

LEADING LIKE THE SAVIOR

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There is a stark contrast between the worst leaders in the world and the perfect leader, the Savior of the world. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) explained: “Those leaders in history who have been most tragic in their impact on mankind were tragic precisely because they lacked to almost any degree the qualities of the Man of Galilee. Where Jesus was selfless, they were selfish. Where Jesus was concerned with freedom, they were concerned with control. Where Jesus was concerned with service, they were concerned with status. Where Jesus met the genuine needs of others, they were concerned only with their own needs and wants. Where Jesus was concerned with the development of his disciples, they sought to manipulate mortals. Where Jesus was filled with compassion balanced by justice, they have so often been filled with harshness and injustice.”¹

To succeed as leaders in the Lord’s Church, we must follow His example. The following ideas can help us become more Christlike in our leadership.

Christlike leaders serve “with an eye single to the glory of God” (D&C 4:5), seeking to do the will of Heavenly Father. The Savior said, “I came down from heaven, not to do mine

own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38).

Christlike leaders do not rely on “the arm of flesh” (2 Nephi 4:34). They humbly pray for guidance. They wait upon the Lord and seek to do His work in His time and His way instead of depending on their own talents and abilities.

Christlike leaders do not seek for positions in the Church; they see callings as opportunities to serve, not as promotions. Nor do they see releases as demotions. A release is inherent with every calling.

Christlike leaders are servants; they help, teach, and encourage those they serve. They seek to bless others, as the Savior did: “He doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world” (2 Nephi 26:24). They see themselves as the Lord’s representatives to help others return to Him.

Christlike leaders seek to help others develop. President Kimball also taught:

“Jesus trusts his followers enough to share his work with them so that they can grow. That is one of the greatest lessons of his leadership. If we brush other people aside in

“BUT I DON’T HAVE ANY LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE!”

Don’t worry if you don’t have much experience yet. You have been called by inspiration, by one having authority (see Articles of Faith 1:5). The Lord sees what you can become. Your call to lead can be an opportunity to develop your strengths and overcome weaknesses.

In business and other organizations, a leader’s education and experience are often key qualifications, but the Lord’s way is different. President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) taught: “[The] apostles which God called, which Jesus, the Son of God called, . . . were not educated; they did not comprehend the sciences, they did not occupy high positions in Judeah—they were poor and illiterate; of humble callings in life. . . . Well, then, the Lord is different. He makes His calls different from those calls made by men.”¹ Fortunately, whom the Lord calls He qualifies!²

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow* (2012), 151.
2. See Thomas S. Monson, “Duty Calls,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 44.



FOR LEADERS WHO COUNSEL WITH CHURCH MEMBERS

As you meet with Church members who need your help, they might want you to solve their problems for them. But doing so would deprive them of personal growth. They might come expecting an immediate solution, but their problems will often need more time to work themselves out. These are some common challenges. The following questions, suggested by priesthood leaders, can help as you prepare to counsel with members:

- Do you counsel and help members in such a way that overcoming their challenges remains their responsibility?
- Are you guiding members to find answers on their own?
- Are you following up on tasks they agreed to do?
- Are you helping them find resources to solve their own problems?
- Are you encouraging them to cry unto the Lord?
- Does your counsel encourage members to progress?

Of course, all situations are different, so it will be important to follow the guidance of the Spirit. Serving with love, patience, and spiritual sensitivity will lead to good results.

order to see a task done more quickly and effectively, the task may get done all right, but without the growth and development in followers that is so important. . . .

“Jesus gave people truths and tasks that were matched to their capacity. He did not overwhelm them with more than they could manage, but gave them enough to stretch their souls.”²

The Prophet Joseph Smith described how he led the people so well: “I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves.”³ This is the essence of the Lord’s approach to leadership. ■

NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, “Jesus: The Perfect Leader,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1979, 7.
2. Spencer W. Kimball, “Jesus: The Perfect Leader,” 6.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 284.