

# Church Leadership

## IV. Examples of Leaders from Scripture

### Study of Barnabas

Use these Scriptures to follow the story of Barnabas. Write down information that describes the kind of person that Barnabas was.

- Acts 4:36-37            Son of Encouragement; generous, a Levite, from Cyprus, land owner
- Acts 9:26-28            Builder of relationships between people; advocate for people; helpful to Saul; courageous – not fearful like other disciples; concerned about relationships between believers; opened doors for Saul; helped Saul be accepted to leaders in Jerusalem
- Acts 11:22-24            trusted leader; a good man; chief investigator; filled with the Holy Spirit; evangelist; counselor
- Acts 11:25-26            put forth time and effort to find Saul; recognized great ministry opportunity; sought someone with appropriate gifts and abilities; “took him” is strong statement = compelled Saul
- Acts 13:1-3              Barnabas and Saul (Barnabas had a higher position)
- Acts 13:4-5, 13            John Mark accompanies Barnabas and Saul but later abandons them
- Acts 14:1-3, 8-13        Paul does the miracle (called Hermes, errand boy), but Barnabas is called the king of the gods (Zeus)
- Acts 15:35-41            Argument over Mark; Barnabas was unwilling to abandon his protégé; separation from Paul; Barnabas returns to Cyprus, his home country
- II Tim 4:11              Barnabas has been successful with Mark; this is recognized by Paul.

Conclusion: Barnabas was a man of wealth, but more importantly, a man of influence and respect. He opened doors for Saul, and gave Saul/Paul the freedom and opportunity to develop into an incredibly strong New Testament leader. Barnabas was a top notch leader, counselor, advocate, bridge builder, mover, and shaker.

## Character Studies of Some Leaders in the Bible

Note: Both negative and positive examples are included in this list. For small group work, the names with “\*” work best. Instructions: read the passage; be prepared to give answers to the following questions:

- Who was the character?
- What was the situation?
- How did the person handle the situation?
- What was the response/result?
- What principles can be gained from this episode?
- How might the principles be applied to me/us?

Demonstration/Example of presentation

Joshua\*                      Exodus 33:7-11; Joshua 1:1-9; Joshua 8:30-35

We don't have any information about his early years; we only know that he was among the slaves who lived in Egypt and he witnessed the plagues in Egypt and was a participant in the miracles of God, including the crossing of the Red Sea. It mentions in Numbers 13:8 that he was from the tribe of Ephraim. In Ex 17:8-10 Joshua was the leader of the army which fought against the Amalekites. This was the occasion when Moses was on the hill praying. In Ex 24:13-14 Joshua went with Moses up the mountain Sinai, where they spent 40 days and nights. When they came down from the mountain to return to the people, they discovered the golden calf idol and the people engaged in improper behavior. In Ex 32:17 we read that Moses threw down the stone tablets on which the commandments had been written. In Ex 33:11 we read about the tent of meeting in which Moses frequently met and communicated with God. When Moses returned to the camp to be with the people, Joshua remained in the tent. Joshua was among the twelve men who were sent as spies into the land of Canaan. He and Caleb were the only two spies to give a good report of the land and to urge the people to not be afraid to enter the promised land. Unfortunately, the people refused to listen to Joshua and Caleb and there followed a long period of wandering in the wilderness. When all the members of the first generation to come out of Egypt were dead, and it was time to enter the promised land, it was Joshua who was appointed to become leader of the people. Joshua was encouraged to “Be strong and courageous” and to be very careful to obey all the law passed on by Moses. Joshua successfully led the Hebrew people across the Jordan River and into the land of Canaan where they attacked many fortified cities and displaced the inhabitants of the land. Joshua was a faithful servant of God throughout his lifetime. He brought to completion the work started by Moses; he established Israel in the promised land. He told the people that they would have to “choose whom they would serve” and he said “as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” God said that Joshua was a faithful servant (Joshua 24:29).

Summary: Lived in the tent of God's presence as a “trainee” of Moses; had promise of God's blessing and presence; success depended on obedience; was faithful to do things properly; was conscientious

Caleb

Joseph            Gen 39:1-23

Had integrity; had confidence and trust of everyone; did not give in to temptation; did not criticize God when he was unjustly accused and imprisoned; had opportunities to “witness” while in prison; wise counselor; good steward of resources

Moses            Ex 2:11-15; 3:1-10; Heb 11:24-27

Had a sense of calling/purpose in his life; failed to wait for God’s timing; tried to do God’s work in his own strength

Esther \*         Esther 4:1-17

Put the interests of her people ahead of concern for herself; willing to lay down her life for others; showed a responsible attitude

Nehemiah        Neh 5:14-19

Saul \*            I Sam 15:1-31

Was unfaithful in carrying out God’s instructions; was filled with arrogance, pride, and had a rebellious spirit; was more concerned about his reputation with the people than his respect for God

David            I Sam 16:1-13

Had the kind of attitude that God wanted; had great faith in God; was humble

Rehoboam \*     I Kings 12:1-19

Was a divisive individual; did not listen to the advice of the elders; did not care about the people in his kingdom

Daniel \*         Dan 6:1-28

Distinguished himself in conduct; was trustworthy; above reproach; was not corrupt in any way; was consistent with prayer habit; was not intimidated by the edict of the king; was faithful to God in spite of threat

Ezra             Ezra 9:1-10:6

Was committed to God in time of moral crisis; took on weight of people’s sins; prayed to God in confession; acknowledged sins, fasted and prayed

Paul \*            Acts 20:17-38

Worked hard night and day; taught constantly; lived with integrity; there were no questions about his motives or the way he handled his financial affairs; was genuinely concerned about the welfare of the Church in Ephesus. In particular note the following verses: v18 lifestyle; v19 served with humility, tears, endured persecution; v20 and v27 taught everything that was helpful; v33-34 supplied all his own needs; v35 was a model to others; v36-37 emotional separation because of mutual love

## **Leadership Competencies Demonstrated by Godly Leaders**

### **Heart for God.**

The Biblical Leader Has a Close Relationship with God. He :

- Desires to be in God's presence
- Communes with God through Bible reading and prayer
- Pursues personal holiness and obedience
- Worships God privately and with God's people
- Rejoices in the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit

The Biblical Leader Recognizes His Call to Serve God, God's Kingdom, and God's People. He:

- Understands the sovereignty of God and the rule of Christ's kingdom over all spheres of life
- Orients life and ministry around Kingdom purposes
- Promotes all Christ centered movements
- Works for the unity of believers within both the global Church and local church

The Biblical Leader is Moving Toward Maturity. He:

- Seeks to be more Christlike each day in attitude and behavior
- Seeks the mind of Christ and Biblical perspectives in all circumstances
- Demonstrates integrity and consistency in His walk before God and people
- Knows himself – his personality, gifts, emotional strengths, and weaknesses

### **Heart for the Church**

The Biblical Leader Understands the Purposes of God. He:

- Works to extend the Kingdom and establish the Church throughout the world
- Understands the realities which make the Church healthy and growing
- Mobilizes and equips God's people for ministry participation
- Seeks the unity of all believers

The Biblical Leader Follows the Example of Jesus. He:

- Has a servant attitude towards others
- Is a discipler and model for others
- Empowers those who follow him
- Understands and accepts the role of suffering and inconvenience in leadership
- Handles interpersonal conflicts constructively in order to accomplish reconciliation
- Communicates vision and purpose effectively

### **Heart for People**

The Biblical Leader is Aware of the Spiritual Needs of the World. He:

- Has a heart for people of other cultures and is involved in world missions
- Reflects on and understands the trends of the time
- Recognizes the tensions between the gospel and the prevalent cultural context
- Is sensitive to the culture and community in which he lives and ministers
- Can discern the spiritual needs of individuals with whom he has contact

The Biblical Leader is a Practicing Evangelist. He:

- Has a passionate concern for those who have never heard the Good News
- Presents the Good News accurately and effectively
- Mobilizes and trains other Christians to share their faith
- Intercedes for and prays with many people consistently
- Has compassion for and provides help to those in need

The Biblical Leader is Disciplined in Behavior. He:

- Manages ministry and family priorities well
- Leads and shepherds his family well
- Can administer, plan, organize, and evaluate
- Knows how to select, build up, and supervise those who serve under and with him
- Budgets and manages financial resources responsibly

The Biblical Leader Has “People Skills”. He:

- Has a suitable and acceptable leadership style which can be adapted to individual needs
- Has an effective approach to decision making and problem solving
- Is quick to listen and slow to speak
- Communicates well both verbally and in writing
- Seeks out and listens to feedback from others