

Acts 20:17-24



HONOURING LEADERSHIP

The following document is a rough copy of Pastor Drost's sermon notes
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Probably one of the most popular quotes on leadership that I have heard is by John Maxwell:

"Everything rises and falls on leadership." Dr. John Maxwell

I think we all understand that we need leaders (Captains on ships, Fire Department Chiefs, Generals leading armies, a foreman/forewoman leading a construction project, coaches on teams, movie directors, an orchestra needs a conductor, etc.)...

Illustration: Marching on Remembrance Day

Leadership matters!

But while we all would acknowledge the need for leadership, we also tend to have some negative feelings about leadership! **Here are some reasons why:**

(1) Our bad personal experiences

Many of us have had leaders in our life that displayed a less than honourable character. Leaders that were bullies, arrogant, were abusive of power and position... intimidating!

Maybe it was a teacher that put you down. Or a wealthy person who got a position because of their money and became your boss. An abusive father. A corrupt member of parliament caught breaking the law.

These emotionally painful negative experiences taint how we look at leadership in general.

Often through a negative, suspicious, critical lens!

(2) Our exposure to so much negative news.

Negative news travels fast! (TV, Newspapers, Facebook, Twitter)

90% of the news in the newspaper and on television is negative because that's what we pay attention to. **I read that bad news sells 7 times more than good news.** **Sensationalism and fear sell!**

The saturation of negative news distorts our view of our world.

- We hear about the 189 people killed in a plane crash in Indonesia but we don't hear of all the thousands of people killed each day in a car accidents. Therefore, not surprisingly, people have a much greater fear of flying even though it's much safer than driving.
- We hear about the terrorism in the world and people start thinking that most Muslims are very dangerous people, never mind the fact that most serial killers in North America are white Anglo Saxon men in their 40s.

This negative news also affects our image of leaders.

- People are way more likely to hear about the priest that got caught with a prostitute than the thousands of upright priests who serve their whole lives with impeccable records.
- Newspapers are more interested in writing stories about the crooked cop than about the thousands of great police officers that spend their whole careers putting themselves in harm's way to serve and protect their communities with impeccable track records.



We tend to get this image that there are “many” crooked leaders, many immoral priests, that most politicians are liars, that you can’t trust a cop, that all TV evangelists are out to get your money...

Another reason we have this less than favourable feeling about leadership is...

(3) Our North American history

– I’m going to look at this next week.

(4) Our own human nature

You don’t have to teach a child to disobey!

Rebellion comes naturally. **We simply do not like to obey.**

Right from the first humans on earth, the problem has always been disobedience to God’s authority. By nature, we hate for someone to tell us what to do.

We hate the word “no”... “no you can’t!”

In many ways we are just like King Henry VIII of England who wanted to divorce Catherine and would not accept the Pope’s “no you can’t”.

So this all influences how we honour leadership. (I have chosen to use the title “Honouring Leadership” because it’s not just about honouring a leader, valuing a leader; it’s about honouring, valuing, the principle of leadership).

This all moulds how we treat leadership, how we value leadership, it **shapes** how we think about leadership, how we lead, how we follow, who we follow, why we follow...

And, if John Maxwell is correct, and I think he is, and **"Everything rises and falls on leadership"**

...we need to get our thinking right about LEADERSHIP.

Leadership affects all aspects of life, so we need to get this right! **If we want to see this church go forward we need to get our thinking right about leadership because, leadership matters!**

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Romans 12:2 (NKJV)

The world narrative is constantly influencing us to think about leadership in a certain way. Therefore we need to renew our thinking to be conformed with what God says about leadership.

The Bible is full of excellent teaching on good leadership! I’m asking you to consider looking at this subject with me again next Sunday and I’m going to leave you with something to do and think about this week... we want to look at Biblical leadership, what is a good leader, our attitude towards leadership and what makes a godly follower.

✚ Here is one of the best passages of scripture on Biblical leadership: **Acts 20:17–38**... write that down somewhere and read it at home looking for the nuggets of truth about Honouring Leadership

“From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived, he said to them: “You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to



house.

I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus. “And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace. “Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of any of you. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds (pastors) of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears. “Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him. What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.” Acts 20:17–38 (NIV)

This is full of amazing nuggets on true leadership and on honouring leadership!

Paul is in Miletus on his way to Jerusalem. He knows that he will never see them again. In Jerusalem he will be persecuted and then taken to Rome and eventually die a martyr’s death.

So, he sends to Ephesus and calls for the Elders of the church, the leaders. Why?

Because leadership matters!

Jesus established Apostles. Those Apostles established leaders in the churches. God has always worked through leaders! Paul uses three words to describe these church leaders:

1. Elders

vrs. 17 “From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church”.

Referring to their need to be spiritually mature and responsible with decisions affecting God’s people.

2. Overseer

Vrs. 28 “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers”.

Referring to their responsibilities to watch over God’s people.

3. Pastor

“Be shepherds (pastors) of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.

They are called pastors/shepherds when referring to their responsibility to tend to God’s flock under their care.



Church leaders are spiritually mature people who have been ordained by the Holy Spirit to oversee and tend to God's people under their care.

In other words, they are like **spiritual parents!** Which makes sense because the principle of honouring or placing value on the role of leadership is birthed with the ten commandments:

– The first few commandments are all about Honouring God!

“I am the Lord your God.” “You shall have no other Gods.”

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.”

“Honour God with the sabbath.”

– Then they move to honouring your father and your mother:

“Honour your father and your mother that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

These commandments are back to back because they are related. **Honouring your parents, your first earthly leadership, is directly related to honouring God, who is the supreme leader of all.**

You honour God by honouring your parents.

You honour God by honouring your other leadership.

That's what the Apostle Peter tells us.

“Honour the king.” 1 Peter 2:17 (NKJV)

You honour God by honouring the king.

You honour God by honouring the mayor.

You honour God by treating leadership with honour.

“There is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore, whoever resists authority is opposing the ordinance of God.” Romans 13:1b–2a

The attitude we have towards leadership is directly related to the attitude we have towards God!

Close

• Where are you with the greatest leader Jesus Christ?

Are you His follower? He stands before you, as He stood before His disciples and says: **“Follow me!”**

Will you say “YES” to Him in your life? **Let Him be the captain of your life!**

• **Assignment:** Everyday for leaders in your life

“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior.” 1 Timothy 2:1–3 (NIV)

