



Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees

Servant Leaders

Opening Prayer

Introduction

In the introduction to *Relational Leadership: A Biblical Model for Leadership Service*, a book by Walter C. Wright, Eugene Peterson writes, “We begin by following. There are no ‘born leaders.’ We start out by following our parents, our siblings, older children in the neighborhood. Later we follow teachers, coaches, bosses, managers, counselors and guides...And then somewhere along the line, whether we intend it or not, whether we want it or not, whether we realize it or not, people start following us. We become leaders. All of us. People see what we are doing and where we are going; it looks like we know what we are doing and where we are going. They follow. We are leaders before we know how to be leaders...Leaders of every shape and kind – mothers and fathers, friends and neighbors, brothers and sisters, presidents and chairpersons, pastors and teachers, artists and athletes – which is to say, all of us, need help.” (pages viii and ix)

- What leadership roles do you have?
- What kind of help have you received in those roles? What kind of help do you still need?

Wright writes, “If by leader we mean one who holds a position of authority and responsibility, then every Christian is not a leader. Some are – some are not. But if by leader we mean a person who enters into a relationship with another person to influence their behavior, values or attitudes, then I would suggest that all Christians should be leaders. Or perhaps more accurately, all Christians should exercise leadership, attempting to make a difference in the lives of those around them...I will suggest that leadership is a relationship – a relationship in which one person seeks to influence the thoughts, behaviors, beliefs or values of another person.” (page 2)

- What do you think of Wright’s definition of leadership?
- Tell why you do (or don’t) agree with Wright’s statement that every Christian should exercise leadership, attempting to make a difference in the lives of those around them.

Before one can lead as a Christian there are some prerequisites that need to be considered.

Read **Jude 1** together:

To those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ.

Servant Leadership

Five Principles

1. Leadership is about influence and service.
2. Leadership is about vision and hope.
3. Leadership is about character and trust.
4. Leadership is about relationships and power.
5. Leadership is about dependency and accountability.

–Walter C. Wright,
Relational Leadership
(pages 12-17)

Wright says, “Jude here describes his readers in terms of three characteristics that I believe are prerequisites for leadership in the Christian community, three characteristics that set Christian leadership – the leadership of servants – apart from ordinary leadership. In fact, I believe Jude 1 addresses three critical questions that are foundational to any form of leadership anywhere:” (page 5)

1. Who am I? The identity question.
2. Why am I here? The purpose or meaning question.
3. Will I be safe? The survival or security question.

- How does Jude 1 address each of those questions?

Read **Philippians 2:1-8**. What is to be the attitude of those who lead in the church (or anywhere for that matter)?

- How would you describe a servant leader?
- What does God expect of those who lead in the church?

Read **Ezekiel 34:1-6**

- What were the “shepherds of Israel” doing?
- What were they supposed to be doing?
- What are leaders in the church supposed to be doing?

Read **Ezekiel 34:7-11** What is God’s judgment on those who do not lead as His shepherds?

Read **Ezekiel 34:11-17** What example does God set for leaders?

Read **Ezekiel 34:17-31** What does God have to say to the sheep?

Key Question: In what ways are servant leaders stewards?

Action Item: What are some things I can do to increase my leadership skills – especially in the area of Christian stewardship? What help do I need?

Closing Prayer

Provide time at the end of each session for questions, comments and group prayer. The prayer can take one of the following forms or be done in a way the group decides.

Adoration...

Confession...

Thanksgiving...

Supplication....

Praise...

Remember...

Ask...

Yield...

