

*Moses* *Joshua* *Esther* *Daniel* *Nehemiah* *David*  
**LEADERSHIP  
LESSONS**

*Peter* *Barnabas* **FROM THE** *Paul*

**BIBLE**



Bruce R. Ewards



# **LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE BIBLE**

# **Leadership Lessons from the Bible**

Copyright © 2023  
by Bruce R. Edwards

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

Printed in the United States of America

First Printing, 2023

ISBN 979-8-89546-427-4

All Scripture quotations contained herein, unless otherwise noted,  
are the New King James Version of the Bible.  
Copyright 1979, 1980, 1982 Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers

[www.bruce-edwards.com](http://www.bruce-edwards.com)

# CONTENTS

Preface .....	Page 6
Introduction.....	Page 7
Leadership Lessons of Moses .....	Page 8
Leadership Lessons of Joshua .....	Page 18
Leadership Lessons of Gideon .....	Page 39
Leadership Lessons of David .....	Page 53
Leadership Lessons of Nehemiah .....	Page 70
Leadership Lessons of Esther .....	Page 82
Leadership Lessons of Daniel .....	Page 94
Leadership Lessons of Paul .....	Page 112
Leadership Lessons of Peter .....	Page 118
Leadership Lessons of Barnabus .....	Page 124
What the Bible Says About Leadership .....	Page 131
The Need for Bold & Godly Leaders .....	Page 138
Closing summary .....	Page 141
About the Author .....	Page 142

## Preface

In my over 40 years of pastoral ministry, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of effective leadership. Leading a large church with more than 15,000 members has not only shaped my understanding of spiritual leadership but also deepened my commitment to helping others become better leaders. This passion extends beyond the church, as I have had the privilege of guiding business owners in leading their organizations with integrity and purpose.

The inspiration for this book, *Leadership Lessons from the Bible*, comes from my desire to equip the next generation of leaders with the character and skills necessary to make a positive impact in every sphere of culture. I believe that the greatest leader in history is Jesus Christ, whose legacy of love, service, and transformative leadership has continued to inspire and grow for over 2,000 years. His example serves as the ultimate model for how we can lead with humility and effectiveness.

My hope is that this book will serve as a guide for leaders aspiring to influence their communities and beyond in ways that honor God and contribute to the growth of His Kingdom.

As we embark on this journey together, may we be inspired to lead with purpose, integrity, and a heart for service, just as our Master Leader has shown us.

# Introduction

Welcome to *Leadership Lessons from the Bible*, where we explore timeless principles of leadership through the lives of seven key Old Testament figures: Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, Nehemiah, Esther, and Daniel. These individuals, each called by God for specific purposes, offer rich insights into what it means to be an effective leader in the face of diverse challenges.

This book is based on the material I've shared in various leadership conferences over the past few years, where I had the privilege of teaching these lessons to leaders from different walks of life. By arranging the content in the order these figures appear in Scripture, I aim to provide a clear, chronological journey through their leadership stories.

Each chapter includes a brief summary of the life of each leader, followed by practical leadership lessons drawn from their experiences. From Moses' ability to lead an entire nation out of slavery to Esther's courage to stand up for her people, these figures reflect essential qualities that today's leaders can adopt.

Ultimately, while these Old Testament leaders provide powerful examples, our master model of leadership is Jesus Christ. He embodies the perfect blend of wisdom, humility, and servant leadership. Our ultimate goal in this journey is not just to learn leadership principles but to learn to lead like Jesus—the greatest leader of all.

Let's embark on this journey together, growing into better, more effective leaders.

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM MOSES



# THE LIFE OF MOSES

Moses is one of those larger-than-life characters whose story feels more like an epic saga than a simple biography. His life can be divided into several clear acts—each more dramatic than the last. From the baby hidden in a basket to the towering figure who parted the Red Sea, Moses' journey is an exhilarating blend of faith, doubt, triumph, and frustration.

## The Birth of a Liberator

Let's start with the dramatic arrival of Moses. Born during a time when Pharaoh had commanded that all Hebrew male babies be killed, Moses came into a world that immediately wanted him gone. His mother, not willing to give him up, made the bold decision to hide him for three months. When it became too dangerous to keep him, she crafted a waterproof basket and set him afloat in the Nile, praying for the best.

And here's where the first of many miracles happens. Pharaoh's own daughter, of all people, finds the baby and—captivated by his innocent cries—decides to adopt him. In a poetic twist, Moses' biological mother is hired to nurse him, allowing her to care for the child she thought she had lost. Even at this young age, it's clear that Moses' life is not just a series of coincidences. Something big is on the horizon.

## Growing Up in Pharaoh's House

Moses grows up as Egyptian royalty, living a life of privilege and education. He is well aware of his Hebrew roots but likely grapples with a confusing identity. Here's a man who has access to all the splendor of Pharaoh's court, yet he knows deep down he's different—his people are the ones in bondage. As Moses matures, this inner tension begins to boil over.

One day, witnessing an Egyptian beating a Hebrew slave, Moses takes matters into his own hands. In a fit of rage, he kills the Egyptian and buries him in the sand, hoping no one will notice. But

secrets like that don't stay buried for long, and when word gets out, Moses has to flee Egypt, leaving behind his cushy life and everything he's known.

### **Forty Years in the Desert—Round One**

Moses escapes to the desert region of Midian, where he spends the next 40 years of his life living a far quieter existence. He marries a woman named Zipporah, the daughter of a Midianite priest, and becomes a humble shepherd. During these years, Moses likely reflects on his past, the impulsive decisions that led him here, and what his future holds—if anything.

But God isn't done with Moses. In fact, this is just intermission. One day, as Moses is going about his shepherding duties, he encounters a burning bush that is not consumed by the flames. When he approaches, God speaks to him, calling him by name. Imagine that! After 40 years of thinking he was washed up, God taps him on the shoulder and says, "I've got a job for you."

### **The Reluctant Leader**

Now, here's where Moses' human side shines through. He doesn't immediately leap at the chance to become the hero. Instead, he offers up excuse after excuse: "I'm not a good speaker." "What if they don't believe me?" But God has a solution for every concern. Moses' brother Aaron will help with the talking, and God equips Moses with miraculous signs—like turning his staff into a serpent and making his hand leprous and then clean again.

Reluctantly, Moses heads back to Egypt to confront Pharaoh. What follows is a showdown of epic proportions. After repeated refusals from Pharaoh, God unleashes a series of plagues—rivers turning to blood, frogs, locusts, darkness, and the devastating death of Egypt's firstborn sons. Finally, Pharaoh relents, and Moses leads the Israelites out of Egypt. But it's not a simple walk in the park.

## **Leading Israel—The Long Journey Home**

The parting of the Red Sea is perhaps one of the most famous moments in all of the scripture. With Pharaoh's army chasing after them, the Israelites seem trapped—until Moses, under God's direction, stretches his hand over the waters, and they split, allowing the people to cross on dry land. Once they're safe, the sea crashes back down, swallowing the Egyptian army.

The story doesn't end with this miraculous escape. Moses still has the Herculean task of leading an entire nation through the wilderness. And let's just say, the Israelites weren't the most grateful bunch. They complain about food, water, and just about everything else. Moses, with patience that would challenge even the calmest among us, intercedes on their behalf, bringing their needs before God.

Along the way, Moses receives the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, a set of laws that will guide the Israelites and set them apart as God's chosen people. This, of course, comes with its own drama, including the infamous moment when Moses returns to find the people worshipping a golden calf. In a fit of righteous anger, Moses breaks the tablets and has to return to the mountain for a second set.

For 40 years, Moses leads the Israelites, facing rebellion, hardships, and victories. He doesn't get to enter the Promised Land himself, but he brings his people to the brink of it, handing over the reins to his successor, Joshua.

### **The Legacy of Moses**

Moses' life is a masterclass in leadership, perseverance, and faith. He wasn't perfect—he doubted, got angry, and even disobeyed God sometimes—but his heart was always turned toward God's purposes. From his humble beginnings in a basket to his final moments overlooking the Promised Land, Moses' life is a testament to the extraordinary things that can happen when one is willing to say "yes" to God—even reluctantly.

In the end, Moses is remembered not only for the miracles and wonders but for his close relationship with God. He spoke with God “face to face,” an honor few ever experience. His story is one of redemption, not just for himself, but for an entire nation.

## **Leadership Lesson 1**

### ***God Uses the Humble***

In Numbers 12:3, we read a profound statement: “Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.” Imagine for a moment that this could be said about you. How would it change your perspective on life? Wouldn’t it cause you to pause and wonder about the depth of humility God values? The Bible records Moses as the meekest man on Earth, and this was not by accident. His humility set the stage for God to use him as the leader of the Israelites, a people who desperately needed guidance and direction. But humility like this doesn’t appear overnight. So, how did Moses develop such deep humility? What circumstances shaped him into the man God could trust with such a monumental task?

Moses was born into a Levite family at a time when the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. Pharaoh, fearing the growing number of Israelites, issued a brutal decree: every male Hebrew baby was to be drowned in the Nile (Exodus 1:22). But God had other plans. Moses’ mother, Jochebed, defied Pharaoh’s orders, placing her precious son in a waterproof basket and setting him adrift on the river. Can you imagine the desperation and faith that move required? How often do we find ourselves in situations where we are forced to entrust what we hold dear into God’s hands, knowing it’s the only way for them to survive and flourish?

Moses’ parents could not have known that their son, floating on the Nile, would one day change the course of history. Pharaoh’s daughter found him and raised him as her own, giving him all the privileges of royalty. For the first 40 years of his life, Moses lived as a prince of Egypt. He had access to wealth, education, and power—the very things most people would cling to. Acts 7:22 tells

us that Moses was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and deeds.” With his gifts, Moses could have become a military leader or a great orator, but God had something different in mind.

True humility is about finding your confidence in God, not in yourself. Moses had to learn this lesson in a painful and transformative way. Though he may have sensed that God had a special purpose for him, Moses acted prematurely, killing an Egyptian in a rash attempt to deliver his people. His actions backfired, and he fled to Midian as a fugitive. This was where God truly began to shape Moses. From a mighty general, Moses became a lowly shepherd—an occupation despised by Egyptians (Genesis 46:31-34). Imagine the contrast: once, he commanded soldiers; now, he herded sheep. He once addressed large crowds; now, he spoke to animals. The proud prince was being stripped of his ego, and slowly, his confidence in himself faded away, replaced by a growing dependence on God.

During those 40 years in Midian, Moses learned to care for sheep, but more importantly, he learned to be humble. The wilderness became his classroom, where he discovered that God’s plans are not accomplished through human strength, but through obedience and trust. When Moses returned to Egypt, it wasn’t as the man who had once been a prince, but as a servant of the Most High God. The proud Moses was gone; in his place stood a man who knew that real power comes from humility and reliance on God.

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **Leadership Lesson 2**

### ***God Will Fight Our Battles for Us***

The parting of the Red Sea is one of the most dramatic and awe-inspiring moments in biblical history, a story so powerful it has been depicted in movies and artwork for centuries. But what really happened on that day? In Exodus 14, the Israelites had just fled Egypt, and Pharaoh, his heart hardened, pursued them with a mighty army. As the Egyptians drew near, the Israelites were terrified. They cried out to the Lord, and their joy at being delivered quickly turned into grumbling. Fear overshadowed their faith as they accused Moses of leading them into the desert to die.

How many times have we found ourselves in similar situations? Despite witnessing God's faithfulness in our lives, when faced with adversity, we often lose sight of His power and start to panic. The Israelites' fear is a mirror of our own doubts when life seems overwhelming. But God, in His mercy, doesn't abandon us to our fears. Moses, standing on the shores of the Red Sea, spoke words that should echo in our hearts today: "Do not be afraid. Standstill, and see the salvation of the Lord... The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace" (Exodus 14:13-14).

The battle was never between the Israelites and the Egyptians. It was a battle between God and the forces of darkness that sought to destroy His people. How often do we forget this? We get caught up in thinking our struggles are ours to fight alone, but God has already promised to fight for us. All He asks is that we stand still, trust Him, and let Him lead the charge. Just like the Israelites, we are called to remember that the same God who parted the Red Sea is the One who fights on our behalf today.

## **Leadership Lesson 3**

### ***With Great Power Comes Great Accountability***

Moses was a man who walked closely with God, but even he wasn't immune to failure. One of the most poignant examples of this is found in Numbers 20, when Moses struck the rock at Kadesh. The Israelites, as they so often did, were complaining again—this time about the lack of water. After decades of leading a rebellious people, Moses had reached his breaking point. God gave him specific instructions: speak to the rock, and water would come forth. But in his frustration, Moses struck the rock instead, not once but twice. In doing so, he misrepresented God's holiness before the people.

This mistake had serious consequences. God told Moses that because of his disobedience, he would not enter the Promised Land. Think about that for a moment. After all Moses had endured, after leading the Israelites for 40 years, he was denied entry into the very land he had longed to see. Why? Because God holds leaders to a higher standard. With great power and influence comes great responsibility. Moses' lapse in judgment was not a minor mistake; it was a breach of trust. Leaders, whether in the church, family, or community, are held accountable for their actions. When we let our emotions or frustrations get the best of us, we risk leading others astray.

No matter how long we've walked with God or how much we've accomplished, we are never beyond the need for obedience. Even Moses, with all his intimacy with God, was not exempt from the consequences of his actions.

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

## **Leadership Lesson 4**

### ***Choose the Treasures of Heaven***

Moses had everything the world could offer—wealth, power, and prestige. Raised as a prince in Egypt, he had access to all the treasures of the world’s greatest empire. But Hebrews 11:24-27 tells us something remarkable: by faith, Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. He chose instead to suffer with God’s people, knowing that the fleeting pleasures of sin were nothing compared to the eternal rewards that awaited him.

This is a challenge for us today. We live in a world that constantly pushes us to chase after material success, to find our worth in wealth, status, or possessions. But Jesus warned us, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matthew 6:19-20). Moses understood this. He kept his eyes on the unseen, the eternal. He knew that what the world offers is temporary, but the treasures of heaven are forever. So, choose the treasures of heaven over the treasures of this world. It is a huge lesson on leadership.

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## **Leadership Lesson 5**

### ***Developing a Personal Relationship with God***

One of the most beautiful aspects of Moses' life was his close relationship with God. Exodus 33:11 tells us that "the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend." What an incredible testimony! Moses wasn't just a servant of God; he was God's friend. And it was this intimate relationship that sustained him throughout his life.

Like Moses, we are invited into a deep, personal relationship with God. But this relationship requires effort on our part. Just as a relationship between friends or spouses grows through time spent together, our relationship with God grows through prayer, worship, and the study of His Word. God is always ready to draw near to us, but we must be willing to draw near to Him.

Developing a personal relationship with God is the most important thing we can do in this life. When we make Him our priority, everything else falls into place. Like Moses, we will find that walking with God brings peace, purpose, and power, even in the midst of the hardest trials. As leaders seeking the kingdom of God and His righteous must be a priority in our lives as leaders.

Through Moses' life, we learn that God values humility, fights our battles, holds us accountable, offers treasures in heaven, and desires an intimate relationship with us. These lessons are timeless, challenging us to live in such a way that we, too, may be used by God for His great purposes.

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

## Test

1. Moses grew up as Egyptian royalty in the home of Pharaoh, living a life of privilege and education.  
  
A. True  
B. False
2. God called Moses to deliver the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage at a very young age.  
  
A. True  
B. False
3. Moses willingly and boldly accepted God's call to be Israel's deliver because he believed he was an excellent orator and well-qualified for the job.  
  
A. True  
B. False
4. Moses received the 10 commandments from God.  
  
A. True  
B. False
5. Moses was blessed to be one of those who entered the promised land.  
  
A. True  
B. False

6. One of the lessons of leadership we learn from Moses is how unimportant a personal relationship with God is.
- A. True
  - B. False
7. Moses had everything the world could offer—wealth, power, and prestige yet he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter and instead chose to suffer with God’s people.
- A. True
  - B. False
8. Moses teaches us as leaders no matter how long we’ve walked with God or how much we’ve accomplished; God requires our accountability.
- A. True
  - B. False
9. Moses shows us that true humility is about finding your confidence in God, not in yourself.
- A. True
  - B. False
10. Through Moses’ life, we learn that God values humility, fights our battles, holds us accountable, offers treasures in heaven, and desires an intimate relationship with us.
- A. True
  - B. False

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM JOSHUA

# **The Life of Joshua**

Joshua is a pivotal figure in the Bible. He succeeds Moses as the leader of the Israelites and leads them into the Promised Land. Originally born in Egypt during the time of Israel's slavery, Joshua grew up witnessing the mighty acts of God through Moses, including the Exodus from Egypt. As Moses' trusted assistant and skilled military commander, he played a key role in battles, such as the defeat of the Amalekites. His story offers an incredible example of servant leadership. After a short overview of the life of Joshua, we will highlight five key leadership principles that Joshua demonstrated that helped him to "have good success." While these principles were important during the time of Joshua, they are also important to us and our ability to be a successful leader today.

Joshua's life is the stuff of legends—filled with epic battles, divine encounters, and a whole lot of faith. If Moses was the man who led the Israelites out of Egypt, Joshua was the one who brought them into the Promised Land. His story is one of transition, as he steps into the daunting role of leader after Moses' death. Let's take a journey through the life of Joshua, a man who, through courage and trust in God, saw promises fulfilled.

## **A Humble Beginning with a Front-Row Seat**

Before Joshua was a great leader, he was an apprentice of sorts—Moses' right-hand man. His original name, Hoshea, meaning "salvation," was later changed to Joshua by Moses, which means "The Lord is Salvation." A fitting name for the one who would lead God's people into victory.

Joshua first enters the biblical stage in the book of Exodus, fighting the Amalekites while Moses, with Aaron and Hur by his side, prayed on a nearby hill. In this battle, whenever Moses lifted his hands, Joshua's army gained the upper hand. When Moses' arms grew tired and dropped, the Amalekites began to win. So, Aaron and Hur helped hold up Moses' hands, and with that simple act of teamwork, Joshua led Israel to victory. This wasn't just a battle—this was a life

lesson for Joshua. Victory wasn't about strength alone; it was about obedience, faith, and teamwork. Joshua was learning how to trust in God's provision.

He also had the privilege of spending intimate time with Moses, experiencing the presence of God firsthand. Joshua was with Moses on Mount Sinai and even stood watch over the Tent of Meeting, where Moses spoke with God. This gave Joshua a close, front-row seat to God's mighty acts and Moses' leadership.

### **The Spy Who Trusted God**

The next time Joshua steps into the spotlight is during the infamous spy mission to Canaan. When Moses sent twelve spies to scout the Promised Land, it was Joshua and Caleb who stood out. After seeing the giants and fortified cities, ten of the spies returned trembling, spreading fear among the Israelites. They said, "We felt like grasshoppers next to these people!" But not Joshua. He and Caleb had a different perspective. They said, "If the Lord is pleased with us, He will give us this land. Don't be afraid!"

Their faith didn't win the popular vote. The people listened to the ten fearful spies, and as a result, the Israelites spent 40 more years wandering in the wilderness. But Joshua's faith was noted by God, and while an entire generation would perish in the desert, Joshua and Caleb were spared to see the Promised Land. Lesson learned: Trusting in God's promises, even when the odds seem impossible, will take you places—literally.

### **Stepping into Big Shoes**

When Moses passed away, it was Joshua's turn to lead. Talk about intimidating! Imagine stepping into the shoes of a legend like Moses. Joshua must have felt the weight of responsibility settle squarely on his shoulders. But God had a reassuring word for him. In Joshua 1, God says, "Be strong and courageous... as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will never leave you nor forsake you."

With those words, Joshua's mission was clear: Lead the Israelites into the Promised Land, a territory overflowing with milk and honey, but also with enemies, giants, and fortified cities. His job

wasn't just to lead the people geographically; it was to lead them into God's promises.

### **Crossing the Jordan—With a Splash**

The first major task on Joshua's plate was crossing the Jordan River. This wasn't a simple stroll through the park. The Jordan was at flood stage—rushing, roaring, and seemingly impassable. But God had a plan. He instructed Joshua to have the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant step into the water first. The moment their feet touched the river, the waters parted, and the Israelites crossed on dry ground, much like their parents had done at the Red Sea. It was a powerful, symbolic moment. This was God's way of showing the people that Joshua was the new leader—just as He had been with Moses, so He would be with Joshua.

### **The Battle of Jericho—Marching to Victory**

Joshua's military campaign began with one of the most unusual battle plans in history. The first city they encountered in the Promised Land was Jericho, known for its massive walls. But instead of launching a traditional attack, God gave Joshua an odd command: march around the city once a day for six days. On the seventh day, march seven times, then blow trumpets and shout.

Now, picture being in Joshua's shoes. This wasn't exactly the kind of strategy you'd learn at military school. But Joshua had learned to trust God's unconventional methods. So, he and the Israelites followed the plan, and on that seventh day, when they gave the final shout, the walls of Jericho came crashing down.

Joshua's faith in God's direction paid off, and the people of Israel saw that victory wasn't about military might—it was about obedience to God. The battle of Jericho wasn't just a win on the battlefield; it was a spiritual victory, a reminder that God's ways are higher than ours.

## **A Few Bumps Along the Way**

Not every battle went as smoothly as Jericho. Shortly after, the Israelites faced defeat at a smaller city called Ai. The reason? Someone had disobeyed God's commands, and sin had crept into the camp. Joshua, devastated by the loss, sought God's guidance, and the culprit was revealed. After dealing with the sin, Joshua led Israel to victory once again. This was another leadership lesson for Joshua—sin in the camp, even hidden sin, could bring down the whole nation. Integrity was key.

## **A Long Campaign for the Land**

Joshua's campaign to conquer Canaan wasn't a quick one. It was long and grueling, involving numerous battles and alliances. Yet through it all, Joshua remained faithful to God's instructions. He led the Israelites into victory after victory, claiming the land that God had promised their ancestors.

One of the most famous moments of Joshua's leadership occurred during the battle of Gibeon. When the Israelites needed more daylight to finish off their enemies, Joshua prayed, and God literally made the sun stand still. It was a miraculous moment—proof that when Joshua asked for God's help, the laws of nature themselves would bend.

## **A Legacy of Faithfulness**

Joshua's leadership didn't end with battles. After the land had been divided among the tribes of Israel, Joshua gathered the people and delivered a final speech. In it, he famously said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." This declaration cemented Joshua's legacy as a man of unwavering faith. He didn't just lead by strength; he led by example, continually pointing the people back to their covenant with God.

Joshua died at the age of 110, but his legacy endured long after his passing. The Israelites remained faithful to God throughout Joshua's lifetime and for generations after, a testament to his leadership and influence.



## The Takeaway

Joshua's life shows us that leadership is not about being the biggest or the strongest; it's about obedience and trust. He was a man who trusted God when the stakes were high, and as a result, he led an entire nation into the fulfillment of a promise centuries in the making.

Joshua's life invites us to be strong and courageous in the face of the unknown, to march around the "walls" of our own lives, and to trust that, with God, the impossible can become possible.

Joshua was one of the twelve leaders Moses sent into the promised land to "spy" out the land. They were to check out the land to see how to go in and possess it, not to see if they could or not. God already told them the land was there's and they were to go in and possess it and He would send an angel to drive out the enemies. (Exodus 33)

However, ten of the spies came back with a bad report. They said they couldn't possess the land because the enemy was too big and strong, but Joshua and Caleb came back with a good report. They said, *"Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."* (Num. 13:30) They had a spirit of faith. They believed God and were prepared to do what God said to do.

The other 10 spies were filled with fear. They believed what they saw not what God said. As a result, the Israelites spent 40 years wandering in the desert before they entered the promised land, a trip that should have taken less than 2 weeks. As leaders we need to be people of faith, trusting God and doing what He says to do.

After the incident with the 12 spies, Joshua lived through those **40 years** of wandering in the desert and served as Moses' assistant. When Moses died God selected Joshua to replace Moses as the leader of Israel. Joshua was **prepared** to be the leader God was calling him to be. Joshua then led the people across the Jordan River into the Promised Land. He then led them through several battles and challenges as they possessed the land God had given them.

Fortunately, Joshua did a great job, and his life demonstrates several leadership principles for us.

### **Importance of Preparation**

His time as an apprentice to Moses helped prepare him for the place of leadership he would step into. All of those early experiences would be valuable preparation for when he was chosen as leader to take the people into the promised land.

Preparation is important for any endeavor if it is to be successful. Every event requires planning and preparation to be successful. If a wedding is to be successful it requires preparation. For a soccer team (football) to play its best requires preparation. Leadership requires preparation. We can learn some other important principles of leadership from Joshua. In Joshua 1:9, God said, ***“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go”.***

In this command there are five leadership lessons from Joshua’s life that can be applied to ours as disciples of Jesus that will help us step into the place of leadership God calls and prepares each of us. Let’s take a look at each and discuss how we can develop and apply them in our lives to help us become better leaders.

# **Leadership Lesson 1**

## ***Leaders Submit to the Purposes of God.***

After Moses dies, God speaks, in Joshua chapter 1 verse 2:

***“Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all these people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel.”***

God makes it clear that this is His work. God has a purpose and just as He had used Moses, He will now use Joshua. Joshua is to lead the people in fulfilling the purposes of God.

As leaders, we are to follow the plan of God, not our plans or the plans of others. It is crucial for leaders to submit themselves to the plans and purposes of God. His plans are blessed. He has a plan and purpose for you!

As a leader, we need to hear God’s voice and be led by His Spirit. We are to follow Him and His purposes, then lead others in the pursuit of God’s plan and purpose.

When we are submitted to and following the purposes of God we never need to question, “Is God for or against us?” Our question should be, “Am I on God’s side?” “Am I submitted to His purpose?” When we are on His side and pursuing His purposes, we will succeed as a leader.

This lesson should remind us as leaders that real authority only comes in complete submission to God. The leader does not have to make up a battle plan and accomplish victory, he only needs to follow well. Be submitted to the purposes of God!

## Discussion Questions & Notes

What is God calling you to do and be?

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Are you following His plan and purpose? How? How not?

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **Leadership Lesson 2**

### ***Leaders Possess the Promises of God.***

God always keeps His promises, Chapter 1 verse 3 says:

***“Every place that the sole of your feet will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised Moses.” In verse 5: “No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life” and He promises “Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will never leave you or forsake you.”***

God promised Joshua He would be with Him, He would give him the land he walked on, and no one would be able to stop him. God has made promises to us. They are in His Word. He promises to be with us, to strengthen us, to protect us, to give us rest, to forgive us, and many more. God is faithful. We can count on Him to keep His promises. We just need to receive them – to possess them.

Many don't possess the promises of God because of doubt and unbelief. Often, it's because they are not even aware of the promises of God. Sometimes it's because they have allowed the enemy to steal the promises. Leaders know the promises of God and POSSESS them. Here are somethings that help you possess God's promises –

### **4 Simple Keys to Possessing God's Promises**

- 1. Find the promise in the Word of God.** The first step to possessing the promises of God is to find as many scriptures as you can that promise what you need. The power and provision of the promise is only found in the Word.

“Leaders are destroyed because they don't know the promises!”

- 2. Believe that you receive the promise.** Finding the promises of God in the Bible is very important, but just because there is a

promise in the Bible doesn't mean you are going to automatically possess it. It takes FAITH! Hebrews 6:12 (NCV) says, "***do not... become lazy. Be like those who through faith and patience will receive what God has promised.***" It takes faith to possess the promises of God! Believing in God and His Word is a critical part of Faith. This is not just knowing in your head what God has promised but believing it in your heart (spirit).

"Leaders overcome doubt and unbelief!"

- 3. Speak God's promise (His Word).** Faith is believing and speaking. (2Corinthians 4:13) To possess the promises of God you must declare with your mouth the promise of God's Word. (Romans 10:9)

"Leaders only speak the Word!"

- 4. Hold fast to your profession of faith. (Hebrews 10:23) It is through faith and "PATIENCE" that we possess the promises of God. (Hebrews 6:12)** There are not any microwave results in the kingdom of God. If you're going to possess the promises of God, you will have to persevere. **The enemy will try and steal the promise from you by tempting you** to quit, to give up, or let go of God's promise. He will try to intimidate you and get you into fear.

"Leaders overcoming fear!"

God is with you as you walk out your purpose as a leader for Christ. It is Christ in you that enables you to do what He is leading you to do. He provides all that you need to fulfill His purposes. These are promises from God. Leaders possess the promises of God!

## Discussion Questions & Notes

Talk about some of the promises of God that you need to possess. Are there promises that you have already possessed? What are they?

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

Discuss the 4 keys to possessing God's promises. Are you spending time in God's Word regularly? Are you taking notice of His promises?

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Assignment: Start underlining or highlighting the promises of God as you read (find them) during your Bible reading and study time.

## Leadership Lesson 3

### *Leaders Obey the Precepts of God.*

Precepts are laws, or rules, or commands or principles given as a course of action or conduct. They are guiding truths which have the good of the individual in mind. In this case we are talking about the instruction God gives.

Those who follow God's precepts acknowledge God's guidance in their lives and their dependence upon Him. Precepts encourage responsibility, promote truth, are beneficial and acknowledge dependence. They assist us in discovering what God is doing in our lives so that we can cooperate with Him rather than compete with Him.

As leaders it is crucial for us to know and follow the directions and commands of the Lord without wavering. We must be confident and fully persuaded in what God has spoken.

In Joshua Chapter 1 verse 8 the Lord told Joshua, **“This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success.”**

Notice the two important keys to the verse: 1) Meditate on the Word, in other words, KNOW what is written and 2) DO what is written. The precepts of God, His commands and principles are found in the Word of God. Leaders study the Word to KNOW His precepts and then, just as important, they DO them.

God's precepts are for our benefit and not to be a source of bondage. We need not attempt to follow them perfectly but must only seek to follow them sincerely. We must do what we are able to do with God's help. Our understanding and practice of the precepts will improve if we get started doing what we are able to do.



## Discussion Questions & Notes

Are you meditating on God's Word Day and Night?

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

What are some of the precepts of God you are doing? Not doing?

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Leadership Lesson 4

### *Leaders Soak in the Presence of God.*

Joshua needed the assurance that God was now going to be with him. Look at Joshua 1:5: “...

***“Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.”***

God also says in Hebrews 13:5, “*My Presence will go with you ...Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you*” Remember God’s presence will give you the power to do what He’s called you to do!

God never leaves us! You can count on that, but we need to experience His presence. It is possible for God to be in us and in our midst and not be aware. Soak – means to immerse yourself in the Lord. Be purposeful in recognizing His presence. “*Be still and know that I am God.*” (Psalm 46:10)

As a leader, you can be assured of God’s presence and know that you can accomplish what He has called you to do as a leader. It is not by our own might or power, but by the Spirit of God.! (Zech. 4:6)

*“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*  
Isaiah 41:10

*“It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”*  
Deuteronomy 31:8

## Discussion Questions & Notes

What can you do, or do you need to do to stay aware of the presence of God in your life?

NOTES: NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Share a time or times you have experienced the presence of God in your life? What does the presence of God mean to you?

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **Leadership Lesson 5**

### ***Leaders Stay on Point with God.***

In the last chapter of the Book of Joshua, Joshua makes this powerful declaration,

***“Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness ... choose this day whom you will serve ... as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD”*** (Joshua 24:14-15).

Joshua is saying, “I have chosen to serve the Lord, I am choosing to serve the Lord right now, and I will go on serving God until the very end.” Joshua was saying regardless of circumstance and all the issues he was facing he was staying on point with God and His purpose.

Great leaders stay focused on the Lord as they carry out their purpose as leaders. Staying on point means staying focused, not being distracted, or divided.

God has an amazing life planned for you, but Jesus made it clear that you need to stay focused. In Luke 9:62 Jesus responds to a man who said he would follow Jesus after he took care of some family business; ***“Jesus said to him, ‘Anyone who lets himself be distracted from the work I plan for him is not fit for the Kingdom of God’”*** (Luke 9:62 TLB).

The Devil is committed to keeping you “out of the game.” He doesn’t want you doing Kingdom work. Keeping you distracted is one of the methods he uses to make you ineffective.

Great leaders stay on point with God!

## Discussion Questions & Notes

Are you keeping your eyes on Jesus? Are there things in your life distracting you from being the leader God wants you to be? What are they?

NOTES:

[illegible]

## CLOSING

**STORY:** - 150 years ago there was great leader who as a young man was forced to abandon his military career in disgrace. For seven years he failed in several business attempts. He faced bankruptcy on multiple occasions. He was even forced to sell his pocket watch, his last remaining possession that had value, to provide Christmas gifts for his impoverished family. When war broke out, his application to rejoin the military was rejected. He finally took a job selling bread to the Army as a way to help the war effort. The young man was an unlikely candidate to lead the Union Army to victory during the Civil War and at the age of 46 became the youngest man to be elected president of the United States. His name was Ulysses S. Grant. Many leaders are not born into privilege; oftentimes, they are shaped through difficulty.

Joshua, like Ulysses Grant, came from the most unlikely of backgrounds – slave to a leader of millions. Yet Joshua is considered by some as one of the greatest leaders of history. Frequently, significant leaders start with humble beginnings; such was the case with Joshua.

No matter your background, education, or current circumstances you can become the leader God is calling you to be. As young leaders we can learn from the life of Joshua.

His life speaks to the importance of being faithful to God. Joshua was not a great leader because of anything within himself; rather, he was a great leader because God empowered him to do great things. He submitted to God's purpose for his life, he possessed the promises God made to him, he stood on God's truth, soaked in His presences, and stayed focused on God.

Joshua allowed himself to be a vessel for the Master's use. You can too! Put these lessons of leadership from Joshua into practice in your life.

# TEST

## TRUE OR FALSE

1. As a leader it is NOT important to be prepared.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
2. Moses sent 12 spies into the promised land; 10 came back with a good report, but Joshua and Caleb came back with a bad report.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
3. When we are on His side and pursuing His purposes, we will succeed as a leader.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
4. As leaders' real authority only comes when we are in complete submission to God – His plan and purpose for our life.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
5. God has many promises for us, but we can NOT count on Him to keep His promises, you never know what God will do.
  - a. True
  - b. False

6. One of the leadership lessons we learn from Joshua is to obey the precepts of God.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
7. The precepts of God are laws, rules, commands, and principles given to us by God as guiding truth for our course of action and conduct.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
8. As a leader we can NEVER be assured of God's presence.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
9. Keeping you distracted is one of the methods the devil uses to make you ineffective. Leaders stay focused.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
10. 4 keys to possessing God's promise are: 1) Find the promise in the Word of God, 2) Believe that you receive the promise, 3) Speak God's promise (His Word), 4) **Hold fast your profession of faith.**
  - a. True
  - b. False



# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM GIDEON

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **THE LIFE OF GIDEON**

Gideon was an unlikely hero chosen by God to deliver Israel from their arch-enemy – the Midianites. He came from a humble background, being part of the weakest clan, the tribe of Manasseh. He saw himself as the least in his family. Despite his initial fears and doubts, Gideon was called by God to lead Israel to victory using only 300 men against an overwhelming enemy force. His story, found in the Book of Judges, highlights how God often chooses the most unexpected people to accomplish extraordinary things when they trust in His power.

Imagine you're threshing wheat, minding your own business, but because of fear you are hiding in a winepress because the nation's enemies have been terrorizing the land for seven years. Your people are starving, hope is almost nonexistent, and you're just trying to survive the day. Then, out of nowhere, an angel shows up and calls you a "mighty warrior," saying that you are going to save your entire nation. That's how the story of Gideon begins—one of the most unexpected heroes in the Bible.

After a brief summary of his life, we will look at some key principles of leadership we can learn from this Old Testament leader.

### **The Least Likely Hero**

Gideon, son of Joash, was from the tribe of Manasseh, one of the least significant tribes in Israel. He was living during a dark period for the Israelites. They had once again turned away from God, and as a result, were being oppressed by the Midianites, a nomadic people who would sweep through Israel's land, destroy crops, and leave nothing behind. The Israelites were in survival mode, hiding in caves and makeshift shelters.

Enter Gideon. Not exactly brimming with self-confidence, he responded to the angel's call with a fair amount of skepticism. "How can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family!" (Judges 6:15). Not exactly the resume of a superhero. Yet, God had a different plan for Gideon, a plan to turn this seemingly insignificant man into a national leader.

## **A Divine Recruitment Strategy**

Gideon wasn't quite ready to accept this grand destiny. Before he took a single step, he asked for a sign. Actually, several signs. You see, Gideon was the cautious type—perhaps a bit like that friend of yours who needs confirmation from three different sources before deciding what to order at a restaurant. He first asked God to make dew appear only on a fleece while keeping the ground dry. Then, just to be sure, he asked God to reverse the process. God, in His patient way, complied both times, giving Gideon the assurance he needed to get moving.

## **Downsizing for Victory**

Now confident that God was indeed with him, Gideon rallied an army of 32,000 men to face the massive Midianite forces. But in one of the most memorable—and counterintuitive—military strategies in history, God told Gideon that the army was too big. Too big! God whittled the army down, first to 10,000, and then to a mere 300 men, sending the rest home.

The reason? God wanted to make it clear that the victory would not be by human strength or numbers, but by His power alone. With just 300 men armed with trumpets, torches, and jars (no swords required), Gideon led a surprise nighttime attack. The Midianite army was thrown into confusion, turning on each other, and Israel won an overwhelming victory without even breaking a sweat. The moral of the story? When God is on your side, it doesn't matter how small or inadequate you feel—His power is more than enough.

## **A Judge and a Leader**

After the miraculous victory over the Midianites, Gideon became a judge over Israel. He didn't rule as a king, despite being asked to do so by the people. His reply? "The Lord will rule over you" (Judges 8:23). Gideon understood that his success wasn't about him—it was about God's plan for Israel.

However, his story has a twist. Later in life, Gideon made an ephod (a type of priestly garment) out of gold from the Midianite plunder. Unfortunately, this ephod became an object of worship, and Israel fell into idolatry again. It's a sobering reminder that even heroes of the faith can falter.

## **Legacy of Gideon**

Gideon's life is a testament to the fact that God uses unlikely people to accomplish His purposes. From a man hiding in fear, God crafted a leader who defeated an overwhelming enemy with an underwhelming army. Gideon's story is a reminder that when we feel unqualified or overwhelmed, God sees potential in us that we may never recognize. God doesn't need the strongest or the bravest—He just needs someone willing to trust Him. There are many practical leadership lessons we can learn from Gideon here are a few.

# Leadership Lesson 1

## *Your Mission (call/purpose) Doesn't Change*

It doesn't matter how many times you have failed or messed up; it doesn't make any difference what your background, education, or finances are; regardless of how difficult or impossible things may look - God does not change His mind. God has **called you to greatness** and He wants to use you. You are a mighty man or woman of God called to be a leader. ***"The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.*** (unchanging/constant)". (Romans 11:29

If things haven't worked out so far or no one else sees you as leader of valor don't give up. When God shows you how to be a leader for Him don't doubt or question. Answer the call and move forward in fulfilling your mission (call/purpose). Your purpose is still valid. ***"I am the LORD, and I do not change."*** (Malachi 3:6) Trust Him. Be great for God!

When God took away Gideon's soldiers, the goal was never to not *have* a battle, and it was never to not *win* the battle. The mission didn't change, only the method. Don't allow the call and purpose for your life to be deterred or deferred because of others' opinions, circumstance, or even your own weaknesses. There's an urgency to your call as a leader. There are people waiting for you.

**Don't give up – be of good courage.**

**This is my command—be strong and courageous!**

**Do not be afraid or discouraged.**

**For the LORD your God is with you  
wherever you go."**

## **Leadership Lesson 2**

### ***God Makes the Impossible - Possible***

The Bible is filled with stories of God making the impossible possible.

- God saved mankind from elimination by having a 500-year-old man build a boat in the desert.
- He saved baby Moses by having his mother float him down the river in a basket, and then had the daughter of the very king who decreed that all Israelite babies be killed, adopt him, and raise him in the palace.
- God waited until Abram was 100 years old before he gave the promised son. He used a shepherd boy with a rock to kill a famous military champion (who also happened to be a giant).
- He had Elijah pour water over the altar, enough to fill a trench around it, before burning up the offering with fire from heaven to humiliate the prophets of Baal.
- Jesus told the wedding caterers to fill the jugs with water.
- He told Peter to get a coin from the mouth of a fish.
- He healed a blind man with spit-mud.
- He defeated death by dying. When He left the tomb, He folded the cloth.

The task set before Gideon looked impossible. He was facing a trained army well equipped and ready for battle. But with God the impossible becomes possible.

Don't waste time worrying about what you don't have or how hard or strange the way God is asking you to lead. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus – the provider of all that you need. Don't cry over soldiers and swords. Look for torches and trumpets. Watch for the Lord to do something only He can do, so the glory can only be given to Him. ***“What is impossible with man is possible with God.”*** (Luke 18:27)

## QUESTIONS AND NOTES

Do you see yourself as a leader? Why? Why not?

Discuss how God saw Gideon compared to how Gideon saw himself. Do you have some of the same concerns Gideon had?

Discuss how God works in our life and on our behalf to help us be overcomers and face difficult challenges.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Leadership Lesson 3

### *The Battle is Not Yours*

As we read the story of Gideon in Judges 6–7, it's interesting to notice how many times it mentions God's actions in helping Gideon fulfill his divine purpose.

- God approached Gideon to lead the charge (6:12),
- God sent Gideon (6:14),
- God promised to be with Gideon (6:16),
- God gave signs of assurance to Gideon (6:36–40),
- God filtered out the fearful soldiers (7:3),
- God tested the troops at the river for Gideon (7:4),
- God promised to deliver Israel with 300 men (7:7),
- God told Gideon when to attack (7:9),
- God assured Gideon again (7:10),
- God handed the Midianites over (7:15), and
- God caused the Midianite army to turn on each other (7:22).

Do you see it? While Gideon is the one mobilizing the men and implementing the plan it wasn't his battle. **It was God's.** It was always God's battle. So is your mission and purpose.

Stop trying to carry the burden of your plan and don't become stressed about how God's plan is going to work and come to pass. of an untested Plan B. Your church is His. Your people are His. Your purpose is His. It's not about you. It's all about Him! The battle belongs to the Lord.

**While the battle belongs to the Lord – You still have to do your part in the battle.**



## **Leadership Lesson 4**

### **God WILL Accomplish HIS Plan.**

God is obligated to carry out His plan (His Word) Jeremiah 1:12 says, “***He is watching over His word to perform it.***” (Jeremiah 1:12) In Isaiah 55:11 God reminds us that His word “will not return void, but it shall accomplish that which He purpose and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” History is His story. He is the author and finisher. He raises up kings and tears them down again. He is our strong tower. He is an ever-present help. He is Lord of all and overall. When God says something will be done, you can know it will absolutely, positively, 100% be done.

On the other hand, God is not obligated to carry out OUR plans. Often, we spend time praying asking God to bless our plan. What we need to do is pray to know God’s plan. His plans are already blessed.

God tells Gideon,

- “I WILL be with you.”
- “You WILL strike Midian down as if it were one man.”
- “I WILL stay until you return.” And,
- “Don’t be afraid, for you WILL NOT die.”
- “I WILL deliver you with the three hundred men.”

God has a purpose and a plan, and He will be faithful to complete His plan. Ephesians 2:10 reminds us God created us for good works, “which God *prepared ahead of time* for us to do,” (emphasis mine) and Jeremiah 29:11 reminds us God knows the plans He has for us. When we understand God will work out His plan, it changes how we pray. Instead of asking God to be with us in our plans, let’s instead ask that He allow us to be with Him in His plans.

## **Leadership Lesson 5**

### ***Leaders of Valor Set the Example***

You are a Leader of Valor! What do we mean by – “Leader of Valor”? This is the confession God spoke over Gideon. “***The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!***” (***Judges 6:12***) ***Valor*** means to be strong, courageous, bold, and fearless. At this point in Gideon's life he was anything but courageous or fearless. In fact, he is literally afraid, hiding from the Midianites.

God saw the potential in Gideon not where he was or the way he was. God created Gideon for greatness. God created you for greatness. The question is, do you see it? You are a mighty man or woman of God.

Once you see it and know it you need to model it. When the time came for the battle to occur, Gideon gave each of his 300 men their torches and their trumpets, and their clay pots, and he gave them this instruction in Judges 7:17: “Watch me,” he said to them, “and do what I do.” In this moment, Gideon gave us a beautiful picture of biblical leadership. It's not a “do as I say” strategy, but one built on leadership by example.

Our actions need to model our words. It's not enough to say it; we must display it. It's not enough to talk it; we must walk it. It's not enough to know it; we must show it.

Paul encouraged the church at Corinth to follow him as he followed Christ. We need to model trust in God through difficult circumstances. We need to model determination to reach others and disciple them. Leaders are disciples who make disciples.

1 Timothy 4:12 “***Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.***”

## **What does this have to do with you?**

First like Gideon we often don't see ourselves the way God does. You may think you are insignificant or maybe you feel like you have failed God or see yourself as a loser. But God... sees us differently. He sees us as winners, overcomers, champions, leaders of valor.

Second, we may have tried to do something for God or at least something good but it doesn't work. We don't succeed. Which can cause us to feel discouraged and distracted and defeated.

We have been trying to do it our way, in our own strength. We question if God is even real or cares. Some of us are doubting whether God has chosen the right person for the job. If this is how you feel, take heed to these five lessons on leadership from Gideon's life and begin to apply them to your situation.

## **Closing**

As leaders, we need to get our hearts and our heads right, and then invite people to watch us and do what we do, reminding ourselves and others -

1. Our mission (purpose) doesn't change.
2. God makes the impossible possible.
3. The battle belongs to God.
4. God will accomplish His plans.
5. As we set the example.

**You are a mighty leader of valor for God!**

## QUESTIONS AND NOTES

### What does it mean the “Battle belongs to the Lord”?

Are you setting a good example as leader? Why? Why not?

What can you learn from Gideon to help you be a better leader?

[illegible]

# TEST

## TRUE OR FALSE

1. As leaders we need to follow Jesus' example and be moved with compassion as we lead.
  - a. True
  - b. False
2. Leading with love and compassion is really all about what is motivating us.
  - a. True
  - b. False
3. If you have failed or if you don't come from the right kind of background you are disqualified to be a leader for Jesus.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. It is important to always remember when faced with challenges or trouble the battle belongs to you.
  - a. True
  - b. False
5. God called Gideon because he was being a great and courageous leader.
  - a. True
  - b. False

6. As leaders for Christ we have a responsibility to set the example.
- a. True
  - b. False
7. Since the battle belongs to the Lord - we don't need to do anything, God does it all.
- a. True
  - b. False
8. God is obligated to carry out OUR plans.
- a. True
  - b. False
9. God saw the potential in Gideon not where he came from or the way he was, and he sees us same way.
- a. True
  - b. False
10. We may think we are failures or insignificant, but God sees us as might men and women of God.
- a. True
  - b. False

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM DAVID

# **Introduction**

## **The Life of David**

David's life is one of the most incredible journeys in the Bible—a story filled with dramatic highs and devastating lows, marked by courage, faith, failure, and redemption. His rise from shepherd boy to warrior, king, and ancestor of Jesus is nothing short of legendary. Let's dive into David's remarkable story, a tale that weaves together humble beginnings, impossible victories, royal intrigue, personal struggles, and a lasting legacy.

The story and life of David are found in 1 Samuel 16 through 1 Kings 2 as well as in 1 Chronicles 10 through chapter 29. He is one of the best-known and most important people in the Bible. David was a man of war, bloodshed, murder, and adultery, yet he was called a man after God's own heart. (Acts 13:22) He became the most celebrated king the nation ever had, and the nation thrived under him. Jesus would come through the lineage of David. Jesus the Messiah comes into the world through David. We read in 2 Samuel 7 how the Word of the Lord came through the prophet Nathan unveiling this unconditional covenant with David through which God promises David and Israel that the Messiah (Jesus Christ) would come from the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah and would establish a kingdom that would endure forever. David is a key part of the prophetic future of the Kingdom of God. Let's look at some of the key elements of David's life.

### **The Shepherd Boy: Humble Beginnings**

David's story begins in Bethlehem, where he was born the youngest of eight sons to Jesse. Now, in most families, being the youngest means you're often overlooked, and that's exactly what happened to David. While his older brothers were off fighting battles or managing important matters, David was given the task of tending sheep—hardly a glamorous job.



But here's where things get interesting. David wasn't just a shepherd; he was a shepherd with a lion's heart. On more than one occasion, David faced wild animals like lions and bears to protect his flock. This young boy, alone in the fields, learned something essential: faith in God's protection and strength. David wasn't just taking care of sheep; he was building the character that would one day allow him to stand before giants.

### **The Giant Slayer: David vs. Goliath**

Fast forward to a day that would change David's life forever—the day he faced Goliath. The Philistines were at war with Israel, and their champion, Goliath, a giant of a man standing over nine feet tall, was terrorizing the Israelite army. Day after day, he would challenge the Israelites to send someone to fight him, but no one dared—until David showed up.

At the time, David wasn't even a soldier. He was simply running an errand, delivering food to his older brothers who were in the army. But when he heard Goliath's taunts and saw the fear gripping the Israelite camp, something stirred in him. How could this pagan giant defy the armies of the living God? David's faith was on full display as he boldly volunteered to fight Goliath.

Armed with only a sling and five smooth stones, David approached the giant. Goliath mocked him, but David responded with a declaration of faith that has echoed through history: "You come against me with sword and spear, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty." And with one precise shot, David hurled a stone that struck Goliath in the forehead, bringing the giant crashing down. David's victory wasn't just a personal triumph; it was a statement of God's power and favor.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **The Anointing: Chosen by God to Replace Saul**

Now, even before David's dramatic encounter with Goliath, he had already been chosen by God for a higher purpose. King Saul, the first king of Israel, had disobeyed God, and as a result, God decided to remove him from the throne. God sent the prophet Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint a new king from the house of Jesse.

When Samuel arrived, Jesse paraded his seven older sons before the prophet. Each one seemed impressive—strong, tall, and kingly. But God wasn't interested in outward appearances. One by one, God rejected them. Finally, Samuel asked if there were any more sons. Jesse, almost as an afterthought, mentioned David, the youngest, who was out tending to the sheep. When David was brought in, God spoke to Samuel, saying, "This is the one." Samuel anointed David, and though he didn't immediately take the throne, David was now God's chosen future king.

### **Years of Struggle: David on the Run**

David's journey to the throne was anything but smooth. After his victory over Goliath, David became a national hero. He was invited into Saul's court, where he played the harp to soothe the king's troubled mind. But as David's popularity grew, so did Saul's jealousy. Saul saw David as a threat to his throne and became consumed with paranoia. On multiple occasions, Saul tried to kill David, forcing him to flee and live as a fugitive.

For years, David lived in the wilderness, hiding in caves and moving from place to place to escape Saul's wrath. Despite these challenges, David never lost faith in God's plan for him. He had opportunities to kill Saul and claim the throne by force, but he refused, saying, "I will not raise my hand against the Lord's anointed." David knew that God's timing was perfect, and he trusted that the throne would come to him in due time.

## **King of Israel: The Reign of David**

Eventually, Saul was killed in battle, and David was made king over Judah, the southern portion of Israel. Seven years later, he became king over all of Israel, uniting the kingdom under his leadership. David's reign was marked by military victories, including the capture of Jerusalem, which he made the political and spiritual capital of Israel. It became known as the City of David, and it would remain the center of Jewish life for generations.

As king, David's leadership was a mix of greatness and imperfection. On one hand, he expanded Israel's borders, brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, and established a strong and prosperous kingdom. On the other hand, his reign was marred by personal failings, most notably his affair with Bathsheba. This moral lapse led to a series of tragic events in his family and kingdom, including the death of his infant son and the rebellion of his son Absalom.

Despite these challenges, David remained a man after God's own heart. He was quick to repent when confronted with his sins, as we see in his heartfelt psalms of confession. David's life is a reminder that even great leaders have flaws, but God's grace is always available for those who turn back to Him.

## **David's Legacy: The Lineage of Jesus**

David's story doesn't end with his death; his legacy lives on in the most significant way possible. God made a covenant with David, promising that his descendants would sit on the throne of Israel forever. This promise was ultimately fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, who was born in Bethlehem, the City of David. Jesus, often called the Son of David, is the eternal King who reigns forever, fulfilling God's promise to David.

David's lineage is central to the story of redemption. His life, with all its ups and downs, points to a greater King, one who would conquer sin and death. In this way, David's story is woven into the

fabric of God's plan for humanity, making him not just a king of Israel, but a key figure in the salvation history of the world.

### **Conclusion: A Man After God's Own Heart**

David's life is one of the most complex and inspiring in the Bible. From his humble beginnings as a shepherd to his rise as a giant-slayer and king, his journey was marked by faith, courage, and a deep relationship with God. Though he faced incredible challenges—both external and internal—David always turned back to God. His life shows us that even the greatest heroes are human, but with God's grace, they can leave a legacy that lasts for generations.

David's story is a testament to the power of faith, the importance of repentance, and the reality that God can use imperfect people to accomplish His perfect plan. He was a warrior, a worshiper, a king, and, ultimately, the ancestor of the Savior of the world. What a life!

### **Lessons of life we can learn from David.**

The life of King David provides us with several valuable life lessons that transcend time and continue to inspire and guide us today. Lessons like -

- With disobedience comes consequences.
- Be quick to repent.
- Cultivate a Heart of Worship
- Embrace Forgiveness and Humility:
- Seek God's Guidance and Trust in His Plan
- Prioritize Integrity and Righteousness

While we are inspired by David to confront and slay the giants of life with the power of God in our lives and to serve the Lord with reverence, we are also warned of the consequences of trying to cover up our sin. By incorporating these lessons into our own lives, we can grow spiritually, navigate challenges with resilience, and live a life that brings honor to God and blessings to others.

While the life of David provides us with lessons for life it also provides us with great lessons on leadership. Few figures stand as vividly or as timelessly in the realm of leadership as King David. His courage, humility, and resilience, among other qualities, set a high standard for exceptional leadership.

David’s place of leadership offers invaluable lessons in navigating challenges with grace, leading with a deep sense of purpose, and the transformative power of authenticity. Let’s explore 7 leadership lessons from King David that we can incorporate into our places of leadership today.

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Leadership Lesson 1

## *God uses young leaders.*

In today's society, we often believe that our age defines what we can and cannot do. We put limitations on ourselves based on how old we are. But age is not a limiting factor when it comes to our relationship with God and His ability to use us for His purposes. Just look at David.

David was a teenager when he was anointed by Samuel to be the next king of Israel (1 Samuel 16:13). Think about it, a teenager was chosen by God and given the responsibility of leading a nation. We would probably say that he was too young, and inexperienced, to handle such a task. But God saw something in David that we didn't. God looks at the heart. *"For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."* (1Sam. 16:7)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Leadership Lesson 2

### *God uses leaders who are ordinary people.*

It came as a surprise when God chose David, a shepherd boy, to become the next king of Israel. David was the most unlikely giant slayer. God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

The same thing happened when John and Peter healed the lame man at the gate beautiful. (Acts 4) The leaders and others couldn't figure it out. Acts 4:13 says, "*When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.*"

The Bible is filled with stories like that of David, an obscure shepherd boy who was taken out of the fields and raised up to be the greatest king in the history of Israel.

Would you like God to use you to touch the lives of others? Would you like God to lead you and speak through you? Would you like to be used by God to do extraordinary things for the Kingdom of God? He will if you let Him. God goes out of His way to use ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Leadership Lesson 3

*God uses leaders who are worshipers.*

David had a heart for worshiping and glorifying God. Even though he was constantly on the run from Saul, he still made time to worship God. In Psalm 63:1-8, we see David crying out to God in worship, even in the midst of hardship. And in Psalm 139:1-24, we see him praising God for His omniscience and omnipresence.

David worshiped God in song, with instruments, with the dance. He was a focused and passionate worshipper of God. *“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.”* (Psalm 150:6) Let all the great leaders be worshipers.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Leadership Lesson 4

### *God uses leaders with a heart for God*

The life of David is an amazing example of what it looks like to walk with God. From his humble beginnings as a shepherd boy to becoming one of the most influential kings in history. From his failures of adultery and murder to repentance and forgiveness. From setbacks and defeats to restoration and victory.

David's life is a testimony to what God can and will do when we keep our heart right. When we face giants, we can trust in God's power to give us victory. When obedience is hard, we can remember that it is always worth it because God always keeps His promises. And when we sin, we can know that there is forgiveness and restoration available to us through Jesus Christ.

The Bible says, *"The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him"* (2 Chronicles 16:9 NLT). To be a true leader even as young people we need to have an intimate relationship with God always keeping our heart right with God.

*"And when He had removed him (King Saul), He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'"* (Acts 13:22)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Leadership Lesson 5

*God uses leaders who have FAITH.*

Throughout all to the trials and obstacles, David showed that he had faith in God. He believed that God was in control. God had promised that David would be king, and since he wasn't king yet, that meant Saul *couldn't* kill him. Same with Goliath. When others brought up doubts, David pointed to evidence of how God had taken care of him in the past (1 Samuel 17:33-37). He trusted that God would continue to keep His promises.

*"But I trust in you, Lord; I say, "You are my God." My times are in your hands; deliver me from the hands of my enemies, from those who pursue me." - David (Psalm 31:14-15)*

"Have mercy upon me, O God,  
According to Your lovingkindness;  
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,  
Blot out my transgressions.  
<sup>2</sup>Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
And cleanse me from my sin. Hide Your face from my sins,  
And blot out all my iniquities....  
<sup>10</sup>Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
<sup>11</sup>Do not cast me away from Your presence,  
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me."

Psalm 51:1,2,10,11

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Leadership Lesson 6**

### *God uses leaders who operate in GRACE.*

Perhaps the most surprising thing about David being “a man after (God’s) own heart” is that he’s just as well-known for his mistakes as his successes. This is someone who slept with the wife of one of his friends, tried to cover up the resulting pregnancy, and had the husband killed when that cover-up didn’t work. He abused his power at times, wasn’t known as a great father or husband, and would sometimes lie when it suit his purposes.

Why would God have anything to do with a lying, adulterous murderer? Really, it says more about God’s character than David’s. The one thing David did was recognize when he was wrong and repent. He cried out for God’s mercy and tapped into the grace of God for his life.

Being a good leader doesn’t mean making the fewest mistakes; it means being open about them and being quick to ask forgiveness (receive God’s mercy) and get back on the right path in the power of God’s grace.

Grace is God’s favor and ability working in you and through you. It is tapping into the anoint of God and His power to live and serve Him. Leaders operate in GRACE.

*I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, Lord, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing. - David (2 Samuel 24:10)*

## Leadership Lesson 7

### *God uses leaders who are led by the Spirit.*

Spirit-Led leaders always seeks God's guidance. David show this throughout his life. He "inquired" of God many times in many different situations.

- 1) **1 Samuel 23:1-3** "Therefore David inquired of the LORD, saying, 'Shall I go and attack these Philistines?'"
- 2) **1 Samuel 23:4-5** "Then David inquired of the LORD once again."
- 3) **1 Samuel 23:10-11**  
"Then David said, 'O LORD God of Israel, Your servant has certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah to destroy the city for my sake. Will the men of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as Your servant has heard? O LORD God of Israel, I pray, tell Your servant.' And the LORD said, 'He will come down.'"
- 4) **1 Samuel 23:12-14**  
"Then David said, 'Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?'"
- 5) **1 Samuel 30:8-9**  
"So David inquired of the LORD, saying, 'Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?' And He answered him, 'Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all.'"
- 6) **2 Samuel 2:1-2**  
"It happened after this that David inquired of the LORD, saying, 'Shall I go up to any of the cities of Judah?' And the LORD said to him, 'Go up.' David said, 'Where shall I go up?' And He said, 'To Hebron'"
- 7) **2 Samuel 5:17-21**  
"So David inquired of the LORD, saying, 'Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand?' And the LORD said to David, 'Go up, for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into your hand.'"
- 8) **2 Samuel 5:22-25**  
"Then the Philistines went up once again and deployed themselves in the Valley of Rephaim. Therefore David inquired of the LORD, and He said, 'You shall not go up: circle around behind them and come upon them in front of the mulberry trees. And it shall be, when you hear the sound of the mulberry trees, then you shall

advance quickly. For then the LORD will go out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines.”

**9) 2 Samuel 21:1**

“Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years ... and David inquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, ‘It is because of Saul and his blood- thirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites’”

David’s multiple inquiries of the Lord reveal that he was a man of prayer, who was always intent to know His will. This was the main reason why he was called a man after God’s own heart.

I challenge you to learn from David’s example and begin to cultivate the habit of always inquiring of the Lord and waiting for His answer. Ask the Lord for direction even in the smallest of details. The more you seek direction from God in prayer and the more you desire to know His will, the more you will hear His voice. God is ready and willing to engage with you as you seek Him for direction as you lead. Proverbs 3:6 tells us, *“In all our ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”*

*“With upright heart he shepherded them and guided them with his skillful hand.”* *Psalm 78:72*

**NOTES:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# TEST

## TRUE OR FALSE

1. Jesus is a poor example of leading with mercy.
  - A. TRUE
  - B. FALSE
2. Great leaders lead with mercy.
  - A. TRUE
  - B. FALSE
3. As a leader, when we extend mercy to those we lead, we show them how valuable they are.
  - A. TRUE
  - B. FALSE
4. Mercy triumphs over judgement.
  - A. TRUE
  - B. FALSE
5. As believers we should be merciful, but mercy as a leader has no place because it makes us appear soft and weak.
  - A. TRUE
  - B. FALSE

6. David is a good example for us to learn from because he was perfect.
- A. TRUE
  - B. FALSE
7. David was a man after God's own heart because even though he made mistakes he kept his heart right through repentance and his committed to following the Lord.
- A. TRUE
  - B. FALSE
8. We learn from the life of David that God uses leaders who are young.
- A. TRUE
  - B. FALSE
9. One of the life lessons we learn from David is as long as you repent there are no consequences for our sin.
- A. TRUE
  - B. FALSE
10. One of the important lessons of leadership we learn from David is the importance of inquiring of the Lord – to be led by the Spirit.
- A. TRUE
  - B. FALSE

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM NEHEMIAH



# Introduction

## The Life of Nehemiah

Nehemiah was a cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of Persia, a position of trust and influence. Though he lived in exile, his heart remained deeply connected to his homeland, Jerusalem. When he learned of the city's ruined walls, Nehemiah was moved to action. With the king's blessing, he returned to Jerusalem and spearheaded the rebuilding of the city's defenses, overcoming opposition and challenges with strong leadership, determination, and faith.

He provides modern day leaders with a wonderful model of leadership. Nehemiah lived during a time when the Jewish people had returned to Jerusalem after years of exile in Babylon. The city was in ruins, and its walls lay broken, making it vulnerable to attacks.

The story of Nehemiah is found in the book of the Bible titled after his name (it is found between the books of Ezra & Esther) He wasn't a prophet, priest, or king. He was a Jewish exile working for a foreign government. He did his "secular" job so well that he rose to a prominent position in the court of the Persian Emperor Artaxerxes I as cupbearer.

We will learn how this unique position gave him the opportunity to engage with King Artaxerxes and to seek permission from the king to go to Jerusalem and help restore it.

One of the key verses that sets the stage of our study of Nehemiah is Nehemiah 2:17-18

*Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach." <sup>18</sup> And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me. So they said,*

***“Let us rise up and build.”** Then they set their hands to this good work.*

Nehemiah was known as the “Rebuilder of Walls”. His leadership and commitment to God provides us a powerful and inspiring story of Spirit led leadership. Let’s begin our lesson by taking a quick historical look at the life and ministry of Nehemiah.

### **Historical Background**

The story of Nehemiah takes place about 160 years after the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon (ca. 587 B.C) and 445 years before Christ.

Because of the Israelites idolatry and rebellion God’s people suffered the judgment of God, first the North, Israel in ca. 720 B.C. by the Assyrians and then finally the South, Judah was attacked by the Babylonians in 589 BC. After the Babylonians destroyed the city of Jerusalem, they took the Jews captive and held them for 70 years in Babylon.

However, God had promised that His people would be restored to their homeland. So, we have the rise of the Persian Empire, and they would defeat Babylon in 539 B.C. By the providential leading of God Emperor Cyrus the Great of Persia made a decree that the Jews be allowed to return to Jerusalem.

Many Israelites returned immediately, but many stayed behind because they had been assimilated into the Babylonian and Persian societies. Cyrus also returned the articles Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had stolen from the temple, and he also decreed that the Israelites be given generous gifts from their Persian houses (Ezra 1:4–11). The first group of Jews led by Zerubbabel to return numbered about 50,000, 80 years later a second group led by Ezra returned to Jerusalem, and then 14 years later the third group led by Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem.

## **Zerubbabel**

Zerubbabel was selected to lead the first group of returnees in 536 B.C. (Ezra 2:2; Neh. 7:7; 12:1). Under his leadership, nearly 50,000 people took advantage of Cyrus's offer and returned to Jerusalem (Ezra 2:64–65). When they arrive, they find the city is still in ruin. Immediately began to rebuild the temple and surrounding city.

Zerubbabel was appointed governor and given oversight of the Temple construction (Hag. 1:1). First, with the help of the priests, he restored the altar of burnt offering and in the second month of the second year started to lay the Temple's foundation (Ezra 3:2).

Soon after work began opposition arose from surrounding adversaries, and, eventually, the work was brought to a standstill by order of King Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:1–24). Only the foundation of the temple had been completed.

Through Zechariah, the angel told Zerubbabel the Temple would not be completed through the strength, wisdom, wealth, or military power of Judah, but exclusively through the power of God's Spirit. This message, along with others from Haggai and Zechariah, inspired Israel to resume construction.

Finally, after a seventeen-year delay, under the next king of Persia, Darius, the Jews were granted permission to continue rebuilding. Within three and a half years after the second effort began, the temple was completed in 516 BC.

### **Notes**

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Ezra

Ezra was the second of the three key leaders who led the remnant of Jewish exiles back to Jerusalem as prophesied by the prophet Jeremiah.

With support from the Persian king Cyrus, and under royal edict, Zerubbabel led the first return to Jerusalem in 536 B.C. and was instrumental in helping rebuild the temple in Jerusalem as we just discussed.

Sixty years after the temple was completed, Ezra was commissioned by Cyrus's successor, Artaxerxes, to lead the second Jewish return to Jerusalem in 457 B.C., focusing his efforts on the spiritual rebuilding the community and restoring the hearts of the people back to the Word of God.

And of course Nehemiah, a cupbearer and trusted advisor to Artaxerxes I, led the third return in 444 B.C. and was responsible for rebuilding Jerusalem's walls and outer defenses which we will cover in a moment.

To put things in context, the events of Esther, Queen of Persia (483 – 473 B.C.), occur between the first return (under Zerubbabel in 536 B.C.) and second return (under Ezra in 457 B.C.).

Ezra was born in Babylon and by profession was a scribe. He was also a priest, a member of the priestly family of Aaron. He was a well-known scholar and teacher, and because of all his qualities combined it made him an outstanding figure among the people and leaders in Babylon.

A great and secure future lay ahead of him in his land of exile, but Ezra's heart was with his brethren in Jerusalem. In fact, he answers the call to teach Israel the ways of God again (Ezra 7:10). So, Ezra left Babylon and headed to Jerusalem with great excitement and expectancy.

As a leader, Ezra was passionate, purposeful, and direct. He confronted problems in the community with boldness, listened to the wisdom and encouragement of contemporary prophets, and always looked to the Word of God for guidance, encouraging the people to focus their attention on God's plan, God's Word, and God's authority, never his leadership. So, Zerubbabel focused on building the temple and Ezra focused on building the spiritual foundations of the people. This all leads to Nehemiah and his call to rebuild the walls.

## **Nehemiah**

When Nehemiah heard that the walls of Jerusalem were still broken down more than a half-century after the completion of the rebuilding of the temple, he didn't just complain about it. He "sat down and wept," fasting and praying before God (Neh. 1:4).

He didn't just pray, he took action. He saw a problem and swiftly began carrying out a plan to fix it. He went to the king and asked for permission to not only take an extended vacation from his job in the King's court, but also asked for help rebuilding the walls. Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem in 445 B.C.

Immediately Nehemiah met with opposition, both from within and without. Despite opposition from enemies like Sanballat and Tobiah, Nehemiah's unwavering faith and strategic leadership guided the people through challenges. With relentless perseverance and prayer, the walls were completed in a remarkable 52 days, a testament to Nehemiah's obedience to God's call, his leadership, and the power of united purpose under divine guidance.

Nehemiah was a great leader. His faithfulness to God and leadership abilities enabled him to accomplish a task that many tried to stop, and some believed would be impossible. He united the people and restored the walls of Jerusalem. He brought glory to God and set an incredible example for us today by leading a construction crew. We can learn a lot about leadership from the life of Nehemiah. Here are 5 Leadership lessons from Nehemiah.

## **Leadership Lesson 1**

### ***Be Spirit Led***

Every believer should and can be “led by the Spirit” (Romans 8:14). Leaders need to know the voice of Jesus and then be willing to obey that voice. It is a must for effective leadership. God gives us our part to do and then He does His part. But we can never work alone or trust in our own power or abilities. Too often we lead through only our senses (what we see, feel, etc.) or only what we can figure out in our own mind. Being led by the Spirit moves into a supernatural realm.

An effective leader knows that they must seek God first in all they do, to inquire of the Lord, to get orders from headquarters and then make sure they are in the center of His will and purpose for their purpose (assignment/vision). (**John 15:5**) Nehemiah demonstrates this throughout his life. We see him praying asking for God’s help and direction from the start and then through all the challenges, processes, and then the ultimate completion of the walls

## **Leadership Lesson 2**

### ***Be Passionate***

Great leaders are passionate about the vision and call God has given them. Passion includes vision, enthusiasm, drive, determination, and creativity. Nehemiah could hardly sleep as he imagined himself accomplishing God’s objective. His passion was off the chart. As a leader be passionate about the vision God has given you. Being positive and excited about what you are doing is contagious. As a leader, be passionate.

## **Leadership Lesson 3**

### ***Be a Mobilizer – Motivator***

Leadership is influence. Getting along well with others is a crucial part of leadership. This would include such skills as verbalizing ideas, dreams, and concerns; articulating goals concisely and simply; and demonstrating grace with a heavy dose of enthusiasm and encouragement. Leaders who motivate always inspire others to do their best. Great leaders are able to mobilize people and get them moving together toward the vision. They quickly affirm and remember to give credit where credit is due.

Nehemiah was strong in all those qualities. He recruited, inspired, and mobilized a multitude of people to carry out the mission of rebuilding the walls, and in just fifty-two days, the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt. He effectively leveraged his authority and influence to gain the resources and support needed for the project. He knew how to use his position to rally people behind his vision and mobilize them toward a common goal.. Leaders are great communicators who are able to mobilize and motivate people towards a common goal.

Notes

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Leadership Lesson 4

### *Be an Overcomer*

Leadership can be challenging. Part of that difficulty will come from naysayers. People who sow seeds of doubt and have all kinds of reasons you can't do what God has called you to do. Opposition may come from those on your team or from outsiders. Sometimes it even comes from the people you are trying to serve or help. From people who look nothing like you, or from people who look just like you. From folks who benefit from the disfunction and despair of the people, or from folks you think would be with you. When opposition comes, leaders need to have a resolve to stand strong and trust God to help overcome whatever the enemy does to try and stop you. Never give up or quit.

Nehemiah faced all kinds of opposition as they rebuilt the wall. They were ridiculed and mocked. Their enemies did everything possible to discourage them. They threatened to tell untrue stories about Nehemiah. Nehemiah listened but persisted. Nehemiah knew he was “doing a great work” (6:3) and could not come down from the wall to debate with the enemies. Nehemiah persisted even when adversity came. Leaders know how to stand and overcome. They are never deterred or discouraged by adversity. They finish what they start.

Notes

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## Leadership Lesson 6

### *Be and Stay Focused*

Great leaders stay focused on the mission and vision. They are visionary and missional. They are not easily distracted or diverted away from the mission.

In today's fast-paced world it is easy to get distracted by the cares of the world and just the everyday demands of life. As leaders it is important to always keep your eye on the vision. I am telling my team all the time, "The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing."

Nehemiah kept the people focused on the work even when faced with all kinds of diversions and distraction. Even when they were making preparations to face the opposition. He didn't let the work go undone as he countered the threat.

Being focused on the mission is a powerful principle of leadership that helps foster passion, purpose, and positive outcomes in the areas/places we lead. Great leaders stay focused on the mission and vision.

Notes

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **Closing**

Nehemiah was a visionary, missional, and strategic leader. His mission was to rebuild Jerusalem's walls which were in ruins. A vision without strategic thinking will not go very far, and a strategy without strategic planning will also falter. Casting and sustaining a vision require missional awareness and strategic leadership. There is a lot we can learn from Nehemiah as a leader.

He was an ordinary person in a secular position yet became a transformational leader that impacted the lives of thousands of people and the kingdom of God for all of eternity.

You can do the same. The leadership lessons of Nehemiah can help all of us become better leaders. Study the 5 principles of leadership we shared in this lesson and as you start to implement them in your life and place of leadership you will begin see God do incredible things in you and through just like Nehemiah.

## **Notes**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Test

1. Nehemiah was an ordinary man who had a secular job as cupbearer for the King.  
A. True      B. False
2. Nehemiah was known as the “Rebuilder of Walls”.  
A. True      B. False
3. Nehemiah is a poor example of Godly leadership.  
A. True      B. False
4. Nehemiah led the first group of Jews back to Jerusalem.  
A. True      B. False
5. Zerubbabel led the people back to Jerusalem and focused on rebuilding the temple.  
A. True      B. False
6. Ezra returned to Jerusalem and was focused on rebuilding the spiritual foundations of the Jewish people  
A. True      B. False
7. The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt immediately after the temple was completed.  
A. True      B. False
8. Great leaders need to be “passionate” about the vision and call God has given them.  
A. True      B. False
9. Leaders never face major problems or opposition so they don’t need to be “overcomers”.  
A. True      B. False
10. Nehemiah was a visionary, missional, and strategic leader.  
A. True      B. False

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM ESTHER

# **Introduction**

## **The Life of Esther**

Esther was a Jewish orphan who rose to become the Queen of Persia. Her beauty and grace captured the heart of King Xerxes (Ahasuerus), but her true legacy lies in her courage and faith. When a plot to annihilate the Jewish people was revealed, Esther risked her life to intervene. Encouraged by her cousin Mordecai, she approached the king and revealed her Jewish identity, exposing the scheme and saving her people. Esther's story, told in the Book of Esther, highlights bravery, selflessness, and divine providence in times of peril. Before we take a look at the lessons on leadership, we can learn from this from a teen age girl let's take a brief look at the life of Esther.

She was an orphan, and she came from a despised ethnic minority, yet she became one of the most influential leaders in ancient Iran. This female leader lived in a very male-dominated society. The deck was stacked against her. But that didn't stop God from changing a nation through **Esther**.

### **Background**

The story of Esther is found in the Bible in the book named after her. It takes place in Persia (present day Iran) the most powerful empire of that day around 478 BC. The people of Israel at this time have been in exile for over 100 years and most are living in cities controlled by the Persian Empire.

Esther is one of the Jews in exile living in Persia. She is a young beautiful teenage girl (about 15). She is an orphan being raised by her much older cousin Mordecai. She is taken captive by the King of Persia along with several other pretty young women. All these young women were to candidates to become the next queen of Persia – the wife of the King. The deck was stacked against Esther, but that didn't stop God from changing a nation through This young female leader lived in a very male-dominated society.

## The Story

Here's the story. Evil King Xerxes (more like a dirty old man than Prince Charming) throws a party to show off his trophy wife, Vashti – the Queen. But Queen Vashti refuses to cooperate with the King, so King Xerxes removes her as queen and sets up the first-ever “Miss Persia Beauty contest” to find a replacement queen. Esther, a beautiful young Jewish orphan, being raised by her much older cousin Mordecai, wins the crown and becomes the new Queen.

The King has a key assistant named Haman. The King promotes him to a high and noble position in which all the other noblemen of the kingdom bow to him. He is a crude, arrogant, and evil man. He becomes very angry with Mordecai a Jew because he refuses to bow before him. So, Haman tricks the king into signing a law making it legal to kill and rob Jews for one day and plots to have Mordecai executed by hanging.

So, Mordecai to counter the evil plans of Haman convinces the new Queen Esther to ask the king to spare the Jews. Esther refuses to do it because if anyone enters the king's presence without an invitation they are usually killed, and Esther had not been summoned by the king in a month.

Mordecai's response to Esther is the key verse of the whole book:

***“If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”***

**Esther 4:14**

Esther overcomes her fears, finds favor with the King and convinces him to help the Jews. In fact, the King not only revokes the decree against the Jews but allows Esther and Mordecai to write a new law signed by the King in favor of all the Jews.

Instead of Mordecai being killed the King has Haman hung on the very gallows Haman had built for Mordecai. In the end the Jews are saved, Esther becomes a hero, and the king promotes Mordecai.

**Notes:**\_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **Leadership Lesson 1**

### ***God has a plan for your life.***

Mordecai got it when he said, “*For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to the royal palace for such a time as this*” God loved the Jewish people and he didn’t create Esther’s beauty and finesse for her and her alone. Esther was placed in a royal position to assist in the delivery of God’s divine plan. You are in the place you are in because God wants to use you.

## **Leadership Lesson 2**

### ***God gives you divine moments and divine partners.***

As believers, there are no such things as accidents or coincidences. God’s timing is providential. God doesn’t want you to go it alone. He will assign divine partners – team members who will come along side to help you.

Esther’s divine moment of providence came by accepting her responsibility to go to the king. Mordecai one of Esther’s divine partners made it clear if she didn’t obey God would find someone else. God will use you only if you’re ready—or he will find someone else. Don’t miss your divine moments and divine partner. Be alert. Expect God to open doors and bring people into your life. He will put you in places to make a difference. You have divine moments assigned to your life for God to use you to alter/change the circumstances - (for your life, for the lives of others, for families, communities, cities, nations)

Notes

---

---

---



## Leadership Lesson 3

### *You need to count the cost.*

Esther realized that coming before the king without being summoned might result in her execution unless the king granted her permission to come forward. *“I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish”* (Esther 4:16).

Most of the leadership situations you and I face are not life and death, but often they require courage, determination, and endurance. **Jesus warns us in Luke 14:28**, *“But don’t begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?”* Regardless, a wise man or woman counts the cost before proceeding.

## Leadership Lesson 4

### *You need God’s wisdom. (Esther 4:15-17)*

Once Esther knew what she needed to do she sent word to Mordecai have him ask all the Jews to pray and fast for three days to seek God’s wisdom. (Esther 4:15-17) Esther didn’t just pray for wisdom herself. She engaged her staff and all the Jews throughout the land to pray and fast with her. This is an oft-neglected step in the leadership action plan. Ask God – get wisdom from Him! We tend to run ahead of God, working on our own power. Let’s remember to stop and seek God’s will.

Notes

---

---

---

---

---

## **Leadership Lesson 5**

***You need a plan and then you need to take action.***

When Esther finished fasting, she didn't wait for any spectacular spiritual or supernatural event to take place. She made plans concerning the bouquet and stepped in front of the King. She carefully planned out her approach to the king and how she would request the king to save her people and then took action.

There is a time for prayer and a time for action. Once the time for prayer was completed, Esther took action the very next day. We need to be just as decisive and courageous, knowing that God is with us whatever happens. . Never act against a significant initiative without a well-developed plan!

## **Leadership Lesson 6**

***You don't need a Godly political leader in office.***

The Jews were saved not because the King in power was righteous or Godly, but because of a young orphan's boldness, an old man's wisdom, and a lot of prayer. Generations earlier, God blessed Egypt because of a slave named Joseph, and God blessed Babylon because of an exile named Daniel. Neither Egypt nor Babylon had righteous leaders, but that didn't hinder God from blessing and protecting his people.

We are to pray for Godly and righteous leaders because when they are in power it makes our work for the Kingdom easier, but throughout history some of the greatest moves of God happen when the ungodly are in power. Don't use the political situation be an excuse to delay or stop you from doing what God is calling you to do.

## Leadership Lesson 7

### *The time to follow God's plan is NOW.*

There will be times in your life when you've gathered all the information you can, you've prayed as well as you know how, you've sought Godly counsel; you have a plan, but then there is something inside of you that's still not sure. So, you wait, procrastinate, look for confirmation or some sign from heaven, whatever... but at some point, you just have to muster the courage to move forward. Faith is now! (Heb. 11:1) Without all the answers, are you ready to step out and walk by faith? Don't be afraid to allow God to determine the outcome, obey God, trust God and step out in faith. The time for God's plan is now. *"Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."* (2Cor, 6:2)

Esther had prayed, she had a plan, but did she know for sure it would work? Apparently not. The end of verse 14 in chapter four says, "Yet who knows..." Regardless Esther went any way, without being 100% certain. ***Who knows?*** *God's plan is now.*

What is God asking you to do where you are now? If you can't or won't do something for God NOW, more than likely you won't do anything when you get to wherever you think you should be or want to be.

Notes

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## CLOSING – “FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS”

**Who knows if God has not put you (*point to yourself*) in the place that you are – “for such a time as this?”**

Every one of you are leader called by God. You have a purpose and a mission. If you don't answer the call God will raise someone else up, but I believe you are here (*at this leadership camp*) because you want to be prepared to be the very best leader for God that you can be.

The story of Esther is a powerful example of courage, faith, and resilience in the face of adversity. Through her experiences, we can learn valuable lessons that are just as relevant today as they were thousands of years ago.

From standing up for what is right to trusting in God's plan, to taking bold action even when it is scary, Esther's story challenges us to live our lives with **purpose and conviction**.

As you reflect on these 7 biblical lessons on leadership from the book of Esther, you too can make a difference in your world, no matter how small or insignificant you may feel.

The place of leadership often places us in tenuous situations where we must stand courageously like Esther. Esther saved a nation. Her obedience saved God's people from destruction! The reward for obedience was even better than expected. So, it is with you.

**God has a special plan for your life. He has put you in a unique place just like He put** Esther in a royal position, not by chance, but for a purpose. God didn't make a mistake where He has put you at this time.

Often, we spend too much time trying to figure out where God wants us to be or wishing we were somewhere else, instead of just allowing God to do something with our life where we are now, while waiting for more to come.

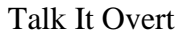
So, use your current position now to be a positive influence. Use your voice to be an advocate for others in need. Esther teaches us that leadership is not just about personal gain or prestige but about using our influence to make a difference in the world.

By following Esther's example and relying on God's guidance and strength, you can overcome the challenges that come your way and leave a lasting impact on those around you.

Get ready God wants to use you. Let's the story of Esther and see inspire and help you to become better leaders as we serve the Lord. God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things. He uses young men and women just like you. God uses people from every ethnic background and every social economic background.

**Who knows if God has not put you in the place  
that you are for such a time as this?**

The challenge of leadership is to be strong,  
but not rude; be kind, but not weak;  
be bold, but not a bully;  
be thoughtful, but not lazy;  
be humble, but not timid;  
To do what is right, not what is easy.



## Talk It Overt

- [illegible]

# TEST

## TRUE OF FALSE

Circle “T” True – “F” if False

- T – F 1. Great Godly leaders realize that they can do nothing by themselves.
- T – F 2. As a leader, developing a team is NOT that important.
- T – F 3. As a leader, the 3 steps to choosing the right team members are; 1) pray 2) appoint 3) be selective.
- T – F 4. Getting the right people on your team is extremely important, but just as important is developing your team..
- T – F 5. To be a leader for God your age is important, so is having the right, and a good family background.
- T – F 6. God chose Esther because she was an older lady, who came from a rich and well-known family.
- T – F 7. One of the things we learn from Esther is the need to be courageous and decisive as a leader – to make a plan and then take action.
- T – F 8. The time for God’s plan is as some future time when you have everything figured out.
- T – F 9. If you don’t answer the call God has for you, He may raise someone else up to do what you are supposed to do.
- T – F 10. The story of Esther explains how Esther overcomes her fears, finds favor with the King and convinces him to help the Jews.

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM DANIEL



# **Introduction**

## **The Life of Daniel**

Daniel was a young Jewish noble taken captive during the Babylonian exile. Known for his unwavering faith and wisdom, Daniel rose to positions of influence under several kings, including Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius. Despite being in a foreign land, he remained loyal to God, even when facing dangerous situations like the lion's den. Daniel's life is marked by prophetic visions, interpreting dreams, and his steadfastness in prayer, making him a symbol of integrity, courage, and God's faithfulness. His story is recorded in the Book of Daniel.

The life of Daniel is one of the most captivating accounts in the Bible. It's a tale of a young man, snatched from his homeland, who not only survives exile but thrives in one of the most powerful empires of his time. Daniel's journey is filled with twists, courage, divine interventions, and a rise to influence that is nothing short of extraordinary. Let's step into the world of Daniel—a world where lions' dens, fiery furnaces, and the corridors of political power intersect.

### **Early Years in Exile: A Kid in a Foreign Kingdom**

Imagine being a teenager, living your life, when suddenly everything you know is ripped away. That was Daniel's reality. Around 605 BC, Babylon, under King Nebuchadnezzar, invaded Jerusalem. Daniel, along with other promising young men from noble or royal families, was taken captive. They were brought to Babylon, a foreign land with a completely different culture, language, and set of beliefs. This was not a study-abroad trip; this was forced assimilation.

The Babylonians had a cunning plan: they wanted to train these Jewish boys to serve in the king's court. But this wasn't just any training. Daniel and his friends were taught the ways of the

Babylonians, including their literature, language, and customs. They were even given Babylonian names—Daniel became “Belteshazzar,” and his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were renamed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

This was a test of identity. Everything in Babylon was designed to make Daniel forget who he was, where he came from, and what he believed. But Daniel wasn’t easily swayed. Early on, he made a crucial decision—he resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine. Instead, he requested vegetables and water. This was more than a dietary choice; it was a stand for his faith. And guess what? Daniel and his friends thrived. They became healthier and wiser than all the other trainees. From day one, Daniel was proving that faithfulness to God could outshine any empire’s best efforts.

### **The Fiery Furnace: Standing Tall in the Heat**

One of the most famous stories from Daniel’s early years involves his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and a fiery furnace. Nebuchadnezzar, in all his glory, built a massive golden statue and decreed that everyone must bow down and worship it. Daniel’s friends, however, refused. Their faith wasn’t just private; it was public, and they wouldn’t bow to any false gods—even under threat of death.

Nebuchadnezzar, infuriated, ordered them to be thrown into a blazing furnace. This wasn’t just any furnace; it was heated seven times hotter than usual. The soldiers who threw them in were killed by the heat. But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? They were seen walking around in the flames, completely unharmed. And there wasn’t just three of them—there was a fourth figure, described as “like a son of the gods.”

The three friends emerged from the furnace without even a hint of smoke on their clothes. Nebuchadnezzar was so awestruck by this miracle that he promoted them and declared that no one could speak

against their God. This moment set the stage for Daniel's later encounters with the divine and demonstrated that their faith was more powerful than any earthly king.

### **The Lions' Den: Faith Tested in a Den of Beasts**

Fast forward a few years, and Daniel is now an older man, still living in Babylon but under new leadership. The Persian Empire had taken over, and King Darius ruled. By this time, Daniel had become so trusted and respected that he was promoted to one of the highest positions in the empire. In fact, Darius was considering putting Daniel in charge of the entire kingdom. But, as is often the case when someone rises to the top, jealousy follows.

A group of jealous officials concocted a devious plan. They knew that Daniel's faithfulness to God was unshakable, so they convinced King Darius to issue a decree that for 30 days, no one could pray to any god or man except the king. If someone disobeyed, they'd be thrown into a den of lions. Daniel, of course, continued praying to God three times a day, just as he always had. He wasn't about to compromise his faith.

Caught in the act, Daniel was thrown into the lions' den. It was a gruesome fate—those lions were kept hungry for just such an occasion. But, once again, divine intervention showed up. God sent an angel to shut the mouths of the lions, and Daniel spent the night untouched. The next morning, when King Darius rushed to the den, hoping that Daniel's God had saved him, he found Daniel alive and well. The jealous officials? Well, they didn't fare as well when they were thrown into the lions' den later.

Darius, moved by the miracle, decreed that everyone in his kingdom should revere Daniel's God, "for He is the living God, enduring forever."

## **Rising to the Top: Advisor to World Leaders**

Throughout Daniel's life, one thing was clear—he wasn't just a man of faith, he was a man of influence. He served under multiple kings, including Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus. Each of these rulers relied on Daniel's wisdom, integrity, and insight. He interpreted dreams, offered sound counsel, and helped shape the course of history.

One of his most notable moments of influence came with King Nebuchadnezzar, who had a troubling dream that none of his advisors could interpret. Daniel, trusting God, not only revealed the dream but also explained its meaning—a prophecy about the rise and fall of kingdoms. This act earned Daniel great favor, and he was promoted to a high position in Babylon.

But Daniel wasn't just an advisor to kings—he was also a prophet. God revealed to him visions of the future, some of which are still being studied today for their significance in world history and eschatology (the study of the end times).

### **A Legacy of Faith, Leadership, and Integrity**

The life of Daniel is a testament to what it means to live faithfully in a foreign land, surrounded by pressures to conform. From his early years in exile to his rise as an advisor to world leaders, Daniel consistently displayed courage, wisdom, and unwavering faith. He faced lions, fiery furnaces, and the political scheming of jealous men, yet he never wavered in his trust in God. He was a leader of extraordinary character and resilience.

Daniel's story is a reminder that no matter how challenging the circumstances, faithfulness to God can carry you through. We can learn so much about leadership from Daniel. Let's take a look at five very powerful lessons about leadership that we can glean from Daniel.

# **Leadership Lesson 1**

## ***Leaders have an “excellent spirit”***

First, Daniel was a person of great character. The Bible says, "*He had an excellent Spirit.*" (Daniel 5:12) This is key to Daniel's leadership, and it is key to our leadership. We need leaders with great character, leaders with an excellent spirit.

Having a "different spirit" like Daniel's means living a life that is distinctly aligned with God's will, standing out from the world through faith, integrity, and godly character. This type of spirit reflects an unwavering commitment to God, even in the face of cultural pressures, adversity, or personal sacrifice.

God is calling us to be leaders with a different spirit than that of the world. He lives on the inside of you which means you can live and live with a spirit of excellence. When we lead with a spirit of excellence, we will like Daniel demonstrate -

- 1. Faithfulness to God:**
- 2. Integrity in all circumstances:**
- 3. Reliance on God's wisdom:**
- 4. Courage and Boldness:**
- 5. Trust in God's**

In essence, to have a "different spirit" like Daniel means living with faith, integrity, and courage in a way that sets you apart for God's purposes. It's about being so deeply rooted in your relationship with God that your life reflects His light in every situation, just as Daniel's did.

## Leadership Lesson 2

### *Leaders Prepare*

*“Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the royal family and nobility, young men without blemish, good looking and skilled in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding, erudition and competence to be in the king's palace, and teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.”*  
Daniel 1:3-4

God's favor is attracted by a spirit of preparation. Daniel prepared himself by equipping himself with knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. He was one of the best, so the “boss” chose him. Daniel was prepared to make the most of his situation. As mentioned above, Daniel was known to have "an excellent spirit." (Daniel 5:12, 6:3) He leveraged his abilities and his unfortunate position of exile for the glory of God.

**"Success happens when opportunity meets preparation."**

Great and Godly leaders will always prepare. Knowing how to be a good leader starts with preparing today. If you commit to doing what you can to prepare, God will be there to help you and give you the understanding and wisdom you need.

**"By not preparing, you are setting yourself up to fail."**

## QUESTIONS and NOTES

- What small steps can you take today to pursue excellence?
- How can you manage your current season well (and prepare for the next opportunity and season in your life?)

[illegible]

## Leadership Lesson 3

### *Leaders are “set aside”*

***"But Daniel resolved that he would not be contaminated with the king's food, or with the wine he drank." Daniel 1:8***

The Babylonians tried to assimilate the Israelites into their culture. That is why they chose the best young men of Israel, then immersed them in a Babylonian environment and trained them for service in the king's court.

Daniel didn't have much control or voice in the situation. However, he did what he could to remain faithful to his God and his people. Then, Daniel and his friends Ananias, Mishael, and Azariah (Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego) refused to eat food that was contrary to Jewish dietary laws. They controlled what they could control. They are distinguished.

To be set apart means:

God chose us specifically for His Glory. The church has been set apart to be holy as God is holy and to tell the world that God, through Jesus Christ, called them out of darkness into His wonderful light. As a Christian, I am set apart to show the great and wonderful love God has for us and to live a holy life before God. This means living a life that does not conform to the ways of this world.

*To be **set apart means** = to select something or someone for a specific purpose; by Websters-Dictionary*



Scripture says that the eunuch who was in charge of Daniel and his 3 friends was afraid of getting into trouble if he let Daniel and his friends abstain from the king's food. Daniel asked the eunuch if they could do a test for 10 days; If they seemed weak, they would stop their fast. Here's what happened to Daniel and his 3 friends after those 10 days:

*"It was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the king's food" "As for these four young men, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king asked them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters who were in the kingdom."*

**Daniel 1:15, 17, 20.**

There was no reason why Daniel and his friends would have been fatter after eating vegetables for ten days. Here's the lesson: **become holy and God will do the supernatural in your life.** We create space and God fills it. In other words, when we commit to God's will, He makes sure we have everything we need to succeed. Where God leads, He provides.

**Great leader who have an excellent spirit will set themselves apart for the Lord's work.**

## QUESTIONS and NOTES

- How are you set apart for God's purposes?
- Are you living in a way that is bringing glory to God and separating you from the rest of the world?
- How?

[illegible]

## Leadership Lesson 4

*Leaders Serve (when a door opens, walk through it)*

The book of Daniel relates how the king of Babylon at the time, Nebuchadnezzar, was having bad dreams that no one could interpret. In fact, they were so bad that he was going to kill all the wise men of Babylon, including Daniel, Ananias, Mishael, and Azariah.

But Daniel, having confidence in God and in His gift of interpretation, courageously offered to help the King. He succeeded!

Here's what will boldly seize a God-given opportunity:

***"Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and paid homage to Daniel and ordered that an offering and incense be offered to him. The king answered and said to Daniel, 'Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery.' Then the king gave Daniel high honors and many great gifts and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon." (Daniel 2:46-48)***

The king gave God glory, blessed Daniel, brought him gifts, and granted him influence. Notice that Daniel gained influence through service. He served the king, and he served hundreds of others preserving their lives. This was not a simple service: he risked his life.

Divine influence will **not** spread into the world through invasion. It will come via invitation. Godly leaders do not try to control a people. Like Daniel, our leadership goals should be to grow in excellence, serve others, and put God above all else.

## QUESTIONS and NOTES

- How are you serving the Lord?
- Where and how are you serving?
- To be greater in the Kingdom of God is what?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## **Leadership Lesson 5**

### ***Leaders will Change the culture***

Through Daniel's faithfulness and obedience, kings professed God's goodness. King Nebuchadnezzar, who built idols of gold for himself and cast people into fiery furnaces, praised God, saying, ***"I thought it right to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me. How great are its signs, how powerful are its wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom, and His dominion endures from generation to generation."*** (Daniel 4:2-3)

Then, after Daniel escaped from the lions' den, King Darius wrote to various nations: ***"I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion, the people must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, who endures forever; His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his dominion will be to the end."*** (Daniel 4:26)

In other words, Daniel's leadership caused a change within the culture. Ultimately, as Christians, our leadership must impact the world we live in. We are called to be "salt and light" in our world (culture) (Matthew 5:13-16)

I believe we (you) can make a difference IF we apply these leadership lessons from Daniel in our lives. Think about it... What if you were committed to excellence and service in the areas where God has gifted you? For Daniel, it was literature and understanding of visions and dreams, but for you, it could be your school, home, as a teacher, leader of the small group, or as an entrepreneur, mechanic, plumber, coach, or whatever, you name it!

Have confidence in God. Prepare and pursue excellence. Be secluded and brave. Serve. Then, look at how God uses your life to influence culture for His glory. In due course, an influencer will invite you to sit at the table. Your knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and relationship with God will create ripples that will become waves. People near and far will be able to taste and see God's goodness through *you*.

## QUESTIONS and NOTES

- Do you think you can make a difference in your world (culture)? How?
- How and what do you need to do to be a leader with an "Excellent Spirit"?

[illegible]

# TEST

- T – F 1.** Daniel and his friends willingly traveled to Babylon as part of a cultural exchange program.
- T – F 2.** King Darius was forced to throw Daniel into the lions' den because of a decree that the jealous officials had tricked him into signing.
- T – F 3.** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were unharmed in the fiery furnace, and a fourth figure appeared with them in the flames.
- T – F 4.** Daniel's ability to interpret dreams and his wisdom earned him a position of influence under multiple kings.
- T – F 5.** Daniel's leadership was characterized by an excellent spirit, which set him apart and aligned him with God's will.
- T – F 6.** Having a "different spirit" like Daniel's means conforming to the world's standards rather than standing out through faith and integrity.
- T – F 7.** Daniel attracted God's favor because he prepared himself with knowledge, understanding, and wisdom.
- T – F 8.** Daniel and his friends refused the king's food because they wanted to show rebellion against Babylonian rule.
- T – F 9.** Daniel gained influence in Babylon by serving others, including risking his life to interpret the king's dream.
- T – F 10.** Daniel's leadership had no impact on the culture around him.

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM PAUL



## Who Was Paul

The Apostle Paul, originally named Saul, was a pivotal figure in early Christianity. Born in Tarsus, a city in modern-day Turkey, he was a devout Pharisee and a persecutor of Christians until his dramatic conversion on the road to Damascus. Following this encounter with Jesus Christ, Paul became one of the most influential missionaries and theologians of the early church.

Known for his zealous preaching and extensive travels throughout the Roman Empire, Paul authored several letters (epistles) that form a significant portion of the New Testament. His writings, characterized by deep theological insights and practical guidance for Christian communities, continue to impact profoundly Christian doctrine and practice to this day.

Paul's life exemplifies radical transformation through faith in Christ, from persecutor to passionate advocate for the gospel. His missionary journeys established numerous churches, and his teachings on grace, faith, and the unity of believers remain foundational in Christian theology. Paul ultimately suffered martyrdom, leaving behind a legacy of faith, resilience, and unwavering commitment to spreading the message of Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul offers timeless leadership lessons that every serious leader should study through his letters. After his life-changing encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, he became a key leader of the early church, a passionate defender and encourager of new believers during the early Church era. Here are 5 lessons of leadership that today's leaders can learn from Paul.

## **1. Leaders Identify with Others**

Paul addressed early Christians as "brothers" even when admonishing them—a practice reflecting his commitment to explaining God's enduring love and Christ's saving sacrifice. Paul saw his role in growing the Church and spreading Jesus' message as vital, and he led with both seriousness and compassion.

By using terms like "brother" and "sister," Paul demonstrated solidarity with those he led, fostering a supportive environment without elevating himself above others. This approach remains relevant today: effective leaders inspire and support their teams while maintaining humility and empathy. Paul's concern for his team is evident in his letters; for instance, in 2 Corinthians 2:13, he expressed worry when Titus, his co-worker, was absent in Troas.

Do you, as a leader, connect with your team on a personal level? Genuine care fosters loyalty and dedication among team members, echoing Ronald Reagan's belief that great leadership mobilizes people to achieve remarkable goals.

## **2. Leaders Are Not Afraid to Tell Hard Truths**

In addition to empathy, effective leaders must confront uncomfortable truths candidly and tactfully. Paul exemplified this when he confronted Peter in Antioch for his hypocrisy in Galatians 2:11-14. Peter had been avoiding eating with Gentiles due to pressure from Jewish Christians, contradicting the inclusive message of the Gospel.

Paul's direct approach in addressing Peter's inconsistency underscores the necessity for leaders to uphold truth and integrity, even when it involves confronting colleagues. This leadership principle, exemplified by Paul, resonates with Jack Welch's view that effective leaders make tough decisions, regardless of popularity.

### **3. Leaders Achieve Quantifiable Results**

Paul's leadership was characterized by strategic vision and tangible outcomes. He established numerous churches and mentored countless individuals, advancing the kingdom of God methodically and purposefully. His clarity of mission, guided by the Holy Spirit, enabled him to achieve significant results despite adversity.

Paul's resolve and focus are evident in Philippians 1:20-22, where he expresses readiness to endure any hardship for the sake of Christ. His disciplined approach, coupled with a deep understanding of his mission's importance, serves as a model for results-driven leadership. At the end of the day, the effectiveness of our leadership is the result.

As a leader, are you driven by clear goals and a strategic vision? Paul's example encourages leaders to pursue their objectives with unwavering determination, echoing the sentiment of Bill Parcells that results, not effort alone, define success.

Paul's legacy as an energetic, focused, and compassionate leader offers a timeless blueprint for leadership success. Leaders who emulate his courage in truth-telling, empathy in relationship-building, and clarity in goal-setting are poised to make a profound impact in their spheres of influence.

### **4. Leaders Have Boldness**

Leaders demonstrate boldness. Throughout the New Testament we see that Paul was bold in his proclamation of the Gospel. In Romans 1:16, he stated: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." As a leader, he did not worry about pleasing people or being liked. John Maxwell has written "You can never make everyone happy. And wanting to do so is a setup for

disappointment or failure.” And we should never be surprised when we face opposition. In John 15:18, Jesus told his followers “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.”

## **5. Leaders Have Influence**

John Maxwell often says that leadership is influence, nothing more and nothing less. In *Called to Lead*, John MacArthur shows how Paul’s leadership was manifest in the most unlikely of situations—in a shipwreck, where he was the lowest-ranking person onboard a ship sailing to Italy. Paul was a prisoner, and prisoners have no authority. That was Paul’s situation in Acts 27 when Paul was on a ship sailing to Rome. Yet, those on the ship listened to him. He had influence. MacArthur tells us that if you can show people you truly have their best interests at heart, they’ll follow you.

# TEST

- T – F 1.** Paul was originally named Simon before his conversion to Christianity.
- T – F 2.** Paul was born in Tarsus, a city in modern-day Turkey.
- T – F 3.** Before his conversion, Paul was a devoted follower of Jesus Christ.
- T – F 4.** Paul confronted Peter for his hypocrisy in Galatians 2:11-14.
- T – F 5.** Paul's leadership was ineffective because he lacked clear goals and vision.
- T – F 6.** Paul demonstrated boldness in his proclamation of the Gospel and was not ashamed of it.
- T – F 7.** Paul was afraid to speak the truth and avoided confronting other leaders.
- T – F 8.** Despite being a prisoner, Paul had influence and was respected by those around him.
- T – F 9.** Paul's leadership focused only on preaching and did not involve mentoring others.
- T – F 10.** Paul's legacy as a leader emphasizes courage, empathy, and goal-setting.

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM PETER

## Who Was Peter

The Apostle Peter, originally named Simon, was one of Jesus Christ's closest disciples and a foundational leader of the early church. A fisherman by trade, Peter was called by Jesus to leave his nets and become a "fisher of men" (Matthew 4:19). Bold, passionate, and sometimes impulsive, Peter played a key role among the Twelve Apostles.

Peter's faith journey was marked by both great revelations and human weakness. He was the first to confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:16), yet he also famously denied Jesus three times before His crucifixion (Luke 22:61-62). However, after Christ's resurrection, Peter was restored and commissioned by Jesus to "feed My sheep" (John 21:15-17), signifying his leadership role in shepherding the church.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter boldly preached, and 3,000 people were saved (Acts 2:41). He performed miracles, spread the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles alike, and endured persecution for the sake of Christ. His epistles, 1 and 2 Peter, provide encouragement to believers facing trials, emphasizing steadfast faith, holiness, and the hope of Christ's return.

According to church tradition, Peter was martyred in Rome, choosing to be crucified upside down, feeling unworthy to die in the same manner as his Lord. His life exemplifies transformation through Christ—once a fearful man who denied Jesus, Peter became a fearless witness, fully devoted to the Gospel, and key leader of the early church. His legacy remains a testament to God's grace, redemption, and the power of the Holy Spirit working through a surrendered life. As leaders today, we can learn valuable lessons from the leadership of Peter.

## **5 Leadership Lessons from Peter's**

Peter's life in the New Testament is a testament to leadership shaped through experience, failures, and growth. From a bold yet impulsive follower to a wise and steadfast leader. Here are five key lessons from his life that every leader can apply: humility, resilience, forgiveness, service, and unwavering faith.

### **1. Humility: Recognizing One's Limitations**

Peter was naturally bold, outspoken, and confident—qualities that can be strengths in leadership. However, unchecked confidence can lead to overestimation of one's abilities. One of the most defining moments of Peter's journey was his denial of Jesus after boldly declaring that he would never forsake Him (Matthew 26:33-35). When confronted after Jesus' arrest, Peter denied Him three times, realizing too late that his self-reliance had failed him.

This humbling experience transformed Peter. He learned that true leadership does not stem from pride but from acknowledging one's weaknesses and relying on God's strength.

**Illustration:** Imagine a young CEO who refuses to listen to his team, convinced that his decisions are always right. After a major financial setback, he realizes that true leadership requires listening, learning, and admitting mistakes. Like Peter, leaders must embrace humility to grow.

### **2. Resilience: Overcoming Setbacks and Failures**

Leadership is not about avoiding failure but about learning from it. Peter experienced many failures—sinking when walking on water (Matthew 14:29-31), misunderstanding Jesus' mission (Matthew 16:22-23), and denying Jesus. Despite these setbacks, Peter did not



allow failure to define him. Instead, he repented, learned, and emerged stronger.

After Jesus' resurrection, Peter was restored and given a renewed mission (John 21:15-17). He went on to lead the early church with boldness, preaching at Pentecost and playing a crucial role in spreading the Gospel.

**Illustration:** A basketball player who misses a crucial shot can either dwell on the failure or train harder and come back stronger. Leaders like Peter must choose resilience over regret.

### **3. Forgiveness: Extending Grace and Mercy**

Peter's denial of Jesus was a painful failure, but it was met with Christ's grace. In John 21, Jesus asks Peter three times, "Do you love me?"—mirroring Peter's three denials and restoring him to leadership. Jesus' forgiveness not only reinstated Peter but also empowered him to lead with a renewed heart.

Effective leaders extend grace to others, understanding that mistakes do not define a person's worth. Leaders who create an environment of forgiveness encourage growth, honesty, and accountability.

**Illustration:** A manager notices an employee make a costly mistake. Instead of immediate punishment, she offers mentorship and guidance, helping the employee learn and improve. Forgiveness in leadership fosters loyalty and growth.

### **4. Service: Putting Others Before Self**

One of the greatest leadership transformations in Peter's life was his shift from seeking personal prominence to selfless service. Initially, Peter sought recognition, even asking Jesus who among the disciples was the greatest (Luke 22:24-26). However, Jesus taught that true greatness comes through serving others. Peter later embodied this

lesson, dedicating his life to preaching, healing, and strengthening believers (Acts 3:6-7). Great leaders do not seek power but prioritize the well-being of those they serve.

**Illustration:** Consider a military general who eats the same meals as his soldiers, stands beside them in battle, and puts their needs first. Like Peter, true leaders serve rather than demand service.

## **5. Unwavering Faith: Trusting in God’s Plan**

Peter’s leadership was ultimately defined by his faith. Even when faced with persecution and threats, he boldly proclaimed Christ. In Acts 4:19-20, when forbidden to preach about Jesus, Peter replied, “We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.” His faith enabled him to endure hardship, imprisonment, and even martyrdom.

Leaders must hold firm to their convictions, especially in challenging times. Faith provides clarity, strength, and perseverance when obstacles arise.

**Illustration:** A business owner faces an economic downturn but remains steadfast in their mission, making ethical decisions and trusting that perseverance will lead to success. Like Peter, faith-driven leadership inspires others to stay the course.

## **Conclusion: Becoming a Peter-Like Leader**

Peter’s journey shows us that leadership is not about perfection—it is about growth. A Peter-like leader embraces humility, rises from failure, extends forgiveness, serves selflessly, and leads with unwavering faith. Whether leading a church, a business, or a family, applying these principles will create a lasting impact. Just as Peter’s transformation shaped the early church, leaders today can inspire change by walking in these timeless truths.

## TEST

- T – F 1.** Peter was originally named Simon before Jesus called him to be a disciple.
- T – F 2.** Peter was known for being timid and reluctant to take leadership among the apostles. **(False)**
- T – F 3.** Peter was the first to confess that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. **(True)**
- T – F 4.** After denying Jesus three times, Peter was never restored to leadership. **(False)**
- T – F 5.** On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached, and 3,000 people were saved. **(True)**
- T – F 6.** Peter's epistles, 1 and 2 Peter, focus on financial prosperity rather than enduring trials. **(False)**
- T – F 7.** According to tradition, Peter was crucified upside down in Rome because he felt unworthy to die like Jesus.
- T – F 8.** Peter's life teaches leadership lessons such as humility, resilience, forgiveness, service, and unwavering faith.
- T – F 9.** Peter never made any mistakes or failures as a leader.
- T – F 10.** Peter's transformation from a fearful man to a bold preacher demonstrates the power of God's grace and the Holy Spirit.

# LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM BARNABUS

## Who Was Barnabas

Most Christians are familiar with Peter and Paul and the other apostles of Jesus, but Barnabas is often overlooked – even though his influence and teachings can be just as powerful. So, who was Barnabas in the Bible? And what can we learn from him?

Barnabas' name appears 23 times in Acts and 5 times in the letters of Paul. He was a Levite from Cyprus who shared the Good News with unwavering passion and commitment. Barnabas was called by God to serve in Antioch, spreading the gospel and working to advance the faith. His ministry was marked by courage and selflessness, as he traveled throughout Judea and Asia Minor spreading the Good News to people of all backgrounds. Barnabas was successful in leading both Jews and Gentiles to the Christian faith.

Acts 11:24 paints a vivid picture of Barnabas, a man “full of the Holy Spirit and faith” and a powerful, inspiring agent of God's work. He owned a field that he sold to give money to the apostles, symbolizing his generosity and commitment to the Lord's work. Barnabas embodied the spirit of Christian generosity by taking in Saul, soon to be known as Paul.

Barnabas was a tremendous help to Paul in many ways. He not only provided Paul with guidance, but he vouched for Paul's introduction into the Jewish Christian apostolic sphere in Jerusalem. His acceptance enabled Paul to be welcomed into the faith.

They traveled together on Paul's first missionary trip and worked in tandem to form a strong foundation for the church in Antioch, a city that became the birthplace of Christianity. It was there that the Christ-followers first earned their title of ‘Christians.’

Paul and Barnabas experienced a heated conflict when deciding whether to take John Mark with them on their missionary journey;

the Bible states they parted ways after John Mark had “deserted” them. Though Paul and Barnabas had ceased to be ministry partners, their bond of faith in Christ remained strong. As brothers in the Lord, their relationship was sustained by their shared Christian beliefs.

Barnabus is a biblical role model whose example we can still learn from today. We can find wisdom and guidance in the life and legacy of Barnabas. Here are 5 leadership lessons we can learn from Barnabus.

Barnabas was an incredible example for today’s Christian Leaders, willingly giving up everything—wealth, respect, and worldly standing—for a life devoted to Jesus. What a powerful reminder of how we should be willing to put our faith in Him and trust that He will provide for our needs. Here are **5 Leadership Lessons** we can learn from the life and ministry of Barnabus.

## **1. Leaders Walk in Love Even in Disagreements**

Paul and Barnabas’s relationship offers leaders an important lesson – that even godly, Spirit-filled leaders, surrounded by the love of the Church and experiencing success in their ministry, can disagree and still remain devoted to each other. Through their story, we discover that unity is possible even in times of disagreement.

Though disagreements can be hard, even among God ordained leaders, they don’t have to end in division and separation, but can be used to further the work of the ministry.

We see this in the story of two beloved brothers in Christ and church leaders who, after an argument, went their separate ways. Despite the disagreement, the missions of both men went on to double!

This highlights how, despite our own brokenness, our imperfections, and sins, God can use even our mistakes for His glory.

Strengthened by their common faith in God, Paul and Barnabas carried on with their mission, albeit no longer as a united pair.

While they disagreed on personal matters and practical procedures, they stayed committed to their shared purpose of spreading the gospel to the ends of the earth. Their differences were set aside for the sake of what truly matters – the power of [God's word](#).

Barnabas stands as an exemplary mentor for Christian leaders. His faith in Paul after his conversion was unmatched – when no one else trusted him, Barnabas was standing by his side.

He gave Paul the opportunity to share the gospel in Antioch, and was also Paul's travel companion on the very first missionary journey. Barnabas is a lasting figure of faith, support and guidance to believers.

## **2. Leaders Keep Sharing the Gospel as the Priority**

Barnabas, a devoted Christian leader, made a bold decision to sell his field and donate the funds to the apostles; however, his most significant contribution was his years of courageous missionary work.

Traveling at great personal risk, he brought many to Jesus. His tremendous efforts were rewarded when he witnessed the success of his protégé, the infamous Paul, as he rose to renown in the ministry.

Barnabas' unwavering commitment to God's work was remarkable, even when faced with adversity. After Paul and Barnabas had gone their separate ways amid a disagreement, Paul accused him of hypocrisy. Yet Barnabas persevered, shepherding others to faith and delivering extraordinary achievements for God's Kingdom. Barnabas: a true man of encouragement, generous with his life and resources for the sake of the church. He, alongside Paul and other Christian leaders, was instrumental in sharing the gospel, bringing many Jews and Gentiles to faith. His efforts are still celebrated today

for being a powerful force for evangelism. No matter the circumstance Barnabas keep the gospel the priority.

Through the courage of men like Barnabas, we have the incredible opportunity to know Jesus today. Let's honor his legacy by keeping the sharing of our faith with others the priority, no matter how daunting the task may seem.

By spreading God's Good News near and far, we can continue what Barnabas started and ensure that Jesus' message of love and grace will never be forgotten.

### **3. Leaders Don't Need to be Famous to be Effective**

Barnabas is not as famous as Paul or Peter, neither is he well-known like John or Timothy, but he surely played an important role in the early church.

A case in point is his effort in making the church accept Paul the convert, before Paul became the apostle we have come to admire and imitate. In Acts 9:26-28, we read how Paul, then named Saul, was granted acceptance in the church:

*"And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out."*

Barnabas was the man who bridged the gap between the church and the man who would soon go on mission trips to change the world with the Gospel.



## **4. Leaders Develop Other Leaders**

Barnabas was a model of Christ-like servanthood: willingly giving up his position to Paul in order to help support, nurture, and develop another leader, John Mark.

Barnabas effectively mentored both Paul and John Mark, prepping them for their ministries and guiding them toward fulfilling their destinies. Barnabus models the need for leaders to develop other leaders. Paul, in particular, ended up being more prominent than Barnabas and, by the close of their missionary journey, they were referred to as Paul and Barnabas – a testament to the impact of his mentoring.

## **5. Leaders are Encouragers**

Life is filled with moments of struggle, difficulty, and discouragement; however, just like Barnabas, we can be an anchor of hope and encouragement to others.

By the grace of God, we can be beacons pointing fellow Christians to Jesus and helping them grow in ministry, as others have supported our own spiritual journeys. Let's join together to be a blessing in the lives of our brothers and sisters.

Barnabas was a man devoted to encouraging and exhorting others in faith. He was an encourager of the early church, a friend to Saul, and a promoter of peace and unity.

Barnabas was an example of a disciple of faith living out the Great Commission and following the teachings of Jesus. His life was a testament to the power of faith and the strength of purpose. He taught us the importance of understanding, patience, and self-sacrifice.

As we think on the legacy of Barnabas, may we strive as leaders to follow his example in our leadership to be a blessing to all those around us.

# TEST

- T – F 1.** Barnabas was one of the original twelve apostles of Jesus.
- T – F 2.** Barnabas was a Levite from Cyprus who played a crucial role in spreading the Gospel.
- T – F 3.** Barnabas and Paul were ministry partners who traveled together on Paul's first missionary journey.
- T – F 4.** Barnabas refused to support Paul when he first converted to Christianity.
- T – F 5.** Barnabas was known for his generosity, selling a field to support the apostles.
- T – F 6.** The first time believers were called 'Christians' was in Jerusalem under the leadership of Barnabas.
- T – F 7.** Barnabas and Paul never had any disagreements during their ministry.
- T – F 8.** Barnabas was committed to developing other leaders, including John Mark and Paul.
- T – F 9.** Barnabas prioritized fame and recognition over the mission of spreading the Gospel.
- T – F 10.** Barnabas is remembered as an encourager who strengthened and supported fellow believers.

# WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT LEADERSHIP

## **Defining Leadership in the Bible**

We just finished covering some valuable leadership lessons from 7 Old Testament men of faith, but the Bible has a lot more to say about leadership. It provides many more examples, parables, and teachings that shed light on the concept of leadership. In this chapter we expand our understanding of leadership to the overall counsel and insights the Word of God gives about Godly leadership.

Biblical leadership is defined as the act of influencing and serving others in alignment with God's purposes, emphasizing humility, servanthood, and care for those being led. It contrasts with worldly leadership by prioritizing character and responsibility over authority and self-interest.

### **Servant Leadership**

There's a distinct difference between leading with self-interest and leading with a servant's heart. This difference hinges on perspective. Leading with self-interest often places personal gain or power at the forefront, clouding genuine intentions.

Leading as a servant, however, prioritizes the needs of others and fosters a culture of empathy and selflessness. The Bible offers profound insights on this servant-style leadership and I believe it's a model we should strive to follow. Let's look at some of the key aspects of Godly leadership from a purely Biblical perspective.

#### **1) Leading Like Jesus**

The Bible doesn't leave us guessing about how to lead; it provides a clear role model in Jesus Christ.

And His leadership style was radically different from the norm. It wasn't about dominance or personal gain. Instead, He led with humility and selflessness.

Remember the poignant scene at the Last Supper? Jesus took on the role of a servant, washing the feet of His disciples. This was a task usually assigned to the lowest servant in the household. Yet, here was Jesus, the Son of God, doing it.

In John 13:15, He said, “I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”

This act wasn’t just a display of humility; it was an explicit call to servant leadership.

If we want to lead biblically, we need to follow His example. We must put aside our pride and ego and serve those we lead.

And yes, it’s not easy. But when we lead like Christ, we not only influence others effectively but also honor God in our leadership.

### **3) Rooted in the Wisdom of God**

The concept of servant leadership isn’t a novel idea or some modern leadership seminar revelation. Its roots can be traced back to the oldest book in the Bible, the book of Job.

Job 29:15-16 reads, “I was eyes to the blind and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not, I searched out.”

Here, Job positions himself as a servant to those in need, providing help and seeking justice for them. This is a clear example of servant leadership — using one’s position not for personal gain but to serve others. We see the concept of servant leadership modeled and illustrated throughout the Bible with Jesus being the epitome of servant leadership.

In essence, the biblical view of leadership has always been about serving others first. It’s a timeless principle that has been guiding leaders for millennia.

#### **4) Focused on Developing Faith**

Servant leadership is the focused on helping develop the faith of those we lead. Godly leadership is about the growth and well-being of those we lead.

The Apostle Paul is an excellent example of this. Throughout his letters in the New Testament, he consistently encourages, advises, and supports the early Christian communities. He challenges them to “live by faith and not sight”. He admonished them to “fight the good fight of faith”.

In Thessalonians 5:11, he writes, “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

Paul’s leadership was NOT about maintaining status or control. He valued the growth of his followers and worked tirelessly to help them become better Christians.

As leaders, we too should strive to foster growth by helping inspire those we lead to develop their faith. It’s not about creating followers, but nurturing future leaders. This shift in focus can truly influence our teams and organizations in a positive and lasting way.

#### **5) Showing Patience and Forgiveness**

Leading with a servant’s heart also requires a great deal of patience and the ability to forgive, as modeled by Jesus Christ throughout His ministry. I was told by one of my mentors the key to success in ministry is “not to get bitter”. Leaders have many opportunities to take offense, but as leaders we need to be quick to forgive.

Look at the story of Peter, one of Christ’s closest disciples. He denied knowing Jesus three times on the night of His arrest. Yet, after His resurrection, Jesus didn’t cast Peter aside. Instead, He forgave him and reaffirmed His love for Peter.

This is a powerful lesson in leadership. In our interactions with those we lead, there will be disappointments and failures. However, like Christ, we should respond with patience and forgiveness.

These qualities not only strengthen relationships but also create a safe environment where people are not afraid to take risks or make mistakes. And that's where real growth happens.

## **6) Motivated by Love**

The most powerful resource God has given the servant leader – is love. And no one exemplified this more than Jesus.

In John 13:34, Jesus says, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”

This isn't a mere suggestion, but a command. Jesus didn't just talk about love; He lived it out through His service to others.

As leaders, we should strive to lead with love. This means genuinely caring for those we lead, empathizing with their struggles, and celebrating their successes.

Love humanizes leadership. It breaks down barriers, fosters trust, and ultimately makes us more effective leaders.

This might be a challenging concept in a world where leadership is often associated with power and control. But remember, we're called to a different standard – a biblical standard that puts love at the core of leadership.

## **7) Maintain a Spirit of Humility**

Leadership can be a tricky terrain to navigate, especially when it comes to dealing with one's ego. I've been there. I have had the opportunity to be part of some incredible victories within the church. I have witnessed miracle after miracle during the growth of our ministry.

As leaders we need to guard against taking any of the glory. Yes, we play apart and sometimes make sacrifices for the ministry, but anything good that is accomplished is because of God.

It is easy to fall into the trap of self promotion, seeking validation and approval. But as you study the Bible's teaching of leadership, we discover that an ego-driven approach is far from what God expects from us as leaders.

Philippians 2:3 says, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves."

Let this verse be a wake-up call for each of us as leaders. We must realize that leadership isn't about self-promotion or being in the limelight. It's about serving others and valuing them above ourselves.

Look what the Lord has done. The way to guard against pride is to always give the glory to God. After all He is the one who gives us the anointing, the gifts, the ability to think, talk, figure anything out, gives us the vision, the resources, etc. We are simply stewards serving the Lord and the people He has called us to. My prayer is that He find me faithful.

## **8) Get Wisdom**

In the Bible, there's a story of a young king who, when asked by God what he desired, chose wisdom above all else. This was King Solomon, and his leadership is still admired today.

As leaders, we are often faced with tough decisions and complex situations. It's in these moments that we need divine wisdom the most. The Bible says, "*Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.*" (Proverbs 4:7)

We need to "GET WISDOM". James 1:5 tells us, "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."



Praying for wisdom isn't a sign of weakness. Instead, it shows our reliance on God and our desire to lead according to His will.

So, don't shy away from asking for wisdom in your leadership journey. It's one of the most powerful tools we have at our disposal.

### **Final thoughts: Leadership as service**

The essence of biblical leadership can be distilled into one powerful concept: leadership as service. This principle, is taught throughout the Bible and is modeled by Christ. Servant Leadership is not about power or control but about putting others first. It's about washing feet, showing love, and leading with humility and grace.

It's a radical departure from some of the accepted norms of leadership we see today. But when adopted, it can transform not just the leader but also those they lead. In Matthew 20:26-28, Jesus says, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve."

As we reflect on these words, let us reevaluate our own approach to leadership. Are we leading for our benefit or for the benefit of others? Are we serving or being served? Are we following the biblical model of leadership?

In the end, it's not about titles or positions; it's about influence. And the greatest influence comes from a heart that serves others first. So, let us strive to lead by example. Let our actions mirror the teachings of Jesus. Let us serve first, love unconditionally, and lead with humility. This is the biblical view of leadership.

# THE NEED FOR BOLD GODLY LEADERS

## THE WORLD IS DEPERATE FOR BOLD GODLY LEADERS

No organization will be healthier than its leadership. That is true in business, politics, sports, and education. It is also true in churches, Christian networks, and denominations. As a pastor that is a sobering reality that constantly challenges me never to lose sight of the Apostle Paul's admonition in 1 Timothy 4:16 to keep a close watch on myself and on my doctrine. The reason that Scripture places far more emphasis on a pastor's character than his gifts or proficiencies is because what a pastor is required to be is more important than what he is called to do.

When a pastor forgets this, he can easily drift into professionalism, relying more on mental muscle-memory than the Holy Spirit to carry out his responsibilities. That quickly devolves into trusting in gifts rather than grace and can result in a pastor operating on autopilot rather than walking and leading by faith. It is spiritually deadly—both for the man and the church he serves.

Good, courageous leaders—including church leaders—serve as stack-poles for those who follow them. They will stand if they have someone to lean on. Absent such leadership, good causes will go unsupported and bad causes will go unresisted. Good people often remain timid and uncertain when their leaders remain mute in the face of such causes—both good and bad.

It is obvious we need bold, godly, and courageous leaders in our churches, but we also need them in the marketplace, government, education, the media, and in the home. We need people to rise up as Godly leaders in every area of life.

As the church was being prepared to start Jesus led group of twelve disciples. When He ascended to heaven, Peter and James appear to have become the leaders of the apostles and the church in Jerusalem. The apostles then established leadership in the local churches. When Paul wrote to Titus, he was very concerned that the right kinds of men were appointed to positions of leadership within the church ([Titus 1:5-9](#)). If an error was made in who was appointed, then the resulting damage would not be easily undone. And when he had limited time near Ephesus, it was

“the elders of the church” whom Paul summoned to Miletus in order to encourage and exhort.

Without good leadership, chaos easily follows. Many of the unsolved problems in the life of local churches can be traced back to defective leadership. Conversely, the resolution of problems almost always can be traced back to effective leadership.

If success depends upon the quality of leadership, then Christians should care deeply about leaders within their local church. Christ purchased the church with His own blood, and it is through the church that God intends to display His glory in the world and to the spiritual realms ([Ephesians 3:10](#)). Take time, then, to pray for your leaders. Consider how you can actively encourage them to faithfulness and in their labors. Be someone whom to lead is an occasion for joy and not groaning ([Hebrews 13:17](#))—for your leaders’ sake, and for yours.

Also, pray for leaders in your community, government, schools, and other areas. I believe there is power in prayer. We also need to pray for the right leaders and do all we can to help raise up Godly leaders. The world is desperate for bold and Godly leaders. Leaders with character, who are filled with the Spirit of God, and have servant's heart. Men and women who won't compromise Godly values but will stand for righteousness and holiness.

## Closing

My prayer, as we conclude our journey through *Leadership Lessons from the Bible*, is that you feel inspired and challenged to embrace the principles of leadership exemplified by Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, Nehemiah, Esther, and Daniel. Each of these remarkable figures faced unique challenges and made courageous decisions that not only shaped their own destinies but also influenced the course of history.

The lessons drawn from their lives serve as timeless guides for us today, urging us to lead with integrity, faith, and a servant's heart. Our ultimate model of leadership is Jesus Christ, who perfectly demonstrated love, humility, and purpose in His mission. By striving to lead like Him, we can cultivate a positive influence in our world and contribute to the advancement of God's Kingdom.

As you reflect on these insights, I encourage you to take bold steps toward becoming the leader you are called to be. Whether in your community, workplace, or family, may you embody the values and principles of biblical leadership, making a lasting impact for the glory of God. Together, let us rise up and lead with conviction, knowing that we have been equipped to inspire change and foster hope in a world that desperately needs it.

## About the Author

Bruce Edwards is a pastor, teacher, and author with over 40 years of leadership experience in business and ministry. He has been married to his wife, Trudy, for over 50 years. They have two children and 6 grandchildren.

He has a master's degree in Business management and a degree in pastoral ministry. He served over 28 years at Victory Christian Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma, as Senior Associate Pastor. He has written over 30 books and helps pastors grow their churches.

As a pastor, he has a passion for helping people experience the abundant life provided through Jesus and is committed to teaching and communicating the principles of God's Word with clarity, simplicity, and boldness.



**Pastor Bruce R. Edwards**



Moses

Joshua

Esther

Daniel

Nehemiah

David

Gideon

Transforming believers into Leaders

# FAITH



Bruce R. Edwards