

Leadership

INTRO: Do you count yourself a leader?

- Some of you here will be thinking – “YES I am a leader”
- Other will be thinking – “NO way am I a leader”
- And others will be thinking – “MAYBE I am a leader but I’m not too sure”

This message is not just for those who stand at the front on Sunday

Leadership is for everyone

What is leadership?

- Google puts it like this: ‘The action of leading a *group* of people or an *organization*, or the *ability* to do this’
 - The world sees leadership as an ability
 - Ability to lead lots of people in a group or organisation
- Leadership is more about **Responsibility** than it is about **Ability**
 - Duty > Skills
- “Leadership is not about titles, positions or flowcharts. It is about one life influencing another” (John Maxwell)
- “A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way” (John Maxwell)
 - Jesus is the way
- As Christians we **ALL** have a **Responsibility/Duty** to influence others to win them for Christ – this is just one leadership responsibility we all share as Christians

Leadership is less about ability and more about responsibility, a responsibility that is God given to have kingdom influence on the world around us

How can we come to this conclusion?

Biblical Leadership

In the very beginning, God gave us leadership responsibility

Genesis 1:26 - Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” (NIV)

- **THEY**
 - Men and women
- There are no barriers to leadership, it includes everyone
- **OUR IMAGE... OUR LIKENESS**
 - We have been created in the likeness of the God who made the universe
 - He has supreme authority and responsibility
 - We are like God in that we too have authority and responsibility
 - It is God given responsibility to rule over everything on Earth
- We are created to have and share in the responsibility that God has given
- **LET US MAKE... SO THAT**
 - We were created for a purpose

- Part of that purpose is to steward the Earth responsibly rather than to exercise exploitive domination
 - △ Gives glory to God and not ourselves
 - Leadership is not a characteristic we possess but is our whole existence
 - “What matters is not the presence of certain abilities, so much as the fact that God has set us in a certain relationship to himself” (David Atkinson)
- The responsibility we’ve been given comes out of our created purpose – a relationship with God
- **RULE OVER**
 - Ruling over the Earth is a hugely responsible task
 - What we have responsibility for everyday is far less than this
 - *Story of being in charge of Past Times for a week*
 - Your responsibility may be different to mine
 - △ Raising children to know and love Jesus
 - △ To be a witness in the workplace / at school / at home / in the neighbourhood or community / in sports teams / in activity groups
 - △ Care for Brynmawr – e.g. pick up litter, be good stewards, encouraging people
 - △ Being at the head of a board / executive committee
 - △ Representing your town as an MP / local council
 - △ Church elder / kids’ worker / pastoral carer / teas and coffees etc...
- No matter how big or small your responsibility may seem, God has entrusted it to you to do it faithfully

Maybe after all this you are thinking – **“Okay, I have been made in God’s likeness to lead, I have responsibility, but there is no way I can carry it out”** – I just want to reassure you, that not having all the resources you need for task is okay

- But man provides for neither the living creatures or nature; God provides (Matthew 6:26-30)
 - We may feel like we are ill equipped for leadership because we cannot provide the resources needed to fulfil our responsibility
 - But God will provide us with everything we need
 - Leadership requires complete and utter dependency on God in everything we do
 - △ *Story of speaking in Malawi vs speaking at Alpha*
 - △ So that’s my experience of what it looks like to rely on God in my leadership, yours could be praying for people, setting example in worship, sending an encouraging text, making Godly decisions in the workplace etc...

So God has given us, men and women in his church, you and me, leadership responsibility to carry out in our everyday lives to fulfil his purposes

Leadership in Practise

Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

- A talent is not a measure of ability but a measure of weight
 - A weight of responsibility not an amount of gifting
 - God has given to all of us a weight of responsibility that we can handle
 - △ We start with a small measure of responsibility
 - △ Even the one bag servant has riches from his master – 1 bag ~ 20years salary

Some of my present
and future
responsibilities

SHARE STORY

- I lead a youth group of 6 young people
- I'm unmarried with no children
- I have friends from university who are

not Christians

➤ **What are your responsibilities?**

- △ As we are faithful with what we are given more is added
- △ It won't be a burden

God gives to each of us a measure of responsibility weighted to what he entrusts us with and we are called to be faithful with it in all areas of our lives

- Not about how much responsibility we have but about how we use what has been given us
 - God isn't looking for equal return from everyone, but rather faithfulness with what he has entrusted us
 - The commendation he gives the 2 and 5 bag servants is the same
 - Examples:
 - △ If you run an activity group in the community well
 - △ If you witness to your 1 best friend (unchurched) and take them 1 step forward in their journey to salvation
 - △ If your round the dinner table having God honouring conversations with your family
 - △ If your preaching to a crowd of 5000
 - Taking a lead with our responsibilities is a safe place to be
 - Being passive and doing nothing will take us to a dark and horrible place
- Guys, there is a warning here that if we do nothing we will be cut off from our inheritance, this is not a rule, but true faith produces works so let's use however much we have been given to make more for God's kingdom
- What can stop us exercising our leadership responsibilities?
 - 2 different groups of people
 - 1) Laziness – "I can't be bothered" and Unwillingness – "I don't want to"
 - △ We outwork our responsibility for God's glory
 - △ When we grasp an understanding of the privilege to what God has given us it will make us want to take a lead out of the responsibilities we've been entrusted with
 - 2) Fear – "I'm too scared" and Inadequacy – "I'm not able"
 - △ If we leave all the responsibility to '5 bag leaders' we end up burying what God has given us in the ground
 - △ Even if you don't *feel* like a leader, know the truth that God has given you all the resources you need and we can call upon him for them

Our feelings can get in the way of the good works God has prepared for us to do, but the truth is God loves you and wants you to share in his leadership responsibility by working out faithfully what he's given you

So do you count yourself a leader?

The truth is, whether you feel able or not, God has given you a privileged responsibility, big and small to take a lead in this world

RESPONSE: PRAY – Forgiveness / Repentance / Impart Faith + Courage