

Developing Leaders

Detailed Outline

Part 5 of 5

Introduction

In the talk given by Oswald Sanders on Leadership as mentioned in the introduction, Oswald Sanders shared a story on Sovereignty. He recounts a time when he was actively involved in serving the Lord and he was asked to take over a significant administrative responsibility. This he declined at least one or two times and it finally came to him that in spite of all his thoughts God was sovereignly raising him up as a leader in that area. And as a result of that realization he took over that leadership task.

Sovereignty is a very significant factor when we discuss leadership. Let us look at this briefly.

V. Sovereignty and Leadership

A. Human Responsibility

1. When we look at the scriptures, human responsibility is evident as we look at the development of leaders.
2. When we consider the Old Testament, particularly the Book of Proverbs, it becomes evident that this book was written to us generally, but more specifically to little “princes” and “princesses.” Proverbs is the work of a King who is preparing children for royalty.
3. This has implications for every one of us as believers -- for our king is preparing us for royal leadership. However, there is in that instruction a very specific purpose of preparing people to serve as rulers.
4. This was a very conscious and purposeful way in which leaders were encouraged and developed in the book of Proverbs.
5. In the New Testament, we read passages like:
“The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Tim. 2:2 NASB)
6. Paul is saying to men like Timothy, he is to find younger men who are similarly gifted and to develop that gift so that they may be effective in their ministry and effective therefore as leaders.
7. All of us are responsible; especially those in leadership positions to look for people who have similar gifting, similar functions and we are to help and develop them grow in that regard. That is our human responsibility.

B. Sovereign Responsibility

However, we dare not overlook the sovereignty of God in the process. We may be thinking in our minds that certain people are destined to be leaders but God may have other plans. God may raise to leadership those who we have never imagined.

1. Paul as a leader

- a) This can be seen in the case of Apostle Paul.
- b) No one was inclined to even believe he was converted, let alone, that he would become one of the great leaders in the church and in the Christian faith.
- c) We read:
While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." (Acts 13:2)
- d) In the midst of that prayer meeting it seems that God had somehow indicated through his Spirit that these two men were now being specified for a new ministry and new leadership.
- e) It is interesting to note that in this text Barnabbas is named first, followed by Saul. It is also Saul rather than Paul as we know him.
- f) It is in their first missionary journey they encounter a false prophet, Barjesus. Barjesus hinders the proclamation of the gospel and Paul realizes he must address that sin. So Paul steps forward and pronounces a curse on that man. From that time on we read, it is Paul, not Saul, and his companions.
- g) Something happened in that moment. Paul did what he believed to be true and God in his sovereignty elevated Paul to a position that he may never have dreamed about. Barnabbas, in turn supports Paul wonderfully in that new leadership role that God had sovereignly designated.

2. David

- a) Think about David and the selection of Israel's king.
- b) Saul stood head and shoulders above everybody else. In that sense, Saul was Israel's Goliath. He was their champion. When Goliath challenged the children of Israel to send one man to fight him, it obviously should have been Saul.
- c) Saul stayed cowering in his tent, and David steps forward. David, the one who was not even there when the sons of Jesse were asked to present themselves before Samuel the prophet.
- d) No one could even imagine that David was the candidate to become the next king.
- e) He was not great in stature but he was a man who had a heart for God and God sovereignly raised him up.
- f) Isn't it interesting that the way in which God raises David up is by bringing Goliath

who blasphemes the name of God? David is so intent upon who God is and in his Sovereignty that David in his proverbial weakness stands before a giant. That is because David believes he serves a big God.

C. Conclusion

1. We thus see the sovereignty of God in two dimensions.
 - a) In the first dimension, it is God who sovereignly chose David when no one else would have.
 - b) In the second dimension, we see that David steps forward when no one else would have, because he believed in a sovereign God for whom Goliath was no threat.
2. This is our learning from the matter of sovereignty of God.
 - a) When we are seeking to develop leaders, we must be purposeful in the process of doing so.
 - b) We need to be active and aggressive in seeking those men who have potential and those men who are servants.
 - c) We must seek to develop them as Paul has instructed us to do. In the process, we must remember that it is ultimately God who sovereignly raises men up.
 - d) We need to recognize that sometimes his choices and ours are not the same and that we need to go with his.
 - e) God sovereignly raises up leaders, leaders who have confidence in his sovereignty.