

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION & DEFINITIONS

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Introduction: - 1Corinthians 1:26-31; Titus 1:5-9; Luke 6:12-16; Exodus 3: 1-10; Numbers 11:16-17; Joshua 1:1-2

This course presents the biblical foundations of leadership or of anointed servanthood. God has given certain principles in His Word by which His leadership and Church are to function.

Some of us have wonderful gifts, abilities and potentials but often do not realise what we have. The emphasis on this course is to develop your gifts and capacities, and your inter-personal relationships among other leaders and followers.

There are some basic characteristics that makes a successful leader:

- Personal qualities or personalities that are unique to you;
- Thoughts and feelings, which are your attitudes;
- Actions or behaviour

There are other characteristics of successful leaders:

- Empathy (power of understanding, ability to enter into people's feelings – he tries to understand how others feel and is also sympathetic)
- Goal achievement (*Philippians 3:14* – he must have a purpose, a goal and a reason for doing what he does)
- Competence (he has the skills and ability to do a good job and is diligent to give his best for others and for God)
- Emotional stability (he is reasonable, confident, cheerful, gracious, peaceful, and not easily discouraged)
- Group membership (has a strong sense of being part of a group and understands and welcomes the contributions of others)
- Ability to share leadership (works well with others, respects others, has a high regard for others, humbles himself)
- Consistency and dependability (he keeps his word, is reliable and communicates clearly)

Although the above list can be found in most leadership textbooks and also in the Bible, the following four can be included, that is:

- A sense of God's calling or mission

- Awareness of being Christ's channel of love to mankind
- Dependence upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit
- Exemplary living in accordance with Christian morals and ethics (i.e. rule of conduct and moral principles)

God needs people to lead His people

The central truth of this course is that leadership is God's method and God's tool for working out His plan and His purpose for the earth and for people.

Leadership is needed to accomplish a purpose, to get something done. The idea of Christian leadership exists because God has a purpose and He has a definite plan to accomplish that purpose. He does not work in a random way or by chance but knows, in advance, what His purpose is and how He will move to achieve it.

An important part of God's plan is that His work will be done by people, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit. God chooses people and give them specific tasks to do in order to accomplish His purpose. These people are often given direct calls with detailed instructions as to what to do. They in turn can organise groups of people, which they guide towards the goal indicated by the Lord.

Our calling to leadership is not by human standards or qualifications but by God's choice and *grace* (*1Corinthians* 1:26-31; *1Samuel* 16:7). It is important to recognise that it is God who anoints a person to minister or to be a leader. Human organisations can only agree with His anointing. We need to remember that the goal of ministry is spiritual increase and growth in other people's lives, not prestige for the minister.

God also gives to the Church, persons to fill specific positions such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (*Ephesians* 4:11-16; *Romans* 12:6-8). God also gives gifts of administration and helps to support the work of ministry.

The tools that God gives to people to enable them function in their calling as leaders are **the spiritual gifts** (*1Corinthians* 12: 4-11) and **His word** (*2Timothy* 3:16-17; 2:15; *Joshua* 1:8).

The New Testament (NT) presents all Christians as ministers in the sense that all have definite ministries to perform in the Body of Christ. Each Christian has a special and important function to fulfil. Everyone has a role to play in the service of the Lord and we must each seek to know what we are called to do.

There are two distinct ministries in the Church – **Governmental** and **Congregational** ministries. These two sets of ministries complement each other in the fulfilment of God's purpose for the Church and ensure that all are involved in the Lord's business.

Leaders must be qualified spiritually, morally and emotionally to be able to fulfil their functions. The Bible is full of detailed lists and descriptions of leadership qualifications and responsibilities. There are qualifications for priests, prophets and kings in the Old Testament (OT), and for Church leaders in the New Testament (NT).

The main purpose of ministry is that all might be restored to the original image of God by being like Christ – *Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 4:13-32; 5:1-5; Colossians 1:15*. Every church vision must key into this central core of ministry otherwise it is irrelevant.

The evidence of the organised Church, and many types of Christian ministries throughout the world, is evidence that God uses leaders.

Levels of leadership:

There are various levels of leadership. We will start from the lowest to the highest form or level of leadership:

Level 1 – Leadership by position or title (not always necessarily by talent or ability). The influence of this type of leadership does not go beyond the lines of job description or title.

Level 2 – Leadership by relationship or character

Level 3 – Leadership by productivity or results (People like what you do and want to emulate you)

Level 4 – Leadership through people-development or reproduction (People follow you because of what you have done for them. They stay faithful to you)

Level 5 – Leadership by respect (People follow you because of who you are and what you represent)

Definition of Leadership:

What is leadership? Who is a leader?

The concepts of leadership vary in people's minds. Most people define leadership by what a person does. For example, people see a leader as someone who:

- motivates people towards a certain purpose or goal
- draws people into a certain course of action
- gives direction and structure to others' work and efforts
- advises and co-ordinates others
- goes ahead as a guiding force
- holds the authority to lead others by instruction or correction

These definitions are good but there is a lot more to being a leader. Leaders in God's kingdom are judged not so much by what they do or accomplish but by the character they reveal – who they are before what they do. This high standard applies not so much to the leader's achievements but to the condition of his or her heart and spirit. If first the leader's heart is right, godly behaviour will always follow and good leadership will be manifested.

As a general principle in God's kingdom, leaders are called and recognised by character qualifications as well as ministry and functional duties.

The Hebrew word for leader is '*nagiyd*'. It has servant-hood as a base element, and developing out of that base setting forth an example to the people (*John 13:3-5, 12-17*;

Matthew 20:25-28; 23:11-12; Luke 22:24-27). A *nagiyd* leader has as its root the picture of a man or woman under authority, one who is subject to a higher power, and who fulfils the wishes of that power. This is the kind of leader God wants to give His people; a man or woman who would listen to His will, and execute it faithfully with divinely appointed authority. David, a man after God's own heart, was God's *nagiyd* for Israel.

From this definition, to be a leader in God's house, a person must first come squarely under the authority of Almighty God.

A leader must be an example to the people on how to follow God's commands. He is not the one in charge but God. He is simply a person with a responsibility to provide service to others. A leader takes the forefront and leads by example, whether in battle against God's enemies or in establishing truth and justice in God's kingdom.

Another illustration of a leader is that of a shepherd who goes before his people to prepare the way for them. The shepherd in Psalms 23 is a type of Christ and a picture of every leader of God's people.

General Definitions

It is important to first understand certain terms commonly used in leadership:

a) Ministry

The word 'ministry' means to serve or to be a servant. All Christians have the ministry of being servants in the house of the Lord. While public and pulpit ministries don't have room for all Christians, there is always room for dedicated Christian service.

b) Talent

Talents are God-given natural abilities and opportunities, which vary with each individual. Each member of the Body of Christ has received at least one talent or ability from the Lord, and every believer has the responsibility to develop the talent he has been given and use it for the kingdom of God (*Matthew 25*). God can adapt your talent to match your spiritual gifts.

c) Grace (*John 1:14; Romans 12:3, 6; Ephesians 4:7*)

The NT definition of grace carries the meaning of divine influence upon the heart, and its reflections in the life of the receiver. It also means the deposit of God within a Christian, an enablement that makes him come forth in an area of service to the Body of Christ. The grace of God is freely given to each member of the Body of Christ, that each might minister freely to all of the Body. In this way, the grace of God fosters growth in the Body. You do not earn or work for God's grace. It is a free gift by God's Sovereign act or by demand in prayer.

d) Gift (*Romans 12:6; 1Corinthians 14:1, 12; 1Timothy 4:14; 2Timothy 1:6*)

This means an endowment and a blessing from God. In this case, the recipient is not the focus of the gift but the focus is on all of the other people beyond the recipient whom God will bless through the recipient's exercise of the gift (*1Corinthians 14:12; 12:7*). Spiritual gifts are from the Lord and are not a tool for attracting attention or admiration. Instead, they must be sought through prayer, and must be faithfully used to serve those whom the Lord wants to help through you.

e) Office

This word refers to an official right to do or practice something. It denotes a specific action, function or involvement. All members of the Body do not have the same office or the same function (*Romans 12:4; 1Timothy 3:1, 10*). Each part must therefore know its office to fulfil, and must be faithful to the responsibilities of that office.

f) Ordained Ministry (*Jeremiah 1:5; John 15:16*)

Ordination is commonly defined as the act of officially investing a person with ministerial functions and holy orders. To officially ordain someone to the ministry is to formally appoint someone to this work, and to regulate the ministry activities of that person.

Points to note about ordination:

- It is important to note that true ordination does not precede ministry; it follows it.
- Ordination does not produce a ministry but faithful ministry leads to recognition and ordination.
- It is only by the enablement of the Holy Spirit that a person is truly ordained by God to do the work of ministry.
- A man is not ordained by man so that he can function. Instead, he is recognized by man because he has already been spiritually ordained by God, and also because he is already functioning in the ministry that God has given him.
- Ministry is about true service, and not for position or title or selfish ambition. It is very easy to receive the recognition and adulation of men and yet miss the anointing and touch of God. You cannot do without divine recognition as it is a major requirement for effective ministry.