Tools for Wise Leadership

A programme of TWR-Africa, produced by TWR-Zimbabwe, presented by Rev Dr Roy Musasiwa

Series 12: Self-Leadership
Talk 02: The Leader as a Role Model of Peace and Joy

Welcome to the programme **Tools for Wise Leadership**. In this series of programmes we are focusing on self-leadership. In order to lead others well you have to lead yourself well first. Now this means different things of course. In the last programme we began to explore the heart of the Christian leader based on Romans 14:17-18 which says:
For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.

We explored the meaning of righteousness and began to explore the meaning of peace. So what is peace? This has three dimensions. The first is peace with God which we explored in the last programme. The second and third dimensions consist of peace with others and peace with self.

Consider peace with others. How can you be a good leader if you are always in conflict with others? Maybe you are always suspicious of other people's motives? Or you easily feel threatened by the success of others and therefore you acquire a wrong type of PHD, meaning Pull him down/ Pull her down.

Lack of peace with others is a sure way to chase away the Lord's blessings. Energy gets dissipated in the process of conflicts and very little production takes place. On the other hand, peace with others attracts God's blessings. Psalm 133 says, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity..." The Psalm ends by saying, "For there the LORD commands his blessings, even life for evermore." That is why in Rom 14 Paul says you must not, by what you eat or drink cause someone else to stumble. Nor must we be judging one another. Peace with others is essential for Christian leadership.

The third dimension is peace within. We need to be at peace with God and with other people, but we also need to be at peace with ourselves. Now peace within does not depend on outward circumstances. Those who play blaming games are only betraying a lack of peace within. How many times do you hear people blaming people or other circumstances for their lack of peace?:
If it wasn't for my mother-in-law I would be a very happy person
My husband/wife is the real cause of my misery.
If only I was in England I would be happy.
If only I can get rid of this person I would be ok.

In one of the earlier programmes I explained that this blaming phenomenon is what psychologists call **projectionism** which means externalizing your inner turmoil on other people or situations so that you do not face the actual root cause of the problem – the root problem being yourself!

What angers you in another person is often an unhealed aspect of yourself. If you had already resolved that particular issue, you would not be irritated by its reflection back to you. You see, sometimes the one who condemns another the most is projecting their own guilt on someone else, and punishing it in that someone. Do you remember the people who brought to Jesus the woman caught in adultery? We read that story in John 8:1-11. Those men demanded that the woman should be stoned to death. Jesus had to challenge them, "Whoever is without sin, let him be the first to cast

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the stone." All of them disappeared one after another. They must have realized that they were projecting on the woman the sins that characterized their own lives.

What we are saying here is that to be an effective leader you need to have peace with others and peace within. Indeed the Kingdom of God is characterized by righteousness and peace.

Thirdly, the kingdom of God is characterized by joy in the Holy Spirit according to Romans 14:17-18. Some think rejoicing just automatically happens when circumstances are good, and is impossible when circumstances are painful. But that is not the case. When Paul in Phil 4 says "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" he is implying that you can choose to rejoice, and it is possible to rejoice even when circumstances are terrible. You can choose to rejoice knowing that "The joy of the Lord is your strength"(Nehemiah 8:10). Unhappiness is the thief of emotional strength! Have you ever seen an emotionally depressed person being very productive in their work? No. They lose energy and work suffers.

The joy of the Lord is your strength **physically**. Worry takes away value from our physical life. It results in high blood pressure, ulcers, heart problems and other debilitating physical conditions. So self-leadership means we should choose to rejoice and not allow our strength to be stolen through depression.

Choosing to rejoice also makes it easier for other people to be close to you. Moodiness, on the other hand, is like a heavy cloud which also depresses others and repels them. Do you want to influence others? Then help them to come closer to you by being a joyful person.

But the greatest reason for choosing to rejoice is that rejoicing reflects Christ to the world. Joy is part of our Christian witness. The fruit of the Spirit is listed as love quickly followed by joy. A Christian who is not joyful can hardly be a credible witness to the world.

Now how do you affect the choice to rejoice? It's not by wishful thinking where you just do like Bobby McFerrin and tell yourself not to worry but to be happy. Rather it is by having a good **relationship** with self, others and God that we can be able to rejoice despite terrible circumstances. That is how Horatio Spafford succeeded in being happy in the middle of a disaster. This is the man who wrote the song: "It is well with my soul." He wrote such a song after losing his only son in a Chicago fire accident, and all his 4 daughters who perished when the ship they were travelling in sank. Humanly speaking the resulting grief would have been overwhelming. Yet he could write in the song, "When sorrows like sea -billows roll. Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, It is well, it is well with my soul."

Now that is the sort of self-leadership that makes someone fit to be a leader of others. Horatio Spafford was very different from many people who are catastrophisers and who suffer from a disease I call "cantstandititis". What I mean is that when anything painful happens to these people it strikes them as a catastrophe. When someone gossips about them, it's a catastrophe. When they don't have money for a coke it's a catastrophe. And whenever any such catastrophe happens you hear them saying they can't stand it. That is why I say that some people are catastrophisers who suffer from a disease called "cantstandititis".

Let me say one more thing about joy. True happiness is a by-product of becoming more like Christ and living in subjection to the Father's will as Jesus did. There is a paradoxical truth here: You will never be happy if you are concerned primarily with becoming happy. One writer says, "Trying to find happiness is something like trying to fall asleep. As long as you consciously and zealously try grasp it, it never comes." So make Jesus the centre of your life and you will find true joy.

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Please remember in saying all this we are just illustrating the necessity of self-leadership. You lead yourself by practicing righteousness or integrity. You lead yourself by developing peace with God and peace with others. You lead yourself having the kind of joy that will not be defeated by outward circumstances. That is the heart of Christian leadership. A person who leads himself or herself in this way is a good candidate to be able to lead other people.

Now that you know these tools of wise leadership, blessed are you if you put them into practice. Please don't forget to tune into the next programme for more **tools of wise leadership**.

Discussion Questions for: Series 12 - Talk 02 - The Leader as a Role Model of Peace and Joy

For this series of *Self-Leadership* you can use the following study questions to guide you in deepening the impact of this series:

Study Question 1: for Personal reflection
What does this episode mean to you personally as a leader?

Study Question 2: for Group Discussion
What does this topic mean you as a group of leaders?

Study Question 3: for applying the topic
What can you apply from this topic in your role as a leader?

Summary:

A good leader worth following is someone that has peace with God, peace with herself/himself and peace with others, while displaying the joy which comes by knowing Christ as Saviour.

Discussion Questions:

Study Question 1: Personal reflection

When differences of opinion arise, how do I resolve such differences in love?

Do I encourage people to lead effectively by the example I set?

Study Question 2: Group Discussion

A leader may have inherent weaknesses that s/he should guard against. How does a leader resolve inner conflict so that s/he do not project this on to other people?

Study Question 3: Applying the topic

What circumstances, actions or habits should I avoid in order to be a good leader?

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