSE and SENATE MAJORITY and MINORITY LEADERS make MORE — \$ 193,400. And the SPEAKER of the HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES makes \$ 223,500. This puts the regular SENATORS and REPRESENTATIVES in the TOP 5% of WAGE–EARNERS in the country, and the SPEAKER of the HOUSE — is in the TOP 3% of WAGE– EARNERS in the country. And with the PERKS they receive factored in (such as the MOST GENEROUS PENSION PLAN in the NATION, a THRIFT PLAN, tax-payers’ portion of their HEALTH INSURANCE, FREE PARKING at CAPITOL HILL, SUBSIDIZED GYMNASIUMS, and taxpayers’ portion of their LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES), MEMBERS of CONGRESS REALLY MAKE probably \$ 30,000 MORE per year. I GUESS it is PRETTY HARD to be “HUMBLE, PUBLIC SERVANTS” with the SALARIES and PERKS they get in WASHINGTON, D.C. THE BIBLE describes SERVANT— HOOD in a MUCH DIFFERENT way. That is the FOCUS of this CHAPTER of the Letter— BEING TRUST– WORTHY SERVANTS of GOD.

I. SERVANTS FOR CHRIST — v. 1— 5

1. The apostle Paul tells us here that he is a SERVANT of Christ— and that he it does not matter if the Corinthian Christians try to judge him, about what kind of SERVANT of the Lord he is— it only matters that “It is the LORD who judges me.”

2. SO— what does it MEAN to be a “SERVANT of CHRIST”??

3. LISTEN to what JESUS said to His DISCIPLES MONTHS before His BETRAYAL, TRIAL, and CRUCIFIXION — in MARK 10. JESUS said: “You know that those who are regarded as

rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. [It shall] Not [be] so with you. Instead, whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to BE served, but TO SERVE, and to give his life as a ransom for all.” (Mark 10: 42— 45, NIV)

4. JESUS made it CLEAR to His DISCIPLES that the LEADERS AMONG THEM SHALL PROVE THEIR CALL from GOD and THEIR WORTHINESS to LEAD— by HUMBLY SERVING OTHERS for CHRIST’S SAKE.

5. This IDEA of JESUS, of showing one’s QUALIFICATIONS to LEAD by SERVING OTHERS— was NOT what the CORINTHIAN CHRISTIANS were USED to in their GREEK CULTURE — they were used to EXACTLY what JESUS warned against— of the LEADERS “LORDING OVER” everyone else, and showing their “SUPERIOR AUTHORITY” over other people by “BOSSING THEM AROUND.”

6. A GREAT EXAMPLE TODAY of these kinds of LEADERS who “LORD IT OVER” others — a GREAT EXAMPLE are the “LORDS” of WALL STREET — the HEADS of those GIANT BANKS and INVESTMENT HOUSES that were BAILED OUT by our FEDERAL GOVERNMENT with TAXPAYER MONEY a few years ago, and a FEW YEARS LATER announced MAJOR BONUSES for their STAFF — and ESPECIALLY for the ALREADY— RICH PRESIDENTS and VICE— PRESIDENTS!! Remember the character “GORDON GECKO” from the movie “WALL STREET” in 1987 (played by the actor MICHAEL DOUGLAS) — an IMMORAL, ‘MAKE- MONEY- AT- ANY- COST’ ATTITUDE WAS HIS ONLY GUIDING PRINCIPLE in life; he coined the term “GREED IS GOOD FOR AMERICA” — HIS SPIRIT LIVES ON in WALL STREET TODAY ! !

7. “ GORDON GECKO’S” ATTITUDE is one these CORINTHIANS could UNDERSTAND COMPLETELY ! ! ! Consider, then—

II. THE POPULARITY OF LEADERSHIP ! !

1. BEING a LEADER has always been an attractive position for a lot of people. MANY PEOPLE are DRAWN TO the PRESTIGE, the HONOR, and the POWER exhibited by people in positions of INFLUENCE and AUTHORITY.

2. THAT CERTAINLY WAS TRUE in the CORINTHIAN CHURCH to whom Paul was writing. PAUL had ORGANIZED and PUT the CHURCH in CORINTH together about FIVE YEARS EARLIER, appointing leaders and organizing PRAYER GROUPS and assigning BIBLE teachers and so on. PAUL had moved to the city of EPHESUS about three years before writing this letter. He was now leading the Christian Church in EPHESUS, and was SADDENED to learn how DYSFUNCTIONAL and WORLDLY the CORINTHIAN CHRISTIANS had become since he had LEFT THEM three years ago. INSTEAD of REMEMBERING what PAUL had taught them about JESUS' COMMAND that EVERY LEADER MUST BE a HUMBLE SERVANT, they were acting just like those PAGAN LEADERS whom JESUS SAID they SHOULD NOT BE LIKE !!

3. Paul wrote in verse 8: "Already you have become rich! Quite apart from us you have become kings!" (NLT) With biting sarcasm, he told the CORINTHIAN CHRISTIANS just how wrong they were to get PUFFED UP with some kind of PHONY SPIRITUAL PRIDE about their importance before God!

4. Then, in verse 10, he PAINTED the PICTURE of TRUE APOSTOLIC LEADERSHIP — (read vv. 10 to 13)

5. A TRUE LEADER for CHRIST is willing to face any kind of HARDSHIP or poor treatment for the sake of the LORD.

III. HOW TO SERVE JESUS CHRIST !!

1. OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ALWAYS needs new LEADERS, in EVERY CHURCH and

EVERY CHRISTIAN

ORGANIZATION !

2. SOME have said, “PAUL WAS TALKING HERE ABOUT ‘APOSTOLIC LEADERS’ and the like — they were full-time PASTORS and EVANGELISTS and MISSIONARIES. What does that have to do with the rest of us believers?”

3. The ANSWER IS— FIRST, the APOSTLES were “FULL—TIME” Ministers, as you say, but many of the leaders Paul was describing were NOT.

4. SECOND, the PRINCIPLES of LIFE and ATTITUDES that Paul practiced and encouraged everyone to have are meant for ALL BELIEVERS, not just FULL—TIME leaders.

5. SO, PAUL tells us here the PRINCIPLES and ATTITUDES that ALL CHRISTIANS should HAVE & LIVE BY as we FOLLOW & SERVE our Lord Jesus Christ:

— Be TRUSTWORTHY — verse 2.

— Do not worry about being JUDGED by anyone but God. v. 4.

— Treat people BETTER than you are treated. v. 12—13.

— Imitate the APOSTLES in following Christ. v. 16—17.

— God’s reign is not of idle talk, but the Spirit’s POWER . v. 20.

6. AND, OF COURSE, PAUL wanted his READERS to ALWAYS FOLLOW and OBEY the guidance of Jesus Himself:

— LOVE your neighbor as yourself (Matt. 22: 39) ;

— FORGIVE as God has forgiven you (Matt. 6: 14—15) ;

— PRAY often, and about everything (Luke 11: 9—13) ;

— GIVE generously, as did the poor widow (Lk. 21: 2—3);

— Avoid hypocrisy: Do not JUDGE others (Matt. 7: 1—5) ;

— Avoid hypocrisy: pray for God to cleanse your HEART , not your outward things (Luke 23: 25) ;

— Always, always — SEEK for the Lost (Luke 15: 1—7) .

CONCLUSION — We LEAD for JESUS, by serving OTHERS . We SERVE JESUS, by serving OTHERS.

One night, at 11:30 PM, [about Feb. 11th, 1965] a middle– aged African-American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rainstorm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride. Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car.

A young white man stopped to help her, generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960s. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxicab [for the Airport].

She seemed to be in a big hurry, but wrote down his address and thanked him.

Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home.

A special note was attached. It read: “Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes, but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's bedside just before he passed away. God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others. Sincerely, Mrs. Nat King Cole.”

NAT KING COLE, one of the greatest singers of the 1940's and 50's and 60's, was the FIRST African– American with a Variety show on NBC, a major TV NETWORK. He died of LUNG CANCER at St. John's Hospital in Santa Monica, Calif., on FEB. 15th, 1965, at the age of 45. HIS WIFE MARIA was at his side.

YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW to LEAD, in the NAME of JESUS CHRIST?? THEN LEARN

to SERVE OTHERS, in the NAME of JESUS CHRIST.