

Lecture #2

Jesus Had a Heart to Honour His Father

Leadership is Having a Heart to Serve the Father

The core reason Jesus led so well was that He wanted to serve His Father faithfully.

We can't serve effectively if we don't understand who we serve. (John 17:3) The same is true for us, we must have a desire that our service is not only pleasing to the Lord, but that it is faithful to the calling that He has given to us. We can not lead if we have a low understanding of the nature of God. Everyone who wants to be effective in their service, must make it their first priority to learn and to study the nature of the one whom we are here to serve. Practically, this means we need to be in the word and constantly studying the nature and attributes of God.

We can't lead effectively if we don't understand who we lead. There is a need to know who it is that we lead, to know the sheep that we are called to feed. Since leading is having an influence on the lives of others and guiding them to a more committed service, then we must have a good appreciation of those under our care.

We can't lead effectively if we don't equip people and give them the tools to lead. Since it is not our job to solely lead people from one place to another, but rather build believers in the understanding and knowledge of God, so they can lead in the future, then we must equip them to become the next generation of leaders.

We must prepare ourselves to invest in the success of other believers.

A leader must, at all times, be willing to give praise to those whom they lead while, and at the same time, be willing to accept criticism. Always appreciating those under their leadership, while dealing with all issues that arise within the church. In short, they allow those under them to make and learn from their mistakes.

A leader is always giving of themselves as needed, while building a team that can serve the Lord effectively in ministry.

Serving a Holy, Sovereign God means we understand that our labour is for the Lord, and not for our own benefit. This means it's not about the visual, or even the end results, rather it is all about faithfully serving the Lord, always seeking to serve and to please the Lord. The victory is found in the means and motivation of our service, yet, the outcome is the Lords.

There will be many times when we will labour our entire lives and never see any tangible results. Yet, by faith, we know that there are always unseen results. Our service is to find the Lord's approval, knowing by faith, that our labour was done for His glory. And if our leading and service never sees fruit this side of heaven, we will still rejoice because we have done what we were called to do.

“For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour” (John 4:37-38).¹

There are many examples of those who influenced others who then went on to achieve great things, though they themselves never saw the fruit of their labours.

1. Edward Kimball

Edward Kimball, a dedicated Sunday School teacher in Boston, played a pivotal role in the conversion of Dwight L. Moody. Kimball visited the young man at his workplace, a shoe store and shared the message of Christ with him. It was this personal encounter which led Moody to

¹ All subsequent Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version unless otherwise stated.

accept Christ. From the labour of this one man came a new convert who became one of the most influential evangelists of the 19th century, preaching to millions across the U.S. and the U.K. ²

2. Mordecai Ham

In 1934, a 16-year-old Billy Graham attended a revival meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, led by evangelist Mordecai Ham. Initially reluctant, Graham was persuaded by a family friend to attend. During the meeting, he felt compelled to respond to the invitation to accept Christ. This decision marked the beginning of Graham's journey as an evangelist, eventually leading him to preach to millions worldwide. ³

3. Robert Eaglen

On January 6, 1850, during a snowstorm in Colchester, England, 15-year-old Charles Spurgeon sought shelter in a Primitive Methodist chapel. The scheduled preacher was absent, so a layman named Robert Eaglen stepped in to deliver a simple sermon based on Isaiah 45:22: "Look unto me, and be ye saved." Spurgeon later recounted that this message led to his conversion, and he went on to become one of the most influential preachers in Christian history. ⁴

² "Leave a Legacy," NewLife Christian Fellowship, accessed August 19, 2025, <https://newlife-ct.org/blog/2025/05/06/leave-a-legacy>.

³ "Billy Graham (1918 – 2018) - North Carolina History," *North Carolina History* -, March 7, 2016, <https://northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/billy-graham-1918/>.

⁴ "The Impact of One," *Harvest*, n.d., accessed August 12, 2025, <https://harvest.org/resources/devotion/the-impact-of-one/>.

Never forget what the end goal is.

We do not serve the church, or the Elders, or a schedule. We serve the One who rewards those who labour for Him. Furthermore, we may never receive human praise, but we seek the Lord's praise. This must be remembered, because it is too easy for us to feel that we have never accomplished anything significant for the Lord in our lives.

Our Service is to please the Lord alone. We lead people with empathy, knowing many have not received proper biblical training. The end goal is to strive to help those we lead to be effective in their ministry.

The text of John 17:25,26 forms the basis of the next 10 principles of loving as the Father has loved Christ, which is within us as His redeemed.

10 Principles of Leading with the Heart of Jesus

1) Serving is following.

John 12:26 - "If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honour him." Serving Christ comes with the privilege of being with Him and receiving the Father's honour. We need to see that to follow the word of God is a privilege, regardless of what recognition we obtain from it. To follow the word of God faithfully will certainly bring about the Lord's blessing in that we have been good and faithful stewards, even if we have been opposed by the enemies of Christ.

2) Success comes through the accomplishment of doing all things for the Lord, not the visual results.

This is certainly a lesson we learn by faith. We need to ask ourselves, “did I serve the Lord faithfully and truthfully to His word?”. If that is true, then we have done our part, and we can know for certain that the Lord was pleased in our labour. We must not allow our human pride to make us feel that we have failed because there were no visible results.

3) A servant's heart understands that we are not of this world.

A servant heart is one who is willing to give of themselves for the greater benefit of the kingdom of God and exalt Christ. This must be tempered with our own physical and mental health, however, there is a clear understanding that we cannot serve the Lord part-time. There must be, and will always be, a sacrifice involved to put Christ first in our lives. The disciples left all, and followed Christ. Even the Lord Jesus in his humiliation, sacrificed the glory that was His, and that was due to Him, so that he could serve us and provide us our salvation. To be a servant of the Lord means there is an understanding of a sacrifice of our time, and even of the comfort and conveniences in our life so that we can serve the Lord faithfully as needed.

4) Leaders allow themselves to be vulnerable.

To be vulnerable simply means that we allow others to see our shortcomings, and how the Lord works in our lives to move us closer to Christ. Too often, leaders want to set themselves above the criticism of people by pretending to be godly and having a correct attitude in every issue of their lives. Great leaders are vulnerable. They reveal that they too are working and

seeking to be what Christ wants them to be. Not that they have obtained qualities of perfection, but rather they are labouring within themselves to be more like Christ.

5) Jesus led by serving others.

In John 13:14-15, he washed his disciples' feet, teaching them humility and the importance of serving one another.

This is by far the greatest illustration of great leadership. Jesus served and was willing to humble himself before others publicly to demonstrate his love for them, and his purpose which was to serve the Lord, his father, by serving his followers. As leaders today, we must be an example of serving. We must never think of ourselves as leaders who do not do the menial tasks, but rather set an example of loving and serving one another, so others can follow in our footpath as we follow the Lord Jesus.

6) Jesus was emotionally concerned for those under His care.

He showed deep empathy, weeping with those who mourned (John. 11:35).

He connected personally with people, understanding their needs (Mark 10:21).

He had compassion as they were as sheep without a shepherd (Matt. 9:36).

Leaders cannot be casually involved in the lives of their people, they must have a genuine concern for the spiritual and physical well-being of those they lead.

7) People respect those who show a real concern for their needs.

A leader demonstrating a genuine concern for the lives of others creates a genuine relationship. This type of genuine relationship is crucial, so that others can build confidence in them. When a leader cares about them, then they will follow, allowing us to lead them. But no

one will follow a leader who has no interest in the struggles they are facing and does not care about their concerns.

8) Applying the Word of God with integrity is essential for building strong, lasting leadership.

Just as Jesus relied upon the Word of God to be the basis for how He operated and dealt with false teaching, godly leaders must have integrity in how we interpret, handle, and apply the word of God. When we see godly men and women handle the word of God with honesty, care and concern, acknowledging our shortcomings to understanding, this creates a genuineness that is seen. It is this integrity to the Word of God that develops true followers, who seek to have the same integrity in interpretation.

9) Listening to others will allow you to learn how to lead.

Anybody can talk, but leaders listen. We listen to hear how they understand a situation so we can better guide them to the correct position. We listen so we can know the genuine motive behind their thoughts. We listen to show that we care, and when we have listened, we gain their trust. But no one will follow a leader simply because they are told to, rather, they will follow when we demonstrate a real desire to see them grow spiritually.

10) Serving the Lord is not about personal preferences.

Leaders lead even when it's tough to lead. There are times when we would rather not have to deal with a situation, or we would rather leave an issue knowing it would not be well received, but it is not about our preferences; it is about being faithful to the Word and the message of Christ.

The theme verse of our church sets the tone for how we lead. It reveals the desire to motivate people to grow in the Lord, as well as to motivate the congregation to serve the Lord with the best we have to offer.

“Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name” (Psa. 96:8).

How does this verse teach or inspire you to serve in a new or different way than you have in the past? How does it shape the way we lead within the church?

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