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Leadership Fueled by Glory: His or Mine?

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LINDSEY WILKERSON LEADERSHIP FUELED BY GLORY: HIS OR MINE?

In 1956, Jim Elliot and four other missionaries sacrificially gave of their lives in Ecuador. They initially died to self by surrendering their own comfort and worldly pursuits, and secondly laid down their lives in physical death. When the five men were killed, there had been no conversions among the Waroni tribe in which they sought to evangelize. In fact, they had not yet shared the Gospel with a *single member* of the tribe (Barnes, 2006). No Gospel conversations, no converts, and no followers. Was their death an example of successful mission work? Successful leadership?

Measuring success and effectiveness in leadership is a peculiar yet revealing concept. Frequently, leaders allow their success to determine their worth, and they strive for success in that which they value most. Therefore, their true values, consciously or unconsciously, drive and determine their sense of worth. However, from a biblical perspective, God gives us purpose and establishes our worth through creating us in His image and likeness and through the redemptive work of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Christian leaders often attempt to marry the two worlds by combining a worldly measurement of success and self-worth with a biblical pursuit of God. Yet, this marriage often produces a “deceptive pursuit of spiritual self-glory” (Setran, 2016, p. 61).

Although Christian leaders are often tasked with exhibiting quantifiable effectiveness and success, pride and submission should not coexist as their motivating factors; therefore, those in leadership should follow a foundational model of Christ-like submission and humility. Christian leaders should refrain from the lure of the world’s standard of quantitative analysis and pursuit of personal and organizational success; instead, they should follow a pattern established by Jesus and evaluate their lives and their success from a Godly lens (Hughes & Hughes, 2008).

In advancing this argument, I will first introduce the idea of submissive fol-

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lowership, specifically as witnessed in John 4:31–34 (Wilder & Jones, 2018). Next, I will present the example of followership modeled by Jesus and a biblical view of leadership. Then, I will examine prideful leadership fueled by success, praise, and recognition. Lastly, I will propose that leaders make a daily choice to choose God’s glory over their own.

Submissive Leadership: Fueled by His Glory

Jesus: Fueled by the Father’s Glory

From birth, Jesus focused on His mission: to die a sacrificial death, offer redemption for all humankind, and bring glory to the Father. Paul offers insight into this mission in Philippians 2:5–8. Jesus never lost His deity yet added a layer of humanity. He relied on the work of the Spirit to guide and empower His life and ministry (Ware, 2013). Although equal to God, as He was fully God, He “did not thereby insist on holding onto all the privileges and benefits of His position of equality with God,” nor did He “clutch or grasp His place of equality with the Father and all that this brought to Him in such a way that He would refuse the condescension and humiliation of the servant role He was being called to accept” (Ware, 2013, p. 18–19). This life of humble submission was evident throughout Jesus’s life.

In John 4, Jesus crossed cultural and gender boundaries by speaking with the Samaritan woman and offering her eternal life. Through this interaction, He also revealed the foundational center of His ministry and His primary form of leadership. John writes, “Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to accomplish His work’” (John 4:34, ESV).

In John 4:31–34, Jesus illustrated that His life was dedicated to the Father’s will and the fulfillment of the Father’s work. Jesus attributed His work to obeying His Father. D. A. Carson (1991) suggests that Jesus is echoing Deuteronomy 8:3:

And He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. (ESV)

Jesus exemplified this verse in John 4:34 when He proclaimed that His sustenance came from doing the will of the Father, not from anything this world could provide. Carson writes,

The creative will of God, realized in obedience, sustains life. If in His dealings with the Samaritan woman Jesus was performing His Father’s will, there was greater sustenance and satisfaction in that than in any food the disciples could offer Him. Indeed, all of Jesus’s ministry is noth-

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ing other than submission to and performance of the will of the One who sent Him. (Carson, 1991, p. 28)

R. C. Sproul (2009) adds, “That’s who Jesus is. His meat and His drink—His zeal, His passion—was to do everything that the Father sent Him to do” (p. 67). In this passage, Jesus perfectly modeled a life humbly submitted to the will and the work of the Father. Undeterred from earthly desires, even the life-sustaining necessities, Jesus was intentional about His mission. His mission was His food, His fuel, His driving force, His only passion and desire.

Jesus Glorifies the Father

Jesus was intentional about fulfilling the will of the Father and proclaiming His glory. John 4:31–34 provides an example of His submission and prioritization of faithful obedience. Later, in Chapter 17, John offers another example of Jesus’s intent toward fulfilling the Father’s will and bringing Him glory. At the moment immediately before His betrayal and arrest, Jesus gazed toward heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you” (John 17:1, ESV). Jesus’s appeal for glorification was not merely to receive glory for glory’s sake. Murray J. Harris (2015) argues, “Jesus requests that His Father should show forth His Son’s glory by His death-resurrection-exaltation and thus achieve His own glory” (p. 285). In verse four, Jesus continues to explain His focus towards the Father’s glory by adding, “I glorified You on earth, having accomplished the work that You gave me to do” (John 17:4, ESV). Jesus provides a synopsis of what His work on earth, up until this point, had accomplished—bringing glory to the Father!

Jesus further emphasized the point by repeating the same request of glory; the purpose of this glory must continue to apply. Harris concludes, “This glorification of Jesus comes through and after His passion . . . Jesus would glorify His Father by His acceptance of the cross and His return to his preincarnate glory” (2015, p. 285). Thus, from His birth to resurrection, Jesus’s work on earth functioned not only to provide redemption for humanity but also sought to bring ultimate glory to the Father.

While Jesus glorified the Father through humble submission, complete obedience, and ultimately His sacrificial death, what does glorifying the Father look like for Christian leaders? Similar to the example provided by Jesus, obedience and disciple-making are distinguishing marks of a life devoted to God’s glory. Andrew Davis suggests leaders must understand the ultimate end of glorifying the Father (Davis, 2014). He states that for an individual or church to glorify God, there are two journeys: the internal journey of sanctification and the external journey of making disciples (Davis, 2014, p. 318). He adds that churches and individuals cannot prioritize one over the other, yet consistently and harmoniously progress in each journey (Davis, 2014, p. 319).

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Followership

Followership as Modeled by Jesus

As a follower of Christ, Jesus's example in John 4:31–34 and His clarification in John 17:1–4 offers purpose, intentionality, and a perfect model for the life of a believer. As a Christian leader, this passage offers the one true foundational crux of leadership. According to Wilder and Jones, “By identifying greatness as servanthood and by presenting Himself as the slave who gives Himself for others, Jesus described a pattern that sees the leader first and foremost as a follower of the God who goes before us” (Wilder & Jones, 2018, p. 149). He modeled the perfect foundation for leadership through His humble submission, death to self, and setting aside His equality to God.

Colin G. Kruse (2003) agrees that John 4:31–34 illustrates that Jesus's satisfaction came from doing the will of the Father and completing the work assigned to Him. He adds that although there had been many years of hostility between the Jews and Samaritans, after Jesus interacted with the woman at the well, the people of the town later urged Jesus to stay (John 4:40; Kruse, 2003). In fact, John 4:39 says that because of the woman's testimony, many Samaritans believed. John 4:41 adds that many more believed after Jesus stayed with them for two days because of His word.

Because Jesus's fuel was to do the will and work of the Father, He was more concerned with the needs of the Samaritan woman and the Samaritan people than His own. From this humble submission and rejection of earthly desires, many heard, believed, and received eternal life. As a leader, Jesus was not concerned with His desires, the recognition or praise of others, climbing the ladder of success, or other factors that may fuel leaders today. He was simply focused on glorifying the Father by doing His will and performing the works He had assigned. Therefore, the Father was glorified, and many received salvation.

Secular Followership

The concept of followership that Jesus exemplified through submission to the Father and leading out of obedience to God is contrary to the secular concept of followership that has become quite popular. The secular version of followership is not a biblical submission to God as a Leader but focused on individuals who are considered followers as opposed to leaders. Robert Kelley (2008) propelled forward the secular concept of followership, offering two dimensions that define how people follow: Do they critically think for themselves? Do they create positive or negative energy for the organization? He also offers five styles of followership that provide insight into labeling different types of followers: sheep, yes-people, alienated, pragmatics, and star followers (Kelley, 2008, p. 7).

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James Schindler draws on Kelley's thoughts, defining a follower as "one who pursues a course of action in common with a leader to achieve an organizational goal" (Schindler, 2014, p. 11). He adds that "followership is not synonymous with being a subordinate," and effective followers contribute to the organization's goals, make their own decisions, hold individual values, and "speak their minds" (Schindler, 2014, pp. 6, 11). Cox, Plagens, and Sylla (2010) further explain the difference between followership and following. They define followership as "not merely the actions of a subordinate who accepts and obeys the dictates of the organizational authority figures," whereas following is "impelled (consciously or unconsciously influenced) by actions of leaders" (p. 37). This best illuminates the difference between the secular and biblical concept of followership in that secular followership does not involve subordination. It is centered on the follower's individual values and mindsets and their contribution to the leader and the organization. However, it does not include the idea of Christ-like submission to the will and purposes of the Father. Where secular followership separates the idea of labeling one as a follower or leader, biblical followership views all leaders as followers first and foremost.

Biblical Followership

Wilder and Jones (2018) use the term "followership" considering the biblical mandate to submit to God as the ultimate leader and lead others from this position. They compare leadership to the chief purpose of man. If our purpose is "'to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever,' our approach to leadership should provoke Creator-glorifying joy in the lives of the people we lead" (Wilder & Jones, 2018, p. 19). Based on the belief that Christian leaders are followers first, they describe followership as the idea that everyone, even the leader, is continuously being led.

Wilder and Jones (2018) also define Christian leadership as:

The Christ-following leader—living as a bearer of God's image in union with Christ and His people—develops a diverse community of fellow laborers who are equipped and empowered to pursue shared goals that fulfill the creation mandate and the Great Commission in submission to the Word of God. (p. 16)

As Jesus modeled in John 4:31–34, leaders are first called to submit to God and then carry out His purposes and work. Essentially, just as Jesus modeled, leaders are called to be followers more so than leaders. Wilder and Jones (2018) add, "We are not called to lead like Jesus in the sense of attempting to imitate His precise practices of management or administration; instead, we are called to lead as followers of Jesus" (p. 21).

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Perry W. H. Shaw (2006) echoes these ideas, stating, “As with Christ, true authority comes not through forced authority but through a chosen submission of love. Rather than seeking to control those they have been called to lead, Christian leaders follow the divine model given in Christ” (p. 128). Shaw suggests that a leader’s identity is found in his/her relationship with God and not in his/her ability to have power and influence over others or his/her significance due to fulfilling the role of leader. Shaw (2006) concludes, “Stated simply, the source of Jesus’s lordship is found in His relationship with the Father, not in the extent of His power and influence over His followers” (p. 125).

Slave-like Followership

Tim Cochrell (2018) appropriately titled his book *Slaves of the Most High God*, as he suggests a slave-like followership instead of the secular model of servant leadership.

Robert Greenleaf’s secular model of servant leadership focuses on selflessness and a desire to serve, seemingly fitting with a biblical view of leadership. However, Greenleaf’s servant leadership model places the leader accountable to self and those who are being led as opposed to God and His purposes; it entirely denies God’s authority (Cochrell, 2018). The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (n.d.) website states, “Servant leadership is a philosophy and set of practices that enriches the lives of individuals, builds better organizations and ultimately creates a more just and caring world” (n.p.). It also states, “A servant-leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong” (Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, n.d., n.p.). While the priorities of the followers direct the servant leader, the slave-like leader is directed by God’s Word, character, and Spirit (Cochrell, 2018). Although Greenleaf’s model of servant leadership seems to value positive, biblical attributes, it is not centered on scriptural understanding and mandates for individuals or leaders.

Galen Jones (2012) argues that Greenleaf’s servant leadership model reflects a distorted Christology and is not wholly acceptable for Christian leaders; however, a more biblically oriented servant leadership model is warranted. In his quest to develop a biblical perspective of servant leadership, Jones concludes, similarly to Cochrell, that the master-slave relationship best describes God’s relationship with His people and chosen leaders (Jones, 2012, p. 5). Jones (2012) states, “Jesus’s call to leadership is paradoxical in that it demands leaders to seek the lowest position, that of a slave, if he is to lead others (Mark 10:44)” (p. 6). Jones calls for Christian individuals and leaders to be slaves of God, purchased by the blood of Christ, and converted from slaves to sin under Satan’s mastery to slaves of God under Christ’s mastery (2012, p. 9).

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While arguing that contemporary servant leadership is flawed theologically and incompatible from a Christian worldview, Cochrell adds that “a servant leader in Scripture is not called to be a servant after all, but rather a slave who is obedient and ultimately accountable to God as his or her Master” (Cochrell, 2018, loc. 252 and 271). Jesus modeled slave-like followership, reflective of many aspects of Greco-Roman slavery including the master’s ownership of the slave, the master’s provision of the slave’s identity, a slave’s representative authority, a slave’s submission to the master’s will, a slave’s unconditional obedience, a slave’s complete dependence on the master, and a slave’s subjection to possible mistreatment. Slave-like followership is demonstrated in Jesus’s submission to the Father, dependence on the Holy Spirit, and servanthood (Wilder & Jones, 2018, p. 137). Wilder and Jones clarify this by stating, “Christ-following leaders serve even when no one will ever know about their service, and they do not see their service as a favor that they perform for the people they lead. They are not servants because they serve; they serve because they are servants” (Wilder & Jones, 2018, p. 149). Jesus describes this slave-like submission and obedience in John 4:31–34 as He compares His fuel to the pursuit of God’s will and accomplishing His work.

Followership Led by the Spirit

Although Jesus was fully God, in His humanity, He relied on the Spirit to guide, direct, and empower Him to accomplish the will and work of the Father (Ware, 2013, p. 26). This exemplifies the image of followership. Before one can lead, they must wholly submit to the will of the Father and rely on the work of the Spirit. Leaders should depend on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in every aspect of their work, including their motivation and methodology. If not, leadership is unsuccessful, regardless of the outward appearance (Wilder & Jones, 2018, p. 38).

Moreover, Jesus modeled leadership through a combination of submission to the Father and dependence on the Spirit (Wilder & Jones, 2018, p. 38). Wilder and Jones write,

[Jesus] revealed that none of us can lead God’s people effectively in our own power. The shepherds of Christ’s church must practice not only a disposition of submission to the Father but also an overwhelming dependence on the Spirit as modeled in Christ’s ministry. (2018, p. 143)

Jesus may not have given us specific principles to follow for leadership; however, He provided a pattern for leaders to follow (Wilder & Jones, 2018, p. 149). His main priority was to be a humble, submissive follower of His Father.

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Biblical Leadership

Jesus provided leaders a foundational model of biblical leadership. Andrew Davis (2014) defines Christian leadership as “the God-given ability through the Holy Spirit to influence people by word and example to achieve God’s purposes as revealed in the Scriptures” (p. 312). He argues that first and foremost, Christian leaders must trust Scripture’s sufficiency as their guiding vision for leadership (Davis, 2014, p. 313). Don N. Howell (2003) similarly defines biblical leadership as “taking the initiative to influence people to grow in holiness and to passionately promote the extension of God’s kingdom in the world” (p. 3). He adds that one’s motive must be their heart’s desire to pursue God’s glory; their agenda is not the intelligent plan of a visionary leader but that of faithful, obedient stewards of God’s command (Howell, 2003, pp. 300–301). Wilder and Jones similarly claim that a leader is not called to proclaim his or her own power and vision, but God’s revelation under submission to Christ (2018, p. 3). The authors explain, “The leader’s pursuit of God always takes precedence over the leader’s positional authority. Before we are leaders, we must be followers—followers of a God who goes before us” (Wilder & Jones, 2018, p. 10). They also suggest leaders refrain from looking at the Bible for a list of principles to follow but rather look for God, the ultimate leader (Wilder & Jones, 2018).

Prideful Leadership: Fueled by My Glory

While Jesus modeled a form of followership completely surrendered to the Father for the Father’s glory, sin often takes leaders away from God’s glory towards that of their own. Due to the sin that lives inside, the temptation to exchange God’s glory for self-glory exists. This may be the greatest hindrance to true followership. Ever so subtly, leaders become influenced and shaped by “appreciation, reputation, success, power, comfort, and control” (Tripp, 2012, pp. 98–99). Paul David Tripp adds that God gives two options: “We attach our identity, meaning, purpose, and inner sense of well-being either to the earth-bound treasures of the kingdom of self or to the heavenly treasures of the kingdom of God” (Tripp, 2012, pp. 101–102).

Pastor and theologian J. C. Ryle (n.d.) passionately explains of the idea of followership that Jesus modeled:

A zealous person in Christianity is preeminently a person of one thing. . . They only see one thing, they care for one thing, they live for one thing, they are swallowed up in one thing; and that one thing is to please God. Whether they live, or whether they die—whether they are healthy, or whether they are sick—whether they are rich, or whether they are poor—whether they please man, or whether they give offense—whether they

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are thought wise, or whether they are thought foolish—whether they are accused, or whether they are praised—whether they get honor, or whether they get shame—for all this the zealous person cares nothing at all. They have a passion for one thing, and that one thing is to please God and to advance God’s glory. If they are consumed in the very burning of their passion for God, they don’t care—they are content. (n.p.)

Howell (2003) contrasts worldly and Godly leadership, explaining that “to obey Jesus’s call to servanthood would involve a radical surrender of one’s natural pursuit of comfort, wealth, and recognition” (p. 203). The difficulty in this surrender, the daily submission to the will and work of Christ, often lies in one’s sense of pride. Pride is “deep-rooted and self-preserving,” and “it hindereth the discovery of itself” (Setran, 2016, p. 63). Tripp warns that “all of this will happen without your notice because you will remain convinced that you are perfectly okay. When confronted, you will remind yourself of your glory. When questioned, you will defend your glory” (2012, p. 167).

Worldly Success

According to Kent and Barbara Hughes, many Christian leaders “face significant feelings of failure, usually fueled by misguided expectations for success” (Hughes & Hughes, 2008, p. 9). Therefore, the idea of success and the goal of leadership is different for many people and many organizations (Hughes & Hughes, 2008). They add, “Pragmatism becomes the conductor. The audience inexorably becomes man rather than God. Subtle self-promotion becomes the driving force” (Hughes & Hughes, 2008, p. 29). Howell suggests that with the elevated status of leadership positions come the increased opportunities for “greed, arrogance, and vanity to creep in and overtake one’s soul” (2003, p. 189). He argues that

careful attention to one’s heart motivation will prevent the servant-leader from the pitfalls that commonly attend positions of influence . . .

A heart in pursuit of God’s glory and the spiritual welfare of God’s people nurtures resilience because it releases one from being inflated by triumphs or dismayed by setbacks. (Howell, 2003, p. 300)

When considering the evaluation of success, Scripture explains the connection between success with knowing and obeying God’s Word (Hughes & Hughes, 2008, p. 37). While the world gives a picture of climbing the ladder of success, Jesus models the humble and submissive position of obedient followership instead of an office of leadership (Wilder and Jones, 2018, p. 195). Wilder and Jones continue,

The road to His kingdom did not, after all, land Him in an exquisite

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palace or an oak-paneled bedroom. It took Him to a cross—a throne of splintered wood, where His only robes were the flayed ribbons of His own flesh and where the scepter extending from His hand was not a polished staff but a bloodstained spike. (Wilder & Jones, 2018, p. 197)

Quantifiable Success

It is common to question leadership potential and effectiveness when there is very little measurable success—especially when compared to others. Success in life seems to be measured quantitatively. For example, in the secular world, bank accounts and followers determine success. How, then, should a Christian leader measure success? In ministry, one may look to an increase in numbers to justify effectiveness. Often unconsciously, success in the ministry can mimic that of success in the world, and the servant of God evaluates himself as a businessman might (Hughes & Hughes, 2008). Of such an experience, Hughes and Hughes (2008) write, “I realized that I had been subtly seduced by the secular thinking that places a number on everything. Instead of evaluating myself and the ministry from God’s point of view, I was using the world’s standard of quantitative analysis” (p. 30).

Jesus, Himself, was not concerned with building massive churches or creating large organizations; He was simply being obedient to the Father and fulfilling the assigned tasks. Jesus was concerned with growing His followers spiritually, more so than numerically. Through the aid of the Holy Spirit, He called the disciples to lead the initiative in reaching and making disciples of all nations. Similarly, leaders cannot focus on numbers from a worldly and prideful standpoint but from a desire to fulfill the Great Commission in reaching and making disciples for the glory of the Father.

John 4:35–38 illustrates Jesus’s perspective; it is not about personal success, who sows and who reaps; it is about following His will and doing the work of the Father. Carson (1991) points out that success in reaping typically depends on the sowers who came before. From a Kingdom perspective, it does not matter who sows or who reaps, simply that the work is complete, and God receives the glory.

In the Kingdom of God, there must be cooperative sowing and reaping, where both parties share in the joy of success (Howell, 2003). Some may reap and never sow, yet they still share in the joy of success. Jim Elliot and fellow missionaries may be the perfect example of this cooperative sowing, reaping, and joy. Elisabeth Elliot states, “To experience the glory of God’s will for us means absolute trust. It means the will to do His will, and it means absolute joy” (Hughes & Hughes, 2008, p. 40). Despite losing her husband in what appeared to be an unsuccessful missionary endeavor, her joy was not found

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in success and was not prohibited by death. Her joy was found in the will of the Father.

Praise, Recognition, and God-like Status

J. D. Greear compares following Jesus to characters in a story. In one of his sermons, he explained:

The call to discipleship is the question of whether or not you are willing to resign as the main character in a story about you and take up a supporting role, a minor character role in a story about Him, where your main concern is no longer whether you flourish in prosperity or you flounder in poverty and begins to be how your story contributes to the glory of His story and what He is doing in the world. (Greear, 2019, n.p.)

If King Jesus, God in human form, chose to resign from the main character in His own life to bring glory to the Father, how much more is this fitting for us? Greear (2019) adds, “My applause isn’t found when they stand and cheer for me, but when they stand and cheer for Him.” This concept changes the look of success. Success is no longer when we are recognized and praised, but when *God* receives worship and praise. Are others led to praise the leader or to praise the only One who is worthy, the One who Jesus Himself sought to praise?

When leaders no longer feel the need to be glorified, they can lead with genuine love, concern, and compassion (Wilder & Jones, 2018). Wilder and Jones suggest, “It is a privilege to lead the people of God—but leadership in the kingdom of God should result in humble stewardship, not prideful ownership” (2018, p. 97). To become an empowering leader as opposed to a controlling, recognition-seeking leader, significance must only be found in a relationship with Christ (Shaw, 2006).

Davis suggests that all leaders are tempted to exalt themselves, forgetting that God alone is responsible for their lives and their every move; this pride is especially common among gifted leaders (Davis, 2014). Yet Davis writes, “Pride is the deadly enemy of God’s glory” (Davis, 2014, p. 333). Setran references the work of Richard Baxter as he discusses pride’s deceptive role in influencing those in leadership. He concludes that pride is so dangerous “because it drove ministers to use the work of God to further their idolatrous pursuit of god-like status” (2016, p. 67). Pride and the pursuit of god-like status is an extreme hindrance to Christian leaders and their pursuit of Christ. Setran also warns that a Christian leader’s love for honor might seem to be seeking God while actually serving Satan (2016, p. 62).

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Leading for Self

A common problem found in leadership lies in the search for significance. Many leaders seek to find significance through success, recognition, and position (Shaw, 2006). Howell (2003) points out that Jesus reminded His disciples “that they [were] servants, not lords, and that leadership in the kingdom of God must take on a wholly distinct and contrastive character from leadership in the secular world” (p. 200). For Christian leaders to be biblical and effective, they must put Christ’s mission in front of their desires for success, be willing to sacrifice for this mission, and put the good of the team ahead of their own well-being (Thompson, 2015, pp. 63–64). Tripp (2012) adds, “Self-glory turns chosen and called ambassadors into self-appointed kings When this happens, in ways you and I might not be aware of, we are ministering to promote a person, but that person just doesn’t happen to be Jesus Christ” (p. 180).

Leadership Fueled by Glory: His or Mine?

Christian leaders must follow a foundational model of biblical, Christ-like followership, as witnessed in John 4:31–34, as opposed to allowing pride to become the driving force in leadership seeking personal glory. A biblical form of leadership based on Scripture and Jesus’s example is contrasted with popular contemporary views of leadership that promote individual success, praise, and recognition.

Leadership promoting God’s glory is not about the pursuit and accumulation of personal glory. It is humble; it does not seek to impress, be admired, or gain an advantage (Wilder & Jones, 2018, p. 24). To lead from this humble, submissive position, one must die to self and self-centered plans, dreams of success, comfort, desire for pleasure and control, kingship, and pursuit of self-glory (Tripp, 2012, pp. 189–190). Wilder and Jones remind us of the example that Jesus provided: “The Gospels portray Jesus as a God-fearing, God-following leader who demonstrated submission to the Father, dependence on the Spirit, and willingness to serve” (2018, p. 156).

The Waroni tribe that Jim Elliot and fellow missionaries sought to evangelize in 1956 had never heard the Gospel. Yet due to the work of family members left behind and missionaries who followed their lead, the Waroni now have over 400 believers, approximately 25–40% of their tribe. In fact, several years after tribesmen speared the five missionaries to death, one of them, named Mincaye, became a missionary (Barnes, 2006). Steve Saint, son of Nate Saint, one of the five missionaries killed, stated,

God took five common young men of uncommon commitment and used them for His own glory. They never had the privilege they so enthusiasti-

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cally pursued to tell the Huaroni [Waroni] of the God they loved and served . . . This success withheld from them in life God multiplied and continues to multiply as a memorial to their obedience and His faithfulness. (Saint, 1996, p. 27)

Before his death, Jim Elliot prayed, “Lord make my way prosperous not that I achieve high station, but that my life be an exhibit to the value of knowing God” (Elliot, 1958, p. 13). Elliot understood the leadership that Jesus modeled. Perhaps this is a valid measurement of the success and effectiveness of leaders. As leaders and followers of Christ, the goal is not to achieve selfish desires, but that desires would begin to align with God’s will and to His glory. May the Father’s will be the leader’s food and fuel—their one desire. Christian leaders should lead others with this pursuit and in this pursuit. Through the Lord’s guidance and Spirit, let it also be said of me, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to accomplish His work” (John 4:34, ESV); therefore, “Be imitators of me as I am of Christ” (1 Cor. 1:11, ESV).

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