

CHAPTER 9: THE JESUS-CENTERED LEADER

SUMMARY

Most Christian approaches to leadership simply find good and bad examples of leaders in the Bible and say, “Be like this,” or “Don’t be like that.” Although the Bible certainly provides great examples of leadership, these approaches often assume the Bible is a book primarily about you and what you are to do, rather than primarily about God and what He has done in Christ. Gospel-centered leadership does not begin with the command to imitate, but with the good news that God is gracious and has sent His Son to take our sins and give us life.

Jesus-centered leadership is God-focused, Christ-exalting and Spirit-led influence toward a kingdom agenda. Gospel-centered leadership is inextricably linked to the work of a triune God in redemption. The gospel is Trinitarian. The Father sends, the Son accomplishes and the Spirit applies. Thus, gospel-centered leadership is marked by its redemptive influence and kingdom initiatives.

AUDIT

Individual

- 1. Are you a Jesus-centered, God-focused, Christ-exalting and Spirit-led leader with a kingdom agenda? What is your focus?**
- 2. Do you see your skills and gifts as secondary to your union with Christ?**
- 3. Are you quick to repent and confess? Are you living in hidden sin or a habitual pattern that nobody knows about?**
- 4. How would your employees describe your leadership? How would your spouse and children?**

5. **Is your identity wrapped up in being the leader, or are you happy to and willing to let others lead? Do you feel threatened when others lead?**

6. **Do you acknowledge your limitations with others? Can others lovingly talk about the limitations of your leadership in your presence?**

7. **Does your leadership complement or compete with other leaders in your church?**

Group

1. **What does the culture of your church or ministry reveal about your leadership?**

2. **Does the culture of your church reinforce the idea that no man is irreplaceable?**

3. **Are the leaders on your staff and within your church free to confess and seek help? Is confession and repentance a regular part of your church?**

4. **Do the leaders of your church live in gospel-centered community? Do they have honest relationships?**

5. **Are you raising up leaders or minions? What is the difference?**

RENEWAL

Individual

- 1. How can you keep your focus on the gospel? What steps do you need to take?**
- 2. What can you do to live a more transparent life, living in gospel-centered community and confessing sin and struggles to other leaders in the church?**
- 3. In what areas can you grow as a leader? How can you be more of a servant leader? How can you be more led by the Spirit?**
- 4. How can you use your leadership skills and gifts to complement others instead of compete against others?**

Group

- 1. In what ways does your church culture reflect healthy leadership? Unhealthy leadership? What adjustments need to be made?**
- 2. How can you better encourage and cultivate a culture of confession and repentance, a place where leaders can be open and honest?**
- 3. What can you do to raise up leaders instead of minions?**
- 4. How can leadership in your church or ministry be more redemptive and kingdom-minded?**

PRAYER

Father, thank You for Your graciousness and for sending Your Son to take our sins and give us life. Thank You for leadership. You are so good for inviting us to play a part in Your grand redemptive plan. Find us humble and faithful. We pray this in Your Son's name, amen.

RESOURCES

- *Pastor's Self-Evaluation Questionnaire* by Tim Keller and David Powlison
- *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership* by McIntosh and Rima
- *Leadership and Self-Deception* by the Arbinger Institute
- *Rescuing Ambition* by Dave Harvey