

Leadership Lessons from the Life of Moses
Lesson #19, Be Courageous and Speak All that God Commands-
It's Why He Put You in Leadership

Text: Ex.6:29; 7:2

The text for this lesson is brief, and we've covered its basics previously to some degree, but it contains an vital point: As *spiritual leaders*, our purpose is lead others to faithfulness to God, back to faithfulness to God, or to greater faithfulness to God. This goal is achieved in primarily one way. We **speaking all that God commands**. Though other duties of *compassion* and *caring* for related *physical* and *spiritual* needs may be involved, this is the primary path to faithfulness. To illustrate, think about the following question: From whence does *faith* come? Romans 10:17, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the **word of God**." It shouldn't then surprise us that *faithfulness* is also derived from *hearing the word of God*. All too often, our efforts toward spiritual leadership employ a little (or a lot!) of everything **but telling/showing** them *what God says*. We resort to *psychology*, *sociology*, or misdirected *compassion* that winds up enabling rather than correcting their lack of faith. So let's be clear: The *modus operandi* of spiritual leadership is to *teach God's Word*, Mark 6:34; *all of it*, Ex.6:29; 7:2. Given the clarity of the above, let's consider some related points and examples from other passages:

- **Esther 4:14, Difficulty.** Esther was in a difficult predicament. Despite being a Jewish captive in Persia king, Esther's grace and beauty ultimately attracted the attention of the king (Ahasuerus, 1:1; 2:5-7, 8-17a), and he made her his queen (2:17b). However, three important factors are involved: 1) Esther had concealed her ethnicity *before* and *after* her coronation, 2:10,20; 2) Through a series of related events, a plot evolved to "annihilate all the Jews" and "seize their possessions," 3:13; 4:7; and, 3) By Persian law, anyone who approached the king *without being summoned* was killed unless he accepted them, 4:11. Mordecai, Esther's *cousin* (2:7), discovered the plot and told her, wanting her to *speak to the king* and use her position and influence to avert disaster, 4:8. But this would require her to both *reveal her ethnicity*- which might get her killed, and to *approach the king without being summoned*- which could also mean her death. Now, all of that to get to Mordecai's "advice" to Esther given her **position of leadership**: "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place **and you and your father's house will perish**. And who knows **whether or not you have attained royalty for such a time as this?**" 4:14. There are a couple of salient points relative to *spiritual leadership* to be gleaned from this: 1) We do not always *know* that God has put us in a *position of leadership* for a specific purpose, but if He did (as I believe He did with Esther), what a tragedy it is to *shun our responsibility* because of its **difficulty**; and, 2) Neglecting or rejecting our opportunities for *spiritual leadership* has (eternal) consequences, cf. Matt.25:24-30. Good leaders do *the right thing* because it's the *right thing*, regardless.
- **Acts 20:20,26-27, Dedication.** Paul probably spent more time preaching and teaching in Ephesus than anywhere else, cf. 19:8-10; 20:31. In describing that time to the Ephesian elders, he affirmed that he "did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," 20:20-21. Because of his *diligence* and *completeness* in "declaring to you the whole purpose of God," he was "innocent" of *their blood* (should they be eternally lost), vv.27,26. Note specifically: 1) He did not *shrink back*- good leaders don't; 2) *anything profitable*- good leaders are well-read and discerning; and, 3) good leaders help others *see and understand* God's *whole purpose*, rather than just they parts they're interested in, or want to hear.
- **John 16:12, Discernment.** Jesus had "many more things" He wanted and needed to tell His disciples, but understood that they could not "bear them **now**." They needed to grow some first. Think about all that these disciples see and *experience* between this statement and Acts 2. Mature faith is sequential- it is built step by step. Missed steps prevent further progress. Good leaders are *discerning* enough to understand this, and take great pains to "build" with the right *tools*, *materials*, and *methods*, but also in the right *order* and *time* (can't build the *roof* before the *walls* and *foundation*), cf. 1Cor.3:10-14; Eph.2:19-22.

Three important "D's"- *Difficulty*, *Dedication*, and *Discernment*; all are vital to good leadership.

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Discussion Questions

1. What is the purpose of *spiritual leadership*?

2. How is this goal accomplished? How is it not accomplished?

3. What lessons should we learn about *spiritual leadership* from the story of Esther?

4. What other *biblical leaders* (besides Moses and Esther) stand out in your mind because God *put/allowed* them to be in “difficult” positions, but they did the right thing(s) anyway?

5. How long, in total, did Paul spend in Ephesus? Specifically, what did he spend this time doing?

6. What three things did Paul do/not do relative to the Ephesians that *good leaders* today should note and emulate?

7. From John 16:12:
 - a. What did Jesus **not do** to/for His disciples?

 - b. Why did He not do **that**?

 - c. What did the disciples **yet lack** that would allow Him to tell them the rest of the information they needed? (Hint: What did they *see* and/or *experience* between the time of John 16:12 and Acts 2?)

8. How are *good leaders* comparable to “*a wise masterbuilder*”?