

# THE CHRISTIAN LEADER AT WORK



SERVING BY LEADING

BY KENT M. KEITH



The Christian Leader at Work:  
Serving by Leading

By Kent M. Keith

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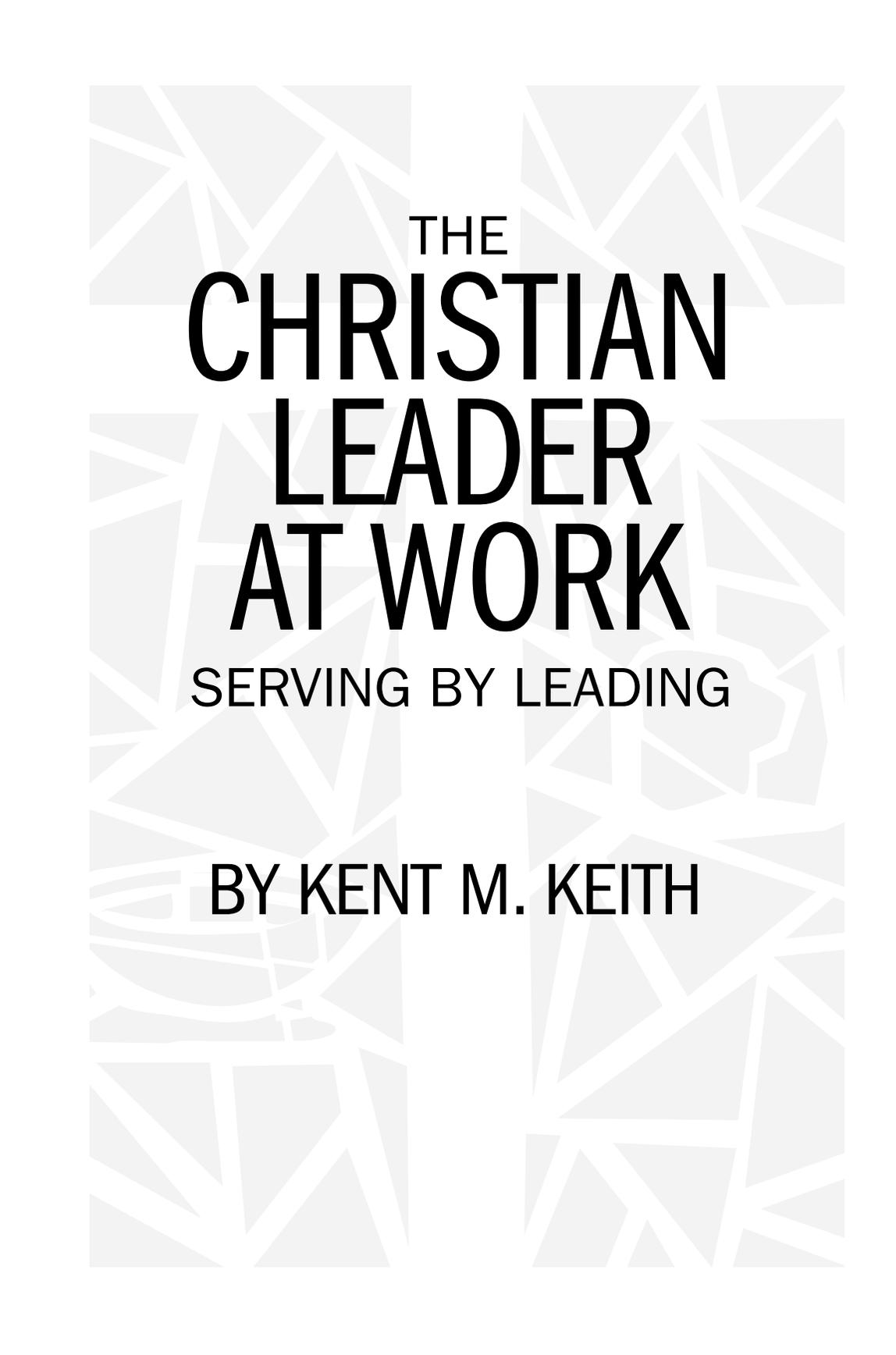
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THE  
**CHRISTIAN  
LEADER  
AT WORK**

SERVING BY LEADING

BY KENT M. KEITH

To the students, faculty, staff, board members, donors,  
and friends of Pacific Rim Christian University

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word  
was with God, and the Word was God.  
He was with God in the beginning.  
Through him all things were made;  
without him nothing was made that has been made.  
In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.  
The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness has not overcome it.

(Jn 1:1-5)



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# Author's Preface

Many good books have been written on Christian leadership. Some have been written for the leaders of churches and religious organizations. Others have been written for Christians who lead secular organizations. I have quoted from many of these books, and I am grateful to their authors for their insights. I hope that this book will promote interest in reading their works.

What I find profoundly moving is the way in which Christians take the teachings of Scripture and put them into action. That's why this book focuses on the Christian leader *at work*. As Christian leaders, we need a strong foundation in Scripture, and we need to know how to advance the kingdom of God through the many daily decisions we are called to make. The question is: What leadership model, skills, practices, and organizational structures are based on the teachings of Jesus and the guidance of Scripture? In short—how should we lead as Christians?

I believe that these practical questions are important regardless of the kind of organization that a Christian leads. That is why this book is for Christians who are willing to be servant-leaders, whether they lead in churches, businesses, non-profit organizations, the military, government agencies, schools, or hospitals. I pray that this book will be useful to all of them.

Kent M. Keith  
October 2015





# Introduction

We were created for deep spiritual fulfillment and liberating joy: the joy of loving and serving God; the joy of loving and serving others. When we see the opportunity to love and serve by *leading*, we can follow the teachings of Christ and become *servant-leaders*.

Aubrey Malphurs, in his book, *Being Leaders*, pointed out that the requirements of Christian leadership are simple. A Christian leader must be a Christian, committed to following Christ. A Christian leader must give priority to Scripture and divine revelation as sources of truth. A Christian leader must draw strength from the Holy Spirit. And a Christian leader must be a servant-leader. Malphurs defined servant leadership as “the *humble service of others based on our love for them*.”<sup>1</sup>

Christian leaders don’t start with the way the world is, they start with the way *Christ is*. That is why servant leadership is not about the values of the secular, commercial culture that surround us every day. It is not about acquiring power, wealth, and fame. We were created for much more than that. We were created to love and be loved, to support each other in our families and communities, and to develop and use our God-given gifts in service to others. We were created to live and share the Gospel. We were created to know God and to bring about God’s kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Servant leadership is based on the way we were designed by the Creator. That is why servant leadership touches our spirits and connects with our souls. It resonates with our deepest desires for ourselves, our families, and the world. It allows us to be who we are really meant to be. Serving by leading is a way to find joy, and to share that joy with everyone with whom one lives and works.

It is easy to see the spiritual benefits of serving by leading, but there

are also practical benefits. Serving by leading *works*. It is effective. That means that we can be who we are called to be, while making our way in the world, using our resources wisely, and impacting the world for God.

In the following pages, we will discuss the importance of faith, the Two Great Commandments to love God and to love our neighbors, and the call to serve others. We will look at the power model of leadership rejected by Jesus, and the service model of leadership that Jesus pointed us toward instead. We will examine the characteristics and key practices of servant-leaders. Since servant-leaders work in organizations, we will review organizational forms and institutional operating principles. We will explore the challenges of leading organizational change. We will discover that servant-leaders help people to perform at their highest levels by getting past Theory X and extrinsic motivators. Finally, we will discuss the challenge of being in the world but not of the world, a challenge faced by all disciples of Jesus.

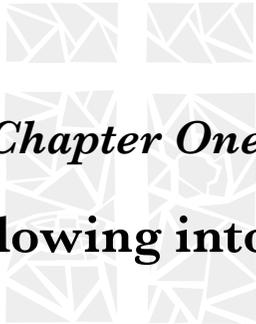
But first, our faith must be strong.

*Coming Up in Chapter One:*

## **Faith Flowing into Deeds**

- **Defining faith**
- **What happens when we live by faith**
- **What the Bible teaches us about faith**
- **The faith of Habakkuk**
- **One reason we need confidence and trust in God**
- **Why our faith should flow into our deeds**





# *Chapter One:*

## **Faith Flowing into Deeds**

What is faith? It can be defined as trust and confidence in God.<sup>2</sup> It means trusting in God even when we do not understand what God is doing. Faith is our response to God's self-revelation. Faith connects us to God and makes our relationship with God possible.

A life of Christian leadership is a challenging life. It requires deep faith—an unshakeable faith that will sustain our relationship with God as we do God's work. No matter what happens, we must be firm in our faith.

When we live by faith, we can sense God's presence. We can see God moving in our lives and the lives of those around us. We can see God in the natural world. We can feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in our loving relationships with our families and friends. We can hear the call of Christ when we take up our crosses and serve others. Our faith connects us to the power of Christ to heal us. Our faith makes miracles possible.

Jesus emphasized the importance of faith. He said: "Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you" (Mt. 17:20).

Faith is not about the material world that can be measured and tested by science. Faith is about the life of the spirit. It is not about what we see physically, but what we see spiritually. As Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:7, "we live by faith, not by sight." Hebrews 11:1 says that "faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

### ***The faith of Habakkuk***

One of the most dramatic and beautiful affirmations of faith in the

Bible is found in the Old Testament book of Habakkuk.<sup>3</sup> Habakkuk was a Hebrew prophet who lived 2,600 years ago. It was a turbulent time for Judeans, who came under the control of the Assyrians, then the Egyptians, and then the Babylonians. Habakkuk complained to God about God's inaction in the face of violence and injustice in Judah. God answered that the wicked would be punished. God was raising the Babylonians, who were known for being ruthless, swift, and unstoppable. They would conquer the Judeans. Later, the Babylonians themselves would be judged.

Habakkuk was distraught. Would the Babylonians wipe out the Judeans? How could God do this? Weren't the Babylonians worse than the most wicked Judeans? He did not understand. But in the face of that coming destruction, Habakkuk still had faith in God. At Habakkuk 3:17-19 he said:

Though the fig tree does not bud  
and there are no grapes on the vines,  
though the olive crop fails  
and the fields produce no food,  
though there are no sheep in the pen  
and no cattle in the stalls,  
yet I will rejoice in the Lord,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior.  
The Sovereign Lord is my strength;  
he makes my feet like the feet of a deer,  
he enables me to tread on the heights.

Judah was agrarian, so Habakkuk was describing complete devastation. There would be nothing to eat; death would be everywhere. But his faith was unshakeable. He remained joyful in God his Savior. He knew that the Lord was his strength. With confidence and trust in the Lord, he could face anything.

We need that same confidence and trust in the Lord. One of our challenges as Christians is that we are called to be *different*. Charles R. Swindoll, in *Improving Your Serve*, observed that the key verse in the entire Sermon on the Mount is Matthew 6:8: "Do not be like them..."<sup>4</sup> Living and leading differently, as Jesus calls us to do, requires faith as unshakeable as the faith of Habakkuk.

## ***Faith flowing into deeds***

Jesus calls us to faith, and he also calls us to serve. If we do not have faith, we will have no connection with him. If we do not help others, we dishonor him by ignoring what he told us to do.

Jesus said: “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing...” (Jn. 14:12). What did Jesus do? He fed the hungry, healed the sick, and reached out to the outcast. Fully alive in faith, we must do the same. “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph. 2:10).

This is not about earning one’s way to heaven. As Rick Warren pointed out, “you’re not saved *by* service, but you are saved *for* service.”<sup>5</sup> We should be so grateful for our salvation that we want to demonstrate our faith through our actions. Those actions can make our faith come alive. As we read at James 2:14-17:

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Or, as we read in 1 John 3:17-18: “If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.” Our faith should flow into our deeds.

To follow Christ and lead others in our secular, commercial world is difficult. We must resist many temptations offered by the culture that surrounds us—temptations like power, wealth and fame. But with faith, we can live by the teachings of Christ. Paul encouraged the Corinthians to “stand firm in the faith” (1 Co.16:13). He told Timothy to “fight the good fight of the faith” (1 Ti. 6:12). We will be blessed if we can say, at the end of our lives, what Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:6-7:

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For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

*Coming Up in Chapter Two:*

## **Loving and Serving Others**

- **The Great Commandments**
- **What happens when we fail to love**
- **Why we were created**
- **What we are called to do**
- **One consequence of serving others**
- **Using our gifts**
- **Leading with a servant's heart**
- **Whom we can serve**
- **Worldwide challenges we can address**





## *Chapter Two:*

# Loving and Serving Others

### ***Commanded to love***

When a Pharisee asked Jesus which is the greatest commandment, Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself’ (Mt. 22:37-39). When asked who is my neighbor, Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan who stopped and helped a stranger who was wounded and lying by the side of the road (Lk. 10:29-37).

At the Last Supper, Jesus said: ‘A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another’ (Jn. 13:34-35). This is how Jesus wants us to be known: as disciples who love one another.

In the New Testament, there are many verses urging us to love others.<sup>6</sup> It is very clear: We are commanded to love. If we fail to love, we fail to follow Jesus, and we fail to know God. As we read in 1 John 4:7-8:

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.  
Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.  
Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

A life without love is a meaningless life. As Paul wrote:

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over

my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. (1 Co. 13:1-3)

We were created to love God and to love others. We are at our best when we are giving and receiving love. That is how we are designed. That is why we are here—to “do everything in love” (1 Co. 16:14). We are here to love our families and friends, our neighbors, our co-workers, members of our churches and our communities. We are here to love all people. We do not have to agree with them or approve of what they do. Love is deeper than agreement or approval. We can love people even while disciplining them or protecting ourselves from them—we do not have to let them hurt others or ourselves. But we must love everyone. We must hold an attitude of good will toward them. Jesus allowed no exceptions and no excuses. We should never forget that the two greatest commandments are both about love.

### ***Called to serve***

When we love people, we care about what happens to them. We want to help them when they need help. Jesus called us to do exactly that. He modelled for us by feeding the hungry, healing the sick, and reaching out to the outcast. He made it clear in the parable of the sheep and the goats that we should do the same:

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.

*Loving and Serving Others*

Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life (Mt. 25:31-46).

The message is clear. Those who will have eternal life are those who serve others.

The importance of caring for the poor is brought home in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31). Jesus said:

There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham

far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’

But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’

Concern for the plight of the poor is a major theme of the Bible.<sup>7</sup>

When we love others and wish to serve them, no act of service will be too small or humble. During the Last Supper, Jesus demonstrated humble service. We read at John 13:3-5:

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.

When Peter resisted, Jesus told him, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me” (Jn. 13:8). Peter relented, and Jesus continued washing.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. ‘Do you understand what I have done for you?’ he asked them. ‘You call me “Teacher” and “Lord,” and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord

and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. (Jn. 13:12-15)

Donald Kraybill, in *The Upside-Down Kingdom*, described Jesus as a servant Messiah who came among us as a waiter, a slave, a servant, and not a boss. "Jesus invites humble servanthood," Kraybill said.<sup>8</sup> When we follow the example of Jesus, we do not worry about our status, we just focus on what needs to be done, however humble it may be.

That is why the Christian leader must first have a servant's heart. Siang-Yang Tan, in his book, *Full Service: Moving from Self-Serve Christianity to Total Servanthood*, said:

God has called us *first* to servanthood, not leadership. Servanthood 101 is the foundational course of life and ministry for disciples or followers of Jesus Christ...The Lord Jesus has called us to servanthood that comes out of deep, loving, intimate friendship or communion with him.<sup>9</sup>

Rick Warren, in his book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, agreed:

Thousands of books have been written on leadership, but few on servanthood. Everyone wants to lead; no one wants to be a servant...Even Christians want to be 'servant-leaders,' not just plain servants. But to be like Jesus is to be a servant. That's what he called himself...You must have a servant's heart.<sup>10</sup>

Swindoll, in *Improving Your Serve*, said that servants are givers, forgivers, and forgetters. He used the Beatitudes to describe a servant. Thus, the servant is genuinely humble before God, shows compassion on behalf of the needy, is gentle, has a passionate appetite for righteousness, is merciful, is pure in heart, is a peacemaker, and is persecuted for the sake of righteousness.<sup>11</sup>

Each of us has gifts. We glorify God when we use those gifts to help others. As we are urged in 1 Peter 4:10: "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." Many passages in the New Testament encourage us to

serve others and put their interests before our own. For example:

- “No one should seek their own good, but the good of others” (1 Co. 10:24).
- “You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love” (Gal. 5:13).
- “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2).
- “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. (Php. 2:3-4).

Stacy Rinehart, in his book *Upside Down: The Paradox of Servant Leadership*, said:

Jesus instituted a different order based on the mutuality and interdependence typified in the ‘one another’ commands. We are to love one another, serve one another, put one another first, comfort one another—the list goes on and on. . . Jesus’ model of leadership in His body emerges from a relational context in which life, power, and leadership come from our relationship together in the Lord.<sup>12</sup>

### ***Meeting the needs of others***

We are called to serve. Then whom should we serve? We can begin in our families, helping each other to grow, helping each other to use our God-given gifts, and helping each other to manage the details of our daily lives together. We can reach out to friends and colleagues, helping them in times of need, encouraging and supporting them as they pursue their hopes and dreams.

Beyond our families, friends, and colleagues, we can identify needs

in our neighborhoods and communities. We can address worldwide problems. It is estimated that three billion people live on \$2.50 or less per day. Poverty usually results in a wide range of social, educational, and health problems for the poor. Poverty that is caused by injustice can generate violence between individuals, communities, and nations. Wars have taken a huge toll on humankind. More than 120 million people have died in wars during the past hundred years—including the war-related deaths of civilians from diseases, famine, and atrocities, as well as the deaths of soldiers.

In Genesis 2:15, we read that “the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” We haven’t been taking care of it. Environmental degradation is everywhere, in our polluted rivers, oceans, and air. Plant and animal species are being extinguished. Pollutants have found their way into previously pristine natural habitats. Vast forests are being cut down and not replaced.

If you don’t know where to begin serving others, why not begin with the examples in the parable of the sheep and the goats? Why not focus on providing food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty; befriending a stranger; providing clothing to those in need; helping the sick; and visiting those in prison?

*The hungry.* It is estimated that more than 800 million people do not get enough food to be healthy. On average, one person dies every second as a result of hunger. In developing countries, a third of all deaths in children under the age of five are related to a lack of nutrition, and one child in four is stunted because of a lack of food. Around 27 percent of all children in developing countries are estimated to be underweight or stunted. Millions go to bed hungry every night. Even in the United States, one of the richest countries in the world, it is estimated that 48.8 million Americans—including 16.2 million children—lack the means to get enough nutritious food on a regular basis. People are hungry.

*The thirsty.* It is estimated that more than a billion people lack access to clean drinking water, and 2.8 billion face water shortages at least one month per year. People are thirsty.

*Strangers.* In many countries, there has been a breakdown in communities, so that millions have become isolated or alienated. People are lonely.

*Clothing for those in need.* Clothing donations are needed by many of the estimated 3.5 million homeless people in the United States, 1.35 million of whom are children. The National Center for Children in Poverty notes that about 32.4 million children living in low-income families and 16.1 million living in poor families—and their parents—could also benefit from donated clothes. People need clothing.

*The sick.* Cardiovascular diseases—disorders of the heart and blood—are the number one cause of death throughout the world, killing more than 17 million people in 2011. In the United States alone, nearly 600,000 people die each year of heart disease. Another 600,000 die each year from cancer. Meanwhile, it is estimated that 40 million people around the world are living with HIV/AIDS. The World Health Organization estimates that in 2010, there were 219 million documented cases of malaria, which in that year alone killed between 660,000 and 1.2 million people, many of them children. These are only a few of the diseases that ravage humankind. People are sick.

*Those in prison.* It is estimated that there are nine million people in prison around the world. The United States has 2.3 million people behind bars, far more than any other nation. People are in prison.

In addition, people need educational opportunities, safe living conditions, fair treatment from institutions of justice, and basic personal and political freedoms. Most important, they need to love and be loved. They need opportunities to form communities, to work, to worship, and to develop spiritually. People who have plenty of material goods often have spiritual needs. They may “have it all” but find little meaning in what they have.

Every day, we can watch and listen. We can identify the needs of those around us. Then, in thousands of ways, we can *serve*. We can change lives. We can share the Gospel. We can bring hope.

The Nozomi Project is an example. In March 2011, a *tsunami* hit the Tohoku region of Japan. More than 17,000 people were killed or missing, and 6,000 injured. There was massive destruction of property—more than a million buildings collapsed or were damaged. The tsunami wreaked havoc as far as six miles inland. The region was devastated.

Immediately following the tsunami, a team of Christian missionaries arrived in Ishinomaki, one of the affected towns. People needed healing, people needed jobs, and people needed hope.

Sue Plumb Takamoto went to Ishinomaki to help clear a field of debris. As she did so, she kept noticing colorful shards of broken pottery, strewn everywhere. She and her friends decided to gather the shards. An idea emerged: the broken shards could be smoothed, polished, and transformed into jewelry.

“Nozomi” is the Japanese word for “hope,” so they called it the Nozomi Project. Today it is a social enterprise, building community, providing income, restoring dignity, and generating hope. Nozomi women have been trained to craft one-of-a-kind pieces of jewelry featuring those broken pieces of rice bowls and tea cups. Each woman names her line of jewelry, sometimes in honor of a loved one who died in the tsunami. One third of the women in the project are single mothers and grandmothers; most of them lost their livelihoods, family members, and homes when the tsunami destroyed their world. Now, with the encouragement and support of Christian servant-leaders, they are rebuilding their lives. The Nozomi Project has become a Christian community. Every work day, the women share their lunch, read and discuss the Bible, and pray together.

“God can take broken pottery and broken women who think that life is over for them and do anything he wants,” said Takamoto. “We are in the midst of seeing God do amazing things.”<sup>13</sup>

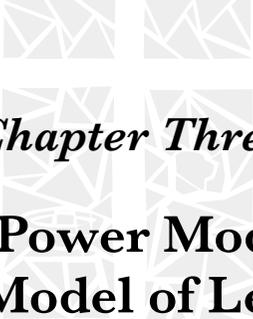


*Coming Up in Chapter Three:*

## **The Power Model vs Service Model of Leadership**

- **Defining the power model of leadership and the service model of leadership**
- **How Jesus calls us to lead**
- **The central message of Jesus**
- **Why the power model is tempting**
- **Disadvantages of the power model**
- **Why Christian leaders embrace the service model**
- **Applying the service model**
- **A network of love**
- **Mutual respect and the recognition of each person's gifts**
- **Loving each other instead of lording it over each other**





## *Chapter Three:*

# **The Power Model vs Service Model of Leadership**

While we can serve in many ways as individuals, we are likely to have greater impact if we join with others. We can join a group of volunteers, or establish an organization, or join an existing organization to address human needs. Once we begin serving in a group or organization, we may see the opportunity to serve by leading. It is then that we must choose what kind of leader we are going to be.

What is leadership? I see two major ideas or “models” of leadership in the world today. One is the power model of leadership. The power model says that leadership is about acquiring and wielding power for oneself. It is often about coercion and manipulation. It assumes a pyramid, a hierarchy in which power is in the hands of the leader at the top. The focus is on the leader, who issues orders to his or her subordinates.

The other model is the service model of leadership. The service model says that leadership is about making a difference in the lives of others. It is not about the organizational hierarchy, because anyone, anywhere in an organization, can be of service. The focus is not on the leader, it is on meeting the needs of others. Teams develop and implement the mission, which addresses the needs of employees, customers, and society at large.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Jesus and earthly power***

Jesus rejected earthly power at the beginning of his ministry. In the desert after his baptism, Jesus faced the temptations of Satan. One temptation was earthly power:

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this I

will give you,' he said, 'if you will bow down and worship me.' Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.' (Mt. 4:8-10)

When it came to leadership, Jesus rejected the power model outright. The mother of James and John approached Jesus and asked that her sons sit at his right and his left in his kingdom. Jesus declined. When the other ten disciples heard what had happened, they were indignant. Jesus then called his disciples together and said:

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mt. 20:25-28)

A nearly identical passage is found in Mark 10:42-45. We find the same message in different words in Luke 22:25-26. During the Last Supper, a dispute arose among the disciples as to which of them was the greatest.

Jesus said to them: 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.'

Thus, all three of the Synoptic Gospels include this key teaching on leadership. Jesus calls us to be servants when we lead.<sup>15</sup>

Malphurs, in his book *Being Leaders*, pointed out that the Greek text for the passage in Mark 10:42-45 and Matthew 20:25-28 uses two different words for servanthood. One refers to a person who serves voluntarily, while the other refers to a person who has forfeited his rights and is in a servile position in relation to his lord. Malphurs said:

Jesus uses the two concepts to carefully weave together the ideas of obligation and willingness in giving one's life to serve as a leader.

We're obligated to serve him but, at the same time, we must be willing to serve him. In short, we *willingly obligate* ourselves to serve.<sup>16</sup>

This teaching of Jesus about leadership reverses the assumptions of the secular world. As J. Oswald Sanders said in *Spiritual Leadership*, “the term *servant* speaks everywhere of low prestige, low respect, low honor...When Jesus used the term, however, it was a synonym for greatness. And that was a revolutionary idea.”<sup>17</sup>

Discussing the teaching of Jesus on servanthood in leadership, Bennett J. Sims wrote in *Servanthood: Leadership for the Third Millennium*:

When Jesus reveals the formula for greatness in leadership he is not talking to a Sunday school class or propounding a truth that applies to some situations and not others. Instead, Jesus is teaching the truth of God's cosmos. He is the revealer of what is true in all settings, at all times, in all relationships. Servanthood is the path of greatness in marriage, in the marketplace, in government, and at General Motors. *Jesus reveals a way of life, not simply a way of being religious.*<sup>18</sup>

### ***The kingdom of God***

That way of life is the way of the kingdom of God. Scholars and theologians agree that the kingdom of God was the central message of Jesus.<sup>19</sup> Over and over again, in statement after statement, Jesus described that “upside down” world of the kingdom. For example, it is very hard for the rich to enter the kingdom (Lk. 18:24). Those who appear holy and righteous may not enter the kingdom; tax collectors and prostitutes may enter the kingdom of God ahead of them (Mt. 21:31). An adult filled with false pride may not enter the kingdom. Jesus said: “Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it” (Lk. 18:17). Whoever humbles herself or himself like a child “is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 18:4). Jesus said that “the last will be first, and the first will be last” (Mt. 20:16). He said that “whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it” (Mt. 10:39).

Jesus distinguished the kingdom of God from the secular world in his teaching of the beatitudes. He did not say, “blessed are the rich and famous; blessed are the powerful and clever.” He said that those who are blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who are persecuted because of righteousness (Mt. 5:3-10). The beatitudes are not about success as defined by the secular world. They are about the life of the spirit, the rich and deep life of faith that Jesus offers to each of us.

The domination systems of the world do not exist in the kingdom of God. Gone is the abusive power that oppresses or enslaves. The kingdom is for love and servanthood instead. As Donald Kraybill wrote in *The Upside Down Kingdom*:

In the upside-down kingdom greatness isn’t measured by how much power we exercise over others...In God’s inverted kingdom, greatness is signified by our willingness to serve. Service to others becomes the yardstick of stature in the new kingdom.”<sup>20</sup>

The teachings of Jesus about servanthood are an integral part of his message about the kingdom of God. In his book, *How God Became King*, N.T. Wright said:

Jesus contrasts the normal practice of pagan rulers with his own vision of power and prestige: ‘Anyone who wants to be great among you must become your servant’ (10:43). *This is at the center of his vision of the kingdom.* And this is not only illustrated, but instantiated, by Jesus’ own vocation: ‘The son of man didn’t come to be waited on. He came to be the servant, to give his life “as a ransom for many (10:45).”<sup>21</sup> (italics added)

Kraybill said that “instead of giving orders and directives...Jesus is asking how he can serve.”<sup>22</sup> As his disciples, we need to do the same. “Rather than asking how we can get ahead, fulfill our needs, and soar to the top, disciples ask how we can best serve others.”<sup>23</sup>

Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges wrote in *Lead Like Jesus*:

This call by Jesus to servant leadership is clear and unequivocal; His words leave no room for plan B. He placed no restrictions or limitations of time, place, or situation that would allow us to exempt ourselves from His command. For followers of Jesus, servant leadership isn't an option; it's a mandate. Servant leadership is to be a living statement of who we are in Christ, how we treat one another, and how we demonstrate the love of Christ to the whole world.<sup>24</sup>

### ***Rejecting the power model in our culture***

Jesus taught us to pray, “your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Mt. 6:10). If we are to follow Jesus and advance the kingdom of God on earth, then we, too, must reject the power model of leadership. That is a challenge—a challenge that is hard for many to accept. Gene Wilkes, in *Jesus on Leadership*, said this about the Matthew 20 passage:

These words are Jesus' most clear yet most avoided teachings on leadership. His words are almost never quoted when the discussion turns to leadership. Few conferences invite potential or actual leaders to begin with this description of a leader when building a personal leadership style. We tend to either read over his blatant message or, at best, use the passage as illustrative material in a call to service.<sup>25</sup>

Denny Gunderson, in *The Leadership Paradox*, commented on the Matthew 20 passage: “What does this mean in plain English? I believe it means *not so with you!* Jesus clearly and unequivocally denounces as worldly any talk or practice that establishes hierarchical orders.”<sup>26</sup> Donald Kraybill agreed, saying that Jesus “declares hierarchy unconstitutional for his people.”<sup>27</sup>

Jesus challenges us to lead very differently than the culture in which he lived and the culture in which we live today. We are accustomed to the power model of leadership, with its hierarchies and command and control systems. But in the kingdom of God, “the values of service and compassion

replace dominance and command.”<sup>28</sup> That’s why servant leadership is not about power and position. Gayle Erwin, in *The Jesus Style* said: “One who leads in the style of Jesus does not use forms of coercion nor does he depend on institutional position for authority. Instead, by serving people, he leads as they recognize his ability and choose voluntarily to follow.”<sup>29</sup> Wilkes in *Jesus on Leadership* summarized it this way: “Servant leaders follow Jesus rather than seek a position.”<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps because the power model of leadership is the dominant model in most cultures, Christian leaders are tempted to adopt this model. Tony Baron, in *The Cross and the Towel*, said: “Church leadership today, in many circles, desires the power of the sword and the shield that comes from the secular world instead of the power of the cross and the towel that comes from Our Lord.”<sup>31</sup>

Rinehart observed that “there is an epidemic of power leadership loose in churches and ministry organizations today. Power leaders are so common that we’ve lost our immunity to this style of leadership.”<sup>32</sup> He explained it this way:

The more modern and sophisticated we become, the greater our tendency to take on the world’s basic management philosophies to accomplish kingdom work. It’s as though we believe, deep down, that Christ’s teaching on servant leadership is an anachronism, better left to the dusty roads of Galilee... Yet, the apostle Paul warned against this tendency...<sup>33</sup>

That warning can be found in Colossians 2:8, where Paul says: “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.” And in Romans 12:2, he said: “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Henri Nouwen, in his book, *In the Name of Jesus*, suggested that power is tempting because “it offers an easy substitute for the hard task of love.”<sup>34</sup> It is easier to control people than to love people. He argued that when Christians use power, the results can be disastrous for society and a

problem for the church itself:

We keep hearing from others, as well as saying to ourselves, that having power—provided it is used in the service of God and your fellow human beings—is a good thing. With this rationalization, crusades took place; inquisitions were organized; Indians were enslaved; positions of great influence were desired; episcopal palaces, splendid cathedrals, and opulent seminaries were built... Every time we see a major crisis in the history of the church... we always see that a major cause of rupture is the power exercised by those who claim to be followers of the poor and powerless Jesus.<sup>35</sup>

There are many practical problems with the power model of leadership. For example, it focuses on *having* power, not on using it wisely. It defines success in terms of who gains *more* power, not who does the most good for his or her organization or community. And because people think they need to build power bases in order to become leaders, the power model promotes conflict between power groups. These conflicts may make it harder to solve problems and seize opportunities. Organizations and communities get stuck, locked in battles over power.

The power model is not good for the leader. The power-oriented leader thinks that leadership is about him or her, so the leader stops listening to others, and eventually becomes irrelevant, out of touch with those he or she is supposed to be leading. That can—and should—lead to the loss of the leadership position. Even worse, the power-oriented leader can never get *enough* power. It becomes an addiction, a disease without a cure. The leader always wants more and more power. This can easily result in spiritual corruption and even a life of self-torment.

People using the power model of leadership have different values than those living the service model. According to Rinehart, the power leadership model has five driving values: standardization, conformity, pragmatism, productivity, and centralization. The servant leadership model is characterized by diversity instead of standardization, empowerment instead of conformity, is centered in the Scriptures rather than pragmatism, and values authenticity above productivity and control.<sup>36</sup>

If we wish to follow Jesus and truly be Christian leaders, we must reject the power model of leadership. Power cannot be our goal, nor can it be our most important tool when we lead. On the rare occasions in which we must exercise power, we must exercise it *with* others, not *over* others, and we must exercise it to *serve and protect* others, not to benefit ourselves.

Foster reminds us that servant-leaders *can* use spiritual power, the power that creates. He says that “the power that creates gives life and joy and peace...The power that creates restores relationships and gives the gift of wholeness to all. The power that creates is spiritual power, the power that proceeds from God.”<sup>37</sup> Somebody is going to exercise power—it is almost unavoidable. That is why it is important to “choose the creative power that is used to lead and liberate. It is only through the grace of God that we are able to take something as dangerous as power and make it creative and life-giving.”<sup>38</sup>

### ***Embracing the service model***

Christian leaders embrace the service model of leadership. That is the way of Jesus.

Malphurs said: “We could sum Jesus’ life up with the one word *service*. One purpose for his incarnation and life on Earth was to serve and thus model what service is all about.”<sup>39</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, in his book, *Spiritual Leadership*, agreed: “Jesus defined leadership as service, and that applies whether a leader works in a secular or a church organization...The true leader is concerned primarily with the welfare of others, not with his own comfort or prestige.”<sup>40</sup>

Foster put it this way: “Do you want to be a leader who is a blessing to people? Do you honestly want to be used of God to heal human hurts? Then learn to become a servant of all.”<sup>41</sup>

The service model of leadership is about serving others, not using others. Servant-leaders don’t ask, how can I get power? How can I make people do things? Instead, servant-leaders ask, what do people need? How can I help them to get it? What does my organization need to do? How

can I help my organization to do it?

The service model is not about the leader, it is about the needs of others. The servant-leader is important because the servant-leader can help his or her colleagues to focus on identifying and meeting those needs. The servant-leader can set the agenda, call attention to the issues, ask challenging questions, coach and mentor, and join his or her colleagues in meeting the needs that the organization is there to meet. Identifying and meeting the needs of others gives servant-leaders meaning and satisfaction. It is a way to live one's faith, and do what Christ has called us to do.

### ***A network of love***

Servant-leadership is not about lording it over others, it is about loving others. N.T. Wright said that “our ‘big story’ is not a power story...It is a love story—God’s love story, operating through Jesus and then, by the Spirit, through Jesus’ followers.”<sup>42</sup> We lead with love.

Blanchard and Hodges explained in their book, *Lead Like Jesus*, that to lead like Jesus, you must love Jesus, and you must love *like* Jesus. “To lead like Jesus is always to seek to do the loving thing in the use of our influence on the thinking, behavior, and development of others.”<sup>43</sup> It’s what people need most from their leaders. Foster said:

How do spiritual leaders serve their people? They serve them by compassionate leadership. People do not need someone who will stand over them and pontificate in authoritative tones about the meaning of life. They need someone who will stand with them and share their excitement, their confusion, their hurt. People need leaders who love them.<sup>44</sup>

Rinehart quoted Howard Snyder as saying that “the church is not a chain of command but a network of love. This is, of course, supremely impractical to people steeped in hierarchical concepts. But it is the way of the Kingdom.”<sup>45</sup> Rinehart adds: “What a world of difference in the relationships and ministry of a group characterized by a network of love rather than a chain of command!”<sup>46</sup>

That network of love is based on mutual respect. Would we lord it over people if we respected them? No, we wouldn't. When we respect people, we listen to them, consult with them, include them, and team up with them. Erwin said: "We lord it over others because we don't recognize their value and don't view them in the way Jesus does."<sup>47</sup> When we recognize their value, and view them with respect as Jesus does, we realize that we can lead by serving, not commanding. We can build relationships that allow people to contribute to the organization at their highest levels.

A network of love recognizes each person's gifts. These gifts are contributed when the gifts are needed to serve the organization. Rinehart said:

While each member of the family of Christ has his or her specific roles to play in accomplishing kingdom purposes, the relationships among its members are critically important. Those relationships do not emphasize rank. Instead, we stand shoulder to shoulder, mutually supporting and deferring to one another. We step up to make our contribution and then step back into our place to encourage and applaud the contribution of others.<sup>48</sup>

Everyone has a role; everyone has a place; everyone can make the contribution he or she is gifted to make.

What about authority? Authority is the right to act—the right to give orders or make decisions. It is possible that legal authority will be an issue if there is disagreement, and the disagreement cannot be resolved through dialogue. In a situation like that you probably need to go back, start again, and reconnect with the mission and your colleagues. If the legal right to act is all you have left as a leader, you have suffered a major breakdown in your relationship with those you lead, and you are not likely to be able to lead them effectively.

Servant-leaders may have legal authority, but they exercise *moral* authority. That is authority that is not legislated but earned. If people respect you and trust you; if they believe that you have faith in God and you have their best interests at heart; if they know that you are seeking to advance the kingdom of God, and you are on the journey with them; then they will follow you. You will have moral authority, and if you

authentically exercise moral authority, your legal right to act may not matter.

Most important, we need to acknowledge that the ultimate authority belongs to God, and we are God's instruments. When we have authority, we should use it to benefit others, not ourselves. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he referred to his authority as "the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down" (2 Cor. 13:10; also 2 Cor. 10:8). We can use authority not to make people do things, but to help people grow in their faith and service.

### ***Leadership experts echo Jesus***

Leadership experts experienced in the world of work have come to conclusions that are consistent with the teachings of Jesus. Robert Greenleaf was one of those experts. He worked for AT&T from 1926 to 1964. During those years, AT&T was one of the largest corporations in the world, with more than a million employees. Greenleaf rose through the ranks to become the Director of Management Research. It was his job to help the leaders and managers of AT&T to become as effective as possible. What he concluded was that the most effective leaders were those who were focused on serving others.

In 1970 Greenleaf published his classic essay, *The Servant as Leader*, in which he coined the words "servant-leader" and "servant leadership." He defined the servant-leader by saying:

The servant-leader *is* servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is *leader* first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions...The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.

The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-

first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, *while being served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? *And*, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?<sup>49</sup>

Greenleaf echoed the call of Jesus to be servants first. When the opportunity arises to serve by leading, then the servant accepts the responsibility and becomes a servant-leader, paying attention to the needs of others, and helping them grow. Greenleaf also echoed Jesus when he shared his concern for the least privileged in society.

James Autry has been a jet fighter pilot, business executive, and poet. After many years leading a major corporation, James Autry listed the six things he believes about leadership. In his book, *The Servant Leader*, he wrote:

1. Leadership is not about controlling people; it's about caring for people and being a useful resource for people.
2. Leadership is not about being boss; it's about being present for people and building a community at work.
3. Leadership is not about holding on to territory; it's about letting go of ego, bringing your spirit to work, being your best and most authentic self.
4. Leadership is less concerned with pep talks and more concerned with creating a place in which people can do good work, can find meaning in their work, and can bring their spirits to work.
5. Leadership, like life, is largely a matter of paying attention.
6. Leadership requires love.<sup>50</sup>

Meg Wheatley is an organizational consultant. In *Leadership and the New Science*, she argued that the universe can no longer best be understood as a machine, as in Newtonian physics. Rather, it is best understood in terms of relationships and connections, as in quantum physics. She said:

To live in a quantum world, to weave here and there with ease and grace, we will need to change what we do. We will need to stop describing tasks and instead facilitate *process*. We will need to become savvy about how to build relationships, how to nurture growing, evolving things....Those who relate through coercion, or from a disregard for the other person, create negative energy. Those who are open to others and who see others in their fullness create positive energy. Love in organizations, then, is the most potent source of power we have available.<sup>51</sup>

Perhaps we are just beginning to understand what Jesus taught us: that we are designed to love and be loved, and that we can achieve what we need to achieve, together, through loving each other instead of lording it over each other. Bennett J. Sims wrote:

In the long run, no leader is privileged to ‘lord it over’ anyone, in any system, because the universe itself is constructed to honor the freedom of the human spirit. Systems that violate such freedom are doomed to topple in the revolt of subjugated children, oppressed employees, and tyrannized citizens, however long it takes. This is why servant leadership is foundational. Like a rock on which to anchor a house, it will secure any structure of human enterprise built upon it—families, businesses, churches, nations—as well as the emerging network of nations in their interlocking need of one another for the peace and protection of the planet.<sup>52</sup>

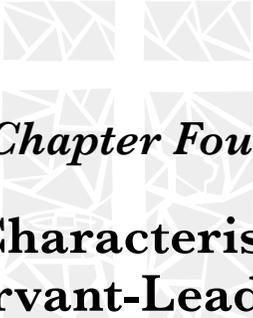


*Coming Up in Chapter Four:*

## **The Characteristics of Servant-Leaders**

- **Jesus the Good Shepherd**
- **Servant leadership and styles of leadership**
- **Religious and secular lists of the characteristics of servant-leaders**
- **Four elements that are unique to servant leadership compared with other theories of leadership**
- **Humility and servant leadership**





## ***Chapter Four:***

# **The Characteristics of Servant-Leaders**

### ***Jesus the Good Shepherd***

Jesus is our ultimate example of the servant-leader. How can we describe him as a leader? Michael Youssef, in *The Leadership Style of Jesus*, reminded us that Jesus described himself by saying: “I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep” (Jn. 10:14-15).

Youssef grew up in the Middle East. He was able to observe firsthand the relationship between a shepherd and his sheep. He recalled:

A good and faithful shepherd experiences a rewarding sense of satisfaction when he sees that his sheep are safe, well fed, and contented... From dawn to dusk, the good shepherd selflessly dedicates his days to the welfare of his sheep. Even at night, a good shepherd sleeps with one eye open. He is ready to leap into action to protect his woolly followers at the first sign of trouble.

When Jesus claims to be the Good Shepherd, he is not using an empty metaphor. He is claiming to be a very special kind of leader—a leader who truly loves the flock and sacrifices himself for their benefit.<sup>53</sup>

Siang-Yang Tan shared the words of a thank-you card for ministry written by Roy Lessin:

The beautiful thing about a servant of the Lord is that God gives him the heart of a shepherd. It is a heart that leads instead of a heart that controls; it is a heart that gives instead of a heart that takes; it is a heart that serves instead of a heart that demands; it

is a heart that restores instead of a heart that scatters. It is a good heart—it is the only kind of heart that the sheep will follow.<sup>54</sup>

### ***Jesus the situational leader***

Wilkes commented on the different ways that Jesus exhibited leadership. He said:

Jesus exhibited paradoxical styles of leadership. He adapted his style according to those he addressed and the context of the situation: He was gentle as a lamb yet courageous as a lion. He was yielding yet aggressive when cornered by injustice. He was gregarious but spent much time alone. He was meek yet in control at all times. He never had a formal education, yet he taught with great authority. He was a conformist yet an iconoclast. He was a friend to the outcast yet dined with insiders.<sup>55</sup>

In short, he used whatever style of leadership was needed to meet each moment.

This is a key to the effectiveness of servant-leaders. They do not have a single “style” of leadership. They adopt whatever style or method is necessary to address the needs of the individuals and organizations they lead. As Gunderson said: “No one style defines servant leadership. Jesus employed a variety of techniques, depending on the situation in which he found himself. Today, this is called situational leadership.”<sup>56</sup>

Servant leadership is not about the style of the leader, it is about identifying and meeting the needs of others. As the needs of others change, the servant-leader changes. If a leader has only a single style of leading, what he or she does may be appropriate in some situations but not others.

There is a saying that anyone who is a hammer thinks every problem is a nail. A servant-leader isn’t a hammer. A servant-leader is the whole toolbox. The servant-leader uses whatever tool is most appropriate in the circumstances.

To take two obvious examples, if you are the captain of a ship that is sinking, you need to issue orders to get people into the lifeboats. You should still listen, to make sure the orders you issue are accurate, but your role is to command. That is how you are going to serve best—that is how you are going to save lives. But if you are the chairperson of a committee of volunteers working on a community project, you need to consult, discuss, deliberate, and help the group work toward a common understanding and commitment to the project. That is how you are going to serve best—that is how you are going to move the project forward.

This need for flexibility applies also to the individuals you lead. Some need more direction, some need less; some need more encouragement, some need less. Servant-leaders adjust their leadership styles so that they can connect with people on the basis of their needs and their stages of development. Treating everyone the same would mean treating some inappropriately.

### ***The characteristics of servant-leaders***

Malphurs said that servant-leaders have at least four characteristics: humility, service, focus on others, and love. That is why he defined servant leadership as “the *humble service of others based on our love for them.*”<sup>57</sup> To put it another way, a servant-leader loves people and wants to help them.

Blanchard and Hodges said that servant-leaders ask: “What is the most loving thing I can do in this leadership moment as I seek to lead like Jesus? Doing the loving thing as a leadership principle requires wisdom, patience, courage, sacrifice, and hard work.”<sup>58</sup>

Warren discussed the following characteristics of real servants: They make themselves available to serve; they pay attention to needs; they do their best with what they have; they do every task with equal dedication; they are faithful to their ministry; and they maintain a low profile.<sup>59</sup> Warren also said that servants think more about others than about themselves; they think like stewards, not owners; they think about their work, not what others are doing; they base their identity in Christ; and they think of ministry as an opportunity, not an obligation.<sup>60</sup>

Baron stated that servant-leaders in churches act strategically, seeking lasting change. They encourage intimate relationships instead of dependent relationships, with the goal of transforming their faith communities. They persevere, and are not anxious, but are filled with prayer. They inspire personal responsibility instead of a victim mentality; they invest in motivated people; and they acknowledge that interpersonal conflicts may simply reveal pre-existing problems that need to be addressed.<sup>61</sup> Above all, “servant leaders live for the applause of the One as opposed to the applause of the many... Their primary responsibility is to take care of God’s flock.”<sup>62</sup>

James C. Hunter, in his book, *The Servant*, used the description of love in 1 Corinthians 13 to create a list of characteristics that he said would result in service and sacrifice as a leader. Those characteristics are patience, kindness, humility, respectfulness, selflessness, forgiveness, honesty, and commitment.<sup>63</sup>

Secular writers have proposed a variety of characteristics of servant-leaders. In his classic essay, *The Servant as Leader*, Greenleaf made it clear that the most important characteristic is the desire to serve. He also discussed listening and understanding; acceptance and empathy; foresight; awareness; persuasion; conceptualization; self-healing; and rebuilding community. He said that servant-leaders initiate action, are goal-oriented, are dreamers of great dreams, are good communicators, are able to withdraw and re-orient themselves, and are dependable, trusted, creative, intuitive, and situational.<sup>64</sup>

Scholars study a variety of leadership theories and compare the theories to each other. A reading of the scholarly literature suggests that scholars see four elements that are unique to servant leadership compared with other theories:

1. *The moral component.* This is about treating people right, and creating an environment in which people can raise moral issues.
2. *The focus on serving followers.* Servant-leaders serve followers for their own good as well as the good of the organization.

They encourage people to grow so that they can reach their fullest potential.

3. *Concern with the success of all stakeholders.* Servant-leaders define stakeholders broadly to include employees, customers, business partners, communities, and society as a whole—including those who are the least privileged. Servant-leaders care about everyone the organization touches.
4. *Self-reflection, as a counter to the leader's hubris.* Servant-leaders are able to reflect and put their role in perspective. They know that leadership is not about them, it is about their ability to serve others. Their self-reflection often results in humility.

### ***The importance of humility***

Humility is an essential characteristic of servant leadership. People who lack humility are focused on themselves; they show little respect for others. They are not willing to listen, and are reluctant to build teams, share leadership, or grow people. They want to be served, rather than to serve. In short, they simply do not do what servant-leaders do.

Sanders said that “humility is the hallmark of the spiritual leader.”<sup>65</sup> Jesus referred to himself as gentle and humble when he said, “take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Mt. 11:29).

There is no doubt that Jesus is the ultimate example of humility. As we read in Philippians 2:5-9:

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in

appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

We must follow the example of Christ. In 1 Peter 5:5-6 we are instructed: “All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because ‘God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.’ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.”<sup>66</sup>

Stott noted that Paul described four models of ministry in 1 Corinthians 4, and “the common denominator of all four is humility: humility before Christ, whose subordinates we are; humility before Scripture, of which we are stewards; humility before the world, whose opposition we are bound to encounter; and humility before the congregation, whose members we are to love and serve.”<sup>67</sup>

Humility is not about being weak or filled with self-doubt. Blanchard and Hodges explained humility this way:

As a leadership trait, humility is a heart attitude that reflects a keen understanding of your limitations to accomplish something on your own. It gives credit to forces other than your own knowledge or effort...People with humility don’t think less of themselves, they just think of themselves less...Humility is realizing and emphasizing the importance of others. It is not putting yourself down, it is lifting others up.<sup>68</sup>

Humility is understanding that we have important roles, but so do others; we have contributions to make, but so do others; we have things to say, but so do others—and we need to listen to them. Humility reminds us that we do not serve alone, we serve with our brothers and sisters in Christ. We serve in and through our Christian community. We serve as members of the body of Christ.

Tan said that “servanthood and humility are inseparable... Servanthood in humility will lead to true service. False servanthood in pride will lead to self-righteous service that is ultimately destructive to

everyone and the community as well.”<sup>69</sup>

The opposite of humility—pride or self-conceit—is a serious problem. As Sanders said, “nothing aggravates God more than conceit, the sin that aims at setting the self upon a throne, making of God a secondary figure.”<sup>70</sup> C. S. Lewis called pride or self-conceit “the great sin.” In his book *Mere Christianity*, he wrote:

There is one vice of which no man in the world is free; which every one in the world loathes when he sees it in someone else; and of which hardly any people, except Christians, ever imagine that they are guilty themselves...The vice I am talking of is Pride or Self-Conceit; and the virtue opposite to it, in Christian morals, is called Humility...According to Christian teachers, the essential vice, the utmost evil, is Pride...It was through Pride that the devil became the devil: Pride leads to every other vice; it is the complete anti-God state of mind.<sup>71</sup>

The reason that pride is such a serious problem is that it cuts people off from God. Lewis said: “As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people: and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.”<sup>72</sup>

God really wants us to know him, to be in touch with him. Lewis said that “if you really get into any kind of touch with Him you will, in fact, be humble—delightedly humble, feeling the infinite relief of having for once got rid of all the silly nonsense about your own dignity which has made you restless and unhappy all your life.”<sup>73</sup> Lewis said that if you meet a really humble person, he or she will not be busy telling you that he or she is nobody. He or she will probably be a cheerful, intelligent person who is interested in what you have to say. “He will not be thinking about humility: he will not be thinking about himself at all.”<sup>74</sup>

Wilkes said that “humility begins when you have a true picture of yourself before God and God’s call on your life.”<sup>75</sup> Erwin emphasized honesty as a key element in humility. He said:

Humility is simply seeing ourselves as we actually are, not higher

or lower. It means being gut-level honest about ourselves—being up front. It means knowing who we are and owning that—and owning our emotions. It means living without hypocrisy...One of the most loving things I can do for someone is to be honest (humble) about myself so they don't have to sift through my deceptions.<sup>76</sup>

### ***Humility and effective leadership***

As Wilkes said, “humility allows God to work in a person’s life.”<sup>77</sup> It allows us to connect with God. It also allows us to connect with people. Malphurs pointed out that egocentric leaders are not likely to be successful:

The glaring reality is that followers are quick to recognize and despise prideful, egocentric leadership. They can spot proud leaders from a distance and have little respect for them. And if they follow their leadership at all, it's because they have to, not because they want to. On the other hand, these same people are usually open to following humble leaders who have the right motives. They look for, respect, and gladly follow leaders who are not prideful and who don't consider others beneath them.<sup>78</sup>

Laura Reave, in her study of spiritual values and practices related to leadership effectiveness, concluded that “in spite of all the fascination with charismatic personalities, it turns out that quiet, humble leaders who stay in the background are often the most effective.”<sup>79</sup> By contrast, “a major cause for executive failure identified by executives themselves is personal vanity and pride.”<sup>80</sup> Reave noted that “humble leaders do not seek to develop a personality cult with public attention and devoted followers. Instead, they direct people’s attention to the goals and values of the organization, creating a strong corporate culture and sustained excellence.”<sup>81</sup>

The value of humility has been noticed by management experts. Jim Collins, in *Good to Great*, researched successful companies. The most effective leaders, whom he called Level 5 leaders, were humble about

themselves while being very ambitious for their businesses. He said:

Level 5 leaders channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great company. It is not that Level 5 leaders have no ego or self-interest. Indeed, they are incredibly ambitious—but *their ambition is first and foremost for the institution, not themselves.*<sup>82</sup>

Level 5 leaders did not talk about themselves, they talked about their companies and the contributions of other executives. They were modest about themselves, but had “ferocious resolve, an almost stoic determination to do whatever needs to be done to make the company great.”<sup>83</sup>

Merwyn Hayes and Michael Comer interviewed leaders for their book, *Start with Humility: Lessons from America's Quiet CEOs on How to Build Trust and Inspire Followers*. They found that humility was essential to leading effectively.

Leaders who have humility are able to build trust and inspire people to *want* to follow them... Humility is one of the most important attributes of leadership, because it helps connect the leader to followers through their common bond of humanity.”<sup>84</sup>

“If we can develop a truly humble attitude, we can change the world,” wrote Jorge Mario Bergoglio before he became Pope Francis. “We have to be humble, but with real humility, from head to toe.”<sup>85</sup>

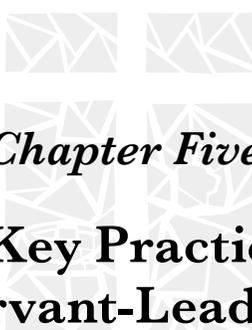


*Coming Up in Chapter Five:*

## **The Key Practices of Servant-Leaders**

- **Evidence of the practical effectiveness of servant leadership in the workplace**
- **Leading authentically and effectively**
- **The premier skill of the servant-leader**
- **Changing the organizational pyramid**
- **Helping people grow**
- **Coaching and unleashing**
- **The central ethic of leadership**
- **Misperceptions about servant leadership**





## *Chapter Five:*

# **The Key Practices of Servant-Leaders**

Some people think that spiritual values conflict with leadership success in a hard-nosed, competitive world. Research and common sense tell us the opposite. Reave, who reviewed more than 150 leadership studies, found consistency between spiritual values and effective leadership. Reave concluded:

The spiritual values of integrity, honesty, and humility, and the spiritual practices of treating others with respect and fairness, expressing caring and concern, listening responsively, appreciating others, and taking time for personal reflection have all been linked to quantifiable positive effects for organizations and individuals. They cause leaders to be judged as more effective by both their peers and their subordinates, and they lead to enhanced performance. They have been proven to be associated with increased worker satisfaction and motivation, greater productivity, greater sustainability, and enhanced corporate reputation, which in turn have all been linked to increases in the bottom line of profits.<sup>86</sup>

Servant leadership is spiritual leadership, and it is very practical. As Blanchard and Hodges wrote:

Christians have more in Jesus than just a spiritual leader; we have a practical and effective leadership model for all organizations, for all people, for all situations... Jesus understood from years of personal experience the challenges of daily life and work... He knows the problems that beset us in the everyday world!<sup>87</sup>

There is growing evidence of the practical effectiveness of servant leadership in the workplace.<sup>88</sup> The research indicates that servant leadership encourages positive organizational citizenship behaviors—the

willingness of people to pitch in and help out, even if the tasks are not in their job descriptions. Servant leadership creates a service climate at work, and promotes fairness in the workplace. Employees of servant-leaders are more helping and creative than those working with leaders who score lower on servant leadership.

Servant leadership has been shown to be positively related to employee job satisfaction, which is an important factor in employee retention. Servant leadership has a positive impact on employee commitment to the organization, higher levels of job performance, and community citizenship. Servant-leaders are good at building and facilitating effective teams. They promote open and problem-driven communication, team confidence, personal integrity, and cooperation among team members. In short, servant leadership *works*.

There are many practices that help servant-leaders to be effective. They include self-awareness, listening, changing the pyramid, developing colleagues, coaching not controlling, unleashing the energy and intelligence of others, and foresight.<sup>89</sup>

### ***1. Self-Awareness***

Each of us is the instrument through which we lead. If we want to be effective servant-leaders, we need to be aware of who we are and how we impact others. We want our impact to be as positive as possible. To become more aware, we need feedback, and we need time to reflect and pray.

When you are a leader, others are always watching and interpreting what you say and do. To serve others well, you need to know what impact your words and deeds are having on them. That is a challenge, because it is hard to see ourselves as others see us. We know what *we* intend by our words and actions, but that may not be what other people see or understand. We need to know who we are, so we can lead *authentically*. We need to know what impacts we have on others, so we can lead *effectively*.

There are a number of ways we can get feedback. We can ask family

members and friends who know us, care about us, and will be honest with us. We can identify mentors, people who are experienced in our field or at work, who can put things into perspective for us. We can take personality profiles, role-play difficult situations, and tape “practice sessions” so we can observe our own behavior more objectively. We can ask our colleagues for a 360-degree evaluation of our performance. We can survey our colleagues on specific ideas or issues. We can bring in facilitators to run focus group sessions. We can reflect at the end of each day on what happened, and how we behaved, and how others reacted to our behavior. We can pray for guidance.

Servant leaders are not overly self-critical. They simply strive to grow so that they can help others to grow. They seek advice and input about their behavior, their skills, and ways they can become even more effective as servant-leaders.

Self-awareness includes awareness of one’s duties and roles. Robert Greenleaf said:

The cultivation of awareness gives one the basis for detachment, the ability to stand aside and see oneself in perspective in the context of one’s own experience, amidst the ever present dangers, threats, and alarms. Then one sees one’s own peculiar assortment of obligations and responsibilities...Awareness is *not* a giver of solace—it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace. They have their own inner serenity.”<sup>90</sup>

On a daily basis, one can step back, withdraw, and spend some time alone to reflect and pray. Greenleaf said: “Pacing oneself by appropriate withdrawal is one of the best approaches to making optimal use of one’s resources. The servant-as-leader must constantly ask: How can I use myself to serve best?”<sup>91</sup>

As we know from Scripture, Jesus modelled solitude and prayer. Christian servant-leaders can follow his example by stepping back, praying, and asking God: How can I best use the gifts You have given me?

How can I *grow* the gifts You have given me? What is Your plan for me? What have You taught me so far? Where are You calling me to serve now?

## **2. Listening**

Paul Tillich said that “the first duty of love is to listen.”<sup>92</sup> Listening is how the servant-leader connects with people. It is how the servant-leader becomes relevant. It is the first step in identifying the needs of others. How will you know what people need, if you don’t ask and listen? Tan pointed out:

In order to nurture deeper and more loving relationships with each other, to connect with one another in the Spirit in the depths of our soul, we need to listen to one another carefully and attentively. This kind of listening will help us to discern and know each other’s deepest needs and to respond lovingly and appropriately to such needs with Spirit-filled acts of kindness that are truly other-directed.<sup>93</sup>

Deep listening makes it possible to dialogue. David Young found dialogue to be a breakthrough tool in working with churches that needed renewal. He wrote in *The Gift of Dialogue*:

In dialogue, two or more persons interact in such a way that they discover greater truth than they can know on their own... The dynamic interchange creates understanding among people who together discern solutions to complex problems and discover exciting possibilities... That is how dialogue transforms individuals and institutions.<sup>94</sup>

Pope Francis, when he was Jorge Mario Bergoglio, said:

Dialogue is born from a respectful attitude toward the other person, from a conviction that the other person has something good to say. It supposes that we can make room in our heart for their point of view, their opinion, and their proposals. Dialogue entails a warm reception and not a preemptive condemnation. To

dialogue, one must know how to lower the defences, to open the doors of one's home and to offer warmth.<sup>95</sup>

Dialogue can lead to consensus. Steve Timmis, in *Gospel Centered Leadership*, defines consensus in the church context as “decision-making that requires full agreement before final action; it is reliant upon the work of the Holy Spirit in his church, and intentionally uses the process as a means of discipleship and mission.”<sup>96</sup> One of the benefits of seeking consensus is that “it exposes heart issues to the light of the gospel in a way that no other decision-making process does. Any other method avoids vital heart issues that should be exposed in the decision-making process.”<sup>97</sup>

Even when full agreement is difficult to attain, consensus is a worthy goal. It is a way of discovering diverse ideas, facts, interpretations, hopes, fears, and beliefs. It is a way to find out who will be affected by a decision, and what the affect will be. It is a way to learn whether people have confidence in the decision, and if not, why not. Relying on assertive leadership or quickly defaulting to the majority view may be faster, but important facts and issues may be missed, and a poor decision may be made as a result. Timmis added:

Nor should we underestimate the evangelistic significance of submitting to this process...If non-Christians witness a room full of people engaging with an issue with due seriousness, mutual affection, appropriate honor and a defining love for God and his glory, they will see something truly supernatural.<sup>98</sup>

Of all the many ways to learn about your colleagues and customers, listening face-to-face is often the simplest and most effective method. Wilkes said:

Listening is the easiest way to understand the needs of people who are in ministry with you. You don't need complicated report forms and status reports to know what others need to complete their task. Simply ask the question, ‘What do you need to do your job?’ Then listen.<sup>99</sup>

Robert Greenleaf believed that listening is the premier skill of the servant-leader. He said that “only a true natural servant automatically

responds to any problem by listening *first*.<sup>100</sup> Servant-leaders don't start with their own expertise. They start by asking people about their hopes, dreams, wants, and needs. It is only *after* listening that servant-leaders begin to apply their knowledge and experience to see if they can help.

Listening first is very practical. As Don Frick noted in *Greenleaf and Servant-Leader Listening*:

It will often be the case that time spent listening at the beginning will save far more time later. Time spent listening gives you the opportunity to truly understand and then solve the problem or seize the opportunity. Acting quickly without understanding the problem or opportunity can result in wasted time and effort, or even disaster.<sup>101</sup>

Marvin Bower concluded after many years of experience as a management consultant that listening was one of the problems with “command and control” companies. He wrote: “I have observed that a high proportion of CEOs in command companies don't listen very well. They may even turn off people who have valuable information to provide; and one turn-off may discourage the person from coming forward the next time with even more valuable information.”<sup>102</sup>

Listening was one of the important factors in the election by *Fortune* magazine of new members to the National Business Hall of Fame. Peter Nulty wrote:

Of all the skills of leadership, listening is one of the most valuable—and one of the least understood. Most captains of industry listen only sometimes, and they remain ordinary leaders. But a few, the great ones, never stop listening. They are hearaholics, ever alert, bending their ears while they work and while they play, while they eat and while they sleep. They listen to advisers, to customers, to inner voices, to enemies, to the wind. That's how they get word before anyone else of unseen problems and opportunities.<sup>103</sup>

Dr. Ernesto Sirotli is one of the world's leading consultants on the topic of economic development. He started working in Africa in 1971, and has

since worked in local economic development in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United Kingdom, Africa, Latin America, the United States, and Asia in projects that promote local entrepreneurship and local self-determination.

Dr. Sirolli learned at an early age that if he wanted to help people, he had to be quiet and listen. He invented an enterprise facilitation system in which he does not initiate anything, or try to motivate anybody. Instead he becomes a servant of people who *already* have passion, energy, and imagination. He helps them to identify resources and make connections so that their dreams can come true. Over the years, he and the Sirolli Institute have worked with 300 communities, and have helped entrepreneurs around the world to develop more than 40,000 new jobs. It always starts with listening. “Want to help someone?” Sirolli asks. “Shut up and listen.”<sup>104</sup>

Judi Brownell, in her book, *Listening: Attitudes, Principles, and Skills*, described listening techniques that can enhance one’s listening skills, such as perception checking and vocalized listening techniques. She said that “the practice of sincere and consistent listening contributes to the development of a unique atmosphere or climate that makes further information sharing possible. It’s called *trust*.”<sup>105</sup> And trust is essential to effective leadership.

What makes listening so challenging? For one thing, there always seems to be background noise. There are unclear messages and constant interruptions. There are competing tasks, deadlines, and personal issues. It takes a lot of concentration to really listen.

Even when you are able to concentrate, it is not easy. Why? Because others have to be willing to speak up, and not everyone speaks up in the same way. Some people will speak up at office meetings. Some will chat with you in the hallway or coffee room. Some will send you a text, email, tweet, or message on social media. Some will talk during social events. Some will drop by your office. Some will answer survey questions. Some will only speak when asked a direct question. Some will send a message through somebody else. Some will only use body language.

That's why servant-leaders are flexible listeners. They make sure there are many ways for people to speak and be heard. They are flexible in their modes of listening, to match the speaking preferences of others. And they look for respectful ways to get input from those who are *not* speaking.

When you listen, you have to give the speaker your full attention. To do that, you have to *really want to hear* what the speaker is saying. This can be hard if you disagree with that person, or that person doesn't like you, or that person never seems to say anything positive, important, or useful (at least in your opinion). You have to remain open to what the speaker is saying. Greenleaf described that kind of openness:

Openness to communication is the tendency to view everything heard or seen...with unqualified wonder and interest. Later, for purposes of analysis or action, one may form a value judgment about what he or she saw and heard. But the initial attitude and response would always be: 'This is interesting. I wonder what the meaning is—what is being said to me?'<sup>106</sup>

Truly listening can be threatening. After all, you might hear something that you don't want to hear. You might hear something that causes you to rethink a long-held idea or belief. Listening might change your attitude toward others. It might change your behavior in an important way.

Winston Churchill offered important insight when he said that "courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."<sup>107</sup> Servant-leaders have the courage. They listen.

### ***3. Changing the Pyramid***

The traditional hierarchy—the pyramid—makes it hard to listen well. There are two ways that servant-leaders try to overcome the problem of the pyramid so they can listen better: they flatten the pyramid at the top, or they invert the pyramid. As Kraybill wrote, "Jesus flattens hierarchies,"<sup>108</sup> and "the Jesus way looks up from the bottom, not down from the top."<sup>109</sup>

Greenleaf worked in a huge corporation, and was very aware of the problems faced by the leader at the top of a pyramid structure. He said:

To be a lone chief atop a pyramid is *abnormal and corrupting*. None of us are perfect by ourselves, and all of us need the help and correcting influence of close colleagues. When someone is moved atop a pyramid, that person no longer has colleagues, only subordinates.<sup>110</sup>

One result is that is hard for the chief at the top of the pyramid to get good information. There are some things that the chief doesn't know because nobody will tell the chief. "Even the frankest and bravest of subordinates do not talk with their boss in the same way that they talk with colleagues who are equals, and normal communication patterns become warped," Greenleaf said.<sup>111</sup> People don't want to say anything that will upset the chief, or bring blame to themselves or their colleagues. As a result, the chief can quickly become isolated. As Greenleaf noted:

Those persons who are atop the pyramids often suffer from a very real *loneliness*. They cannot be sure enough of the motives of those with whom they must deal, and they are not on the grapevine. Most of what they know is what other people choose to tell them. They often do not know what everybody else knows, informally.<sup>112</sup>

In addition to the problem of getting information, it is also hard for the chief to test out new ideas. Greenleaf said:

The pyramidal structure weakens informal links, dries up channels of honest reaction and feedback, and creates limiting chief-subordinate relationships which, at the top, can seriously penalize the whole organization.

A self-protective *image of omniscience* often evolves from these warped and filtered communications. This in time defeats any leader by causing a distortion of judgment, for one's judgment is often best sharpened through interaction with others who are free to challenge and criticize.<sup>113</sup>

The solution? The pyramid can be flattened at the top, at least

informally, by bringing together senior leaders who are committed to the mission and to each other. Ask them to share all the information they have, from all their various sources, so the team can listen broadly and widely. After examining the information and discussing the issues, the best decision is likely to become obvious to everyone. In any case, the chief is likely to make a better decision than if the chief had acted alone.

One of the characteristics of a pyramid is that people tend to look up at their boss to make sure they are keeping their boss happy. Paying attention to your immediate manager or leader is fine, but if everyone is only looking *up*, who is looking *out* at the customer, client, patient, member, student, or citizen—whoever it is that the organization was created to serve? Paying attention to your customers is essential to your organization's ability to fulfill its purpose and obtain the resources to continue its work.

In order to focus on those served, servant-leaders often talk about inverting the pyramid, turning it upside down so that the “boss” is on the bottom and those served are on the top. Instead of looking up at their bosses, people look up at their subordinates and their customers. As Erwin said, “in the kingdom of God, the power pyramid is reversed, up-ended, so that the authority is on the bottom, not the top.”<sup>14</sup>

Organizations with inverted pyramids use many methods to learn about the needs and desires of those they serve. The conduct interviews, focus groups, surveys, product testing, and internet-based feedback from users. Servant-leaders in these organizations listen to colleagues, front-line employees, customers, business partners, investors, creditors, communities—everyone the organization touches.

#### ***4. Developing Your Colleagues***

Each of us has gifts, and each of us is unique. Helping others to grow and develop their unique potential is a sacred task. Servant-leaders give it high priority.

It is hard to imagine a more dramatic example of growing people than the way Jesus helped his disciples to grow. They were not experienced

leaders, or preachers, or educators, or public relations gurus. They were not wealthy, or well-connected, or highly educated. At the time Jesus chose them, they were what people of their day would have described as “ordinary.” They were fishermen, a tax collector, and a zealot. Furthermore, they were not especially quick to understand Jesus. They had to keep asking him what he meant. They argued among themselves. One of them actually *betrayed* him.

This was not what a talent scout of the time would have considered a “dream team.” Erwin said that Jesus “went to the streets and wharves and picked out the strangest crew ever to be sent out on a mission to change the world.”<sup>115</sup> And yet, after the resurrected Jesus appeared to them, the disciples did indeed *change the world*. They became articulate towers of strength, energized and unwavering in their faith. They suffered and died for Christ. And in the process, they launched Christianity.

Jesus lived with them, taught them, and modelled servant behaviour for them. He challenged them, prodded them, prayed for them, and loved them. He prepared them for what was going to happen, and what they were going to do. When the time came, *they did it*. And we are in their debt today.

Barnabas introduced Paul to the other disciples, and asked Paul to help him in his early work of sharing the good news. Paul in his turn sought to grow Christian communities, and mentored individuals such as Timothy. Down through the centuries, Christian leaders have grown Christian communities and other Christian leaders.

Sims said that the work of the servant leader is “*to honor the personal dignity and worth of all who are led, and to evoke as much as possible their own innate creative power for leadership.*”<sup>116</sup> He added: “A servant leader does not see production as the first purpose of an enterprise. *Human enhancement*, not human employment, is the primary aim of organizations led by servants. Delivering a product or service is important but secondary...”<sup>117</sup>

Robert Greenleaf thought that growing people is the most fundamental business of any organization. He said that “*the work exists for the person as much as the person exists for the work...* A leader who accepts this ethic would say: *I am in the business of growing people.*”<sup>118</sup> Greenleaf said that

the best test of a servant leader is: “Do those served grow as persons? Do they, *while being served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?”<sup>119</sup> Thus, Greenleaf measured the effectiveness of servant-leaders by their ability to help others grow.

Developing people is a key strategy for organizational success. When people grow, the capacity of the organization grows. When the capacity of the organization grows, it can do things better, or do things it was never able to do before. Individuals benefit, the organization benefits, and those served benefit.

Leaders who understand the strategic importance of growing employees are giving higher priority to employee education and training. Eisenstat and colleagues, in their article in the *Harvard Business Review* on high commitment, high performance companies, reported:

...Most of the leaders we interviewed regarded the creation of opportunities for their people as one of their most important jobs. In many cases these CEOs directly taught and mentored the next generation of leaders in development programs that they had personally designed.<sup>120</sup>

There is great hope for the future when the next generation of leaders is able to do even more than the current generation. As Gunderson said, “the primary goal of a leader trainer is to grow people beyond himself or herself. Jesus said to the disciples that they would do even greater things than he did...True servant leaders know genuine joy when their former pupils grow beyond them.”<sup>121</sup>

The people you develop may leave your organization. That may be a short-term loss for your organization, because it takes time to recruit and train new people to replace those who have left. But if you help people grow and they assume a greater role elsewhere, making a bigger contribution, then you are still advancing the kingdom of God. That, in fact, can be one of your goals—to train and prepare individuals who will become servant-leaders in other organizations.

One way to make sure that people are growing is to sit down with them and establish individual development plans. Ask employees: How do

you want to grow? What do you want to learn? What future do you aspire to? How can we help? The plan can include new experiences, seminars, travel, field trips, team-building exercises, skills training, formal education, and/or new positions within the organization. Monitor the plan on a regular basis. Make sure that people are growing!

### **5. Coaching, not controlling**

A good way to develop people is through coaching. We can bring out the best in people by engaging, inspiring, and coaching them. Instead of a “chain of command,” we can lead through a “chain of coaching.”

Coaching can involve teaching the mission, values, and responsibilities that colleagues need to understand in order to do their jobs well. Wilkes said:

Leaders make a big mistake when they forget to instruct the people they are equipping. Too many times, leaders invite others to become involved in ministry and then leave them alone to guess what they should do. Problems always surface when workers go untrained. Instruction is part of leadership...<sup>122</sup>

Coaching should involve regular feedback on performance—what the person is doing well, and what the person can do better. Constructive criticism is important because it is an opportunity for “speaking the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15). Specific, behaviour-focused comments are most useful.

When a colleague asks for help, the best way to coach may be to ask questions, so that the person you are coaching can find his or her own answers. Sir John Whitmore, in *Coaching for Performance*, said that “coaching is unlocking a person’s potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them.”<sup>123</sup> Give your colleagues another perspective, a different way of seeing things, and you can help them grow.

I have been fortunate to have a number of mentors and coaches over the years. One who has helped me for decades is Rev. Donald Asman, who was the pastor at my church, Manoa Valley Church. Pastor Don

has a wonderful way of listening. After lots of listening, he asks questions for clarification, and then he asks questions that get me thinking about options, choices, and different ways of viewing the issues or challenges. He doesn't tell me what to do. He creates an environment in which I can think—and pray—about what I should do. Often, I don't understand his questions at the time he asks them. It may be weeks or months before I fully understand. But when I do, I have one of those “aha!” moments that are truly a blessing.

Servant-leaders focus on coaching instead of controlling. While rules and regulations are necessary, they don't bring out the best in people. Micro-managing, or focusing on compliance, often kills the initiative and commitment of those you are leading. Sims said:

Built as we are for freedom and allegiance, our resistance to control mounts as pressures to control increase. Increasing control reduces responsiveness and productivity, which in turn moves human feeling in two directions for all parties involved. Satisfaction moves down; alienation moves up. Control systems discourage friendship. They are marked by grudging compliance and high turnover...At their worst, control systems are kept in place by violence, coercion, and threat.<sup>124</sup>

Kouzes and Posner, in their book, *A Leader's Legacy*, said: “The more you control others, the more likely it is that they will rebel. Exemplary leaders have repeatedly told us that they get the greatest commitment precisely when they let their people go.”<sup>125</sup>

If you have a strong desire to control, to micro-manage, you will not be able to develop and coach others. Gunderson said that “the human obsession for control and the sincere desire of a true leader to serve are mutually exclusive.”<sup>126</sup> A desire to control can defeat the greater purpose of servant leadership. As Rinehart wrote:

So much of ministry is the repeated exercise of beginning something, watching others grow and develop, and then letting go. If we don't counteract our need to control, we will find it difficult to fulfill one of our central callings as a leader: to give away the ministry.<sup>127</sup>

When you focus on serving people instead of controlling them, you focus on reaching people's hearts and minds. You spend time getting to know people. You learn about their hopes and dreams. You learn why they joined the organization or volunteered to participate. You learn about their work, and their goals, and how they see their roles. You learn how to facilitate the dreams of others. You learn how to coach people so they can grow in their capacity to serve.

### ***6. Unleashing the Energy and Intelligence of Others***

Once people are trained and coached, they can be unleashed to make their fullest contribution to the organization. Jesus knew how to do this. He mentored his disciples, and then he began to send them out on their own. We read at Mark 6:7-13:

Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits. These were his instructions: 'Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.' They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

Unleashing the energy and intelligence of others requires delegating responsibility. Sanders wrote:

The degree to which a leader is able to delegate work is a measure of his success. A one-person office can never grow larger than the load one person can carry.

Failing to delegate, the leader is caught in a morass of secondary detail; it overburdens him and diverts his attention from primary tasks. People under him do not achieve their own potential. In some cases, insisting on doing a job oneself is a result of simple conceit.<sup>128</sup>

People need the experience of being unleashed. Everyone is there, at the office, at the plant, at the church. Why not engage everyone to the fullest? Why not let everyone make the highest and best contribution they can make to the work of the organization? This about advancing the kingdom of God. Why hold anyone back?

If you help your colleagues grow through training and increasing responsibilities, and coach them along the way, then they should understand the mission of the organization and their roles in fulfilling it. They should be aligned with the organization's values, and should have the skills, the resources, and the knowledge to do their jobs well. If so, they are ready for more responsibility. They are ready to make more of their own decisions about what needs to be done, when, and how.

Your goal as a servant-leader should be to leave behind other servant-leaders who can continue the important work of the organization. That will only happen if people are unleashed. Blanchard and Hodges said:

One aspect of a job well done as a servant leader is how well we have prepared others to carry on after our season of leadership influence is completed...The fruit of great servant leadership is realized when a leader seeks to send the next generation of leaders to meet the challenges of their season with all the wisdom, knowledge, and spiritual resources he or she can provide.<sup>129</sup>

## **7. Foresight**

Robert Greenleaf said that “foresight is the ‘lead’ that the leader has.”<sup>130</sup> Foresight provides the context for creating the organization's vision for its future. The organization's vision can then be the basis for a strategic plan and tactical plans geared to make the vision a reality.

If you aren't exercising foresight, you really aren't leading—you are just reacting. And if you are just reacting, you may run out of options, get boxed in, and start making bad decisions, including unethical ones. A failure of foresight can put an organization in an unfortunate situation that might have been avoided. That's why Greenleaf referred to foresight as the central ethic of leadership.

Kouzes and Posner, in their book, *The Truth about Leadership*, emphasized the importance of foresight. They said:

The capacity to imagine and articulate exciting future possibilities is the defining competence of leaders. Leaders are custodians of the future. They are concerned about tomorrow's world and those who will inherit it...They think beyond what's directly in front of them, peer into the distance, imagine what's over the horizon, and move forward toward a new and compelling future.<sup>131</sup>

Kouzes and Posner surveyed thousands of people about what qualities or characteristics they want most in leaders they would willingly follow. The quality of being “forward-looking” ranked second, right after honesty. Foresight is important to those you lead.

For people of faith, foresight is about spiritual discernment, the effort to understand God's will and engage in the true work of God. It draws upon the spirituality, intellect, imagination, and beliefs of those involved.

While foresight is important, it is difficult to describe and hard to practice. Gunderson said that “foresight is the ability to intuitively sense where things ought to go. It is a feeling for that which is not yet here.”<sup>132</sup> Wilkes said:

I believe good leaders cultivate the ability to read current events and thus have a strong sense of what the future may bring. Great leaders take present circumstances and spell out potential scenarios from those factors. They seem to see what no one else can see.<sup>133</sup>

Robert Greenleaf explained the practice of foresight this way:

The prudent man is he who constantly thinks of ‘now’ as the moving concept in which past, present moment, and future are one organic unity. And this requires living by a sort of rhythm that encourages a high level of intuitive insight about the whole gamut of events from the indefinite past, through the present moment, to the indefinite future. One is at once, in every moment of time, historian, contemporary analyst, and prophet—not three separate roles. This is what the practicing leader is, every day of his life.<sup>134</sup>

The practice of foresight requires a kind of double vision. Greenleaf said:

One is always at two levels of consciousness: one is in the real world—concerned, responsible, effective, value oriented. One is also detached, riding above it, seeing today’s events and seeing oneself deeply involved in today’s events, in the perspective of a long sweep of history and projected into the indefinite future. Such a split enables one better to foresee the unforeseeable.<sup>135</sup>

To exercise foresight, we need to watch and listen. We can track changes in the natural environment and changes in technology. We can study data on economic, social, political, and demographic trends. We can network with others, and listen to their views of the future. We can pray, and we can look for the “signs of the times,” to see if we can understand what God is doing. We can interpret what those signs mean to our organization, region, country, and the world. And we can take action based on prayer, facts, and intuition.

### ***Misperceptions about servant leadership***

Servant leadership is so different from the power model of leadership that it is often misunderstood. Perhaps the biggest misperception is that since it is about serving, it can’t be about leading. But servant leadership is about *servicing by leading*. Servant-leaders are indeed leaders.

Malphurs identified four common misperceptions about servant leadership. They are: it’s doing ministry for others, it’s passive, it focuses on the leader’s weaknesses, and it ignores the leader’s own needs.<sup>136</sup>

As for the first issue, servant-leaders don’t do it all by themselves, they equip others to use their gifts so that they can serve also. As for passivity, Malphurs argued that “servant leaders are proactive risk takers. You won’t find them standing around, waiting for orders. The reason is that the Master has already issued those orders as recorded in the Scriptures more than two thousand years ago.”<sup>137</sup> As for the leader’s weakness, all of us are frail human beings, but we can still be strong with the power of Christ in our lives. And servant-leaders understand that if they are to sustain their

leadership, they need to take care of themselves, spending time in prayer, with families and friends, exercising, and resting.

Another misperception is that if you are a servant-leader, people will take advantage of you. Tan wrote:

Servanthood is not being a doormat for everyone to walk over and abuse or manipulate, with an inability to say no to unreasonable requests, or worse still, vicious demands. Servanthood flows out of obedience to God's will, out of deep friendship and communion with the Lord, who will guide us at times to lay down our lives and sacrifice for others, and at other times to say no without feeling guilty. In true servanthood, then, we give up control to the Lord our Master and not to people.<sup>138</sup>

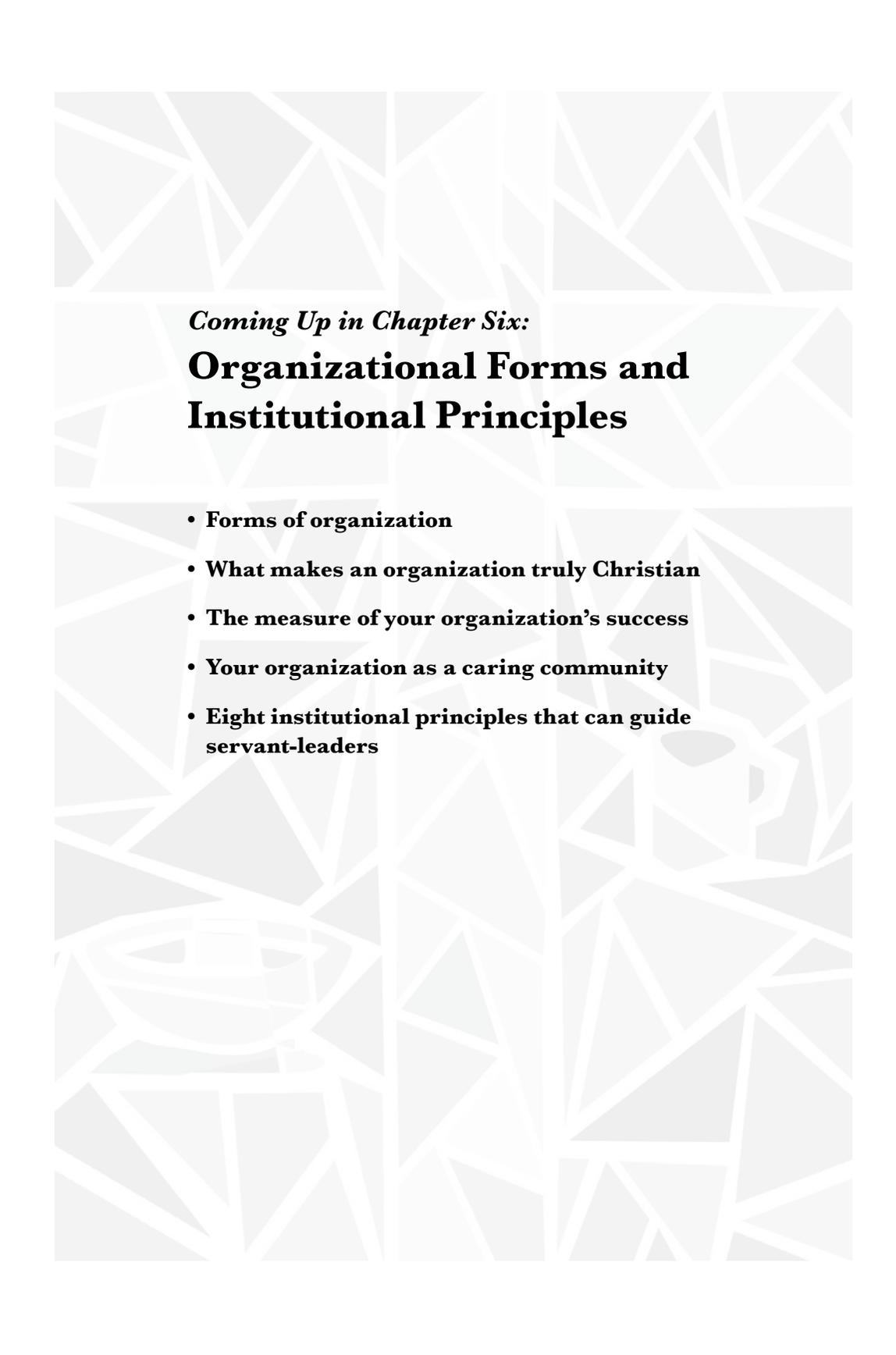
Erwin argued that servanthood and servitude are not the same thing. Servitude is the result of force, while servanthood is the result of choice. "Servanthood is a loving choice we make to minister to others."<sup>139</sup>

People won't take advantage of you if you don't let them. Be friendly, but be firm. Be clear about the service that you can provide, and the time and resources you have to serve. Being a servant-leader doesn't mean you have to do other people's jobs or take on additional work, if you do not have the time and resources to do the work well, or you cannot do it without harming yourself or others.

Another misperception is that servant leadership is not results-oriented. Actually, servant leadership is *more* results-oriented than other ideas about leadership. That's because servant-leaders get *two* kinds of results. First, they obtain the resources needed to continue and if possible expand the work of the organization. Second, they serve their colleagues and customers and make the world a better place.

How, specifically, do servant-leaders get results? They get results by helping their employees to grow and perform at their highest levels. They also get results by identifying and meeting the needs of customers, so their customers are happy, and come back for more, and tell their friends. Servant-leaders do indeed get results, and they do it in a way that benefits employees, customers, and society at large. They do it in a way that

answers the call to serve. They do it in a way that advances the kingdom of God.



*Coming Up in Chapter Six:*

## **Organizational Forms and Institutional Principles**

- **Forms of organization**
- **What makes an organization truly Christian**
- **The measure of your organization's success**
- **Your organization as a caring community**
- **Eight institutional principles that can guide servant-leaders**





## *Chapter Six:*

# **Organizational Forms and Institutional Principles**

We are commanded to love, and we are called to serve. We can serve by leading a group of people who have come together as a community that serves others. If we do that, we may want the community to continue after we are gone. We can join an organization, or we can form an organization, and build it in the hope that it will continue to do God's work far into the future.

### ***Organizational forms***

Any form of organization can be used to serve others. It can be a sole proprietorship, partnership, non-profit organization, for-profit organization, or government agency. It can be a social business or "benefit corporation" (known as a B Corporation).

The specific legal form of the organization may depend on the practical question of how resources can best be obtained to do God's work. If you and your friends have money to get started, you may wish to be a sole proprietorship or partnership. If there are donors, and you can charge fees for services, you may wish to form a non-profit organization. If the best way to raise money is by issuing shares to the public, you may wish to form a for-profit corporation. If you want to make sure that shareholders understand that they are only one group of stakeholders you will be serving, you may wish to establish a social business or a B Corporation. If the work you want to do is within the role of government, you may wish to support legislation to expand the duties of an existing agency or create a new one, and then get funds appropriated. Pick the form of organization that seems best suited to support and sustain the service you believe you are called to provide.

It is important to distinguish between organizational needs and purposes. You must get the resources to do the work, and you must generate a surplus, earn a profit, or obtain government appropriations to continue doing the work. That's an organizational *need*. But getting resources is not the organization's purpose. The *purpose* of the organization is to serve others. The purpose of the organization is to do God's work.

You will of course invite others to serve with you. You will need people with specific talent and experience. They may or may not be Christian, but they must be committed to the mission and values of the organization.

What will make your organization truly Christian is not how many people in the organization profess to be Christian, or how often they worship or pray. That is important—it can promote alignment and commitment, and create a faith environment that gives daily meaning to your work. But even more important will be what your organization *does* and how it does it. If your organization is meeting critical human needs; if your organization is helping its employees to grow and use their God-given gifts; if your organization is living and witnessing the teachings of Christ; then it is truly doing what Christ called us to do, and it will be Christian. By your fruits they will know you.

How will you measure the success of your organization? While you must obtain the resources to continue and if possible expand your work, the measure of your success will not be financial profit, or your personal power, wealth, or fame. The measure of your success will be the people you have loved and helped. It will be the lives you have changed, and the lives you have saved. It will be how well people have grown and fulfilled their sacred potential as human beings. It will be how many people have been inspired by your example and have come to know Jesus. It will be how many people have grown toward God.

### ***Your organization as a Christian community***

The description of the early Christian community in Acts 2:42-47 is deeply inspiring:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold their property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

References in the letters of Paul suggest that the new Christian communities that he helped establish were “sharing” communities whose members ate together, prayed together, and helped each other when in need. At Romans 12:10-13, Paul wrote:

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

At New Hope Myanmar Church in Yangon, the Thang family shares with the Lord's people who are in need. In 2008, some members of their church passed away due to AIDS and left their children behind. “There was nobody to take care of them, so my mother took two of the children to stay with our family,” recalled Esther Thang, a leader of the PacRim Bible Institute in Yangon. “After a year, my mother decided to start a children's house for the kids whose families were part of the church.” Some of the children were from divorced families. Others had parents, but their parents didn't have enough money to take care of them. Some of the children were from the countryside, and didn't have access to schools. “Soon we had ten kids, and then more, until now it is twenty,” Esther said. The children range in age from 5 to 14 years old. The children are provided with food, clothing, school expenses, and love.

“It is hard to give the children all the attention they need,” said Esther.

“But my two brothers, one of our cousins, and I all help tutor the kids so they can succeed in school.” With a family of five, twenty children in the orphanage, and Bible Students coming and going, the Thang family compound is a busy Christian community. “It’s like a party every day,” says Esther with a big smile.<sup>140</sup>

Sanders said that “Christ taught that the kingdom of God was a community where each member served the other.”<sup>141</sup> Greenleaf said that “any human service where the one who is served should be loved in the process requires community, a face-to-face group in which the liability of each for the other and all for one is unlimited, or as close to it as it is possible to get.”<sup>142</sup>

Any organization can be a caring community, providing encouragement and support when needed. Sims wrote:

Servanthood acknowledges and respects the freedom of another and seeks to enhance the other’s capacity to make a difference. Wherever such leadership is exercised—at home, at work, in business and the church, in the classroom and throughout the globe—it can result in an astonishing increase in zest, creativity, productivity and, best of all, in bonding people into communities of caring.<sup>143</sup>

Broetje Orchards is a faith-based family farm founded by Ralph and Cheryl Broetje. Their company has over 6,000 acres of apple and cherry orchards and 2,000 employees in the state of Washington. They donate 75% of their profits each year to their foundation, which helps people in need all over the world. The Broetje’s have combined faith and business into a single mission, guided by the principles of servant leadership.

It began with a dream.<sup>144</sup> When Ralph was fifteen, he heard a missionary from India speak about the suffering of children. He thought it be great to have an orchard and help kids some day. In 1968, Ralph and his wife Cheryl borrowed money to buy an orchard, and spent years developing the orchard and paying off their debts. Things were going according to plan until 1979, when the people available to work in their orchard changed suddenly. One reason was that the Iran oil embargo

drove up gasoline prices to the point that U.S. migrant families stayed home instead of following crops around the country. In their place, young Latino men began showing up for work.

In 1984 the Broetjes travelled to Mexico to try to learn more about the in-migration of workers to the U.S. They discovered that many migrants had been forced off their lands because of a lack of water, inadequate roads, or no accessible markets for their produce. There was also oppression and political violence. “That mission to Mexico made me realize how hard it was for people there to dream about achieving anything, because the opportunities did not exist,” Ralph said.<sup>145</sup> Ralph and Cheryl came to believe that the daydream Ralph had at age fifteen was now becoming real in their lives through their apple farming business. The difference was that the people they were to serve first were their own employees.

“Although we were aware that public sentiment was largely against Latino immigrants, we felt God calling us to live out biblical principles,” said Ralph.<sup>146</sup> Those biblical principles were that “the foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born” (Lev. 19:34) and God “shows no partiality...he defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing” (Dt. 10:17-18).

The Broetje’s understood that the migrant lifestyle was not good for the workers or their families, so they literally built a community for them. They built affordable housing, a chapel, and a preschool and elementary school that provide quality Christian education. They redesigned the work so that more of it was year-round. They trained their employees so that they could assume more and more responsibility, and become managers and leaders in their own right. They built a community that cared for the business that cared for the community. The Broetje’s wrote:

During the past 30 years our employees have become our community. Together we tend a large fruit garden that then takes care of our needs. As we have learned how to care for one another over the years, we as a community are increasingly able to extend resources and solidarity to other communities both in the U.S and internationally.<sup>147</sup>

And so Ralph's daydream has come true. With the profits generated by their business, they are not only serving children and their families in India, they are working with others to build better societies at home and around the world.

A few years ago my wife and I visited Chiang Mai, Thailand, an ancient cultural capital. We stayed at a small hotel that could best be described as an adult hostel—friendly staff, good food, great location, and very simple accommodations, all for a very low price. There was a cross over the entrance, and a plaque of the Last Supper inside the hallway near the kitchen. We noticed that a number of Christian missionary groups stayed there.

After a day in museums and art centers, we decided that our feet had earned a massage. We heard that there was a small massage parlor near the hotel. We found it, and learned that all the women who worked there had been prisoners. They had been taught the art of massage in prison so that they could earn a living when they finished serving their terms. A Christian had founded the massage parlor to give them jobs.

The massage began on the front porch with the washing of our feet. We then went inside, and found half a dozen women giving customers their massages, while chatting, laughing, and helping each other. The older women seemed to be offering suggestions to the younger ones. We quickly understood that it was not a massage parlor, it was a community, and we became part of it, talking and laughing along with them. They took good care of our tired feet, but they did much more. They lifted our spirits.

In his book, *The Concept of the Corporation*, Peter Drucker argued that the big business corporation is America's representative social institution, stating that "its social function as a community is as important as its economic function as an efficient producer."<sup>148</sup> More recently, Henry Mintzberg has argued that "beneath the economic crisis lies another crisis of far greater proportions: the depreciation in companies of community—people's sense of belonging to and caring for something larger than themselves."<sup>149</sup> Mintzberg says that community is "the social glue that binds us together for the greater good...Community means caring about

our work, our colleagues, and our place in the world, geographic and otherwise, and in turn being inspired by this caring.”<sup>150</sup>

There are lots of ways to build a community at work. Respect people, include people, and share information with people. Emphasize teamwork and cooperation. Share milestones in the work of the organization. Celebrate special events in the lives of individuals, such as birthdays, weddings, and graduations. Create social events that allow people to get to know each other better. Celebrate public holidays. Help people out during difficult times, such as sickness, or the death of a loved one. Show every member of the organization that she or he is appreciated and valued as part of the community.

There are many institutional principles that can guide you as a servant-leader. Here are eight:

1. Reach agreement on the organization’s purpose and desired outcomes
2. Serve employees
3. Serve customers
4. Strengthen partnerships
5. Serve communities
6. Build and facilitate teams
7. Develop an effective board
8. Grow servant-leaders

These principles can help your organization to be a servant-institution.

### ***1. Reach agreement on the purpose and outcomes***

Your organization needs to know why it exists and where it is going. Who are you there to serve? Why? Wilkes said:

Leadership begins with a mission. Without mission there is no need or motivation to lead. A God-sized mission that captures the heart of a person draws him into leadership because he must have others involved in order to carry out a mission of that size... Servant leadership finds its motive from God's commissioning a person to carry out a divine plan among a group of people. Becoming servant to the mission and a follower of the God who called you is the heart of servant leadership.<sup>151</sup>

Greenleaf emphasized the unifying dream. He said:

Institutions function better when the idea, the dream, is to the fore, and the person, the leader, is seen as servant of the idea... It is the idea that unites people in the common effort... It is the communicated faith of the leader in the dream that enlists dedicated support needed to move people toward accomplishment of the dream.<sup>152</sup>

Once you have decided on the mission and who you are going to serve, you need to ask: How will you serve them? How will you know if you are serving them well? What outcomes will you measure? Why are those the key outcomes? Your time and resources must be used for maximum benefit. You need to be clear about your organization's purpose and desired outcomes.

## ***2. Serve employees***

There are many things you can do to serve employees. Commit to their success the day they join the organization. Provide positive working conditions and appropriate equipment. Tailor employee benefits to meet employee needs. Set up regular systems for receiving employee input. Establish individual development plans. Provide training and continuing education. Offer promotion opportunities from within. In short, respect and trust employees, and help them to grow in service to others.

Nothing gets done unless your colleagues do it. The knowledge, experience, and compensation level of each person may vary, but every job is important or it shouldn't exist. Everyone counts. Everyone can make

a difference for the organization and those it serves. So listen to your employees, share information with them, rely on them, and commit to them.

### ***3. Serve customers***

Your organization was created to serve customers, clients, patients, members, students, or citizens. The purpose of your organization is to meet their needs. To do that, you must establish a variety of ways to listen to them. Listen to them during the creation of programs or products, so that you can create programs or products that truly meet their needs. Listen to them when they purchase your program or product, to get their reactions and perceptions. Ask customers how well the program helps them or the product works for them when they use it. Report back to customers regarding the action you have taken as a result of their input. Respond to customer complaints by working with the customer to reach solutions. Make sure you are really serving your customers.

### ***4. Strengthen partnerships***

No organization exists without vendors and suppliers, and most organizations have donors, investors, or creditors. Seek partnerships for mutual benefit. Listen to vendors or suppliers to understand their needs. Recognize mutual interdependence and build trust. Seek to maintain long-term relationships. Focus together on the “end customer.” Listen to donors, so that you will understand them and can help them to fulfill their values and dreams through their support for your organization. Provide accurate, honest, and timely information to investors, creditors, and the general public. If you have shareholders, consider their interests along with the interests of other stakeholders; maintain a balanced approach. Your organization relies on many other individuals and organizations. You can’t fulfill your mission without them. Make sure you work together as partners.

## **5. Serve communities**

Your organization should have a positive impact on the communities in which it is located. Identify the needs of those communities, and work with individuals and community groups to help meet the needs that you identify. Encourage employees and business partners to volunteer time and expertise to the community. Give employees time off for community service. Provide direct financial support to community groups or events as appropriate.

For-profit businesses can serve communities just as surely as non-profit organizations or government agencies. Unfortunately, many for-profit businesses define their service very narrowly, seemingly indifferent to what service is provided to whom, so long as it makes money. Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer said:

Companies must take the lead in bringing business and society back together... The solution lies in the principle of shared value, which involves creating economic value in a way that *also* creates value for society by addressing its needs and challenges. Businesses must reconnect company success with social progress. Shared value is not social responsibility, philanthropy, or even sustainability, but a new way to achieve economic success. It is not on the margin of what companies do but at the center.<sup>153</sup>

For example, when Vikki Pryor was CEO of SBLI USA in New York, one of her goals was to build upon the history of the company to provide financial services for working people and the less affluent. Consistent with her belief that God has given gifts and talents to everyone, she embarked upon a strategy to train and empower the existing employees, who in many cases felt they did not have the resources and skills to compete in a changing work environment. It was a double benefit because many people were hired from the communities the company was serving.

As the company evolved and grew, the culture of service and volunteerism flourished within the company. Many successful programs were launched, such as employee participation in fundraising walks, food and clothing drives, and community service days. Customers reported satisfaction levels over 95% year after year, while employee satisfaction was

tracked with 87% planning to stay with the company through retirement.

Fundamental to the company's strategy was the belief that all people, regardless of their station or background, should have access to high quality, fairly priced insurance products with good service. Products and processes were designed with this principle in mind. As a result, employees were able to earn a living by serving others from their own community. Life in the community was improved by providing *both* jobs and financial services.

If you focus on meeting needs, you will find that the legal form of your organization is not a limitation. For example, some non-profits have created businesses to supplement their income or create jobs for those in need. Bill Shore, in *The Cathedral Within*, described non-profit organizations that established businesses to create jobs for the poor, the disabled, or former prisoners who needed jobs so they could start a new life.

Meanwhile, some corporations classified as “for-profit” corporations have become “social businesses.” Social businesses employ workers, produce goods and services, sell the goods and services to customers, and make money. However, a social business is “cause driven” rather than profit-driven. The purpose of a social business is to solve social and environmental problems. For example, a social business could sell high-quality food products like yogurt at low prices to meet the nutritional needs of poor children. It could develop renewable energy systems and sell them at low prices to rural communities that have no energy supply. It could provide telecommunication services to isolated villages to connect them with educational and business opportunities. Profits can be used to pay back investors and to grow the business.

During the past forty years, many businessmen have come to believe that the purpose of a for-profit corporation is to maximize the wealth of shareholders. One of the unfortunate results of this view is that businesses have been willing to sacrifice the interests of employees, customers, and communities in order to maximize shareholder profits. This “shareholder primacy” is not required by law, and it disregards the essential contributions of other stakeholders to the success of the business.<sup>154</sup>

B Corporations have been established to avoid the shareholder primacy problem. The B Corporation legal framework makes it clear from the beginning that the responsibilities of the corporation include the interests of their employees, communities, and the environment as well as shareholders. The Declaration of Interdependence of B Corporations states:

We envision a global economy that uses business as a force for good. This economy is comprised of a new type of corporation—the B Corporation—which is purpose-driven and creates benefit for all stakeholders, not just shareholders. As B Corporations and leaders of this emerging economy, we believe:

- That we must be the change we seek in the world.
- That all business ought to be conducted as if people and place mattered.
- That, through their products, practices, and profits, businesses should aspire to do no harm and benefit all.
- To do so requires that we act with the understanding that we are each dependent upon another and thus responsible for each other and future generations.<sup>155</sup>

Whatever organizational form you choose, you can serve communities and change lives in the process.

## ***6. Build and facilitate teams***

Marvin Bower was managing partner of McKinsey & Company, a management consulting company, for sixteen years. Looking back on his career, he argued that the shortcomings of hierarchical, command-and-control systems of management have become more apparent. He said that a business “should be run by a *network* of leaders positioned right through the organization. Leaders and leadership teams working together will, I suggest, run a business more effectively than a hierarchical, command-and-control structure.”<sup>156</sup>

Teams are essential to servant leadership. Wilkes pointed out that “leadership of a team is the highest expression of servant leadership. This is true because team leadership embodies each of the principles of servant leadership. Servant leaders serve best when they team with others to accomplish the mission.”<sup>157</sup> Rinehart agreed:

If we are faithful stewards of our own gifts and spheres of ministry, we will probably be most comfortable serving God’s people in a team context. Teams of leaders working together for the building up of God’s people allow each leader to live most closely aligned to his or her gifting and sphere. Tasks and responsibilities are distributed around, with each person recognized for his or her unique contribution. The body is edified because all serve on a team. This is a model of ministry each believer can follow.<sup>158</sup>

What are the advantages of teams? Wilkes said that “teams are how leaders do their best work.”<sup>159</sup> Teams are superior to individual effort because teams have more resources, ideas, and energy than an individual. Teams don’t depend on the strengths of just one person, but on a variety of strengths from many people. Team members provide different perspectives, share the credit and the blame, and keep each other accountable for the goals. Above all, teams are how Jesus did ministry.<sup>160</sup>

A team is not a work group. Work groups have a strong leader, individual accountability, and individual work products. They may be members of a department or branch with its own hierarchy. Members of the work group report to the work group leader, who is responsible for the group’s results. By contrast, teams have shared leadership roles, individual and mutual accountability, and collective work products. Everybody on the team is responsible for the team’s results.

Work groups can be used for routine tasks such as collecting information and coordinating activities. Teams are best at solving problems and seizing opportunities. Teams should be formed when you need a breakthrough, a new paradigm, or a creative solution.

Robert Greenleaf advocated teams of equals. He said: “*No person is complete; no one is to be entrusted with all. Completeness is to be found only in the complementary talents of several who relate as equals.*”<sup>161</sup> Team members are

equal in that each member of the team is equally important to achieving the team's task. Individuals are chosen for the team because of their experience, expertise, or insight, not because of their titles or positions in the organization. Teams are most effective when they consist of people with diverse backgrounds and points of view. No one individual has to be an expert in everything—it is the team as a whole that is the expert.

The team leader is a facilitator, setting the agenda, tracking progress, and helping the team to function effectively. Teams are not hierarchical in the way they operate, so that all ideas can be expressed and taken seriously. Team members can contribute ideas on any aspect of the task, even if it is outside their daily area of expertise or responsibility.

Respect for other team members is a requirement for effective teamwork. Only in an environment of mutual respect will the opinions and insights of all team members be considered carefully. Teams do not function well when a person considers himself or herself a star, a solo performer who doesn't need input or advice from others.

Leadership of the team's work may shift as the subject matter shifts to areas in which different team members have expertise. Rinehart described it this way:

We work as a team, depending on one another's strengths and roles. We recognize and deeply respect each other's callings, strengths, spiritual gifts, and contributions. We have roles to play because of our gifts, and we each offer leadership to the group in those special areas. Our focus is to recognize what God wants to accomplish, to look to the best person to bring leadership to it, and then to support him or her in that process... This is what we term *rotating functional leadership*. Each person has a function, and when that function is needed, that person becomes our leader.<sup>162</sup>

In today's organizations, no one person can know everything that needs to be known to make wise decisions. A team committed to the organization and to each other can make wiser, more effective decisions than any one leader.

Greenleaf urged that the senior administrative leadership team should

be a “council of equals” with the CEO as “first among equals.” The result is better information for the senior administrator and better testing of ideas at senior levels. The senior team can be informally constituted, without changing the organization chart. Team members can share the burden of leadership, preventing burnout for the single leader who is the official head.

### ***7. Develop an effective board***

The government grants corporate status to organizations in order to fulfill the public good.<sup>163</sup> Each corporation, for-profit or non-profit, has a board, and by law, the board has all the legal authority to manage the corporation. It is therefore the board’s responsibility to fulfill the public good.

Greenleaf said that trustees (by which he meant board members) are the holders of the charter of public trust for the institution. He said that “trustees are accountable to all parties at interest for the best possible performance of the institution in the service of the needs of all constituencies—including society at large.”<sup>164</sup> Board members should care about everyone the organization touches—employees, customers, business partners, shareholders, creditors, communities.

Board members should be positive examples for those they serve. They should uphold high standards of conduct in their public and private lives. In 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Paul set out qualifications for overseers and deacons in the early church, nearly two thousand years ago. Christian church leaders must model Christian virtues.

The modern corporation is a comparatively new type of organization, but within the past century corporations have come to dominate our social, economic, and political lives. Since each corporation must have a board, and boards hold all legal authority for the organization, it is interesting that corporate boards have received little attention. Attention has been focused instead on the senior administrative leader—the President, CEO, or Executive Director. While the senior administrative leader is important, boards can play a major role in enhancing the

effectiveness of their organizations. They can make sure that their organizations truly *serve*.

To do that, boards should lead or initiate, not just react. They should not be nominal or honorary boards that just rubber stamp the decisions of the administration. Board members should be thought leaders. They should be in touch with social, economic, environmental, and political trends. They should be servant-leaders who understand the needs of those being served.

Effective boards have members who are diverse in their backgrounds, expertise, age, gender, ethnicity, and political views. Board members are polite but are willing to speak up and share their views even when those views are not popular with other board members. They offer the administration new ideas, connections, and resources. They ask provocative questions, and provide a safe climate for reflection and discussion. They also provide advice on staff performance.

Greenleaf argued that boards are valuable to an organization for many reasons. Board members have their own information sources. They have the perspective of detachment from administration because they are free from the pressures of day-to-day operations and have no career stake within the institution—they are not administrative insiders with contending interests. Board members can therefore step back and see the continuum of past-present-future; they can have a sense of history. They can hold the vision of the organization, and keep its ultimate purpose in sharp focus. When they do these things, they not only add value, they become symbols of trust, and provide a shelter of legitimacy for the organization.

Boards and administrations have different roles. The difference in their roles results in tension between them. Greenleaf pointed out that board members need to be a little bit dogmatic but mostly open to change, while administrators need to be the opposite—mostly dogmatic but a little open to change. To put it a little differently, board members need to be mostly *critical* (asking questions, testing assumptions), while administrators need to be mostly *believing* (implementing programs, sustaining morale so that things get done).<sup>165</sup> This is not a tension to be resolved, but a tension to

be lived with. Both roles are important and necessary, and together, they will yield the best results for the organization.

Because the board and the administration have different roles, the board chair and the senior administrator also have different roles. The chair is servant-leader to the board; the senior administrator is servant-leader to the staff. The chair should not dominate the senior administrator, and the senior administrator should not dominate the board. The chair and senior administrator should be partners. Each should ask the other: What can I do to help you to be effective?

During board meetings, issues should be discussed from many points of view. Each board member should contribute to board discussions and processes. There should be no hierarchy or “inner circle” that makes some board members more important and limits the participation of others. Once decisions are made, there should be one voice. No individual board member has legal authority—only the full board has legal authority.

Board members should constantly ask the questions that servant-leaders ask—questions about why the organization exists, who is being served, how well are they being served, and how do we know. For example:

#### 1. Mission

- Why does our organization exist? What is God calling us to do? How do we know?
- Which people and what resources do we need to fulfill our mission?
- Do we need to change our organizational structure or functions in any way to better fulfill our mission?

#### 2. Colleagues/Employees

- How well are we serving our employees? How do we know?
- Do they have the resources they need to provide quality service to others?

- How often and in what ways do we listen to our employees?
- How well do we respond to what we hear from our employees?
- How do we help our employees grow as persons?
- How can we do better?

### 3. Customers/Clients/Members/Patients/Students/Citizens

- Who is our organization serving? Why?
- How well are we serving them? How do we know?
- Do we have the resources we need to provide them with high quality programs, products, and services?
- How often and in what ways do we listen to those we serve?
- How well do we respond to what we hear from those we serve?
- How do we help those we serve to grow as persons?
- How can we do better?
- Are there others we should also be serving? Why? If so, what do they need? How do we know?
- If there are others we should be serving, what resources will be required to serve them? How can we get those resources?

### 4. Business Partners/Shareholders/Communities

- What impact is our organization having on our business partners, shareholders, and the communities in which we operate? How do we know?
- How can we have a more positive impact?
- What programs and resources do we need to have a more positive impact? <sup>166</sup>

Servant-leaders in the boardroom keep their organizations closely connected with everyone the organization touches. Understanding the needs of each group is essential to effectiveness, efficiency, and the ability of the organization to fulfill its mission. Board members should visit sites at which the organization operates, and meet employees, customers, shareholders or members, business partners, and community members. As Max DePree pointed out: “There is no better way for a board member to learn what is going on in a corporation or a non-profit group than to spend a couple of days with a customer.”<sup>167</sup>

In choosing board members for your corporation, seek servant-leaders who see their participation as a way of living their faith. Seek board members who have a passion for the mission of the organization. Seek board members who will commit to contributing their time, talent, and treasure. Seek board members who will be excellent *team members*. Board work is team work, not a place for individual stars.

### **8. Grow servant-leaders**

The key to implementing the institutional principles of servant leadership is simple: you will need lots of servant-leaders. That’s why servant-leaders grow other servant-leaders. Youssef reminded us:

One of the key lessons we learn from the leadership life of Jesus is that the purpose of leadership is not to produce followers, but to produce more leaders. If a leader is not continually recruiting, inspiring, training, and sending out new leaders, then that leader is not truly leading. A leader who produces only followers is just a boss. A leader who is constantly trying to turn followers into leaders helps to guarantee the vitality and longevity of his organization.<sup>168</sup>

Or, as he put it another way: “Authentic Christlike leaders disciple others who become leaders who disciple others.”<sup>169</sup>

When you seek to grow servant-leaders, start by looking for servant leadership characteristics in job applicants. Then provide servant

leadership training for all employees and encourage them to be servant-leaders. Include servant leadership practices in competencies that are evaluated for compensation and promotion. Be open, be transparent, and be consistent. Make sure servant leadership is understood, is practiced, and is embedded in your organizational culture. Above all, make sure you *model* servant leadership. It is hard for some people to understand what servant leadership is about, until they see a servant-leader in action. As the saying goes, “preach often; if necessary, use words.”

*Coming Up in Chapter Seven:*

## **Leading Organizational Change**

- **Why servant-leaders are especially good at leading change**
- **A major issue for institutions that are failing**
- **Building the desire for change**
- **Achieving lasting change**





## *Chapter Seven:*

# **Leading Organizational Change**

When I think about leading people during a time of change, I often think of Moses. He led the Israelites from a life of bondage in Egypt to the Promised Land. One would think that the Israelites would have been overjoyed, not only to be free, but to be on a journey that would end in a new home, a land of milk and honey. But that isn't what the Bible tells us. Instead, we learn that the Israelites complained, resisted, and even went astray.

The problems began right away. As they camped by the Red Sea, the Israelites saw the Pharaoh's army coming toward them. They were so frightened, they said to Moses: "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!'" (Ex. 14:11-12).

Miracle followed miracle, but still the Israelites complained. They said to Moses and his brother Aaron: "If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death" (Ex. 16:3).

They continued to wander in the desert, stopping at Rephidim, where the people complained: "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst? Then Moses cried out to the Lord, 'What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me'" (Ex. 17:3-4). Later, when Moses was on Mount Sinai, the people grew tired of waiting for him to come down from the mountain. So they made false gods and worshipped them. They abandoned the one true God.

Moses was a great prophet, leading his people on a journey of great historical and spiritual importance. But even for him, even with the miracles that demonstrated God's power and love, leading change was not easy.

It wasn't easy for Jesus, either. He is the Christ, the Messiah. He came to tell us about the kingdom of God and launch the New Creation. He taught the disciples a new way of loving and living, a new way of relating to God, a new way of being God's people. The disciples had trouble understanding. They told him not to go to Jerusalem, because they didn't want him to die; they didn't like God's plan. In the Garden of Gethsemane, they couldn't stay awake and pray with him. After the arrest of Jesus, the disciples scattered, and Peter denied him three times. But we know the end of the story. In fact, we know that the story will never end. Jesus changed the world, and Christ reigns.

### ***The servant-leader and change***

Leading change is a constant responsibility of the servant-leader. There are many reasons for organizational change. Sometimes, an organization is failing and must change in order to survive. Other times, an organization is growing and the growth requires new ways of doing things. All organizations may seek to change in order to better serve their employees and customers. After all, the world continues to change socially, politically, economically, technologically, and environmentally. When the world changes, servant-leaders and their organizations must change, too, so that they can continue to meet the needs of others. Serving others is a dynamic process.

Change is often fearful and confusing. People typically resist change. They find it hard to give up doing things the way they are used to doing them, even if they can see that new ways will be better. They find it hard to learn new skills, or develop new relationships, or accept new standards. The change process often requires additional hours of work in order to keep the organization running while new systems are learned and introduced. People also fear that however good the change may be for the organization and those it serves, the change may not be good for their own jobs and careers.

Nobody should be led through a change process unless the changes are truly necessary. The only moral justification for the fear and confusion is that the changes will result in an organization that can better serve its mission, its employees, its customers, and its communities.

Servant-leaders are especially good at leading change. First of all, servant-leaders do not use organizational change as an excuse for building their own power and position. Servant-leaders will not make changes based on personalities, factional politics, and competition between rivals. Instead, servant-leaders focus on meeting the needs of the organization and those it serves.

Second, servant-leaders listen, consult, and analyze information so that the organization can adapt and remain relevant to changing needs. David M. Herold and Donald B. Fedor, in *Change the Way You Lead Change*, pointed out that leaders need to understand how change will impact others, and how willing and able people will be to carry out the change. Understanding the impact on others helps decide what to change, how fast, and with what resources. There are fundamental questions to ask when leading change. What do we think needs changing? Why? How should we proceed? Who will lead the change? Who is expected to follow? What is the internal context like?<sup>2170</sup> What is the external context like? Servant-leaders ask these questions and listen carefully to the answers.

Third, servant-leaders are good at leading change because they are team leaders. They don't just issue orders; they don't just send a memo. That doesn't work. People may not understand the memo, or may not have the time, ability, or resources to do what is requested. Worse, people may not want to do what is requested, and will therefore drag their feet, pretend to misunderstand, or even sabotage the work.

People are willing to change when they are consulted, they understand the need for the change, they understand what the change is about, they have the time and resources to make the change, and they are kept informed of the progress during the change process. Servant-leaders know that it's a team effort, from start to finish.

### ***Changing oneself in order to change others***

Fourth, servant-leaders focus on growing people. McFarland and Goldsworthy in their book, *Choosing Change: How Leaders and Organizations Drive Results One Person at a Time*, wrote:

Our research and experience confirm that development is a key factor in successful change efforts. When you focus on developing your people, every part of the change effort gets easier: your team members handle the disruption better, they contribute more, and they find it easier to build and sustain the desire for change.<sup>171</sup>

McFarland and Goldsworthy pointed out that leaders have to be willing to start the change process by changing their *own* behavior. If the leader is not willing to change, how can the leader expect everyone else in the organization to change? “If you want to lead others to change,” McFarland and Goldsworthy wrote, “you need to first be open to change yourself.”<sup>172</sup> In order to change, you have to step outside your comfort zone, explore new ideas, and adopt the ideas that better fit the changing environment. Doing that requires the willingness to learn and grow.

One example is Capt. Michael Abrashoff, who took command of the *USS Benfold* in June 1997. At the time, retention was poor in the US Navy—40% of sailors were washing out before their four-year terms were up. That was a major issue, since it cost the Navy \$35,000 to recruit and train each new sailor. Morale seemed to be especially bad on the *USS Benfold*, whose crew members cheered when the previous captain left the ship.

At first, Capt. Abrashoff didn’t know how to turn the situation around. Yes, he knew all about command and control, but that had obviously failed his predecessor. What should he do? He wrote:

Over the next 21 months, I found out. Retaining people sometimes requires redeeming them—changing their lives. But first, I had to redeem myself. I had to become an entirely different type of leader. A different type of person, really. Only then was I able to redeem my sailors, one at a time. Together we learned a different way to think and act.<sup>173</sup>

Instead of barking orders and relying on his power as commander, Capt. Abrashoff met with each sailor, one-on-one, to get to know them and ask what they would change to make things better. He delegated more and more responsibility for running the ship. He created a shipboard learning center where sailors could take college-level distance learning courses. Capt. Abrashoff said:

I realized that the only way to achieve my goals—combat readiness, retention, and trust—was to make my people grow. It worked. The *Benfold* has set all-time records for performance and retention, and the waiting list of officers and enlisted personnel who want to transfer to the *Benfold* is pages long. It's a long wait because very few aboard the *Benfold* want to leave.<sup>174</sup>

Capt. Abrashoff grew, and then helped others to grow. The changes that resulted were dramatic.

### ***Tales of turnarounds in higher education***

Finally, servant-leaders are good at leading change because they keep their eyes on their organization's mission and the people the organization serves. What has God called us to do? Whom are we called to serve? How can we serve them best? The servant-leader never loses focus on the big questions: Who are we, and where are we going?

Many years ago, a friend and colleague, Dr. Edward Kormondy, and I learned that failure to focus on these big questions was the biggest reason that a number of colleges and universities were in serious trouble. Ed and I had each led turnarounds at universities. Ed approached me about doing research on other presidents who led turnarounds at their universities. We wanted to learn from presidents who led teams through a change process that saved their institutions from extinction and moved them far enough forward so that they could build a new future. What problems did they face, and how did they handle them?

We gathered survey data from thirty-six presidents, and then Ed conducted in-depth interviews with nine of the presidents. The presidents

that we surveyed were in some very tough situations. For example, eleven days after Don Averill arrived at Palo Verde College in California, his institution was put on probation by the accrediting commission. He was given only 6 months to turn everything around. Thomas deWitt started work at Lasell College in Massachusetts when enrollment was at a thirty-year low. There were 43 buildings for 393 students. Many of the buildings were empty. The budget was being balanced by selling college property.

Robert Knott arrived at Tusculum College in Tennessee and found a \$1.6 million deficit that nobody had mentioned before he arrived. He discovered that there were no accountants in the business office. Garry Hays took on United States International University in San Diego when it had a \$28 million debt and was already in Chapter 11 bankruptcy. He had only a year to turn it all around to meet the terms of a court-approved plan. Alan Guskin found Antioch College in Ohio with closed buildings and an enrollment of 400—down from 1200 in earlier years. The college was essentially bankrupt, a year away from closing. The college wasn't paying its bills, wasn't paying taxes, and was borrowing money from trustees. Ten to fifteen percent of the tuition wasn't being collected. At the same time, departments were overrunning their budgets.

When Jerry Lee assumed his position at National University in La Jolla, California he found trouble with faculty governance, accreditation, litigation, and an accounting system that couldn't track payables and receivables. When he began to make changes, somebody fired a bullet through his office window. His son, who was three years old, had to have an armed guard to escort him to and from kindergarten each day.

What did we learn from the survey? Thirty-one of the thirty-six presidents we surveyed found that the major issue that they encountered was a lack of institutional and program planning. *Their institutions simply didn't know where they were going.* That was the biggest single issue. They had lost their focus on whom they were serving.

What did these presidents do to turn their institutions around? Nearly all of the thirty-six presidents said that they immediately held in-depth meetings with faculty, staff, and board members. Twenty-five of the presidents reorganized the administration, while a smaller number cut the

budget, retained consultants, and froze all expenditures. Those were the immediate steps they took.

When it came to long-term strategies, thirty-two of the presidents mentioned long-range planning or strategic planning. That made sense, because the major issue was that the institutions didn't know where they were going. When asked what strategies were *the most effective* in turning their institutions around, the largest number of responses related to general organizational development. Within the category of organizational development, the largest number of responses related to appointing or restructuring the senior management team. Once they figured out where they were going, the universities needed leaders who were committed to going there.<sup>175</sup>

### ***Leading change at the Cleveland Clinic***

If the organization is failing, the need for change is obvious. The change process may not be easy, but most people will understand that change is necessary for survival. If the organization appears to be doing all right, the need for change may be harder for people to accept. People will be less willing to do anything differently, even if doing things differently could enhance the service of the organization.

Joe Patrnchak led a successful effort to introduce servant leadership principles at the Cleveland Clinic. The Cleveland Clinic is one of the most respected healthcare systems in the world. It has 40,000 employees and 3.5 million patient visits per year from citizens of over 100 countries. The *U.S. News & World Report* typically ranks it in the top four of all U.S. hospitals. But back in 2007, not all was well at the Cleveland Clinic.

When Joe was hired as the Chief Human Resources Officer in 2007, he was given only six weeks to come up with a basic human resources framework. What he came up with was “based on the simple idea that if you want people to thrive you need to create a great place for them to work and grow.”<sup>176</sup>

John P. Kotter, in his book *The Heart of Change*, emphasized the

importance of the first step to successful change—you have to increase the sense of urgency.<sup>177</sup> People have to see the need for change, and the need has to be obvious and tangible.

Joe calls it the power of dissatisfaction. “You leverage the dissatisfaction that exists in your organization to build a strong business case for change.”<sup>178</sup> In his book *The Engaged Enterprise*, Joe explains the steps he took to bring about change at the Cleveland Clinic, starting with the documentation of dissatisfaction. He commissioned a survey on employee engagement that showed that engagement was poor. Then a survey of patient satisfaction showed that while clinical results were superior, the overall patient experience was only average. These surveys established dissatisfaction among the leaders, who then supported a major effort to improve employee engagement.

The leaders adopted the statement, “we are all caregivers,” to convey the idea that everyone at the clinic affected patients in some way, even if they were not doctors or nurses. The patient experience was affected also by the people who maintain the facilities, and work in the kitchen, and check in the patients, and walk people to their cars when they are ready to go home. Joe recalled:

I had a personal experience that demonstrated that idea for me one day when I had slipped into the chapel to collect my thoughts before an important meeting. I thought I was alone, but after a few minutes, I felt a tap on my shoulder. A gentleman in a facilities uniform was standing there. He asked me if I was okay. I said yes. After a pause, he said: ‘I’ll keep you and your family in my thoughts and prayers today.’ I guess he assumed that either I or someone in my family must have been ill...It meant a great deal to me—just as one human being to another. If that isn’t a perfect example of what we mean by ‘we are all caregivers,’ I don’t know what is.<sup>179</sup>

A “Cleveland Clinic Experience” program was launched, bringing together caregivers from different functions and levels of the organization for three-hour discussions of the mission and values of the Clinic. Three hundred staff members were trained to lead the discussions. Then Joe

introduced servant leadership as the leadership model, providing coaching to the top 100 executives. That was followed by a one-day servant leader initiation program for 400 director-level leaders. Within two years, more than 3,000 leaders received servant leadership training.

Servant leadership was then integrated into the clinic's performance management tool, so that people were assessed for their servant leadership. Servant leadership tools were developed, and 100 senior leaders were trained in using the tools. These "Servant Leadership Strategic Advisors" serve as champions and resources for servant leader initiatives at the clinic.

Joe knew that if you want the best possible patient experience, you need to provide the best possible *employee* experience. That, in turn, is about helping people to achieve their full potential.

The clinic decided to "care for the caregivers" by instituting an "Adoption Assistance Benefit" for staff members adopting children, and a "Caregiver Hardship Program" for those with financial emergencies. The clinic added a "Tuition Reimbursement Program" and a "School at Work" program to help staff members complete high school degrees. A "Caregiver Wellness Program" was launched, giving staff members free access to Weight Watchers, Curves, and other programs, with onsite classes. Over 12,500 employees participated in the wellness program, and lost a total of 75,000 pounds. The clinic saved \$78 million in healthcare outlays.

The clinic established employee recognition programs, with five different levels of awards, some simply a commendation from a manager, and others carrying a modest cash award. Caregiver Celebrations became part of the organizational culture. The average number of awards increased to 19,000 *per month*; the focus was on saying "thank you."

The change process took deep commitment, because there was resistance at each stage regarding each new program. It also took a long-term commitment, because it was two years before improvements in employee engagement showed up in the surveys. However, at the end of five years, the ratio of engaged to actively disengaged employees went from a dismal 2.5 to 1 in 2008, to a world class 10.5 to 1 in 2013. Patient

satisfaction improved just as dramatically. The change process was an extraordinary success.

Joe did not know how it would all turn out. When he started in 2007, it was him, alone, with an idea about how to do things differently. He put his reputation and his career on the line. “Leading this kind of change is not for the faint of heart,” Joe said. “But if you were faint of heart, you wouldn’t be doing what you’re doing, right?”<sup>180</sup>

Looking back on his decision to take on the challenge, Joe recalled how he struggled with the idea of moving from Boston to Cleveland to join the Clinic. It was an industry where he had no previous experience and no network. Meanwhile, there were other opportunities in familiar high tech companies where he had spent the majority of his career.

Before he made the decision he went off to a weekend silent retreat for a time of discernment. He shared with me that he was constantly drawn to the passage in the Bible in which Jesus told Peter where to catch some fish, telling him to put out into the deep (Lk. 5:4). He also recalled that God is found sometimes not in thunder and lightning but in a whisper. Joe closed his talk at a Greenleaf Healthcare Conference by sharing “Came a Whisper,” a poem he wrote to express the emotions he was experiencing at the time:<sup>181</sup>

Came a whisper: *“Put out into the deep.”*

With a whisper I replied: *“But I’m not able.”*

Came a whisper: *“Just be willing.”*

With a whisper I cried: *“The path is not clear and I’m afraid!”*

Came a whisper: *“Be at peace; my hand is at your side.”*

With a whisper I pleaded: *“This task will consume me and my world made small.”*

Came a whisper: *“The Deep, like my whisper, has no boundaries. This work I’ve chosen for you. If not you, then I will choose another. Sufferings and happiness. Both are my gifts.”*

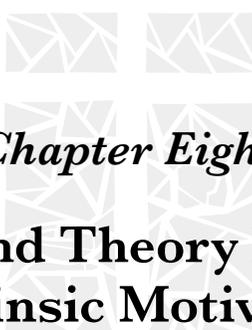
With a whisper, I prayed: *I will follow.*

*Coming Up in Chapter Eight:*

## **Beyond Theory X and Extrinsic Motivation**

- **What it means to be created in the image of God**
- **The assumptions of Theory X**
- **The assumptions of Theory Y**
- **Going beyond Theory Y**
- **Serious problems with extrinsic motivation**
- **The benefits of intrinsic motivation**
- **Meaning as an intrinsic motivator**
- **Reaching higher levels of persistence, performance, and productivity in the workplace**
- **The “realists” who have mistaken reality**
- **How Christ is calling us to a higher reality**





## *Chapter Eight:*

# **Beyond Theory X and Extrinsic Motivation**

We know from Genesis 1:27 that “God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” What does it mean to be created in the image of God?

There are many interpretations. One is that we are similar to God in some physical or spiritual ways that make it possible for us to make God manifest through us. Another is that we are God’s partners, relating to God in some way that is similar to the way humans relate to each other. Another is that we were created to have dominion over the earth, as God has dominion over us. Another is that we are God’s representatives on earth, making his presence known to all in Creation. We may, in fact, be God’s representatives in the *New Creation* that began with the resurrection of Christ.

In his sermon, “The Weight of Glory,” C. S. Lewis said:

Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbour he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ *vere latitat*—the glorifier and the glorified, Glory Himself, is truly hidden.”<sup>182</sup>

If human beings are all created in the image of God, we should love them. After all, each person is loved by God; each person is an expression of God. We should also treat each person with respect. We may not agree with what others say or think; we may not approve of the way others behave. But we can still treat them with respect, and even with a sense of wonder. What is their journey like? What can we learn from them?

We will probably not help people on their journey if we dominate or manipulate them. And yet, that is the way most leaders and managers

treat people. Those who live the power model of leadership, adhere to Theory X, and use extrinsic motivators, think poorly of people and do not bring out their best. People become disengaged, or resist, or even sabotage the work of the organization.

Servant-leaders are different. They live the service model, build on Theory Y, and use intrinsic motivators to help people become their best, most authentic selves—the people God intends them to be. As a result, people are able to make their best contribution to the success of the organization. They are happier, more productive, and perform at higher levels. They are better able to serve.

### ***Theory X and Theory Y***

Douglas McGregor was a professor of management at MIT. He pointed out in his book, *The Human Side of Enterprise*, that how we lead or manage people depends on our assumptions about human nature and human behavior. He described two sets of assumptions he called Theory X and Theory Y.

Theory X assumes that most people dislike work and will avoid it if they can. Because they don't like work, they must be coerced, controlled, directed, or threatened with punishment to get them to work toward the achievement of organizational objectives. Furthermore, most people want to be directed and to avoid responsibility. They have little ambition. They just want to be secure.

By contrast, Theory Y assumes that work is as natural as play or rest. The threat of punishment is not the only way to get people to work. In fact, people will exercise self-direction and self-control in working toward organizational objectives when they are committed to them. Commitment to objectives is a function of the rewards associated with their achievement. Those rewards can be the satisfaction of ego and self-actualization needs.

Theory Y assumes that most people learn not only to accept but to seek responsibility. A lot of people have the capacity to exercise a relatively high degree of imagination, ingenuity, and creativity in solving

organizational problems. In short, people are willing to work, and have a lot of potential to make significant contributions to the organization. Unfortunately, McGregor said, “under the conditions of modern industrial life, the intellectual potentialities of the average human being are only partially utilized.”<sup>183</sup>

Robert Greenleaf knew Douglas McGregor. In fact, McGregor invited Greenleaf to teach at MIT. It is interesting to see how Greenleaf went beyond Theory Y. If the intellectual potential of most people is only being partially utilized, as McGregor said, why not focus on developing people, and then make sure that their talents are *fully* utilized?

Years later, when Greenleaf wrote his classic essay, *The Servant as Leader*, he focused on the importance of growing people. He said it was the fundamental business of any organization. The best test of the servant-leader is whether those served are growing. To an adherent of Theory X, this makes no sense. To an adherent of Theory Y, this is a challenge to move to a higher level—to servant leadership. Helping people grow to develop their God-given gifts is a noble, sacred, joyful task.

### ***Extrinsic motivation***

Extrinsic motivation is about what you *have* to do, not what you *want* to do. People are extrinsically motivated when they do a job not because they like it, but because they need the money or the reward, or they want to avoid punishment. This is the traditional “carrot and the stick” approach used on donkeys: wave the carrot in front as a reward, but use the stick in the back as punishment if the donkey doesn’t move forward. Basically, extrinsic motivation is a simple proposition: If you do *this*, you will get *that*. And *that* has nothing to do with the work itself.

Extrinsic motivation is deeply ingrained in our secular culture and our organizations. It affects how we raise children, teach students, and “manage” employees. We constantly search for “incentives” to offer people in order to get them to do things—or stop doing things. We tell a child that if he will read that book, we will give him ice cream. We tell a student that if she gets good grades, we will throw a party for her and her friends. We tell a

worker that if he reaches the sales goal, we will give him a monetary bonus.

Many of today's practices are based on the research done fifty years ago by B.F. Skinner, a radical behaviorist. The rats and pigeons Skinner used in his experiments were conditioned by rewards and punishments. The way to control people, Skinner concluded, was to do the same. Want to get something done? Offer a financial incentive or issue a threat, and people will improve their performance.

Skinner believed that human free will was an illusion. He said that if the consequences of an action are bad, there is a high chance that a person will not repeat the action; if the consequences are good, the person is likely to repeat the action. He denied the existence of a core spirit, soul, or personality—thereby denying God and spiritual life.<sup>184</sup> Despite the fact that a majority of Americans consider themselves to be Christians, and presumably believe in a spirit or soul, Skinner's ideas have taken over our secular culture.

People, of course, are not rats or pigeons. Empirical research over the past thirty years has demonstrated the limitations of extrinsic rewards and punishments as motivators for people. For his book, *Punished by Rewards*, Alfie Kohn reviewed hundreds of studies on the impact of extrinsic rewards and punishments. He found that extrinsic rewards work best in the short term. (They don't work well in the long term, because people always want *more* rewards.) Unfortunately, extrinsic rewards devalue the work or activity, because the message is clear—the work is not as important as the reward. When we say, “if you read this book, I will give you ice cream,” we are saying that reading the book is not as exciting as eating the ice cream.

Empirical research indicates that extrinsic rewards undermine performance, because people just want the reward, and will take shortcuts in their work in order to get it. Extrinsic rewards can also kill intrinsic motivation. Something that was once done for fun becomes “work” when it is rewarded, so people will only do it in the future if they are rewarded in some way.

Kohn found that pay-for-performance and incentive systems often

fail to increase performance and are sometimes counterproductive. When employees are surveyed, pay is often not the most important motivator, contrary to what managers think. Rewards also hide problems. When things aren't going well, managers are tempted to offer rewards or threats, instead of sitting down with employees to learn why performance is poor or how it could be improved. In a sense, managers don't manage—they just issue rewards or punishments.

Empirical research also indicates that rewards discourage risk-taking. People will do only what is needed to get the reward, and will often cheat or cut corners, manipulating numbers and pressuring others in order to get the reward. When employees set goals, they set goals at safe levels, lower than could be achieved, to make sure they get the reward. Kohn concluded that for many reasons, rewards do not result in people doing a better job.<sup>185</sup>

### ***Intrinsic motivation***

Intrinsic motivation is very different from extrinsic motivation. It is about what you *want* to do, not what you *have* to do. People are intrinsically motivated when they do something because it is fun, interesting, fulfilling, or meaningful. When you are intrinsically motivated, the work itself is your reward. You don't do *this* in order to get *that*; you do *this* because you enjoy doing it. No reward is needed.

James Kouzes and Barry Posner, in their book, *The Leadership Challenge*, stated:

The research is very clear. External motivation is more likely to create conditions of compliance or defiance; self-motivation produces far superior results. There's even an added bonus. People who are self-motivated will keep working toward a result even if there's no reward. But people who are externally controlled are likely to stop trying once the rewards or punishments are removed.<sup>186</sup>

Kouzes and Posner add that “if people are going to do their best, they

must be internally motivated...When it comes to excellence, it's definitely not 'What gets rewarded gets done,' it's '*What is rewarding gets done.*'<sup>187</sup>

In his book, *Intrinsic Motivation at Work: Building Energy and Commitment*, Dr. Kenneth W. Thomas reported on the results of sixteen years of research on intrinsic motivation. What he found was that intrinsic rewards relate to higher levels of job satisfaction, performance, innovativeness, commitment to the organization, and reduced stress.<sup>188</sup> The implications for higher levels of employee performance are clear. "We are now at the point where the biggest gains will come from systematically improving intrinsic rewards," Thomas said.<sup>189</sup>

Thomas and his colleagues identified four intrinsic rewards at work: (1) a sense of meaningfulness, (2) a sense of choice, (3) a sense of competence, and (4) a sense of progress.<sup>190</sup> Servant-leaders attend to all these intrinsic rewards. They help their colleagues to find meaning in serving God by serving each other and the organization's customers. They unleash their colleagues, encouraging them to make more choices. They build competence through training and development. Finally, they coach and mentor their colleagues, providing feedback and supporting their progress.

Daniel Pink, in his book *Drive*, identified three elements that define the "Type I" or intrinsically motivated person at work: Autonomy, mastery, and purpose. (These match up well with the sense of choice, sense of competence, and sense of meaningfulness identified by Thomas and his colleagues.) Pink said that Type "I" or intrinsically motivated behavior is made, not born—it doesn't depend on age or gender. The advantages of Type "I" behavior are that it outperforms extrinsic Type X behavior in the long run; it doesn't disdain money or recognition; it is a renewable resource; and it promotes greater physical and mental well-being.<sup>191</sup>

As a result of his extensive experience with business leaders, Greenleaf focused on intrinsic motivation. In addition to growth, he emphasized the importance of the meaning of the work itself. He said that "*the work exists for the person as much as the person exists for the work.* Put another way, the business exists as much to provide meaningful work to the person as it exists to provide a product or service to the customer."<sup>192</sup> When people are growing and find meaning in their work, they are intrinsically motivated.

### ***Hygiene Factors and Motivating Factors***

One of the most-read articles in the history of the *Harvard Business Review* is an article by Frederick Herzberg entitled “One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?” Herzberg believed that the factors that lead to extreme *dissatisfaction* on the job are company policy and administration, supervision, relationship with the supervisor, work conditions, salary, relationships with peers, personal life, relationships with subordinates, status, and security. He called these factors “hygiene” factors that are extrinsic to the work. He believed that the factors that lead to extreme *satisfaction* at work are achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. He called these factors “motivators” that are intrinsic to the work.

Herzberg argued that the factors that produce job satisfaction and the factors that produce job dissatisfaction are not the opposite of each other. They represent different sets of human needs. The hygiene or extrinsic factors are the primary cause of unhappiness on the job. Employers need to get the hygiene factors right so that employees will not be dissatisfied. Salaries, for example, need to be fair, so employees will not be unhappy.

However, getting the hygiene factors right is not enough to make employees happy and motivated. What motivates people and makes them happy is another set of factors, the job content factors—achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. Herzberg concluded: “If only a small percentage of the time and money that is now devoted to hygiene...were given to job enrichment efforts, the return in human satisfaction and economic gain would be one of the largest dividends that industry and society have ever reaped through their efforts at better personnel management.”<sup>193</sup>

The extrinsic motivators are important. Working conditions should be fair. People should not be dissatisfied. But if you want to help your colleagues to reach their highest levels of performance, you must focus on intrinsic motivators. This is a perfect fit for Christian leaders, because people who know they are called to do God’s work are intrinsically motivated.

### ***Meaning, purpose, and performance***

Thomas identified meaning as an intrinsic motivator. He said that “a sense of *meaningfulness* is the opportunity you feel to pursue a worthy task purpose...that you are on a valuable mission, that your purpose matters in the larger scheme of things.”<sup>194</sup> As Eisenstat and colleagues reported in their *Harvard Business Review* article, high-commitment high-performance CEOs “understand that being part of an enterprise that is helping to create a better world unleashes the commitment and energy of their people.”<sup>195</sup> That commitment and energy produce better results.

Thomas concluded that the need for meaning and purpose is fundamental to our nature as human beings. He said:

There is a great deal of evidence that people are hardwired to care about purposes. We seem to need to see ourselves as going somewhere— as being on a journey in pursuit of a significant purpose...There is also much evidence that people suffer when they lack purpose. Clinical studies show that people deteriorate in various ways without purpose.<sup>196</sup>

Daniel Pink agreed. He said that “from the moment that human beings first stared into the sky, contemplated their place in the universe, and tried to create something that bettered the world and outlasted their lives, we have been purpose seekers.”<sup>197</sup> Christian leaders are purpose seekers. They seek to align their organization’s purpose with God’s purpose.

In her book, *Dare to Serve*, Cheryl Bachelder, CEO of Popeye’s Louisiana Kitchen, described the ways in which she applied servant leadership principles to turn around the restaurant chain. It’s a dramatic story. When Cheryl started at Popeye’s, sales and profits had been declining for a long time. Six years after she started, average restaurant sales had climbed by 25 percent, market share had grown from 14 to 21 percent, profitability at Popeyes restaurants was up by 40 percent in real dollars, and the stock price was up 450 percent.<sup>198</sup> Cheryl dared to serve, and her organization grew. She gives God the credit. In the dedication of her book, she wrote: “All glory be to God the Father, for He sent His Son who dared to serve us all.”<sup>199</sup>

While Cheryl took many steps to improve the company's performance, one important step was to invite the company's leaders to develop a personal purpose—the purpose that gives their work meaning. Cheryl wrote:

*It is the leader's responsibility to bring purpose and meaning to the work of the organization.*

Purpose and meaning are essential to creating a high-performance organization. When people believe their work matters, they contribute differently. They arrive early and stay late. They find creative solutions to problems. They build their skills so they can add more value. They work collaboratively to ensure the success of the team. They stay in the job longer.

Purpose and meaning at work raise the energy level, commitment, and performance of the team.<sup>200</sup>

Popeyes conducted a workshop that took the team members through several exercises. First, team members were asked to draw a timeline of the significant events in their lives that have shaped them as leaders. Next, they were asked to select their top priority values from a set of thirty-four. Then they used a diagnostic tool to identify the roles in which their talents and skills are maximized. After they looked at their life experiences, values, and strengths, they zeroed in on their personal purpose. Cheryl said: “When a team member lands on their personal purpose, it helps them determine how they connect with the Popeyes Purpose: how will they inspire servant leaders to achieve superior results?”<sup>201</sup>

Team members at Popeyes are encouraged to share their personal purpose with others in the company. That gives them feedback and encouragement, helps team members understand each other better, builds mutual support, and helps team members to feel that they are part of something greater than themselves. Most important, team members are encouraged to put their personal purpose into action. “At Popeyes, the leaders who have an action plan for their personal purpose are having more impact on the business,” Cheryl said. “Personal purpose leads to sustained superior performance.”<sup>202</sup>

Research suggests that when you combine the desire to serve with intrinsic motivators like growing and finding meaning, the result is higher levels of performance in the workplace. Adam M. Grant, a professor of management at the Wharton School, studied the impact of prosocial motivation when combined with intrinsic motivation. Prosocial motivation is the desire to help others and make the world a better place. Intrinsic motivation includes growth and meaning. Grant said that “employees display higher levels of persistence, performance, and productivity when they experience prosocial and intrinsic motivations in tandem.”<sup>203</sup>

In short, people perform better when they have a desire to serve or benefit others, and they are intrinsically motivated because their work is meaningful and they have the opportunity to grow. These research results support what Christian servant-leaders know: When people respond to the call of Jesus to serve others, and they find God’s work meaningful, they can perform at their highest levels.

### ***Being realistic***

The secular, commercial culture has many views of human beings, and many of those views—perhaps the most common ones—are negative or condescending. The power model of leadership is about acquiring power, wealth, and fame for oneself. It is about grabbing instead of giving. (I am determined to get mine; I don’t care if you get yours.) The power model assumes that human beings are driven by selfishness and greed, are takers and not givers, and are focused on money and other material rewards. Theory X assumes that human beings are lazy and mean, not to be trusted, and unwilling to take responsibility. Those who wield extrinsic motivators think that people are easily controllable by offering rewards and threatening punishments. All of these assumptions conflict with the idea that we are created in the image of God. All of these assumptions are degrading. Even worse, they can easily become negative self-fulfilling prophecies. They bring out the worst in people.

We are God’s greatest creation, not rats or pigeons in a cage, not donkeys to be manipulated with carrots and sticks. We are fallen, yes; but

Christ has redeemed us. We are sinners, yes; but we can understand who God wants us to be. We can lead the way Jesus taught us to lead, the way we were designed to lead, the way that brings out the best in ourselves and others. We can treat others with respect and serve them by leading them in a way that gives us joy while providing service to others.

People who adopt the power model, Theory X, and extrinsic motivators consider themselves “realists.” But they have mistaken reality. They have mistaken who we really are and who God wants us to be. They do not understand that we are created in God’s image. They do not understand that Christ is calling us to a *higher* reality. They do not understand that we are spiritual beings, guided by the Holy Spirit. They do not understand who we are capable of becoming and what we are capable of doing.

It is the crass materialists who are naïve. It is the arrogant power-mongers who are limiting the potential of vast numbers of individuals, and then claiming that people do not have much potential. In their own way, they have put people in a modern form of bondage, bondage to the assumptions of the secular, commercial culture.

The Christian leader understands what it means to be in bondage to the secular, commercial culture. Christian life requires a daily exodus from that bondage. The Christian leader follows Jesus, and liberates those with whom he or she works. Colleagues are free to grow, serve, and become who God wants them to be. In the process, the “weight of glory” is shared, and by being shared, falls more lightly on our shoulders.

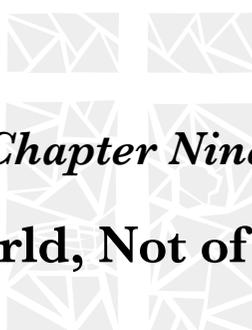


*Coming Up in Chapter Nine:*

## **In the World, Not of the World**

- **The call to be our best**
- **Secular symbols of success**
- **The counter-cultural character of servant leadership**
- **Starting with the way Christ is**
- **In the world, not of the world**
- **The “dark side” of serving**
- **Finding personal meaning in the face of adversity**
- **The need for servant-leaders**
- **Servanthood and eternity**
- **The assurances of Jesus**





## *Chapter Nine:*

# **In the World, Not of the World**

The call to be servant-leaders is a call to be our best. When we are who Jesus calls us to be, we are more loving, more caring, more attentive, more enthusiastic. We become a gift to others. When we are who Jesus calls us to be, we are intrinsically and spiritually motivated, and we do our best work. When we are who Jesus calls us to be, we can serve by leading, helping our colleagues and our organizations to grow in service to others. When we are who Jesus calls us to be, we can alleviate suffering and bring hope. When we are who Jesus calls us to be, we can grow toward God and help others to grow toward God as well.

But it is not easy. To be who Jesus calls us to be, we must learn how to be in the world, not of the world.

### ***Servant leadership is counter-cultural***

We live in a secular, commercial culture that considers power, wealth, and fame to be symbols of success. That is what our culture tells us to strive for, and people measure us by how much we get. But power, wealth, and fame are false idols, and they do not make people deeply happy. They can be used as tools to serve others, but they are only tools, not goals.

We have known this for thousands of years. For example, the book of Ecclesiastes, which was probably written in the third century B.C., reminds us that wealth and pleasure are short-lived and meaningless (Ecc. 2:4-11). The voice in Ecclesiastes concluded that we should do good, find satisfaction in our work, enjoy our daily food and drink, and above all, “fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind”(Ecc. 12:13).

As followers of Jesus, we know that he refused earthly power—he

declined to become a secular king. He told us that he came to serve, and he called us to do the same. As for money, Jesus made it clear that “life does not consist in an abundance of possessions” (Lk. 12:15). He said:

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also... You cannot serve both God and money (Mt. 6:19-21, 24).

After his interaction with the rich young man, Jesus told the disciples: “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 19:23). As for fame, we only need to be known to God, our families, our colleagues, and those we serve. We don’t need to be known by millions of people.

Servant leadership is counter-cultural. That’s why Christian leaders don’t start with the way the world is, they start with the way *Christ* is. They start with the teachings of Jesus, and seek to live them. That’s why servant leadership is not about acquiring power, wealth, or fame. It is not focused on the leader, but on identifying and meeting the needs of others. It is not about meeting our ego needs by being the center of attention, but by being spiritually grounded—living our faith, and living a life of love, authenticity, integrity, and wholeness.

Servant leadership is not about our organizations competing with other organizations for prestige or recognition, it is about our organizations fulfilling their missions for God. It is not about how much money we bring in, it is about how many lives we change. It is not about leading from the top of the pyramid of a large organization, but working in teams, as colleagues. It is not about being up on a pedestal, distant from those we are leading. It is about humility, being willing to listen to and work with others, shoulder to shoulder, to do God’s work.

Being a Christian leader is about approaching life and leadership from an entirely Christian perspective. That perspective is that Christ, the Son of God, has taught us how to live and lead. If we follow him, we will lead a

meaningful, impactful life. We will liberate others; we will bring hope and joy to others. We will help those who need help the most. And we will do it without worrying about what the secular, commercial world thinks. We will be successful in more important ways than the secular, commercial world can imagine. As Rinehart said:

Servant leadership...should be the foundational cornerstone of our thinking about spiritual leadership. Christ lived, taught, and modelled it for us, and it is our true distinctive as believers...So rather than take our cues from the culture around us, we ought to capitalize on what makes spiritual leadership truly kingdom focused: 'a leadership which is not modelled on the power games of the world, but on the servant leader, Jesus, who came to give His life for the salvation of many.'<sup>204</sup>

It is hard to avoid the assumptions and values of the secular, commercial culture that we interact with every day. Stott said:

Our model of leadership is often shaped more by culture than by Christ. Yet many cultural models of leadership are incompatible with the servant imagery taught and exhibited by the Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, these alien cultural models are often transplanted uncritically into the church and its hierarchy."<sup>205</sup>

Swindoll agreed:

Probably the greatest tragedy of Christianity through its changing and checkered history has been our tendency to become like the world rather than completely different from it. The prevailing culture has sucked us in like a huge vacuum cleaner, and we have done an amazing job of conforming.<sup>206</sup>

If we respond to Christ's call, we can still move forward in faith, and find peace in the Lord. Tan said that a servant heart or servant attitude is

a strong antidote to pride and all its ugly manifestations that take away rest and God's peace: competitiveness, arrogance, entitlement, self-absorption and self-obsession, envy or jealousy, manipulative control of others, resentment, and bitterness...

Servanthood that is founded on faithfulness rather than on worldly success... will lead to deep rest and peace in the Lord, as well as deep joy!<sup>207</sup>

### ***In the world, not of the world***

To lead the way Jesus calls us to lead, to lead in a way that is both counter-cultural and effective, we must be *in* the world, not *of* the world. At the Last Supper, Jesus prayed for his disciples. He said:

I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one (Jn. 17:14-15).

We need to be in the world, fully engaged, loving and helping others.<sup>208</sup> We do not have to be *against* the world. N.T. Wright reminds us that “the kingdom Jesus inaugurated, that is implemented through his cross, is emphatically *for* this world.”<sup>209</sup> However, we do not have to measure ourselves by the world’s values or its measures of “success.”

That gives us great freedom. We don’t have to be rich and famous. We don’t have to have prestige. We don’t have to be members of the social elite. We don’t have to be politically powerful. If we acquire power, wealth, and fame, we can use them as tools to serve others. If we don’t acquire power, wealth, and fame, that’s fine. It doesn’t matter. We are not here to be a success as the world defines it. We are here to be who God wants us to be, not who the world wants us to be. We are here to follow Jesus. If we do, we will be blessed, whether we are “successful” or not.

Still, we are surrounded by the values of our secular, commercial culture, and it is not easy to go against popular norms. One of those popular norms is the power-oriented leader. You may feel awkward as you learn to lead the way servant-leaders do. It may feel a little strange before it becomes natural. And while servant leadership is effective—more effective than the alternatives—it is not a quick fix. It requires an up-front investment in people. It takes time to listen to people and grow people. It requires patience.

When you lead with the heart of a servant, some people will not understand. Some people will see you as a weak leader, or not a leader at all, because you are not pacing the floor, barking orders at your subordinates. Instead, you are listening, identifying needs, and working together with others to meet those needs.

When you lead with the heart of a servant, some people will feel threatened. After all, servant-leaders are *different*. Those who are caught up in the power model of leadership, Theory X, and extrinsic motivators may not want to admit that there is another way—a *better* way. They may mock you, attack you, or simply make it hard for you to succeed.

Swindoll, in *Improving Your Serve*, pointed out that being a servant at heart has its consequences, including “the dark side” of serving, such as affliction, confusion, persecution, and rejection.<sup>210</sup> He recalled the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9: “We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.” We just have to remember that when we are pressed, perplexed, persecuted, and struck down, *we can still serve*. After all, we are not crushed, we are not in despair, we are not abandoned, and we are not destroyed. Swindoll said:

Let’s keep our eyes wide open when we grab the towel to do a little one-on-one foot washing. Every once in a while we are going to get kicked. . . .It’s all part of the humbling process God uses in shaping our lives ‘to bear the family likeness of His Son’ (Rom. 8:29).<sup>211</sup>

The good news is that we can find personal meaning even when things in the secular, commercial world are not going well—even when the world is crazy. That is the message of the Paradoxical Commandments that I wrote during the student revolution of the sixties:

1. People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered.  
Love them anyway.
2. If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives.  
Do good anyway.
3. If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies.  
Succeed anyway.

4. The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.  
Do good anyway.
5. Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.  
Be honest and frank anyway.
6. The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds.  
Think big anyway.
7. People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs.  
Fight for a few underdogs anyway.
8. What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.  
Build anyway.
9. People really need help but may attack you if you do help them.  
Help people anyway.
10. Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth.  
Give the world the best you have anyway.

Whatever the world does to us, we get to choose how to *respond*. And we can always respond in a way that is meaningful to us—a way that is consistent with our values and our faith.<sup>212</sup>

The biggest challenge to being in the world, not of the world, may be the need to overcome our own egos. We struggle with false pride. We easily become consumed by self-interest. We live in a “me-first” culture that encourages us to grab what we want.

In their book, *Lead Like Jesus*, Blanchard and Hodges address the ego issue. They use the acronym “EGO” to mean “edging God out” due to pride and the desire to promote oneself. This kind of EGO is filled with fear, and a need to protect oneself. This separates people from God and each other. People who edge God out spend a lot of time comparing themselves with others, so they are never happy.

But there is another way to use the acronym EGO, and Blanchard and Hodges say that is “exalting God only,” with humility and confidence

in God. Those who exalt God only create communities and promote fellowship. Their lives are characterized by contentment, generosity, and trust.

If you are edging God out, Blanchard and Hodges suggest that you can “altar” your leadership ego by embracing an eternal perspective, and seeking to lead for a higher purpose. You need to trust and surrender to what you believe about God, His Kingdom, and His claim on your life. You need to seek the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>213</sup>

### ***The assurance of Christ***

While it is challenging to be in the world, not of the world, we cannot waiver. As Gunderson said:

Jesus Christ is the ultimate model for all leadership models, styles, and concepts. He was and is *the* universal leader. His leadership applies in all cultures and at all times...Not only is servant leadership *not* a contradiction in terms, it is the *only* way to properly lead.<sup>214</sup>

Blanchard and Hodges agree:

As followers of Jesus, we must seek to lead like Jesus in this world. As a philosophy of leadership, servant leadership may be considered one option among many others; but as a theology of leadership, it is a mandate for all who call Jesus Lord...Servant leadership is a concrete expression of a daily commitment to live out the Word of God and the will of God and thereby advance the kingdom of God.<sup>215</sup>

Servant-leaders are needed everywhere, in every walk of life, in every family, group, organization, community, or nation. Wilkes said:

Too many organizations, homes, businesses, and schools struggle because they lack men and women who lead as Jesus did... Churches, organizations, and the communities they serve need leaders who know how God has made and gifted them for service

and who willingly serve Christ and those placed in their care... Ministries and organizations will survive in the twenty-first century when men and women stop following self-conceived concepts of leadership and adopt Jesus' teachings and examples.<sup>216</sup>

As Christian leaders, we must respond to the call of Jesus to servanthood and to eternal life. Tan said: "Ultimately, servanthood is about living for eternity."<sup>217</sup> We know that we can walk with Jesus now, and we can walk with Jesus for all time. Wilkes said:

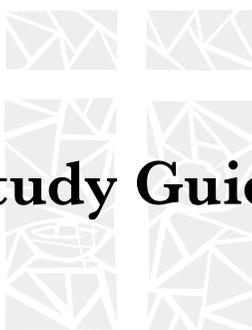
Trusting that you are returning to God gives you an eternal perspective...Trusting that God controls your eternity gives you the confidence to risk everything earthly to achieve anything eternal. The hope of a servant leader who follows Jesus is in an eternal relationship with the God who created you and sent his Son to die for you.<sup>218</sup>

Blanchard and Hodges said: "The world needs to see God, and the only way they will see Him is if they see God through us. Each of us has a decision to make: will we choose to lead like everyone else, or will we choose to lead like Jesus...?"<sup>219</sup>

When we choose to lead like Jesus, we have his assurances. Jesus said: "I am the way and the truth and the life" (Jn. 14:6). "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit..."(Jn. 15:5).

We know that the world around us is not what God wants for us. There is too much pain and suffering, too much hate, too much war, too much sickness and poverty. We pray that God's kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven. How will the kingdom break into our world? Through love and service, not power and oppression. That's why Jesus commanded us to love and called us to serve. One way to serve is by leading. We can become Christian leaders at work, serving each other, serving our customers or members, and reaching out to our communities and beyond.

This is how the kingdom of God will break into our world. This is how the kingdom *will* come, on earth as it is in heaven.



# Study Guide

This study guide consists of questions designed for individual reflection or group discussion. The questions are organized according to the chapters in the book. Ideas and quotations not found in the text of the book have been added to the Study Guide to deepen the reflection or group discussion.

## ***Introduction***

1. Malphurs said that Christian leadership is not limited to religious organizations. He said: “A Christian leader leads in any context whether or not it’s a professed Christian organization. Christian leaders are Christian leaders outside of as well as inside the Christian community. Our mandate is to lead Christianly regardless of the context” (Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 13). What do you think? Is Christian leadership limited to religious organizations? Why or why not?
2. What do you think are the requirements of Christian leadership?
3. The author says that “Christian leaders don’t start with the way the world is, they start with the way *Christ* is.” Do you agree or disagree? Why? What does that statement mean to you?
4. Do you think we were designed by the Creator to love and serve others? Why or why not?
5. This book is about the Christian leader *at work*. John Dalla Costa wrote:

Work has always been the locus of God’s calling. It would be surprising if it were not, for work matters profoundly as a creative

act, as a contribution to sustenance and community, as a mark of human dignity and personal identity...God works with who we are, which means that God is persistently active and inviting within the work we do. David was called to become the anointed king of Israel while tending sheep. Similarly, the first disciples of Jesus Christ were invited to follow while repairing and cleaning their nets after a long night trying to catch fish. The stirring of souls for intimacy with the divine did not wait for after work or weekends, but instead came within the everyday reality of productivity (Dalla Costa, *Magnificence at Work*, 11).

Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Does work have meaning for you? If so, explain. Is your work part of your spiritual and religious life? Why or why not? Do you sense the presence of God “within the everyday reality of productivity?” If so, can you describe what that divine presence is like?

### ***Chapter One: Faith Flowing into Deeds***

1. How do you define faith?
2. How would you describe the faith of Habakkuk?
3. Does living your faith make you feel fully alive? How would you describe how you feel?
4. Swindoll said that the key verse in the entire Sermon on the Mount is Matthew 6:8: “Do not be like them...” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
5. The author says: “Jesus calls us to faith, and he also calls us to serve. If we do not have faith, we will have no connection to him. If we do not help others, we dishonour him by ignoring what he told us to do.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
6. Does your faith flow into your deeds? How? Do you have an example you can share?

## **Chapter Two: Loving and Serving Others**

1. Scot McKnight points out that the first great commandment stated by Jesus was based on the Jewish *Shema*, found at Deuteronomy 6:4-5, which McKnight refers to as the creed of Judaism. The *Shema* is “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” Jesus amended the *Shema* by adding a verse from Leviticus 19:18, “love your neighbor as yourself.” Loving others was certainly part of Judaism, but not central to the creed of Judaism. McKnight said that the addition of the passage from Leviticus transformed the *Shema* into the *Jesus Creed*. McKnight concluded that “making the love of others part of his own version of the Shema shows that he [Jesus] sees love of others as central to spiritual formation” (McKnight, *The Jesus Creed*, pp. 8-9).

Why are we commanded to love others? Identify the reasons given in the text. Do you agree with those reasons? Why or why not? Can you think of other reasons?

2. What does it mean to love someone you have never met? Someone you don't really like?
3. The author concludes from the parable of the sheep and the goats that “those who will have eternal life are those who serve others.” Do you agree? Why or why not?
4. During the time of Jesus, washing the feet of another person was a very humble, menial task. Kraybill wrote: “Foot washing isn't a pleasant task. It means bending over and facing dusty feet. The bending symbolizes obedient service...The servant's hands touch feet splattered with filth and mud. Normally a master washed his own hands and face but not his crusty feet. That was the dirty work of slaves” (Kraybill, *The Upside-Down Kingdom*, 244). Why did Jesus wash the feet of his disciples?
5. What gifts do you have? How can you glorify God by using those gifts to help others?

6. Whom do you serve?
7. How do you identify and meet the needs of others?
8. The Bible contains many verses on the issue of wealth and poverty, especially the plight of the poor and the need for social justice. Wallis wrote in *Faith Works* about an experience he had at his seminary:

Several of my fellow students and I made a study of every mention of the poor in the Bible. We found several thousand verses on the subject. In the Hebrew Scriptures, it was the second most prominent theme, idolatry being the first, and the two were often related. In the New Testament, one out of every sixteen verses had to do with wealth and poverty...We were utterly amazed! Then we became even more amazed as we discussed our findings and realized that none of us had ever heard a sermon in any of our churches on the danger of riches and God's concern for the poor! Yet the Scriptures were filled with this theme from beginning to end. Why the silence? (Wallis, *Faith Works*, 71-72).

What do you think? What has been your experience? Have you or your church focused on the problem of poverty? If so, what did you do? If not, why not?

Basil of Caesarea (known as Basil the Great, c. 330-379 A.D.) sold all his properties to feed the poor. He is quoted as saying: "If one who takes the clothing off another is called a thief, why give any other name to one who can clothe the naked and refuses to do so? The bread that you withhold belongs to the poor; the cape that you hide in your chest belongs to the naked; the shoes rotting in your house belong to those who must go unshod" (Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity, Vol. 1*, 212). What do you think? Do you agree with Basil the Great? Why or why not?

9. What can you do about world problems such as hunger, lack of water, and disease?
10. Do you know people who have plenty of material goods but are not really happy? What might be their spiritual needs? How can their needs be addressed?

11. What needs are being addressed by the Nozomi Project in Japan?

### **Chapter Three: The Power Model vs Service Model of Leadership**

1. Leadership has been defined as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 5). How do you define leadership?
2. In your own words, what is the power model of leadership? The service model of leadership?
3. What model of leadership have you used most often in your own life? What were the results?
4. What was Jesus’ teaching regarding the power model of leadership?
5. Bennett Sims wrote that “Jesus reveals a way of life, not simply a way of being religious.” How would you describe that way of life?
6. Scholars and theologians agree that the kingdom of God was the central message of Jesus. Borg said that there are three points about the kingdom of God on which most scholars agree: (1) God’s kingdom was for the earth, not heaven; (2) God’s kingdom referred to what life would be like if God were Lord and the domination systems of the world no longer existed; and (3) the kingdom of God was a transformed world, a blessed world, a utopia, “God’s dream for the earth” (Borg, *Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary*, 186-187). Borg stated that “the phrase ‘kingdom of God’ names God’s passion for the earth—God’s will, God’s promise, God’s dream. That it involves justice for those oppressed and exploited by the domination system is illustrated by two very familiar portions of the gospels, the Lord’s Prayer and the Beatitudes” (Borg, *Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary*, 188). Borg said that “in Jesus’ passion for the kingdom of God, we see God’s passion for a transformed world—a world of justice and nonviolence...” (Borg, *Speaking Christian*, 92-93).

David Anderson, a professor at Chaminade University of Honolulu, identified five characteristics of the kingdom of God. First, the kingdom is for a worldwide community of caring and sharing, and is against the love of money or wealth for its own sake. Second, the kingdom is for recognizing the Godly value of people as people, and against false values such as prestige and status. Third, the kingdom is for universal, inclusive solidarity and against selfish solidarity (“us versus them”). Fourth, the kingdom is for servant power, the power of love, not the abusive power that oppresses or enslaves. Fifth, the kingdom is for subversive wisdom or alternative wisdom, not conventional wisdom. Kingdom people don’t fit into the world’s mold. The kingdom of God is the sinful world turned upside down (Anderson, “The Kingdom of God,” Chaminade University lecture, February 27, 2007).

What does “the kingdom of God” mean to you? How would you define it? What is it about the kingdom of God that is most important to you?

7. Where does Jesus’ message about servanthood in leadership fit into his message about the kingdom of God?
8. Why are Christian leaders tempted to use the power model of leadership?
9. What are some practical problems with the power model of leadership?
10. Richard Foster, in *Money, Sex & Power*, said: “Power can be an extremely destructive thing in any context, but in the service of religion it is downright diabolical. Religious power can destroy in a way that no other power can...Those who are a law unto themselves and at the same time take on a mantle of piety are particularly corruptible” (Foster, *Money, Sex and Power*, 178).

John Stott said: “It is my firm conviction that there is too much aristocracy in the leaders of the Christian community, in defiance of the teaching of Jesus and his apostles, and not enough love and gentleness” (Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership*, 113). He also noted that

“the Bible contains clear warnings about the use and abuse of power... The apostle Peter clearly echoed this teaching when he urged church elders to shepherd God’s people, ‘not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock’ (1 Pe. 5:2-3)” (Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership*, 37).

Do you agree with Foster and Stott? Why or why not?

Have you experienced the abuse of power? What was it like? How might the leader have behaved differently, in order to achieve results without abusing his or her power?

11. Donald Kraybill said:

Rather than exchanging a new hierarchy for an old one, Jesus flattens hierarchies. He understands that hierarchies too easily begin to act like deities. Humans bow down, worship, and obey them. Jesus once and for all disarms the authority of hierarchies to act like gods. He calls us to participate in a flat kingdom where everyone is the greatest. In this kingdom the values of service and compassion replace dominance and command. In this flat family, the greatest are those who teach and do the commandments of God (Matt. 5:19). They love God and others as much as themselves (Kraybill, *The Upside-Down Kingdom*, 231).

Do you agree with Kraybill? Why or why not? Have you ever “bowed down” to a hierarchy? What is a “flat kingdom” like? How does it work? Do you know people who love God and others as much as themselves?

Rinehart quoted Howard Snyder as saying that “the church is not a chain of command but a network of love.” Do you agree? Why or why not? How would you describe a network of love?

What have leadership experts concluded about love and leadership? Do their conclusions contradict or support the teachings of Jesus? In what ways?

### **Chapter Four: The Characteristics of Servant-Leaders**

1. Youssef said that “when Jesus claims to be the Good Shepherd, he is not using an empty metaphor. He is claiming to be a very special kind of leader...” What kind of leader was he claiming to be?
2. Read Ezekiel 34. What is the Lord’s complaint about the shepherds of Israel? What are they doing wrong? Who does the Lord say will be Israel’s shepherd? What will he do for his flock? What insights does Ezekiel 34 provide regarding servant leadership?
3. Why is servant leadership not a single style of leadership?
4. The author lists the opinions of Malphurs, Blanchard and Hodges, Warren, Baron, and Hunter regarding the characteristics of servant-leaders.

In addition, James Autry described five ways of being that move people toward an unswerving attitude of service: Be authentic, be vulnerable, be accepting, be present, be useful (Autry, *The Servant Leader*, 3-21). James Sipe and Don Frick picked out seven characteristics or “pillars” of servant leadership: person of character, puts people first, skilled communicator, compassionate collaborator, foresight, systems thinker, and moral authority (Sipe and Frick, *Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership*, 4-6).

Robert C. Liden, a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and his colleagues identified seven servant leadership dimensions: emotional healing, creating value for the community, conceptual skills, empowering, helping followers grow and succeed, putting followers first, and behaving ethically (Liden et. al., “Servant Leadership: Development of a Multidimensional Measure and Multi-level Assessment,” 169). Dirk van Dierendonck, a professor at Erasmus University in the Netherlands, chose six key characteristics. He said that servant-leaders empower and develop people, they show humility, are authentic, accept people for who they are, provide direction, and are stewards who work for the good of the whole (Van Dierendonck, “Servant Leadership: A Review and Synthesis,” 1232-1234).

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What do all these lists of characteristics have in common? How do the lists differ? Which characteristics do you think are the most difficult to attain? Why? Which are the easiest? Why?

5. Make up your own list of characteristics of the servant-leader. Why did you choose the characteristics you chose?
6. What are the four elements that scholars believe are unique to servant leadership compared with other theories or ideas of leadership?
7. What does humility mean to you?
8. Stott said that “at no point does the Christian mind come into more violent collision with the secular mind than in its insistence on humility...The wisdom of the world values power, not humility. We have drunk in more of the power philosophy of Nietzsche than we realize” (Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership*, 37). Do you agree or disagree? Why?
9. Jesus said at Luke 14:8-11: “When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this person your seat.’ Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and he who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Have you ever exalted yourself, and then been humbled? What happened? How did it feel? By contrast, have you ever humbled yourself, and then been exalted? What happened? How did it feel?

10. Why is humility an essential characteristic of servant leadership?

**Chapter Five: The Key Practices of Servant-Leaders**

1. What does research say about the practical effectiveness of servant leadership?
2. What are seven key practices of servant-leaders?
3. The author says: “We need to know who we are, so we can lead authentically.” What does it mean to you to lead authentically?
4. Do you get feedback on your own behavior? If so, how?
5. Jesus modelled solitude and prayer. For example, “After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray” (Mt. 14:23). “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed” (Mk. 1:35). “But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed” (Lk. 5:16).

Do you withdraw and pray? When and where? How often?

6. Wayne Cordeiro said:

God is speaking directly to us. He has been since the beginning of time, long before we were born. He is sending out signals—instructions and guidance—targeted just for you. He’s sending you warnings of what is ahead in your life...The real question is not “Is God speaking?” Rather, it is “*Am I listening?*” His voice is all around us: speaking, warning, coaching, coaxing and correcting (Cordeiro, *The Seven Rules of Success*, 11).

Are you listening to God? Do you listen in prayer? Are there other times and places you listen?

7. Greenleaf believed that listening is the premier skill of the servant-leader. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
8. Do you consider yourself to be a good listener? Why or why not?
9. Do you have experience in seeking group consensus? What was it like? What did you learn?

10. What are the advantages and disadvantages of seeking consensus?
11. What makes listening so challenging?
12. How do servant-leaders change the pyramid?
13. In a hierarchical organization, subordinates may be reluctant to tell the chief what she or he needs to know. Erwin said that “the only means by which the person at the top can be assured of honesty and truthfulness from those beneath him is to make himself of ‘no reputation’—to lay aside his power and authority and approach them as a servant” (Gayle Erwin, *The Jesus Style*, 78). What do you think?
14. Why do servant-leaders give high priority to developing their colleagues?
15. Have you ever been a coach? What was it like? What did you learn? What did you help others to learn?
16. Do you find it easy to delegate responsibility to others? Why or why not?
17. What does foresight mean to you? Why is it important?
18. Why did Greenleaf say that foresight is the central ethic of leadership?
19. What are some common misperceptions about servant leadership?

### ***Chapter Six: Organizational Forms and Institutional Principles***

1. What are some of the different organizational forms available to a servant-leader?
2. What will make your organization truly Christian? How will you measure the success of your organization?
3. How can you make your organization a caring community?
4. What are eight institutional principles that can guide you as a servant-leader?

5. Wilkes said that “leadership begins with a mission.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
6. What are some ways in which your organization can serve the communities in which it operates?
7. What are the advantages of teams? Why are they essential to servant leadership?
8. Patrick Lencioni describes the dysfunctions of teams as absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability, and inattention to results (Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, 188-189). Have you experienced any of these dysfunctions on a team? What was it like?

By contrast, Lencioni says that members of truly cohesive teams trust one another, engage in unfiltered conflict around ideas, commit to decisions and plans, hold one another accountable for delivering on those plans, and focus on the achievement of collective results (Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, 189-190). Have you been on a truly cohesive team? What was it like?

9. Have you served on a board? Based on the discussion in the text, would you say that the board you served on was effective? If so, why? If not, why not?
10. Paul set out qualifications for overseers and deacons in the early church. At 1 Timothy 3:1-15 he wrote:

Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with

outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

Do these qualifications still apply today? Do they apply to all Christians who are members of boards, even if the boards are not church boards? Would you add any qualifications?

11. What questions should board members be asking?
12. How can you and your organization grow servant-leaders?

### ***Chapter Seven: Leading Organizational Change***

1. Why are servant-leaders good at leading change? Name five reasons
2. According to McFarland and Goldsworthy in *Choosing Change*, the power model doesn't work very well when leading change. Threatening to fire people if they don't go along with the change process does not improve the likelihood of success. In fact, the "power-coercive" approach can make matters worse in the long term. Explaining to employees how the change will benefit them also has its limits, since it does not tap into people's need to contribute to a higher purpose. What do they suggest is a key to successful implementation of change?
3. McFarland and Goldsworthy in *Choosing Change*, described five D's for individual and organizational change: disruption, desire, discipline,

determination, and development. Disruption is an event or experience that suggests the need to change. Desire is a measure of the degree to which an individual or organization wants to change. Discipline is about the small, consistent steps needed to achieve change.

Determination is about the resilience to keep going even when there are setbacks. Development is about continuous improvement, with feedback and ongoing learning.

John P. Kotter, in his book, *Leading Change*, listed eight steps in the change process. The eight steps are: (1) establishing a sense of urgency, (2) creating the guiding coalition, (3) developing a vision and strategy, (4) communicating the change vision, (5) empowering employees for broad-based action, (6) generating short-term wins, (7) consolidating gains and producing more change, and (8) anchoring new approaches in the culture.

Have you ever led an organizational change? Do any of the five D's described by McFarland and Goldsworthy or the eight steps listed by Kotter match your experience? If so, which ones? What do you think is the most difficult D or the most challenging step in the change process? Why?

### ***Chapter Eight: Beyond Theory X and Extrinsic Motivation***

1. What does it mean to you that we are created in the image of God?
2. What are your assumptions about people in the workplace? Are your assumptions more like Theory X or Theory Y?
3. According to a 2012 survey by the Gallup organization, only 13% of employees worldwide are engaged at work, meaning that they are psychologically committed to their jobs and are likely to make positive contributions to their organizations. The largest group, 63%, are “not engaged,” meaning that they lack motivation and are less likely to invest their discretionary effort in organizational goals or outcomes. That leaves 24% who are *actively disengaged*, meaning that they are unhappy and unproductive at work and are likely to spread negativity among their co-workers, making it harder for others to get their work done.

How do you explain the low number of people who are engaged at work? What factors do you think are important? Have you had a job in which you were not very engaged? One in which you were very engaged? What made the difference?

4. How does servant leadership go beyond Theory X and Theory Y?
5. How would you define extrinsic motivation?
6. Some of the problems with extrinsic motivation that are identified by Alfie Kohn and mentioned in the text are echoed by Daniel Pink in his book, *Drive*. Pink listed seven reasons extrinsic rewards—carrots and sticks—don't work. Extrinsic rewards can extinguish intrinsic motivation by turning an activity into "work." They can diminish performance, because the focus is on the reward, not the work itself. They can crush creativity, because rewards narrow the focus and limit the depth and breadth of thinking. They can crowd out good behavior, because people no longer do things that are worth doing for their own sake. Extrinsic rewards encourage cheating, shortcuts, and unethical behavior. They can become addictive, because people need larger and more frequent rewards to keep them motivated. They can foster short-term thinking, because people just think as far ahead as they need to in order to trigger the reward. Pink concluded that extrinsic rewards can work when the tasks are routine, not very interesting, and don't demand much creative thinking. They can also work when the reward is non-tangible, such as feedback or useful information about one's performance. They are harmless when the extrinsic reward is unexpected and offered only after the task is complete, so it is not a motivator at all (Pink, *Drive*, 34-59).

With so much evidence that extrinsic rewards don't work well, why do so many people continue to use them? Do you use them? Why?

7. How would you define intrinsic motivation? What are some of the advantages of intrinsic motivation?
8. Edward L. Deci reported on a study comparing intrinsic and extrinsic aspirations. The extrinsic aspirations were to be wealthy, famous, and physically attractive. The intrinsic aspirations were to have satisfying

personal relationships, make contributions to the community, and grow as an individual. (Note that the extrinsic aspirations were about what you *have*, while the intrinsic aspirations were about who you *are*.) Those with *intrinsic* aspirations had greater vitality, were more content, and had greater self-esteem. In short, people who were intrinsically motivated were mentally healthier than those who were extrinsically motivated (Deci, *Why We Do What We Do*, 127-128).

What do you think? Do these research results make sense in terms of your own experience? How do you feel when you are intrinsically motivated? How do you feel when you are extrinsically motivated? When do you feel the most stress? The least stress?

9. Which factors did Herzberg call “hygiene factors” and which did he call “motivators”? Are both important? Why or why not?
10. We have known for centuries that the symbols of success in our secular, commercial culture do not provide meaning. Here is Ecclesiastes 2:4-11:

I undertook great projects: I built houses for myself and planted vineyards. I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees. I bought male and female slaves and had other slaves who were born in my house. I also owned more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me. I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I acquired male and female singers, and a harem as well—the delights of a man’s heart...

*I denied myself nothing my eyes desired;*

*I refused my heart no pleasure.*

*My heart took delight in all my labor,*

*and this was the reward for all my toil.*

*Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done*

*and what I had toiled to achieve,*

*everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind;*

*nothing was gained under the sun.*

Where do you find meaning in your own life? Have your most important sources of meaning changed over time?

11. According to Adam Grant, what happens when you combine the desire to serve with intrinsic motivators like growing and finding meaning?
12. McGregor points out that “the limits on human collaboration in the organizational setting are not limits of human nature but of management’s ingenuity in discovering how to realize the potential represented by its human resources. Theory X offers management an easy rationalization for ineffective organizational performance: It is due to the nature of the human resources with which we must work. Theory Y, on the other hand, places the problems squarely in the lap of management. If employees are lazy, indifferent, unwilling to take responsibility, intransigent, uncreative, uncooperative, Theory Y implies that the causes lie in management’s methods of organization and control” (McGregor, *The Human Side of Enterprise*, 66).

The author agrees with McGregor, stating that “it is the arrogant power-mongers who are limiting the potential of vast numbers of individuals, and then claiming that people do not have much potential. In their own way, they have put people in a modern form of bondage, bondage to the assumptions of the secular, commercial culture.” What do you think? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

### ***Chapter Nine: In the World, not of the World***

1. In what ways is servant leadership counter-cultural?
2. Why is it easy to slip into cultural norms instead of following Jesus?
3. Tan said: “In Christian ministry today, especially in the local church but even in the marketplace and the home, as we have grown popular and successful we may also have gradually descended into arrogance, incompetence, and materialism and traded in our badge of service and servanthood. If so, we need to repent, and respond afresh to the call and challenge to servanthood in Christ. (Tan, *Full Service*, 188-

189). How can we do that—repent, and respond afresh to the call and challenge of servanthood in Christ? What would be some first steps?

4. Why must we be *in* the world, but not *of* the world? What does that mean to you?
5. What is “the dark side” of serving?
6. What is the message of the Paradoxical Commandments?
7. What are the two ways Blanchard and Hodges used the acronym EGO? What do they mean by “altaring” your leadership ego?
8. In *Lead Like Jesus*, Blanchard and Hodges shared spiritual reasons, practical reasons, and legacy reasons for servant leadership. The spiritual reasons are that servant-leaders seek first the Kingdom of God; servant leadership honors God and his commandments; servant leadership puts the love of Jesus into action; and servant leadership models Jesus to others. The practical reasons for servant leadership are that servant leadership provides better service, servant leadership provides better leadership; servant leadership closes the gap between success and significance; and servant leadership models Jesus to others. The leadership legacy reasons are that it’s not about you, you can live your life with God-grounded confidence, live a life full of integrity, and submit to the will of God for your life (Blanchard and Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus*, 193-208).

What are your reasons for being a servant leader?

9. What assurances has Christ given us? Do you need any more assurance? Why or why not?



# Biblical References

**All Biblical quotations are from  
The Holy Bible, New International Version (2011).**

*Dedication*

Jn. 1:1-5

*Chapter One:*

*Faith Flowing into Deeds*

Mt. 17:20

2Co. 5:7

Heb.11:11

Hab. 3:17-19

Mt. 6:8

Jn. 14:12

Eph. 2:10

Jas. 2:14-17

1Jn. 3:17

1Co.16:13

1Ti. 6:11-12

2Ti. 4:6-7

*Chapter Two:*

*Loving and Serving Others*

Mt. 22:37-39

Lk. 10:25-37

Jn. 13:34-35

1Jn. 4:7-8

1Co. 13:1-3

1Co. 16:14

Mt. 25:31-46

Lk. 16:19-31

Jn. 13:3-5

Jn. 13:8

Jn. 13:12-15

1Pe. 4:10

1Co. 10:24

Gal. 5:13

Gal. 6:2

Php. 2:3-4

Ge 2:15

*Chapter Three:*

*The Power Model vs Service Model of Leadership*

Mt. 4:8-10

Mt. 20:25-28

Mk. 10:42-45

Lk. 22:25-26

Lk. 18:24

Mt. 21:31

Lk. 18:17

Mt. 18:4

Mt. 20:16

Mt. 10:39

Mt. 5:3-10

Mt. 6:10

Col. 2:8

Ro. 12:2

2 Cor. 13:10

2 Cor. 10:8

*Chapter Four:*

*The Characteristics of Servant-Leaders*

Jn. 10:14-15

1Co. 13

Mt. 11:29

Php. 2:6-9

1Co. 4

1Pe. 5:5-6

*The Christian Leader at Work: Serving by Leading*

*Chapter Five:*

*The Key Practices of Servant-Leaders*

Mk. 6:7-13

*Chapter Six:*

*Organizational Forms and  
Institutional Principles*

Ac. 2:42-47

Ro. 12:10-13

Lev. 19:34

Dt. 10:17-18

1Ti. 3:1-13

*Chapter Seven:*

*Leading Organizational Change*

Ex. 14:11-12

Ex. 16:3

Ex. 17:3-4

Lk. 5:4

*Chapter Eight:*

*Beyond Theory X and Extrinsic  
Motivation*

Ge. 1:27

*Chapter Nine:*

*In the World, Not of the World*

Ecc. 2:4-11

Ecc. 12:13

Lk. 12:15

Mt. 6:19-21, 24

Mt.19:23

Jn. 17:14-17

2Co. 4:7-9

Ro. 8:29

Jn. 14:6

Jn. 15:5

Mt. 25:21

*Study Guide*

Mt. 6:8

Dt. 6:4-5

Lev. 19:18

1Pe. 5:2-3

Eze. 34

Lk. 14:8-11

Mt. 14:23

Mk. 1:35

Lk. 5:16

1Ti. 3:1-15

Ecc. 2:4-11



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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 34.
- <sup>2</sup> Faith can be distinguished from our beliefs. While faith is trust and confidence in God, our beliefs are our descriptions of God. Our faith can remain strong, even as our beliefs change. See Chapter 6, “Faith versus Beliefs,” in Kent M. Keith, *Have Faith Anyway: The Vision of Habakkuk for Our Times* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 41-47.
- <sup>3</sup> For additional background, see Chapter 1, “The Prophet Who Confronted God,” in Keith, *Have Faith Anyway*, 1-6.
- <sup>4</sup> Charles R. Swindoll, *Improving Your Serve* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1981), 93.
- <sup>5</sup> Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 228.
- <sup>6</sup> See, for example, Mt. 5:43-48; Mt. 22:39; Mk. 12:28-31; Lk. 6:27-35; Jn. 13:34-35; Ro. 12:9-10; Ro. 13:9; Eph. 4:2; 1Pe. 4:8-9; 1Jn. 4:7-21.
- <sup>7</sup> See, for example, Jim Wallis, *Faith Works: How to Live Your Beliefs and Ignite Positive Social Change* (New York: Random House, 2000), 71-72.
- <sup>8</sup> Donald B. Kraybill, *The Upside-Down Kingdom* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2003), 229.
- <sup>9</sup> Siang-Yang Tan, *Full Service: Moving from Self-Serve Christianity to Total Servanthood* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006), 16.
- <sup>10</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 257-258.
- <sup>11</sup> Swindoll, *Improving Your Serve*, 93-119.

- <sup>12</sup> Stacy T. Rinehart, *Upside Down: The Paradox of Servant Leadership* (Colorado Spring, CO: NavPress Publishing Group, 1998), 104.
- <sup>13</sup> Alanna Foxzwell-Baraja, “Beauty from Broken Things,” *Christianity Today*, (July 2013), 1. The Nozomi Project website is [www.nozomiproject.com](http://www.nozomiproject.com). Necklaces, bracelets, earrings, rings, framed pendants, and other accessories made from pottery shards can be purchased online.
- <sup>14</sup> The power model and service model of leadership are discussed in secular terms in Kent M. Keith, *The Case for Servant Leadership*, 2nd ed. (Honolulu, HI: Terrace Press, 2012), 19-30.
- <sup>15</sup> See also 1 Peter 5:2-3: “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.”
- <sup>16</sup> Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 37.
- <sup>17</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 21.
- <sup>18</sup> Bennett J. Sims, *Servanthood: Leadership for the Third Millennium* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005), 9.
- <sup>19</sup> According to *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*, “the centrality of the idea of the kingdom of God... in the teaching of Jesus is beyond all question.” Alan Richardson and John Bowden, eds., *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983), 317. The Gospel of Mark contains 14 references to the “Kingdom of God;” the Gospel of Matthew has 38 references to the “Kingdom of Heaven/God” or its equivalents; and the term “kingdom” occurs 46 times in the Gospel of Luke and 8 times in the Acts of the Apostles. See David Noel Freedman, ed., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 4, K-N (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 56-58. McKnight said that “Jesus overtly connects his mission, his vision, and his preaching with kingdom.” Scot McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 93. See also Graham Stanton, *The Gospels of Jesus*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2001), 203.
- <sup>20</sup> Kraybill, *The Upside-Down Kingdom*, 229.

- <sup>21</sup> N.T. Wright, *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels* (New York: HarperOne, 2012), 227-228 (italics mine). The references are to the Gospel of Mark.
- <sup>22</sup> Kraybill, *The Upside-Down Kingdom*, 229.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time* (Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group, 2005), 12.
- <sup>25</sup> C. Gene Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1998), 87.
- <sup>26</sup> Denny Gunderson, *The Leadership Paradox: A Challenge to Servant Leadership in a Power-Hungry World* (Seattle: YWAM Publishing, 2006), 29.
- <sup>27</sup> Kraybill, *The Upside-Down Kingdom*, 230-231.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., 231.
- <sup>29</sup> Gayle Erwin, *The Jesus Style* (Palm Springs, CA: Ronald N. Haynes Publishers, Inc., 1983), 57-58.
- <sup>30</sup> Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 75.
- <sup>31</sup> Tony Baron, *The Cross and the Towel: Leading to a Higher Calling* (Tucson, AZ: Wheatmark, 2011), 51-52.
- <sup>32</sup> Rinehart, *Upside Down*, 44.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid., 28.
- <sup>34</sup> Henri J. M. Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 59.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., 58-59.
- <sup>36</sup> Rinehart, *Upside Down*, 34-40.
- <sup>37</sup> Richard Foster, *Money, Sex and Power* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2009), 196.
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid., 212.

- <sup>39</sup> Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 38
- <sup>40</sup> Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 125.
- <sup>41</sup> Foster, *Money, Sex and Power*, 228.
- <sup>42</sup> Wright, *How God Became King*, 241.
- <sup>43</sup> Blanchard and Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus*, 177-178, 195.
- <sup>44</sup> Foster, *Money, Sex and Power*, 239.
- <sup>45</sup> Rinehart, *Upside Down*, 50.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup> Erwin, *The Jesus Style*, 56.
- <sup>48</sup> Rinehart, *Upside Down*, 145.
- <sup>49</sup> Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), 13-14.
- <sup>50</sup> James A. Autry, *The Servant Leader: How to Build a Creative Team, Develop Great Morale, and Improve Bottom-Line Performance* (Roseville, CA: Prima Publishing, 2001), 20-21.
- <sup>51</sup> Margaret J. Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science: Learning about Organization from an Orderly Universe* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 1994), 38-39.
- <sup>52</sup> Sims, *Servanthood*, 10.
- <sup>53</sup> Michael Youssef, *The Leadership Style of Jesus* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2013), 42.
- <sup>54</sup> Tan, *Full Service*, 147-148.
- <sup>55</sup> Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 96.
- <sup>56</sup> Gunderson, *Leadership Paradox*, 187.
- <sup>57</sup> Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 34.
- <sup>58</sup> Blanchard and Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus*, 195-196.

- <sup>59</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 257-264.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid., 265-270.
- <sup>61</sup> Baron, *The Cross and the Towel*, 137-154.
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid., 151. Baron also encouraged church leaders to focus on prayer and Scripture, and to consider the meaning of the ancient vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience for Christian leaders today.
- <sup>63</sup> James C. Hunter, *The Servant: A Simple Story about the True Essence of Leadership* (Rocklin, CA: Prima Publishing, 1998), 124.
- <sup>64</sup> Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 7-48. For additional definitions of the servant-leader, see Keith, *The Case for Servant Leadership*, 9-11.
- <sup>65</sup> Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 61.
- <sup>66</sup> The quote, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble,” is also found at James 4:6.
- <sup>67</sup> John Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 114.
- <sup>68</sup> Blanchard and Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus*, 66-67.
- <sup>69</sup> Tan, *Full Service*, 88, 91.
- <sup>70</sup> Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 153.
- <sup>71</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: HarperOne, 2001), 121-122.
- <sup>72</sup> Ibid., 124.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid., 127.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid., 128.
- <sup>75</sup> Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 41.
- <sup>76</sup> Erwin, *The Jesus Style*, 71-72.
- <sup>77</sup> Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 43.
- <sup>78</sup> Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 35-36.

- <sup>79</sup> Laura Reave, “Spiritual values and practices related to leadership effectiveness,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 16 (2005): 672.
- <sup>80</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>81</sup> Ibid., 673.
- <sup>82</sup> Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2001), 21.
- <sup>83</sup> Ibid., 30.
- <sup>84</sup> Merwin A. Hayes and Michael D. Comer, *Start with Humility: Lessons from America's Quiet CEOs on How to Build Trust and Inspire Followers* (Westfield, IN: The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2010), 3-4.
- <sup>85</sup> Jeffrey A. Krames, *Lead with Humility: 12 Leadership Lessons from Pope Francis* (New York: American Management Association, 2015), 7-8.
- <sup>86</sup> Reave, “Spiritual values and practices related to leadership effectiveness,” 681.
- <sup>87</sup> Blanchard and Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus*, XIII, 18.
- <sup>88</sup> A list of articles on empirical research regarding servant leadership in the workplace can be found at [www.toservefirst.com](http://www.toservefirst.com), in the “recommended reading” section. The list was provided by Dr. Robert C. Liden, professor of management at the University of Illinois at Chicago. See also Chapter 10, “Servant Leadership,” in Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2013), 219-251.
- <sup>89</sup> For a secular discussion of the key practices, see Keith, *The Case for Servant Leadership*, 31-56.
- <sup>90</sup> Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, pp. 27-28.
- <sup>91</sup> Ibid., 19.
- <sup>92</sup> Michael Moncur, “Quotation Details.” The Quotations Page. Accessed August 15, 2015. <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/33410.html>.
- <sup>93</sup> Tan, *Full Service*, 118.

- <sup>94</sup> David S. Young, *The Gift of Dialogue* (Westfield, IN: The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2012), 7.
- <sup>95</sup> Krames, *Lead with Humility*, 12.
- <sup>96</sup> Steve Timmis, *Gospel Centered Leadership: Becoming the Servant God Wants You to Be* (Purcellville, VA: The Good Book Company, 2012), 97.
- <sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.
- <sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.
- <sup>99</sup> Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 195.
- <sup>100</sup> Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 17.
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- <sup>211</sup> Ibid., 181.
- <sup>212</sup> I wrote The Paradoxical Commandments as part of a book for student leaders that was published in 1968. Since then, millions of people have used the commandments, including Mother Teresa, John Maxwell, and Stephen Covey. More information is available at [www.paradoxicalchristians.com](http://www.paradoxicalchristians.com) or [www.paradoxicalcommandments.com](http://www.paradoxicalcommandments.com).
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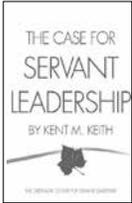
# About the Author

Dr. Kent M. Keith graduated from Roosevelt High School in Honolulu in 1966. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Government from Harvard University, a Master's degree in Philosophy and Politics from Oxford University in England, a Certificate in Japanese from Waseda University in Tokyo, a law degree from the University of Hawaii, and a doctorate in higher education from the University of Southern California. During his career he has been an attorney, state government official, high tech park developer, YMCA executive, and university president. From 2007 to 2012 he served as CEO of the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership in Indiana, and from 2012 to 2015 he served as CEO of the Greenleaf Centre for Servant Leadership (Asia) in Singapore. He is currently President of Pacific Rim Christian University in Honolulu ([www.pacrim.edu](http://www.pacrim.edu)). Dr. Keith is married to Dr. Elizabeth Misao Keith, and they have three grown children.

Dr. Keith has given more than a thousand conference papers, speeches, and workshops in the United States and eleven countries in Europe and Asia. He is known throughout the world as the author of the Paradoxical Commandments, which he first published in 1968 in a book for student leaders. In 2002, his book *Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments* became a national bestseller in the United States, and was published in 17 foreign languages. It was followed by three more books: *Do It Anyway* (2003), *Jesus Did It Anyway* (2005), and *Have Faith Anyway* (2008). Dr. Keith is a passionate advocate of servant leadership, and has written a number of books and articles on the topic, including *The Case for Servant Leadership*; *Servant Leadership in the Boardroom*; *Questions and Answers about Servant Leadership*, and *The Ethical Advantage of Servant Leadership*. More than 200,000 copies of his books have been sold worldwide. Information about the Paradoxical Commandments is available at [www.paradoxicalchristians.com](http://www.paradoxicalchristians.com), and more information about servant leadership is available at [www.toservefirst.com](http://www.toservefirst.com).

# Other Books by Dr. Kent M. Keith

## **SERVANT LEADERSHIP:**



### **The Case for Servant Leadership**

by Kent M. Keith

(Terrace Press, Second Edition, 2012)

This book is a best-selling introduction to servant leadership, with over 50,000 copies sold to date. It explains the ways in which servant leadership is ethical, practical, and meaningful. It discusses the universal human value of service, defines servant leadership, compares the power model of leadership with the service model, describes seven key practices of servant-leaders, and explores the meaningful life of servant leadership. It includes questions for reflection and discussion, as well as an appendix on servant leadership compared with other ideas about leadership. Now in its second edition, *The Case for Servant Leadership* has been used by businesses, government agencies, schools, hospitals, churches, non-profit organizations, and more than forty universities across the United States.

**Available from [www.toservefirst.com](http://www.toservefirst.com)**



### **Questions and Answers about Servant Leadership**

by Kent M. Keith

(Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2012)

During the past two decades, Dr. Keith has given hundreds of speeches and workshops on servant leadership. This book shares the questions that he is often asked and the answers that he gives when he is making presentations. In some cases, the answers have been expanded for this publication. This book will be especially useful to those who naturally begin with questions, whether they are new to servant leadership or have been on the journey for many years. The book provides the reader with starting points for further study, reflection, and implementation. Where applicable, answers conclude with recommendations for additional reading. A list of all the recommended readings can be found at the end of the text.

**Available from [www.toservefirst.com](http://www.toservefirst.com)**



### **Servant Leadership in the Boardroom: Fulfilling the Public Trust**

by Kent M. Keith

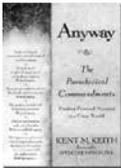
(Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2011)

This book presents and augments the views of Robert Greenleaf on the opportunity of board members of all types of corporations—for-profit and non-profit—to truly lead and make a difference

for their organizations and those their organizations serve. The book provides historical background on the public purpose of all corporations, the responsibilities of board members as trustees for the public good, the unique value of board judgments, the relationship between the board and administration, and keys to board effectiveness, including the board as a “council of equals” that focuses on what matters most, asking fundamental questions and seeking information about how well the organization is serving its employees and society at large.

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## **PARADOXICAL COMMANDMENTS:**

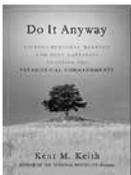


### **Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments**

by Kent M. Keith  
(G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2002).

The Paradoxical Commandments were first written by Kent Keith in 1968, when he was 19, as part of a booklet for student leaders. The commandments subsequently spread around the world, and have been used by millions of people. This book is an introduction to the Paradoxical Commandments and what they mean. It was a national bestseller in the United States, and has been translated into 17 languages.

**Available from [www.paradoxicalcommandments.com](http://www.paradoxicalcommandments.com)**

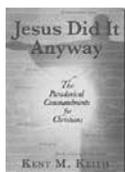


### **Do It Anyway: Finding Personal Meaning and Deep Happiness by Living the Paradoxical Commandments**

by Kent M. Keith  
(Inner Ocean Publishing, 2003; New World Library, 2008).

This book is a companion to *Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments*. It describes how people have used the Paradoxical Commandments to break away from their daily excuses, or a painful past, or a complicated present, to find meaning anyway. This is a practical “how to” book for those who want to put the Paradoxical Commandments into practice in their own lives. The book includes forty stories about people who are living the commandments; questions for personal reflection and group discussion; and an interview with the author in which he answers the questions he is asked most often about the commandments.

**Available from [www.paradoxicalcommandments.com](http://www.paradoxicalcommandments.com)**

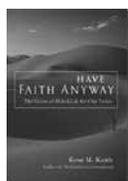


## **Jesus Did It Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments for Christians**

by Kent M. Keith  
(G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2005).

For more than forty years, the Paradoxical Commandments have been used by Christians all over the globe. Mother Teresa thought they were important enough to put on the wall of her children's home in Calcutta. *Jesus Did It Anyway* illustrates the Paradoxical Commandments through stories and verses from both the Old Testament and the New Testament, the teachings of Jesus and the apostles, and personal anecdotes. The 14-chapter book includes a study guide with questions for each chapter.

**Available from [www.paradoxicalchristians.com](http://www.paradoxicalchristians.com)**



## **Have Faith Anyway: The Vision of Habakkuk for Our Times**

by Kent M. Keith  
(Jossey-Bass, 2008).

*Have Faith Anyway* explores the author's new eleventh Paradoxical Commandment: *The world is full of violence, injustice, starvation, disease, and environmental destruction. Have faith anyway.* To help the reader better understand what it is like to have faith in the face of seemingly insurmountable problems, the author tells the story of the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk, whose vision of a conversation with God led him to an inspiring affirmation of faith even in the face of devastation and death. The book concludes with the author's own vision of a conversation between a Christian and God today. The book includes a Readers Guide for Reflection and Study.

**Available from [www.paradoxicalchristians.com](http://www.paradoxicalchristians.com)**



## **Morality and Morale: A Business Tale**

by Kent M. Keith  
(Terrace Press, 2012)

*Morality and Morale: A Business Tale* is a story about a young business manager faced with a moral dilemma at work. As he calls on others for advice, he learns that business is a way to serve others; that there is a universal moral code that each of us can follow in our businesses and our private lives; that morality and morale are related, so that when morality goes up, so does morale; that treating others right can be a source of personal energy and can result in business success; and that living morally makes life more meaningful. The book includes Notes for the Reader with background on the ideas introduced in the story.

**Available from [www.moralityandmorale.com](http://www.moralityandmorale.com)**