

The Mindset of a Leader

Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:2–24

Code: B130822

So far in our series on the roles of men and women in the church, we've laid out the guidelines for male leadership in detail. If you're gifted to lead, by this point you have a good idea what your job is. But be careful not to jump into leadership and forget your place. You're a sinner saved by the grace of God, just like everyone you're leading. You have no reason to boast. Leaders who forget that wreak spiritual havoc in the church.

Many contemporary church leaders fancy themselves businessmen, executives, entertainers, psychologists, philosophers, presidents, or lawyers. Yet those roles contrast sharply with the symbolism Scripture employs to depict pastors and spiritual leaders in the church.

In 2 Timothy 2, for example, Paul uses seven different metaphors to describe a spiritual leader. He pictures the minister as a teacher (2 Timothy 2:2), a soldier (2 Timothy 2:3), an athlete (2 Timothy 2:5), a farmer (2 Timothy 2:6), a workman (2 Timothy 2:15), a vessel (2 Timothy 2:20–21), and a slave (2 Timothy 2:24). Each of those images evokes ideas of sacrifice, labor, service, and hardship. They speak eloquently about the complex and varied responsibilities of spiritual leadership. Not one of them pictures leadership as glamorous.

That's because it's not supposed to be glamorous. Leadership in the church is not a mantle of status to be conferred on the church's aristocracy. It isn't earned by seniority, purchased with money, won through style, or inherited through family ties. Its requirements are faultless character, spiritual maturity, skill in teaching, and a willingness to serve humbly.

God has ordained that leadership is to be a role of humble, loving service. Church leadership is ministry, not management. God calls leaders not to be governing monarchs but humble slaves, not slick celebrities but laboring servants, not charismatic personalities but faithful shepherds. The man who leads God's people must above all exemplify sacrifice, devotion, submission, and lowliness.

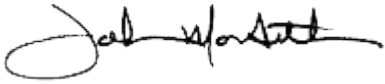
With the trends in the church where they are, nothing is more sorely needed today than a return to biblical leadership principles. Solid men willing to take on the true realities of leadership are appallingly rare, yet they are needed more than ever to stop the inexorable march of feminist values.

So, men, take the lead. Don't avoid leading or others will follow your example of cowardice. Set a good example by being faithful in prayer, living above reproach, maintaining a pure and orderly lifestyle, and humbly serving other Christians.

Next time we'll turn our attention to the role of women in the church.

But for now, think about the destructive power of pride. Have you seen pride blind you to the sin tucked into the corners of your life? How does a high-minded church leader negatively affect those in

his care?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John H. H. H." with a large, stylized initial "J" and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

(Adapted from [Divine Design](#).)

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