

The Vincennes Voice

“...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight...” (Matt. 3:3)

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TRAITS OF GREAT LEADERS

Larry R. Ping II

Joshua 1:1-2 records, *“Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.”*

Imagine being Joshua at this time. He was taking over for one of the greatest leaders of all time. God had chosen him to be the new leader of the Hebrews. The book of Joshua lays out a blueprint of a great leader. Consider these traits!

1) A GREAT LEADER REALIZES HE HAS GOD ON HIS SIDE. Immediately after announcing the death of Moses God declared, *“There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee”* (Josh. 1:5). Great leaders do not strike out on their own,

nor do they go about trying to *“establish their own righteousness”* (Rom. 10:3). Great leaders know exactly and precisely Who is in charge, God! Remember, *“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us”* (Rom. 8:31)?

2) A GREAT LEADER WILL BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS. God told Joshua, *“Be strong and of a good courage”* (Josh. 1:6). He added later, *“Only be thou strong and very courageous”* (Josh. 1:7). And again, *“Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage”* (Josh. 1:9). Even great leaders need an admonishment to be bold and brave. They need to be bold and brave as there will be followers who will test Joshua's limit. They will prod and poke Joshua, sometimes incessantly. This is one of the penalties of leadership. The Psalmist had much to say on this subject. He said, *“Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD”* (Psa. 27:14). He penned, *“Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen*

your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD” (Psa. 31:24). There is no room in a leader's life for cowardice. It will not work.

3) A GREAT LEADER WILL OBSERVE AND DO ALL OF GOD'S LAW. Joshua was told, *“observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left”* (Josh. 1:7). Great leaders do not cut corners or take short-cuts. They do not determine on their own accord to only follow the parts of God's Law they like. They study it diligently (II Tim. 2:15; Acts 17:11) and make a determination to do all of it. Of Noah, another great leader, it was said, *“Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he”* (Gen. 6:22). Not long after God said again, *“And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him”* (Gen. 7:5). Of Moses it was written, *“Thus did Moses: according to all that the LORD commanded him, so did he”* (Exo. 40:16). David said, *“I have respect unto all thy commandments”* (Psa. 119:6). We would do well

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to adopt the attitude of Cornelius who said, “*we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God*” (Acts 10:33). Want to be a great leader? Then heed the final warning of the final book, “*For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book*” (Rev. 22:18-19).

4) A GREAT LEADER WILL MEDITATE UPON GOD’S WORD DAY AND NIGHT.

Joshua was told “*thou shalt meditate therein day and night*” upon the words of God (Josh. 1:8). A great leader will occupy his mind with the sound, wholesome words of the Bible. He will not permit his thoughts to wander to evil and impure thoughts. Meditation upon God’s words helps with achieving this

Biblical charge. To meditate is to “focus one’s mind on a certain text, and to contemplate its role in one’s life.” The longest Psalm states, “*I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways*” (Psa. 119:15). Committing God’s word to memory and meditating upon it offers an enormous advantage. As David said, “*Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee*” (Psa. 119:11). Great leaders are always thinking spiritually, and cause others to do the same.

5) A GREAT LEADER WILL NOT BE DISMAYED.

God cautioned Joshua, “*be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed*” (Josh. 1:9). This is not to say a leader will never have fears or second thoughts. However, he will not tolerate those fears and doubts to overcome him. He will conquer them! The notion of being dismayed is “to let terror lead to discouragement which leads to apostasy and rebellion.” Great leaders cannot afford to let this happen to them or to those who are following. These words of David carry out the idea of

dismay perfectly. “*The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell*” (Psa. 27:1-2).

6) A GREAT LEADER IS HUMBLE.

He will never forget he, as a fellow creation of God, is not higher or more important than any other individual. God told the new leader, “*This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee*” (Josh. 3:7). A short while later Joshua was told to “*Loose thy shoe from off thy foot*” and “*Joshua did so*” (Josh. 5:15). As the new “magnified” leader, Joshua had a grand opportunity to flex his power and refuse to humble himself, but he did. Great leaders will always recall, “*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time*” (I Pet. 5:6). Humble leaders are gladly followed.

FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm