

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP FOR A NEW CENTURY

I. Christian Leadership begins with your view of God and God's purpose in establishing His Church.

- A. After the fall of Adam and Eve God moved into the mindset of a missionary. His goal was to bring the human race back to Himself through faith.
- B. Genesis twelve reveals His missionary strategy which was to bless Israel and through that nation bless the other nations of the world.
- C. Isaiah reaffirms this when he states that God's desire for Israel was that they be a light to the Gentiles in order to bring salvation to the ends of the earth (Is. 49:6). However Israel failed in fulfilling God's missionary purpose (Romans 10:21)
- D. God's next strategy is to send His Son who will not only die for our sins but establish His Church and even the gates of Hell will not overcome this new entity (Mt. 16:18).
- E. The apostle Paul states that Jews and Gentiles become one, as they come to faith and enter into this body (God's Church) which reveals God's wisdom to the rulers and authorities in heavenly realms (Eph. 3:7-13).
- F. The result of all this is a coming to God of people from every kindred, tongue, and tribe who stand before Him purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ (Rev. 5:9-10).
- G. Implications of our God being a missionary God:
 - 1. The bottom line is that our God is glorified as we his creatures join His mission. Joining His mission reflects our commitment to His character and His purpose.
 - 2. The Church of Jesus Christ is a missional body. This means that its local expressions called congregations are to be missional outposts carrying out God's purpose not places of refuge from the culture.
 - 3. It means that ministry by its very nature is missional.
 - 4. It means that I have been gifted by God to build up this body in relation to the mission given to us by our founder.

II. Christian Leadership is impacted significantly in how we see ourselves. I will illustrate from the life of Peter.

- A. Peter affirms that he will lay down his life for his Master (John 13:37) only to then deny Him three times. As a result Peter is convinced that God cannot really use him and he goes back to the family business. Peter's failure to become a radical disciple leads to withdraw and discouragement.
- B. Jesus makes a special trip to Galilee to engage Peter as a disciple. As Jesus gets Peter to affirm his love for him, He tells Peter he has a job, which is to feed sheep. This job will cause Peter to lose his life since feeding sheep from our Lord's perspective is not a quiet pastoral enterprise but the fulfillment of a mission (John 21:15-19)
- C. Peter's ministry of feeding sheep in the book of Acts involves helping sheep learn who Jesus is and become disciples (Acts 2,3,4,5,and 10)
- D. Peter however needed to be reminded that his ministry of feeding sheep was for all people despite what others in the Church might think. (Acts 10 and Galatians 2).
- E. Peter teaches us as sheep that our job is the same as his (I Peter 2:9-12).
- F. Implications of understanding that feeding sheep includes getting them to know Jesus Christ and become his disciple:
 - 1. A missional God is looking for missional people who will join Him in His mission. He is not looking for caretakers and maintainers.
 - 2. Feeding sheep begins with introducing sheep to their rightful Master.
 - 3. Missional people have no choice but to lead since most people do not think they want to be involved in a dangerous mission.
 - 4. Missional people understand that suffering is a "given" for those leading missions that upset the status quo.

III. Christian Leadership is impacted by how we view the message of the Gospel that we have embraced and are committed to sharing with others.

- A. If we accept the premise that our God is a missionary God drawing women and men back to Himself through the Church?
- B. If we accept the premise that we are called to be missional people, regardless of our gifting and roles, in order to glorify God by implementing His mission?
- C. If we accept the concept that both the culture and the average church culture rejects God's mission and His missional role for His church?
 - 1. The world around us rejects all this because the people in the culture are blinded spiritually (I Cor. 2:14). This is why God is involved in His mission in the first place.
 - 2. The culture of first world congregations normally rejects this because they have bought into a consumer theology that focuses on the believer first and the believer's needs now and in eternity.
 - a. Believers believe God is missional in seeking lost people.
 - b. God is missional in wanting to reach others across the sea.
 - c. However that mission is only embraced after my needs are met first.
- D. If we accept these premises it means we understand that all ministry is cross-cultural and all those involved in ministry are called to be missionaries.
- E. The implications of serving a missional God, who calls us to be in mission with him, in worlds that do not understand God or His mission implies:
 - 1. I am always working in a cross-cultural situation, which means:
 - a. I am building cultural bridges to the truth.
 - b. I am removing cultural barriers to the truth.
 - 2. Missional ministry requires leadership whether I am gifted or talented to be a leader or whether I am not.

