

Leadership

Webster defines a leader as “one who leads, a commander.” There is a real need in these last days for true leadership—someone who will lead through action and example. Many people want an exalted position, but few want the accountability that comes with it. But an unaccountable man is a dangerous man because he can become a dictator instead of a leader. Dictators do not answer to anybody.

A true leader will be accountable for his life and his actions. And if his life is governed by character and conviction, he will pay his bills, keep his word, raise his children in the fear of God, and be ever faithful to the things of God.

A leader cannot afford to be lazy; he must be dependable. Proverbs 10:26 says, “As vinegar to the teeth and as smoke to the eyes, so *is* the sluggard to them that send him.” A pastor desperately needs people whom he can count on and who he can depend on to finish what they were asked to do. Proverbs 25:19 says, “Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble *is like* a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.”

A leader must have credibility. This cannot be demanded; it must be earned. To be credible, one must be a man of his word; he cannot be a liar. He must prove himself by living a godly life before God and man. Just because a man has the ability to preach, sing, or play an instrument does not mean that he should not be accountable for the way he lives. A true leader will be a submitted person.

A leader must be a man of principles and conviction. Men who preach without having convictions are like “clouds without water.” An unprincipled man should never become licensed to preach. A true leader should have a solid and uncompromised belief system based on an apostolic perspective. He must be faithful to the gospel (the New Birth, Inward and Outward Holiness, and the One God message, etc.). It is more important to exalt principles and Godly character than to be awed by oratory abilities. Men who adhere to principles become leaders.

The following list of principles was given to President Garfield when he was a youth:

1. Never be idle.
2. Make few promises.
3. Always speak the truth.
4. Live within your income.

5. Never speak evil of anyone.
6. Keep good company or none.
7. Live up to your engagements.
8. Never play games of chance.
9. Drink no intoxicating drinks.
10. Good character is above everything else.
11. Keep your own secrets if you have any.
12. Never borrow if you can possibly help it.
13. Do not marry until you are able to support a wife.
14. When you speak to a person, look into his eyes.
15. Save when you are young to spend when you are old.
16. Never run into debt unless you see a way out again.
17. Good company and good conversation are the sinews of virtue.
18. Your character cannot be essentially injured except by your own acts.
19. If anybody speaks evil of you, let your life be so that no one believes him.
20. When you retire at night, think over what you have done during the day.
21. If your hands cannot be employed usefully, attend to the culture of your mind.
22. Read the above carefully and thoughtfully at least once a week.

These personal principles were given to him by an elder friend, and he cherished them all the days of his life.

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