



Keys for Success!

For more than 20 years, Shelby and I have been involved in fulltime ministry. We've been blessed with the opportunity to be involved with churches and ministries of all shapes and sizes. There is one thing that has always stood out as the major difference maker in and around each of these ministry experiences. LEADERSHIP.

There are two basics principles of leadership that I want to share with you today.

1. The most important thing a leader should know
2. The most important ability a leader must possess

First, the most important thing a leader should know is Where He Is Going. There is nothing more frustrating than following someone who isn't sure of where they are going. Think back to last time you were in your car following someone else who was obviously lost? This has got to rank up there with waiting in the drive thru line at a fast food joint for ten or fifteen minutes when you've only got five minutes to spare. Following a leader who is lost is like having your skin removed.

It's painful, irritating and time consuming. It's also very simple to avoid! As leaders, all we need to do to remove this element of negativity is to educate ourselves as to where it is that we're leading others. Many times we get consumed with locating the skills to effectively lead others (and there are some great ones) but neglect to focus in upon this most important piece of the puzzle. We live to find people who are far from God in order to walk with them to a place where they're close to Him. However, if we don't know the route that leads us close to Him, we can easily wind up leading people on what seems to be a wild goose chase!

Spending a little time in the Word and in His Presence is a great kick start on the Road to Leadership. As we gain clarity regarding our destination, leadership becomes incredibly effective and simple. Even if we lack a few of the golden nuggets of leadership, we can see a high degree of success if we possess a clear vision and a set goal. Knowing where we're going is vital to effective leadership!

God wants each of us to be effective. He's expecting us to do whatever it takes to reach our God-given destiny. That's why we count on Him to fill us in as to where it is that we're going along with the best path to take us there. Our role is fairly basic. Discover, Develop and Deploy. Once we Discover our destiny we can begin to Develop the skills necessary to get us there. After developing our skills, it's time to Deploy those skills with a determination to accomplish our God-given destiny. If you want to remove a lot of the frustration connected with leading a family, a business or a ministry, the first step is to insure that you realize where it is that you're going!

Secondly, the most important ability a leader must possess is The Ability to Follow. Following is a real art form. We can't possibly expect to be good at teaching others how to follow if we don't first possess that ability ourselves. Sowing and reaping is law. If we're not developed in the art of following we won't reap followers who are any good at it, either.

One of the most impressive elements of David's leadership was the team of leaders that he was able to build. Even before his kingdom was fully established he had surrounded himself with other incredible men that were developing many of the same skills by following David's example. The Bible calls them David's Mighty Men! The actions performed by this group of champions were absolutely astounding.

One man, named Shammah, found himself alone when an enemy troop of Philistines came to town. He stood alone and defended a pea patch against his enemies and slew the Philistines all by himself and experienced, what the King James Bible refers to as, a great victory! Another of these Mighty Men, Benaiah, went down into a pit on a snowy day and slew a lion. Try That!

I find it interesting that David also had some experience killing lions. However, Benaiah went into a pit on a snowy day and slew his! These men that surrounded David were awesome! Some of the great exploits that these men performed may have been even more impressive than those performed by David, himself. However, these guys never challenged David's leadership. They understood the art of following.

Being a great follower doesn't diminish one's value; it increases it! Every good leader must possess the ability to follow. How well-developed are you in the art of following? Can you receive instruction from those above you without attempting to sabotage their request? Can you take yourself down the road that your employer suggests even when you think you know a better road?

There are times when we do know a different route that could be taken. There might even be times when we know a better route. But if both roads lead to the same destination, a good leader realizes that it might be more advantageous to simply follow rather than to argue! A great leader must possess the ability to follow and not be afraid to demonstrate that ability to others. None of us can effectively lead others in a life as Christ Followers if we do not first possess the ability to follow Christ. We must willingly develop this art form in order to be as effective as we possibly can be!

If you're leading people towards Christ, you're a leader! Don't be quick to shirk your responsibility to develop great leadership skills. Refuse to buy the lie that your leadership ability doesn't make a difference. You're a difference maker and everything that you can learn about leadership will help you make even a greater difference in the lives of those that you lead! I hope that it's possible for you to join us on Tuesday, May 8th for what I believe will be a great night of Leadership Insights. Our desire is to lead you to a place of effective leadership in your home, your workplace, and your community. Plan on joining us!

We believe in YOU!

Pastors Thom and Shelby