

Episode 010

Why Your Leadership Matters

Introduction

A question that often arises is whether it is worthwhile for us to take up roles of leadership. Whether we will make that much difference anyway. Let me explain why it is absolutely crucial that we take on the responsibility of leadership.

The War of Influence

You may not be conscious of this. But there is a huge war to influence. Happening even as we speak. And I am not referring to the competitiveness between social media influencers of today. I am not referring even to the political influences being exerted by different political players today.

This war has been waged even back to the Garden of Eden. When the serpent sought to wrestle the influence of God away from Adam and Eve. Yet it started even way before then. Back in heaven itself when Lucifer sought to influence angels to his side against God. Today, this war of influence is for the hearts and minds of every person. A war that has eternal consequences for individuals. Who is going to have the primary influence over our lives?

In my late teens, I attended my first Christian camp. I was not even a believer then. I was still uncertain about who Christ was. But I was struck by the conviction of the camp speaker who was rejected by his own family because of his faith. He made a statement that I will never forget. He was determined to influence others for Christ, because if he does not, others will. And not necessarily for Christ.



What we must understand in this physical universe is that it hates vacuums. The moment there is a vacuum, it immediately attracts something to fill it. Create a vacuum in a container and the moment a little gap or hole is made, air will rush in to fill that vacuum. The same happens over people's lives. A vacuum of influence will not be maintained. Someone will influence. If we do not influence, others will. If the godly will not or do not influence, the ungodly will. The Devil is not going to sit back say, "Excuse me, you have neglected to influence that chap for a few months now. Would you like me to do it instead?" He is not going to ask. In fact, he is ferociously seeking to undermine the influence of the godly 24/7.

The question is this. Will we just let Devil have the influence? Or will we stand up in Christ to say, "We got to do something!" Already the Devil is the Prince of the kingdom of the air (Eph 2:2). His influence is so pervasive in many parts of society today. Will we resist the rising darkness and bring forth God's light?

That is why I decided many years ago, that I must rise to influence as a leader. Because I am convinced that every person who does so for Christ, will make a difference. The more Christ-followers determine to be leaders for God, the greater our influence and impact upon this sin corrupted world. Let me share about 2 key persons you need to bring along in your leadership as you seek to influence.

The God You Bring

We are called to be ambassadors for Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:20 (NIV84)

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.



Ambassadors cannot fade into the wallpaper, hidden in the background. Ambassadors have to speak out for the nation they represent. Ambassadors have to build and exert an influence upon the nation they are assigned to, for the sake of their own nation. In the same way, we should exert an influence for the Kingdom of God in whatever arena God has assigned us. Further, we are called to be the light of this world.

Matthew 5:14–16 (NIV84)

14 “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Jesus made it clear that to shine, we must not be hidden. Not tucked away in a place of invisibility. Unseen, unheard. A crucial way to shine is to have influence. Leadership is a powerful way to have influence. Yet not just any kind of leadership. The Kingdom of God type of leadership. A leadership that represents God. When we bring servant leadership. When we practice Kingdom principles in our leadership. When we live out and speak out for Kingdom values. When we seek to honour God in our leadership. When we seeking to be led by the Spirit of God. That is how we can be ambassadors for Christ in our leadership.

You can be God’s representative wherever you exert influence. You can intentionally bring God Presence and His ways into your home, your neighbourhood, your church, your workplaces and even your recreational spaces.

Keys to bring God into your environment

- Be intentional to be God’s ambassador. Continuously consider how you can be a better representative. In your perspectives, your attitude, your behaviour, your speech.
- Be prayerful. You cannot represent God effectively by your own strength. You need the grace of God. Each day ask for God’s strength and guidance



- Be inviting of God's presence. You can be a vessel upon which the presence of God is upon, wherever you go. A wonderful book to inspire you is "The Practice of the Presence of God" by Brother Lawrence. PDF versions are available in the internet.
- Be wise. Ask God for wisdom to graciously and effectively represent God in all the different circumstances you find yourself.

The You, You Bring

While God would like you to bring His Presence into your environment, God is also very keen for you to bring the redeemed you into your environment. There is a unique flavour that you bring as yourself. Into your leadership, into your environment. In your contributions through your perspectives, your ideas, your creativity, etc.

You are unique as a person. God created you with a certain temperament, personality, with talents and so forth. This is further shaped by your background, your upbringing, your education, the choices you have made and experiences of life. While sin may have marred our lives, the redemptive power of God is at work in your life to bring a God-improved version of yourself. This will impact people around you.

Many years ago, my wife started part-time work as a young librarian cum assistant accountant in a Council library while she was still studying. Lai Ling has always been an efficient diligent worker. She immediately proved her value by getting a lot of work done. The managers at the library began to notice her good work. But the senior accountant began to accuse her of sloppy work and went about undermining her. Lai Ling was stunned by those accusations, but she explained to the management exactly all the things she had been doing. It turned out later that the senior accountant was jealous of her and insecure about her position because she was afraid that the management would replace her with Lai Ling. Lai Ling chose not to react against the accountant but showed grace. Some months later Lai Ling resigned from the job as she was offered a full-time job as an accountant in another company. She graciously thanked the accountant. The accountant teared and apologised for making things difficult. Lai Ling had brought God's grace and mercy into her work environment.



You can bring the best version of yourself into your leadership for the glory of God. Many years ago, I determined that I want to be my best Me. Not for myself. Not for some ego trip. But for God's Kingdom's sake. For that is how I can best serve God. For I am here as a servant of God. My heart is to give glory to God. If by being the best version of myself, I can give the best glory to God - then I will pursue that. So can you.

Keys to pursue the best you

- Seek God's leading for your key roles. God can give you insights into the leadership roles He has planned for you. Then you can better prepare yourself for it.
- Prayerful self-examination. You can improve as you become aware of what areas to improve in your life. Allow God to lead you in this. Often the Holy Spirit speaks to us about aspects of our lives we need to grow in.
- Seek help. The input, advice and feedback of others can help us tremendously to grow in God. We can also learn from books, videos, mentors, coaches, etc.
- Rely upon God. We always need God's help to change.

Conclusion

Your leadership matters because every Christ-follower who steps out in leadership will help add a godly influence into this world. There is a circle of influence which you can have where you represent God. Your impact increases also as you bring the best version of yourself into the leadership.



Discussion Questions

These questions could be done personally or as part of a group discussion.

1. Have you seen in your experience, when a vacuum of godly influence was filled with an ungodly influence? What was the consequence?
2. Have you seen the impact of a vacuum being filled by godly influence? Did it make a difference?
3. What are some hindrances to you rising up to have a greater influence for Jesus? What can you do about it?
4. What do you believe God is saying to you about becoming a greater influence for good?

Actionable Steps

Following questions are to prompt us on suitable actions. Importantly, come up with steps you will take to make progress. Give them datelines and priority.

1. What are the concrete steps you can take to be an influencer for God, in your current environment?
2. What are the 1 or 2 steps you can take in the coming weeks to bring God into your environment?
3. What are the 1 or 2 steps you can take over the coming season to pursue the best version of you?





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