

# How To Lead Anything



## *Concepts Great Leaders Obtain*

To be an effective leader a man doesn't need to know everything. In fact, "know-it-alls" tend to be obnoxious and are seldom good leaders.

***1 Corinthians 8:1-3 "Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.***

***And if any man think he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.***

***But if any man love God, the same is known of him."***

A good leader really needs to know three things. He must first know God. That doesn't mean just knowing about God. Of course, knowing about God is foundational. A leader knows God, first by salvation, and then by walking with Him. Bible reading, praying, walking by faith, all of these help a man to know God. Second, a man must know himself. Not in the way the Greek philosophers meant it. A man must know his strengths and weaknesses, besetting sins, likes and dislikes. The reason this is important is that a leader needs to seek companions and followers that have strengths that the leader himself is lacking in. He must also work on these strengths and weaknesses to improve them. Many leaders make the mistake of attracting men that are just like them and discarding those that are different or that disagree with them. They make the same mistake in training them to be like them. The old preacher that taught us the Bible told us that he didn't want to be a leader. He said he wasn't good at being friendly and had trouble with small talk. He really didn't like visiting with people. I learned from that. I had the same problems. Over the years I have worked on being more friendly and talking to people. Others of my peers looked on it as an excuse to not change and improve. They would use his bad character trait as

an excuse to be the same. In their attempt to imitate him, they picked up a bad character trait. The third thing a leader needs to know is men. Many times, a leader has little choice in the men that he is given to lead. However, a good leader must evaluate the men under him, train them, and put them in the best position to be successful.

***Gen. 14:14 "And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan."***

There are 3 tools that are essential for good leadership. These can be easily learned and mastered, but can't be faked or imitated. Unfortunately, fakers and imitators get followings but seldom leave anything lasting except a messy situation resulting in ruined lives. Imitators, many times, end up imitating the bad as well as the good. In evaluating leaders, use the Bible as the standard. Pick out the good things in a man and try to use them. Ignore the mistakes, failures, and bad character traits. All men have both. These three tools are **Communication, Cooperation, and Charity**. It would be well advised to learn these as far as leadership is concerned.

## Communication



Communication is the process of passing from the leader to the follower the knowledge and desire of what needs to be done. From the follower's point of view, it is the understanding of what is expected of him and how to accomplish these goals. For the pastor, communication is the process by which God deals with him and how he communicates to the church what God wants done. It is important to notice that communication has to go both from the leader to the follower and from the follower to the leader. For the follower, he must be able to ask questions, voice concerns, and give ideas of his own so that the leader knows his message has been received. He must be able to do this without fear of ridicule. Many preachers and leaders make the mistake of thinking all the communication they need to do is from the pulpit. No doubt effective preaching is a good way to communicate.

***1 Cor. 1:17-21 "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."***

***For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.***

***For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.***

***Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?***

***For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”***

However, there is a great possibility of misunderstanding. While too little communication is not good, a good leader must also be wary of too much communication. Some leaders think that the more information they are able to put out, the more effective they are. Too much information leads to confusion. A preacher should work to keep his messages short and to the point. Some spend too much time studying facts when what is needed is the simplifying of the facts available. Keep it short and simple. The greatest revival in the Old Testament was in Nineveh, under the preaching of Jonah. Jonah preached an eight-word message in ***Jonah 3:4 “And Jonah began to enter into the city a day’s journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”***

The idea is to take the complicated and make it simple. The most effective preacher punctuates his sermons with appropriate illustrations. People remember the stories and short, witty sayings!

Preaching alone is only part of the equation. Personal work and one on one meetings are also needed.

***Acts 20:20 “And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,”***

***Ezekiel 34:4-6 “The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.***

***And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.***

***My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.”***

A good leader must seek the follower. He is responsible for finding and training the follower. To wait for the follower to find the leader is not leading but following. A good leader must spend a lot of time with his followers to assure that they understand what is expected of them; and they have the resources needed to do the job; and he must personally encourage them. Followers need the assurance that they are doing the right things. A good leader also has the responsibility of disciplining the follower. Followers have a tough job. They have to follow human leadership that is flawed. Probably the hardest

job of the leader is to recognize if a follower has made a mistake or has willfully rebelled against God and the chain of command that God has placed him in.

The leader's responsibility is that of a parent. As a parent, the purpose of discipline is to restore fellowship and correct the problem, not banishment. Of course, casting out the scorner does cause the strife to cease.

***Proverbs 22:10 "Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease."***

However, that rarely solves the problem of the scorner, as he moves on and causes problems where ever he lands. One of the mistakes leaders make is to try to discipline the follower in public. As a parent, leader, or pastor this leads to nothing but embarrassment on the part of the follower and the leader, and seldom corrects the problem.

***Proverbs 29:17 "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul."***

Public rebuke should be reserved for serious sins. Sins that affect the leadership in the church or group. It should be used after trying to get the thing right privately.

***Matthew 18:15-17 "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou has gained thy brother."***

***But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.***

***And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.***

Open rebuke should be used prayerfully and sparingly because the result is most probably, banishment!

***1 Timothy 5:20 "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear."***

Communication is simply the leader giving his vision of the purpose of what needs to be done and the way and encouragement to accomplish it.

***Proverbs 29:18 "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."***



# Cooperation



Cooperation is the idea that in order for the leader to be effective the follower must follow the clear instructions of the leader. Cooperation is necessary because without cooperation the leader will have no one follow him and the follower will never arrive at his full potential. Cooperation is based upon clear, concise communication. That is why communication comes first. That is why the leader spends his time simplifying the instructions. Without good communication it is impossible to have cooperation. Cooperation requires submission. Submission is based upon confidence that the leader knows what he is talking about. It is much easier to follow someone in which there is confidence. In the sports world they use the expression “buying in”. They say that the players have “bought in” to the coach’s way of doing things. There is no substitute for experience. Experience, good or bad, if the leader has learned the lessons, goes a long way in leadership. The good leader must be able to determine a person’s strengths and weaknesses and then put that person in the best possible position to succeed. No one wants to be set up to fail. Cooperation, like communication, is also two-way. The good leader provides the tools, information, and encouragement that a follower needs to do the job. He then gives the follower the opportunity to fail or succeed. He must, like Jonathan’s armor bearer (*I Samuel 14:6-14*), “have his back”. A good leader practices “servant leadership”. The purpose of the boss is to work for the employee. The servant leader is there to assure the success of the followers. He must work for them.

***Matthew 20:25-28 “But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.***

***But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;***

***And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:***

***Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”***

***Mark 10:42-45 “But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.***

***But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:***

***And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.***

***For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”***

The follower’s success is the leader’s success. In fact, it is the leader’s responsibility to turn the followers into leaders.

## Charity



Charity properly defined, as far as leadership is concerned, is the ability to love someone in spite of their faults. The man that taught me these leadership principles used the word ‘understanding’ here, instead of ‘charity’. I think the word ‘charity’ describes it better. It is the ability to love someone that is not perfect; and in fact hard to love. It is the kind of love that has the person’s best interest at heart. No leader will be effective as he might be, if he doesn’t care about those he leads. No follower will ever reach his potential without growing to love the leader. Many leaders rely only on fear as a motivational tool. Fear is a great motivator and must be instilled in followers. But it must be the fear of failure, and disappointment. While both fear and love are needed for a balanced approach, fear has its drawbacks and will never be effective without love. If only fear is used, failure will result when a greater fear comes along. A proper understanding of the balance can be illustrated in the following: *“We serve God because we love Him. We won’t stop serving God because we fear Him.”* ***“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.” (Proverbs 1:7)*** But it is only the beginning. ***“Perfect love”*** is the end or result.

***1 John 4:17-19 “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.***

***There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.***

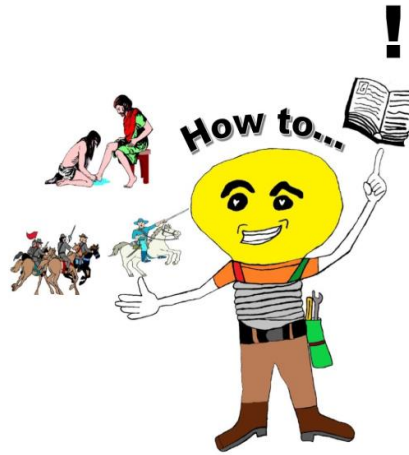
***We love him, because he first loved us.”***

A proper love allows a leader or follower to make a mistake and not lose control. Good leaders and good followers make many mistakes and failures but are able to succeed because of love. Charity allows the leader and follower to get along in spite of their faults and differences. This is critical because the good follower will be different, sometimes opposite from the leader, in personality, intelligence, and ideas.

These are the three tools of leadership: **Communication, Cooperation, and Charity**. With these three tools, a leader has a better chance to be successful. However, just having, and using these tools will not make a man a good leader. In addition to using these tools a good leader will need to have the three character traits of **Courage, Confidence (in God), and Consistency**. These will be covered in part 2 of this series on leadership. Part 3 will concentrate on mistakes that leaders make.



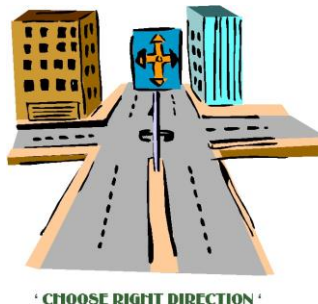
# How To Lead Anything



## *Character Great Leaders Exhibit*

It is important as a Christian and as a Maintenance technician to develop good leadership skills. You never know when you will be put in charge. Personally, I don't like being in charge. I like fixing things. It is easier to deal with things than with people! However, to be successful, many times a Christian or maintenance man must take the lead to see that the job gets done. It is very important to train other people to do your job when you pass on, get sick, get promoted, or are unable to do your work.

Learning the three tools of leadership is important. But this is only the first step. Head knowledge does not always lead to success. It is the process of implementing the tools that will lead to successful leadership. So besides learning the tools it is important to have the character to practice them that will cause a person to be a good leader. These three character traits are ***Courage, Confidence (in God), and Consistency.***



# Courage



It is hard to define courage. It is doing the right thing, regardless of the cost or circumstances. It is bravery when others are afraid. It is going forward when others are running away. Courage is what allows a man to do the impossible! To many, these are just good thoughts. The man that has courage puts these thoughts into action when he is alone, out-numbered, and in the battle. I spent some time in the Marine Corps. As a marine, like many others, my favorite marine was Chesty Puller. His actions in the Korean Conflict are a testimony of bravery and leadership unparalleled! I am always inspired when I read how he was surrounded and fought his way out taking the wounded and dead and picking up the abandoned army vehicles on the way! When surrounded, he made these statements, "We are surrounded. *That simplifies the problem.*" "They are in front of us, behind us, and we are flanked on both sides by an enemy that outnumbers us 29:1. *They can't get away from us now!*" "When the marines were cut off behind enemy lines and the Army had written the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division off as being lost because they were surrounded by 22 enemy divisions. The marines made it out inflicting the highest casualty rate on an enemy in history and destroying 7 entire enemy divisions in the process. An enemy division is 16500+ men while a marine division is 12500 men." A good leader has courage! It was the courage of one man that inspired the others to action. It had taken years of combat experience to build this character that was so needed at the time. I recommend his biography titled "Marine-The life of Chesty Puller"!

The Old Testament has many stories of courage. The story of David and his battle with Goliath and then his battle with king Saul are the best. My favorite one is a short one in **2 Samuel 23:20!**

***"And Benaiah the son of Jehoida, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lionlike men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in the time of snow:"***

He didn't just slay a lion. He went down in a pit where the lion was waiting on him and where there was no way out! By the way, it was snowing!

Moses gives good insight into courage.

**Hebrews 11:24-26** *“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter;*

*Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;*

*Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.”*

Courage requires **“refusing”** and then **“choosing”**! Rejecting and **“Esteeming”**! It looks beyond the circumstances to the results.

## Confidence (In God)



Confidence is that characteristic of leadership that is known as “It”! Some people have “It”. In the sports world, it is the quarterback who is behind in the score with just a little time left and he calls the plays, executes them and gets the score and wins the game. In basketball it is the shooter with seconds left on the clock, behind by two points, and with confidence he takes the three point shot and it goes in. This is self-confidence. Many times self-confidence is deceitful. The same quarterback or three-point shooter may make horrible personal decisions that ruin his career and life! The arm of flesh will fail you. It is deceitful. Many a man fails because he has not put his confidence in God! What is needed is confidence in God! This can only be obtained by faith, by walking with God, and by God answering your prayers.

The story of David's battle with Goliath gives great understanding in this confidence in God. David refused Saul's armor and used what he knew would work. The weapon that he had confidence in was his sling. Oh! Also, it is important to notice what he told Goliath in **1 Samuel 17:45 & 46**

***"Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.***

***This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.***

That is confidence in God! David, like all good leaders, placed his confidence in God!

Several years ago, I contracted a fatal fungal infection. I was dying and should have died. The disease Doctor told me that I had the worst case of it that he had ever seen. After I got better, I learned of three other people that had contracted it and all three went blind in a month and died two months later! I should have died! I was ready to die because when I was twenty years old, I had received Jesus Christ as my Savior! Many people prayed for me and God healed me. I talked to a fungus expert that had a doctor's degree in fungi! She told me that she had never met anyone that had gotten the infection and lived!

When I was at my lowest point, on death's door, I had an experience that gave me confidence in God that I will never get over! I had gone from 205 lbs. down to 115 lbs. My thinking was so bad that they would tell me the day's date and then ask me minutes later what the day was. My brain could not function normally. I didn't know. I couldn't control my bowels. Talk about embarrassing! The fungus had attacked my brain. I couldn't walk and because my brain swelled and pinched my optic nerves, I was totally blind. I don't remember a lot of what happened, but I do know that at night, I would remember Bible verses I had memorized as a young man. It is amazing that I didn't know what day it was but I knew ***James 4:8 "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded."*** I would quote them, get under conviction, and start confessing my sins. I had been saved for 36 years I wasn't trying to earn heaven. I was preparing to go there! I never saw a physical vision and I never heard an audible voice, but the presence of God would show up! I know that He was there. It was like he put his arm around me and let me know that everything was going to be alright. I tell people that this was one of the best things that ever happened to me! I am still partially blind and every day is a gift but also a challenge. Before I got sick and almost died, I loved and served God by faith. The only evidence I had of Him was what the Bible said and what my heart felt. Now I have confidence in Him, that He not only is real, but that the God that made this whole universe cares enough about me to show up when I needed Him the most! I still love Him and serve Him by faith.

This confidence in God is what gives the leader the courage and conviction to do the right thing. It is what allowed the martyrs to suffer and die for Him. Death is only a temporary trip into His presence!

# Consistency



Courage and confidence in God is what attracts followers to the leader, but consistency is what keeps them following. Making good decisions over and over again develops a dependency on the leader that he knows what he is doing. Showing up every day develops consistency. Being on time develops consistency. Getting up before everyone else to pray and prepare develops consistency. It takes a lifetime of doing the right thing that causes people to expect the best from you and count on you. Answering your phone. Making yourself available on a regular basis. Seeking the follower to know their welfare, questions, problems, and frustrations. These are all marks of consistency.

The Bible word for consistency is faithfulness. There are some great thoughts in the Bible about faithfulness that apply to leadership. The expression ***“faithful man”*** only appears 4 times in the Bible. Each time it gives great insight into leadership.

***Nehemiah 7:2 “That I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many.”*** Notice how being faithful and fearing God prepares a man for leadership. Just being faithful is not enough. It should be coupled with the fear of God!

***Proverbs 20:6 “Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?”***

You can't go by what a man says about himself, you have to watch him under pressure and see how he responds. People that make excuses for their mistakes, blaming others, make horrible leaders. A leader doesn't use the expressions, “It's not my fault!” or “It's not my job!” He says things like, “How could we have avoided this?” “I should have done it this way.” “Ok. We are in a mess now. How can we fix it?” Faithful men are rare. If you find one, he is worth taking the extra time with and making him a leader. They are worth seeking and preparing for God to use! One of the training tools to train children as well as good leaders is to give them some liberty and see how they handle the responsibility. Don't set them up to fail, but set them up to succeed!

**Proverbs 25:19** *“Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.”* Although both of these ailments are not life threatening, they both are very painful and will slow you down. An unfaithful man is the same way. You must have a plan B! Or you must find some other way to get the job done. Bad help is like a neglected garden. It is sometimes better to have none! The job of a good leader is to take an unfaithful man, give him the right responsibility, tools, and encouragement and change him into a leader. Notice the followers that were attracted to King David:

**1 Samuel 22:2** *“And everyone that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him: and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.”*

David took those distressed, in debt, and discontented, surely unfaithful and turned them into a mighty army! You are responsible for those that God puts under your control. Take their handicaps and turn them into great leaders!

**Proverbs 28:20** *“A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.”* Notice that faithfulness produces blessings. Unfaithfulness produces guilt! The unfaithful has to cut corners to get what he wants. The expression, “The hurrier up I go, the behinder I get!” applies here! A real leader is not in it for the money. He knows that God will take care of him and that God has plenty of money and will provide what is needed. Patience is an essential leadership quality. Patience has to be learned by going through problems.

I have always thought of faithfulness as a character trait of a good follower. That is why good followers are trained into being good leaders.

**1 Corinthians 4:1, 2** *“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

*Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”*

A steward is given something valuable to take care of. Here he is given the mysteries of God. These aren't secrets but are valuable teachings and revelations about God that other people miss because of their unfaithfulness. Continued reading of the Bible is a form of faithfulness. Believing what you don't fully understand is a form of faithfulness. Over time God sees your faithfulness and gives you the “goods” to take care of!

I am impressed by the life of Abraham. When Abraham went to offer his son on the altar, he took young men with him (**Genesis 22:3**). They couldn't go the whole way (**Genesis 22:5**), sometimes a leader has to do things that are just him and God! Moses trained Joshua. The Bible pattern is one leading another. Even Jesus took Apostles and sometimes the three with him to show them God's leading (**Matthew 26:37**). A great example of following that leads to leadership is expressed in **2 Kings 3:11**

***“But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel’s servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah.”***

Notice that Elisha was known as the man that took care of Elijah. He ***“poured water on the hands of Elijah.”*** He was a good helper and then when Elijah passed off the scene, God put Elijah’s mantle on Elisha and he did twice the miracle of Elijah!

These all show a consistency that separates the good leader from the hireling.

***Job 7:2*** and ***John 10:10-14*** give some insight into this:

***Job 7:2 “As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work:”***

***John 10-14 “The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.***

***I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.***

***But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.***

***The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.***

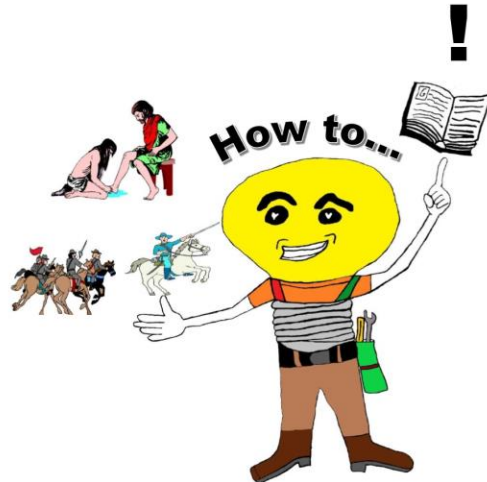
***I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.”***

These verses teach a great lesson in leadership and consistency. The servant is looking for the shadow. He just wants an easy place to work. “Made in the shade!” The hireling is looking for pay day, the reward of his work. He wants the job because it pays well. He doesn’t love the sheep. In fact, they are just a nuisance to him. Both of these characters, the servant and the hireling, show bad leadership qualities. Notice that the third character is the thief. He is just in it for himself. He steals, kills, and destroys. When he is done there is nothing left.

Now notice the Good Shepherd. His leadership brings a more abundant life! He cares for the sheep. He opens himself up to them. They know him and he knows them. The Good Shepherd fights the wolf and protects the sheep. He does it constantly and is there for the sheep.

As a leader the important things are doing right and caring for the followers. This can only be accomplished by having ***courage, confidence in God, and being consistent.***

# How To Lead Anything



## *Catastrophes Great Leaders Avoid*

### *Bad Decisions – The Mistakes of King Saul*

One of the blessings as well as one of the curses of leadership is that the leader has to make decisions. The saying is that *“Everything rises and falls on leadership!”* Men and Women become leaders in many different ways. Some seek to be in charge, some have the responsibility thrust on them, and some reluctantly must take charge and lead. Regardless of how a person becomes a leader, good leadership is based upon a person’s ability to make the right decisions at the right time. Although many times these are big decisions, most of the decisions are small decisions that have large consequences. So learning how to make good decisions is essential in good leadership. Many times the decisions will affect people’s lives and destinies! Many times a small decision has an eternal consequence!

King David is an example of a great leader. If you study his life from a leadership view, you will see that he made many good decisions. However, you will notice that he made one very bad decision that he never got over and that cost him and the nation of Israel for generations. This was the matter of Bathsheba.

***2 Samuel 11:4 “And David sent messengers, and took her: and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.”***

That was the sin that he committed, but the bad decision is back in ***2 Samuel 11:1***

***“And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.”***

The bad decision was that it was time to go to battle and David didn't go! If I was going to comment on the first three kings of Israel and use the briefest expression to as what their main problems were and what it was that caused their downfall I would say that they *quit!* King Saul quit totally believing (*1 Samuel 13:13*); King David quit fighting (*2 Samuel 11:1*); and King Solomon quit building (*1 Kings 9:1, 11:1*)! All of their mistakes came from ceasing to continue. Inactivity brings about disobedience and produces major problems and leads to failures!

One of the advantages of being a Bible believer and reader is the fascinating way the Bible has to give us the ability to make good decisions. One of the ways the Bible does this is by revealing the sins and mistakes of major Bible characters. This study is a look at the first king of Israel, Saul. I have learned a lot about Saul. When I was a young Christian, God revealed to me from Bible reading that I had a lot of the same character flaws that King Saul had! Ever since then, I have studied and meditated on his life as revealed in the Bible. I believe God used that to change and remake my character so that I have not made the same mistakes that King Saul made. My prayer is that this study will help you to become a better leader and maybe make good decisions.

Saul shows up in the Bible in *1 Samuel 9* and then dies in *1 Samuel 31*. The insight into his life and the bad decisions he makes and continues to make is very instructive. Saul is an interesting character. There is still debate today on whether he will be in heaven, or not. I cannot make that determination. I know that I am saved, but I can only go by your testimony as to whether you are saved! We know that God took his Spirit from him. We know that he had a bad testimony. One of the hardest things to do is conduct a funeral of a person whom you don't know for certain if they are saved. The lesson to learn is to not leave a questionable testimony as to your salvation by making bad spiritual decisions! Abraham's nephew, Lot, also left a bad testimony. If all we had was the Old Testament account of Lot we would think he was lost. In *2 Peter 2:7* he is called ***“just Lot”*** and in *2 Peter 2:8* he is ***“that righteous man”***! At your funeral, we want to tell your relatives that you trusted Christ as your Savior and lived for Him your whole life! We can't say that about king Saul.

I am still learning from King Saul. Recently, I noticed that one of King Saul's mistakes was that he obsessed on what he thought was a personal enemy and quit fighting the Lord's enemies. I have found out that if you will fight the Lord's battles, God will fight your personal battles. It was such a problem for Saul that he could not see the other problems that he had to take care of. Another thing I have found out is that a leader cannot just concentrate on one area. *Ecclesiastes 11:1, 2* says ***“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.”*** The common expression is “Don't put all of your eggs in one basket!” A leader doesn't choose his problems. They just come. *Job 3:26* describes it perfectly! ***“I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.”*** The idea is to use your time to serve God. For me it is doing electrical work for the church and people that need it. I also do my job at work, but I take time to tell people about Jesus. I also try to encourage people at church. I spend time with my mother. I also use my free time to write. I spend time praying and reading the Bible. I invite people to church and try to counsel the young people to live for God. I go to the VA nursing home. Sometimes, they let me preach and I take it seriously. Good leaders have a lot going on and it is helping

others. One of the keys to finding good leaders is to look for people that are busy. Of course Jesus set the example with his revolutionary concept of servant leadership. I let my boss know that the reason he is my boss is so that I can do my job better. The purpose of a pastor is to lead and feed the sheep, not himself! The pastor's job is not to fleece the flock for his own benefit. I am amazed at the way God leads us. He doesn't feed us directly many times. He takes us to green pastures and lets us feed there! He does the leading and we do the feeding!

Saul is introduced in the Bible as a good son that is given the responsibility to find some lost donkeys. It is instructive to notice that he never completes that job! Someone else finds the donkeys.

***1 Samuel 10:2 "When thou art departed from me today, then thou shall find two men by Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying What shall I do for my son?"***

Part of good leadership training is to finish the job. Some one that has lots of ideas but no follow through does not make a good leader. He may be a good teacher, but that doesn't make him a good leader. A leader has a purpose. The purpose is to finish. Starting things and never finishing is a bad character trait that will cause much confusion in the life of the Child of God. God finishes things and expects us to also.

Notice also that Saul has spent all of his money. A person who doesn't have a handle on his finances will not make a good leader. A good leader knows how to manage money well! He is not a hoarder, but a good giver and saver for later.

***1 Samuel 9:7 "Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man? For the bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a present for to bring to the man of God: what have we?"***

A good leader does not spend all of his money on his journey. He may give it all away or spend it on others, but not on himself. Notice the difference in the life of David. When David is sent to take something to his brothers, he finds someone to take care of the sheep. He doesn't leave them defenseless. He thinks ahead to see the results of his actions.

***1 Samuel 17:20 "And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle."***

I know that these are little details, but it is the little details that either make the leader or break the leader! The little things are the big things in God's view:

***Luke 16:10 "he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in that least is unjust also in much."***

The real insight into Saul's character is when they are going to anoint him to be king. They can't find him. He is hiding among the stuff.

***1 Samuel 10:22 "Therefore they inquired of the LORD further, if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff."***

Many Bible commentators say that Saul started out humble and then pride came in and ruined him. They use the following verse.

***1 Samuel 15:17 “And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?”***

Saul wasn't humble, but he didn't think much of himself. While I was taught that this was because he was humble, I don't think this is accurate. I see Saul as a coward. Notice how many times it says that he was afraid (***1 Samuel 15:24, 17:11, 18:12, 15, 29, 28:5, 15, 20***). God used this to build boldness in me as a young Christian. As I studied Saul, I saw a lot of the same things in me that were in Saul. I was a coward! I didn't want to turn out like Saul, so I started working on these things. Over time God has improved and changed my character and given me boldness in certain situations. Cowardice is thinking about yourself and what others think of you. Saul never got over this. His whole miserable reign was about himself! Every problem he saw as one that someone was against him and out to get him! A good leader realizes he is in charge to make sure the followers succeed! It is not about him! It is about them!

The first mistake that King Saul makes is not waiting on God. Sometimes taking matters in your own hands is not the best decision. I have found that I don't have the authority to make some of the needed decisions. Saul was not the priest or the prophet. He did not have the authority to make the sacrifice. The old preacher said, “God's train may run slow, but it is always on time!” It is very important to learn patience. Patience is essential for leadership. You can't let the pressure of the situation force you into making the wrong decision! Another great saying from an older man of God was, “The problem is that I am in a hurry and God is not!”

***1 Samuel 13:8-10 “And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.***

***And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings, And he offered the burnt offering.***

***And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.”***

Notice Samuels response and Saul's excuse:

***1 Samuel 13:11-14 “And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash;***

***Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gial, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering.***

***And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee; for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.***

***But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.”***

Notice the difference in David when he had the chance to kill Saul. It was in his power to do it. He, however, realized that it was God who sets up and removes the rulers. He wanted no part of it.

**1 Samuel 24:6** *“And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD’S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD.”*

As a leader it is extremely important to know where your authority ends. Some decisions you do not have the authority to make. Don’t make these decisions. Some decisions you must make and you must make good ones.

Read **1 Samuel 13:11 and 12** again and notice who Saul blames. He blames the people, then Samuel, then the enemy, and then God! Everyone but himself. It is important as a leader to place the blame on yourself. If you had made the right decision the outcome would be different.

Another bad character trait brought out about King Saul is his bad ability to misinterpret God’s words and plan for him! You can learn a lot from his excuses. He always blames the situation and others for the bad mistakes. He never blames himself. Also, it is interesting that he is very pious in the way he brings God into it! Over the years, I have seen people ‘manufacture’ the will of God for themselves! It is very important as a leader to recognize if it is God leading you or you making up something to impress others. Making things up may make you look good for the moment, but over time leads to confusion as to what it is that God wants you to do.

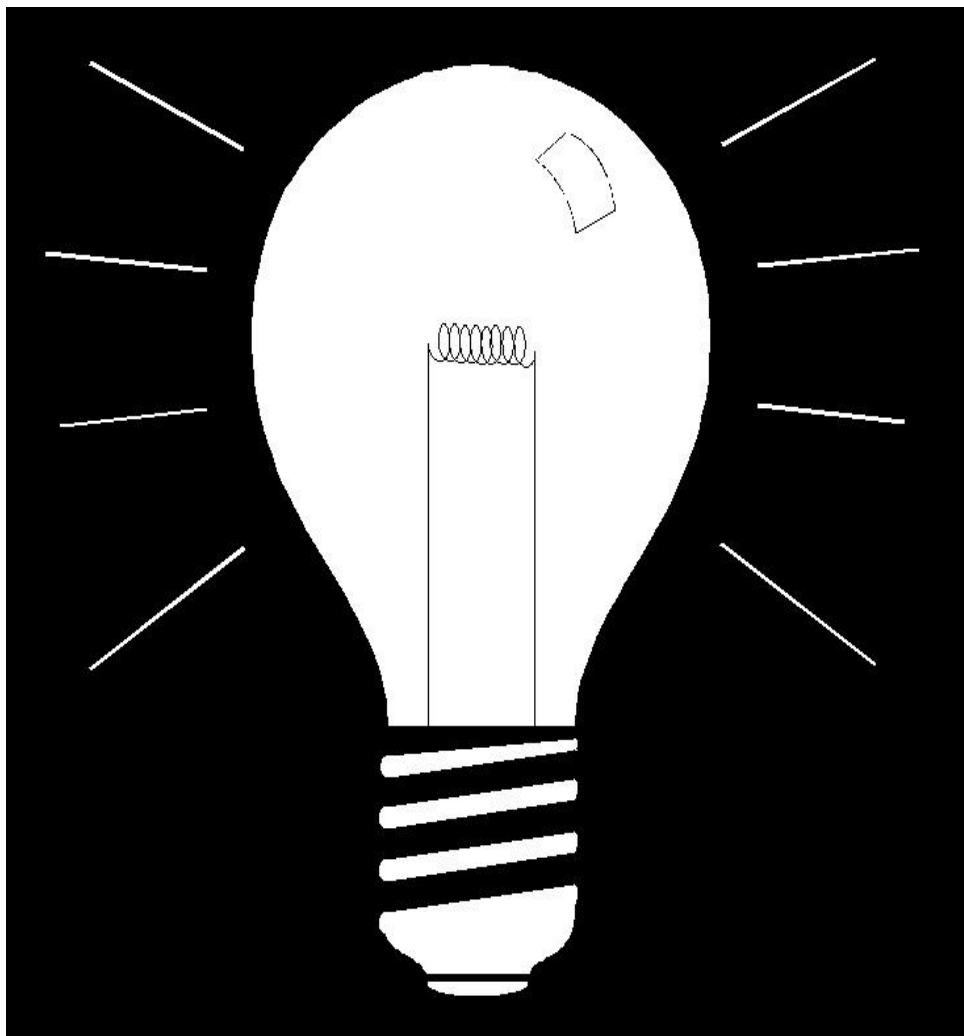
Another bad character trait that will ruin a leader is blaming his mistakes on others. For some, when things fail, the next step is to see who can be blamed! I tell these contractors that that I work with, that I am the best friend that they have. What I want them to know is that I am with them to get the job done right and the fire alarm working so that it will detect a fire! Whatever it takes, together we will finish the job! Fix the problems not the blame!

One of the lessons to be learned from the bad decisions that Saul made is to not just concentrate on one thing. Especially what you think is the problem. The purpose of good leadership is to get others to be the best they can be. They are doing many things that help the organization succeed. I always thought that the verse in **Proverbs 29:18** *“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”* is a great leadership verse! I think this vision has something to do with supervision. It is the leader’s responsibility to provide oversight. Notice how keeping the law is involved. There are certain rules that need to be observed. In the Fire Alarm world this is called ‘the code.’ Fire Alarms must meet the provisions of ‘the code.’ Also, someone is in charge. And not just in charge but providing a mission and a glimpse into the future when success will happen. Many times this is the Fire Marshal. He is there to make sure the code is followed and interpreted correctly. In good times as well as bad people have to be able to see the future. In bad times they need to see what it will be like when things get better. In good time they need to see what will happen if they let up and don’t finish. Or if they quit and things then fall apart. A leader must plan for the time that he is no longer on the scene. He must prepare others to lead. Saul made the mistake of thinking David was his enemy, when David was actually being prepared to lead when Saul passed off the scene. One of the biggest responsibility of leadership is to properly train others for leadership. Sometimes the one that you think is your biggest enemy is actually your best friend. When I was installing fire alarms, I was given a large complex to put the fire alarm in. It was a lodge, that consisted of three large buildings. One was a

restaurant, one was a visitor center, and the other was a hotel. When I got to the job I met the electrician that I was to work under. He said, “We always have problems with the fire alarm people.” He was starting the process of placing blame on the first day of the job! I told him that he didn’t know me and that if he would work with me, we would make sure that the job was done correctly and on time. At the end of the job he thanked me because that is just what happened. I learned a lot by going through the problems that occurred on that job.

Saul never learned the lessons of leadership. When he gets to the last days of his life, he is still not waiting on God. By then God is not answering his prayers and so he goes to a woman that conjures up Samuel from the dead. Totally against the will of God. He is defeated in battle and commits suicide. What a horrible way to end a career. It started and ended with bad decisions!

My prayer is that I will learn from the bad decisions that Saul made and not make them myself. My prayer for you is that you will learn the tools of leadership: **Communication, Cooperation, and Charity**; will have the character traits of leadership: **Courage, Confidence in God, and Consistency**; and will learn to make good decisions.



# How To Make Good Decisions

Ask yourself these questions:

1. Is it right?
2. What does the Bible say about it?
3. Is it God's perfect will?
4. Will it bring glory to me or to God?
5. Does it glorify the flesh?
6. How will it affect my character?
7. How will it affect my testimony?
8. How will it affect other people?
9. How will it affect my friends?
10. How will it affect my family?
11. How will it affect my church?
12. What is the cost in money?
13. What is the cost in time?
14. What is the cost in labor?
15. Will it make God smile?
16. Will it bring me closer to God? Or drive me away from God?
17. Will it draw people to God?
18. Will I have to repent if I do it?
19. Can God go in with me? Will his presence be there?
20. Is it a step of faith?
21. Can I get godly counsel on it?
22. Will I be ashamed if I do it?
23. Does it bring me godly, pure thoughts?
24. Is it addicting?

