

## **The Character of every God-Ordained Leader**

In the coming move of God, many of the things seen in some Christian leaders today will be swept away. Only those who fulfil the biblical requirements of leadership will play any significant role in what is to come. Let us look now at some of the biblical standards that God requires of a leader anointed and appointed by Him. In Exodus chapter 18 Moses father-in-law told him that he was taking upon himself too much, and should choose others, faithful and trustworthy who would the work of leadership with him.

Clearly then, one of the first things a God-ordained leader must be is someone humble enough to listen to what others are saying and genuinely consider that it might have something of value in it. Sometimes God will send us “outsiders” those not our closest friends to feed things into our lives which are genuinely from God and which would be of grate blessing to us, if only we would be humble enough to listen seriously to what other people say.

The second characteristic shown thus far in the scripture is being humble enough not to want all the fame and high profile for yourself, but being willing to share it with others around you, in order that the job shall get done, to the glory of God, not to the glory of any man. If you know of a great man of God, he is one who would recognise these things as being true, contrary to many Christian leaders today who spend more time and more money promoting themselves and their closest friends, than they do promoting the name of Jesus and all that He has done for us.

The third characteristic of a God-ordained leader brought out in this passage is that they must be those who have proved themselves faithful. Faithful, you understand, to God that is, not necessarily to any particular denomination, or faithfulness to you personally, but someone who has shown that he considers the discernment and obedience to the will of God is what is most important, and not adherence to the will of man for the sake of position or popularity. So far there has been nothing said about education.

The reason for this is because most of the people who, over the centuries have made the greatest impact for God have been men of little or no education. Peter and John are described in the book of Acts in one place as being uneducated laymen, and also as those which the people acknowledged are ones who had been with Jesus. The context of the latter is not that they remembered that Jesus was their friend and they went around together, but that the way they lived their lives and spoke their words was in such away that even ungodly people could recognise the anointing and hand of God on their lives.

There are many people who have come up with “good ideas” for church outreaches and campaigns, but the results have shown them to be simply that, good ideas rather than God ideas. Do you remember Jesus telling the fishermen to put the boat out into deep water and let down the nets for a catch? They had been fishing all night and caught nothing, at that time of the day the fish would be hiding from the sunlight, not swimming down the river. However, obedience to God’s idea meant that they had to call for others to bring their boats to help them take on board the amount of fish that they had caught. If you do what God wants and allow His ideas to have priority over man’s, then the results will be similar.

The forth characteristic is someone who is a good mixer, not someone who has very little sense of his worth and thinks everyone else is worthy to be listened to except himself, but

somebody who feels comfortable talking to all types of people on an equal basis, treating each one with the appropriate amount of respect due to them. Many times it has been known that a leader will make a rule that it must be one or maybe two years before anyone showing leadership quality would be considered for a position on the leadership team, then very soon afterwards, someone new joins the congregation, offering to give the church a lot of money each year.

Just watch and see how quickly such a person will be given a leadership position. That is corruption, and must be eliminated from the household of God. Not everyone will be called to or appointed Elders, Pastors or Teachers but everyone can have a leading influence over people without realising it. St Paul said that we are all living epistles that will be read by everyone we come in contact with.

If we are walking close to Jesus and honouring His name then people will see Jesus in us. If we are very welcoming and kind to people on a Sunday in Church and behave like a worldly person when they get back to the office on the Monday, then people will very soon see through the hypocrisy of it and it will be ever harder to persuade them to come to church.

Often people outside of church congregations will say that they will not go to church because the people are hypocrites, not mentioning that they will not be judged by God on how somebody else lives their life, they will be judged on how they responded to Jesus, and whether they had a genuine, on-going and deepening personal relationship with Him day by day. Another characteristic of a God-ordained and appointed leader is that they will be one who is far more concerned about fulfilling their calling in God and to a reasonable extent, allowing God to take care of the material needs on earth.

There is a balance here, the person, if employed on a full time basis should be paid a living wage, enough to live on reasonably well, but should not be paid at such a high rate that it would be embarrassing if anyone in the congregation ever realised just how much of their offering goes into the Minister's pocket rather than towards the poor in the church or the upkeep of the building etc.

A leader, employed by the church or not, should be one who truly knows from experience that it is far more blessed to give than it is to receive. Does not our Saviour say that the more we give the more (blessing) we will receive? Yet this is just another part of scripture that so many, even committed Christians do not seem to believe. Another characteristic of a God-ordained leader is that they will be someone whose word can be trusted.

How many people have been hurt by the experience of either offering an idea to our minister or offering our services in some way and are told "I'll think about it", which you know at once is a lie and will not tell you the truth to your face because he does not love you enough to do that. Perhaps you will phone one of the leaders at a difficult time and the person says they will phone you back later, where as the truth is that you are not important to him, and he doesn't want to talk to you.

You know perfectly well the person had no intention of ringing you back later; it was just a form of words so a conversation with you could be avoided. If you are a leader, then you should remember that in the days of Moses, if someone made a promise to do something, even to a fellow brother or sister in the church, however small, and they did not do it, God himself would punish that person for not being true to his word.

Being true to one's word is a Characteristic of God. Since He has that characteristic then if you are to be a leader with honour and respect, you must develop this characteristic also. Be careful at what you say, least you promise to do something and then do not stand by your word. There is a world of difference between "I'll try to come to see you this afternoon" and "I'm sorry I didn't see you yesterday afternoon but something came up". Could a message have been got through to that person in some way?

So what about women? Obviously a leader should behave in the proper manner with women, preferably not seeing them alone, else he would expose himself to the risk of false accusation which could not immediately be proven untrue, and never visiting a person of the opposite sex for any reason after midnight, unless one of the other leaders of the church accompanied him.

Precautions like these should prevent anything regrettable happening, in respect to both the church leader and the person to be ministered to. Timothy says that leaders must be those who are not or have not been married to more than one wife. Certainly a single person comes under this category. This is one reason why it is good to have plurality in leadership, so that people who have a particular gifting in one area of leadership can lend their experience and expertise to the ones that are gifted in a different way.

That's how the body was designed to work, all together, helping one another as part of a team. Having stated all the above, any leader must be a person devoted to God through prayer, a deep personal on-going relationship with God day by day, and know that the greatest honour one can be given in the church is to become "one who serves". Surely this is the chief characteristic of all God-ordained and appointed leaders?