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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



Ron Porter
Founder

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How is Your Success Defined

A TCL E-Leadership Resource

***Nehemiah 1:11** O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." Now I was cupbearer to the king.*

What aspect of life, if not examined properly, will produce in us the wrong theology and practice of leadership? There are probably more but I would suggest the one which caused the most problems is the study of successful leadership. Let's start by looking at Dictionary.com's first three definition statements of the word "success".

1. The favorable or prosperous termination of attempts or endeavors.
2. The attainment of wealth, position, honors, or the like.
3. A successful performance or achievement

Now add the word leadership and then try to measure the success of the leadership life of Jesus. Was Jesus a success or failure? By the above, most would agree He looked like a failure. Read page 88 and 89 of Christian author Scott Rodin book [A Steward Leader](#) and you will be sure Jesus' leadership life WAS a failure. (By the way I loved every other page of this book, buy it!) He believes that Jesus came to save sinners, but in doing so IS NOT the model for every aspect of life, especially leadership.

If you look closely at the phrase "successful leadership" it is no wonder there is debate. We simply cannot be transformed into the principles or methods that Jesus used to lead because our minds are imbedded with a definition of success that represents pictures of some sort of worldly achievement that Christ did not attain. In the process we have transformed the phrase "successful Christian leadership" into an oxymoron. Doing do causes us to look everywhere else but the life of Christ for leadership models.

I would suggest that one tendency to look elsewhere for leadership could be because we don't desire the end result of Jesus' life, ... and that my friends might be "something to die for". You see, by the world's definition of success, the world believes Jesus' death represented total leadership failure. Expose yourself too long to that world-view and you will begin to feel the same way. In reality, Jesus' death was the total successful fulfillment of His mission, yet his leadership is largely unrecognized. We just need to define success as in God's favor, not mans. Only then can we take it to the next level and study what, if anything, Jesus wants leaders to know about about their own "recognition".

Now do not be confused or misunderstand me. I am talking about leadership, not a successful business, church or organization. There are many moral, spiritual and good things to achieve that will bring a level of wealth and prosperity to a person or organization. Prosperity in worldly terms is not a measurement for successful leadership. It could be a sign of it, but it is not a requirement. If you think it is requirement, you will never examine the life of Christ in your pursuit of it. We need to ask and answer this question. Does God intend to teach us something new about leadership if we would just study the life of Jesus a bit more? The answer is very important. The answer has a lot to do with what we believe success really is. It has everything to do with which way you look to learn about leadership.

I am not done studying this aspect of leadership yet, but I am confident of one thing. If you continue to pursue a leadership life full of "the favorable termination of your attempts and endeavors" that help you attain "wealth, position, honors or the like", you will always be in the pursuit of a great "performance or achievement"... and then people will enjoy what they see but ...

... you will fail in Christian leadership.

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