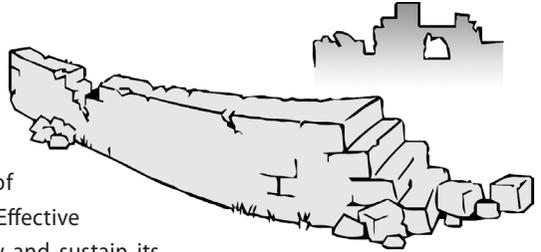


leader qualities ...



I have been looking recently at the issue of leadership and the qualities that are required. Effective leadership is vital if a church is going to grow and sustain its growth. So what are some of the qualities a good leader needs to have?

A good leader needs to be visionary. Again, and again I have observed that church, missionary and ministry leaders are people of vision. Vision really means that those who are in leadership know where they are going. In the book of Nehemiah, we see a man who was burdened about the condition of Jerusalem. Nehemiah 1:4: *"So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of Heaven."* As soon as Nehemiah heard of the plight of his people, and that the walls were in ruins, he was burdened, and had a God given vision to return and rectify the situation.

PRAISE the Lord for:

- ★ A total of 1163 responses from the USA prison edition for 2018
- ★ Another fruitful trip to the USA for Carl. Andrew and Carl were able to promote the paper to a number of new churches who are keen to use the paper for outreach
- ★ Another church plant ministry in Canada who are keen to use the Challenge for outreach
- ★ Another couple of team members for our next Impact Africa mission team
- ★ The possibility of partnering with Word of Life in Spain to distribute the Challenge newspaper

A good leader needs to be passionate. To have a vital relationship with the Lord Jesus and thus a passion to fulfil their God-given vision. Once Nehemiah knew what God wanted him to do, he pursued it with vigour. He was bold before the king in letting him know what was ailing him, and then what he needed, to get him back to Jerusalem and get started on the wall.

A good leader needs to be prayerful. In the first chapter of Nehemiah, prayer is mentioned eight times, and numerous other times throughout the rest of the book. Most leaders recognise that prayer should be an integral part of developing a God-ordained vision. Leaders can get many good ideas that on the surface seem worth running with, but unfortunately are not God-ordained. In John 21, the disciples fished all night and caught nothing and as they came to shore, Jesus asked them if they had caught any fish to which they had to answer no. Jesus then asks them to cast their net on the right side of the boat. Remember these were seasoned fishermen who knew the Sea of Galilee well, however at the word of Jesus they

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were blessed with a full net. I have seen churches doing programs for years without knowing if they were God-ordained or not. The result is no fruit and the church becomes disillusioned and profoundly discouraged.

A good leader knows the importance of conveying their vision to others. This is particularly important in church life. Evidence abounds that clearly indicates that unless the church owns the vision it has little to no chance of succeeding. Nehemiah took time in chapter 2 to share how God had called him and prepared the way for him to return to Jerusalem. By doing this, he was validating his vision

PRAYER needed for:

- ★ Project funding for Impact Africa. Each year our Impact team raises funds to help various ministries including prison work, hospital ministry and children's program
- ★ A full-time Editor to free Carl up to concentrate on promotion and development of the ministry in Australia and overseas
- ★ The commencement of this new project into Spain. We need our UK newspaper on board as well as funding to allow this to commence
- ★ The monthly distribution of the paper for Australia. We are praying for an increase to 40,000 copies per month

from God. An important part of conveying the vision to a church is to model it to the people. If the leaders want their people to evangelise, for example, then they need to be prepared to model evangelism. Another important part of conveying a vision is to inspire people. Nehemiah did this by not only letting the people know what God had already done, but that he was willing to get down in the trenches with his people. Leaders who are aloof from their people rarely inspire. In addition, Nehemiah inspired his people by his faith in God. Having expressed how God had done some wonderful things, he then declares to his people in chapter 2v20, "The God of heaven Himself will prosper us."

A good leader will recognise the need for practical infrastructure to bring into reality their vision, and to sustain it. Nehemiah was strategic in what he did. For example, with the rebuilding of the wall Nehemiah appointed families to do the section of the wall next to their home. This gave them extra incentive to do the job well. Whilst this is only a brief overview of the importance of vision, particularly in the local church, I am absolutely convinced that many of our churches are experiencing a crisis of leadership and as a consequence a crisis of vision. We need to get back to developing godly leaders, who are putting into place God ordained vision.

CARL CARMODY
EDITOR CHALLENGE

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