

## Weekly Blogs on Leadership

by Dr. Jay Zinn • 5/30/2016

### Week 13

#### Not Many Mighty

In his letter to the Corinthian church, Paul provided insight into what makes a true leader. Something rarely considered by the carnal mind. He said, “think of what you *were* when you were called. Not many of you were wise according to human standards; not many were influential (or mighty); not many were of noble birth. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to [confound] the wise; ... the weak things of the world to [confound] the strong. He chose the lowly things of the world ... the despised things ... to nullify the things that are ***so that no one may boast before him.***” Herein lies the secret to true, authentic leadership. Someone most “unlikely” to become a leader—not only in the eyes of the world, but in their own eyes.

When you read through the Bible, the Holy Spirit drafted great leaders to fill positions they didn’t want to fill. Moses argued with God that he was the wrong person to deliver the children of Israel. Gideon was found hiding from the enemy in a wine press when he was called out to lead, and he tested God twice with a fleece before he accepted the assignment. Jonah was called to preach repentance to Nineveh and ran in the other direction. The prophet Samuel called the tribes of Israel together to present them their first king, but they couldn’t find Saul. When they asked God about it, the Lord said, “He has hidden himself among the baggage.” All these leaders—and more—were called to lead, yet with no desire to do it.

A.W. Tozer once wrote, “I believe it might be accepted as a fairly reliable rule of thumb that the man who is ambitious to lead is disqualified as a leader. The true leader will have no desire to lord it over God’s heritage, but will be humble, gentle, self-sacrificing and altogether as ready to follow as to lead.”<sup>1</sup>

There’s something refreshing about a reluctant leader who believes someone wiser and more gifted than themselves could be found. Recognizing their lack makes it more likely that God will enhance their *natural* abilities, and empower them with *spiritual* abilities they realize come only from him and, therefore, refuse to boast in themselves. When people applaud their leadership, they don’t believe themselves worthy of it—not in the sense of *false* humility, but by understanding that their achievements rest solely on faith in God’s mighty power to assist them in the discharge of their duties. There’s no other explanation for it. Thus, they don’t even hear the applause.

How relentless our enemy who tempts us to believe that whatever is successfully accomplished on our watch as leaders—is our own doing. “You shall be as *gods...*,” he whispers, because he knows if we believe the lie—i.e., believe our own press—then we’ll lose the very source of our success. Nebuchadnezzar took the bait in Daniel 4, and a clear illustration of why we should avoid *self-glory* at all costs. God shares his glory with no other. “To him be all the glory, great things *he* has done”—should be our motto. If we’re called to lead...let’s humbly do so and acknowledge his grace through the journey. Because God opposes the proud, and gives *grace* to the humble (James 4:6).

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<sup>1</sup> A.W. Tozer, in *The Reaper*, February, 1962, pg. 459.