

Real Life Group Leaders

Biblical Leadership

Notes: These notes are taken from “*Leading Life-Changing Small Groups*” by Bill Donahue and the Willow Creek Small Groups Team. All Scripture used here is from the New International Version unless noted otherwise.

The Call to Servanthood

John 13:34-35 – “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

What does John 13:34-35 tell us about the example of leadership that Jesus gave us?

Leaders Shepherd Others

John 10:14 – I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me

How does the “shepherd” model of leadership that Jesus gave us help small group leaders?

Leaders Work Together

Mark 3:14 – He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach

What does Mark 3:14 tell us about God’s plan for how He wants His children to conduct ministry?

Leaders Are Lovers

John 13:1 – It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

What does John 13:1 tell us about how leaders should conduct themselves?

How may we as group leaders better express love to those in our groups?

Small Group Leader Qualifications

Who is fit to lead a small group?

Connect with Christ

1 Corinthians 11:1 – Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

What does 1 Corinthians 11:1 tell us about how we should approach leadership?

Pursue Your Calling

Jeremiah 20:9 – But if I say, “I will not mention Him or speak any more in His name,” His Word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.

What does Jeremiah 20:9 tell us about the attitude we should have about teaching God’s Word to our groups?

Guard Your Character

Proverbs 4:23 – Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

What does Proverbs 4:23 tell us about a leader’s character?

What can we do to guard our heart?

Honor Your Compatibility

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 – There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

What does 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 tell us about how leaders should approach their ministry?

Develop Your Competence

2 Timothy 2:15 – Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

What does 2 Timothy 2:15 tell us about the obligation leaders have for self-development?

Maintain Your Commitment

Luke 9:62 – Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

What does Luke 9:62 tell us about the commitment leaders should have to their ministry?

Increase Your Capacity

1 Timothy 4:16 – Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

What does 1 Timothy 4:16 tell us about the leader's capacity for ministry?

How may we avoid leader burnout in our ministry?

Leadership Assessment

It is a good practice to take a "leadership inventory" of the seven leader qualifications from time to time. Identify areas of strength and celebrate them. Take note of areas for improvement as well. Use the ratings below as a guide to determine where you might need some focus or help:

- 1= needs significant improvement
- 2 = needs some improvement
- 3 = maintaining my present status
- 4 = making some progress in this area
- 5 = making significant progress in this area

Action Step: Based on the above assessment, where is God asking you to focus some energy in the next season of ministry? In what areas should you celebrate progress?

Motives for Leadership

What do the following verses have to say about the appropriate motives for leadership?

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving" (Colossians 3:23-24).

"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples" (John 15:8).

"Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

"Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away" (1 Peter 5:2-4).

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-13).

"...that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:19-21).

What wrong leadership motives are addressed below?

"Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips." (Proverbs 27:2)

"We speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed-God is our witness. We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else" (1 Thessalonians 2:4-6).

"Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be" (1 Peter 5:2).

"For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths" (2 Timothy 4:3-4).