

Fifty Two Principles of Kingdom Leadership

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Introduction

All Christians are called to be great representatives of the Kingdom of God on earth. This involves various degrees of leadership in our daily occupations at home, at work, in our daily buying and selling and in our sport and recreation. In 2 Cor 5:18-20 (NIV) St Paul teaches us:

*All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and **gave us the ministry of reconciliation**: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people'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*

Also in the Lord's prayer all who love God are mandated to do all they can to pro-actively be part of bringing the Kingdom of God to earth in our everyday life:

Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt 6:10).

This is not a natural occupation but supernatural. Accordingly there are eight steps that help us put this calling into reality:

1. be reconciled to God through faith in the power of the blood of Christ that was shed on the Cross to forgive us our sins and bring us into right relationship with God on a permanent and everlasting basis
2. love God and love others as first priority (Matt 22:37-40)
3. be filled with the Holy Spirit who empowers us to live out the Christian life
4. be uplifted and edified daily by the word of God so that we may progressively grow in our understanding of the values and the ways of the Kingdom of God
5. be people of prayer
6. put into practice the ways of God in our daily lives and occupations, especially the great commission, and
7. be at rest in the knowledge that God has a way for every situation and that we are uplifted by Him in every aspect of His purpose for our lives (Heb 4:1-3)

Whether you are a Mum or Dad at home, teach in kinder or school, work in a shop or are the CEO of a corporation... life gains ever increasing joy as we see every day as an adventure with God, loving him every moment, surrendering every anxiety to him and looking for the Holy Spirit to be released in every situation.

This understanding of life inspires and empowers us in our servant leadership responsibilities and releases us to be people of hope who in turn inspire others to seek out their Kingdom purpose.

The following 52 principles of Kingdom leadership (one study for every week of the year) are designed to help us grow in our capacity to be great Ambassadors of the Kingdom of God in the course of our daily occupations.

1. Pray & Obey

Key Scripture

James 4:13-17

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them (NIV).

Insights

To pray and obey is the basis of our personal relationship with God. It is also the basis of every Kingdom business plan or activity. The relational core of the Kingdom of God is the great commandment (Matt 22:37-40) and our obedience is defined by where we place our hope (Psalm 119:73-81).

From this passage in James we learn that before we make our plans we need to seek God's plans. This is about our daily attitude, that when God first will lead us on the right path and protect us from making decisions that can lead to disasters.

But where is the delineation between incidental decisions like which side to get out of bed in the morning and important business decisions? James says: *If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.* Accordingly most small decisions of the day are not moral or business imperatives and we can proceed on the basis of our daily committing our lives to God. Where moral or ethical issues are at hand or where we are making decisions that impact others, then we should take these matters to God in prayer.

Illustrations

Contemporary

Take for example the story of Bob (name changed). Bob and his Christian partner thought the new contract offer for their business was so good it would set them up for life. Without specific prayer on whether this contract was God's provision for them or not they signed up with high hopes. After huge increases in production to meet the new contract the purchasing company delayed payments time and time again, finally refusing all payments and telling Bill and his partner to go to court if they didn't like it. Ultimately the company debt to meet production costs destroyed the company before the court case could be resolved. The law had been used as a method of business bullying rather than justice. Bill and his partner lost their homes and had to start over again. Through this experience they learnt the hard way to pray through James 4:13-17 before making business decisions.

Scripture

The story of Hezekiah

Reading: 2 Chron 31:20 to 32:27

Reflection:

- a. What was the capital city of Assyria?
- b. How long after Jonah's mission to Assyria did Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem occur? (around 55-60 years)
- c. What were the implications of Jonah 4:11 and 2 Chron 32:21?
- d. After serving God well does this mean we are protected from attack? (31:20 – 32:1)
- e. What were Hezekiah's practical responses to this threat? (32:2 – 32:6)
- f. What were Hezekiah's spiritual responses to these threats? (32:7-8 and 20)
- g. What was God's response to Hezekiah and Isaiah's "pray and obey" (32:21)
- h. What is our public enemy #1? (32:25)
- i. What is our top priority before God and man? (32:26).

Cross References for further study

Matt 7:24, John 12:24-26, Rom 12:3, 1 Peter 5:5-9.

2. Pain

Key Scripture

James 1:2-12

*Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. **Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.** If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do. Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. But the rich should take pride in their humiliation - since they will pass away like a wild flower. For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business. **Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial** because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.*

Insights

As Christians we will encounter mistakes, problems, suffering and disappointments in life like anyone else. The difference for the Christian is the call to allow suffering to produce humility, character, wisdom and dependency on God as part of our discipleship (James 1:4).

There are three kinds of pain:

1. corrective
2. protective
3. destructive.

When pain comes from God it involves his redemption purposes – to teach us to rely on his strength rather than our own, to teach us about discipline, endurance and the gaining of maturity through the circumstances (Heb 5:14).

There will be pain in Christian leadership when you are miss-understood, criticized, judged and even attacked for righteousness sake (Matt 5:10-11). At times such as these we have to take our burdens back to the Lord in prayer, forgive those who attack us and allow the circumstances to purify our motives and actions under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

One of the most common mistakes Christian leaders make is to respond to correctives with denial and self-justification. We want to reply: "Yes, but...." So next time your spouse or your good friend offers advice or a corrective, just say: "Thanks for your concern, I'll take that on board" or, "thanks for your input, let me pray about that..." and take the matter to the Lord in prayer with thanksgiving (Prov 10:17, 11:2, 11:14).

Finally, how often have you heard this kind of question: *How can there be a loving God with so much suffering in the world?*

Firstly we should note that Jesus de-linked suffering from punishment (Luke 13:3-5). So if someone has suffering or misfortune don't judge them for their sins.

Secondly God didn't make the world this way. He made it perfect then gave man free will to choose to obey God or rebel. This is the point of Genesis chapters 2 and 3. In reality we are all like Adam and Eve, that is we all face the same choices to obey God or to go our own way. The consequences of our disobedience to God are clearly stated in Gen 2:17 and Romans 1:18-2:1. It is our individual and corporate sin that causes the most pain to others.

But with our failures God offers forgiveness and redemption and calls us to be on his side as part of the work of the Gospel - to bring good news, healing, restoration, transformation and reconciliation to a hurting world (Luke 4:19-21).

Illustrations

Contemporary

It was 10am at the Hotel Astir at Vouliagmeni near Athens as I was preparing for the crew pick up as a Captain with Singapore Airlines on the Airbus A340 fleet. Suddenly I felt all the energy drain out of my body with an onset of Nausea. Fresh air on the balcony facing the beach did not relieve the symptoms so I rang reception for a doctor. Ten minutes later I found myself being taken out of the hotel in a wheel chair. Hold on, wheel chairs are for other people, not for healthy airline pilots! I was in the early stages of a heart attack.

In the ambulance I was completely at peace, although I knew this would be the end of my flying career with Singapore Airlines. As the doctor held my hand I sensed his caring good will flow through to me. Thanks Doctor George. Then my spirit reached out to God: *"Father, I'm ready to come or ready to stay"*. As a committed Christian this was an epiphany moment for me. No *"why"* questions. Just trust and look forward to a new life.

I knew at that moment God owed me nothing. At 53 years I had led a great life... that could now expire. I was ready to go and be with my Lord for eternity, or ready to stay, *"your will be done"*. God gave me an extension of life through a great plumbing job in the hospital along with the loving support of my family and friends. But I knew from that moment my life was

not my own. From then on every breath was a gift of grace and every day a fresh opportunity to serve my Lord with love and gratitude. This pain was transformational in helping me learn how to live a life for God, filled with joy and service to this day, twelve years on...

Scripture

The story of Manasseh

Reading: 2 Chron 33:1-17

Reflection:

- a. What did Manasseh learn from his father?
- b. What did he fail to learn from his dad?
- c. Who has the most influence in the nation, prophet, priest or King?
- d. What role did pain have in the restoration of Judah under Manasseh?
- e. Is anyone beyond redemption?
- f. How did you last react to a corrective?
- g. Pride is our downfall - did you seek to justify yourself first with a "but" response?

Cross References for further study

Prov 1:2-7, 10:25, Heb 12:1-17, Heb 2:10.

3. Passion

Key Scriptures

Matthew 22:37-40

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Heb 11:24-28

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

Daniel 6:7-11

The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions' den. Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered - in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." So King Darius put the decree in writing. Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before...

Insights

The story of the “Passion of the Christ”, the examples of Moses, Daniel and Stephen in Acts all have something in common – the cost of loving God. It is passion for God that overcomes fear of man. Through this passion God accomplishes his greatest works including the redemption of man. The most important priority in our lives is to keep the great commandment as the object of our passion (Matthew 22:37-40).

If we just get on with just the great commandment how great our lives will be. How many people will be blessed and come to know Christ as we release the love of God in our sphere of influence? With such a passion there is no place for closet Christians!

Illustrations

Contemporary

I met Fong (not his real name) over lunch in Singapore. Fong lived in Singapore but was from Malaysia. In his spare time he drove a van around Malaysia showing Christian movies to students in public schools. I remarked to Fong that he could be arrested in Malaysia for doing this - to which he replied: “Yes, I know. But if I am arrested I will start a prison ministry.”

Another outstanding illustration of the passion for God overcoming the fear of man is the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his resistance of Hitler under Nazi Germany.

Scripture

The parable of the Minas
Luke 19:11-25

Reflection:

This is a marketplace story about business, politics and power plays. In Luke 19:13 (NKJV) the owner instructs his staff to “do business until I come” and in 19:15 the owner wants to know how much each man had made by trading. The owner expected his staff to be productive.

- a. Why did Jesus tell this parable and how is it connected to the conversion of Zaccharus?
- b. What were the employees instructed to do with around 4 months salary in the owners absence? (v13)
- c. What was the expectation of the owner while he was away? (v15)
- d. How had the first servant served with passion and what was the reward (v16,17,24-26)
- e. And the second servant? (v18,19)
- f. And the lazy servant? (v20-24)
- g. How are we using the gifts and abilities that God has given us in our daily business life?

Cross References for further study

Prov 10:25, Matt 10:37-39, Phil 3:7-12

4. Patriarchal Covenant

Key Scriptures

Gen 12:1-3

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Gen 12:6-7

Abram travelled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

Insights

God took the initiative with Abraham and invited him into a relationship where he conversed with God. God then established a covenant of faith with Abraham before the law was given under Moses. Today we are on the continuum of a 4000 year promise: *God blesses us that we may bless others* or in modern idiom "we pay it forward". We also see in verse 6 that this covenant was to the descendants of Abraham and sealed with a gift of the land of Israel (also 15:18).

This covenant of Grace was connected to Jesus thorough the priesthood of Melchizedek, who was Prophet, Priest and King of Peace (12:18). We know that only in Jesus can these three offices exist in the one person without corruption (Heb 7), so it is most likely that Melchizedek was in fact an encounter between Abraham and the three members of the Trinity – Father (12:1), Son (12:18) and Holy Spirit (15:17, 17:5) where "H" represents the Holy Spirit, signified by adding "h" to the spelling of Abraham's name.

Illustrations

Contemporary

I was walking down Lonsdale Street one evening when two young men came out of a café. As they stood on the adjacent footpath one of them opened a cigarette packet, discovered it was empty, pulled out the silver paper, lit it and then dropped it in flames at my feet. I paused, turned to the young man and the Holy Spirit put special words in my mouth for him: "*Mate, what you need is not the power of burning paper, what you need is the power of the Holy Spirit*". How do you think he responded?

He turned to me and said: "Are you a believer". I replied "Yes", and he asked: "Could you tell me what to believe because I don't know what to believe?" Before I could answer his mate remarked: "Well I'm Jewish, tell me what Jesus Christ has done for us in the last twelve months". Again the Holy Spirit gave me an answer: "Well my father was Jewish, so I empathise with your position. I have been an airline pilot for 37 years and everywhere I have gone in the world I have found Christians who have given up the comforts of home to serve the poor and the needy". "That's good enough for me" he replied. Then I asked if I could pray

for them to come to know Jesus, to which they readily agreed. There on the footpath the Abrahamic covenant was extended... God's blessing to me being passed on to two strangers that they in turn may bless others.

Scripture

1 Kings 8:10-11

1 Peter 4:10

Reflection:

The continuation of the covenant of Grace from Abraham through the patriarchs, the Kings and the judges through to Jesus was especially manifested in the dedication of the temple under Solomon, when the Holy Spirit's presence was so strong that the priests could not even perform their services.

It is very interesting to note that the leadership and the prayers of the dedication of the temple (1 Kings 8) were conducted by the King, not the Priests. In the history of Israel there is a recurring theme of 'good king, good priests, good nation' and 'bad king, bad priests, bad nation'. Accordingly let us learn from the best kings of Israel (David and Solomon) by making a habit of reading the wisdom books on a daily basis (Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon) so that we may grow in wisdom under the unction of "Word and Spirit" so that we may bless others, especially in leadership in the marketplace.

The continuation of the covenant of Grace given to Abraham is the life and soul of the new testament Christian - to serve others as stewards of the grace God has extended to us (1 Peter 4:10). Let us dedicate ourselves to the covenant of Grace as a lifetime commitment to God to be his salt and light in our daily world.

In summary the Abrahamic covenant is a relationship founded by God and consummated by our responding with the obedience of faith.

Cross References for further study

Gen 17, Heb 7 & 8, Matt 5:13-16

Template

Key Scripture

Book 1:2-12

Insert scripture

Insights

Insert

Illustrations

Contemporary

Insert story

Biblical

Insert reference and questions

Cross References for further study

Prov 10:25

Date	Shopping	Study	Study Leader
25 March	Graham	4. Patriarchal heritage	Peter
1 April	Des	5. Pay your debts on time	Kerry
8 April		6. Penitence	Graeme
15 April		7. People	Jolian
22 April		Good Friday	
29 April		8. Perform	Doug
6 May	Jolyon	9. Perimeters	Des
13 May		10. Persist	Cal
20 May		11. Personal care	Peter
27 May		12. Perspective	Collie
3 June	Doug	13. Pervasive	Andrew
10 June		14. Philanthropy	David
17 June		15. Perception	Choon

Study Preparation

1. **Patriarchal** heritage – the privilege of being a link in the extension of the Abraham covenant
2. **Pay** your debts on time
3. **Penitence** – call a spade a spade, practice quick repentance from sin, be quick to apologies to those we have offended and don't let the sun set on your anger (Eph 4:26).
4. **People** – build the right team, inspire, invest-in, delegate, shepherd, affirm, discipline and build a culture of unity & inter-dependency - lead from the big picture, listen to feedback and act justly (Matt 7:12, 12:25, James 2:8)

5. **Perception** – how you & the mission are understood is dependent upon how you behave & how you communicate. It's not about you, it's about the Kingdom. It's not about "what's in it for me", it's about the kingdom (Acts 1:3).
6. **Perform** – (In the unction of the Holy Spirit with skill, righteousness, justice, mercy and accountability (Psalm 112:5-9, Zech 4:6)
7. **Perimeters**, keep focused on what God has asked you to do and don't get spread too thin by taking on too much. If you want to expand test the proposal carefully against the mission parameters and seek the counsel of your governance board
8. **Persist** - don't lose sight of your call - bring godly commitment to whatever you agree to do and pray for God's strength to complete the job (John 17:4)
9. **Personal** care & development through reading, mentoring & being mentored, healthy time balance, margins, attending conferences, workshops & seminars, resting in God, exercising and enjoying varied interests (Matt 11:28-30)
10. **Perspective** - regularly review your progress and problems with Kingdom insights (Psalm 50:12b, Acts 1:3-4, Matt 16:18-19, Jn 16:33, Rev 1:18)
11. **Pervasive** - extend leadership that invests godly influences attitudes & activities without exceptions
12. **Philanthropy** - the "first fruits" principle is about prioritising God first in your life, not succumbing to financial idolatry and caring for those in need (Prov 3:9-10, Matt 6:19-33, 1 John 3:17).