

Servant Leadership

Power Inverted, Greatness Redefined

Model Leadership after Christ's Humility

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(Mark 10:42-45)

Phil@UsefulEngines.com

<https://tinyurl.com/Call2Unity>

Servant Leadership

Text: Mark 10:42–45

Objective: Model leadership after Christ's humility.

Key Themes: Power inverted, greatness redefined.

Discussion:

How does Jesus redefine leadership?

How can leaders guard against control and pride?

Application: Serve others in ways that go unseen.

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The Upside-Down Kingdom

Jesus' Redefinition of Leadership

Worldly model: "Those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them... exercise authority over them." (v. 42)

Kingdom model: "Not so with you." (v. 43) Greatness comes through service; first place comes by being the slave of all.

Christ's example: "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." (v. 45)

Key Theological Points

This is leadership defined by **sacrificial service**, not by accruing privilege.

Authority is **given by God for the good of others**, not self-promotion.

Leadership is a **stewardship**—a temporary trust to be exercised in humility.

The **ultimate model is the cross**, where Christ gives Himself for those He leads.

Analysis – Mark 10:42–45

Context:

James and John had just requested prominent positions in Jesus' kingdom (Mark 10:35–41). The other disciples became indignant, revealing that **status and rank** were still deeply ingrained in their understanding of leadership.

Jesus' Redefinition of Leadership:

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Guarding Against Control and Pride

Practical safeguards leaders can employ:

Accountability: Serve alongside a team of elders or co-leaders (Acts 14:23).

Service in obscurity: Regularly engage in unseen acts of service (John 13:1–17).

Feedback culture: Invite correction from trusted peers (Proverbs 27:6).

Prayer posture: Daily submit ambitions and decisions to God's will (Philippians 2:3–4).

Fruits of Servant Leadership in Scripture

Examples of New Testament servant leadership patterns:

Jesus washing the disciples' feet (John 13:1–17) – Humility, love, and example-setting.

Paul's ministry style (1 Thessalonians 2:7–12) – Gentle care “like a nursing mother” and encouragement “like a father.”

Barnabas (Acts 4:36–37; 9:26–27; 11:22–26) – Encourager, advocate for the marginalized, quick to give others the spotlight.

Jesus' Vision Statement

What does the King envision for His Kingdom?

*“...Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king. **For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.’**”*

John 18:37

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matt. 28:18-20

- What is the difference between a statement of vision and a statement of principle?
 - What versus How
 - Ends versus Means
- What is the difference between a vision statement and a goal?
 - A goal is an operational milestone... a point of measure towards the vision.
- Did the first Christians recognize one or more Visions?
 - By obeying (i.e. acting upon) the Apostle's teaching.
 - By developing specific spiritual and communal disciplines.
 - By developing memorable creedal statements that encapsulated vision and purpose.

1 Corinthians 15:1-8

Now I want to make clear for you, brothers and sisters, the gospel that I preached to you, that you received and on which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message I preached to you – unless you believed in vain. **For I passed on to you as of first importance what I also received – that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.** Then he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as though to one born at the wrong time, he appeared to me also.

“Follow Me” (not ‘Study Me’)

I Timothy 6:11-16

*“...Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king. **For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.**” John 18:37*

*“...Jesus said to him, ‘**I am the way, the truth, and the life.** No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” John 14:6*

*“But Peter and John answered and said to them, ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. **For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.**” Acts 4:19-20*

*“This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ **Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**” Acts 4:11-12*

“Follow Me” not “study Me”

Help Wanted...

How do we get Kingdom “business” done?

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” Matt. 9:35-38

We need to see as Jesus saw and feel as Jesus felt so that we will do as Jesus did.

What did Jesus See and Feel?

1. Matt 9:36 – Jesus saw the great need of lost people.
2. Matt 9:37 – Jesus saw the great harvest of lost people.
3. Matt 9:37 – Jesus saw the great need for workers of the harvest.

What did Jesus do?

- A. Jesus ministered to peoples’ physical and spiritual needs.
- B. Jesus prayed for more workers.

What guidance did the Apostles provide?

- 1 Corinthians 11:1 – be imitators
- 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 – diversity of gifts; roles
- 1 Corinthians 12:27 – roles established
- 1 Peter 3:15-17 – be prepared
- James 1:21-26 – be doers

The Church that Jesus Built

Whose church is it anyway...? Matt. 16:15-19

“There are many plans in a man’s heart. Nevertheless, the Lord’s counsel – that will stand.” Prov. 19:21

The Apostle Paul said that God will judge whatever we build based upon a foundational principle. 1 Cor. 3:1-23 ; 1 Cor. 3:10

Common misguided church motivations...

- 1. Church driven by Traditions*
- 2. Church driven by Personality*
- 3. Church driven by Finances*
- 4. Church driven by Programs*
- 5. Church driven by Events*
- 6. Church driven by Seekers*

Mat 16:15-19 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” (16) Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (17) And Jesus answered him, “You are blessed, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven! (18) And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. (19) I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will have been released in heaven.”

Some versions read: **Prov 19:21** – Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.

- 1. Plans, programs, and personalities don’t last. But, God’s purpose will last.*

Traditions

“We’ve never done it that way before...”

Personality

“What does the leader want...”

Finance

“How much will it cost...”

Programs

“The womens program, the youth program, the xyz committee...”

Buildings

“All resources go to the building... maintenance, mortgage, budget...”

Events

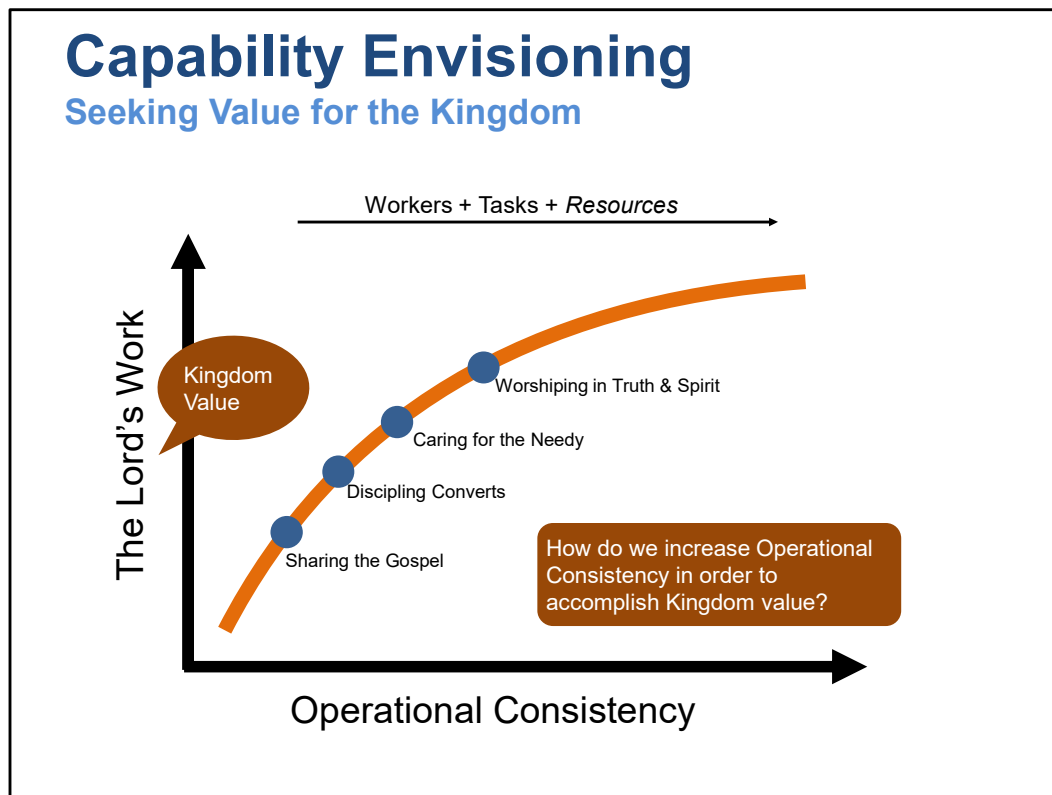
“Busy activity schedules...”

Seekers

“Adapting to the ‘wants’ of the unchurched...”

1Co 3:1-23 So, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but instead as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. (2) I fed you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready. In fact, you are still not ready, (3) for you are still influenced by the flesh. For since there is still jealousy and dissension among you, are you not influenced by the flesh and behaving like unregenerate people? (4) For whenever someone says, “I am with Paul,” or “I am with Apollos,” are you not merely human? (5) What is Apollos, really? Or what is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, and each of us in the ministry the Lord gave us. (6) I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused it to grow. (7) So neither the one who plants counts for anything, nor the one who waters, but God who causes the growth. (8) The one who plants and the one who waters work as one, but each will receive his reward according to his work. (9) We are coworkers belonging to God. You are God’s field, God’s building. (10) **According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master-builder I laid a foundation, but someone else builds on it. And each one must be careful how he builds.** (11) For no one can lay any foundation other than what is being laid, which is Jesus Christ. (12) If anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, (13) each builder’s work will be plainly seen, for the Day will make it clear, because it will be revealed by fire. And the fire will test what kind of work each has done. (14) If what someone has built survives, he will receive a reward. (15) If someone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss. He himself will be saved, but only as through fire. (16) Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? (17) If someone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, which is what you are. (18) Guard against self-deception, each of you. If someone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become foolish so that he can become wise. (19) For the wisdom of this age is foolishness with God. As it is written, ***“He catches the wise in their craftiness.”*** (20) And again, ***“The Lord knows that the***

thoughts of the wise are futile." (21) So then, no more boasting about mere mortals! For everything belongs to you, (22) whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future. Everything belongs to you, (23) and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.



What “roles” may be defined for Church members?

What “resources” may we leverage in doing Kingdom work?

What “tasks” correspond to Church business?

1. Inward Disciplines

1. Prayer and contemplation
2. Fasting
3. Study

2. Outward Disciplines

1. Evangelism
2. Submission
3. Service

3. Corporate Disciplines

1. Worship
2. Teaching

3. Celebration

Capability Maturity

Ephesians 5:1-21; Romans 12:1-8

Key Operational Objectives

1. *Love the Lord with all your heart.*
2. *Love your neighbor as yourself.*
3. *Go and make disciples.*
4. *Baptize them.*
5. *Teach them to obey.*

Key Kingdom Values

1. *Knowing Christ → commitment to a covenant relationship.*
2. *Growing in Christ → commitment to maturity.*
3. *Serving Christ → commitment to ministry.*
4. *Sharing Christ → commitment to mission.*

Ephesians 5:1-21

Therefore, be imitators of God as dearly loved children and live in love, just as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us, a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God. But among you there must not be either sexual immorality, impurity of any kind, or greed, as these are not fitting for the saints. Neither should there be vulgar speech, foolish talk, or coarse jesting – all of which are out of character – but rather thanksgiving. For you can be confident of this one thing: that no person who is immoral, impure, or greedy (such a person is an idolater) has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let nobody deceive you with empty words, for because of these things God's wrath comes on the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be sharers with them, for you were at one time darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live like children of light – for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth – trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For the things they do in secret are shameful even to mention. But all things being exposed by the light are made visible. For everything made visible is light, and for this reason it says: "Awake, O sleeper! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you!" Therefore consider carefully how you live – not as unwise but as wise, taking advantage of every opportunity, because the days are evil. For this reason

do not be foolish, but be wise by understanding what the Lord's will is. And do not get drunk with wine, which is debauchery, but be filled by the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for each other in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Romans 12:1-8

Therefore I exhort you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice – alive, holy, and pleasing to God – which is your reasonable service. Do not be conformed to this present world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God – what is good and well-pleasing and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but to think with sober discernment, as God has distributed to each of you a measure of faith. For just as in one body we have many members, and not all the members serve the same function, so we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually we are members who belong to one another. And we have different gifts according to the grace given to us. If the gift is prophecy, that individual must use it in proportion to his faith. If it is service, he must serve; if it is teaching, he must teach; if it is exhortation, he must exhort; if it is contributing, he must do so with sincerity; if it is leadership, he must do so with diligence; if it is showing mercy, he must do so with cheerfulness.