

Chapter 6

Clues to Becoming a Leader Who Serve Leaders

*“Do you see any truly competent workers?
They will serve kings rather than working for ordinary people.”
(Proverbs 22:29 NLT)*

When God needs to do something enormous, He selects unique people to meet the need. He typically chooses people who have already demonstrated many essential godly attributes, particularly *righteousness, faith, and a willingness to embrace the challenge.*

He wants people who will actually accomplish His directions!

Noah built an ark, Joseph saved the world from starvation, Moses led the Hebrews out of slavery, Joshua conquered Canaan, Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, Daniel served four kings, the Apostles spread the Good News as far as they could, and numerous others.

Those Who Don't Give Up!

*“So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing **if we don't give up**” (Gal. 6:9).*

God is looking for people who **consistently make progress** towards perfection and their assignment no matter how many obstacles they face along the way. They view obstacles as mountains to go over, go through, or go around. An apostolic mission requires people with distinctive traits whom God can depend upon to accomplish the mission and not give up. Accomplishing God's will is more important than personal comfort and worldly desires. **These kinds of people are made for such a time as this.**

Ambassadors of God and Apostolic Leaders

*“We are Christ's ambassadors;
God is making his appeal through us”
(2 Co 5:20 NLT).*

Most nations appoint an ambassador as an official representative from their government to another country. Ambassadors always prepare before going to their assigned nation. They need to know everything about the nation they represent and what their government wants them to do or say as their envoy - they need to know their 'commander's intent.' Of course, they must also

know and understand everything about the country they will serve in including the history, culture, current issues, etc.

Ambassadors must be educated, demonstrate a high level of maturity, be flexible, and be able to think on their feet, especially in a time of crisis. Typically, ambassadors are appointed to the position, but some suddenly find themselves thrust into the job!

When King Nebuchadnezzar's army captured Jerusalem, he gave specific orders to Ashpenaz, the Master of the Eunuchs, to select certain kinds of young men to serve in the palace. They needed to be: strong, healthy, good-looking, teachable, skillful in wisdom, etc. In other words, find the best people available because –

Why waste time on people who don't even meet the basic criteria?

Daniel, and his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, along with other young men from Judah's royal and noble families, were among those who fit the description, *at least at first glance*. They were captured and brought to Babylon and immersed for three years with the Babylonian culture.

Don't Miss God's Calling!

First impressions count.

I think we have all probably judged someone at first sight by their appearance or attitudes; I know I have. It's difficult to ignore a person's initial presentation. Studies show that about 55% of our first impressions about people are NON-verbal; they say a lot about a person's attitudes, feelings about themselves, and training.

There is something called the **7/11 Rule**; within the first 7 seconds of a meeting, people can make 11 impressions about someone, such as if they are: attractive, well-groomed, have good posture, courteous, confident, etc. **I think many people stand in God's way** of blessing them when they don't try to do the best for themselves in the first place. **People can miss their calling** simply by being lazy in their appearance and not giving up their flesh, worldly attitudes, and the pride evident to others.

Daniel & Co. (his friends) certainly made the **right first impression**. There is no indication that this band of brothers makes a fuss when inspected; when the king wants people with no blemishes, you can be sure they're inspected. They knew their position, but chose to maintain their calm, be polite, and comply.

They chose peace over panic.

Instead of a negative, fearful, and combative posture, they decided to **act more like ambassadors from the King of Kings** than self-centered crybabies. They depended on their God to help them. *Titus 2:11 says, "We should live in this evil world with self-control, right conduct, and devotion to God..."*

Of course, outward appearances such as strength, health, and good looks were **only the first steps** in selecting the right advisors for the King. These were simply **entry-level** conditions that get attention and position people for the second phase of the test. But if all the young men were the **cream of the crop**, what would make Daniel & Co. stand out from the others? What would be their **distinctive traits**, their **competitive advantages**, that would get them noticed by the King? For one thing-

Attitude Shows

It's written on a person's face and how they stand. It's one of the first things people see, and the second is what they say and how they say it.

The words that flow and the attitudes that show

– can instantly make or break a good opinion.

Have you ever been introduced to someone who doesn't stand up straight, looks bored, or doesn't look you in the eye when you're talking to them? Do they start talking about themselves and have no interest in listening to what you have to say? Are they always turning the conversation back to themselves? Do you feel like you can't get away from them fast enough!

Scripture gives us clues about attitudes, *"For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. If you **serve Christ with this attitude**, you will please God, and others will approve of you, too"* (Rom. 14:17-18 NLT).

We know Scripture says God looks at heart, but that's not easy for us to see. We first see and hear the outward vessel.

As the old saying goes, *'You don't get a second chance to make a good first impression.'*

The Compromise Test

Daniel & Co. were raised as princes in a royal Hebrew family and most likely obeyed all the Jewish laws, many of which pertain to food. During the long trip from Jerusalem to Babylon, they had a lot of time to consider what they would do in various situations, such as food choices. They also realized the advantage of being of one mind. If they stuck together in **one accord** as a band of brothers with the same mind and purpose, they would have **Team Advantage**. Their unity would be a **force multiplier** as they supported and encouraged one another emotionally and spiritually when they determined **compromise was not an option**.

A Diplomatic Solution

They knew severe consequences could come from disobedience, but how would they handle it? Well, instead of simply refusing to eat the food, which would be a huge insult and bring a lot of

trouble down on the chief eunuch, Daniel was **prepared with a wise solution** and offered a **diplomatic reply**. He suggested an alternative of water and vegetables for ten days and happily for everyone, *“At the end of the ten days, they looked healthier and better nourished than the young man who had been eating the food assigned by the king” (Daniel 1)*. They won the day, and they won the gratitude of Ashpenaz.

Diplomatic wisdom helped them face the **Compromise Test – and win!**

These young men presented themselves as **ambassadors from the King of Kings**. They didn't act or speak like one would expect of captured victims - slaves with no options. They sought God to help them to live with the highest standards of speech, attitude, and action.

Their Godly attitude and wise choices made all the difference.

It was their competitive advantage.

One of the signs of an effective ambassador is wisely using **diplomacy**, defined as the skill in handling affairs without arousing hostility. As God's ambassadors, AAs are far more respected when they use diplomacy and tact, which is a keen sense of what to do or say in order to maintain good relations with others or avoid offense (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

Why challenge a no-win situation when God's wisdom calls for diplomacy?

Daniel & Co. could have found a hundred ways to be offended, but they didn't. They always chose to behave with the highest standard of **sincerity, honesty, and wisdom**. Never duplicitous, never dishonest, never self-seeking. The effects of obedience to God's laws combined with good diplomacy and **tact** made it easier for God to give the chief official increased respect and favor to them.

On the other hand, Queen Vashti challenged King Xerxes and just about lost her head! She learned a hard lesson about having the wrong attitude when the King requested her to come to his banquet and show everyone how beautiful she was. *“But when they conveyed the king's order to Queen Vashti, **she refused to come**. This made the king furious, and he burned with anger” (Esther 1:12)*. Her attitude and disobedience **embarrassed the king** when she refused his command. Vashti was banished from the palace, which opened the door for Esther, who had the **right attitude - and changed history**.

God had plans for them and for us to be accepted - not rejected. The Apostle Paul may have...

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