

Spiritual Leadership Series 04
Leading Like Jesus
By Bill Denton

INTRODUCTION

A. We've been looking at the topic of spiritual leadership

1. We defined it – helping to move people from where they are to where God wants them to be

2. We looked at the flip side of leadership which is followship
 - a. yes, part of leadership is to create and encourage followers
 - b. but the truth is, followers have a very real and important part to play in responding to, and benefiting from leadership
 - c. if there is a crisis in leadership (and I believe there is), there is also a crisis in followship

3. Then we looked at the foundation for leadership
 - a. the foundation turns out to be Jesus himself
 - b. spiritual leaders will look like Jesus
 - c. we also looked at what Jesus said about leadership
 - 1) not like what was commonly practiced among the Gentiles
 - 2) a leader does not exist to be served but to serve
 - 3) just like the Son of Man came to serve, not to be served
 - 4) Jesus is our example and pattern for leadership

B. One more lesson in this series, and today we're going to look a bit more at Jesus

1. There are some basic ideas about spiritual leadership that simply do not get enough consideration

2. Today's church often gives lip service to Jesus, but fails or refuses to actually allow Jesus to teach us about spiritual leadership

3. Whether we want to admit it or not, we often resort to worldly forms or styles of leadership while ignoring what the Bible teaches, or what Jesus shows us

C. Today – leading like Jesus

I. EVIDENCE THAT WE DON'T PAY ATTENTION TO SCRIPTURE

A. Churches with elders

1. Elders function like a board of directors
2. Elders function like parents who are too quick to say, "No!"
3. Elders become too focused on money
4. There are other problems, but my point is simply this – even churches with elders can experience leadership that is decidedly unbiblical

B. Churches without elders

1. Ripe for problems caused by dominating personalities, or the opposite where there is a lack of any strong personality to move it toward action
2. Often has no way to develop a vision for the church, and no way to develop effective programs of work
3. Feels it must operate via a "men's business meeting"
 - a. such meetings can be good to a point
 - 1) they provide a way for people to have input
 - 2) they provide a way for people to be involved
 - 3) they provide a way to come to common agreement and plans
 - 4) they provide a way to deal with problems
 - 5) however, they are often not the best way to do any of that
 - b. business meetings can be ineffective and harmful
 - 1) they often become complaint or gripe boards
 - 2) they are notoriously ineffective for long-range planning
 - 3) the focus is often on minor or irrelevant discussions
 - 4) the least spiritually minded person has the same voice and vote as the most spiritually minded person
 - 5) it can either make decisions too hastily, or take forever

C. Why do we resort to forms and styles of leadership that are non-biblical?

1. Because that's how we've always done it
2. Because we're Americans and we like democratic processes
3. Because we have not paid nearly enough attention to biblical teaching on leadership

II. HOW DID JESUS LEAD?

A. Mark 3:13–19 (NAS) —

13 And He went up on the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. **14** And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach, **15** and to have authority to cast out the demons. **16** And He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter), **17** and James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, “Sons of Thunder”); **18** and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot; **19** and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him.

1. One of the problems people have learning leadership from Jesus is that they fail to go from specifics to principles
 - a. we're not Jesus, and there are a lot of things we will never do
 - b. but it doesn't mean we can't learn to lead like Jesus led

2. I want you to see the principles of leadership found in this passage because they are very important
 - a. there is a broad, general leadership Jesus provided to everyone, and that leadership was the focus of his teaching
 - b. we're concerned today with a narrower kind of leadership, in which Jesus invested most of his time and energy

B. Four things Jesus did that stand out in this passage

1. Jesus chose and called the men he wanted to lead
 - a. it is simply a fact that Jesus did not lead everyone the same way – he chose twelve from among the many who were called disciples
 - b. he narrowed the field so he could effectively teach and train the ones he called
 - c. it might appear that this would limit his impact on the world, but it actually served to enlarge his impact because each one he called would then become a leader also

2. He called them to be with him
 - a. this is so fundamentally basic it often slips by us
 - b. physical presence is a vital aspect of leadership and fellowship
 - c. **Acts 4:13 (NAS) — 13** Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

3. He sent them out to preach
 - a. spiritual leadership equips others to serve
 - b. get the principle here, and don't get stuck on preaching
 - c. Jesus was developing men for specific roles and responsibilities that we will not be doing today
 - d. the principle still works, however – leaders don't lead people into perpetual follower positions only – they equip them to do something

4. He gave them authority to cast out demons
 - a. don't get stuck on casting out demons
 - b. the point I want you to see is that Jesus gave these twelve men the authority necessary to do the work he sent them to do
 - c. nobody can do a job for which they have no authority

III. JESUS' PRIMARY METHOD OF LEADERSHIP

A. Matthew 5:1–2 (NAS) —

1 When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. 2 He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying,

1. You can find any number of passages that tell us Jesus taught his disciples

2. The primary method of leadership used by Jesus was teaching
 - a. yes, we could say he provided an example to the disciples
 - b. we could say he modeled what it means to be a spiritual person
 - c. but even those were educational in nature

B. Not everyone is expected to be a teacher, but leaders are

1. In 1 Tim 3:2, one of the qualifications an elder must possess is the ability to teach

2. This doesn't necessarily mean he must be a classroom teacher, but he must have the ability to teach others since the primary method of leading others involves teaching

C. The problem with really appreciating this point is that it goes beyond just teaching Bible to people in classes

1. It's one thing to teach a class, it's another to teach a person in a way that takes him or her from where they are to where God wants them to be

2. Most Christians have never experienced that kind of personal attention

CONCLUSION

A. We can learn a lot from seeing how Jesus led his disciples

1. He called people into special, and specific, leader-follower relationships
2. He called them to be with him
3. He led them to equip them to do something
4. He gave them authority necessary for what they were to do

B. Teaching was the primary method leadership employed by Jesus

C. The question for us is why don't we make better use of the principles of leadership used by Jesus?

1. Why do we continue using forms and styles that aren't taught in scripture?
2. Why do we ignore the way Jesus did things?

D. Spiritual leaders need to learn how to lead like Jesus

E. Invitation