

(English Transcript) Spiritual Leadership Principles Lesson 4

Principles from Jesus

We've come to the final lesson for this audio course titled **Spiritual Leadership Principles**. Lesson 4 is focused on leadership principles from Jesus and the Gospels.

We will highlight a few key principles from the life of Jesus. What you will find is that most of these principles have already been discussed in Lessons 1, 2 and 3.

Remember that Lessons 5-10 in your handout are intended for your self-study. These lessons are self-explanatory. You may work through them by yourself or in a group with leaders from your church or as a group with other pastors. You might pick one lesson each month to read, discuss and prayerfully apply in your life and the life of your church.

As we begin Lesson 4, our final lesson of this audio course, here is the question to consider:

Who is the greatest leader in history?

Of all the names that might be given in response to that question. One name stands out above the rest: Jesus Christ.

Let me read from the book "Leadership Lessons of Jesus". (Written by Bob Briner and Ray Pritchard)

"From his birth in a Bethlehem stable to his death on a cross, he lived on this earth for less than forty years, leaving behind only a few hundred followers upon his return to heaven. He never wrote a book, taught a seminar, or created a detailed study outline for his disciples to follow. After his departure, he sent the Holy Spirit to aid in recalling what he did and said.

A few years later, his movement had swelled to include thousands of new believers. Soon his followers fanned out across the Roman Empire, spreading the good news he had taught them. Within five generations, the number of Christians reached into the millions.

Two thousand years have passed since he was here, yet his followers today number more than one billion, with millions more people joining every year. The organization he founded, the church, has branches in every country on earth.

Yet ironically, his public ministry lasted less than four years. With no formal training and in the face of murderous opposition, he inspired such loyalty that his followers were willing to die for him.

How did he do it? What principles did he follow? And do those same principles still work today?

If you have ever dismissed Jesus as irrelevant to modern life, brace yourself. Most of us know that Jesus was a great teacher and the Redeemer of the human race, but many people never considered him to be the ultimate leader. Who else has ever had his enduring impact. Human leaders come and go, but the legacy of Jesus has grown greater with passing of each century." As you reflect on what we have discussed in Lesson 1-3 in this handout, take some time to think about the leadership principles you see demonstrated in the life of Jesus. You might first

want to review each of the prior lessons and look for a few key principles. And then consider how Jesus modeled these principles more than two thousand years ago. I am sure you will come up with a few other leadership principles that are not in this handout.

Before you stop this recording and write down a summary of the most important leadership principles you recall from the life of Jesus, here is a brief summary of leadership principles from the first three Lessons.

Lesson 1:

- Focus on making disciples and leaders will be the fruit.
- Many leaders struggle because they desire to hold control and do not empower and delegate responsibility and authority to others.
- The character of a leader is critical. Three key traits of a leader: Holy, Habitual and Humble.
- How a leader leads may be more important than the results. Godly leaders assume the positions of kneeling (servanthood), teaming (empowerment and delegation) and stewarding (use gifts given by God and helping others to serve in the same way).

Lesson 2:

- The qualities of the most effective leaders appear to align with biblical principles and God's character, spiritual gifts, and the Fruit of the Spirit.
- Shared leadership is critical.
- There are clear qualifications for leaders provided in the Bible. Most of these criteria focus on WHO the leader is and less on WHAT the leader can do. Character is critical.
- Servant leadership is the primary model to follow with a focus on love, servanthood and humility.

Lesson 3: From the life of Nehemiah ...

- Godly leaders respond to God's call.
- Godly leaders seek God for His vision and direction.
- Godly leaders care for the people they lead.
- Godly leaders stay close to God through prayer.
- Godly leaders build teams and empower others and share the work of the ministry.
- Godly leaders motivate and inspire others to achieve God's calling and mission.
- Godly leaders are strengthened by God in the face of adversity.
- Godly leaders are peacemakers who confront conflict and work to resolve it.
- Godly leaders do not compromise on their deeply held biblical convictions and values.

Pause the recording now and write down your list of leadership principles of Jesus. How did he live out these principles listed above? What additional principles would you add? When you have completed this activity, restart the recording.

Continue with the recording ...

I would love to hear what you wrote on page 22. I hope you see that many of the principles discussed in Lessons 1, 2 and 3, are based on principles we see in the life of Jesus as well as in God's Word.

I want to keep things very simple in this lesson. Let us start by reading Philippians 2:5-11. This passage provides a summary of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We can make a few observations from this passage alone that will help us summarize a few of the most important leadership lessons that we can apply to our leadership roles.

Philippians 2:5-11

"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

In these few verses, we see at least four key truths about the eternal Second Person of the Trinity.

1. Jesus is God
2. Jesus is man
3. Jesus is Savior
4. Jesus is Lord.

Jesus is God, he was equal to God. It says he didn't consider equality with God something to be grasped or held on to. In John 1:1 we learn that in the beginning, from eternity past, Jesus was the Word and the Word was God.

Although Jesus is God, he responded to the Father's call to become flesh. **Jesus is man**. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. The Incarnation is the most amazing act of leadership we could ever witness. Jesus humbled himself. Jesus came as a servant. Jesus modeled submission, obedience and a focus on others. Love for others and devotion to his calling were at the heart of his mission. Jesus did not lead from a pedestal. He was not concerned about title, position, or power.

Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah regarding the promised Messiah being the suffering servant. **Jesus is the Savior of the world**. Jesus' leadership approach involved sacrifice and suffering for the glory of God and the benefit of others. Jesus is God. Jesus in Man. And Jesus is Savior. Jesus became obedient to death, even death on a cross. He sacrificed willingly. He was not forced. He went to the cross with a servant's heart.

Jesus is God, Jesus is man, Jesus is Savior, and Jesus is Lord. Jesus rose from the dead, showing that the Father was pleased with the sacrifice that was made. In response, the Father exalted him to the highest place of honor and gave him the name above all names. At the

name of Jesus, every knee will bow and tongue confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.

Godly leaders don't take glory for themselves. They are to reflect the glory and focus it on God. Through Jesus' life, he always reflected the glory to the Father and deflected any credit or praise away from himself. Leaders don't need to look to promote or advance themselves. Godly leaders, respond to God's call and fulfill the vision that God has provided, with a focus on glorifying God and caring for those under his or her leadership responsibility.

Jesus is reigning in heaven today at the right hand of the Father, and he is going to come again to rule and reign. He will return as the Word of God, and the King of kings, and the LORD of lords.

Jesus is God, the eternal Word of God.

Jesus is man, the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

Jesus is Savior, he is our substitute. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sin.

Jesus is Lord, the Victorious One. He is victorious over sin and death and Satan.

Using this passage, we can see a few critical leadership principles from the life of Jesus that will help to summarize the learnings in this course.

#1. Jesus led with humility.

Jesus was from above, yet he came to dwell among the people. He resisted the leadership pedestal. We see this in the incarnation. Jesus is God, yet Jesus is also man.

#2. Jesus led with transparency.

Jesus allowed his disciples to behold him. He revealed God's glory in his walking, talking, eating and sleeping. He was transparent with his followers. He was authentic. This transparency and authenticity developed trust. The values that Jesus promoted were evident in his life.

"Jesus dwelt with his followers, He allowed them to behold him. He let them see him up close and personal. Most of us begin our careers wanting to be the same type of leader, but as we ascend the leadership mountain, we find a lot of reasons to stay up there. Jesus never led from the mountain. He came down and walked with the common, ordinary people. He surrounded himself with twelve close friends and he live with them openly, He showed us that truly great leaders are transparent leaders." Bill Robinson, *Incarnate Leadership*

#3. Jesus was focused on the mission.

He did not look to receive credit from others for the work he was doing. He reflected all glory to the Father and he stayed focused on completing the work that the Father gave him to do.

There is no place for ego or pride in the life of a godly leader. This does not mean that leaders do not work hard. Jesus literally gave his life for the mission. As leaders, we must recognize that God has equipped us to succeed in whatever he calls us to do. Our success is not about

what we have or what we do; it is about what God has, what God has done, and what God continues to do.

When we are confident and not humble, we deny the grace of God. When we are humble and not confident, we deny the power of God. In humility, we acknowledge that our gifts are from God. We have no room to brag. But our gifts are from God! What can give us more confidence than that? In humility we acknowledge our utter sinfulness. But we have been redeemed by the God of the universe. In humility, we recognize that God's strength is made perfect in weakness. In this strength, we can stay focused on our calling as we bring glory to God.

#4: Jesus led with grace and truth.

Grace-filled leadership releases not only warmth but also energy into an organizational culture. Energy dissipates in a climate of fear. Jesus empowered his followers and delegated responsibility and authority to them. He spoke and lived truth consistently. He remained committed to his values and the mission while fostering an environment for his followers to listen, watch, practice, make mistakes, get feedback, try again, and succeed. In an environment of fear with no grace, mistakes are too costly. But with a balance of grace and truth, people can fulfill God's calling on their lives.

Below is a chart comparing a climate of grace and a climate of fear.

<u>Grace</u>	<u>Fear</u>
Risk taking	Caution
Self-direction	Obedience
Service of mission	Service of leadership
Spontaneous	Secretive
Bold	Tentative

Grace never lowers our demands or expectations. When we lift up those we lead, grace also puts the leader in a stronger position to lift expectations and empower others. The message of grace is that the leader has confidence in the resilience, commitment, and strength of the people being led.

#5. Jesus led through sacrifice.

He sacrificed his life. He also sacrificed time, comfort, credit and privilege. Leadership without sacrifice is not Christian leadership.

Sacrifice is never easy, so when you feel you have already sacrificed enough for your mission, consider these encouragements:

- "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends".
(Jesus Christ, John 15:13)
- "An action of small value performed with much love of God, is far more excellent than one of higher virtue, done with less love of God." (Henry Ward Beecher)

- “Only a life lived for other is worth living.” (Albert Einstein)
- “There is only one effectively redemptive sacrifice, the sacrifice of self-will to make room for the knowledge of God”. (Aldous Huxley)
- “Love always involves responsibility and love always involves sacrifice. And we do not really love Christ unless we are prepared to face His task and take up His cross.” (William Barclay)

Based on just these few leadership principles of Jesus, here are a few questions we can ask ourselves regarding our leadership approach.

- Jesus dwelt with those he led: *Am I staying close enough to those I lead?*
- Jesus’s disciples beheld him: *Am I being transparent with those I lead?*
- The glory of Jesus was a reflection of his Father: *Are my actions reflecting our mission or gathering personal glory?*
- Jesus led with grace and truth: *Am I leading with grace and truth?*
- From the manger to the cross, Jesus sacrificed: *What am I sacrificing for those I lead?*

What other leadership principles would you highlight from the life of Jesus?

On page 23, I attempted to connect the dots from Philippians 2 to a few leadership qualities of Jesus. You can read the various Scripture references but here are the main points.

- Jesus is Man. The incarnation demonstrated Jesus’ humility.
- Jesus is Savior. Through his life and death, Jesus modeled obedience, servanthood and love.
- Jesus is Lord. Through his resurrection and ascension, Jesus holds all authority and he empowers us delegates his authority to his followers to fulfill the mission of the kingdom.

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

This is the ultimate example of empowering and then delegating responsibility and authority to those who you are leading. Jesus lived his life that way and as leaders we should take on the same character trait.

There's a wonderful book called *The Leadership Lessons of Jesus*.

It is references on page 24. It is written by Bob Reiner and Ray Pritchard. It contains 75 leadership principles of Jesus from the Gospel of Mark.

Here are some of the chapter titles:

- A call to leadership
- Leaders call followers
- Leaders teach with authority
- Leaders take care of their people
- Choosing a team
- Leaders plan
- Painful attacks
- Leaders are often unappreciated
- The Unity requirement
- A leader is faithful
- Decisive action
- Practical vision
- Leaders pray in gratitude
- Preparing for hard times
- Speaking to inspire
- Cultivating loyalty
- Only by prayer
- The servant leader
- Leading vs Managing
- Total commitment
- Take time for people

In your handout, I have highlighted 30 of these principles. I hope you will see that most of these relate back to principles we have discussed throughout this course. Take time now to read through pages 24-27 and make your own notes. I tried to map a few of the principles back to this course.

For example:

- #1 related to the importance of Character.
- #2, #3, #5, #6, and #16 relate to the importance of building teams.
- #10 and #11 relate to dealing with conflict.
- #15 and #22 relate to calling
- #18, #20, #22 related to vision

Pause the recording now and read through these pages.

On page 27, highlight a few of these principles that impacted you.
How might you implement these in your leadership approach?

Continue the recording ...

If you take anything away from this lesson, please understand the fullness of Christ and his leadership qualities.

Philippians 2 is a great passage for you to memorize and reflect on these four truths that Jesus is God, Jesus is man, Jesus is Savior, and Jesus is Lord. As we study the life of Jesus, we will see many of the leadership principles that have been discussed in this course.

You can demonstrate the same principles as you lead in the church, in your family, in the government, in the community, and in your workplace.

This will conclude the audio portion of Spiritual Leadership Principles.

Lessons 1 focused on the leadership deficit and the need to develop leaders. Leadership development should not be our focus though. Our call is to make disciples and be conformed to the likeness of Christ. As we invest our energy in this way, God will raise up leaders to respond to His call.

Lesson 2 was an extensive look at Qualified Leaders. We discussed the importance of understanding the definition of leaders in the church, the need for shared leadership, qualified leadership, and servant leadership. We looked at examples of godly leadership from Acts 20 and 1 Peter 5. We also looked at the example of “Bad Shepherds” in Ezekiel 34.

Lesson 3 was a study of nine leadership principles from the life of Nehemiah. These can be applied by a pastor, an elder, a missionary, a husband, a mother, a ministry team leader, anyone in a workplace, or a volunteer in the community.

- You focus on your calling and live out the God’s vision.
- You care for the people you are leading.
- You understand the importance of prayer in your leadership.
- You develop teams, empower team members and delegate responsibility and authority.
- You are called to motivate and inspire team members to accomplish God’s mission.
- Clarity of God’s calling and vision will give you strength to persevere in the face of adversity, to guard against discouragement, distraction and deceit.
- You also have solid principles on dealing with conflict. Leaders can be peacemakers who look to reconcile others and resolve conflict.
- Lastly, you are to have strong convictions and principles from God’s Word that you will not compromise.

These principles are based on Scripture, thus it makes sense that we would see these modeled in the life of Jesus.

This brings the audio portion of this course to a close. You have lessons 5 through 10 to study on your own or in a group. May God bless and strengthen you to lead like Jesus, by God’s grace and for His glory.