

REDEEMER SMALL GROUP LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Part II – The Making of a Leader

Discuss ideas of what biblical leadership is and what biblical leaders do. Record ideas on board.

Biblical Leadership

Biblical leadership is the task of leading God’s people into mutual ministry with one another for the purpose of building up the body of Christ and reaching out to the world. (Eph. 4:11-13; Matt. 28:18-20)

Leaders need to...

- Establish a growing and maturing relationship with the Lord (John 15:5)
- Sense a calling or passion from the Lord to lead people (Ex. 3:1-10; John 21:15-17)
- Have a vision for building up future leaders (2 Tim. 2:2)

Ask for examples of leaders from scripture. What made them good/bad leaders? Why did people follow them?

Jesus is a very challenging model of Biblical leadership. He told people to “follow me” (Matt 4:19) and expected them to give up everything to do so. In return, He gave them meaning and purpose to life. He nurtured, trained, and equipped them for a mission that was far bigger than anyone could have imagined. Two things caused people to follow Christ: His vision and His example.

His Vision

In Matthew 9:36-38 Jesus casts a very compelling vision for His disciples.

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his field.’”

Jesus saw thousands of neglected people who needed shepherds. Leaders are shepherds who have a vision and a plan to appropriately care for and lead people.

His Example

Jesus cast a vision and then embodied the vision by becoming an example of it.

John 13:4-5, “He got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.”

This was the lowest job of the lowest slave in the house. *Why did Jesus do this belittling task?*

To show us that leaders lead by example. Leaders serve those they are leading. No task is “beneath” a leader. In Mark 10:45 Jesus tells his disciples that he did not come to be served, but to serve.

As a small group leader, you too are a shepherd. A shepherd cares for the flock as if they were his or her own children (1 Thess. 2:5-12)

You also are an example to the members of your small group and should model Christlikeness.

Paul told his disciples to imitate him. Read 1 Corinthians 11:1 and Phil 3:17.

- “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.”
- “Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.”

Was this egotistical of Paul? Why would he sound almost cocky and tell (not ask) people to follow his example?

As you grow and mature in your relationship with the Lord, your group members will grow with you. Matthew 10:24-25 says that a student will become like his teacher. The decisions you make, the language you use, the actions you take, your behavior, attitude, and habits, both good and bad, may be imitated in the life of those you lead (1 Thess. 1:6). This is why character and maturity before the Lord is essential to biblical leadership!

Biblical leadership flows out of a life of devotion to Christ

You impart to others what has been imparted to you. That’s why biblical leadership requires both depth of character and competence. Students are experts at discerning both. They can smell it in you a mile away! Be a leader of character as you become a leader of competence. Competence will come as you develop your skills, but character is a matter of the heart. In the end, God will reward those who finished will because of the depth of their character, not simply to size of their group.

Key objectives for a biblical leaders

- Lead through serving your people well
- Multiply your ministry into the life of another
- Finish the race with integrity

PRAY: Pair up leaders and have them pray with their partner that they will have a heart to lead others through casting a compelling vision and by being a Christlike example.

Qualifications of Small Group Leadership

Leaders are servants who communicate God’s truth and lead their groups in prayer, ministry, and spiritual growth. In order to mature as a competent Spirit-filled leader, check yourself against the following biblical characteristics. Use these things to develop your spiritual character.

Christ Follower – Having a passion for Christ

Leaders are not expected to be perfect, but our goal should be to become perfect in Christ (Col 1:28) and to reach maturity as described in Eph. 4:13:

“...until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”

Here are some areas in which to grow in maturity

- Turn from sin in your life (1 John 1:9; Rom 6:6)
- Spend time in God’s Word and in prayer (Col 3:16; 1 Peter 2:2)
- Be filled with the Spirit – let the Spirit control you (Rom. 7:6; Eph. 5:18)
- Use your gifts in ministry (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11)
- Learn to persevere in adversity (Rom. 5:3-5; Phil 1:29; 1 Peter 4:12-14)

Character – *Paying attention to the heart*

Depth of character is a matter of becoming more like Christ and less like the world. It also refers to these spiritual qualities or characteristics:

- Being transformed into the image of Christ instead of conformed to the world (Rom 8:28-30; 12:1-2; Phil 1:9-10)
- Developing a character worthy of leadership (1 Thess. 1:3; 1 Tim. 1:5; 3:1-15; 6:11; Titus 1:5-9)

Calling – *Called to shepherd God's people*

Leaders have a heart for being caregivers. They see others with compassion as Christ saw them in Matt 9:36-38 – distressed and downcast, in need of a good shepherd who will protect them and provide nurturing care for them. Leaders are convicted about the need for ministry and the use of their spiritual gifts to shepherd others (Phil 1:8; 1 Thess 2:7-8; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

Competence – *Able to lead and guide a group*

Leaders set direction, keep the group focused and guided toward its purpose. Leaders take time to develop the skills they need to effectively facilitate a small group. (Matt 4:19; 9:36-38; Acts 6:1-7)

Compatibility – *Having the temperament and passion for leadership*

Some leaders lead well because it's natural for them, its part of how God wired them. Even those who do not consider themselves natural leaders are capable of leading (usually in humility) when they are mature and called upon to do so.

Teamwork in leadership is essential. Using their spiritual gifts alongside others is the kingdom design for ministry. (Acts 6:2; Rom 12:8; Heb 13:7, 17)

Commitment – *Doing what it takes*

Spiritual leaders are committed to the vision of the ministry, to Christ, and to their calling, and to helping develop the members of their groups. They realize that leadership requires commitment, not convenience. Leaders are committed to seeing people grow in Christ and to reaching new people for Christ as they are able. (Matt 28:18-20; Rom 16:3-4; 2 Tim 2:2)

Capacity – *An ability to serve people and provide care for them*

Leadership is serving others and doing whatever it takes to accomplish the ministry. This means having time, energy, and resources at your disposal. Leaders must free themselves from unnecessary and distracting commitments so they have the capacity (spiritual, emotional, and physical resources) to do what God has called them to do. (1 Tim 3:4-5, 12)

Review all 7 Qualifications

Go around the room and have each person share which qualification they think is their strongest and weakest. "Why are YOU qualified for leadership?" Discuss.

Motives for Leadership

Discuss suggestions for appropriate and wrong motives for leadership.

Appropriate motives for leadership

- Glorify the Lord
Col 3:23-25, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."
- Bear fruit in your life
John 15:8, "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."
- Keep watch (shepherd) others
Acts 20:28, "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood."
- Be an example
1 Peter 5:2-4, "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away."
- Use you gifts to serve one another
Eph 4:11-13, "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."
- Give God's message of reconciliation
2 Cor 5:19-21, "...God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

Wrong motives/hindrances to leadership

- Self-exaltation
Prov 27:2, "Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips."
- To feel important or gain prestige
1 Thess 2:4-6, "On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. You know we

never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed-God is our witness. We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else.”

- Because someone pressured you
1 Peter 5:2-4, “Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”
- Having a short fuse or exhibiting outburst of anger
James tells us that anger does not achieve the righteousness of God (James 1:19-20). God’s work is accomplished by the one who listens attentively, speaks only when necessary, and is slow to anger. Leaders manage their anger or channel it appropriately. (Gal 5:20; Eph 4:31; Col 3:8)
- Unconfessed sin
We are commanded to confess our sins. John says, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9)*. Any sin that has control of us (Rom 6:16) must be confessed and brought under the lordship of Christ (Acts 2:38).
- Biblical error and false teaching
Paul wrote Timothy and warned him to watch for false teachers who lead people away from the words of the faith and of sound doctrine.

2 Tim 4:2-5, “Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage-with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.”

Leaders are called and gifted of God to build into others, facilitate their growth, and lead by example in obedience and character. The quality of ministry is directly proportional to the quality of leadership.

Leadership Responsibilities

Pre-requisites

- Confess that Jesus Christ is their Forgiver and Leader (Savior and Lord).
- Regard the Bible as authoritative guide to their faith and life.
- Is a participating member of the church (or is actively pursuing membership).
- Agrees to come into the small group leadership structure and fulfill the requirements of a leader.

Responsibilities

You must be willing to commit to doing the following four major tasks:

- Build a leadership team

Your leadership team should consist of you, an apprentice whom you will mentor and train, and a host or hostess for your small group meeting.

Go over “How to Build a Leadership Team” handout

- Conduct life-changing group meetings

Go over “Conduct Life-Changing Group Meetings” handout

- Shepherd the members of your group

It is your spiritual responsibility to care for and nurture your small group members so they become fully devoted followers of Christ and participating members of the church.

Go over “Shepherding the Members of Your Group” handout

- Expand the ministry

Go over “Expand the Ministry” handout

(If a Sr. High apprentice is ready for leadership over their own group, they can be given a new Jr. High group with adult supervision.)

Key Skills for Small Group Leaders

Go over “Key Skills for Small Group Leaders” handout

HOW TO BUILD A LEADERSHIP TEAM

Adapted from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue

1. Sense God's calling for you to lead a small group.
 - a. Do you have a passion for nurturing others in the Lord (John 21:15-17; 1 Peter 5:1-4)?
 - b. Do you enjoy relating to others in a way that brings them together in group life (Heb. 10:24-25)?
 - c. Do you sense you have a genuine walk with God that will be an example to others (1 Thess. 2:10-13)?
2. Choose a person to mentor as you lead your group (an apprentice).
 - a. Choose someone who has the desire to demonstrate the characteristics of a small group and who desires to help others grow spiritually (2 Tim. 2:2).
 - b. Include your apprentice in as many of your leadership activities as you can. Spend time with this person to disciple him or her (Matt 4:18-22; Mark 3:13-15; 2 Tim 3:10).
3. Find a host/hostess for your group (a place to meet and a person to be responsible for the meeting place).
 - a. Work with your host/hostess to plan your meeting schedule and any other important details such as refreshments.
 - b. Remember to update your meeting schedule regularly with your host/hostess.
4. Receive the training needed to lead a small group and continue growing spiritually as a leader.
 - a. Participate in:
 - i. leadership meetings for information, problem solving, support, and celebrations
 - ii. training events as needed or recommended by Tim
 - iii. annual small group leadership retreat
 - b. Make sure you are spending consistent time in the Word of God and in prayer (Ps. 1:1-3; Acts 1:13-14). You cannot spiritually impart what you do not have. Only growing leaders produce growing Christians. Read your Bible, asking God to teach you and give you a vision for your group.
 - c. Work through the book, *Making Small Groups Work*.

“And the things you have heard me say... entrust
to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”

~ Paul to Timothy, *2 Timothy. 2:2*

CONDUCT LIFE-CHANGING GROUP MEETINGS

Adapted from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue

As the small group leader, your responsibility includes assembling the group and leading the time in a way that facilitates self-disclosure, understanding, and application of the Word, and mutual care and support.

1. Use the most appropriate resources available for small group study that seems to fit the needs of the group.
2. Share the responsibility of teaching, leading discussions, social time, prayer, and ministry involvement with gifted members of your group. Don't feel as though you have to do everything for the group. Use your apprentice. (Some in your group might be more gifted than you in certain areas. Allow them to exercise their gifts in the group, such as teaching, leading worship, leading prayer, care-giving, etc...)
3. On a monthly basis report the progress of your group using the Touching Base forms Tim provides.

SHEPHERDING THE MEMBERS OF YOUR GROUP

Adapted from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue

1. Pray for your meeting time and for each member of the group (Phil. 1:3-11; Col. 1:9-12).
2. Exercise oversight of your members (1 Peter 5:1-13). Another word for over-sight is *care* or *shepherd*. It means to be concerned about the welfare of each member of your group just as you are concerned about your own welfare (Phil. 2:4, 20-21).
3. Model Christlikeness to your group. Serve them as Christ served His disciples with acts of kindness (John 13:1-5). Help them grow in Christ. Encourage one another to live each moment of life as Christ would.
4. Create a safe place for others to share their feelings, hurts, pains, and concerns. People will be only as vulnerable as you are. Admit your weaknesses to the group in a way that encourages others to see themselves as they truly are (2 Cor. 4:7; 12:10).

EXPAND THE MINISTRY

Adapted from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue

As the Lord grows the group, it will be necessary to consider birthing a new group in order to provide the appropriate amount of care for each student and to allow others to experience that same life-change through small groups.

1. Use the open chair to invite others to your group. There are many people who are in relationship with your group members that are unconnected to Redeemer.
 - a. Invite prospective new members to a social event with your group
 - b. Get a feel from the group on whether these new members would be a good fit. You might need to cast the vision that growth is healthy and normal for a good group.
2. Encourage each student to maintain a healthy relationship with the church. Members should aspire to become fully devoted followers of Christ who participate actively in the life of the body. This is best done by modeling it yourself.
3. Develop your apprentice by providing him or her with leadership responsibilities and people to shepherd. It is likely that these people will join the apprentice to form the nucleus of a new group.

KEY SKILLS FOR SMALL GROUP LEADERS

Adapted from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue

Here are the four main categories of skill development and growth for small group leaders. Examples of key skills are included under each category. As you can see, these areas correlate with the areas of responsibility on the job description.

Develop Leadership

- Character development
- Vision casting
- Knowing why and how to develop and apprentice
- Mentoring
- Managing group logistics
- Modeling accountability

Shepherd Members

- Caregiving
- Building relationships
- Prayer in the group
- Resolving conflict
- Meeting special needs
- Serving together
- Practice listening skills

Conduct Meetings

- Planning a meeting
- Troubleshooting
- Asking good questions
- Leading discussions
- Using the Bible in groups
- Choosing curriculum
- Opening and meeting creatively
- Praying creatively with the group
- Evaluating process

Expand the Ministry

- Filling the open chair
- "Fishing pond" activities
- The birthing process
- Minimizing the trauma of birthing