

Tools for Wise Leadership

A programme of TWR-Africa, produced by TWR-Zimbabwe, presented by Rev Dr Roy Musasiwa

Series 10: The Leadership Style of Jesus

Talk 8: Giving Generously Without Expecting Returns

Welcome to the **programme Tools for Wise Leadership** where we are currently focusing on the leadership style of Jesus. We have seen that he was a man of authority. He was confirmed in his ministry by the Father by his disciples and by outsiders. He acknowledged the contribution of others. He came as a good shepherd. He demonstrated courage and was willing to break customs which were either serving no useful purpose or were contrary to his convictions. He was tough-minded and yet tender-hearted. As we saw in the last programme one of the signs of Jesus' gentle qualities as a leader was the way he accepted and forgave the woman caught in adultery.

The leadership quality we examine today is that of generosity. Here we are talking about a self-giving spirit – an attitude of giving without expecting a return. That is how our God is. Before he created human beings he had already created all that human beings would need to lead healthy, fulfilled lives. And thereafter he showed himself to be Jehovah-Jireh the provider. Materially he provided his covenant people with land flowing with milk and honey. Spiritually he provided a means for atoning for their sins. Supremely, God gave us Jesus. As the popular John 3:16 says: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

And it is this same Jesus who said in John 10:10 “The thief comes to kill, steal and destroy; but I have come that they might have life and have it to the full.” So Jesus comes across as an abundant life giver. And that is what makes Jesus the greatest leader the world has ever known. But you may ask: What did Jesus give? Well, let's talk about several critical areas of giving that Jesus demonstrated.

Jesus gave us his time. If you want to know what a person values the most, just look at where that person's time goes. There are people who spend many hours on social networking sites like Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. Others are so consumed with sports that they spend many hours either watching sports or talking about sports. The list goes on. But look at the life of Jesus. He left the glories of heaven and gave more than 30 years of physical existence to people. His 3 years of intensive ministry was all people-orientated. He had time for children. He had time for the Samaritan woman despite her unfavourable background. Above all, he invested a lot of quality time in training his disciples for the task of mission. It was this investment of time in people that made Christianity the world-wide faith that it became.

Jesus gave attention to people. It is Jesus' ability to give attention to various people that made the time he gave quality time. You can be with your family for a long time while at the same time you are busy reading the newspaper or watching television. That would be quantity time which does not actually build up the relationship. You are there but you are not there. Achievement expert, **Jim Rohn**, says,

“One of the major reasons why we fail to find happiness or to create unique lifestyle is because we have not yet mastered the art of being. While we are home our thoughts are still absorbed with solving the challenges we face at the office. And when we are at the office we find ourselves worrying about problems at home. We go through the day without really listening to what others are saying to us. We may be hearing the words, but we aren't absorbing the message. As we go through the day we find ourselves

Tools for Wise Leadership, Series 10: The Leadership Style of Jesus

focusing on past experiences or future possibilities. We are so involved in yesterday and tomorrow that we never even notice that today is slipping by."

By contrast wherever Jesus was, he was really there. He gave his full attention to other people no matter what their rank in society was.

Jesus gave material needs to people. At one time there was a large crowd around him and Jesus had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples asked send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." Jesus' response was: "You give them something to eat." The disciples protested that it would take eight months of a man's wages to feed such a large crowd. Jesus multiplied five loaves and two fish to feed the crowd that numbered five thousand men, to say nothing of women and children.

Above all, Jesus gave us his very life on the cross. Now this is something that no one can pay back. He paid a debt that he did not owe for us who owed a debt that we could never pay. Jesus was a giver par-excellence.

Now as a leader how can you walk in the footsteps of Jesus in this area of generosity? Well, to begin with you can share your experience with your subordinates. To get where you are you went through certain hardships and pitfalls. You got to find out what works and what doesn't work. The question is how willing you are to share this experience with subordinates? Some leaders think that to give knowledge to subordinates is to give them an advantage which might even make those subordinates a threat. So they withhold knowledge from their subordinates to keep them dependent and inferior to the leader. In other words such leaders lack Jesus' kind of generous spirit.

Do you remember from the previous program the two mindsets that Adadevoh talks about? He talks about an abundance mindset as opposed to a limited supply mindset. A limited supply mindset says: "I should not give because there is a limited supply. If I give there will be less left-over for me. An abundance mindset says: Let me give because there is enough for us all. An abundance mindset knows that the more knowledge and experience I share, the more I also receive. By giving away knowledge, you gain a lot more knowledge yourself. The same applies to giving appreciation and recognition to others. Those who recognize and appreciate others receive a lot of recognition and appreciation themselves. But if you believe there is a limited supply of appreciation, you will withhold appreciation from others because you believe by not appreciating others you reserve appreciation for yourself. You will instead develop a critical attitude and be very quick to see what is wrong, and very slow to see what is right about situations and people. You will become mean-spirited – the very opposite of Jesus' example. I encourage you to have an abundance mindset and share your knowledge, experience and appreciation with others.

The same applies to your giving time and attention to others. You may not have much by way of material resources, but God has given you the time that you can share with others. There are some leaders who try to have their importance felt by being unapproachable. In order to see them, if you are lucky to see them at all, you would have to make an appointment in advance through many channels of people whose job is to safeguard the time of the boss. Some Christian leaders are as difficult to see as the president of the state! No, I would encourage you as a leader to have the same open door policy as Jesus had.

Apart from this you can also be generous with salaries and wages, to the extent that your organization is able. Have an abundance mindset. We have already seen how this was part of the hallmark of Jesus' leadership style.

Tools for Wise Leadership, Series 10: The Leadership Style of Jesus

Jesus gave generously and gained greatness as a result. Do you want to elevate your status as a leader? Why don't you start today to be a generous giver. Until we meet practice this tool of wise leadership. God will bless you. Amen.

Discussion Questions

May you grow in your leadership skills through the series on the *Leadership Style of Jesus*. The three discussion questions may help you process the content of *Tools for Wise Leadership*:

Study Question 1: for Personal reflection

What does this episode mean to you personally as a leader?

Study Question 2: for Group Discussion

What does this topic mean you as a group of leaders?

Study Question 3: for applying the topic

What can you apply from this topic in your role as a leader?

We encourage you to make use of these questions for the **Talk 8 - Giving Generously Without Expecting Returns**

Study Question 1: Personal reflection

Are you a leader with an 'open door' policy and how does that look?

Study Question 2: Group Discussion

What are some of the benefits of being a generous leader?

Study Question 3: Applying the topic

In your context, what are some of the ways that you can be a generous leader who gives freely?

Please connect with us in response to **Tools for Wise Leadership**. We would love to hear from you!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ToolsforWiseLeadership

SMS / Whatsapp : +27 60 362 4163.

Email: leadership@twr.org

Resources: www.twr360.org/programs/116/tools-for-wise-leadership /
TWR360 mobile app for Android or iOS devices.