

Lead like Jesus 1 - Heart of a Leader

Welcome

How many of you are leaders? Raise your hands today if you are a leader.

The world is in need of leaders. At every level the world is looking for leadership.

- Governments at every level... federal, state, & city. We are constantly firing one leader in hopes of finding a better leader.
- Every business that wants to make it in this turbulent economy is looking for leadership.
- The culture is looking for leadership.
- Your family, your children are looking for leadership.

The world is in need of leaders.

Christians should be the best leaders

In a world in need of leaders, a Christian, a follower of Jesus should be in great demand.

Churches should be leadership centers. People should drive by a church and exclaim “There are some problem solvers. There are some wise people. There are those brave innovators. There are those people who seem to see what can’t be seen, almost like they know what is going to happen before it happens and without fail march undaunted into the struggle.”

Christians should be the best leaders because Jesus is the greatest leadership model.

Perhaps you are hearing me say that and you are questioning if it is true. How can Jesus be a better leader than... Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, or Bill Gates? Is He really a better leader than some on the world's government leadership stage.

In order for me to prove to you that Jesus is the greatest leader, you need to understand what leadership is.

Leadership is Influence

I asked you to raise your hand if you were a leader, and some you did not raise your hand. Let me tell you why you did not raise your hand. You believe that leadership is...

- A position or a title that appears on an organizational flow chart.
- A degree or certificate someone earns after years in a school.
- A skill that you are born with and some people just seem to have it.

Leadership is influence – the capacity to effect change.

Every one of you should have raised your hands, because all of you have influence.

You may be a single parent and think you are not a leader, but I would tell you that you are hugely influential to your kids and to your peers around you.

You may be a young person today and feel like you are not old enough to be a leader, but I would tell you that you

have a lot of influence on those around you.

You may be a retired grand-parent who says “I am too old to be a leader.” I would tell you that grand-parents are more important than ever, and the next generation is looking to their grand-parents for influence.

Every single person in this room has influence. The kind of influence may be different. The area of influence may be different. The amount of influence may be different, but every person listening to me right now... **YOU HAVE INFLUENCE.**

Leadership is influence and I want to tell you that **NO ONE** has ever influenced our world more than Jesus.

No one has influenced our world more than Jesus

We mark our time by the birth of Jesus.

We mark our time B.C. & A.D. What does that mean? B.C. means “Before Christ” and A.D means “Anno Domini – Latin for “The year of our Lord.”

Why is it the year 2021? Because 2021 years ago a single person named Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

What are the 2 most widely celebrated holidays in the world? Christmas & Easter are celebrated throughout the world. Christmas celebrates the birth of one man Jesus and Easter remembers the resurrection of one man Jesus.

The teachings of one man named Jesus have changed the world. His teachings influenced the creation of colleges & hospitals. His teaching have influenced legal systems & government formations.

Imagine you lived 2000 years ago you were going to gamble. You were going to gamble on who would have the most lasting influence... The world empire of Rome with their military and Caesar or a single Jew in Israel.

There is NO WAY you would have placed money on a Jewish man named Jesus...

Imagine a little baby born in poverty... born in a stable and laid in a manger. Imagine a child born under the shadow of the Roman government and under the emperor Caesar.

Imagine this man working as an ordinary carpenter.

Imagine this man calling simple uneducated followers.

And yet... All throughout the world we name our children after the followers of Jesus – Matthew, Mark, Luke, John... and we name our dogs after Nero & Caesar.

BECAUSE NO ONE HAS INFLUENCED OUR WORLD MORE THAN JESUS. He is the greatest leader you could ever follow.

You can go to the book store and you can go to a section called “self help.” You will find many leadership books in this section. I recommend you read these books. There are many books I could recommend you find at Barnes & Nobles, but I really want to suggest that the best leadership book is your Bible,

because it shows you the greatest leadership model in Jesus.

Lead Like Jesus

Over the next 5 weeks we are going to be studying the greatest leader of all time and learning how we can lead like Jesus.

I promise you that if you will come to every installment of this series that you will be a better leader.

In this series we are going to talk about 5 things.

The heart of a leader

The hands of a leader

The head of a leader

The habits of a leader

The legacy of a leader

Today I want to talk to you about the Heart of a Leader.

Heart of a Leader

Before we talk about any strategy, any habit, any piece of knowledge, we must talk about the heart.

The most important part of a leader is the heart.

Proverbs 4:23(NIV) Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

Good leadership does not flow from a book, a business plan, or a really inspiring speech. Good leadership will flow from the heart, because everything flows from the heart.

This simple concept is where everyone messes up. Every book on leadership, conference, or seminar focuses **what** to do and **how** to do it. But to lead like

Jesus you start with the heart... you start with the WHY!

If your heart... if your why is not right, then your WHAT & HOW will never be right.

Why do you want to lead?

What is your Motivation?

Your motivation to be a leader is essential. Before you ever call your meeting, before you ever start your organization, if you do not correct your heart's motivation you will fail before you begin.

The question of why is all about the heart. What is the heart of the leader saying?

The Motive book

Leadership author Patrick Lencioni in his book “The Motive” does one of the best jobs at addressing the motivations to lead. He boils it all down to 2 driving motivations.

Reward & Responsibility

Let’s explain what he means by reward & responsibility.

Reward – You are motivated by the perks and power of leading.

Responsibility – You are motivated by the responsibility to serve and care for the people you lead.

Reward wants the bigger salary, the bigger office, the higher position on the org chart... Reward wants people to notice them and to think higher of them. Reward wants fun, so you use the power to assign all the boring menial junk

assignments to those below you so that you can have the fun tasks.

Responsibility wants to serve, help, and lift up the ones we lead.

When we think about Jesus as the ultimate leadership model, which of these 2 motivations does Jesus display?

Everything Jesus did as a leader was out of a heart to serve. Nothing Jesus did was for personal reward.

Think about the posture of Jesus...

He knelt down to write in the dirt to rescue the woman caught in adultery.

He bends down to take dirt to heal the blind man.

He reaches down to take up little children.

He kneels in prayer.

Jesus teaches us this.

When you bend down to serve, God can lift you up to lead.

When you focus on the responsibility it allows God to focus on the reward.

It allows God to say “Well done good and faithful servant, enter into my happy reward...” Matthew 25:23.

Jesus is a servant leader. Jesus did not just bark out orders and then sit in a cushy office. Jesus served out of responsibility & love.

Are you leading like Jesus in this area?
Are you focused on reward or responsibility?

Lead like Jesus

Turn with me to Matthew 20:20 where we will see a great example of responsibility & reward motivation.

Jesus had just told the disciples for the 3rd time that He will suffer death on the cross... and then this happens.

Matthew 20:20-21(NIV) Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. 21 "What is it you want?" he asked. She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom."

2 disciples, James & John come to Jesus with their mom. What are they seeking?

They are seeking reward... promotion... status... in Jesus' Kingdom. James & John who have been walking with Jesus for around 3 years bring their mom to ask Jesus for them...

When was the last time you brought your mom to your boss to help you negotiate a raise? This is exactly what James & John did. The mom asks Jesus to pick one of her sons to sit at his right hand as 2nd in command, and the other son to sit at his left as 3rd in command.

Jesus had been trying to instill in his disciples the responsibility of serving, yet James, John & their mom are focused on the reward. But James & John were not the only ones with the wrong motivation...

Matthew 20:24(NIV) 24 When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers.

The other 10 disciples heard about what James & John were trying to do, they all became indignant with the brothers. Why? Because they too where after the reward & not the responsibility.

They all thought that this Jesus was going to become an earthly king and that following Jesus would lead to position, power, & money in the bank. All 12 of the disciples are jockeying for the reward of being big on Jesus' organization flow chart when He comes into His kingdom. The other 10 disciples were mad at the brothers because they thought "Why didn't I think to do that!? Hey maw come talk to Jesus for me..."

Jesus revealed his heart of responsibility as he just told them for the 3rd time that he was going to serve the whole world by dying a horrific death on the cross... and they couldn't even understand this because they were all thinking about the reward.

Here is how Jesus responds to this bold request for reward...

Matthew 20:22(NIV) "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?" "We can," they answered.

Jesus says you "You don't get it." They wanted a place at his right and his left, and Jesus had just told them about his death on the cross. On the cross... who

was on his right & left, but two outcasts dying upon the cross.

Jesus asks “can you drink the cup I am going to drink?” This should remind all of us of Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane where he drank the cup of wrath for us. (Matthew 26:39)

And these brothers James & John say “We can.” They are only thinking about reward... The rest of the disciples are only thinking about reward. All 12 disciples are now angry at one another because they think someone else is going to receive a greater reward than they will receive.

So Jesus calls a leadership timeout. Jesus has a conference with his 12 and teaches them the true heart of a leader.

Matthew 20:25(NIV) Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them

Jesus tells them something they already know... He says “YOU KNOW.”

Jesus says the “rulers of the gentiles.” Jesus here is directly referencing the gentile nation of Rome and how their leaders exercise authority over others.

Every leader in Rome was a reward motivated leader. Every leader built up more power so that they could get more riches and also use their power to push everyone down. Jesus told the disciples “YOU KNOW THIS...” and the disciples are like “yeah Jesus... that’s what we want.”

Looking back at the text the words “lord it over them” and “exercise authority” both have the same root Greek word “kata” which means TO PUT DOWN.

The disciples were ok with putting others down so that they could receive reward.

Our world is overflowing with this kind of leadership. It is the leadership model of Rome... it is the leadership model of the world to put others down so that you get more reward. It is actually easy for us to justify this kind of leadership because it is so prevalent. We can tell ourselves that it is ok for us to put others down because that is just how the business world works...

But Jesus says these 4 words to His followers.

NOT SO WITH YOU

Jesus draws a line in the sand and says NO. My followers will NOT be like this. My kingdom is not motivated by putting others down so that you can gain more reward.

Jesus is telling them “I don’t want you to ever have a heart motivation that is all about you.” And so Jesus offers them an alternative heart for leadership.

Matthew 20:26-28(NIV)Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—

2 WORDS. One is easier to receive than the other.

Servant - focused on doing things for others rather than oneself.

If you are anything like me you are ok with this, but you are already bracing against the next word. You are saying in your heart that I will serve others but I AM SLAVE TO NO ONE... But this is the exact word Jesus uses. What does it mean to be a slave?

Slave – Someone bound to obey their master's commands & teachings.

Serving is not a suggestion but a command of our master & Lord Jesus Christ.

We don't get to decide when and how we will serve... We are slaves to Jesus...
BOUND TO OBEY HIS COMMAND.

This means when Jesus tells me to serve someone... I don't get to say no.

When Jesus says to forgive someone... I don't get to say no.

If you are having trouble with this I would ask you to check your heart. I would ask you to check your motivation because I guarantee you are focused on reward and not responsibility.

If you lead for any reason other than to serve others, you will never be a great leader.

It's impossible to lead like Jesus, if you won't serve like Jesus.

Jesus Christ did not just give us the principle... He gave us the model by living it out. Here is the next verse.

Matthew 20:28(NIV) 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."

The greatest leader ever said that He did not come to be served, but to serve... Not to receive a reward but to give his life as a ransom.

musician

Lead Like Jesus

I want you to think about the people who had the biggest influence on your life. I am certain that it is someone who served you.

- A parent who gave their life for you day after day.
- A coach that spent extra time with you and saw something in you that others did not see.
- A teacher... Everyone else said you would never amount to anything but they poured themselves into you... not for themselves but to serve you.

What kind of leader are you?

Reward leaders want you to realize their greatness.

Servant leaders want you to realize your greatness.

Reward leaders find their value in their performance + the approval of others.

Servant leaders find their value in one place – God.

Reward leaders hate criticism because it is all about them. Servant leaders willingly receive criticism and use it to help them serve at a higher level.

The world is in need of servant leaders.

The world has over 2 billion people who call themselves Christian... but the world is lacking those that lead like Jesus.

Do you want to lead like Jesus?
Come ask Him to effect your heart.
Don't run from the conviction you are feeling from him... run fully towards

that conviction and allow Him to shape and mold you into the leader the world needs.

Disciples hear the words of Jesus...
NOT SO WITH YOU.