

Wyoming Church of Christ Sunday 2nd Nov, 2008

Num1:1-6,10-18a,21-30 Neh 1:1-2:8 Allan Blyth

Theme: Body Life (5) "Leadership"

At the table a father complained that their teenage son ate his food off his knife. The wife's eyes rolled secretly. When the son had left she explained to her husband, "You eat your food off your knife!"

Today I want to reflect on **leadership**.

By example, we all give leadership to those near to us whether family members, neighbours or the wider community. Some of us have special leadership roles appointed to us as parents, senior staff members or executives and as ministry leaders in the church. Part of the work of the IIM is to examine leadership and decision making.

Today I want to use some scriptures, esp from Numbers 11 and then using Nehemiah as a case study make some observations about leadership based on the scriptures and also on the life of Jesus.

Read Numbers 11:1-30

In Moses' life, we have many leadership attributes:

1. Prayer – conversation with God.

11:2 When the people cried out to Moses, he prayed to the LORD

2. Wrestling with the issues, even being overwhelmed-
11 He asked the LORD, "Why have you brought this trouble on your servant? Leaders get the complaints.

3. Questioning your own conduct -

11b What have I done to displease you that you put the burden of all these people on me?

4. Questioning relationship with God –
15b —if I have found favor in your eyes—

5. Listening to God & hearing God

16 The LORD said to Moses: "Bring me seventy 17 I will come down and speak with you there

6. Questioning God

22 Would they have enough if flocks and herds were slaughtered for them? Would they have enough if all the fish in the sea were caught for them?"

7. Courageous faith: claims God's promise

24 So Moses went out and told the people what the LORD had said. (see V 18 "... you will eat meat...")

8. Delegating power and sharing leadership

24 So Moses ... brought together seventy of their elders and had them stand around the Tent. 25 Then the LORD came down in the cloud ...

NB candidates known among the people as leaders How exciting it would be if everyone were involved in leading, leading people to Christ and nurturing people in Christ (Mk1:17), carrying one another's burdens and so fulfilling the law of Christ. (Gal 6:2)

9. Reassuring/encouraging the distressed

28 Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses' aide since youth, spoke up and said, "Moses, my lord, stop them!" 29 But Moses replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? NB It's possible to not be able to see the forest for the trees. It's not about Moses – it's about creating a nation of faithful people. In God's service shared accomplishments are more important than individual achievements.

10. Affirming appointed leaders

29b I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" 30 Then Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

Summary – 10 attributes – not exhaustive.

1. Prayer – conversation with God.

2. Wrestling with the issues, even to being overwhelmed-
3. Questioning your own conduct -
4. Questioning relationship with God –
5. Listening to God & hearing God
6. Questioning God
7. Courageous faith claims God’s promise
8. Delegating power and sharing leadership
9. Reassuring the distressed
10. Affirming appointed leaders

In the life of Nehemiah many of these 10 attributes of leadership are to be observed.

Neh 1:1-2:8

1. **Prayer** – conversation with God.
Including fasting V4 confession (6,7)
intercession (10,11)
2. **Wrestling** with the issues, even being overwhelmed-
V.3 walls and gates in ruin
3. **Questioning your own conduct** –
V.7a
4. **Questioning relationship with God** –
V.7b
5. **Listening to God & hearing God**
V.11
6. **Questioning God**
2:2c downcast for the first time
7. **Courageous faith claims God’s promise**
1:9 “I will bring you back”
8. **Delegating power and sharing leadership**
2:7-8 letters to governors
9. **Reassuring/encouraging the distressed**
Neh 4:20b Our God will fight for us!
10. **Affirming appointed leaders**
e.g. Neh 4:12-20 affirming & guiding

Conclusion:

Listening to these scriptures may make us aware that in many ways we are all leaders in our own sphere. But for leaders who have more responsibilities like Moses and Nehemiah, how important to recognize the burden of their role, to pray for them, listen to and support them and to appoint them from among those who are known by the whole community as leaders. The New Testament has a whole lot more to say about that. For social and spiritual qualifications they ought be aspiring to, see Acts 6:3; 1 Tim 3:6: Ti 1:5-9; 1 Tim 3:8-10

With the clarification of our vision and priorities and a new pastor coming as a leader among leaders there is potential for many of you to be appointed to various roles of leadership or reaffirmed in current roles.

As Christian leaders our primary qualification is to have Jesus as our leader. As the NASB expresses the words of Jesus in Mt 23:10 "Do not be called leaders; for One is your Leader, that is, Christ."

Today is Christ your leader? Is Jesus the only one you live to please and to emulate? Have you accepted him as master, instructor, director, leader, of your life. As we receive and believe Him, He is the one (and only one), who makes us children of God. He is a fair, compassionate, healing, humble, servant leader. He is also King of all creation with the power to lead every person and every community to be wholesome and healthy for His glory.

I pray a wholesome body life is what we all desire.

Prayer: May we be led by Christ alone as we heed, encourage, appoint and train as leaders in His body.

