

Developing Leaders to Make Jesus Known – Part 4

Good morning, and this is our 4th and final part of the series – developing leaders to Make Jesus Known.

Over the series, we've been looking at the Characteristics and Qualities of leadership. And I hope that you've seen that most of the **qualities and characteristics** that we've been talking about apply not just to leaders, but to all Christians. **Our children and youth** have been following this series as well and they've also been able to apply the qualities to themselves as well!

This morning, I want to briefly look at three qualities of a leader and these will be applicable to both leaders and to all of us as well. But leaders need to set an example so it's important for leaders and emerging leaders to work hard at being a good example to others in these three qualities that I'm going to look at this morning.

1. Having a heart of humility

One of the main qualities of a leader, that God is pleased with, is a heart of humility.

Now being humble doesn't mean that you have to be soft and weak. Jesus was certainly not soft and weak when he dealt with the false teachers of his day. He was harsh and firm with them.

And Jesus was **brave and courageous** but at the same time, he was humble **and put the needs of others first.**

So in Philippians 2 we read

³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. (NIV)

So we can see from these verses that God doesn't want us to be selfish and proud and he doesn't want us to look down on others. Instead we are to value others above ourselves and think about the needs of others.

Yes, we do need to think about our own needs as well but we also need to think about the needs and welfare of others.

In our self-obsessed and self-gratifying culture, it's too easy to get this balance wrong. It's too easy to become arrogant and think only of our needs and to look down on others.

In the same chapter, Philippians chapter 2, we are shown that Jesus humbled himself, he put his needs aside and thought of the needs of others. **He was willing to sacrifice his own life for the needs of others.**

So a big part of humility is thinking about the needs of others and often making **courageous sacrifices** to care for the needs of others.

And we often see acts of humility and courageous sacrifices in the life of the Kings Family. I love hearing stories and testimonies of how people have cared for and helped other people in the **Church family and outside the church family**. These are acts of humility, thinking not only about our own needs, but also about the needs of others are an act of worship to God and a blessing to others.

And the opposite of a heart of humility is a **proud and arrogant heart**. A heart that is selfish and thinks only about their own needs and their own gain and not about the needs of others.

And God is not pleased with a proud and arrogant heart – in fact he will punish and discipline a proud and arrogant person.

James 4:6 (NIV)

“God opposes the proud
but shows favour to the humble.”

We saw in the story of King David and King Saul, that Saul had a proud and disobedient heart and that God rejected him as king and we saw in Psalm 51,

that though David was not perfect, he had a humble heart before God and he cared for the welfare of his people.

So having a heart of humility that serves others is an important quality for leadership and for us all.

The second quality I want us to think about for a few minutes is **protecting our hearts** or guarding our hearts.

2. Protecting our hearts

Proverbs chapter 4 and verse 23 says this

**²³ Above all else, guard your heart,
for everything you do flows from it.**

The chapter is written by a father to his children and he warns them to guard their hearts, to protect their hearts for so much of what we do and think comes from what we have in our hearts.

Jesus said the same thing in Luke 6:45

⁴⁵ A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

So we need to guard and protect our hearts and we need to fill our hearts with good things and to protect our hearts from evil things.

We live in a world where there are so many pressures and temptations upon all of us. There are hundreds of sexual temptations, materialistic temptations and so many opportunities for selfish ambition – just to think

about our own pleasures and not think about the needs of the poor and vulnerable across our nation and our world.

All these pressures and temptations have two goals, to make us take our eyes off Jesus and to make us forget the poor and helpless.

Many Christians drift away from God and stop following Jesus because of these three areas of temptation: sexual temptations, materialistic temptations and the drive for more and more personal benefits.

So it's really important for leaders and for us all to protect and guard our hearts.

And the third and final quality I want us to look at this morning is

3. Self-Awareness

If we are to be good leaders and to help others around us grow in Christ, then we need to have a self-awareness of ourselves.

Here are some things we need to be aware of of ourselves.

We need to

a) Be aware of your strengths and weaknesses

We all have strengths and weaknesses and we need to be aware of what these are. None of us is strong in every area and God has given us all particular gifts and abilities and we need to play to these – to play to our strengths.

And as we work as a family, as a team, we complement each other.

Talking about our strengths is easy, but talking about our weaknesses can be very hard and here again, we need to be **humble and honest** and in a safe environment, to be able to talk about our weaknesses.

Another part of self-awareness is:

b) Know how you react under stress

We all react differently under stress, some of us become angry, some of us bottle things up, some of us like to run away and hide, some of us like to roll our sleeves up and fight We're all different and we all react differently under stress.

Life is full of stress and joy and for us to grow as healthy individuals and as healthy communities, we need to be self-aware and know how we react under stress and trial.

When I've had a bad day at work or if I've got a stressful situation that I'm having to work out – these are some of the ways I might react:

I might be less patient with my wife and kids and more-snappy with them.

I usually struggle to sleep when I am stressed about something.

I might get an upset stomach when I'm feeling stressed.

I might be more-quiet and bottle up my feelings – although I've learnt talking to people about how I'm feeling REALLY helps.

So it's important to know how you react under stress and how that might affect your own health and how that affects your relationships.

A big part of self-awareness is

c) Know your personality type

God made us all different and we all have different types of personality. Some of us are out going and extravert and some of us are shy and more introvert.

Some of us are more optimistic and some of us have a more pessimistic personality.

I'm certainly more of a pessimist than my wife and we've learnt to compliment each other over the years – it's taken a while but we've learnt to appreciate we are different in our personalities.

I'm more of a worrier than my wife and I worry far too much about far too many things – AND over the years I've had to learn to trust God is in control and I've also had to learn to talk about my worries, rather than bottle them all up.

One last thing about self-awareness:

d) Know how your past failures and loss can affect you now

We all experience failures and loss in our lives. None of us are exempt from failure or loss or hurt. Some of us will have been through huge amounts of failure and loss and over time, that can build up and affect our wellbeing and affect our relationships.

So it's important to take time to work through our failures and losses and to be aware of how they can affect us. It's good to talk through these things with God and it's also good to pray with others and so we can carry one another's burdens as the bible tells us to.

So that's 4 things about self-awareness.

I've written down 7 questions for reflection. Small group leaders, if you want to use 2 or 3 of them, that's fine but no pressure.

If people want to use them for individual use or for use with a friend, that's also fine.

The questions are in the notes which I think you can obtain by clicking on the link in the email that gets sent out each week.

Questions for Small Groups or for individuals.

1. Can you think of any examples from the bible of people who walk humbly or proudly before God?
2. In what ways can we guard and protect our heart?
3. Make a list of your strengths and weaknesses

4. How do you react under stress?
5. How do you manage stress and worry?
6. How would you describe your personality?
7. Have you any hurts or losses that you feel comfortable sharing?