

PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP

Part Four:

The Practices of Success

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PART 4

THE KEY QUALITIES OF A LEADER

All quotes are from *Spiritual Leadership* by J. Oswald Sanders unless otherwise noted.

I. Essential Qualities of a Leader

A. Discipline

1. Lost call in our society today to discipline our inner person.

"Steve Covey in his book, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, says, 'Habits are powerful factors in our lives.' He goes on to comment, 'Our character, basically, is a composite of our habits.' As the maxim goes, 'Sow a thought, reap an action; sow an action, reap a habit, sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny.'" Robert Clinton

2. An admirer once asked a speaker after a moving message, "How long did it take you to prepare that speech?" He replied, "My whole life."

B. Vision: "Seers"

1. People of faith are people of vision.

2. You must see the end result.

3. "Speaking to Douglas Thornton of Egypt, Mr. Baylis, his senior missionary, remarked: "Thornton, you are different to anyone else I know. You are always looking at the end of things. Most people, myself included, find it better to do the next thing.' Thornton's answer was: 'I find that the constant inspiration gained by looking at the goal is the chief thing that helps me to persevere.'"

4. "Vision imparts venturesomeness and history is on the side of venturesome faith."

C. Prayer

1. "As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you; and I will instruct you in the good and right way."
1 Samuel 12:23

2. Prayer must become a release not a burden. "And after bidding them farewell, he departed to the mountain to pray." **Mark 6:46**
3. A leader must pray for their people.

D. Humility

1. "In the early days of his ministry, one might have concluded that the greatness of John the Baptist lay in his fierce denunciation of the evils of his day, in the burning eloquence and blistering words that pierced and exposed the hearts of his contemporaries. But the secret that made him the greatest of those born of women is to be found in his unconscious, but infinitely revealing affirmation: 'He must increase, but I must decrease.' (**John 3:30**) In that one sentence his spiritual stature is revealed."
2. "If I appear great in their eyes, the Lord is most graciously helping me to see how absolutely I am nothing without Him, and helping me to keep little in my own eyes. He does use me. But I am so concerned that He uses me and that it is not of me the work is done. The axe cannot boast of the trees it has cut down. It could do nothing but for the woodsman. He made it, he sharpened it, and he used it. The moment he throws it aside, it becomes only old iron. Oh that I may never lose sight of this." **Samuel Brengle**

E. Humor

1. Ability to laugh at yourself
2. Beware of taking yourself too seriously. Remember: "The Lord laughs at him; for He sees his day is coming." **Psalm 37:13**
3. "A.E. Norrish, a missionary to India, testifies: 'I have never met leadership without a sense of humor; this ability to stand outside oneself and one's circumstances, to see things in perspective and laugh. It is a great safety valve! You will never lead others far without the joy of the Lord and its concomitant, a sense of humor.'"

F. Patience

"And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men." **1 Thessalonians 5:14**
(Memory verse)

G. Large Hearts

"A.W. Tozer pointed out that in one respect all spiritual leaders have been alike. They have all had large hearts. 'Nothing can take the place of affection. Those who have it in generous measure have a magic over people. Intellect will not do. Bible knowledge is not enough. Robert Jaffray loved people for their own sakes. He was happy in the presence of human beings, whatever their race and color."

H. Tact and Diplomacy

1. "Combining those two words, there emerges the idea of skill in reconciling opposing viewpoints without giving offense or compromising principle."
2. "It is a quality that can be acquired and developed. The ability to conduct delicate negotiations and mutual rights and yet leads to a harmonious solution is an asset greatly to be coveted. It involves the ability to place oneself in the position of the persons involved and to accurately assess how they would feel and react."

The same thing can be said in a tactful and in an untactful manner. One shoe salesman said to his client, 'I'm sorry, madam, but your foot is too large for this shoe.' The other salesman said to his client who was in a similar situation, 'I'm sorry madam, but this shoe is too small for your foot.' Each used almost exactly the same words, but tact and diplomacy caused one to make a slightly different emphasis by a slight difference of phrasing and secured a loyal and satisfied customer."

I. Listening Ears

1. Reflective listening
2. "The art of listening is one that must be mastered if the leader is to get at the root of the problem to be solved. ... 'He is giving the answer before I have had a chance to really state the problem.' To many, listening is often the impatient waiting until one can get his views across. But listening is a genuine effort to understand what the other person has to say and to do it without prejudging the issue....Sensitivity to another's needs is expressed more by listening than by talking."

II. Guidance

- A. A must if you're to lead others
- B. Is received during times of prayer and fasting

- C. Through the Word – Holy Spirit – others – daily circumstances
- D. Role of mentor – Dan Sneed, Neah Bay
- E. Holy Spirit – still small inner voice
- F. Word – Lives of others in scripture
 - 1. Saw how God used Barnabas to guide Paul
 - 2. Samuel, David, etc.
- G. Guidance often takes waiting
 - 1. Leaders often don't wait
 - a. See Saul – **1 Samuel 13:8-14**
 - b. They often move ahead without certainty, manipulating the circumstances to meet their needs. **See Ezekiel 34**
 - 2. And He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." **Genesis 22:2** Things done in the flesh always perish.

III. Discipling

- A. "Dwight L. Moody once said that he would rather put a thousand people to work than do the work of a thousand people."
- B. Includes impartation of God given lessons, experiences, values
- C. Leaders must see potential in others
- D. Tolerance with mistakes
- E. Flexibility with people and circumstances
- F. Accountability
- G. Disciplines – Devotions – Study Word – Prayer

H. The ability to recognize the different roles of the discipler:

1. Directing the young believers
2. Guiding those maturing (i.e., insight, advice, accountability)
3. Coaching
 - a. Help with new responsibilities
 - b. Give insight into task
 - c. Help motivate
 - d. Do not control but inspire
 - e. Provide accountability
 - f. Make available resources for growth (books, tapes, etc.)
4. Counseling
 - a. Help others avoid mistakes
 - b. Model life of God
 - c. Have an informal relationship
 - d. Act as a sounding board for feedback.

"Prepare plans by consultation, and make war by wise guidance."
Proverbs 20:18
5. Key is to release people as they grow (i.e., Barnabas and Paul)

IV. Teaching

- A. What does God want to say to the people?
- B. Teaching must be more than giving out information, it must include:
 1. Discernment of:
 - a. Hearts
 - b. Life

- C. With those who are young, directive teaching is critical (i.e., "the Word says you need to _____").
- D. With those more mature, options for choices must be offered so they can wrestle with God and grow (i.e., guidelines instead of absolutes). Leave room for the Holy Spirit to tell, convince and direct the people. Remember, "A person convinced against their will is of the same opinion still."
- E. Teaching ought to clarify and give purpose to the school of life's lessons.
- F. Teaching should help integrate these lessons into people's hearts and convictions.
- G. "Be as clear as the Bible, nothing more, nothing less." Frank Sells

