Critical Analysis of Leadership

Student: Leslie Eyma, Jr.   Student email: eymal@nyack.edu

Program: Masters of Divinity

Alliance Theological Seminary

Date: 12/19/21

Introduction to Critical Analysis

In this Critical Analysis paper, I intend to detail my leadership findings throughout this semester. With this paper, I want to: identify biblical leadership foundations, identify what class texts or biblical characters evidence leadership traits and I will tell how each has informed my understanding of leadership is, provide a ministry audit (strengths and weaknesses), the role of culture in leadership, recommendations for ministry and an overall summary.

Biblical Foundations

My understanding of leadership varied based on certain class texts I read and scripture. Arthur Boers claimed the "biblical authors did not explicitly address the topic of leadership" (Boers, p. 29, 41.) Instead, Boers demonstrated the Bible has a "negative" view of human leadership (Boers, p. 26.) In "Isaiah 3:12b, "my people – your leaders mislead you and confuse your paths"   (Boers, p. 26.) Also, a leader should not aspire to "places of honor" Matthew 23:6 (Boers, p. 38.) While some would counter Boers' hypothesis with Paul's verses on gifts [Romans 12:3–8] within the church as evidence of Biblical leadership, Boers would not. He saw this passage as a mere detail of "aspects of what we understand… leadership to be." (Boers, p. 29.) For example, Boers used Exodus 18 (eg., Jethro & Moses) to proffer the power of leadership delegation in scripture and how "power should not reside in one person" (Boers, p. 30.) To Boers, instead of centralized power, here is a devolution of power (Boers, p. 30.)

Personally, I support Boers views concerning leadership. Contrary to the current church trends, the Bible does not encourage those to seek teaching/leadership status because they will be held to a higher standard [James 3:1.] I would use the following verses to identify critical aspects of leadership: Empathy [Matthew 7:12 [NIV] "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets"]; Humility [Leaders

should engage others in a Spirit of humility [Philippians 2:3–4.]]; The ability to humbly seek

advice [eg., seeking wise counsel from others when making important decision. (Proverbs

11:14)]; Obedience [A leader should have a heart of obedience to the Lord [John 13:13–17]];

Culturally minded & gift recognizing/promoting [A leader should promote diversity within the

Body of Christ; Holiness [A leader should be biblically upright and skillful in their exercise of

leadership (Psalm 78:72) and ensure/encourage their own and their flocks purity/holiness [Acts

20:28]]; Service driven [It is important for a leader to have a heart of service (Matthew 20:26–

28)]; Faithfulness [A leader should be faithful with whatever they are given (Luke 12:48)]; Also,

the leader should recognize their own and their congregants spiritual gifts and encourage their

use and growth (Ephesians 4:11–13, Romans 12:3–8.)] Cooper, Santora, and Sarros, p. 1-7.

Critical texts

Text 1

In *"Transformational Leadership And The Rich Young Ruler: Luke 18:18–30,"* Jeff

Gossmann helped me to understand the concept of transformational leadership v. transactional

leadership. Gossmann defined transformational leadership as having "four characteristics [:] 1)

Idealized influence (eg., "the leader's ideal qualities that make them role models for their

followers;" They are selfless "and avoid using their power for personal gain"), 2) inspirational

motivation (eg., the ability "to ["elevate morale"] inspire … followers to achieve more than …

their [own] self-interest), 3) intellectual stimulation (eg., "stimulate innovation, creativity, and

new solutions to old problems; Looking for "continual… improve[ment], including their

followers in the problem-solving process…[which leads to] increase[d] productivity and

individualized consideration …" and 4) individualized consideration (creates opportunities for

individual growth and provides coaching and mentorship to their followers.) (Gossmann, p. 28-

29.) Conversely, transactional leadership is where a leader relies on "contingent reward(s)

["fulfill[ing] agreed-upon expectations"], management-by-exception [managing

"actively/passively" while noting a followers' "deviances from standards and any mistakes

(made)"], or, sometimes, lassez-faire (Avolio & Bass, 2001)" in their relationships with their

supporters (Gossmann, p. 29.)

Personally, I see use of transformational leadership as a powerful means for holistic

revival in the church, where used in alignment with Christ. This type of leadership sets a

positive church atmosphere. If a leader is focused on their followers rather than self-focused (eg.

money/notoriety), it empowers believers in continued positive development, creates a

community mindset, encourages a collaborative environment for all where open communication

is paramount and is Biblically supported [1 John 4:18.] In turn, it fosters an atmosphere to come

up with creative solutions to problems and engages everyone (eg., through delegation (eg.,

Exodus 18:14-27 – Moses, Jethro and the Judges; Also, the Bible shows the importance of

mentorship and transition plans (eg., Exodus 17, Moses appointing and mentoring Joshua to fight

the Amelikites. Later, in Deut. 34:9, Moses laid hands on and allowed the Lord to empower

Joshua to be the Isrealites' leader.)

Text 2

In "Leader-Member Exchange in Scripture: Insights from Jesus, Noah, and Abraham,"

Jennifer Dose identified Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)'s "interpersonal relationship between

a leader and individual followers" (Dose, p. 83.) Thus, some LMX followers receive a higher

degree of social exchange "including increased levels of information sharing, interaction time,

mutual support, and informal influence" (Dose, p. 83.) "In contrast, other followers receive a

lower level of social exchange and are treated in a more formal, "by-the-book" manner" (Dose,

p. 83.)

Jesus is an example of an individual who successfully used LMX concepts. In the beginning of His ministry, Jesus had many followers, As He progressed in ministry, He selected twelve persons (whom He spent a greater amount of time with and provided more specialized teaching.) "He did not speak to them [the crowd] except in parables, but He explained everything in private to His disciples" (Mk. 4:34). "To you (the disciples) it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given." (Mt. 13:11). Jesus involved the disciples and encouraged them to learn by doing or apply what they had learned, such as when He asked them to give the five thousand something to eat (Mk. 6:37). "Manson (cited in Thornton, 1956) has calculated that seventy percent of the Lord's teaching was given privately to the Twelve." (Dose, p. 89.)   Then, "even among[st] these twelve, He had a more focused relationship with Peter, James, and John" (Dose, p. 87.)   Examples of high LMX included the high amount of teaching they received, specific experiences, expectations, and empowerment. "Only Peter, James and John accompanied Jesus into the house of Jairus (Luke 8:51)." "Peter, James, and John witnessed the transfiguration (Mt. 17:1-2, Mk. 9:2-3, Lk. 9:28-29) and accompanied Jesus to Gethsemane to keep watch with Him (Mt. 26:37, Mk. 14:32-34)." Peter - Walked on water with Jesus (Mt. 14:28-29); Appointed as "the Rock" with a call to "Lead My Sheep…" "Thus, it is significant that He chose not to foster the same level of exchange relationship with each of His followers" (Dose, p. 87.)

Text 3

I saw Moses as a Biblical character who gave me a better understanding of powerful leadership. Moses exhibited a provocative, bold, and fearful leadership styles. I said provocative because Moses only knew the Lord briefly (eg. burning bush) but, spoke with Him, like a friend, in a nervous/questioning/bold tone ("eg. You have been telling me, …You have said…)

Moses was fearful because he felt the weight of what the Lord was asking him to do as a leader. He expressed a willingness to do so but, only if he had the assurance the Lord was with him on the journey. There was a measure of boldness present in Moses. Moses twice recited the Lord's own Word's to Him. It reminded me of Psalm, 119:49-50 declares, "Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope. My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life.." Also, Moses exercised fearful but, cautious faith. He expressed multiple doubts. But, Moses never said he would not do what the Lord asked him to do. He just needed the assurance of the Lord's Presence and His Guidance to undergo the next step in leadership.

I saw Moses' use of a measured leadership style with a benefit of the group focus. The reason for this is how he approached the Lord. He did not willingly accept the leadership position upon the Lord's initial command. Moses only did so after denigrating himself (I can't speak well, who am I, etc…) and asking God for degrees of security (Be with me [His Presence/ His favor] and to teach him [His wisdom – a la Solomon later in the Scriptures]…) Then, he reminded God "…that this nation is your people" and "How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us?" He knew the importance of his and the peoples' success were tied to their relationship with the Lord and His Presence. He did not want to start leading without Him. While Moses struggled with anger and self-confidence issues, it was great to see how Moses led with "teachability and humility."   It reminded me of 1 Peter 5:5-6. When Moses was in Egypt, God wasn't there for him. It wasn't until Moses was humbled and, in the desert, he could listen to the Lord with a receptive heart.   Then, Moses could knew the importance of God's direction and was rewarded for it.   To see/read that Moses was so humble and teachable, the Lord not only rewarded Moses with His Presence but,

fellowshipped with him as a friend is amazing (eg., Ex 33:11 God spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks with his friend and left Moses with a shining face.)

Literature Review

My understanding of leadership is one where a leader is Spirit filled, has discernment, has love and impeccable character. In his sermon entitled, "Leaders, We Need the Holy Spirit - Acts 1-20", Steve Brandon emphasized the "crucial role of the Holy Spirit, especially as it comes to Spiritual Leadership" (Brandon, p. 1.) Brandon cited J. Oswald Sanders: "Spiritual leadership can be exercised only by Spirit-filled men. Other qualifications for spiritual leadership are desirable. To be Spirit-filled is indispensable." Brandon reminded us that "God's ministry must be done in God's power. If we want to speak boldly, we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit" (Brandon, p. 2.) We also need to be led of the Spirit. (Brandon, p.3-4.) To Brandon, it's not about "running the church [as a business]" (Brandon, p. 3.) Instead, we [must] shepherd the church (Brandon, p. 3.)

Boers noted part of being a good shepherd [involves] "discerning what is good and worthwhile from what is not." (Boer, p. 22.) Instead, the church frequently "focuses on individual personalities and … charismatic leaders, who often need and seek out acclamation" (Boers, p. 5). This results in "Church Leadership Lite"… both "short on biblical and theological integrity and oblivious to serious leadership study" (Boers, p. 6.) Kellerman detailed how "leadership is judged on only two criteria: ethics and effectiveness.:" Good leaders possess both qualities while poor leaders do not (Kellerman, p. 71.) In her opinion this presents a problem because there are instances where either good or bad leaders possess one criteria more than another, resulting in disappointment and disillusionment. (Kellerman, p 71-72.) Love is a corner stone of biblical character and leadership. Character is important in leadership because of its impact on the individual and others in its proper exercise or lack thereof. Galatians 5:6 and 1

Corinthians 13:4-7 show how faith and love are intertwined in how they are exercised through

one's character. In their article, Cooper, Santora, and Sarros identify "… good leaders to be

strong in character, that is, to have a moral imperative underwrite their actions. These leaders

with character have been identified as authentic leaders: They are what they believe in; show

consistency between their values, ethical reasoning and actions; develop positive psychological

states such as confidence, optimism, hope, and resilience in themselves and their associates; and

are widely known and respected for their integrity."   They identified "3 dimensions of

leadership character – universalism [an understanding, appreciation, and tolerance for the

welfare of people generally, and is a macro perspective approach to work and life. The character

attributes of respectfulness, fairness, cooperativeness, and compassion…"] transformation [an

activity that inspires others in the achievement of long-term visionary goals. The character

attributes of courage and passion best represent this factor], and benevolence [a micro approach

to work, and focuses on concern for the welfare of others through one's daily interactions.

Selflessness, integrity, and organization loyalty best represent the characteristics of

benevolence.]" These are character traits true leaders should aspire to and live out (eg., 2

Samuel 24 - David.)

      Brafman and Beckstrom analyzed leadership patterns in nature and determined certain

animals (eg., starfish) were able to successfully adapt to environmental changes and grow while

other animals could not adapt if debilitated or even died if certain body parts (eg., limbs,

head/brains) were missing (eg., spider.) (Brafman and Beckstrom, p. 34-35.) The starfish

symbolized a "decentralized"/ "open" system where there is "no clear leader, no hierarchy, and

no headquarters. If and when a leader does emerge, that person has little power over others."

This decentralization ensures even if one "leader" is removed, chaos will not ensue but, the

institution will still survive independently (Brafman and Beckstrom, p. 7, 18-19.) The spider

represented a "centralized"/"closed" system where a definitive leader is in place and the

organization has specific location(s) from where determinations are made (Brafman and

Beckstrom, p.18.) But, if the spider loses its head, it will cease to exist. Likewise, if a

corporation adopts this leadership system, it falters or is destroyed once its identified leader is no

more. Roger Harrison advocated cultivating a "lens of love" within an organization. Harrison

identified "three human needs/motives present: Power ["a way of accomplishing results in the

world that they believe are in service to others, … to [dear] ideals and values, etc…] Plus,

showing strong concern for the welfare, education, growth and development of those in their care

They have a sense of obligation to those weaker than themselves, and they exercise power

according to their understanding of what is good for the organization and its people"],

achievement ["[p]eople with high achievement needs tend to love their work or profession, and

engage in it for its own sake, not simply for the external rewards that may come their way as a

result of their work"] and affiliation ["mutual trust between the individual [and] organization.

People are valued as human beings, not just [parts of] a machine. Warmth and compassion are

common, not just driving enthusiasm or striving for power]" (Harrison, p. 2, 4.) Within all of

these, love must be integral parts, according to Harrison.

Summarize Critical ideas from the authors chosen

These authors' ideas have the potential for various positive impacts in the church or

ministry setting I am in. They highlighted the importance of character. Without it, it may open

up the individual and organization to destruction. The importance of the power of love within

organizations is key and biblical: If you don't lead with love, a leader's goals and results are

meaningless (1 Corinthians 13:1-8b.) With love, it enables individuals to view "[t]he workplace

[as] a field [to] express their love through creativity, excellence and dedication" (Harrison, p. 3.)

True church leaders can be visionaries, recognize and reward success (which motivates their staff as per Kotter's observation.) Secure church leaders will take the time to identify and groom others with leadership potential (eg., produces a new generation of visionaries.) This would lead to greater church growth, community engagement, etc…especially if these were part of the leaders' visions.

Ministry Audit

What strengths in leadership do you witness in your own context?

In my own context I witness promotion of Christlike congregational/individual uplift and an embrace of continued learning.   Current leadership highlighted the importance of delegation of responsibility. This reminded me of Pixar and how one of the founders (Catmull) embraced a similar nurturing environment (Catmull, pg. 39-40, 116- 117.) Another strength is leadership's emphasis on engagement and developing of authentic friendships/relationships where love is present, inside and outside of the church (Mowry, p. 53-54, 81.)

What are areas in your context that can improve?

One potential weakness I see in the leadership structure is the closed system of leadership and to what extent church members are involved in leadership decisions. The ministry leadership structure is closed and predominately family focused (namely, the founder's family forms the "inner circle" of leadership.) There are others, outside of the family, who make up the core group of leadership. But, those numbers are few. Likewise, the ministry needs the ability to identify talented individuals who have leadership potential and nurture them to be leaders within the ministry and themselves. Also, if church members are seen as an "out group", there is no way for them to influence church decisions. Mostly, it seems church decisions are made and

the congregants are told of them after the fact. Also, the ministry can improve by being open to the input of other leaders/subordinates.

What role does culture play in leadership?

"Culture – is as important to patterns of dominance and deference as are leaders and followers" (Kellerman, p.43-44.) The presence of a proper culture can either make or break an organization. An example of a proper culture was evident in "Creativity Inc." by Pixar co-founder, Ed Catmull. Catmull 1) embraced positive changes within a collaborative environment [embrace progressive changes and continued learning (pg. 39, 202) eliminated the hierarchical workplace (pg. 33), fostered a community mindset (pg. 5) and encouraged collaboration (p. 87)]; 2) dealing with problems constructively; 3) valuing the importance of mentorship (pg. 116- 117.) He also highlighted the importance of delegation of responsibility (pg. 39-40), trusting and being open to the input of other leaders/subordinates and creating proper transition plans. The presence of culture in leadership shows how different results can be achieved with the same information. Brafman and Beckstrom believed that so long as leaders do not adopt a primarily centralized leadership style, they will succeed regardless of culture. One story was how both GM and Toyota had access to the same consultant (eg., Drucker) but achieved different results within the auto industry (eg., GM [stagnant], Toyota [success] (Brafman and Beckstrom, p. 164.) Another key factor was employee treatment (eg., GM - workers were "drones who needed to be kept in line" which led to poor management/ employee relations and numerous quality issues; Toyota - employees were "empowered" "assets" which encouraged a team mentality and better quality products (Brafman and Beckstrom, p. 185-188.) Not only was Toyota successful, they were able to replicate the same results on U.S. soil using a GM plant and employees.   Given the importance of culture, "church leaders must take active scriptural steps to understand and

embrace the different [c]ommunication, customs, and unspoken expectations… face[d] in cross-cultural and multicultural ministry contexts" (Schneberger, p. 52-53.)

What recommendations do you have for your current context?

As a church leader, I need to be personally be engaged in continual renewal and be aware/ encourage the gifts the Lord gave to each member. Upon doing so, present them with continued mentoring with a seasoned believer [who was the same gift(s)] in proper stewardship and application of the gifts (1 Peter 4:10). This would allow for the gifts to grow in each member and ensure the church can be built up by allowing the members to apply the gifts inside but, especially outside the church [eg., connecting with the surrounding communities, fostering and establishing relationships (inside and outside the church) especially amongst the younger and older congregants.] This allows for the member(s) faith to grow in the exercise of their gifts, encourages non-believers in finding out where these gifts came from (in seeing or hearing the display of the gifts) and provide evangelism opportunities in the display of the Lord's favor and power.   Also, grace and respect must be shown to the church member in their use of the gift. If the earlier mentioned actions steps are done, the church will be built up for the Lord's glory.

<center>**Summary**</center>

How has this course impacted you as a potential or current pastor or leader of a church?

This course has positively impacted me as a potential pastor and current leader in the church in various ways. The insights I developed from the course were: it is possible to engage in effective transformational leadership within a Christian setting; it is ok to use secular models of leadership and holistic measures to allow a believer to experience wholeness in Christ without sacrificing Biblical foundations.

References:

Boers, A., (2015). *Servants and Fools,* Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN, Kindle Edition.

Brafman, O. and Beckstrom, R., (2007). *The Starfish And The Spider: The Unstoppable Power Of Leaderless Organizations,* Penguin Group, NY, Kindle Edition.

Brandon, S., *Leaders, We Need the Holy Spirit, Acts 1-20,* May 15, 2011 Sermon at Rock Valley Bible Church.

Catmull, E., (2014). *Creativity Inc.*, Random House, NY, Kindle Edition.

Cooper, B, Santora, J and Sarros, J., (2007). *The Character Of Leadership,* Ivey Business Journal,

Dose, J., "Leader-Member Exchange in Scripture: Insights from Jesus, Noah, and Abraham" (2006). Business Educator Scholarship. 14. https://mosaic.messiah.edu/bus_ed/14

Gossmann, J. (2020). *Transformational Leadership And The Rich Young Ruler: Luke 18:18–30.* Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership, 10(1), 22–33.

Harrison, Ph.D., R., (2009). *Accessing The Power Of Love In The Workplace*.

Kellerman, B. (2012). *The End of Leadership,* Harper Business, Kindle Edition.

Mowry, B. (2016). *The Ways Of The Alongsider: Growing Disciples Life To Life*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.

Schneberger, R. (2012). *Toward A Living System Theology For Discipleship And Leadership Development In The Complex Urban Context*. *Africanus Journal*, 4 (1), 49-60.

Van Dyne, L, Ang, S , and Livermore, D., (2008). *Cultural Intelligence: A Pathway for Leading in a Rapidly Globalizing World*, in Hannum, K.M., McFeeters, B., Booysen, L, *Leadership Across Differences: Cases and Perspectives*. San Francisco, CQ: Pfeiffer.