

Leadership Unlimited

Introduction – The Leadership Model

A Need for Leaders

There is a crisis of leadership at every level in our world. Leaders from business and ministry acknowledge they struggle to meet the demands placed on them and that their organizations lack having a significant Kingdom impact. Today leadership is often characterized by being strong, having charisma, and driving for results. Yet with all of this activity, many leaders in business and ministry personally find themselves isolated, overly busy, and focused inward with no means or direction. In addition, couples are often overloaded and overwhelmed leading to an increasing number of broken homes.

Two prominent leaders further describe this need for leadership. *“Where have all the leaders gone? They appear to be an endangered species, caught in a whirl of events and circumstances. The signs of a leadership crisis are alarming and persuasive. There is a widespread loss of faith in our major institutions, incredible technological and global changes are creating great confusion. None of the problems we face can be solved without effective leadership.”* (Warren Bennis)

“The Christian Church has stagnated, largely due to its comfort with routines and rituals that are neither challenging nor relevant for millions of people. The Christian body is seeking leaders who will lead how Jesus led. There is a need for leaders who live and lead from a different starting point with a faith that is more vital and compelling. Absent such leadership, the Church in America will continue to lose its influence in people’s lives and in our society.” (George Barna)

Current Perspectives

Let’s briefly examine and highlight what well-known leaders in the Christian community, the military, and in the marketplace are saying about leadership.

“All leadership is influence.” John C. Maxwell, author and speaker

“Jesus showed us that true leadership starts on the inside with a servant heart, then moves outward to serve others. A servant heart precedes effective leadership methods.” Bill Hybels and Ken Blanchard, *Leadership From the Book*

“Good business leaders create a vision, articulate the vision, passionately own the vision and relentlessly drive it to completion.” Jack Welch, former chairman and CEO of General Electric Co.

“Leaders need two things—character and strategy. If you can do only one, drop strategy.” Colin Powell, former U. S. Army general and U. S. Secretary of State

“Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.” Peter Drucker, management consultant, author

“The only test of leadership is that somebody follows.” Robert K. Greenleaf, author of *Servant-leadership*

“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.” Warren G. Bennis, professor, consultant, author

These quotes from distinguished people summarize a perspective that leadership comes from within, and then it motivates outwardly to influence others through having vision and charisma. While some would say, "Leadership is a skill that can be taught and learned," others would advocate that leadership is an innate part of who you are.

Leadership from the WORLD or from the WORD?

Where does the model and the principles of your leadership come from—the WORLD or the WORD?

Who defines you as a leader—the WORLD with its focus on immediacy and large results or the WORD with a clear focus on an eternal Kingdom, the process, and people?

What is the source of your power as a leader—the WORLD (position, organization) or the WORD (the living Word, Jesus Christ alive in you)?

How will you as a leader be evaluated—the fickle audience of the WORLD or the dependable audience of One—Jesus Christ who is the WORD?

The above quotes and perspectives all contain a measure of truth. They suggest that leadership emanates from our own resources and what one brings to the table, yet something seems to be missing.

Leadership that is from the "WORD" - Jesus Christ

We have looked at what the best and brightest thinkers on leadership have to say. So now let's see what Jesus Himself said about Jesus Christ and His leadership:

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

*Philip *said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus *said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son." (John 14:6–13)*

The context of this passage finds Jesus teaching that He will soon be going to heaven, and that His life and mission on earth is coming to a close. Jesus then makes profound points about the Christian life and how we will live as well as lead in the future:

- His relationship with the Father is first and foremost.
- His actions and leadership were not derived from skills and talent, but from this relationship.
- The work that He accomplished had its origin with the Father. Our life flows out of the life of Christ in us.

Jesus' leadership was more than influence, skills, and talents; its source was a relationship with the Father. It was more than being like the Father. As Jesus was one with the Father, we are called to be one with Christ. Jesus followed the Father. Jesus' work was beyond activity, goals, and plans. It was the Father working through the Son with the outcome being influence on the disciples who were empowered to carry the work on. We see this framework: Leadership is Follow–Through–Influence.

John, chapter one, says that the Word “was God” (verse 1) and that the Word “dwelt among us” (verse 14), referring to Jesus Christ. Because Jesus Christ has redeemed us and now lives in us, our leadership must be *from* this living Word. This is what will define and shape how we are to lead.

For decades when Christians have attempted to define leadership they used the word “influence”—Oswald Sanders and John Maxwell being two of the most prominent. This definition is true in many senses—leadership is moving (influencing) people toward God's purposes. “Influence” is an inspirational and motivational concept. Yet it does not fully capture the idea of spiritual leadership. God does not need us to do things for Him as sincere, noble, and motivated this might be. Influence is vital, yet it is not the first step of leadership. We need to take a step back. In other words, we need to step back from Doing (Influence) to Being (Through) and then step back again from Being (Through) to Knowing and Loving Him (Follow). From this true foundation, we can move forward on solid ground in our leadership.

When we consider leadership and look at how Jesus led, we see three primary ideas emerge:

First, the spiritual arena—how one connects with God the Father and how that transforms a person from the inside out.

Second, the process of being a leader—growing in the heart-based skills of leadership as well as inspiring those you lead.

And third, the purpose from God's perspective—how do we enter into His ways?

Inside out Leadership

The need of the hour for our world is not just for a motivated leader who looks good on the outside. We need leaders who are different, who will transcend their reliance on charisma, gifts, and talents. *We need leaders who are different inside and out.*

We need Christ to be released through us to bring life to the dying, hope to the desperate, and healing to the hurting. Christ said to pray for God to send laborers into His harvest: *“The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the harvest.”* (Matthew 9:37-38)

Leadership of the future must be different than what our world has made it out to be. Even in the Christian community leadership must not take on the look of the world, but it must function from a different starting point with a different end in mind. The arenas of influence for this leadership will be found in families, businesses, ministries, and communities. Leadership takes place everyday in many forms. It is imperative to become the leader that God can use where He has already placed you.

“People do not choose to become spiritual leaders. Spiritual leadership flows out of a person's vibrant, intimate relationship with God.”
Henry Blackaby
Spiritual Leadership

"For if we depend on our own ideas, our own judgment, and our own efforts to reproduce the life of Christ, we will only act out some kind of pious charade which will ultimately scare everybody we meet because it will be so stiff and artificial and so dead. It is the Spirit of God that must teach us Who Christ is and form Christ in us and transform us" Thomas Merton

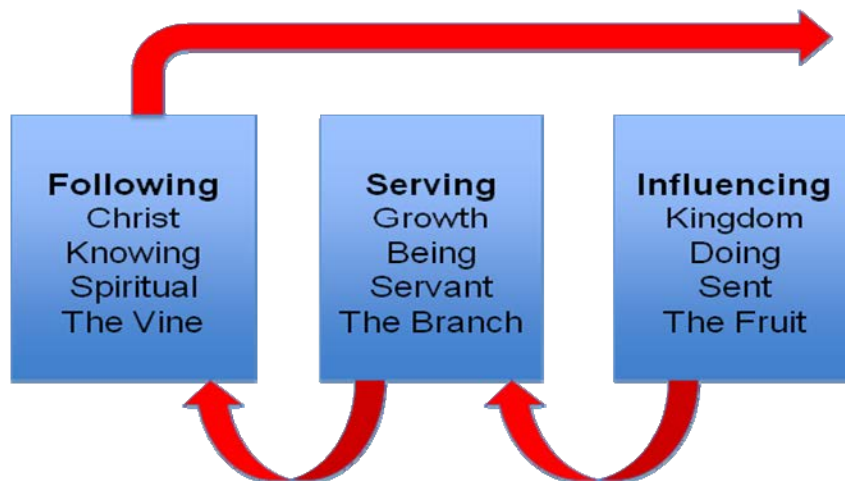
The Framework of Leadership

The world often describes leadership as influence as noted in the quotes above, It is much more than influence although influence is a critical component of leadership and is necessary for an impact. What else is included?

Leadership comes from outside of ourselves and is characterized by functions we enter into. A great picture of this is when Jesus was instructing the disciples at the Last Supper about the essence of their spiritual walk . He painted the picture of the Vine, the branches, and the fruit. John 15:4: *"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me."*

From this picture of the vine, branch, and fruit we see three overarching aspects of leadership: 1. the vine, which is Jesus Christ, is the source of life and nutrients for the branch and is where the fruit comes from. The vine connects to the branch. 2. The branch, which are the believers, is grafted to the vine and is the conduit between the vine and the fruit. The branches network, grow in all directions and are the fruit holders. 3. The fruit, which is the new life (believers, attitudes, etc.) is the product of the vine and the food for others.

The framework for becoming and growing as a leader follows this threefold idea and could be described as FOLLOWING SERVING INFLUENCING. We see the connection of the – vine, branch, fruit and the following, serving, influencing.



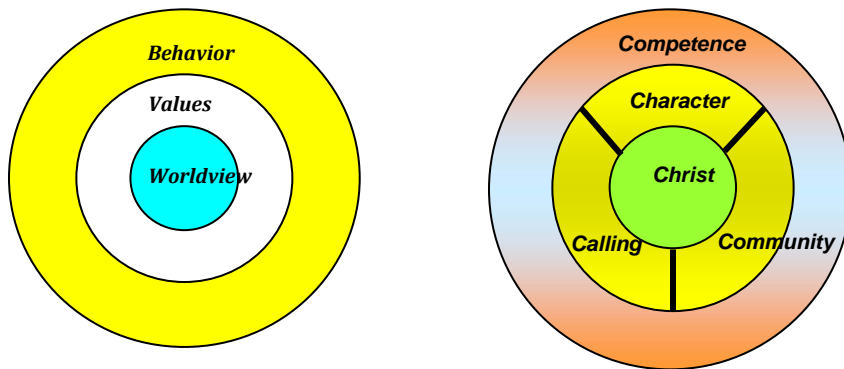
The diagram shows arrows that move back from influencing to serving and then to following and it is from this place of following we exercise a servant's heart and an inspiring influence to bear fruit in God's Kingdom. We need to shift the paradigm of leadership.

Inside-out Growth

Spiritual growth begins with what is known as our worldview (what we believe about God and ourselves, which translates into shaping our values (what we hold to be most important) which in turn drives our behavior. See the illustration on next page. To further understand what each of these entails we see the worldview could also be Christ as our Life. In other words, this is Christ in the form of the Holy Spirit living in each of us. He gives us life and life abundantly. We enter into this life when we are FOLLOWING Christ.

Our values are lived out in our Character, our Community, and our Calling. These are the significant relationships that define our lives (being) and are the context for our SERVING.

Our behavior as a leader is defined in large part as our competence (skills and methods). These skills and competence allow us to be someone who is INFLUENCING others.



Why is it important to have a clear worldview before you focus of behavior or values?

How are you developing in your:

- Worldview
- Values
- Behavior

Which of these is your strength and which is a weakness? Why?

What growth steps can you take?

Spiritual Transformation

We will first examine the spiritual growth of a leader looking at it through the lens of spiritual parenting. The following chart outlines the needs and goals of a growing leader as well as the role the mentor plays. It is a developmental process (cf. 1 John 2:12-14) in which the needs of the future leader and the required role of the mentor gradually change;

It is clear that a leader who is at the spiritual stage as a baby needs a mother and the greatest need of a child is that of a father. No single mentor can effectively fill all these roles in the life of a growing leader. But wherever we are in this process, we should remember that we should nurture them in a relational context of love, care, patience, and encouragement.

| Developmental Level | Developmental | | Role of Mentor | Developing Spiritual Focus |
|------------------------|---|------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| | Needs | Goals | | |
| Babies (New Converts) | Love, Protection, Nourishment | Health, Growth | Mother | New Life |
| Children (Disciples) | Affirmation, Approval, Boundaries, Obedience, | Training, Learning | Father | Life in Christ |
| Young Adults (Workers) | Growing Independence and Activity | Contribution, Maturity | Coach | Christ's Life in Us |
| Adults (Leaders) | Relationships | Multiplication | Brother | Christ's Life through Us |

Where are you in this process of spiritual growth?

How have you grown over the last 2-3 years?

Who is helping

you? Mentoring you?

Functional Growth

In the previous chapter we outlined the threefold growth process for a leader – FOLLOWING, SERVING, and INFLUENCING. Take a look at the chart below which highlight needs and goals for the growing leader and the role of the mentor. This is consistent with the spiritual growth process but looks at the growth from more a practical standpoint.

| Leadership Level | | | Mentor Role | Practices |
|-------------------|--|---|---|---|
| | Needs | Goals | | |
| Follower | Build, Teach, Direction, Affirmation, Approval | Have a solid foundation from which to lead. Be a learner. | Father (provide stability, assurance and approval) | Leadership Basics: Vision capturing and casting, planning, team |
| Servant | Guidance, Discover and think, Freedom with accountability. Opportunities to serve and lead | To be engaged and empowered in serving and leading. | Coach (listen, ask questions, challenge ideas, provide accountability) | Leadership Enhancement: delegation, decision making, strategic thinking, empower others, be a mentor |
| Influencer | Support, encouragement , not to be alone, | To launch a new team or work, to reproduce | Brother (someone who believes in you, speaks truth in love) | Leadership Legacy: Coach others, invest in others. |

Leadership Growth parallels spiritual growth but is focused on applying the spiritual to practical. Skills are involved in the stages of leadership growth.

Where are you in this process?

What are you learning?

A Paradigm Shift in Leadership Perspective

A paradigm shift is “A dramatic change in methodology or practice. It often refers to a major change in thinking and planning, which ultimately changes the way projects are implemented.” Wikipedia

In *Spiritual Leadership* Henry Blackaby challenges us to shift our paradigm - “Our ‘best thinking’ will not build the Kingdom of God. Spiritual leaders must reject human reasoning in favor of God’s infinite wisdom and allow Him to reveal His plans.”

Here are six paradigm shifts that this new way of leading requires. These paradigm shifts could be summed up by the following thoughts;

We do not need more man as a leader, we need more of Christ in the man as leader. We must move from our focus on “CHRISTLIKE” Leadership to “CHRIST LIFE” Leadership. Being Christ like implies that it is up to me to be like Jesus – think like Him, act like Him, etc. This nature of this is derived from our efforts, our motivation, our wisdom to a leadership that flows from the resources of Christ’s Life in us. This leadership functions from He being the source, the power, and the essence. It is also characterized by a process, a leverage, and a legacy that is outside of ourselves.

“Spiritual leaders work within a paradox, for God calls them to do something that, in fact, only God can do. Ultimately spiritual leaders cannot produce spiritual change in people; only the Holy Spirit can accomplish this. Yet the Spirit often uses people to bring spiritual growth in others.” Henry Blackaby, Spiritual Leadership, p. 21

1. The Source of a Leader - Depth determines breadth

Leadership shift: *From* leadership begins with your skills, talents and abilities *to* leadership begins with Christ leading in and through you. We don’t lead like Jesus; Christ leads through us. It is His life in us that is critical. The greatest leadership assets come from the Lord. Leaders don’t create vision; vision comes from the Lord rather than from sincere motivation to do things for the Lord.

2. The Power of a Leader - Who we are directs what we do

Leadership Shift: *From* the power of a leader is found within ourselves, our positions, and/or our organizations *to* the power is from Christ in us, not from us. This power is realized as one knows and walks in the true identity.

3. The Essence of Leadership – Surrender that leads to being a servant

Leadership Shift: *From* character is the most important quality of a leader *to* character comes from Christ and is displayed in serving others. Character is the basis for trust which is a greater motivator than incentives. Character produces fruit through brokenness and dying to self, not by image or activity.

4. The Process of Leadership - goals and outcome/ purpose and priorities

Leadership shift: *From* leadership achieves outward results and is for a few at the top who are generally the ones being served *to* leadership is a stewardship process of serving others which everyone engages in at some level as they trust God with the outcome.

5. The Leverage of a Leader - skills and team

Leadership Shift: *From* a leader is central to the work and the workers *to* both leaders and teams are critical for success. The leader needs a team and a team needs a leader. Leading a team greatly leverages the work.

6. The Legacy of a Leader - Kingdom

Leadership Shift: *From* leaders produce results by focusing on their organization and their bottom line *to* leaders focus on God's Kingdom purpose while engaging in their calling and partnering with others. Leaders are stewards of the "process" and the Lord produces the fruit. The end does not justify the means.

From this perspective we will discover that leadership begins with an intimacy with Christ, matures in the personal growth of deepening character and serving others, and then has a multiplying effect in God's Kingdom. Christ's life in us transforms us to build and reach others.

Leadership is an Inside-out, Upside-down Process

One of the most prevailing perspectives in our world is that leaders make things happen and they produce results. While results are important, from God's point of view the process is as important as the end result. When we solely focus on results, we embrace the mistaken notion that the end justifies the means. We invariably will do whatever it takes to achieve our desired goal. Although the world embraces this attitude, the consequences can be devastating spiritually!

Leadership is more than the outside focus. A biblical perspective of leadership is a process of growing upward, inward, and then outward. In fact, the Lord says, "God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7) This process is important to God because motives count in God's eyes.

"Jesus had just given a verbal response to the disciples' debate about who was the greatest (Luke 22:24-30). Next came his visual response. He said that he came as one who served and not as one who sits at the table (Luke 22:27). The astonished disciples then learned the truth of these words. Alone with his disciples in a room in Jerusalem, Jesus did the unthinkable. While the disciples settled into their prospective cushions and the Passover meal was being served, Jesus unpretentiously rose from the table and wrapped Himself with a towel. The evening meal was being served. . . . Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had

come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. (John 13:2-5) When there was no servant to carry out the custom of foot washing, Jesus assumed the role. The Master became the servant. The greatest and most high became the least and the lowest. In one stunning act, Jesus demonstrated that in the kingdom of God, service is not the path to greatness; service is greatness. Here the divine perspective shines through and appears to our disoriented minds as upside-down."

(Ken Boa, Leadership in the Image of God)

The picture of the vine, the branch and the fruit provides us with the perspective that the Christian life and our leadership begin with an intimate, growing connection (relationship) with Jesus Christ. We are the branches who do not exist without the vine, yet we are God's chosen vessel through whom He produces fruit. We conclude that life and leadership is an inside-out growth process. We participate in this divine fruit-bearing activity but are not the source of it. In this chapter, we will dig into this process and what is involved at each stage.

"Leaders we admire do not place themselves at the center; they place others there. They do not seek the attention of people; they give it to others. They do not focus on satisfying their own aims and desires; they look for ways to respond to the needs and interests of others. Being a servant may not be what many leaders had in mind when they choose to take the responsibility of their organization, but serving others is the most glorious and rewarding of all leadership tasks."
James Kouzes and Barry Posner, *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It.*

The Lord is in charge of the results, we are stewards of the process.

Leadership is beyond influence; it is a spiritual process of Following-Serving-Influencing.