

Kingdom Leadership

Introduction

In other lessons I have discussed the necessity that we be “transformed by the renewing of the mind”. We tend to gloss over this idea by relegating it to eliminating “bad thoughts”. However, the Scriptures mean something much deeper than that. Of course we must bring our thought life into obedience to Jesus but we also must change the very **way** that we think—**how** we think not just **what** we think. This is the essence of renewing the mind. It is a process of changing how our minds think.

This becomes very clear in Jesus' rebuke of Peter.

[Matthew 16:21-23 NASB](#)

From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. (22) Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You." (23) But He turned and said to Peter, "**Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.**"

Jesus told His disciples what was about to happen to Him. They should have understood that this was the Father's will and that it had been prophesied of Messiah by the Old Testament prophets. However, Peter wanted to correct Jesus by saying that it would never happen to Him. Peter had a mindset that was steeped in the traditions of the Jews that had an incorrect understanding of the purpose and actions of Messiah. Jesus gave a harsh rebuke to Peter calling him a stumbling block because his mind was on man's interests and not God's. Another translation says that he was “thinking like mere men”. (*People with worldly oriented mindsets are always stumbling blocks to those who are trying to do the will of the Lord because their thinking processes are like those of men and not the thinking processes of the Lord.*)

Nowhere is this change of thinking process more necessary than in the area of leadership. We must learn to think like the Lord. It appears that all of our understanding of leadership in the Kingdom of God has come from the principles of the world system. I was a VP of sales in a multi-million dollar computer company and later became an executive of a billion dollar national conglomerate. I understand the world's idea of leadership because I have lived it and taught it. However, as my mind has been renewed in the ways of the Lord, I find that the Kingdom of God operates by very different principles than the world system. This is especially true of leadership.

Some Differences

The primary difference between leadership in the Kingdom of God and the world system is in the design and use of authority. To understand this we need to see how authority is utilized in both.

World System

The world system operates from a hierarchical authority structure. That means that authority is based on your position in the hierarchy. The further up the authority pyramid structure you are positioned the greater your authority to direct and control those under you. (*Authority in the world system is the right and power to control and direct people, usually toward a corporate goal or purpose but many times just for the advancement and recognition of those who are above you in the hierarchy.*)

A leader in the world system is a person who has the ability to mobilize and motivate people to buy into or fulfill the leader's goals or ambitions. This is presented as being a “team player” when in fact it means “get on board” with my plan. Any questioning of the leader's plan or strategy causes one to be branded as “not a team player”, a troublemaker, and ousted from the team by firing or being sidelined.

Worldly leaders use people to advance their cause. They look for people with natural abilities that will accomplish the leader's purpose. They call this good people management because they desire to utilize people to their fullest capabilities. A good world system leader causes people to feel privileged to be recognized for what they are doing and slowly leads them into basing their self worth and identity on their job performance.

What happens when this mindset of leadership is brought into the Church and Kingdom? We have hierarchical denominational structures operating like any other corporate entity. We have Pastors setting up individual kingdoms for their own benefit. We have self appointed apostles who set themselves up over a number of churches milking the offerings from God's people for their own lifestyle excesses. None of which even remotely resembles God's plan and pattern for His leaders.

Worldly leaders build successors who will institutionalize and preserve their work. They are more concerned about what was and what is than what is to come. They build museums to the past so that their vision can be maintained..

Kingdom Leaders

Kingdom leadership has a mindset that is centered around relational authority. This is family authority that is exemplified by fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters. A kingdom

leader is one who has the heart of the Father and operates according to the desires of our Heavenly Father.

Because kingdom leaders have a viewpoint, a mindset of the Father, they interact with people not according to **who they are now** but according to **who they will be** in the Lord, who God created them to be. They see in the Spirit a person's calling and desire to help that person fulfill his calling. Their fathering heart sees the Heavenly Father's intentions and helps people move toward their fulfillment.

A kingdom leader does not position himself between the Father and His children. Instead, he becomes a helper, a partner with the Lord to assist the children to move on to maturity and accomplish their destiny.

Kingdom leaders are concerned about inheritors not successors. Their concern is that those who come after will be able to build on the work of the previous generation and carry it forward according to the plans and purposes of God. They stand in the prophetic stream and desire heirs who will also stand and flow in God's prophetic stream.

Kingdom leaders understand that they have no authority over people; only the Lord has authority over people [*John 17:2*] and He has never delegated that authority to anyone. Kingdom leaders lead people from a father's heart, entreating them and directing them from their heart's desire for their good and their sincere fatherly love for them.