

The Journey to Biblical Manhood

Challenge 11: Leadership

Session 3: Why Your Leadership Style Should Be Dying

Unedited Transcript

Brett Clemmer

Hey, it is great to be with you this morning. How are you all doing? You all hugged up? You all hugged up, that's good. I'm so glad. Hey, we are on this journey to biblical manhood and I'm real excited to talk about leadership again this morning. This will be our third session on leadership. We're going to look at some of the ins and outs of servant leadership. But before we do that, we've been trying to bring in some stories about how Man In The Mirror is making impact across the country.

I was recently up in Pennsylvania, at Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania, where literally Washington crossed the Delaware, and Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania. I met a great guy named Pierre Eade, he's a pastor at Crossing Church up there. We did a leadership training and he sent me a video afterwards to share with anyone that wanted to hear about what happened at that training, but really to more encourage church leaders. I'm going to play that video for us this morning, to kick us off, just so you can see a report from around the country.

[Video Audio] "Hi, name is Pierre Eade. I'm a pastor, author and Men's Ministry conference speaker. Our church just completed the Man In The Mirror 3D training. I want to tell you this was an amazing time not only for our church but the other churches that came from our area. We were equipped and empowered as a Men's Ministry to think about strategies for reaching people who don't know Jesus and discipling people to the place in which they're servant leaders for the kingdom of God.

"I want to highly encourage you to attend the next training in you area or consider hosting it, because this is a ministry that will empower your guys to do the work of the kingdom. Our guys are completely on fire, ready to go. I'm just directing at this point. We have a strategy and structure in place thanks to Man In The Mirror. I really want to highly, again, recommend that you attend this training. It's awesome, it's powerful. You will not regret it."

Brett Clemmer: We had a great time with those guys up there, had about 50 guys come for a training, from I think it was a dozen different churches, working with our area director there, Dave Armstrong, who's at Greater Philadelphia North Coalition for Men's Discipleship. Shout out to those guys. I also want to get a shout out to Men Force, a group of eight men who meet on Sundays at 6:00 PM. They use the video bible study.

This group came out of a Success That Matters seminar that they attended, and you see where they are, right? They're in St Catherine, Spanish Town, Jamaica, so Rudolph Briscoe and another of our area directors has been down to Jamaica a couple times over the last few years. It's been great to see the church of God being built there and men getting excited about leading their families and being great husbands and fathers and building God's kingdom there.

Great stuff happening all over, not just the country but even into the Caribbean. Let's get into our lesson, this morning we're talking about leadership, servant leadership specifically today. I went online, and as we talk about servant leadership, I went online, I went to Amazon and I typed in, "servant leadership," and a bajillion books came up. There were funny names, something like, The Five Pillars of Servant Leadership, The Power of Servant Leadership, The Servant Leadership Journal. But my favorite one, I have a favorite and a runner up. My favorite one was called Why Leadership Sucks, The Fundamentals of Servant Leadership. We should be getting sponsor dollars from these guys, shouldn't we, for promoting their books? Then my second favorite one was called Eat More Ice Cream. I'm not sure what that has to do with servant leadership but it just sounded like a good idea.

Servant leadership is something that we hear about all the time. We constantly hear people talking about servant leadership and all these authors write books about servant leadership, but it's not the only mode of leadership. There's lots of models of leadership. Here's what I want you to do, at your table I want you to pick a famous person, a famous leader, can be alive or dead. Try to sum up that person's leadership style in a word or a phrase. I'm going to give you a minute, two minutes most, to do this. Talk at your table, pick a famous leader, and what's their leadership style in a word or a phrase? Go.

Alright, good job. So let's hear it. I'll point to your table, you tell me the leader that you came up with and what was his leadership style. Or just raise your hand, I don't want to take people that didn't come up with one. Who's got one? Alright, what was yours?

Abe Lincoln, and his leadership style was? Humility, alright. So humility, who else has got one? What was yours? Steve Jobs, and his leadership style was? Intimidation, being a hammer. Good, who else has one? Trump, I can't believe that was the third one. Conflict, his leadership style is conflict. Winston Churchill. Never quit, perseverance, right? Persevere. Tony Dungy. Integrity, good. Martin Luther King, non-conflict. One more. Adolf Hitler. Yeah, so charismatic, manipulative. Alright, you guys are going to keep going, I'll keep taking them. Martin Luther. So changing the way people think. Last one? Malcolm X. Enemies are necessary? Enemies are necessary.

Alright, so when we talk about leadership though we're talking about this. We're talking about going on a journey and figuring out what leadership looks like from a biblical perspective. We want to know what the bible says about leadership. We want to serve the people that God's place in our life that honors God. We want to be a servant leader with our family, our coworkers, our church and our friends. This is the head, heart, hands of leadership the way that we're talking about it. This are the world's ways of talking about it, manipulation, intimidation, conflict, enemies.

But the bible talks about leadership in a much different way for the most part. Let's look at what we're going to talk about. What we're going to talk about today is why your leadership style should be dying. Now, it's a little bit of a grammatical game going on here, right? Should your leadership style itself be fading away and dying? No, but dying should be your leadership style.

Dying should be your leadership style. We're going to look about why when I say that, where would that come from and how does that play out in our everyday life? We're going to talk about crosses and feet. We're going to look at some things that Jesus said. We're going to look at three places to die. And then we'll talk about the real reason for servant leadership, the real reason for servant leadership.

CROSSES AND FEET

Let's start, if you've got a bible we're going to whiz around some passages this morning, so turn to Matthew and let's look at Matthew chapter 16 verses 24 to 26. Listen to what Jesus said to the disciples. We're going to look at two interactions that Jesus had with his disciples and see what they teach us about leadership. Verse 24 Matthew 16, "Then Jesus said," or, "told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?'"

Jesus says to the disciples, "If you're going to follow me," because Jesus was a leader, right? He was a rabbi, these disciples followed him around as he went from synagogue to synagogue throughout Galilee, sometimes down in Jerusalem and then back up to Galilee again. They followed him around, he was a leader. He said ... A disciple followed a rabbi around for the express purpose of probably one day becoming a rabbi themselves.

They're following their leader so that they can become like him. What does he say you have to do? "Take up your cross and follow me." Now keep in mind where this is in the story. He hasn't died on the cross yet. He's looking ahead. He's saying, "If you're going to follow me you've got to take up your cross." They probably thought it was a figure of speech. They probably thought it was a figure of speech. No way that they knew that 10 of them would die martyrs' deaths, one would kill himself and only one would survive to live a natural lifespan. But he was telling them, "If you're going to follow me, you've got take up your cross daily." And then all did, all but Judas, they all did. They all did, it's amazing.

Then if you look at John 13, now this isn't this ... Again, the context is important. They're in the upper room and this is passion week, this is the week before he dies. Think about this, Jesus chooses this object lesson for this moment. They're about to lose him. They're about to lose him and he chooses this object lesson so that it would be one of the last things that they remember about their time with him. This is the story.

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, he rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, he tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him."

Think about the juxtaposition of these two phrases. He knew that he was from God, he was going back to God. He knew that God had put all things in his hand, so he took off his coat, wrapped the towel around himself, washed the disciples' feet and then dried their feet off with the towel that was around his waist. From all things in my hand, to washing the disgusting dirty grimy smelly feet of guys who walk

around in sandals on dusty roads all day. That's what Jesus chose to give them as one of the final object lessons that he gave them.

Verse six, "He came to Simon," got to love Peter, right? "Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, do you wash my feet?' Jesus said, 'What I am doing you don't understand now, but afterward you will understand.' Peter said to him, 'You shall never wash my feet.'" I think I would have said the same thing. "No. No, no, no, no. Give me the towel. Alright, I get it, nobody washed the feet, sorry. Give me the towel, I'll finish it up." That's what I would have been.

"Jesus says, 'If I don't wash you, you don't have any share with me. You don't get to be a part of what we're doing here.' Simon Peter said to him then 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head.' Jesus said to him, 'The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.' For he knew who was to betray him, that was why he said, 'Not all of you are clean.' When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, 'Do you understand what I have done to you?'" Did you catch that preposition? Not for you. Not for you, to you.

"Do you understand what I've done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." So what has he done to them, he's given them a command, he's given them an edict. He's shown them what it looks like when a leader serves those who follow him. He's gotten down and he's taken the lowest position in the room he could have taken, to serve them and to wash their feet, because it was important for their feet to be washed? No, so that they understood the lesson of what it looks like to be a leader. This is really where we even get the whole term servant leadership, it's from Jesus serving the disciples.

The issue here is that Jesus is saying is that if you're going to follow me, and after I leave if you're going to lead like me, then you're going to serve like this. That's like the recruiting poster for being a Christian leader, right? Down on your hands and knees with a towel around your waist, washing dirty feet. Not exactly attractive, but that's exactly the picture that Jesus gives us of what it means to be a leader.

If you look at Philippians 2, let's flip over to this last major passage that we'll look at. Philippians 2, you really get the theological sense of this from Paul. He says in Philippians 2:3, "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who," and listen to this, "though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross," even the death of a criminal.

So Paul's like, this is the example that Jesus gave us. He was in the form of God, he was with God, he was God, he is God. He didn't grasp his equality with God, what that means is his status, he was willing to put his status aside and come to earth and become human. And even not just become ... You have become human and become like the king. He could have bumped Caesar off and become the Caesar of the Roman empire. But he didn't do that, he went all the way to servitude, but he didn't even stop there, he went all the way down to being willing to die for the people that he came to lead.

This is the image that we get of what it means to a servant leader. Looking at Jesus' example, this is why I say your leadership style should be about dying. This is our Big Idea then. **Servant leaders give their lives for a purpose, to help others really live.** Servant leaders give their lives to help others really live. So let's look at then three places that we see this being played out.

3 PLACES TO DIE

The first place I think it's played out in our homes. Ephesians 5:25 talks about loving your wives like Christ loved the church. Loving your wives like Christ loved the church. What I put in parentheses here is what I would is sort of the enemy of servant leadership in this context. The enemy of servant leadership in your home is your own comfort. A lot of guys, we work hard all day, we just want to come home, put our feet up, turn on ESPN and eat dinner. But the problem with that is, if you look around society right now, more and more often, just one ramification of this, is that you see women leaving marriages in record numbers. Women never used to leave marriages. You know why? They didn't work, they had nowhere to go. Now they work.

Here's the problem, women working outside the home is not the problem, the problem is when they work outside the home, their husband works outside the home, and then get home and only one of them works. Only one of them takes on the tasks that it takes to raise a family well, to keep a household up. We may get off our butts long enough to pull our wallet out and pay the lawn guy, but for the most part a lot of guys just sit around and watch their wives do everything, or ignore their wives while they do everything.

This is why that you'll see articles about this, about women saying, "Look, why should I stay in this situation? I work hard all day, I come home, I do all the work just so this guy, that obviously doesn't really care that much about me because he just sits around while I cook the meals and I do the dishes and I clean the house and I run the errands and I do the grocery shopping." That's not being a servant leaders in the household.

We've got to, as Christian men, work all to serve our wives, to die for them. That means you have to die to comfort. That means you don't get just collapse at the end of the day and not really do anything. If you're going to be a servant leaders in your household you have to serve your wife so that she can have some free time. You have to invest in your children so that they grow up to be the kind of kids who honor God and follow him.

At work, how can you be a servant leader at work? Ambition I think is the enemy of servant leadership at work. We're striving to get ahead, right? We want to be seen as the person that should get the next promotion. Sometimes that even trickles down, well don't help anybody else because that might give them an advantage. I was with a guy this week, he told me about how he was in the military and he helps some guy out, and that guy got a promotion over him. His dad who had also been in the military said, "Well I told you, never help anybody."

That's not what a servant leaders does. A servant leader does help others. A servant leader wants other people to be successful. You know what it means, it might mean that they get the promotion and you don't. It might mean that they get the recognition and you don't. But that's what a servant leader does, because living as a witness for Christ is much more important that getting a few more bucks in your

check or getting a bigger office. That's not what we want to be known for. We want to be known for being servant leaders.

And then in ministry, now you might think in ministry, "Of course I'm a servant minister, I'm a servant leader in ministry at my church." You know, I know a lot of people who are frustrated in their work at their church because they don't get thanked enough. Now if there's church leaders in the room, you've got to thank the people that invest time and money and talent. You've got to thank them, but if you're on the giving end of that, that's not why you're doing it. It's great to get the recognition, it's great to get the thanks, but you shouldn't be doing it for that reason. You should be doing it because you want to build God's kingdom, because you want to serve Christ.

THE REAL REASON FOR SERVANT LEADERSHIP

If these are the things, if these are the places that we can be servant leaders and the things that you from doing this, what's the real motivation for servant leaders giving their lives to help others really live? It's this, Christ. There's really only one reason, it's Christ. You have to choose, who are you living for? Are you living for yourself or are you living for Christ? Because Jesus makes it clear in Matthew 16, he said, "Take up your cross." Not, "Stand on the sidelines and really encourage the other people as they take up their cross." It's like we have to take up our cross, we have to be willing to die.

Jesus said in John 13, at the end of that thing he says, "What I'm doing now you have to do." If we're going to be obedient to Christ then we have to do what he tells us to do, and he tells us to take up our cross, he tells us to wash each other's feet, each others to love one another. A new commandment I give you, that you should love one another. Now that wasn't really new, love one another wasn't a new concept. So what he was saying was, I'm giving you this renewed imperative, this is coming to the top now. You need to love one another, not look out for your own interest but love one another. The Paul takes that and illustrates that throughout his letters as well.

The second reason that we need to be servant leader for Christ is that it helps point people towards Christ. It helps point people towards Christ. In that Ephesians 5 verse, it talks about, love your wives like Christ loved the church and presented to his father holy and blameless, spotless and blameless. We need to point our families towards Christ.

In First Corinthians 9:19 Paul says that, "I become lesser so that I might win some. I become a servant to all that I might win some." He's trying to point people towards Christ by his servant leadership. You look at John the Baptist in John 3:30, he said, "He must increase, and I must decrease." His disciple's around, like, "Yo, Jesus' getting all the credit. He's getting all the notoriety." He's like, "Yeah, I know. He's supposed to. People are supposed to look at him and not at me. That's the point." So we're pointing people to Christ.

Then, really the last thing is this, is that it's also, servant leadership brings glory to Christ. It takes the glory off of ourselves and it brings that glory and points that glory to Christ. The world promotes self glorification, right? The world promotes you saying, "Hey, look at me, look at all the great stuff that I do." That's not what we're supposed to doing. We're supposed to be saying, "Hey, look at Jesus. Look at what he's done for us. Look at the sacrifice that he's made for us." We do that, one of the ways that we do that is by imitating him, by becoming like him, by taking up our cross, by washing each other's feet, by loving each other visibly.

My role is to bring Christ glory, not to bring myself glory. As a Christian man, as a servant leader, your role is to bring glory to Christ and not to each other. The Big Idea, **servant leaders give their lives to helping others really live**. Servant leaders give their lives to helping others really live.

Let's pray. Father, we live in a world that celebrates winning, that celebrates domination, that celebrates making other people serve you and that glorifies conflict and sometimes even violence. Lord, we know that your example is to be the opposite of those things, to bring peace and unity, to bring love, to serve those around us. Why Lord? So that people can know you, so that people will follow you, so that you can receive the glory. So Lord, as we go into this discussion time and then through this week, will you remind us Father when those little situations where we can go to the right, towards our own glory, or to the left towards yours, will you prompt us to move towards your glory? Towards being a servant to those around us? In Jesus' name, Amen.