

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

**TRUE SERVANT LEADERSHIP INFLUENCE
OTHER TO BE DISCIPLES FOR CHRIST**

"Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life"

2 Corinthians 3:5-6



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TITLE: Servant Leadership

ISBN: 978-1-927468-01-2

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Editor: Dominique Kozarchuk

Copy-editor: Jacqueline Chartrand / Lorn Bergstresser (2018)

Cover Design / Layout: Actsco, Thailand

Text Layout: Sarah Van Pelt (Van Pelt's Business Solutions)

Printed by:

Project L.A.M.B.S. International Inc.

Box 20569 Steinbach, MB Canada R5G 1R9

E-mail: projectlambs@gmail.com

Website: www.projectlambs.com

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from:

New American Standard Bible, © The Lockman Foundation
1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995.

or

New King James Bible © Thomas Nelson, Inc. 1982

First Edition: Jan. 31, 2011

Revised Edition: Dec. 6, 2018

Project Discipleship

Discipleship / Leadership Books # 8

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PREFACE

Welcome to the Project Discipleship series of materials. These courses were designed to give basic information concerning various topics about our Christian faith in Christ Jesus. People are called by Christ to become His disciple, but to become mature in Christ Jesus we need to study the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15) so that we can bear lasting fruit for His glory. We need to determine in our hearts to take time in the Word of God so that the Word of God can get into us.

The purpose of these materials is to stimulate thought and to foster a clearer understanding of how to be a true disciple and servant for our Lord Jesus Christ. These courses can be used as discussion tools for personal study, family devotion, youth meetings, cell groups, or for the running of a discipleship training school. Our hope is that this information will stir the students and encourage them to go deeper into personal research and study of the Word of God.

Our desire is that these courses will be a blessing to the student to be used as a tool and as a resource that can be shared with fellow disciples of Jesus Christ.

Please feel free to mail or e-mail us concerning other subjects or to just write to us with any feedback concerning the content of these studies. We pray that Christ will draw you into an ever deeper personal relationship with Himself as you study.

Your servants in Christ, Rev. Dr. James and Hkaw Win Humphries

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*"Not that we are **adequate** in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our **adequacy** is from God, who also made us **adequate as servants** of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life". II Corinthians 3:5-6*

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INTRODUCTION

Servant leadership can be a very broad topic and much has been written on this subject. So, the question could be asked, “Why another book on this topic?” My answer comes from the extensive travels that I have done over the last decade. What I have noticed is that many people are moving away from a community-oriented lifestyle to an individualistic way of living. We have stop saying, “How can I serve others,” to “Who will serve me?”! These changes have caused people, and especially the church, to move away from the original functional basis of the church, which was a spirit of “**serving one another**”. The challenges that pastors and churches have today, is to get people back to investing again in the “one another principle of Christ Jesus”, which is the root and life source of a **servant leadership** heart. One should not wait for others to give and set the example, but we must step out in faith, through the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, to pour forth not “self-will”, but “God’s will”, upon as many people as possible, with whom we come in contact with each day.

Servant leaders who are true disciples of Christ are called to invest their lives into others around them, producing lasting fruit that only the church is able to yield through unity and harmony, guided each day by the power and authority of the Holy Spirit. My focus in this book is on some key principles from the Bible that might help people in their understanding of the principles that are bedrock to servant leadership.

First, we must make clear that we are servants of Christ Jesus, called by Him out of this world of sin and darkness, to become ambassadors of reconciliation to a lost world (2 Cor 5:20). Christ is our Head and we belong to a Body which is His church (1

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Cor 12:27; Col 1:24). The true Body is one that is built and established on the full Gospel of Jesus Christ. He is the only way, truth and life that we follow (John 14:6).

Jesus Christ was the best example; during communion time with His disciples, Jesus removed His outer gown and, with a bowl of water, washed the disciple's feet (John 13:3-16).

In one form or another we are all leaders. We influence people around us each day by what we say and do. Christ has given us talents and gifts that can be used to either build up or destroy people. He has empowered us to lead as servants. He said that He did not come to be served but to serve.

There is a great need for **servant leaders** today – people who are trained and equipped to serve with their lives no matter the price or cost. The age of grace is coming to an end and the fields are ripe. We are told the labourers are few and that we need to be praying to the “Lord of the harvest” to send out more labourers (Matthew 9:37-38). We need people to step out in faith and believe that God can use them. We should be encouraging all disciples to be equipped and trained to go out to serve our Lord.

Servant leadership is a learned skill and often it evolves from on-the-job training. We learn from our mistakes and make changes to things as we go along. The Bible is one of the best leadership manuals that we can have because we can glean firsthand from people's testimonies and teaching. Their accounts have been kept for us in order to pass on the wisdom which they themselves also learned.

It is the purpose of this study to better equip the reader to become a more effective **servant leader** for Jesus Christ. He has

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sent the Holy Spirit to be our teacher and we are told that when we lack wisdom, we can call upon His name (James 1:5). It is important not to be overcome by fear, but to stand in the power of Christ and to step out in faith. Continue to run for Jesus with all your heart!

If you are a disciple of Christ, you are automatically a **servant leader**. A leader is one who influences another. A disciple is to have a lifestyle that influences others to know more about Christ. The **servant leader** is one who has died to self and has surrendered his will to the will of Christ. We no longer live, but it is Christ living in us (Gal 2:20). We become new creations with old things having passed away (2 Cor 5:17). We must remember that as we lead by example in following Christ, others will follow.

DEFINITIONS AND SYNONYMS

Servant: a person bound to do the bidding of a master or superior; one who must work for another and obey him.
Synonyms: helper, worker, steward, slave, supporter, follower.

Leader: the person who leads or commands a group, organization, or country; a person followed by others.
Synonyms: chief, head, principal, pioneer, front runner, innovator, trailblazer, pathfinder, ground-breaker, leading light, guiding light, torch-bearer, originator, initiator, developer, discoverer, founder, architect, influencer.

SCRIPTURE:

Colossians 3:12-24 (New Living Translation) “*Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tender-hearted mercy, kindness, humility,*

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*gentleness, and patience. Make allowances for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful. Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father. Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly. Children, always obey your parents, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not aggravate your children, or they will become discouraged. Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything you do. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. **Serve** them sincerely because of your reverent fear of the Lord. Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are **serv**ing is Christ.*

The book of Colossians was written by Paul to the church in Colossae. Paul was most likely writing from Rome where he was under house arrest around 60 AD. It also came as a response to what a fellow labourer, Epaphrus, shared with Paul. Epaphrus was converted in the city of Ephesus and went to Colossae to take the Gospel to the Colossians. Out of that effort came a church which he was instrumental in starting (Col 1:7-8 and Acts 19:10). The churches in this area were comprised mainly of Gentile people and the theme of the book of Colossians could be called, "the complete

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adequacy of Christ.” Paul wanted to teach these believers some principles that dealt with things like prayer, supremacy of Christ, the importance of the church, freedom that we have in Christ, the importance of holy living and how we should lead and teach each other. Colossians chapter three set a good foundation stone for what it means to be a **servant leader**.

Servant leadership is always a challenge and the more we advance in leadership the greater the responsibilities and challenges we will face. Leadership can be a very lonely place – there will always be struggles with people who are discontented with what we do.

Our goal as **servant leaders** is to produce lasting fruit (John 15:16). We need to see more labourers and leaders produced for the Kingdom of God and for the work that Christ has entrusted to us. The harvest is ripe we are told the labourers are very, very few (Matthew 9:37-38). Paul wants the church to rest its foundation on Christ and His teaching.

Servant leaders are not born, they are made. We need to understand that most leaders in the Bible were trained and equipped and together worked with each other under the headship of Christ.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

God uses people of various backgrounds to bring leadership to His people. Christ uses our strengths and weaknesses to lead others. When we work within a team, our efforts and effectiveness are enhanced. Christ desires to use us as we are, then move us through an equipping and training process that will mature us into being good leaders. Some examples that we can see are in the

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people listed below:

- Peter:** John 21:15-21
Fisherman
Leader in the church in Jerusalem
Wrote the Books of 1 and 2 Peter
- Matthew:** Matthew 9:9-13
Tax collector
Wrote the Book of Matthew
- Luke:** Luke 1:1-4 & Acts 1:1-2
Doctor (He was a Gentile)
Wrote the Books of Luke and Acts
- Philip:** Acts 8:4-8
Deacon
Evangelist of the Gospel of Christ
Minister to an Ethiopian eunuch
- Barnabas:** Acts 4:36-37 and Acts 11:22-26
Levite
Missionary, teacher and mentored many
other leaders
- Apollos:** Acts 18:24-28
Equipped and well-trained teacher of the
Scriptures
Missionary and teacher
- Paul:** Acts 9:1-22
From Pharisee to an Apostle of Christ