

Tools for Wise Leadership

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

Series 12: Self-Leadership

Talk 01: Leader as a Role Model of Integrity

Welcome to the programme **Tools for Wise Leadership**. Our emphasis in previous programmes has been on a leader leading others for the accomplishment of the purpose for which a group exists. We are now shifting emphasis to self-leadership. In order to lead others well you have to lead yourself well first. This means different things that we will be exploring in future programmes. Today our focus is on the Christian leader as a role model.

But first who is a Christian leader?

Firstly, a leader is someone who **knows** the way. We are talking here of the importance of a leader having the necessary knowledge.

Secondly, a leader is someone who **shows** the way. Here we are referring to the importance of a leader having requisite skills that they put to use in demonstrating how followers must perform needed tasks.

Thirdly, a leader is someone who **goes** the way. The emphasis here is on the leader being a role model. Going the way makes a Christian leader different from a sign-post which shows the way without going the way. I am sure you have experienced what I have experienced several times. I drive past a sign post pointing to Harare. Next time I see the same sign-post again pointing me to Harare. This goes on month after month, and year after year. But the sign post never goes to Harare. Have you known leaders like that? They will teach the need for sacrificial love, but they live in luxury while many around them are in abject poverty. They will emphasize the need for giving while they themselves do not have a lifestyle of giving.

Jesus' problem with Pharisees and Scribes was not that they were ignorant, for they knew their Scriptures back to front. Nor was it because they were lazy; no, they travelled widely to make converts. So what was Jesus' quarrel with Pharisees? It was that they did not demonstrate the values that they themselves taught. Listen to Matthew Matt 23:1-3:

"Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 'The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.'"

You see these Pharisees and Scribes wanted to lead others before they had mustered the desire to lead themselves first. Earlier I said: In order to lead others well you have to lead yourself well first. To be a role model means you do not expect others to meet standards of being, and standards of behaviour which you yourself are not meeting.

Let us now focus on the three areas of self-leadership that would make you and I as leaders role models to society.

The first area is the **heart**, or in short what you are. What you are is the most important aspect of role-modelling. But how do we measure the condition of the heart? Romans 14:17-18 tells us how. It says:

Tools for Wise Leadership, Series 12: Self-Leadership

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.

By “righteousness” Paul is talking about what we would today call integrity. Oh how much God values integrity! In Job 2 the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason.” Job held fast to his integrity even when he was in deep trouble. He had lost all his wealth. His children died mysteriously. In the end he even lost his health. It was not the easiest environment to exercise integrity. More especially when the wife made things even more difficult for Job by insisting, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die.” But Job of course kept his integrity. No wonder the LORD was so proud of Job and even boasted to Satan about his integrity.

Self-leadership in the area of integrity is vital because the biggest reason for leadership failure is lack of integrity. There have been gifted men and women of God who climbed great heights of achievement because of their abilities. Only to come crushing down because of their lack of integrity – especially integrity in sexual matters and integrity in financial matters. Some leaders have been involved in corruption or in other ways misappropriated resources entrusted to them for personal gain. The paying and receiving of **bribes** have become very common in Africa. Some pay in order to win contracts, to cut corners or to get what they do not deserve, such as a driver’s licenses for which they are not qualified. Others demand payment for performing routine services for which they are employed. Yet the Bible says in Deuteronomy 16:19, “You must never twist justice or show partiality. Never accept a bribe, for bribes blind the eyes of the wise and corrupt the decisions of the godly.”

Lack of self-leadership in the area of integrity will disqualify any leader.

Is this not why Jethro advised his son-in-law Moses to select as leaders only those who feared God, who were trustworthy and who hated a dishonest gain? Now integrity or righteousness does not develop automatically. Paul says in 1 Tim 4:7-8, “Train yourselves to be godly, for physical training is of value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” The word ‘train’ suggests an activity that is intentional, deliberate and focused. Training routines are continually repeated until they become habitual.

My friend, if you want to be a wise leader you need to develop not only the conviction that we talked about in the previous programmes but also the integrity which we have been talking about in this programme.

Then Paul proceeds to say that the Kingdom of God is a matter of peace. This is also a heart quality that we need to focus on. You cannot be a credible leader without peace. And peace comes in three dimensions:

Firstly, there is first peace with God. By accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour your guilt is taken away and God treats you just as if you never sinned.

Yet there is another level of peace with God. While our relationship with God is guaranteed because of what Jesus Christ did on the cross, our fellowship with God is affected by whether we are daily living in obedience to him. I continue to love and accept my children no matter what they do. Yet sometimes they do things that make me upset or even angry. They may even lose some privileges if they do not correct their behaviour.

Tools for Wise Leadership, Series 12: Self-Leadership

That is what it is like in our relationship with God as well. When we disobey him our conscience bothers us and our fellowship with God is affected. We lose our peace with God even while remaining his children. But we can correct that by repenting and turning away from our sins. In 1 John 1:8-9 we read, “If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong.” And of course when he cleanses us from all wrong he uses us effectively as leaders.

Well our time is gone, so we will have to continue our discussion in the next programme. We are discussing self-leadership as a condition for effectively leading others. What we have been saying today is that self-leadership effectively means being a role model. That is the heart of self-leadership.

Now that you know these tools of wise leadership, blessed are you if you put them into practice.

Discussion Questions for: Series 12 - Talk 01 - The Leader as a Role Model of Integrity

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:

Leaders should follow a self-leadership style that displays and instils confidence in others.

Discussion Questions:

Study Question 1: Personal reflection

Is my leadership style such that people will confidently follow? Do I exercise the necessary self-discipline to lead?

Study Question 2: Group Discussion

Do you as leaders display the necessary integrity for followers to follow confidently?

Study Question 3: Applying the topic

Which areas in my life do I need to concentrate on to be a good role model of integrity?

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