

<b>Series:</b> Leading Well	<b>Reference:</b> Exodus 31:1-11	<b>Title:</b> Identify	<b>Date:</b> 06.16.2019
<b>Website Writeup:</b> Continuing with our lessons on Leadership, today we have our lesson from Moses: Good Leaders Identify Spiritual Gifts in Others.			

## COLOR CHANGES IN TEXT INDICATE SLIDE CHANGES

We're currently in a 4 week series learning leadership lessons.

Last week we had our first leadership lesson from Jethro given to Moses in Exodus 18. We learned good leaders...

...Delegate to able people

...Own their problems well

...Need mentors for growth & identification of weaknesses

...Succeed by their growing ability to raise up leaders

...And, leaders last by developing their ability to judge the hard cases.

Today we continue with our next leadership lesson from Moses finding that, **Good Leaders Identify Spiritual Gifts in Others.**

We find this beginning in Exodus 31:1-11...

*Then the Lord said to Moses, <sup>2</sup>“See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, <sup>3</sup> and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge & with all kinds of skills - <sup>4</sup> to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver & bronze, <sup>5</sup> to cut & set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts.*

As we said last week, this is a time of growth & building for the nation of Israel. They've moved from where we saw them last week, the Ten Commandments have been given, many various prescriptions have been set as they build community, worship & increase in complexity. Moses has been on Mt Sinai for 40 days & nights hearing all these prescriptions from the Lord. And, we see, God's plan is to use leaders like Moses to train people up in righteousness - yes, they're building structures, but more so, they're training people up in righteousness; teaching them to obey all the Lord has commanded which is reminiscent of Mt 28:18-20 which we will look at later.

*In Exodus 19:5-6 it says, <sup>5</sup>Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, <sup>6</sup>you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.”*

The longer you study Scripture, the longer you realize the continuity of its message & our call as God's people. The concepts of faith, obedience & being a holy nation tasked with bringing God's life to other nations are repeated all throughout Scripture.

Remember, these are brand new ideas for them. We've seen through the story of Noah in the past where humanity leads itself, when left to its own accord. This is described in Genesis 6:5, *<sup>5</sup>The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.*

Contrary to popular belief, humanity morally & socially devolves, not evolves. We may produce more gadgets, but what good are gadgets while still living in disconnection, isolation, subjugation, abuse, and even killing one another? Without necessary training in righteousness & the filling of the Spirit, we can't grow in character & love, becoming what we're truly meant to be - *this is why it says in 2 Timothy 3:16, All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting & training in righteousness.*

Scripture, God's Word to humanity, is our standard & rule. Remember, the civic & ceremonial laws are fulfilled in Christ, but moral law, the Ten Commandments & further, must still govern life. A law which, without Christ, humanity disregards altogether. So, in the Christians decision making, the question is always, "Is this in line with Scripture?" If not, we decide against whatever it is, whether that be in issues of finance, sexuality, marriage, basic human relationships, etc...

The story of the Scriptures progresses from **Creation**, *what it was meant to be*. **The Fall**, *what happened*. **Redemption**, *what it can be in Christ*. And finally, **Restoration**, *what it will be*.

We're in the time of Redemption now, and in the story of God, when we respond in faith, we move toward hope & full restoration gaining that for which our souls truly long. This is why Jesus says in Mt 28:18-20...*"All authority in heaven & on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>Therefore go & make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

The story of Israel's inception & development is a story of God raising up leaders to train people in righteousness - to once again reflect their Creator, as it should've been at the time of Creation. This is much needed transformation & training, since the image of God within humanity has been shattered by the Fall. God's building a nation of witnesses to His glory, tasked with bringing this message to the world. This began back with Abraham when God said *'you will be a blessing to all nations'*. Without God we grasp hold of all the wrong things for purpose & solace in the world. We fill the God-shaped hole in our souls with all the things which only deaden humanity further.

So, in Moses' time, there was much work to be done! Moses is in process of delegating; implementing what Jethro had prescribed in chapter 18. They're moving forward!

Remember we said last week, everyone gets to play? A common saying in the Vineyard. It's true, we see it here - God's calling an artist up to the plate, using his God-given gifting for the sake of the kingdom! Amen! Everything this guy creates has a message & will communicate the heart of God to the people.

This church we inhabit is an amazing depiction of what artists can accomplish from architecture to the stained glass windows, statues & paintings depicting the various stories of the Scriptures. Take a moment & walk through the other sanctuary, and you'll be amazed. Everything in that sanctuary is to communicate the Gospel message. It's a shame much of it's lost on us - here's a simple outline of the people in the upper stained glass windows, who they are, and everyone of them has a story in the building of God's kingdom in the world (framed piece). They have these framed copies of hymns written by Bach & Hayden as a reminder of the beauty of music & its glorification of Christ.

Take a look at the back of the room at the paintings we have up. One of those is a copy of Caravaggio's, *The Entombment of Christ*. I drew that my first year of art school since I was so drawn in by the strong chiaroscuro (heavy light & dark) of his work. As a brand new Christian I wanted to communicate what Christ had done in me to my fellow students & professors - I made them look at the story of Jesus!

In the prayer room you'll see two paintings which used to be one piece (describe). They're the depiction of two Pubian women from Lampung, Indonesia. It represents how in youth they're born with youthful hope, but under the fearful grip of Islam, and the control of older hopeless Muslims within families & communities, there's a growing darkness & hopelessness for them.

To the right you'll see a watercolor by our own, Charles Czworkowski, *The Invitation*. Charles describes it like this: *The frequent nautical references found throughout the Bible have had an influence on me because of their connection to God's plan of salvation. The memorable scenes of Jesus' ministry on & around the Sea of Galilee inspired this watercolor. It's no coincidence, the earliest Christians used the image of a boat to symbolize the Church as a place of refuge from the storms & waves of a world where they were persecuted for their faith. My hope is that this particular image would reflect the incredible grace-filled invitation to salvation & discipleship Jesus gives us individually & collectively as His Church. "Come follow me" Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19)*

We also have this simple charcoal drawing Maddie Greiner did of *Jonah* for a sermon one Sunday. Tomoko did another small piece here in response to the same series. **Chris Nixon is a working artist whom I've asked to hang something here too - here's some of his work on the screen.**

Imagery's powerful & useful in the communication of the gospel & in building faith, the evangelical church had lost that for a while, but it's come back, especially through digital graphics & video. So, everyone does actually get to play!

*And our story continues...<sup>6</sup> Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamak, of the tribe of Dan, to help him.*

This is a big job - God not only fills Bezalel with the Spirit of God & gifts him with abilities, but also provides a co-leader for him as he takes on this task. You'll notice when we do ministry in our Community Group format here we strive to have two leaders doing it side-by-side, since it's much more manageable with someone else. They bring fresh ideas, they carry some of the weight & build on things you don't see. It continues...

*Also I have given ability to all the skilled workers to make everything I have commanded you: <sup>7</sup> the tent of meeting, the ark of the covenant law with the atonement cover on it, and all the other furnishings of the tent - <sup>8</sup> the table & its articles, the pure gold lamp-stand & all its accessories, the altar of incense, <sup>9</sup> the altar of burnt offering & all its utensils, the basin with its stand - <sup>10</sup> and also the woven garments, both the sacred garments for Aaron the priest & the garments for his sons when they serve as priests, <sup>11</sup> and the anointing oil & fragrant incense for the Holy Place. They are to make them just as I commanded you."*

So, Good Leaders Identify Spiritual Gifts in Others. And secondly, **God Calls Leaders Needed for the Ministry He Calls Us To** (vs. 1-2... *Then the Lord said to Moses, <sup>2</sup> "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah,*)

Kim & I were at a church growth conference in January. One of the speakers got up front & said, *"How many of you pastors have said this... 'My area is harder to reach than most!'"* Every pastor raised their hand. He began making jokes about how not every community can be harder than the next. It was a light moment of pointing out our excuse-making in ministry to people.

There's a temptation as a ministry leader, or pastor, to say *'if only'*. Most leaders can identify with the moment in the midst of frustration where we say: *"If only I had more volunteers, more money, more time, more buildings, more platform, more opportunities."* A trap, into which many leaders fall, which hinders us, and isn't true. Sure it'd be nice to have more, but God's given what we need! Maybe there's a better question, such as, "Who are the people God's given our church, and what talents do they possess?" If we believe God speaks through His people, then maybe He gives us the people to do the ministry He invites us into, not necessarily the ministry we want, or think we need.

God gave Bazalel incredible talents, ministry, wisdom & artistic abilities to serve with building the implements of worship outlined by God to Moses for Israel; the priestly garments & the objects within the Tent of Meeting. It's safe to assume golden lamp

stands weren't the first thing on Moses' agenda to build when leading an entire nation of people. Yet we discover over & over God's ways aren't our ways. God gives His church everything she needs to survive & thrive, even if that looks differently than our definition of success.

So, Good Leaders Identify Spiritual Gifts in Others, God Calls Leaders Needed for the Ministry He Calls Us To, and thirdly, **God Fills Leaders with the Holy Spirit to Call them for Ministry** (vs. 3-5... <sup>3</sup> *and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge & with all kinds of skills - <sup>4</sup> to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver & bronze, <sup>5</sup> to cut & set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts.*)

Often it's easy to forget, leading the church is a Spirit-led calling. In the midst of all the admin & logistical issues, it can seem very base & human - but leaders, as we said last week need to go back to the Lord constantly seeking a new filling of the Spirit for the work they do. Notice, this guys not just a skilled worker, he's someone who's filled with wisdom & understanding. He gets what he's doing & what it means in light of the greater kingdom call. Every hammer blow, chisel cut, caste of metal, or whatever they're using to create these objects, are meaningful. It reminds me of our sermon series on Nehemiah's rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem & all the workers they employed. God does the work of calling people for leadership in the church, and it's the pastors/leaders job to equip, train, direct & guide them to recognize & utilize their gifting.

God called Bezalel, then fills Him with the Holy Spirit. This is the first time in the Hebrew Scriptures someone's said to be 'filled' with the Spirit. What a beautiful & unexpected man to whom the filling of the Holy Spirit was given - not a prophet, priest, a king, or judge, but an artist! This communicates everyone's skills are valuable in the kingdom, and useful in bringing light to the message of the gospel to the world.

So, Good Leaders Identify Spiritual Gifts in Others, God Calls Leaders Needed for the Ministry He Calls Us To, God Fills Leaders with the Holy Spirit to Call them for Ministry, and lastly, **God Raises up Teams to Serve with Leaders** (vs. 6... <sup>6</sup> *Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamak, of the tribe of Dan, to help him.*)

In a very unique reference, God also highlights a team & another talented artist who'll work with Bezalel. The phrase 'to be with him' is crucial in understanding, if God will raise up a leader, He'll raise up a team too. Moses job was to listen, pray & then recruit these men for the task to which God had called them.

Leaders are tasked to be recruiters, watchers & visionaries who'll respond to God's call & help others respond to God's call as well. Our success doesn't depend on our ability to do everything, but to both delegate leadership & build capable ministry teams to accomplish the spreading of the Gospel in the world.

We have 8 systems which govern our church. Each one of them has a ministry head who oversees, recruits & leads those under them for the sake of the kingdom work we do as a church.

(1) Vinny & Mary oversee the Worship System. (2) Stef oversees Kingdom Opportunities System. (3) Jordan oversees the Impressions System. (4) Kim oversees the Kids Ministry System. (5) Lindley & myself oversee the Community Group System. (6) I've recently taken over the Missions System (Kara had a baby). (7) John oversees the Stewardship System. (8) Rachel oversees the Prayer System.

Each of those systems has anywhere to a few, to as many as 40+ volunteers! That's a lot of work. Valuable work. There's always a place for you to serve here - they may come to you & ask for your involvement, maybe you should consider saying yes to that. Serving's a great way to know others, and be known yourself. Every little task is there for the sake of making worship happen, and reaching out to our local community in bringing the gospel to them.

And, as I said last week, Lindley & I are working on a class hopefully we can have in place this fall which will lead us through these things well in order for people to easily find their place in church-life! Amen, we're moving forward as well, and God's blessing us along the way in order that we'd too fulfill our calling of being a blessing to all peoples of the world!