

## **CHAPTER 55**

### **PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP**

#### **I. I've been asked to speak to you today on the 'Principles of Leadership.'**

- A. Probably most of you are thinking, 'Oh, no. We've got to sit through another boring lecture on how to become a leader.'
- B. You're likely asking, 'What's he going to say that I haven't heard a thousand times already?'
- C. 'We hear leadership talked about in sermons, Y.O.U. Bible studies, church literature, from Mom and Dad and school counselors.'
- D. 'Why is it necessary to cover the same old stuff again?'

#### **II. Before you tune me out and let your mind wander onto other things, I'd like to address a facet of leadership you may not have considered before.**

- A. It's another side of this vitally important subject that will have an impact on the rest of your life.
- B. It will determine whether you find your hopes and dreams or settle into mediocrity and second best.

#### **III. First, let's discuss some misconceptions about leadership.**

- A. When you think of a leader, most of you picture individuals who occupy prominent positions of influence and authority, such as:
  - 1. Politicians, government officials, law enforcement agencies.
  - 2. Corporate executives.
  - 3. Professional athletes.
  - 4. Ministers and church officials.
  - 5. College administrators.
  - 6. Class officers.
  - 7. Y.O.U. officers.
- B. In other words, you normally think of leaders as the cream of the crop of society or the top five percent.
  - 1. A select group of people you could never qualify to be a part of.
  - 2. A unique class totally beyond your reach.
- C. But the kind of leadership I'll be discussing involves a much broader spectrum of people.
  - 1. This facet of leadership is easily within your grasp.
  - 2. It's the kind that will enhance the quality of your life and increase the level of your respectability.

#### **IV. I know that for some of you, the idea of becoming a leader may be a giant turn-off or a repulsive thought in your mind.**

- A. For example:
  - 1. You may sometimes think those in leadership positions in the Church are 'square' or 'holier than thou' because they're always doing what is right.
  - 2. Some in leadership roles become cocky and arrogant and make themselves appear superior to others.
  - 3. Some people misuse authority and put a bad light on leadership in general.
  - 4. You may think that a leader has to stand alone and speak up when the right thing is not always popular.
  - 5. Young women in the Church particularly have difficulty relating the concept of femininity with leadership.
- B. In other words, because the word leadership connotes a negative meaning, some of you may find it more comfortable to blend in with the crowd and avoid the stigma of ridicule and rejection by your peers.

**V. With this background in mind, let us explore another new approach to leadership.**

- A. Keep in mind that the type of leadership we'll be discussing does not necessarily mean having a position of authority or power over others.
- B. It does not mean occupying the chief seat, being in the spotlight or having the right to give orders.
- C. It does not mean being appointed to an office or being given a title.
- D. This brand of leadership does not mean just being popular, the life of the party or being liked by other people.
- E. It most assuredly does not mean assuming a temporary position that may fade from view after the tenure of office is up.
  - 1. Such as a politician, athlete or actor who loses popularity.
  - 2. Or any position of influence that is appointed for a short duration.

**VI. No, the kind of leadership I have in mind has to do with developing the aptitudes and inner qualities of character that will enable you to reach your highest potential and to be the best you can be.**

- A. It has to do with just being you — daring to be unique.
- B. It has to do with becoming a well-adjusted, confident individual.
- C. To achieve this noble ambition, however, will demand hard work and dedication.
- D. It will mean approaching life with real gusto and renewed enthusiasm.
- E. It will mean painful sacrifice, but the lasting rewards are well worth it.

**VII. Consider the following facts for just a moment.**

- A. For most in this room, you've already lived one-fourth of your allotted lifespan.
- B. This means that three-fourths of your life is yet ahead of you, if time should go on that long.
- C. Thus, you've reached the point where you're now responsible for your actions, decisions and new-found freedom.
- D. The success of your life from this day forward rests within your own hands and the choices you make from day to day.
- E. Up to this time, you may have been ensnared and controlled by that powerful influence called peer pressure.
- F. You're at the crossroads of deciding whether you'll continue to be led by the opinions of friends and associates or break out of that tyranny and start controlling your own life.
- G. You can continue to be held in bondage by 'what others think' and end up as a mediocre Joe, or break loose from the crowd and become the master of your fate.
- H. As an example, you can wind up making a living with a broom or shovel, or you can prepare yourself for a career that will lead to abundant success.
- I. If you are a starry-eyed girl at age 18, you can marry a service station attendant and live in a shanty the rest of your life, or set your sight on a secure future with a caring and mature man.

**VIII. What this all boils down to is that while you're developing your potential, you'll also emerge into a model of excellence that others will look up to, respect and want to emulate.**

- A. Thus, in your own special way, you'll become an effective and influential leader.
- B. You will have built into your life an element of strength and confidence that others will admire.
- C. Whether male or female, you will silently wield a powerful influence on those with whom you come in contact, even though you never have an official title.

**IX. I would now like to explore the major characteristics or principles of leadership you should strive to incorporate into your life.**

- A. Traits:
  - 1. A burning desire to succeed.
    - a. Do you want to settle for second best?
    - b. Are you interested in only getting by?
    - c. Will you be happy knowing you could do better, while choosing to take the no pain, no sweat route?
    - d. If you lack the drive and motivation, go to God and ask for help.
    - e. Pray earnestly for a breakthrough and don't give up until He's answered.
    - f. If you're sincere, He will implant into your mind a powerful, positive desire that will transform your life.

- g. Isa. 40:28-31 — *'Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. (29) He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. (30) Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: (31) But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.'*
2. The discipline to establish meaningful, clear-cut goals.
- Without a game plan to chart your life, you're like a ship at sea with no port in sight.
  - Leaders go places, because they choose the places they want to go.
  - Don't just live for the moment and exist from day to day.
  - Plan or perish — decide your future.
  - Make up your mind what you want to become — quit vacillating.
  - Start setting goals now, even in small everyday things.
3. The ambition and drive to forge ahead and pursue your goals.
- Be a self-starter — get tough on yourself.
  - Keep your eye on your goals and allow nothing to distract you.
  - Set measurable benchmarks or target points along the way to keep you on track and continually motivated.
  - Be specific in what you're trying to achieve.
  - For example, suppose you want to earn money.
    - But is it for college, a car, a new wardrobe?*
    - Determine how much you'll need.*
    - Then set a deadline to earn it.*
  - Thus you've not only established a goal, but tangible benchmarks toward its attainment.
  - Propel yourself forward and don't allow your goals to be diluted with other interests.
4. Persevere until your goals are accomplished.
- The key point here is not to become discouraged and quit.
  - This may call for blood, sweat and tears, but determine to fight to the bitter end.
  - It may mean bouncing back time and again when you've experienced momentary defeat.
  - Decide that nothing will stand in the way of achieving success.
  - Two examples:
    - Thomas Edison experimented 10,000 times before he perfected the light bulb.*
    - Abraham Lincoln ran for a political office 11 times even though he was only elected twice.*
5. Self-discipline and moderation.
- Take control of your life and quit pampering yourself.
  - Stop procrastinating and wasting precious time.
  - Get into the habit of quickly responding to the tasks that need to be done.
    - Doing your chores.*
    - Writing a term paper.*
    - Being punctual with assignments.*
    - Being diligent and hard working on the job.*
  - Govern your natural drives and instincts instead of letting them control you.
  - Stop gluttoning yourself on junk foods.
  - Put the heat on and do what you must to fall in line.
6. Dependability and trustworthiness.
- What are you worth if you can't be relied on?
  - How can you hope to get ahead if you let others down when they need you?
  - The quality of faithfulness is one of the most valuable attributes you could hope to develop as a leader.
  - Many people are failures simply because they lack this priceless ingredient.
  - An employer will pay a big premium to keep a worker on the payroll who proves to be dependable.

7. Going the extra mile.

- a. This is the trait that gives you the edge over the average person.
- b. It simply means going above & beyond the call of duty & giving that extra touch of service.
- c. It means doing more than you are paid to do, or putting the interests of others above yourself.
  - (1) For example, completing a job even though it will take a few minutes past quitting time.
  - (2) Or if you're a babysitter, washing the dishes and providing extra little services that you're not expected to do.
- d. Not only will you find this to be a source of satisfaction, but also it will eventually pay handsome dividends.
- e. Luke 6:38 — 'Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.'

8. Courage and grit to conquer an obstacle or face a new challenge.

- a. At times this will mean being bold and daring.
- b. It may seem that life has dealt you a bum rap and your plans are falling apart.
- c. You'll experience problems and pitfalls you never anticipated.
- d. It could simply mean overcoming fear and entering uncharted waters.
- e. Don't back down — plunge in head first.
- f. Come out fighting and do it with tenacity.
- g. Get involved with activities in an effort to improve and grow.

9. Integrity and character.

- a. Honor your conscience and do what is right no matter how painful or what the cost.
- b. Don't compromise your principles even if it means losing the advantage.
- c. Walk with God and know He's your judge.
- d. Love fellowman and treat him fairly and justly.
- e. Stand tall, steady and strong for what you believe in.

10. Humility and the willingness to sacrifice for others.

- a. The essence of greatness is to think of others first and put their needs above your own.
- b. It is forgetting yourself in service.
- c. Consider the example of Jesus Christ — the greatest leader and servant the world has ever known.
- d. He set aside His position in heaven and became a mortal being in order to make eternal life available to us.
- e. Pride, vanity and self-conceit are not to be found in the life of a true leader.
- f. Don't confuse humility with being mousy, weak and overly modest, but realize it's a willingness to stoop down and try to lift others to your level.

11. Poise and skill in dealing with people.

- a. You'll raise your stock in value when you master the art of human interaction.
- b. Be diplomatic, tactful and sensitive in the way you treat each person you meet.
- c. Practice the rules of etiquette and protocol — be polite, thoughtful and considerate.
- d. Realize that a selfish, ill-mannered person is a revolting and disgusting blight to society.
- e. Learn to gracefully share this world with others.

12. Maturity and emotional self-control.

- a. Read the following article:

*'Maturity is many things. First it is the ability to base a judgment on the Big Picture — The Long Haul. It means being able to pass up the fun-for-the-minute and select the course of action which will pay off later. One of the characteristics of infancy is the 'I want it NOW approach.' Grown-up people can wait.*

*'Maturity is the ability to stick with a project or a situation until it is finished. The young person who is constantly changing jobs, changing friends, and changing mates — is immature. He cannot stick it out because he has not grown up. Everything seems to turn sour after awhile.*

*'Maturity is the capacity to face unpleasantness, frustration, discomfort and defeat without complaint or collapse. The mature person knows he can't have everything his own way. He is able to defer to circumstances, to other people — and to time.*

*'Maturity is the ability to live up to your responsibilities, and this means being dependable. It means keeping your word. And dependability equates with personal integrity. Do you mean what you say — and say what you mean?'*

*'The world is filled with people who can't be counted on. People who never seem to come through in the clutches. People who break promises and substitute alibis for performance. They show up late — or not at all. They are confused and disorganized. Their lives are a chaotic maze of unfinished business.'*

*'Maturity is the ability to make a decision and stand by it. Immature people spend their lives exploring endless possibilities and then do nothing. Action requires courage. And there is no maturity without courage.'*

*'Maturity is the ability to harness your energies and to do more than is expected. The mature person refuses to settle for mediocrity. He would rather aim high and miss the mark than aim low — and make it.'*

— Author Unknown

**X. In addition to the personal benefit that will come to you from applying the principles just described there are many other people whose lives you'll inspire.**

- A. As said earlier, by developing your full potential, and stretching your abilities to the limit, you should become an influential leader in society.
- B. Here's a list of the people your example will most readily affect.
1. Parents.
    - a. You owe your parents a lot.
    - b. Your growth and success will give them great pride and joy.
    - c. You will increase the value and stature of the family name.
  2. Friends, associates and peers.
    - a. You'll become a tower of strength that your friends can look to and lean upon.
    - b. Your example and lifestyle will do much to show them the way to success and motivate them to try harder.
    - c. You will gain greater respect from them and become a model by which they may pattern their lives.
  3. Church members.
    - a. Because you're service oriented and dependable, you'll be given many opportunities in your local Church.
    - b. You'll be sought after to get things done.
    - c. Because you're positive, confident and outgoing, you'll be an inspiration to other young people attending services.
    - d. You'll also become known as a source of comfort and encouragement.
  4. Neighbors.
    - a. They will appreciate having you around because you'll keep your premises neat, clean and in order.
    - b. Since you're a responsible and mature person, they know you'll look out for their well-being and protection.
    - c. Your positive approach will be an asset to the community.
  5. Casual acquaintances.
    - a. You'll be liked because you'll make people feel good about themselves.
    - b. They'll find it easy to talk to you because you're genuinely interested in them.
    - c. You'll radiate an aura of good will and friendliness that just about anyone can relate to.
  6. Employer.
    - a. Because you take initiative, work hard and strive for excellence, you'll become a valuable asset to your boss.
    - b. This will open up greater opportunities for a better job and higher pay.
    - c. When you show ambition and the desire to see your company succeed, you create the kind of atmosphere and enthusiasm that an employer will highly prize.
  7. Fellow workers.
    - a. People need an example to look up to.

- b. They need someone who is industrious and diligent to lead the way.
- c. People on the job need encouragement, too.
- d. If you develop the proper style of leadership, your presence should make itself strongly felt.

8. Teachers.

- a. Teachers appreciate encouragement by someone who shows enthusiasm for their class.
- b. They need students who understand the value of what is being taught and who will make them feel worthwhile.
- c. As a leader you can extend your influence into all these areas of life.

9. The unconverted world.

- a. Society at large is a treasure house of opportunity for service.
- b. People need to be shown kindness, sympathy and concern.
- c. This might involve complimenting a waitress or clerk who is having a rough day.
- d. It might involve helping a cripple or elderly person across the street.
- e. The world needs to see an example of someone who's thoughtful, generous and has it all together.
- f. As a growing, developing leader, seize upon these challenges and opportunities.

10. God.

- a. You'll give God great pleasure when He sees you're trying with all your heart.
- b. You will inspire Him and give Him much joy when you keep Him at the center of your life.
- c. Seek His will and humble yourself before His presence.
- d. Be the kind of leader He can always depend on and use in a time of need.

**XI. In summary, remember that you don't have to be appointed to an office or be given a title to become a leader.**

- A. By developing your abilities to the fullest, and reaching for the stars, you will emerge into the ideal person God intended.
- B. The process will resemble a rosebud unfurling in gorgeous splendor or a butterfly emerging from its cocoon.
- C. You have the choice of existing in mediocrity or ascending to great heights.
- D. Don't wait five years to get started — make up your mind to do it now!
- E. As a clump of clay, will you become a common piece of pottery or a priceless work of art?
- F. Fellows and girls, the choice is yours!

**-END-**