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“Leadership is the art and science of inspiring others to reach their full potential in the pursuit of a common vision”

Dr. James Bultman

Today Reference

John 21:15-17

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.”



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The TCL E-Leadership Resource Are You in the Lap of Whom You Love?

There comes a time in every man's life where the wife gets the best of him. Last year, after I had a few days vacation, she enticed me to go to the pet store to "look"... yea, right.... "look"?

You know how it goes. They ask if you want to hold the mutt just to get you hooked long enough to ring the register. After a bunch of money got rung up, we left with the only possible dog we would ever buy ... a peeka-poo .. a white little lap dog .. two months old and full of energy. I broke my policy of no impulse buying, so there was no surprise when I woke up the next morning having a bout of buyer's remorse.

The dog is incredibly cute. While it gives me a good feeling owning a cute dog as opposed to an ugly one, being cute did not generate any love for it, at least none that I know of. In light of that, I can't really say I became a dog owner for any good reason other than to show it off when company came over. However, a strange thing is happening. My love for my dog is growing and I am learning something about God's love from my dog. These are some things that I have observed about my dog.

He generally will sit on the lap of the one that feeds him the most often. While my wife wins that hands down, there was a 10 day period when my wife was in Florida helping my parents when my dog began to sense that I was his source for food, therefore his first affection. He also has an absolute need to lick the face of the one who holds him.

He loves the one who plays with him. Nothing excites him more that to play "tug of war" or "fetch the bone".

He naturally rebels against the very ones that feed him and play with him. He really tries to obey us but many times he fails. Sometimes when we let him out he does not return when called. Sometimes, even though we say "don't bite", he plays with his teeth and nips us occasionally.

Many times I have cradled this dog in my arms, stared at him, and wondered why my love for him had grown so much. He has done nothing tangible for the household, and he consumes cash through his need for shots and grooming. Yet his existence has brought us joy, partly because we know he loves us.

There is a lesson in this leader's journey in love for my dog. I have recognized that the distance between the capabilities of my mind and my dog's mind is far less than the distance between mine and the mind of Christ. Yet I admit that up to this very word I type, I have been straining to know what specific lesson God is teaching me through this dog. I now think I have it.

While the distance between our minds and the minds of Christ is great, He keeps loving us because we bring Him joy. We bring Him joy when:

We sit on His lap.

When we honorably play with the talents and gifts He gave us.

Then, in the same way my love for my dog endures through His disobedience, so does God's love endure with us. So far, my dog has only brought me temporary sadness when he rebels. My sadness is always temporary because my memories of his disobedience always dissipate the moment he returns and jumps on my lap.

As leaders we might apply these truths:

Love your followers like God loves us and like you love your dog.

Let your anger, sadness and memory dissipate quickly, when your followers return to you.

I am sure there is another level of understanding I will learn about God through my love for my dog. In the meantime my dog will remind me to remain in the lap of God so that my life will bring Him joy.

Whose lap are you on right now?