

# The Facts of Leadership

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*The Facts of Leadership*

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# The Facts of Leadership Volume I

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## What is a Leader?

A leader is a person of vision who sees the direction one must go! A leader is a person of responsibility who carries the weight for the success of a mission! A leader is a person of wisdom who is able to discern what is best! A leader is a person of ability who knows what to do and how to do it! A leader is a person of character who has the inner qualities and strength to withstand scrutiny! A leader is a decision maker who makes the hard calls under pressure! A leader is a person of confidence who is comfortable standing alone when necessary! A leader is a person who can face a crisis that affects others without flinching! A leader is a person who is humble enough to recognize that his/her leadership depends on those who follow!

The list of leadership qualities could continue on and on:

1. A leader is trustworthy.
2. A leader takes the initiative.
3. A leader uses good judgment.
4. A leader speaks with authority.
5. A leader strengthens others.
6. A leader is optimistic and enthusiastic.
7. A leader never compromises the absolutes.
8. A leader focuses on objectives, not obstacles.
9. A leader empowers by example.
10. A leader cultivates loyalty.
11. A leader has empathy for others.
12. A leader keeps a clear conscience.
13. A leader is definite and decisive.
14. A leader knows when to change his mind.
15. A leader does not abuse his authority.
16. A leader does not abdicate his role in the face of opposition.
17. A leader is sure of his calling.
18. A leader knows his or her limitations.
19. A leader is resilient.
20. A leader is passionate.
21. A leader is courageous.
22. A leader is discerning.
23. A leader is disciplined.
24. A leader is energetic.
25. A leader knows how to delegate.
26. A leader is Christlike.

A leader has to be so many different things in order to be effective.

The writer Aesop tells the story of two frogs. The frogs wanted a leader. They bothered Jupiter so much with their requests that he finally tossed a log into their pond, and for a while, the frogs were happy with their new leader. Soon, however, they found out they could jump up and down on their new leader and run all over him. He offered no resistance, nor even a response. The log did not have any direction or purpose in its behavior, but just floated back and forth in the pond. This practice exasperated the frogs, who were really sincere about wanting "strong leadership."

They went back to Jupiter and complained about their log leader and appealed for much stronger administration and oversight. Because Jupiter was weary of the complaining frogs, he gave them a stork which stood tall above the members of the group and certainly had the appearance of a leader. The frogs were quite happy with their new leader. Their leader stalked around the pond making great noises and attracting great attention. However, their joy turned to sorrow and ultimately to panic, for in a very short time the stork began to eat its subordinates.

So it would seem that when it comes to leadership, a lot of people don't know what they really want. But it doesn't take them long to find out what they *do not* want! So leadership is a tough job—even for people who have a lot of leadership skills and characteristics.

King Solomon was a leader who, above everything else, asked God for a good dose of wisdom. Leaders will face obstacles and trials. People often expect leaders to do things that they are very capable of doing themselves.

There is an old legend of a benevolent king who had his men place a great heavy stone on a certain roadway over which all his subjects would have to travel. He then hid himself to see who would try to remove the stone. No one stopped to try to remove the stone, but all worked their way around it, loudly blaming the king for not keeping the roadway clear. Finally, a poor peasant farmer on his way to town with a load of vegetables which he hoped to sell in the marketplace came to the blocked roadway. He lay down his load and with considerable effort and loss of time managed to move the great stone to the side of the roadway. Then, turning to leave, he spied a purse which had been under the stone. He opened the purse and found it to be filled with pieces of gold, with a note from the king indicating that it was all to be the property of the one who would remove the stone.

A wise leader will lead in such a way that people have an opportunity to independently succeed and find their reward in doing so.

## Discussion Questions

1. How would you define a leader in your own words?
2. What do you think is the most important quality in a leader?
3. How can a leader overcome scrutiny and examination of character?
4. Of all the qualities of leadership mentioned, which one could you most readily omit? What effect would this have on a person's leadership?
5. At what point does a leader need to relinquish leadership?
6. In the story of the frogs, which leader would you rather have—the log or the stork? Explain.
7. Leaders eventually lead according to who they really are and sooner or later reveal their real selves. How was this true with the log and the stork?
8. What lesson was the king trying to teach by putting the large stone in the path? Do you agree with what he did? Why or why not?
9. How many of the leadership qualities mentioned in this chapter do you find in your life?
10. Agree/Disagree: "Everyone is a leader to some degree and in some capacity." Explain your answer.

## Choices and Decisions Leaders Face

Life is often like an impossible maze! You find yourself having to make a choice and a decision at every turn. A leader has to deal with unknowns, confusion, dead-ends, and mistakes. The Bible has a lot to say about the process of decision making and choices. It sets forth some guidelines for making decisions and choices. A wise person and a wise leader will heed what the Bible says. The following steps are set forth as a guideline to follow when faced with a difficult decision.

- First:            Make God your highest priority! (Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:2; Mark 12:30)
- Second:        Diligently follow the principles, precepts and promises of God's word (Joshua 1:9, 10; Psalm 119:105).
- Third:          Pray to God for wisdom (James 1:5).
- Fourth:        Seek godly counsel from others—but be wary of advice that comes from those who do not know all the facts and circumstances (Proverbs 15:22).
- Fifth:          Eventually do what seems best after taking into account all the factors (Romans 12:3).
- Sixth          Finally, trust God and rest in Him for the outcome. Don't fret, worry and beat yourself up with hindsight, second guessing and "I should have..." (Psalm 16:11, Philippians 4:6-11).

A leader will have to choose between doing and delegating; between self-gain or sacrifice; between conflict or comfort; between integrity or what's easy; between fear or faith; between excellence and good enough; between the extra effort or the expected; between competing or cooperating; between criticizing or complimenting; between motivating and demanding; between discipline or laziness; between balance and busyness—and the choices never end.

You cannot escape it. You must decide—often right now! You must make a choice—often on the spot! How do you prepare for such a moment? What gives leaders confidence in such a time? Here are a couple of clues.

First, many if not most decisions and choices come out of who we are as a person. This speaks to the importance of character. If a leader has built into him or herself the important qualities of character, such a reservoir of strength will rise up to assist him at any given moment! Any leader who finds him or herself lacking in this area will sooner or later find himself at a distinct disadvantage and often will be at a loss for what to do.



Second, one prepares for the moment of decision, one decision at a time. A track record of good choices and right and appropriate decisions will undergird every decision in the future.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important to have a strong and personal relationship with God in decision making?
2. What problems do you see in seeking advice from others? What advantages do you see in seeking advice from others?
3. To what kind of a person would you go for advice and counsel? Explain why.
4. How does God's Word (the Bible) aid us in our choices and decisions?
5. Why do leaders have so many decisions to make? Choose three decisions or choices leaders have to make as listed in this lesson and tell which choice you would make and why?
6. How does character influence one's choices and decisions?
7. How does character enable you when you have to make a "snap" judgment?
8. How does a track record of good choices help you in making decisions today?

9. Joshua was a great leader. One day he stood before all of Israel and said to them:

*"...put away the gods which your fathers served...And if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"* (Joshua 24:14-15).

What kind of choice and decision was Joshua making? What did it take to make such a decision? Could you have done what Joshua did? Why or why not?

10. What are some good decisions or choices you have made? What actions, character or process was behind such decisions?

What poor decisions have you made? What precipitated the poor decision or choice?

## Hazards Leaders Face

Leadership has its rewards, but it also has hazardous moments that can literally break and destroy a person. Not everyone can withstand the pressure. There are those who assume the position of leader, and it is not long before a lightning bolt of some negative nature strikes them and they never recover. Others may get struck by something similar and it may be an accumulative affect that finally renders them ineffective. The bottom-line is this: leadership can be hard, cruel, unfair, and hurtful. That leads us to the question: are you ready to lead? It is the purpose of this lesson to enable you to recognize and consider the challenging side of leadership. This is a **must** for leaders!

In the Scriptures, a leader is often referenced in terms of shepherding. A shepherd is one who leads the flock. Moses was a shepherd. David was a shepherd. They were both leaders. The leaders of the Church in New Testament language were referred to as shepherds.

Shepherds are to lead people. The following ten experiences are often everyday experiences of a shepherd. Take a good look! Give it serious thought! Can you carry this kind of weight and lead with skill and compassion, rising above the negative impact?

1. As a leader you will experience often that the people who help you the most, will also hurt you the most! They may not intend to but in reality, intentions aside, it will happen. And sometimes, they do intend to do so.
2. As a leader, you will experience that the people you lean on the most will let you down the hardest—sometimes not gently but with a thud. There will be times where you desperately need them, and they are not there for you.
3. As a leader, you will experience criticism like you've never experienced before. You will find yourself under attack by those you never would have thought would do so.
4. As a leader, you will be called upon to deal with issues you never dreamed you would have to deal with. You will find yourself in the midst of circumstances you wished you could hide from.
5. As a leader, you will learn things about others that you are not able to talk to anyone else about. And if you do, you may well find yourself eliminated from leadership.
6. As a leader, you will carry the weight and responsibility all the time, not just when things are going well, but also when things are not going well. The spotlight will be on you—but it seems to shine more brightly when things aren't going well.
7. As a leader, there will be expectations on you that you never had to carry before. There will be expectations of performance, duty, behavior, attitude, decisions, and relationships with others.

8. As a leader, you will find yourself disappointed over and over again with the behavior and attitudes of others.
9. As a leader, you will experience meanness and personal hurt that will leave deep wounds.
10. As a leader you can expect your integrity to be tested as you will be leaned on hard by well-meaning but agenda-driven people.

The list could go on. But you at least get the idea. Leadership may look glamorous and attractive on one side of the coin. Be sure to turn the coin over. The side that has been lying on the ground is dirty. The shine is obscured and in order to get to the shine, you have to deal with the dirt.

This can be hazardous. Be sure to consider this before you assume leadership.

### Discussion Questions

1. What is the main point of this lesson?
2. Why do you think a lot of leaders quit and walk away before the job is done?
3. How is a shepherd a leader? What kinds of issues does a shepherd have to deal with?
4. Agree/Disagree: There is a lot of hurt in leadership. Leaders get wounded by followers or laity. Explain.
5. Agree/Disagree: There is a lot of hurt in followers or laity who are wounded by reactive or insensitive leaders. Explain.

6. How important is it for leaders to keep confidences? Why is this difficult for many? What should a leader do if he needs to “talk it out”?
  
7. How can all of these issues and more weigh heavily upon a leader and break him or her down?
  
8. Have you ever had a “well meaning” person become an antagonist or create opposition to your leadership? How do you handle such a person?
  
9. How should one deal with the expectations of others?
  
10. Having interacted with this information, how do you feel about being in leadership? Is it something you would seek? Explain.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. For those in ministry leadership, the Scriptures make this promise in 1 Peter 5:4: “And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you [who lead] will receive the unfading crown of glory.” What does this mean and how does it make a difference?

## Obstacles Leaders Face

Along with the hazards of leadership, there are also obstacles. Obstacles stand in the way of getting the job done. Obstacles can thwart a project, slow down progress or just make it hard to move ahead.

People can be obstacles. They can stand in the way. They can present opposition.

Guidelines, qualifications, standards, policies and rules can be obstacles. How do you get around these things?

Unsuspected rulings by other agencies can be obstacles. There may seem to be no recourse.

Lack of funding may be an obstacle. Where will the money come from to proceed?

Family pressures may rise up to be an obstacle. Relationships with a spouse or the children may dictate a change of course or realigning of priorities.

Sudden illness of a key player may become an obstacle that slows or stops progress until the situation is cleared up.

There can be no end of obstacles we face. For the early Church, their expansion faced the obstacle of the authority of Rome itself. Time and again they were faced with the threat of imprisonment and death.

Consider the obstacles that the Apostle Paul faced as he endeavored to provide leadership to that early Church.

*“Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches. Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?”*

*“If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus the ethnarch under Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to seize me, and I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and so escaped his hands”*  
(2 Corinthians 11:23-33).

When you read the account of opposition in Paul's life, you come face to face with serious obstacles!

So how does a leader face obstacles? Here are some timely reminders.

First when discouragements come—remember God is the one who will accomplish the work. He delights to get it done through you, His leader. Remember, it is His work. We are His servants.

Second, when opposition and intimidations come, remember there is nothing impossible with God. There is no authority higher than His authority. God delights in doing the impossible.

Third, when temptations come, remember God has provided a way of escape. Seek God's way and God's face. You don't need to be taken out by an enemy dart!

Fourth, when spiritual battles come your way, remember to clothe yourself every day with the armor of God. Never leave your day vulnerable and unprotected (Ephesians 6:10-21).

Fifth, when trials come making your life very difficult, remember God has promised His grace to always be sufficient for your every need (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Sixth, when opportunities and challenges come to you that seem to be beyond your strength or ability, remember God has gifted and equipped you. He has graced you with ability through the power of His Holy Spirit. He will be your Helper.

Seventh, when the blessings come and the obstacles have disappeared, remember the faithfulness of God and don't forget that every blessing that comes into your life is a reminder to you of His love and care for you. Don't forget to thank Him!

Obstacles and hazards together can team up and become so powerful in your life that you say, "I can't!" But the Apostle Paul was an "I can!" kind of guy! Listen to him, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!" (Philippians 4:13).

And so can you. Why not determine right now that despite the obstacles or hazards you will be an "I can" (with God's help) kind of person.

## Discussion Questions

1. In what way can people be obstacles in your life?
2. How can governmental laws or policies or rulings be an obstacle in your life?
3. Read again the obstacles that Paul faced. Which of those have you faced? Which ones would be the worst for you to face?
4. How does remembering that we are but servants, that it is God's work, and that He accomplishes His work through us encourage you?
5. Why is God's ultimate authority, his sovereignty, a help to us in the midst of facing obstacles?
6. How did the early Church view God's authority as opposed to the local or Roman authority? How does this encourage you? Can you give an example?
7. How can obstacles in our life be spiritual battles? How do you prepare for these obstacles?
8. How important is God's grace in your life and how does this help you in the facing or dealing with obstacles?
9. How important is God's faithfulness and God's blessings in your life, and how do they help you when you face obstacles in your life?



10. What does it mean to you to be an “I can” kind of person?

11. What obstacle do you face right now and how has this lesson helped you to keep going?

## Thinking Like a Leader Thinks

This brings us face to face with one of the biggest issues of life—our thoughts! What and how we think can paralyze us or motivate us. The Scriptures say a lot about how we think.

*“As he thinks in his heart, so is he”* (Proverbs 23:7, KJV).

*“For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself”*  
(Galatians 6:3).

*“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things”* (Philippians 4:8).

In fact, our minds are so important that the Scriptures exhort us to guard or set up a garrison around our heart and our mind. We are to protect our thinking process! We are not to think the way the world naturally thinks. We have a strength in God beyond the material and beyond the limitations of this world. Therefore, thinking like a leader thinks takes on a whole new dimension for us. Here are some ideas that will help us think like a leader thinks.

First, think you can succeed and you will. Become an “I can” kind of person. Say with Paul, *“I can do all things through Him [Christ], who strengthens me”* (Philippians 4:13).

Second, think beyond the excuses. Excuses will paralyze you as a leader. Excuses lead you to the “I can’t” mantra and then you will begin to believe in your own excuses. Moses tried the “I can’t” approach with God. Without God there is much we can’t do, but with God, there isn’t anything we can’t do. Excuses will naturally come to your mind. Think beyond them. Don’t look at your own puny self. Look to the Bigness and the Greatness of God.

Third, think *faith* not *fear*! Joshua had a tendency to be fearful. He had a right to be fearful. He was taking Moses’ place as the leader of Israel. Who could fill his shoes? And so the Lord challenged Joshua with these words:

*“No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go”* (Joshua 1:5-9).

Fourth, think big not small! David was small and Goliath was big. But David was able to think big. David knew he had a big God. You may have limitations, but if your view of God is that He is big enough for everything and anything, then you are able to think beyond your limitations.

Fifth, think creatively, not routinely or traditionally. Get outside of your comfort zone or your narrow box. Think of another way to get something done. Leaders who think with creativity are always a step ahead of others.

Sixth, think positively, not negatively. Leaders are able to see the good, the positive and the up side of things. If you are controlled by negative thinking, you will not move ahead. You will wander. The ten spies who brought back a negative report to Israel prior to going into the Promised Land cost the nation forty years of going in circles. Two of the spies said, "We can do it." But their positive voice was drowned out by unbelief and negative thinking.

Seventh, think victory not defeat. Think "win" and not "lose." This is similar to thinking positively, but thinking victory and winning brings with it gladness and joy. You think of finishing ahead of others. You think with the goal of winning the prize.

Eighth, think *best*, not just *good*. There is an attitude that thinking first class is somehow arrogant, but it need not be so. Always striving for the best sets a leader a notch up, a step ahead, and provides an advantage. Do not be dominated by a "good enough" mentality.

Ninth, think action not inaction. Leaders are proactive thinkers. They think what can be done. They are thinking of how to move forward.

Tenth, think biblically not worldly. There is a great wisdom in holding a biblical perspective. A worldly way of thinking always omits God and depends solely on man. Those who have the humility to include God in their leadership will always be ahead of those who do not. Psalm 1 speaks to this way of thinking.

This is thinking like a leader thinks.

### Discussion Questions

1. What does the Bible say about a person's thoughts?
2. What does it mean to be an "I can" kind of person?

3. Moses was a leader who made excuses to God in order to escape the responsibility of leadership. Read Exodus chapters 3 and 4. What excuses did Moses give to God? How did God respond to these excuses? What does it mean to think *beyond* excuses?
  
4. How does faith dispel fear? Why is fear such a powerful and negative influence? How do you overcome fear in your own life?
  
5. What is the difference between thinking big and thinking small? Can you give an example? What does this mean for your own life?
  
6. How can you be more creative? What would this mean for you? Make a list of creative actions people of Scripture have done. How can these acts inspire and motivate you?
  
7. What is the difference between “Good” and “Best”? In what way can the good be the enemy of the best? Read Colossians 3:17. Does God call us to good or to best? Explain.
  
8. Read James 2:14-17. What is James saying about action versus inaction? Are you a leader of action? Are you a Christian of action? Why is it easy to be a person of words but to not back the words up with action?

9. What is the difference between thinking biblically and thinking worldly? Which way do you think? What steps and actions need to be taken in order to think in a biblical way?

10. How did this lesson challenge you? What one thing stood out to you that can help you improve your leadership?

## The ABC's of Leadership: Attitude, Behavior, Care

Leadership at any level is a privilege and a huge calling. But leadership within the Church is the highest calling of all. The Apostle Peter sets forth some ABC's for our leadership. These ABC's make all the difference in the quality of the leadership that is given.

Peter uses the picture of a shepherd to speak to us about leadership. Some of the greatest leaders in the Bible were shepherds. Abraham, Moses and David were all shepherds. The ABC's of being a leader are **A**ttitude, **B**ehavior and **C**are.

Attitude is everything. Attitude has to do with how you do what you do. Let's take a look at what the Apostle Peter has to say:

*“Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.*

*“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:1-8).*

There are a number of things he says to leaders about the area of attitude.

First, make sure your heart is in it. He would exhort us to not be in leadership out of a sense of obligation and compulsion but rather voluntarily of the heart. If leadership is not from the heart, it will soon be callous and impersonal. Many times a capable and able person is 'arm twisted' or even coerced to take on a leadership responsibility. But if the calling of the heart is not there, it will soon become obvious.

Second, Peter suggests that there should not only be willingness involved but eagerness as well. A person must not only be willing, but he must really want to do it. It is precisely at this point one must be very careful. Why would a person really want to do this? Why would a person really want to lead and bear the responsibility of leadership? Peter makes the answer very clear: NOT for self gain! There is the catch!

The willingness and the eagerness must not be for self gratification or self recognition or self gain or benefit. The willingness and the eagerness must be to give and not to get. It is to serve others and not self.

Third, the leader must exhibit meekness and humility. Specifically this means he must first be an example of servanthood, and not some lord of authority. Leadership is all about serving others and not about having power and control. We must prove ourselves to be examples. We are to “show” others how and not just “tell” others how! We must demonstrate to others and not dictate to others.

The ABC’s also include behavior. Jesus Himself had a lot to say about being a shepherd and a leader in John 10:1-16:

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.’ This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them.*

*“So Jesus said to them again, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.*

*“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.”*

First, the behavior of the Shepherd must have integrity! He is always consistent. Always use the same door! For the one who tries to get into the fold in some other way is described as a thief and a robber! A leader must always be upfront, trustworthy, honest, open and committed to an integrity that passes the scrutiny of others.

Second, the behavior of the Shepherd must be personal. He must know those whom he leads. He calls them by name. Those who follow the Shepherd recognize his voice. The leader has made himself known to his followers.

Third, the behavior of the leader must be that of bravery and courage. The leader is a protector. The leader is aware of danger. The leader is prepared to deal with the wolf and the thief. These are those who would destroy and steal.

Fourth, the behavior of the Shepherd must be sacrificial. The Good Shepherd (leader) is willing to lay down his life for the sheep (John 10:11). This is why a leader's attitude must be one of service and not self gain. The leader who is in it for himself will not be a sacrificial leader.

Lastly, the ABC's of leadership involves care. There is a beautiful description of this kind of leadership found in the ancient writings of Isaiah, the prophet.

*"Like a shepherd He will tend His flock. In His arm He will gather the lambs And carry them in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes"* (Isaiah 40:11).

This verse gives to us a picture of what caring leadership looks like.

First, the leader *tends* the flock. All bound up in the word "tend" is the personal and loving care of the Shepherd. He tenderly nurses the wounds. He leads with understanding. He watches over every detail. Why? Because he cares for those he leads.

Second, the leader gets very personal by taking the lambs into his arms. He builds trust through his personal care. His ability to communicate grows as he slowly but surely builds personal trust through his day-by-day care of the lambs. As the little lambs grow, they have learned to trust the care of the Shepherd.

Third, the Shepherd demonstrates his care by his sensitivity and understanding. The nursing ewes need special care. They need a little more time and attention. The leader recognizes their special needs. He responds to these needs with understanding.

The leader who understands the ABC's of leadership will be a leader who is effective. He will be a leader who is loved and respected. He will be a leader who will be gladly and confidently followed.

### Discussion Questions

1. How important is a leader's attitude in leadership? Explain.
2. What does it mean to lead "from the heart"?
3. Proverbs 4:23 instructs one to guard the heart with all diligence. Why is this necessary and what reason is given in this verse? How does this affect leadership?



4. Why does leadership involve the willingness and eagerness of a person? What is leadership like without these ingredients?
5. What is the difference between a servant and a lord? What is a “servant leader”? What is a “lord leader”?
6. Why is integrity important? What kind of a leader do you have when integrity is missing?
7. Why are bravery and courage important characteristics for leadership? What would leadership be like without these ingredients?
8. Describe what a sacrificial leader is like. Why is this important?
9. What does it mean to care for others? List as many descriptions as you can:
10. Why does a leader need to be understanding?
11. Of the ABC’s of leadership, which one do you feel you need most in your own life? Explain.

## Leaders Lead Real People

What a novel thought! People really are real people. The subtle trap of leadership is to make a person less than a real person. Hence:

Leaders see people as pawns to be moved back and forth across a board.

Leaders see people as problems they either need to solve or do away with them.

Leaders see people as some parcel to be shipped on to the next place.

Leaders see people as some percentage rate to manipulate.

Leaders see people as some patron to placate.

Leaders see people as some patient to heal—or bury.

The list could go on.

But people are people—real people with real lives and real feelings and real families and real problems and real dreams and real hopes! God made each and every one of us, and He made us to be real. Let's take a look at what He says about each of us.

*“For You formed my inward parts;  
You wove me in my mother's womb.  
I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
Wonderful are Your works,  
And my soul knows it very well.  
My frame was not hidden from You,  
When I was made in secret,  
And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;  
Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;  
And in Your book were all written  
The days that were ordained for me,  
When as yet there was not one of them.*

*“How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!  
If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand.  
When I awake, I am still with You” (Psalm 139:13-18).*

All of us are different—and yet the process for our being was the same!

Each individual part was designed! Our parts were fitted and woven together! We were made with precision and skill! We are each viewed as a masterpiece!

In other words, each person is a person of value from God's perspective. Leaders too are people. But it seems it is so easy for leaders to forget that those whom they lead are real people to--just like themselves.

So, here are some facts about people that every leader should remember—and if he forgets—he only forgets to his own peril.

First, every person who is under a leader is described as a masterpiece of the creative hand of God, whose personhood is from none other than God Himself!

Second, leaders should strive to handle the oversight process with the same skill and care that God put into the formation process!

Third, there is no tool or summation of leadership tools that captures personhood in totality for man was made to be free. Therefore leadership is a privilege and not a right, and those who lead others must recognize that leadership is not an entitlement.

Fourth, an understanding and appreciation from leaders that people are real people with personhood, that includes personality, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, attitudes, experiences, spirituality, nerves, feelings, and a host of involvements. Such recognition goes a long way in the leading of people!

All leaders, therefore, need to understand that the people they lead are but real people; they are not super-humans who can do the impossible, nor are they sub-humans of whom the leader can take advantage. They are real persons, nothing more and nothing less.

The effective leader will wisely lead with this understanding clearly in place.

## Discussion Questions

1. Why do leaders often forget the humanness of the people they lead?
2. In what terms do leaders often begin to regard the people they lead? How do people respond to this?
3. What does Psalm 139:13-18 say about the make-up and the making of man? Why is this significant?
4. God says you are significant! You are a product of His skill and care! How should this fact affect our view of ourselves? How should this fact affect the view of leaders who find themselves "over" people?
5. When God says (vs. 16) that all of our days were ordained by Him, it suggests that He allows, permits, approves, and even orchestrates the events or circumstances of our lives. How does this encourage you? How can this build your faith?

How might you respond otherwise?

6. How does the fact that you are a masterpiece of the hand of God affect your view of yourself? What affect should it have on leadership over you?

7. If leaders treated their oversight and management with the same skill and care that God gave our very formation, what would that kind of leadership look like?
  
8. Why do some leaders view leadership as entitlement? What part do pride, power, and position play in this view?
  
9. What difference could it make if leaders actually stopped to put themselves in the shoes of those they lead? How would they make the tough decisions?
  
10. What one thing would you like to say to a leader (Don't get political or personal with names) regarding their handling of people?