

CALLED TO LEAD

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**Leadership
Qualities
Taught by Jesus**

Introduction

True leadership is through influence, not position.

Every person on this planet has been given the potential to be an incredible leader, no matter what personality type they have. In fact, **we are all called to lead.**

As John Maxwell puts it, leadership is just influence. We all have the opportunity to influence others. As Christians, we have both the responsibility and the amazing opportunity to influence others for Jesus.

The problem is, few people think of themselves as leaders.

Many assume leadership comes with a title, but that's not true. I've found that titles are often a detriment to leadership. Titles tend to have a strange influence on people's thinking. Those who pull rank and rely heavily on their title are using positional leadership, which is the lowest level of leadership. If someone has to frequently say, "I'm in charge," they really aren't.

True leadership is through influence, not position. It's about servant leadership.

Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave.

Matthew 20:26–27 (NKJV)

Servant leadership is about having the other person's best interests in mind. It's about setting out to be of service to them—to help them to become the best they can be. When someone senses that this is your motive, you gain influence in their lives and they are much more inclined to want to hear what you have to say.

In this eBook, you'll discover a new look at leadership based on Jesus' example of servant leadership, and how you can begin to see yourself as a leader. Look for the small things you can do each day to help lead others one step closer to the only relationship in the world that can change absolutely everything: a relationship with Jesus.

A Leader Motivates Others

Leaders have to take into consideration both the people and the task.

Are you in leadership anywhere in your life?

Before you answer, consider former American President Dwight D. Eisenhower's definition of leadership: "The art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."

Parents, teachers and older siblings fall under this definition of leadership. Actually, we all do. Who hasn't tried to motivate someone to do something?

What's interesting about President Eisenhower's definition is he recognized that leaders need to be concerned with motivating those they're influencing to **want** to take action.

But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you."

Matthew 20:25-26 (NKJV)

If you don't care about what people want as you lead, you become dictatorial. You'll threaten and otherwise manipulate people to take action. Meanwhile, you'll get a much better result if you pay a little more attention to **finding ways for them to enjoy or find purpose in the task at hand.**

You see, leaders have to take into consideration both the people and the task. If you're only focused on the task, you may get things done, but in the end you'll be doing it alone because of how many people you've hurt and offended in the process. To lead, you need **to take people's feelings into account**, not downplay their importance in light of the all-important task at hand.

When you're trying to influence someone to take action, make sure you remember both **the person and the task**. Remember to talk about the purpose behind what needs to get done, and try to make things fun. You'll motivate people to do what you want done not because they have to do it, but because they want to.

Leadership is Trustworthy

To lead effectively, people need to be able to trust you.

We are careful to be honorable before the Lord, but we also want everyone else to see that we are honorable.

2 Corinthians 8:21 (NLT)

We've established that we are all capable of being leaders, since leadership is influence. We all want to be able to influence others, especially when it's for their own benefit because we have something to share that will help them.

You can't influence someone if all you have is the task or end result in mind. You need to take the whole person into consideration—their hopes, dreams and desires, what they enjoy and their sense of purpose. You also need to build a relationship with them.

There are four building blocks to relationships, according to Tom Marshall's book entitled *Understanding Leadership*: trust, care, respect and understanding. Without these four, there is no relationship. Let's discuss the first: trust.

Trust is the most fragile of the four.

Trust is something that is built over time, but it can be lost in a moment. It's built when what you say lines up with what you do, when someone tells you something sensitive and you keep it to yourself, and also when you come through for someone in need.

Trust is built when you keep the little promises you make and when your decisions reflect that you have the other person in mind. It's also built when you extend forgiveness and when you sincerely seek another's forgiveness.

To lead effectively, people need to be able to trust you. Take a look at each of your relationships and ask yourself, "Do I need to build trust with this person?" And if you do, what can you change today?

Leadership Cares For and Respects Others

Actions always speak louder than words.

The world desperately needs more leaders—the kind who develop genuine relationships with others to help bring out the best in those they influence. In fact, **you** are designed to be this kind of leader.

Let's talk about the second and third building blocks for leadership according to Tom Marshall's book, *Understanding Leadership*: care and respect.

Care is essential in developing great relationships.

It's difficult to form a relationship with someone if they don't think you care. Your actions always speak louder than words. Think about the relationships in your life and ask yourself, "When is the last time I did something to show this person how much I care?"

Remember, caring about someone doesn't mean that you can't confront them. In fact, carefully addressing issues to help someone improve is one way to show just how much you care.

Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God."

John 8:54 (NKJV)

Respect is the most neglected of the four building blocks.

If we're not careful, we can begin to take people for granted. The good news is there's a simple solution. Show respect. Do you communicate that you value the people around you? Respect needs to be communicated through words and actions; this is what it means to honour someone.

In John 8:54, Jesus said that if you honour yourself, your honour is nothing. If you chase down honour, you'll never feel like you have enough. Instead, spend your time showing others how much you respect them, and you will build great relationships.

Leaders Take Time to Understand

People are always worth every drop of time and effort you put into them.

Do you wish you had more influence with certain people?

We've been discussing relationship keys that are essential when it comes to influencing and leading others. As the popular saying goes, people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. In other words, **influence is often built through relationship.**

We've covered the first three building blocks to relationships: trust, care and respect.

Now let's cover the fourth building block: mutual understanding.

Mutual understanding takes the longest of all of the building blocks to develop.

It's important to make it a priority to try and understand others' perspectives. Putting yourself in their shoes can help you see how they view the world, or task at hand.

One thing that can help you get on the same page as someone is repeating back what they say to you for clarification. Take the time to really understand and listen.

Tune your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding.

Proverbs 2:2 (NLT)

People are always worth every drop of time and effort you put into them.

Never forget that they are valuable. It is an honour and a privilege to influence them to be all they can be and, through Christ, you're empowered to do it well.

Leadership Has Conflict

The wise love correction because they know it helps them to make better choices in the future.

Even the healthiest relationships experience conflict. No matter how wonderful the relationship is, you're going to need to create boundaries and stick to them.

Even if you think you're being the "bigger person," it's unhealthy to be quiet about behaviour that crosses boundaries. The silence not only hurts you, but it also enables the other person to continue destructive behaviour.

In developing healthy relationships, follow Jesus' example. Jesus didn't hesitate to confront those He loved. When Peter tried to talk Jesus out of fulfilling his mission, Jesus instantly confronted his behaviour.

To develop these relationships, **we need to be willing to talk about the issues that stand between us.** We can't dance around each other's hot buttons because we're too afraid to rock the boat. We need to be willing to share our perspective and be willing to hear someone else's opinion even when it differs with ours.

According to Proverbs 9:8 (NLT), those who listen to and accept correction are wise. It says, "Don't bother correcting mockers; they will only hate you. But correct the wise, and they will love you." The verse below calls these little loving corrections "wounds from a sincere friend." They may hurt a little, but they are better than "many kisses from an enemy." You see, **the wise love correction because they know it helps them to make better choices in the future.**

Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy.
Proverbs 27:6 (NLT)

You can set healthy boundaries in life. People will still cross them—some by accident and some on purpose. Just keep confronting them with love and respect when they do, and you will develop healthy, strong relationships.

Leaders Are Led

As believers, we can receive direction in nearly every step we take.

Have you ever had a feeling about something—a direction you needed to take in life or a place or person you should avoid? Maybe right now you have this type of sense about a new job or career direction, a relationship or a big purchase.

In times of indecision many people wish they could know which choice is the right one. The good news is that, **as believers, we can receive direction in nearly every step we take.**

When we train ourselves to be led by Holy Spirit, we become better able to understand and follow the direction God is leading us to go in our lives. And **one of the ways He leads us is with a feeling of peace.**

For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Isaiah 55:12 (NKJV)

Sometimes a decision can seem logical but something just feels wrong. You may not understand why, but for some reason you just don't feel peace about it. Listen to that feeling!

Other times, everything in your mind says "No!" but your gut says "Yes!" Deep down, you have a sense of peace about the situation. In times like this, carefully set out in that direction and keep checking back to see if you still have that same sense of peace as you go. Pause often to sense what Holy Spirit is telling you.

As you realize how normal and natural His leading can be, it's so much easier to open yourself up to it. You don't have to be nervous about being used by God. He won't require you to be strange or weird as you do it.

You can act on God's leading in a way that is filled with grace, strength and love.

Conclusion

Stay plugged into God's Word and get involved in the world around you.

You are called to influence others. But as believers, how do we bring change to people's lives? Hiding from the world doesn't work. Neither does judging or attacking people we disagree with.

No, **the only thing that causes people to change is inviting Jesus into their lives.** It's crucial that we live in a Spirit Contemporary way so that everywhere you go, you're attracting others to Jesus.

The Lord will make you the head (leader) and not the tail (follower); and you will be above only, and you will not be beneath, if you listen and pay attention to the commandments of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you today, to observe them carefully.

Deuteronomy 28:13 (AMP)

God's Word gives us the powerful principles we need to live this way. As you grow in the Word, you learn how to develop a reputation for excellence. You discover how to reach out to the people around you. You learn to raise a family that loves Jesus and blesses others.

In fact, **we need to pass this mindset on to our kids and raise them to be Spirit Contemporary leaders.** Why? Because the world needs phenomenal believers to rise up in politics, education, science, the arts and every other area. So let's train our children in the ways of God and teach them to excel. Let's raise the next generation to be the greatest blessing the world has ever seen!

Stay plugged into God's Word and get involved in the world around you. You're created to be the head and not the tail. Wherever you are, God's blessings are chasing you down. **And it's His presence in you that will attract people to the source of the most amazing life they could ever find—a life with Jesus.**