

Two Kinds of Leaders

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In my last teaching article entitled THE FORGING OF LEADERS, we examined the process by which God develops His leaders. In this article I want to continue with a more detailed analysis of two types of leaders in God's church today. I will explore in depth the behavior, traits, and fruit of these two types and their personal lives and ministries.

There is a human tendency in all of us, especially the younger among us, to pattern ourselves after someone we admire, or regard as "successful." There are indeed many "successful" ministers today who seemed to rise overnight, who do everything "right" and who seem never to have any problems or encounter any difficulties. Consequently many of these "successful ministers" have been exalted though they have not run the race according to the rules laid down by the timeless Word of God.

Part of the problem I believe is the fact that many of us in today's church have passively stood by and allowed the world's standards to redefine for the church words like "success", "prosperity" and "power". The world's standards are being vigorously applied to the work of the ministry. It is therefore no wonder that there is a marked absence of God's power and presence in so many of our so-called fundamental churches today. Please note that the above comments and/or criticisms are not intended to tear down. My only purpose in stating these things is to lay the mental foundation for the remainder of this teaching.

But first let us briefly review the high points of the last teaching. You may recall the following diagram:



Figure 1

"A" represents the time when each of us says "Yes" to the Lord's call on our lives. For most of us, from that very moment, the anointing, blessing and joy of the Lord seemed supernatural. God's presence was continually with us. Those early attempts at ministry and those years of training were indeed wonderful. We came to believe we

would always have such intimate companionship with the Lord and such supernatural peace and power.

Then one morning we awakened to the unpleasant reality of "B". God was gone. Everything went wrong. We seemed to have lost the Lord's peace and His anointing. This continued until we finally hit bottom, which is represented by "C" on the above diagram.

At "C," every failure, disappointment and rebuff known to man seems to happen. We do our very best, strain at every effort, but it never seems to be good enough. It is here at "C" that self-doubts, fears, disappointments and failures all too often seem to be our lot.

During the entire span of time in "C" the presence of the Lord is nowhere to be found. It's as if He were in Siberia or some other far away place. The only time you ever even think you feel His anointing is when you are actually ministering or telling someone about Jesus.

It is during this time that we go through the three phases which we examined in detail in the first half of this teaching. Phase one is represented with the "Why me?" question and is very self oriented. Phase two is the "Romans 8:28" phase which shifts to "God can make this work for my good" which is a step in the right direction but is still self centered. Finally, we reach phase three which I labelled the "Philippians 1:21" step in which we come to complete surrender and say, as Paul did, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." Here the focus finally shifts from us to Christ.

It is then that we can enter into "D" which is the end of "C" and the beginning of the true and powerful ministry to which God has called us. Then we move into the final state which I have named "E" or the "Moving in the Call" stage. When you reach "E" you fully enter into your call for good. At this point you will enter into your call without the flesh or any of its grandiose illusions.

Before we go further, I would like to make the observation that every true hero of the Bible who was mightily used by the Lord first had to experience the humiliation and brokenness in the "C" stage under the mighty hand of God. Such action, while it may seem cruel to some, is absolutely necessary if one is to be powerfully used by the Lord. For it separates once for all the human flesh from the will of the Spirit which then allows God to work through a yielded vessel. Among biblical examples of this process we find Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, the Apostles Paul and Peter, just to name a few.

Look back at Figure 1 again. We have both "E" and "F" ministries represented. It is these ministries that I want to explore now in some depth.

The Rev. "F's" Ministry and Character:

The "F" minister is represented by the dotted line "F." This is the person who has great personal skill, charm and charisma. His or her ministry appears to be doing well by all outward standards. However, this person has willfully refused to "fail" or be subjugated, even by the Holy Spirit. Thus, this person seems to never experience "C."

Let us now examine the character and ministry of the "Fs" in God's kingdom. Remember, these are the people who by the strength of their own soul power will not allow themselves to be broken by the Lord. Thus, they and their ministries become essentially self driven or "soul driven."

I can think of no person in Scripture who better exemplifies an "F" than Saul. Saul started out legitimately chosen by God to be king of Israel. He was anointed by the prophet, Samuel, and publicly acclaimed king of Israel. I Sam 10:9 & 10 tells us God changed Saul's heart and the Spirit of God came upon him in power.

Saul was 30 years old when he became king and reigned over Israel 42 years. (I Sam. 13:1) However, he never really attained God's approval nor did he retain God's anointing in the later years. You see, one can have God's anointing without God's approval. However, usually, as in Saul's case, if we remain unbroken, God eventually withdraws His anointing too.

In I Sam, chapter 15, we see Samuel giving Saul God's instructions to punish the Amalekites by totally destroying them. Saul was told to put to death every man, woman and child of the Amalekites as well as their livestock. Saul failed to follow these instructions from the Lord. He allowed the Amalekite king to live and brought back some of the most choice animals.

The Lord then spoke to Samuel: "I am grieved that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions." (I Sam 15: 23). Samuel confronted Saul with his lack of obedience and stated:

Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king. (I Sam. 15:22,23).

In this incredibly powerful passage Samuel enumerates the five sins Saul committed: 1) disobedience, 2) rebellion, 3) the sin of divination (witchcraft), 4) pride and 5) idolatry.

At this confrontation Saul "confessed" his sin. But we

must remember that forced repentance is not necessarily true repentance. From this point on Saul proceeded on his own strength, ruling Israel with his own "wisdom." It is very important for our lesson to realize that most of the people of Saul's day never observed this spiritual reality! I fear many people today do not recognize the difference either.

It is here that David enters the picture, is anointed by Samuel to be king of Israel, is called into Saul's service to play the harp for Saul and to be part of his court. Here also David kills Goliath, the Philistine. Note that Saul enjoyed having David around as long as he was no threat to him. But when Saul hears the Israelites acclaim David as slaying 10,000 while Saul slew 1,000, he became jealous of David and, in effect, pursued David for the rest of his (Saul's) life trying to kill David.

It is during this period that we see Saul's soul power at its worst. His list of character flaws seems endless. But as we pass final judgement on Saul we should recognize that the same potential lies within each of us when we respond to our initial call at "A" (Figure 1). God's plan, by taking us into "C" and through to "D" and "E" is to purge these potentially destructive flaws from us. But if we, as Saul, refuse to be subjugated by the Holy Spirit, then our lives look spiritually very much like Saul's life and the progressive degradation of character takes place while often still remaining in the ministry.

Let's briefly amplify below the seven despicable acts of Saul's and look at them with 20th century eyesight.

1. Saul was afraid of David's success. (I Sam 18:15)

The "Fs" of today do not live in peace. They live in fear, especially of those who have been through God's purging process. Most "Fs" will avoid allowing the "Cs" and "Ds" into their inner circle. They simply don't want anyone too close who has been truly broken.

2. In Saul's anger towards David he turned on his own son, Jonathan who tried to tell him the truth. (I Sam 20:30)

Those around Rev. "F," his staff, friends and family, are not free to be candid with him for fear of incurring his wrath. As a result he draws and attracts "yes" men (and women) who tell him what he wants to hear.

3. Saul refused to believe the truth as spoken to him by the priests of the Lord at Nob. (I Sam. 22:14,15)

When God sends His messengers to Rev. "F" he doesn't like it! When they speak against his plans or point out sin in his life, or cross him in any way, "F" rejects what they

say and usually also rejects the person whom God sent.

4. Saul then ordered the priests killed. (I Sam. 22:17)

Rev. "F" of our day cannot easily get away with literal murder so he resorts to murder in the spiritual sense such as character assassination, backbiting, snide remarks and vindictiveness against those who bear the truth to him. If they are in his employ, they soon find themselves looking for another job.

5. Saul repented both times when David spared his life, yet, after a while, he returned to pursue David. (I Sam. chapters 24 and 26)

When Rev. "F" is confronted by his "enemy," for example, a Rev. "E", he says all the right words, weeps and begs forgiveness but doesn't really repent. Therefore in a very short time he is back to his old tricks again.

6. Saul gave his daughter, David's wife, to another man. (I Sam. 25:44)

Rev. "F's" power, influence and vindictiveness is invariably hurtful to his own family. His oppressive power may even eventually destroy his own family yet often the world never sees the true destruction.

7. Saul had banished mediums and spiritists from the land. Yet he sought out the witch at Endor to consult with the deceased Samuel. (I Sam. 28: 5,9).

This is a disturbing ending. If Rev. "F" persists in having his own way year after year, ultimately he will make a deal with the devil to accomplish his own ends. He says, "The end does justify the means. After all, my ministry must continue at all costs, even if it means a 'little sin' is necessary."

It is against my nature to write all these negative things. My general message is upbeat and hopefully edifying to the reader. But it is necessary at times to show the ugliness of unrestrained flesh. The fruit of such flesh is 1) disobedience, 2) rebellion, 3) the sin of divination, 4) pride, and 5) idolatry. The unrestrained human mind knows no limits.

Let's now look to the brighter view, Rev. "E."

Rev. "E's" Ministry and Character

Here we examine the ministry and fruits of the "Es" in God's kingdom. Remember, this is the man or woman who has allowed himself to go through "B", "C" and "D"

to get to "E." There are at least five identifying traits or characteristics which exemplify an "E's" ministry. They are as follows:

1. Royal Priesthood

Rev. "E" has learned that being part of God's royal priesthood is a selfless ministry. A priest speaks to God for man. His focus has turned from "I, me, my and mine" to others, to his brothers and sisters in Christ and to the Heavenly Father. As a priest he has a burden for the lost, the maimed and the dying. Rev. "E" has seen the Father's vision and the heart burden of the Father and has truly made it his own.

2. Righteousness

Rev. "E" also knows the meaning of true righteousness. "E" has his personal life and ministry on a steady course of righteousness. Even the world can look at him with a fine magnifying glass and can't find anything wrong. True righteousness has become an inseparable part of his character and personality.

3. Humility

You will find "E" taking no credit for his work. Christ will be continually lifted up, not "E". In both "E's" ministry and personal life he will be willing to listen and be teachable. His humility overrides his pride and sense of self.

4. God's Grace Abounds

"E" will be not only a recipient of God's grace but he will be a dispenser of God's grace and mercy. He will be quick to show love, mercy and grace. Grace will be an integral and overflowing characteristic of "E's" call. Yet his righteousness will always hold the plumb line by which he measures sin while loving the sinner.

5. Authority

"E" moves in God's authority. He knows who he is in Christ, he is secure in his call, and he has a strong, firm understanding of God's call on his life. "E" will not hang back if God directs him to do something but will do it and do it with all the authority he has in Christ. That doesn't mean he will be overbearing, he just moves in and with authority.

6. Power

There will be power in "E's" ministry. When he speaks, God moves. This doesn't mean that "E" has to have a thunderous voice, nor does it mean all who have thunderous voices are "Es". It simply means that God's power abides in "E's" call. And isn't this exactly what we

would expect since it is God who is accomplishing His purposes through "E".

Rev. "E" reflects the wonderful precious fruit of the Spirit as listed in Galatians 5:22 and 23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. "E" will not have striven for this fruit, it will just be there as a natural byproduct of his years of faithfulness to God.

Looking back at the "Fs" for a moment, and thinking of Saul, how infinitely more rewarding would Saul's life had been if he had allowed himself to be broken and then raised up again by God. Instead of the restlessness, lack of peace, vainglory striving, and all the rest that accompanied so much of Saul's life, he too could have had a sense of the royal priesthood, the personal righteousness, the humility, the grace, and the authority and power of God we see in "E". And, on top of all that, he could have had the

wonderful fruit of the Spirit in his life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control instead of the fruit of the flesh.

How tragic for Saul and the rest of the "Fs" we encounter, both in Scripture, and in today's church. And how wonderful for our beloved "Es" as, at His command, they move mountains for their Heavenly Father all the while enjoying the unsurpassing peace and the sureness of being where God wants them to be accomplishing His purposes in these last days.

Finally, let those of us in places of ministry and authority be careful to honor the "Es" with whom we serve. Let us point the younger aspiring servants of the Lord to the ministries of the "Es", present and past, showing them the true meaning of "success," "prosperity" and "power" in God's service.

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