

LEADERSHIP: BORN OR MADE?

Are leaders born or made? Surely, both are true. On the one hand, leadership is an "elusive and electric quality" that comes directly from God. On the other, leadership skills are distributed widely among every community and should be cultivated and developed. Often our skills lie dormant until a crisis arises.

Some people become leaders by luck and timing. A crisis comes, no one better qualified steps forward, and a leader is born. But closer investigation usually reveals that the Selection was not accidental but was more the result of hidden training that made the person fit for leadership. Joseph is a perfect example. He became Prime Minister of Egypt through circumstances that most people would call "lucky stars." In fact his promotion was the outcome of years of rigorous, hidden training under the hand of God, such that many are ignorantly trying to avoid or abusing the privilege these days. **(Gen. 41:37-40).**

When we contrast natural and spiritual leadership, we see just how different they are.

NATURAL	SPIRITUAL
Self-confident	Confident in God
Knows men	Knows God
Makes own decisions	Seeks God's will
Ambitious	Humble
Creates methods	Follows God's example
Enjoys command	Delights in obedience to God / authority
Seeks personal reward	Loves God and others
Independent	Depends on God

People without natural leadership skills do not become great leaders at the moment of conversion. Yet a review of the history of the church reveals that the Holy Spirit sometimes releases gifts and qualities that were dormant beforehand. When that happens, a leader is born.

"A true and safe leader is likely to be one who has no desire to lead, but is forced into a position by the inward pressure of the Holy Spirit and the press of circumstances... There was hardly a great leader from Paul to the present day but was drafted by the Holy Spirit for the task, and commissioned by the Lord to fill a position he had little heart for... The man who is ambitious to lead is disqualified as a leader. The true leader will have no desire to lord it over God's heritage, but will be humble gentle, self-sacrificing and altogether ready to follow when the Spirit chooses another to lead. May the Lord bless you as you read this note.

Yours in the Master's service

Rev. T. Martins.