Learning Experience 1C

The Most Important Factors in Selecting and Developing Leaders

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A. **Theology**

Three key Biblical characters influence my theology of leadership development—Moses, Jesus and Paul.

Much of my biblical theology of leadership was formed by the life of Moses. Moses demonstrates the ongoing process of having one's soul formed over the course of a lifetime. Moses had wounds and opportunities in his past that uniquely informed his development as a leader. He needed to define himself by God's call instead of by his past and his weaknesses. Over his lifetime, we see him moving from questioning and insecurity toward intimacy and confidence. Initially he failed to lean into God's call for him and operated out of anger, fear and impulse.[1] At Meribah,[2] he failed to lean into what God was calling him to—a shift toward the spoken word of God instead just sign acts but that resulted in rebellion- doing things the same was as always and that meant he missed the promise. Over time, however, he grew into communing with God face to face and following His word as true. He set aside his fear and spoke to the people as a leader who had been spoken to by the living God. He was concerned about the presence of God going before him,[3] focused on the people he led[4] and on the reputation of the God he served more than he was concerned about his own qualifications or safety. Journeying with the God who provided for the Israelites in impossible situations, who led them day and night, and certainly seeing God in His glory, lifted Moses' eyes from his weakness to God's might.

Jesus is an obvious but essential model for Biblical leadership. He led out of intimacy with the Father[5] and dependence on the Spirit. He not only sought God in the selection of leaders by praying all night before calling them, but he routinely demonstrated for them the value of getting away to be with God. In Matthew 9 and 10 we read that Jesus called His disciples *to* Himself and then sent them out, modelling for them ministry priorities. We are first called to God before we are ever sent out. By so doing, Jesus demonstrated the access his disciples have to God. When he instructed them to wait for

power from on high, he was instructing them about the sufficient and essential empowerment of the Spirit.[6]

Further, Jesus created space for his disciples to learn. He clearly articulated his mission and purpose and invited them to join him. After modelling all aspects of his stated purpose repeatedly—preaching, healing, deliverance, teaching,[7] he invited his disciples in. He allowed his disciples to try with increasing measures of responsibility. After experiential learning, he allowed for discussion and coaching. His level of disclosure was greater with those closer to him that with the crowds.

Jesus also pointed his disciples toward multiplication, but this was not in their own power. The mission didn't originate with them neither does power originate with them. They were called into something much bigger than themselves.

Paul is another key leadership figure. He first modelled the radical encounter necessary with Jesus to transform religious leadership into spiritual leadership.[8] Paul also had a significant season of hiddenness and preparation before his public ministry where he presumably worked through the nuances of his radical faith transformation.[9] Paul modelled compassion for the church[10], unwavering commitment to his call[11] and assignment as well as the critical role of empowerment and filling of the Spirit.

Paul lived and promoted the deeper life,[12] missions,[13] as well as the life of the church. These emphases must be central in the life of the leader. Paul was radically opposed to self-focus[14] and centred on Christ-exalting ministry. Critically, he exhorted the role of unity,[15] cooperation, and how no one is above the other[16] and that as the body of Christ, we must be Spirit-led and consistently demonstrating certain characteristics such as joy, patience and self-control. [17]

Theologically, while I find both authors motivating, I resonate more with Ferguson. While Reiland is very practice oriented and motivating, his teachings are grounded in experience but not overtly linked to a biblical theology of leadership. Some of it sounds like external modification (be more

grateful,[18] be a joyful leader[19]) without addressing the soul of the leader underneath. Ferguson, however, provides a far more robust theology of leadership and roots leadership examples not just in church practice but also in the person of Christ. His multiplication principles are rooted in Christ's leadership. If I were to make a recommendation for a young leader to read, I would tend toward HeroMaker to avoid reinforcing the tendency to modify behaviours or lean on leadership strategies alone.

B. Interaction with Texts

In Dave Ferguson and Warren Bird's HeroMaker, the authors list five practices to develop others. Permission Giving and Gift Activation are the most natural practices for me. Frequently, I have a clear sense of what God may be calling people to do, particularly if they are young, wounded or not operating in an area of giftedness. This is sometimes most clear in a deliverance setting or in inner healing ministry. God draws a clear contrast between His purposes and the attacks of the enemy to keep the person from the call of God. I love to partner with God in this way; it also makes discernment easier as it seems that the enemy goes right after a person's calling and core identity. I love speaking the affirmation of God over people and seeing them step into the empowerment of God. To that end, ICNU conversations flow relatively naturally, as does reminding people of how Jesus shares his authority.[20] As the authors suggest, the link between ICNU conversations and activating gift-based serving is clear[21] as what I see in people is usually a call that requires the empowerment and gifting of the spirit.

Permission Giving and Gift Activation are natural for me to continue when I am releasing people into other contexts—other churches or under other people's leadership. This is more natural in deliverance ministry and in my ministry partnership with Mexico. Many times people need permission to know they can hear the voice of God and interact with Him personally. Others need permission to step into gifts of discernment and to walk in the authority God gives. Permission giving and releasing people to operate in gifts is harder in the local church context where some gifts do not seem welcome. In small groups and

ministries I lead, I am creating welcoming spaces but the disconnect is obvious between my leadership and the broader leadership in terms of permission giving. I am encouraging people to bless and pray for our leadership and our church, to notice growth and to hope for more as a church but it is certainly more difficult to multiply leadership when the leadership above me doesn't fully embrace the same values.

In Amplified Leadership Reiland discusses the importance of positivity and gratitude in a leader.[22] This is a growth area for me. I want to be genuinely encouraging and upbeat but I am naturally more tranquil and analytical. Being analytical, I believe, can be both a strength and a detriment. I can easily identify what is not working in systems and in my desire to promote the health of the system, I tend to think the solution lies in identifying and solving problems. When I focus on diagnosing problems and solving them, I notice what is not working more than what is working. Thus I can tend to frame things negatively and lapse in the practice gratitude. People are motivated to change when they feel safe and secure and when there is positivity in the relationship and system. A personal challenge is to seek to identify, at least to start, in equal amounts, what is laudable and what is lagging, what is existing and what is yet-to-emerge. To speak of a gap should be to also speak of gratitude. I am also practicing more and more blessing those whom I disagree with. I want to develop the habit of gratitude and seeing the good so I am characterized by hope as a leader.

Reiland also discusses the importance of invitation in bringing on a team member, stating, "Invite people to a vision, not a task."[23] As I am seeking to develop a ministry in our church and raise up a team that will not be dependent on me in a year or two since it is not an area where I want to serve long term, I realize afresh the importance of communicating vision to the people I am leading. I need to commit to the vision myself, with confidence and embrace my own role as leader in the program.[24] Then, as I embrace the vision, I can clearly communicate it with confidence. Instead of my primary role

as being raising up leaders to fill my spot, I want to raise up people who believe in the power of Scripture to impact the next generation and the central role of Bible teaching and memorization in spiritual formation of our youth. I notice that connecting people to vision comes naturally when I am passionate about a ministry. When I have lost sight of vision and become more task-focused, I also lead in the same way. Thus, my orientation toward task can become diagnostic in a certain sense. If I am not communicating vision, I have likely lost touch of it myself. Without building vision in people and continually pointing us to the vision, I am building a program more than I am building people.[25]

A third consideration from Amplified Leadership is that of preparedness. In a local ministry I lead, I may inadvertently communicate unpreparedness in the program administration.[26] Part of this comes from unpreparedness at national levels due to overworked leaders; another factor is that I stepped in to keep the program running and while I have ample experience, I do not have an abundance of time. It is not adequate to plan on a week-by-week basis or a semester-by-semester basis as I did last year. I am working on creating administrative and financial systems that will account for my own shortcomings in that area as well as better delegation of tasks so I do not carry disproportionate pressure. I need to have thoughtfully planned out the year in order to manage the load on a weekly basis. Upfront investment in systems will allow volunteers, the leadership team, families and the youth to know what to expect. Furthermore, it will allow me to hold people accountable. In my desire to accommodate people, the goal posts can shift. I need to clearly communicate expectations and stick to them in order to be fair and organized and maintain the integrity of the program. In my desire to be flexible and accommodating, I am allowing for disorder. I want a flatter system of leadership but there do need to be firm decisions, even if they are group decisions so communication can happen in a timely fashion.

C. **Your Leadership Development History**

As I have reflected on my leadership in the last few years, I have realized I love engaging with people on a deep level and identifying and calling out their giftings and potential. It is relatively natural for me to develop people towards embracing their full potential, not simply to fill a role. I naturally work well with people who are passionate about deep spiritual things. I lead well people who need spiritual investment and empowerment more than systems and structures; I struggle to lead people who need rigid structures, and a constant stream of resources and inputs. I need to develop structures and means of leading people that are intentional but adaptable, incremental and progressive but not rigid. I also need to learn how to lead even as I empower others. As I elevate their positions and intentional work against hierarchy, I can become uncertain about my own role and voice. Areas of strength, room for growth and considerations for this semester's learning are more fully explored in the table below.

Ministry area	What Has Gone Well	What Is/Was Lacking	Take-away
Quizzing Leadership Team	-flattening leadership structure; moving away from one person makes all the decisions to welcoming other voices -making volunteers feel like leaders -giving permission for older women and younger men to teach the Bible and to use gifts -spreading work load and responsibilities between people based on gifting and desired area of serving	-I do not give a lot of constructive or explicit feedback on what could be changed -In valuing consensus and trying to release others into leadership, there have been a few instances where I needed to make a decision for the group and I hesitated -I need to anticipate that at a district leadership level, the organizer is behind and overworked and information release will be late. I need to give tentative dates and have things drafted ahead so that I am not communicating from a place of disorder or frustration.	-Even in a flatter leadership structure, people need to know who is responsible for what. By "demoting" myself as leader and asking for more support, I have lost my own certainty sometimes about "if" I can lead.
Deliverance Ministry Teams	-Calling out gifts in others and giving them opportunities to lead	-Following up on -structured approaches to leadership development	-I need to pray about leadership development

	-recognizing others are stronger at the on-going relational needs and I am better at crisis management/short-term interventions -providing opportunity for stepping into leadership and practicing gift-based ministry	-planned and incremental strategies for releasing into leadership (I tend to have a general sense of where things might go and respond to the Spirit but I don't necessarily walk people through stages of what to expect or to the 5 stages that Ferguson speaks of. I do the first two stages of apprenticeship well (I do, you watch, we talk; I do, you help, we talk). Most people are comfortable with me leading and I don't know if that is because I am not pushing or equipping enough.	regarding: identifying in whom I should invest at a higher level and how structured that approach should be. (Is my perception of lack of structure due to assumptions I am making around how leadership "should" look or is more structure necessary and helpful?
Bridgeway North American School (CDMX)	-affirmation of individual value and contribution to the school regardless of position (a-typical in a hierarchical culture) -calling others to spiritual leadership in a school environment	-frustration with leadership that spoke of the importance of spiritual leadership but didn't act out of it (how to lead when you aren't the highest leader) -didn't always plan thoughtfully how to use the time of those underneath me. Often reached for low-hanging fruit (what could get done immediately or what was useful and would occupy their time as opposed to what was strategic and developmental for them -planning was often week-to-week and not annual and progressive	-I intentionally value "flatter structures" that empower others, yet I cannot abdicate my own leadership role -I need to be thoughtful in the delegation of tasks, not just with short-term goals but long-term development in mind. It is likely better to bring people's opinions in at a higher level (what are areas where they want to grow as opposed to what tasks do they want to do)
Women's Leadership Development in Cuba	-Shared leadership with another IW colleague in offering retreats for female leaders/pastors/wives. It worked well as she delegated out tasks to short-term teams	-Full engagement in the retreats led to a sense of intimacy and an expectation of commitment from retreat participants (women leaders). I didn't know	-I don't know how to find middle ground in engaging with people, which I sense sometimes limits me from engaging with people and other times

	that weren't in my strengths and I could focus on areas of gifting. -Worked within structured curriculum but made certain parts our own to respond to cultural and personal needs on the women's leadership team -Was able to share my story through a redemptive lens so others could see the possibility for redemption -taught and provided opportunities for listening to Jesus which was a novel concept for most -was able to speak prophetically over every woman and release them into giftings	how to manage the differing relational expectations and the high pressure for high levels of contact and intimacy with many, many people.	means I carry too much of a relationship.

[1] Exodus 3-4.

[2] Numbers 20.

[3] Exodus 33:15.

[4] Exodus 32.

[5] John 5:19.

[6] Acts 1:4-8.

[7] Luke 4:18-19.

[8] Acts 9.

[9] N. T. Wright, *Paul, A Biography*. (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2018), 89.

[10] Romans 10:1.

[11] 2 Cor 11:24-31.

[12] Ephesians 1

[13] Acts 13-14, 16-20.

[14] Galatians 2:20.

[15] Phil 4:2-3.

[16] 1 Cor 12.

[17] Galatians 5:20-21.

[18] Dan Reiland, *Amplified Leadership: 5 Practices to Establish Influence, Build People and Impact Others for a Lifetime*. (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2011), 80.

[19] Ibid, 77.

[20] Dave Ferguson, Dave and Warren Bird. *Hero Maker: Five Essential Practices for Leaders to Multiply Leaders*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 134.

[21] Ibid, 194.

[22] Reiland 77, 80.

[23] Ibid, 124.

[24] Ibid, 99

[25] Ibid, 124.

[26] Ibid, 120.