

The Shepherd's Rod

Equipping thoughts for Leaders



The need for courageous leaders



We live in a day when most of our culture seems intent on pushing the things of God out of the public sector. There is an all out assault to either water down Christianity to a harmless philosophy or intimidate Christians to the point that they hide their light. This poses a interesting challenge for leaders.

One of the best definitions for leadership is "influence." A leader is someone who effectively motivates, directs, and mobilizes people and resources toward the fulfillment of a jointly embraced vision.

Christian leadership is similar and can be defined as someone who is called by God to lead in any capacity. They possess anointing

and character to be able to motivate, mobilize, and uphold God's standards and directions.

They help direct God's people to fulfill His purpose.

Leadership is to be throne centered not man centered. Their primary focus is what God wants done. Their primary commitment is serving Him. Their primary goal is obedience to Him. Our goal is not to succeed in mans definition of success. We are evaluated by our obedience to Him not what we have done. This is how Jesus operated. *John 8:29* "And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."

Because leadership is God centered instead of man centered it can at times cause leaders to be in tension with

the wishes of people. There are all kinds of "seeker friendly" models of church that looks to the "felt needs" of man first. This is why courage is an essential trait of Godly leadership.

Courageous Leadership

Courage isn't an absence of fear but the ability to act with a level head and Spiritual self control in spite of it. Fear is the opportunity for courage, not proof of cowardice. The core task of leading people, resolving conflict, championing change, mobilizing servants, and ruling, all demand a level of resilience and fortitude which points to courage.

Paul advised Timothy of important leadership principles as he was facing difficulty in his assignment in Ephesus. *2 Timothy 1:7 Phillips* , "God has not given us the spirit of cowardice." The Living Bible version says, "God doesn't want you to be afraid of people."

01/18/11
This Issue
The Need for courageous leaders Pg 1-2
God's word on fear and courage Pg 3

It is important for leaders to realize that you can't please everyone and God doesn't expect you to. It is a fact of life that you can't please everyone. Even God can't do that and only a fool would try to do what God can't even do. One person wants it to rain the other wants sunshine. Everyone has different desires.

It is good to take our cue from Jesus who was the greatest leader who ever walked on the face of the earth. For some reason, a prevalent concept about Jesus was that He walked around the hills of Jerusalem picking flowers and talking about peace and love. Tradition often sees

Jesus as a limp wisted leader, who wore flowing effeminate outfits and lacked any masculine qualities. This concept has crept into the church and has often robbed leaders of courage.

Jesus cut through the web of people's enforced expectations. The people didn't hire Him as their musician so He didn't yield to play their tune (even with His own

family). Jesus faced times of both popularity and hostility and He regarded both as imposters. In Lk 4:29 people were angry with Jesus and tried to cast Him off a hill but He walked right through them. In Jn 6:14-15 they tried to make Him King by force and He withdrew from them.

Passive leaders often lack courage and pass up responsibilities for an easier way. They don't deal with things that need dealt with and often don't stick with things until they are finished. Without courage we tend to easily surrender to things and people without a fight. Paul uses the phrase "fight the good fight" three times in his letters to

Timothy as he encouraged him not to give in to any spirit of cowardice.

1 Timothy 1:18 This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight,
1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the

presence of many witnesses.

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

What about love

Unwavering conviction and courage is often a great expression of love. Love makes courage necessary. It is loving something greater than yourself. When we yield to pressure it is usually out of loving yourself more than loving God. We usually yield to cowardice because of self preservation. Fear that is real and poses potential for real harm to ourselves is usually overcome only because we value something/someone more than our own wellbeing.

A Rabbi whose community does not disagree with him is not really a rabbi; and a Rabbi who fears his community is not really a man.
Museum in Tel Aviv

I like the definition of courage by the great Civil War General William Tecumseh Sherman. Courage is defined as "perfect sensibility of the measure of danger and a mental willingness to endure it." John McCain wrote in his book about courage, "Courage is the rare moment of unity between conscience, fear, and action, when something deep within us strikes the flint of love, of honor, of duty, to make the spark that fires our resolve. We are at our complete best when we have courage."

I remember hearing a story from a man who was visiting a Museum in Tel Aviv. He was viewing a section devoted to Jewish community and its government. In this exhibit were the words inscribed on the wall. "***A Rabbi whose community does not disagree with him is not really a rabbi; and a Rabbi who fears his community is not really a man.***" What tremendous truth concerning the Jewish perspective of leadership on a local level.

Deuteronomy 31:6 KJV Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.

Joshua 1:3-9 NLT This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

1 Chronicles 28:20 NIV David also said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the LORD is finished.

Psalms 27:1 NKJV The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalms 56:3-4 NIV When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?

Isaiah 41:10 NIV So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:13 NIV For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

Isaiah 54:4 NKJV Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed; Neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame.

Matthew 10:26 NKJV Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.

Matthew 10:28 NKJV And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Romans 8:15 KJV For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

1 Corinthians 16:13 NIV Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.

2 Timothy 1:7 NLT For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

Hebrews 13:5-6 NKJV For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

1 Peter 3:13-14 NIV Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened."

1 John 4:18 NIV There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.