

Lesson 9

KNOWING WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST BEFORE LEADING

I. **Developing a Godly Self-image**

- A. Created in the Image of God (Gen. 1:26-28). Man has the very image of God stamped on his soul. This image makes man different from the animal world. This image of God was marred in the fall but not destroyed. The image of God shows that man has dignity. He is valuable as a creature of God. NOTE: You are valuable as a person because you bear God's image.
- B. Spiritual Creation in Christ (Eph. 2:10; Col. 2:9-10). In Christ, every Christian has positionally gained back what he/she lost in Adam due to the Fall (Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:9-10). Positionally Christians are perfect in Christ, but experientially we are becoming like Christ everyday ("now and not yet"). NOTE: In Christ, Christians are the most blessed people on earth. Christ is our strength, not ourselves (Phil. 4:13).
- C. Free Men/Women in Christ (1 Pet. 2:16). God made us just the way He wants us to be (IQ, physical appearance, personality, talents and spiritual gifts) (Psa. 139:13, 16). We are, therefore, free to be who we are without shame or guilt. God wants each of us to come to our full potential in Christ—He is committed to this and so should we.
- D. People of Destiny. Christians are chosen, loved, redeemed and given the Holy Spirit by God. We are a people of destiny in that we are headed for heaven. But we are also people called to change their world for Christ. The world around us is changed by faith in God, hard work in obedience and suffering for Christ.

II. **Developing God-given Leadership Styles**

- A. Factors Which Influence Leadership Style
 1. Personality. Leaders prefer to operate with the style they are most comfortable, and this comfortable zone is highly influenced by one's personality.
 2. Expectation of Culture. Different cultures expect different kinds of leadership. Asian, African and Latin American cultures tend towards a more authoritarian style. Western culture tends toward a democratic style.
 3. Method of Appointment. This will be determined by the organizational structure, the church polity, the theology, the traditions and policies of the organization.
 4. Spiritual Gifts. Every leader feels more comfortable and is more fruitful functioning in his own spiritual gifting. A good leader will always staff to his weaknesses.
 5. Situation. The situation may determine whether the leadership style is more authoritarian or democratic. Whatever style, the goal is not to satisfy their own desires but to enable people to reach their potential and achieve their objectives.
- B. Basic Styles of Leadership
 1. Traditional. This leader has a great sense of history and values the good of the past. This person desires to hand down the rich traditions of the church through the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments.
 - a. Strengths: Provides continuity with the past. It guards against liberalism, syncretism and heresy.
 - b. Weaknesses: It does not adapt to today's fast changing world. Often the faith is not applied to today's real life. Emphasizes theological accuracy at the expense of ministry.
 2. Contemporary. This style attempts to break away from the past and go in new directions. The leader tends to have a magnetic personality whose leadership is spontaneous and whose decisions are intuitive rather than based on tradition. This

style leads itself to the modern Charismatic movement, but is much wider than this movement.

- a. Strengths: Provides excitement and joy. People are attracted to life, message and methods. It appears to be closer to New Testament style worship.
 - b. Weaknesses: If there is not strong Bible teaching, the attraction wears off and people leave. People get attracted to a leader and never mature spiritually. Often this style leads to splits and divisions. Disorganization can lead to disillusionment and discouragement.
3. Classical. This style is typified by tight control from the top. The leader provides initiative, drive and accountability at every level. This style is generally very autocratic and brings micro-management.
- a. Strengths: Provides good organization and accountability at every level.
 - b. Weaknesses: Can become remote and impersonal. Organization takes place over people. Micro-management becomes inevitable. This view does not do well in non-western cultures. This can be devastating when white missionaries use this style and ignore the nationals' needs.
4. Human Relations. This style concentrates on building a network of relationships often through small groups. This style emphasizes growth in the basics of Christian life, ministry to the community and building personal relationships. This is a type of management by consensus.
- a. Strengths: Provides pastoral concern. Creates deep caring fellowship and enables people to participate, which brings spiritual maturity. This leader refuses to do the entire ministry himself and develops spiritual gifts in others. He equips people to do their ministry.
 - b. Weaknesses: The leader tends not to be directive enough so that he gives very few directions or goals. It is leadership by consensus and often leads to anarchy. It can become very inward and self-centered (need-oriented).
5. Organic or Systemic. This style adapts to its rapidly changing environment through altering its policies, programming methods and organization. This style allows for many different groups and ministries with different goals but under the unified common purpose of the church.
- a. Strengths: Allows diversity of gifts and ministries and decision making at all levels within the church.
 - b. Weaknesses: This style could promote organization over body life.
6. Conclusion. Everyone may use different styles of leadership in different situations. The best style is that one that is most effective for meeting the leadership needs of a particular group in a particular situation. Each leader must decide what is appropriate for any given situation, which requires flexibility, common sense, sensitivity, and security of who one is in Christ. The ideal situation is a shared leadership or team in which the leaders work together to accomplish a task. But even then, one man will rise to the top as leader.