

Introduction: This Thing Called Servant Leadership

“‘Do not I fill heaven and earth?’ declares the Lord”
(Jer. 23:24). Our #leadership is incomplete without a
concept of God.

The world sees leadership as if through a veil. Without God in the picture, it ignores the effects of sin, the workings of Satan, the influence of the Holy Spirit, the wisdom of the Word, the sanctification of believers through hardship, and the eternal effects of temporal decisions. It also ignores the fact that there is a sovereign Lord, “the great King over all the earth” (Ps. 47:2).

SERVANT LEADER STRONG

“What is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (2. Cor. 4:18). #Leadership focuses on the unseen.

Though he is unseen, he exerts his will over the affairs of people and nations. The generations are vaguely aware of his workings: “The LORD reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations” (Ps. 146:10). He sweeps through history, establishing kingdoms, felling rulers, and calling people to him.

God’s invisibility is a mystery. It’s as if he wanted it to be easy *not* to believe in him. And yet, if you have “eyes to see,” he is everywhere. He is so deep and unfathomable that he must be perceived spiritually. He reveals himself through love, conviction of sin, and in the very fabric of nature. He speaks in numerous ways to those who have “ears to hear.”

How far have you invited this God into your life? How far into your leadership? My prayer is that after you read this book, you will desire more of him in your everyday work, whether you lead a team of three or a company of 30,000.

I hope to show you that he is reliable, not just for salvation and the deep spiritual things of life, but also that he says volumes about how he wants you to lead the people around you. The good news is that he promises to walk with you, guide you, protect you, sharpen you, and be your personal confidant.

I believe a big part of servant leadership is “strength under control.” As the perfect servant leader, Jesus exhibited restrained

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power during his life on earth, but he didn't start that way. He started life as a weak, helpless baby, like the rest of us.

“Blessed are the meek, merciful, pure in heart, & the peacemakers” (Matt. 5:5-9). Jesus's brand of #leadership begins with peace.

While he began in peace, he also displayed a brilliant style of authoritative leadership that commanded respect and stirred up thousands of followers willing to die for him.

And though we likely won't attract such steadfast servants ourselves, he still makes an incredible promise: “[W]hoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these” (John 14:12).

So, our work is cut out for us. That's what Paul the “super apostle” understood when he wrote this:

“I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me” (1 Cor. 15:10). True #leadership is GOD working.

Paul revealed the power behind his great accomplishments, a power at our disposal too—“the grace of God with me.”

This is servant leadership. Full of grace and peace, power and authority.

Aligning Our Concept of Leadership

We see that godly leadership is more than discovering what the organization should be and do in order to be successful. It's also more than setting up our followers to succeed (though it certainly includes these concepts).

Godly leadership begins, flourishes, and grows over time as the leader develops character, good followers, wisdom, and most importantly, a strong walk with the Holy Spirit.

Now, with our foundation built, let's begin in an uncomfortable place.