

***Leaders Who Last*** by Dave Kraft, Crossway, Wheaton, IL 2010 (64 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols)

## **1. Finishing the Race Well**

There are many things that prevent us from finishing well in this crazy, fast-paced world. Leaders fight battles within and without that cause them to plateau, quit, or be disqualified. As I lead others, study the subject of leadership, and coach emerging leaders, I admit I am deeply concerned. Too many are dropping out of the race, losing heart, and letting go of their dreams and lofty purposes. They are simply giving up and throwing in the towel. Due to the rapidly changing and fast-pace world we live in, it is increasingly difficult to lead and lead well with joy, clarity, and confidence. Some just hang on by their fingernails, waiting for retirement to rescue them from their disappointments, fears, and frustrations. What will it take for you and me to be leaders who finish the race well? What issues should we be aware of that could hold us back and keep us from finishing? [page 20]

## **2. The Right Kind of Leaders**

Without the right kind of leaders, organizations seldom go anywhere and the people who lead them fall short of their true potential. Without the right kind of leaders, organizations become bloated bureaucracies concerned more with policy, politics, and procedures than with creativity and innovation. Sooner or later they have the life choked out of them and quickly become an endangered species! [page 21]

## **3. Change Is Constant**

If you are currently in a leadership position or anticipate that you will be in the near future, it should become increasingly clear that you will need to live and lead in a new way. This is necessary to stay viable as a leader, survive your journey, and accomplish your objective.

Times have changed, the culture has changed, rules have changed, and expectations of leaders have changed. Metathesiophobia is the impossible-to-pronounce word for “fear of change.” Fearing, resisting, or balking at the need to change, grow, and adapt can be your undoing as a leader. It can start a downward spiral for your organization or group. The only thing that seems to remain the same is change. Change is more prolific, rapid and complex than ever before. The only place you can't be sure of change is from a vending machine. Everything else is up for grabs.

Here are a few obvious contrasts in the way we need to lead today compared to the ways we've led in the past.

### **Past Leaders**

Organizational  
Operate in committees  
Command and control  
Degreed and elected  
Linear and pyramidal  
Share propositional truth  
People of the written page  
Tightly structured  
Emphasize position

### **Future Leaders**

Relational  
Operate in teams  
Permission-giving  
Gifted and called  
Overlapping circles  
Tell stories  
People of the screen  
Highly flexible  
Emphasize empowerment

[pages 22-23]

## **4. Leaders Motivated by God**

The greatest and most pressing need in the body of Christ today is an army of leaders who have a vision of a desired future and are called and anointed by God. These leaders possess a fire burning in their hearts that can't be extinguished. They are motivated and led by God to intentionally, passionately, and effectively influence others. [page24]

## **5. Over-managed and Under-led**

Most organizations are over-managed and under-led. That needs to change or the body of Christ will be in deep trouble. [page 24]

## **6. What is a Christian Leader?**

A Christian leader is a humble, God-dependent, team-playing servant of God who is called by God to shepherd, develop, equip, and empower a specific group of believers to accomplish an agreed-upon vision from God.

These are the key ingredients of leadership:

- Christian leaders are, first and foremost, servants (bond slaves) of the Lord, and second, servants of those they are leading.
- They are characterized by humility, dependence, and team-playing, rather than being a loner or a one-man show.

- Christian leaders are called by God into leadership. They do not decide for themselves to be a leader. They are not pushed into leadership by well-meaning supporters, nor do they arrive at leadership because no one else will do it.
  - Christian leaders have at least four major responsibilities:
    - *Shepherding* – a leader loves and cares for those being led.
    - *Developing* – a leader helps those being led in their personal walk with Jesus Christ to become fully devoted followers.
    - *Equipping* – a leader trains those being led for the ministry
    - *Empowering* – a leader inspires, encourages, affirms, believes in, and frees people up to serve out of their gifting.
  - Christian leaders are moving toward a specific destination.
  - Christian leaders are creating and sustaining an agreed-upon vision. There is an initial buy-in and a growing ownership of the vision among those being led.
- [page 25]

## **7. Footprints on Our Hearts**

Some people come into our lives and quietly go. Others stay awhile, and leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never the same. [page 40]

## **8. Identifying Your Purpose**

Here are a few steps that will help you on the road to identifying your purpose:

1. Record Bible passages God has applied to your life.
2. Reflect on how God has used you in the past.
3. Determine what you are passionate about.
4. List your known gifts and strengths.
5. Delineate what you have excelled at in your work experience.
6. Define what action words best describe what you like to do.
7. Write down what you enjoy doing in your free time.
8. Reread all your answers.
9. Take note of common themes
10. Write down key words or ideas that repeat.
11. Summarize those key words in a short, energizing statement about yourself.

[page 46]

## **9. The Importance of Passion**

Passion is contagious. Passion will have more of an impact than personality. There is something compelling about leaders who love what they do and do what they love. A leader like this has the power to ignite enthusiasm and dedication in scores of others with whom he has contact. Life is too short to be boring or mediocre. I am one who has always respected, admired, and looked up to leaders with contagious and infectious passion. [page 50]

## 10. The Power of Passion

Edward G. E. Bulwer-Lytton said, “Nothing is so contagious as enthusiasm. It is the genius of sincerity, and truth accomplishes no victories without it.” And I have heard John Maxwell say that passion will enable you to:

- Believe things you never would have believed
- Feel things you never would have felt
- Attempt things you never would have attempted
- Accomplish things you never would have accomplished
- Meet people you otherwise would not have met
- Motivate people you never would have motivated<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Transcribed from a talk given by John Maxwell on *The Power of Passion*. See <http://www.johnmaxwell.com>.

[page 52]

## 11. Passionate Because of a Connection with God

Passion is a God thing, not a personality thing. The Lord wants all his leaders to be so in love with him, so excited about his purpose for their lives, that a deep, heartfelt passion results. Granted, that will look different for a quiet leader than for an outgoing leader (and so it should!).

The passion displayed by Peter is different from that of his brother, Andrew. Paul had a different personality than Timothy. Timothy may have been on the timid side (2 Tim 1:7), but was nonetheless encouraged by Paul to be passionate. And so it is throughout the Bible: different Christian leaders have different combinations of gifts and different personalities, but all are passionate because they are deeply connected with God and his purpose for their lives. [page 53]

## 12. Steps to Take to Become Passionate

There are some steps we can take to develop genuine and contagious passion:

1. Pray like Moody did for God to set you on fire. Ask him to give you passion within the context of how he has designed you.
2. Listen to CDs and read books by passionate, on-fire servants of God
3. Choose to spend time around passionate people. There is power in association. “Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm” (Prov 13:20). Those who hang out with people of passion will acquire passion. You can’t spend time around people with fire in their souls without having it ignite you. (That is why I spent all the time I could with Bill Retts, for example)

4. Attend seminars or conferences that will give you solid teaching on developing convictions, fire, and passion. Sometimes I will listen to speakers not only for the content, but also so that I can drink deeply from their passion. Remember, passion is a God thing, not a personality thing. [pages 53-54]

### **13. What Is Important?**

*Decide* what is truly important in life and what isn't. Then, *discipline* yourself to focus on what is important.

I don't think he was communicating that mowing the lawn, changing oil, or shopping is worthless. But as writer Leroy Eims used to say, "I don't want to be just one more guy pushing one more shopping cart through one more market." It's a matter of priorities and focus; I must be careful not to nickel-and-dime my time away while I miss the important things in my leadership role.

Stephen Covey reminds us, "The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing." I should be concerned with being productive, not simply busy! [page 58]

### **14. Remaining Focused on One's Purpose**

As I cultivate my relationship with Jesus Christ and have clarity of and passion for my purpose, what will kill my effectiveness are unwise choices that are not commensurate with my purpose and passion. Proper priorities will protect my purpose and passion. Opportunities can pop up like the ducks at a shooting gallery. I can shoot them down, but I only have so many bullets and need to be careful what I aim for. [page 59-60]

### **15. Prioritization**

The following story has motivated me to prioritize.

(In the early 1900s,) Charles Schwab, then president of Bethlehem Steel, granted an interview to Ivy Lee, an extraordinary management consultant. Lee told Schwab that his consulting firm could uncover opportunities for improvement of the company's operations. Schwab said he already knew of more things that should be done than he and his staff could get to. What he needed was "not more knowing, but more going."

"If you can show us a way to get more things done," Schwab said, "I'll be glad to listen to you. And, if it works, I'll pay you whatever you ask within reason."

Lee answered, "If that is what you want, I will show you a method that will increase your personal management efficiency, and that of anyone else who applies it, by at least fifty percent."

He handed Schwab a blank piece of paper and said, "Write down the most important things you have to do tomorrow." Schwab did as he requested; it took about five minutes.

Lee then said, “Now, number them in the order of their true importance.” This took a little longer because Schwab wanted to be sure of what he was doing.

Finally, Lee instructed, “The first thing tomorrow morning, start working on item Number 1, and stay with it until it is completed. Then take item Number 2 the same way. Then Number 3, and so on. Don’t worry if you don’t complete everything on the schedule. At least you will have completed the most important projects before getting to the less important ones. . . .

“Do this every working day,” Lee went on. “After you have convinced yourself the value of this system, have your men try it. Try it as long as you like, and then send me your check for whatever you think the idea is worth.”

In a few weeks, Charles Schwab sent Ivy Lee a check for \$25,000 [the equivalent of \$250,000 today].

Schwab reportedly stated that this lesson was the most profitable one he learned in his business career. It was later said that this was the plan largely responsible for turning a little steel company into one of the largest steel producers in the world. It also helped make Charles Schwab a multimillionaire.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Charles Edward Jones, *Life Is Tremendous*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1968) 42-44 [pages 60-61]

## **16. Steps to Succeed**

1. Purpose – what I am called to accomplish in life
  2. Passion – a sense of enthusiasm about my purpose and direction
  3. Goals – where I want to go
  4. Plans – what I am going to do to get there
  5. Priorities – how I will arrange my plans to get there
  6. Schedule – when I will actually do it
  7. Execution – just do it
  8. Evaluation – assessment of what happened, and how I can improve the process
- [page 63]

## **17. A Clear Purpose Is the Driver**

It must begin with a clear purpose. Purpose is the foundation for everything. It gives birth to passion that sings within you as you delve into daily leadership responsibilities. It is accompanied by a sense of joy in knowing you are making a significant contribution. Out of your purpose and passion you set goals to help you get where god wants you to be. To reach those goals you create action steps, a prioritized do list. You arrange them in order of their true importance (remember Schwab and Lee), taking deadlines into consideration. Then you decide when you will do them, execute them as planned and continually evaluate how you are progressing toward your desired goal.

This simple and intentional process will increase any leader's joy and fruitfulness.  
[page 64]

## **18. Finding Your Purpose**

. . . leaders should work through the process of looking within at their interests, bents, and experiences. By doing this, they are able to determine their compelling purpose and, at the same time, expect a call from without. This call may be similar to the burning bush of Moses, or the Damascus road experience of Paul. Or it may be a quiet, slow process. In either case, a clear, deep, intuitive sense emerges that God has laid his hand on you for a specific and predetermined task. A call from God can come at any time in relationship to the clear awareness of one's purpose. In many cases, the call precedes the purpose. God called Moses first and then explained what he had in mind for him. Similarly, God first called Paul, and then gave him his assignment. [page 78]

## **19. Visionary Leaders Called by God**

. . . there is the need for a fresh generation of visionary leaders who are called by God to *lead* the charge in a powerful new way.

It is this group of leaders that would do well to have a burning coal from the fire of God's altar placed on their lips and lives (Isa 6:1-8). The need for such leaders to bring the touch of God on ministry is great. It is the opposite of simply fulfilling a leadership slot in ministry. The present dearth of inspirational, anointed, called, visionary leaders is incredible. [page79]

## **20. Calls of God**

Let's put this mysterious but important call in perspective. There are four calls that I can identify:

1. The call to salvation
2. The call to discipleship
3. The call to service
- 4. The call to leadership [page 80]**

## **21. Being Called by God**

Charles "Prince of Preachers" Spurgeon conducted interviews to ascertain the calling of potential students of Spurgeon College. If their calling was not clear, they were not admitted. Today, however, it seems there is hardly a whisper about being called.

As far as I know, there is no simple recipe for discerning one's call. It's not a matter of steps one, two, and three. It is a result of wrestling with God, examining one's motivation, and sensing the touch of God, the unmistakable voice of God speaking to your soul. It is also helpful to consult with those who know you well.

Oswald Chambers has this to say in *My Utmost for His Highest*:

There comes the baffling call of God in our lives also. The call of God can never be stated explicitly, it is implicit. The call of God is like the call of the sea; no one hears it but the one who has the nature of the sea in him. It cannot be stated definitely what the call of God is to because His call is to be in comradeship with himself for His own purpose, and the test is to believe God knows what He is after.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, August 5 [page 83]

## **22. A Job without the Fire**

There are many people who have entered full-time leadership positions who are not called, will not last, and will soon quit – or worse yet, they will stay on until retirement. Professor Eddie Gibbs of Fuller Seminary put it well when he said, “The presence in seminaries of those who ought not to be there is due to their having fulfilled the academic entry requirements but without assessment of their sense of call to ministry, their suitability or their individual gifting.”<sup>2</sup>

For many, it’s just a job – with no fire burning within! This was affirmed in a recent article I read, which stated the following: “One-thousand four-hundred pastors leave the ministry each month because of stress, disillusionment, of forced termination. In the Southern Baptist Convention, 98 pastors are terminated monthly.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Eddie Gibbs, *Church Next: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 101

<sup>3</sup>Michael Ross, *The Christian Times*, May 2001. See <http://www.christianexaminer.com/Pages/Archive.html> [page 84]

## **23. The Lord Gives Gifts**

“Everyone has some gifts, therefore all should be encouraged. Nobody has all the gifts, therefore all should be humble. All gifts are from the Lord, therefore, all should be contented.” Arthur T. Pierson [page 86]

## **24. All Gifted Differently**

We are all gifted differently. One person is not better or worse than another in the body of Christ because of his or her gifting. The Lord has placed each of us in the family to fulfill certain functions. How I am gifted is God’s choice, not mine. The leader who lasts needs to be gifted in certain ways in order to make the maximum contribution. [page 87]

## **25. Lasting Word Gifts**

A true leader is gifted and skilled at using words to shepherd, develop, equip, and empower followers and potential leaders.

The leader who lasts needs to have word gifts. This is not to say that they don't serve. But what distinguishes them as leaders is their ability to use words to accomplish the mission, communicate an agreed upon vision, climb the mountain, and reach the goal. [page 89]

## **26. Not a Speaker, Not a Major Leader**

I am going out on a limb with this next statement: if a person's gift mix is not predominantly in the speaking category, that person should not consider a major leadership role. They would fit better in a support role. I am not saying that a leader doesn't serve or that serving roles are inferior to speaking roles. But I am saying that leaders serve best by leading through word gifts to move people along from point A to point B. They encourage, exhort, equip, and inspire through language or words.

Leaders need to full of faith, energy, and God-given dreams that carry others along in their wake. Everywhere you look in the Old and New Testaments, you find that the Lord tapped individuals who were wired together this way. Nehemiah, David, Paul, and Peter are a few that spring to mind. They were leaders who spent a lot of time communicating and using words!

People in leadership roles who don't possess speaking gifts get tired, worn out, and discouraged quickly. Many are in leadership roles that they are not gifted to fulfill. They struggle greatly and bear little fruit, and they often quit or are removed. It is difficult to perform a role for which one is not fitted and equipped. You don't have to have a super personality or be extremely outgoing or charismatic. You can be very extroverted and not have these essential leadership gifts, and you can be introverted and possess them in abundance. There are many leaders who are on the quiet side. But these leaders nonetheless have word gifts.

A leader I once served under was a good teacher, but he was not able to energize or motivate those of us under his leadership to believe great things or attempt great things for God. I began to have a sense that he was not in the right place, and I soon discovered that others felt the same way.

One day, several of us prayerfully and carefully approached him with our observations. He was incensed that we had the nerve to question his leadership ability. However, shortly after that confrontation, he accepted a teaching role in another city and became much happier. He now had a good fit. We were better off with a new leader who had the necessary gifts, and he was better off with a job that really suited the way God had designed him. [pages 89-90]

27.

If you are in leadership and feel frustrated, or if you are thinking about taking on a leadership role, I urge you to take an honest look at your gifting, experience, and passion. Listen clearly to what others are saying. Ascertain whether you have a

leadership role to play and have the God-given abilities to carry it out. There's too much at stake to take leadership lightly and step into it for glory, applause, power, attention, or monetary rewards.

There are three things that can point the way to whether you suited for a leadership role:

1. Your gifts, discovered through gift inventories
2. Your experience and passions, analyzed through trends and tendencies in your personal history that answer this question: what has the Lord blessed in the past?
3. Your feedback from others who know you and have observed you. [page 91]

## **28. Crisis of Leadership**

“The greatest crisis in the world today is the crisis of leadership, and the greatest crisis in leadership is the crisis of character.” Howard Hendricks [page 94]

## **29. Character Stands the Test of Time**

*Capacity* and *competence* are like gliders. They can fly, but not indefinitely, and they might not hold up during turbulent times. Who you are will take you much further than what you can do. *Character* will stand the test of time and hold up when the wind howls and the storm rages around you.

Most leaders focus too much on competence and too little on character. More people plateau, quit, or are relieved of their leadership responsibility over character issues than competency issues. In fact, General Schwarzkopf (of Gulf War fame) said, “Ninety-nine percent of leadership failures are failures of character.”<sup>2</sup> Bill Clinton and Richard Nixon are both cases in point.

The primary passage on leadership qualifications in the Bible (1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1) talk mainly of character, not competence. A reading of these two passages reveals that only one competency trait is listed: “teaching.” Everything else refers to character lived out in the context of relationships.

<sup>2</sup>James C. Hunter, *The World's Most Powerful Leadership Principle: How to Become a Servant Leader* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press, 2004), p. 141 [page 96]

## **30. Integrity in Leadership**

In their landmark book, *The Leadership Challenge*, authors James Kouzes and Barry Posner surveyed nearly 1,500 managers from around the country in a study sponsored by the American Management Association. They asked the following open-ended question: “What values (personal traits or characteristics) do you look for or admire in your superiors?” More than 225 different values, traits, and characteristics were identified. Subsequent content analysis by several independent judges reduced these items into fifteen categories. The category that got the most frequent response was

*integrity*. They defined integrity as being truthful and trustworthy, and having convictions.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Get Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1987), p.16 [page 97]

### **31. More Concerned with Character**

“Be more concerned with your character than with your reputation, because your character is what you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>John R. Wooden and Jack Tobin, *They Call Me Coach* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1972) p. 62 [page 98]

### **32. Character Is Trusted**

In carrying out leadership tasks in the context of teamwork, the key is building relationships of trust. Arthur Friedman tells us, “Men of genius are admired. Men of wealth are envied. Men of power are feared, but only men of character are trusted.” Now that is something to chew on. Can we really accomplish anything of value without the trust-filled collaboration of others? And can there ever be trust without solid character? [page 98-99]

### **33. Essential Character Traits**

Here is a list of some essential character traits:

Gentleness	Transparency	Forgiveness
Tactfulness	Patience	Dependability
Thankfulness	Vulnerability	Honesty
Trust	Compassion	Encouragement
Humility	Affirmation	Self-control

1. Rank how you are doing on each descriptive quality. Use a scale from one to five (one being poor, five being excellent)
2. Pick one or two areas where you know God wants you to do something in your life.
3. Write down what you can and will do to experience growth in that area.
4. Choose a person to whom you will make yourself accountable. [page 102]

### **34. Leaders Need to Be Filled with the Spirit**

What we desperately need today are leaders who are called and gifted by God. We need leaders who are filled with the Spirit of God and marked by the kind of character qualities listed in Galatians 5:22-23: “Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” [page 103]

### **35. Challenge One’s Self**

Author Tom Peters observed, “If you’re not scared, you’re not growing.”<sup>1</sup> Peters regularly puts himself in harm’s way a dozen times a year or he goes hopelessly stale. One of the worst mistakes you can make as a leader is putting your life on cruise control. Good, effective, and relevant leadership is all about lifelong learning. It is about being teachable, accountable, and proactive, trying new things. Growth means taking calculated risks.

<sup>1</sup>Tom Peters, “The New World of Work: Free at Last!?” May 2000, [http://www.tompeters.com/recources/obs\\_entries.php?date=200005](http://www.tompeters.com/recources/obs_entries.php?date=200005). [page 105]

### **36. Character Traits to Finish Well**

Bobby Clinton concluded that those he studied in the Bible, as well as other leaders he has observed, shared five characteristics that enabled them to finish well.

1. They maintained a vibrant, personal relationship with God right up to the end.
2. They maintained a learning posture and learned from various sources.
3. They lived by identifiable goals and were characterized by a good degree of self-control in their mind, will and emotions.
4. They saw the need for meaningful, supportive personal relationships. They devoted time to developing a network of such intentional relationships, starting with their marriage and family.
5. They had a clear vision, strong biblical convictions, a great sense of perspective, and a lifelong commitment to pleasing and honoring the Lord through a daily, deliberate surrender to the lordship of Christ in all things.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton, *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: Nav-Press, 1992). [pages 105-106]

### **37. Keep Growing**

After a series of speaking engagements, author and church consultant Tom Bandy noted, “Amid all the cities I have visited this year, and out of all the church leaders I have coached, it amazes me how many leaders have simply stopped growing, or yearn to stop growing.”<sup>3</sup>

Successful people in all walks of life, whether they are artists, inventors, scientists, or executives, never lose the spirit of a learner. They are like trees: when the tree stops growing, the fruit starts to rot.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas C. Bandy, “Breaking Free from Control,” *Net Results* 23, no. 8 (September 2002): 12 [page 107]

### **38. How Fast You Learn**

During a flight, I read an interview with Jim Crupi of Strategic Leadership Solutions. He was asked, “What does the average business person need to know about the future?”

His response was, “Leaders are fundamentally going to have to change the way they lead and manage people. The speed of change is only going to get faster. Their experience is not as valuable as it used to be – only their ability to adjust, adapt.”<sup>4</sup>

And then he made the statement that really caught my attention: “It’s not what you’ve been taught that matters. It’s how fast you can learn.”

In baseball lingo, yesterday’s home runs don’t win today’s ball games. What worked last year might not fit at all. What gave me results three years ago might be totally irrelevant to today’s issues and opportunities. My ability to finish well, to stay relevant, and to remain vibrant and fresh in my leadership and in my walk with God is related to continued learning and growth. Leaders are learners. Learning is inherent in the word *discipleship*, which can be defined as “a student who follows another.” Learning is the key to leadership survival in a changing culture that is traveling at warp speed.

<sup>4</sup>Melissa Chessher, “Executive 2000,” *American Way Magazine*, <http://www.crupi.com/amerway.html> [pages 107-108]

### **39. Read All the Time**

I read all the time. I always have a book with me in the car, on the plane, in my briefcase, and in several rooms throughout my home. I try not to visit the doctor or dentist’s office without taking something along to read that stimulates my thinking and expands my mental horizons. I subscribe to magazines and blogs that are full of creative ideas and paradigm-shifting thoughts. I am eager to keep learning, growing, and changing. [page 109]

### **40. Seriously Consider Radically Different Ideas**

It’s too easy for me to travel along the same rut in my learning patterns. I am determined to take time to examine and understand other points of view, even if they are radically different or contradictory to my own. Philippians 2:4 says, “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others,” which

commentator John Phillips rendered, “learning to see things from other people’s point of view” (PHILLIPS)

I am involved in a church with a majority of younger men and women, and I have many opportunities to practice this principle. Most of what I hear in talking with them is new, different, or downright confusing. But at age seventy, I am still an eager student. [page 111]

#### **41. Keep Learning**

Howard Hendricks shares the story of a professor he had at the Dallas Seminary who was in his study early in the mornings and late in the evenings. Howard walked by his home and saw him through the study window. One day, curiosity got the better of him and he asked the old professor what motivated him to keep studying, assuming that by now he would have encountered almost everything and would be coasting into retirement. The wise old professor answered, “I would rather have my students drink from a flowing stream than a stagnant pool.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Howard G. Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1987), p14 [page 112]

#### **42. Vision to Reality**

“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.” Warren B. Bennis

#### **43. Keep Dreaming**

In his classic work, *Servant Leadership*, Robert K. Greenleaf says,

Not much happens without a dream. And for something great to happen, there must be great dream. Behind every great achievement is a dreamer of great dreams. Much more than a dreamer is required to bring it to reality; but the dream must be there first.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1977), p 16. [page 117]

#### **44. Traits of a Christian Leader**

“A Christian leader is a humble, God-dependent, team-playing servant of God who is called by God to shepherd, develop, equip, and empower a specific group of believers to accomplish an agreed-upon vision from God.” [page 118]

#### **45. Go, Travel, Guide**

A leader is a person who is dissatisfied with the way things are. He has a God-given burden, a vision, and a call to see something different. He wants to see something change, to build a new future. He then begins to communicate what he thinks and

where he wants to go. Because of the character and quality of his life, he is able to get others to join him. In the process of traveling toward this desired future, he sees that those traveling with him are being shepherded, developed, equipped, and empowered. This is appropriate because the word *lead* comes from an Old English root meaning “go, travel, guide.”

To accomplish his tasks, he needs more than followers. He needs other leaders with certain gifts who share the same vision. You will see this pattern throughout the Bible, in the lives of people like Nehemiah, Moses, David, and Paul. They were people with God-given vision and they had the ability to enlist others to join them on their journeys. [pages 118-119]

#### **46. A God-given Vision**

A vision is a clear, challenging picture of the future of ministry as it can be and must be – *can be* because God has given it, and *must be* because he has placed the dream and the burden of this vision on the heart of a leader. Today, people are looking for a cause, a mountain to climb, and a leader to follow into new and exciting territory.

The key in motivating people to a cause is having a vision that is strong and compelling. There are many churches and organizations that have vision on paper but no vision in practice. A leader who has a vision possesses a clear picture of what he wants in the future. He carries a visual snapshot in his mental wallet.

As I have observed the leadership landscape, it seems those who occupy leadership positions fall into three categories:

- *The Administrator.* This is someone who accomplishes things through policy, guidelines, procedures, and regulations. He or she usually had the gift of administration and reaches a desired end by setting up procedure and policy.
- *The Lover.* This is usually someone with strong people skills who possesses the gifts of mercy, hospitality, and helps. He has a pastor’s heart along with a strong love and concern for people’s feelings and welfare.
- *The Visionary.* This individual is on a mission. They are gifted in motivating others, setting a direction, and creating excitement and a sense of adventure. They have a destination in mind and possess the ability to take others along on the journey. [pages 119-120]

#### **47. Enable Others to Catch Vision**

If you find yourself in a leadership role as a pastor, elder, deacon, small-group leader, or ministry overseer, you need to have a dream, a vision from God. You also need the ability to get others to catch the vision as you travel toward your dream. If you are not a strong, natural visionary, you can still learn things to improve your ability to create a sense of vision.

On the other hand, if you find yourself in a leadership role and know that you are clearly not gifted or called to provide visionary leadership (revisit chapters 6 and 7 on calling and gifting), think in terms of recruiting or hiring a visionary team to whom you can defer. Don't let your ego or traditional job definitions get in the way.

[pages 120-121]

#### **48. Vision Is about the Future**

Retired baseball manager Sparky Anderson said, "I've got my faults, but living in the past isn't one of them. There ain't no future in it." Vision is about the future.

There are three phases to seeing a vision fulfilled;

1. Developing the vision
2. Communicating the vision
3. Implementing the vision

[pages 121-122]

#### **49. Needing to Rekindle the Vision**

There are those who have a vision but do not see the urgent need for keeping that vision alive and contagious in the hearts and minds of their followers. In a meeting I once heard Bill Hybels say, "If there is anything I have learned over the years, it is not to underestimate how often I need to rekindle the vision."

The vision needs to be repeated over and over in creative ways by various means and through a variety of people who are committed to it. People have short memories and need to be reminded of the big picture and how their part contributes to the whole. It is the leader's responsibility to set the pace, stirring up emotion and unleashing excitement about the future. Creative and continual communication from the leader first, and then from others, is the key to keeping the fire burning. [page 123]

#### **50. Building a Team**

How does a leader build a team of excited players? He does it through a process of strategic planning. This gives the vision wings. It is important to help people find their ministry niche.

The planning process can be described with words such as mobilizing, energizing, delegating, affirming, encouraging, collaborating, and evaluating. It is best done in the context of a team. According to George Cladis, "The key is a leadership team that lives the vision, breathes it, models it, tells its story every chance it gets, sleeps it, eats it, and otherwise calls people together around it."<sup>3</sup> A vision is usually birthed in isolation, but it is most effectively communicated and implemented in community.

<sup>3</sup>George Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship of Leaders* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1996)p. 56 [page 124]

## **51. Influence Shows Successful Leadership**

“The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority.” Kenneth Blanchard

## **52. A Leader Needs a Team**

A leader who lasts cannot fulfill God’s purpose by himself. The notion of leading always encompasses others. The leader has a God-given dream, and in order to see that dream fulfilled, he needs others with whom he can team. We live in a time when leadership is less of a one-person job and more of a team effort.

Be careful with whom you spend the bulk of your time. A leader influences many by investing in a few and letting those few influence the rest. In his book *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell refers to the “law of the few.”<sup>1</sup> He discusses the leverage a leader can have by investing in a few who can have great impact on others. There are certain people who can help you create change and forward progress because they will talk and influence others.

Once these key influencers are identified, they can join the effort by becoming part of an inner circle, like the circle of influencers both Jesus and Paul had. Your job then becomes one of investing in these key individuals. You will want to make sure that these key people are shepherded, developed, equipped, and empowered so that they are excited and believe deeply in the vision. They will in turn influence others.

<sup>1</sup>Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2000). [pages 127-128]

## **53. Do as Leaders Do**

Followers don’t do what leaders say as much as they do what leaders so. Modeling has much to do with Christlikeness – authenticity, genuineness, and the fruit of the Spirit. In Paul’s first letter to the believers in Thessalonica, he says that he didn’t merely give the gospel, but his own life as well, because they had become dear to him (1 Thess. 2:8). Leaders have their greatest influence by being up close and personal. [page129]

## **54. Different Types of People to Invest In**

Prioritizing certain kinds of people to invest in is critical to leading well. Many church leaders, especially lead pastors, are reactive in deciding who gets their time, rather than proactive and strategic. This has to change! We need to think in terms of five different groups of people with whom we spend our time:

1. Resourceful people
2. Important people

3. Trainable people
4. Nice people
5. Draining people

[page 130]

## **55. Whom We Spend Time With**

One of the things that can torpedo a leader is spending large amounts of time with the wrong people. Our ability to reach our goals and achieve our God-given vision is dramatically affected by the people who populate our appointment calendars.

[page 131]

## **56. Ineffective Leaders**

I wrote an article entitled “Seven Habits of Highly Ineffective Leaders,” a satire based on Stephen Covey’s book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*.<sup>4</sup> Here’s the list:

1. They spend too much time managing and not enough time leading.
2. They spend too much time counseling the hurting people and not enough time developing the people with potential.
3. They spend too much time putting out fires and not enough time lighting fires.
4. They spend too much time doing and not enough time planning.
5. They spend too much time teaching the crowd and not enough time training the core.
6. They spend too much time doing it themselves and not enough time doing it through others.
7. They make too many decisions based on organizational politics and too few decisions based on biblical principles.

Notice in particular numbers 2, 5, and 6, which have to do with the kinds of people you spend time with. I say it again: the people you spend the majority of your time with can and will determine whether you are an effective or ineffective leader.

<sup>4</sup>Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989). [pages 131-132]

## **57. Time Allocation**

I have come to the conclusion that the average leaders will allocate their time in the following five areas:

1. Teaching and communicating
2. Counseling
3. Administering
4. Equipping and training others
5. Vision casting

As I have had the opportunity to observe and invest in leaders over forty years, I have concluded that Christian leaders spend most of their time teaching, counseling, and administering. The two areas that are woefully shortchanged are vision casting and equipping/training. [pages 132-133]

## **58. Discipline and Vision**

I once read of Peter Drucker's meetings with a banker. The meetings were always set for ninety minutes. The banker was always on time and would usher him into his office. At the end of ninety minutes, he would rise like clockwork and usher him out.

It occurred to Drucker that they were never interrupted and that their times together were always ninety minutes in length. When he asked the banker about this, he was told that he had discovered that a ninety-minute time frame was his optimal working time. He could keep focused and stay on task for that length of time, so he built his day around ninety-minute blocks. He would work for ninety minutes, take a break, talk with his secretary, and then work for another ninety minutes.

Drucker mentioned to the banker that they were never interrupted during their meetings, which was unusual in his experience with a man of his responsibilities. The banker remarked that there were only two people who had permission to barge in on his ninety-minute working blocks of time: the president of the United States and the banker's wife. The banker remarked, "The president has never bothered to call, and my wife knows better." Here is a man who had the discipline and the vision to make sure he was getting time with the right people. He was a man who was proactive and not reactive with regard to who received his time and attention. [pages 135-136]

## **59. Few Leaders**

Bobby Clinton says:

If the Lord was to make a statement to us, looking not only at the leadership gap but also at the present leaders, he might rephrase Matthew 9:36-38 as follows: "When he saw the leaders, he was filled with dismay, because so many quit, so many were set aside, and so many were plateaued and directionless. They had lost their zest for leading. They had no clear philosophy or direction in their leadership. They were leaderless leaders. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the leaders with clear direction are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth knowledgeable, discerning and direction-oriented leader-laborers into his harvest.'"<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup>J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988), p202-3 [page 137]

## **60. Producing More Leaders**

"I start with the premise that the function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers."  
Ralph Nader

## **61. Little Time for Leadership Development**

The reason there is a dearth of leaders today is that too little of the average leader's time is focused on leadership development. Only when the current leaders become leader-makers will our organizations, churches, and groups begin to develop the numbers and kinds of leaders needed to make a significant impact for Jesus. The single greatest way to impact an organization is to focus on leadership development. [page 139]

## **62. Coach of Leaders**

Dallas Seminary professor Aubrey Malphurs put it well when he said, "Ministry must not be primarily equated with communication of biblical truth from the pulpit in a sanctuary or a podium in a classroom. The pastor needs to be a leader and a coach of leaders as well as a preacher. Future pastors graduate not knowing how to recruit and train leaders."<sup>1</sup>

It is Aubrey's belief that we need a new paradigm for the lead pastoral role to help accomplish the Great Commission in the twenty-first century. He suggests three key responsibilities:<sup>2</sup>

1. Primary communicator
2. Developer of present and potential leadership
3. Primary vision caster

<sup>1</sup>Aubrey Malphurs, *Ministry Nuts and Bolts: What They don't Teach Pastors in Seminary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1997), p. 12

<sup>2</sup>Aubrey Malphurs, *Developing a Vision for Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Grand Rapids, MI Baker, 1992), p. 85 [page 141]

## **63. Developing New Leaders**

Here are some suggestions to enable all leaders to begin to develop new leaders:

1. Make leadership development a priority and let your goals, schedule, and time with people show it.
2. Begin to pray for God-hungry, potential leaders. Ask the Lord to give you the eyes to see them and the courage to approach them.
3. Select a few to start with. Look for teachable, available, and growing disciples who might already be leading (or have experience leading) at school or in the marketplace. These are the ones you can take to the next level.
4. Assemble subject material to cover under the following three major categories: Character (being), Caring (relating), and Competence (doing). To get the ball rolling, here are a few suggested topics:

<b>Character</b>	<b>Caring</b>	<b>Competence</b>
Faithfulness	Love	Public communication
Honesty	Listening	Leading a small group
Teachability	Vulnerability	Mentoring others
Joy	Team playing	Sharing the gospel
Humility	Flexibility	Leading a meeting
		Decision making

Share your own journey, your successes, and your failures as you cover these areas. You can use resources, such as books, CDs, articles, and Web sites. You can also encourage them to get personal time with other leaders you know who have specific gifts and experiences that can be of help to your leaders in training.

5. Individualize your plan. Devise your plan according to the experience and maturity of the potential leader. You won't work with every leader the same way. Paul says in Thessalonians 2:11-12, "For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you...." One commentator says, "how we dealt with each one of you personally like a father with his own children"(PHILLIPS). Just as each child is different, so is each leader.

6. Give added responsibilities incrementally as each one becomes ready.

7. continue to encourage and express belief in them. I have never met a person who complained that they were encouraged too much. Try to catch your leaders doing something right, not doing something wrong.

In working to develop a potential leader, start by directing them in some responsibility. As they get into it, they need coaching. Make your own experience available to them and help them as they have questions. Then, as you gradually wean them from your close supervision, they need you to be supportive. The last stage is the *delegation* of tasks from you to the developing leader, and then, finally, they are on their own.<sup>3</sup>



Many leaders start at stage one by giving a job or task to a new leader, then take their hands off and move to stage four, releasing them too quickly to be on their own. I am increasingly learning how to coach in stage two and support in stage three. Moving too quickly from one to four is not delegating but abdicating. Without coaching and support, this process doesn't work for growing leaders. It takes time and careful planning to develop leaders (another reason why leadership development is not a priority for a lot of leaders).

Your greatest legacy as a leader is to leave other leaders in your wake that can carry on after you are no longer there. You are a leader who has experienced what a leader faces in your specific role. Make it your priority and goal to pour your life into future leaders!

<sup>3</sup>Kenneth H. Blanchard, John P. Carlos, and W. Alan Randolph, *The Three Keys to Empowerment: Release the Power within People for Astonishing Results*(San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler,1999). [pages 141-143]

## **64. Finishing the Race**

By 7:00 p.m. on October 20, 1968, at the Mexico City Olympics Stadium, it was beginning to darken, and the weather had cooled. The last of the Olympic marathon runners were being assisted away to the first-aid stations. Over an hour earlier, Mamo Waldi of Ethiopia had charged across the finish line, winning the 26-mile, 385-yard race, looking as strong and as vigorous as when he started. As the last few thousand spectators began preparing to leave, they heard police sirens and whistles blaring through the gate. Their attention turned to that gate. A sole figure, wearing the colors of Tanzania, came limping into the stadium. His name was John Steven Aquari. He was the last man to finish the marathon. His leg was bandaged and bloody, due to a bad fall he had taken early in the race.

Now it was all he could do to limp his way around the track. The crowd stood and applauded as he completed that last lap.

When he finally crossed the finish line, one man dared to ask the question all were wondering, "You are badly injured. Why didn't you quit? Why didn't you give up?"

Aquari answered with quiet dignity, "My country did not send me seven thousand miles to start this race, but to finish it."

My fellow leader, Jesus did not call, equip, and put you into a leadership role to have you start and then quit, plateau, or be disqualified. He called you to finish the race, and finish it well. It is my prayer that you, with his help, will be a leader who will hear those wonderful words as you hit the ribbon in full stride: "Well done, good and faithful servant." [page 147-148]