

Discovering Godly Leadership



At the Movies

By David Lantz

Discovering Godly Leadership at the Movies

Discovering Mere Christianity at the Movies

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Indianapolis, IN
dlantz@wisejargon.com
317-670-8060

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Discovering Godly Leadership at the Movies

Introduction

As my children (now in their 30s) were growing up, we watched a lot of movies together. I began to notice that one way they and their friends could share experiences with one another was to say “It was sort of like that scene in the movie, …”

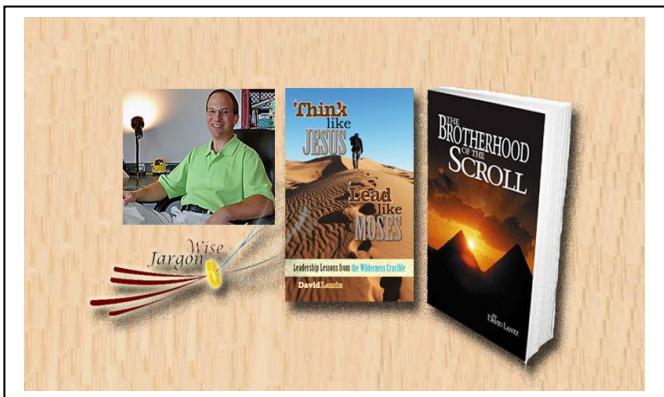
Somehow, in sharing experiences with one another by relating them to a scene from a movie, they were able to connect via shared movie experiences. I thought about that, and how I might use this understanding to communicate the truth of the Scripture to them.

I realized there are some movies we watch in which a single line, or a repeated phrase, provides a common theme that viewers take away from watching the show. Consider the following:

The Blues Brothers	<u>We're On a Mission from God</u>
Highlander	<u>There Can Be Only One</u>
Kingdom of Heaven	<u>God Wills It</u>
The Matrix	<u>Choose the Blue Pill or the Red Pill</u>
Star Trek: First Contact	<u>Resistance is Futile</u>
The Terminator	<u>I'll Be Back</u>
Underdog	<u>There's No Need to Fear, Underdog is Here</u>
The X Files	<u>The Truth is Out There</u>

It dawned on me that in our fractured, multicultural nation, we are losing a sense of who we, as a people, are. In the midst of an increasing mixture of values and beliefs in what many have called a “postmodern” world, the stories reflected in the movies and TV shows provide an important source of common reference.

But by itself, talking about something we might have in common – such as having seen the same movie – is not sufficient to then launch into a conversation about spiritual truth. I believe that if we are to engage the culture, we must first “gain standing.” This is the idea that you will listen to me IF I demonstrate to you that I have something of value to say – and the value is in the eye of the listener.



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Paul did this in his sermon on Mars Hill in Acts 17. While he didn't gain many converts in his initial conversation, he got people to listen to him. He realized that with all the different cultures claiming to speak "THE TRUTH" back in his day, there were those that were searching for the real thing.

The same is true today in culture that is increasingly turning away from the church - yet is hungry for spiritual truth. And so, in 2005, I decided to launch a monthly newsletter called **Conversations with the Culture**.

The concept is a simple one. Using key ideas/themes/scenes from a variety of movies and TV shows, I have chosen to base short bible studies and my personal reflections regarding societal trends on these key ideas. In this way, I seek to initiate a conversation about common values based on the Word of God.

When God laid this project on my heart some years ago, I had no idea where the journey of writing it each month would take me. But now, in 2019, I've written over 150 issues of my newsletter. Going back over them recently, I noticed there are a dozen or so common themes that I tend to write about. And so, another thought hit me:

Why not compile them into PDF theme-based e-books and distribute them? Perhaps high school or college youth groups might find them of use for group study and conversation? Or, perhaps some pastors could be moved by God in developing a sermon for a church service.

And so, I am in the process of going through my old newsletters, updating them as needed, and compiling them into a series I've decided to call "**Discovering Truth at the Movies**."

As I write this in the spring of 2019, I only have a two of my booklets done. If you go to www.wisjargon.com/at-the-movies/ you'll be able to see what all I've created.

So there you have it! Now that you are in possession of this e-book, share it with whomever you like, however you like. My prayer is that as you read this installment of **Discovering Truth at the Movies** that you will be challenged, inspired, and blessed.

In this e-book, I've taken one of compiled ten newsletters I wrote to accompany my book **Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses: Leadership Lessons from the Wilderness Crucible**. In that book, I weave bible lessons that I've taught in adult Sunday School classes together with life applications from my time as State Director of the Indiana Christian Coalition. Enjoy!

Blessings,

David L. Lantz



Discovering Godly Leadership at the Movies

God is calling those who trust in Him to rise up and become Godly Leaders in their communities. Lord knows we need such men and women. Why are they so rare?

One reason is egoism and vanity. Such traits are fatal to the success of a leader. The leader who fears that one of his followers may be seen to outshine him is particularly sure to realize that fear sooner or later. Only by edifying those around him, recognizing their talents and abilities can the leader build a truly cohesive, team spirit of mutual cooperation. Rather, a true leader seeks to mentor and develop those around them, guiding them in ways that will allow them to eventually become his replacement, if not something more.

Another obstacle is the fear to stand against the tide, to make a decision which at the time is unpopular, but which is in fact the right one to make. For people who fail this test of leadership, their excuse is something like "**But I was told by others to do thus.**" They plead their cause, but conclude with the unspoken thought "**Virtue was not convenient at the time.**"

Back in 2010, I wrote a book titled ***Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses: Leadership Lessons from the Wilderness Crucible*** in which I present ten principles of a Godly leader. In writing the book, I selected scenes from ten different movies that I felt demonstrated the leadership principles I was talking about. The last chapter deals with this topic of the Gray Champion, and how God is calling forth men in women in our day who, like Gideon, arise from the grassroots of their communities to become the "valiant warriors" God has called them to be.

As you read about these ten principles in ***Discovering Godly Leadership at the Movies***, perhaps you'll hear God calling you to a ministry of leadership.

In ***Discovering Godly Leadership At the Movies***, I believe you'll be inspired by the themes I've selected to illustrate the ten principles of Godly leadership. If you like it, please be sure to go to my website at www.wisejargon.com/at-the-movies/ to see additional e-books I've created based on my newsletter, ***Conversations with the Culture***. And don't forget to sign up to receive this free monthly newsletter in the future! ,

At The Movies



In 2005, God laid on my heart the concept for a newsletter I've come to call ***Conversations with the Culture***, to talk about the truths of the bible with an increasingly secular society. Since starting, I had no idea where the journey of writing it each month would take me. I've written about 150 issues over years. And now, I'm starting to organize them thematically so that you can order/download them as PDF documents. If you are someone who wants to identify trends in society, discuss current events, and see how to reach the culture around us with a biblical world view, I think you'll find this series I'm calling ***Discovering Truth At the Movies*** a valuable tool – especially if you work in youth/young adult ministry.

Conversations with the ...



David Describes Conversations with the Culture

In the fragmented, multicultural world in which we live, one vehicle provides a means to have a conversation about common values. ***Conversations with the Culture*** is a monthly newsletter using the themes of modern movies and TV shows to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with people in search of an answer to the question, "What is Truth"?

Discovering Godly Leadership at the Movies: In this e-book, I've taken compiled ten newsletters I wrote to accompany my book ***Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses: Leadership Lessons from the Wilderness Crucible***. I believe you'll be inspired by the themes I've selected to illustrate the ten principles of Godly leadership.

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Prince of Egypt & Leadership Principle 1

**Look, Brother, I told You That If You Don't Do What I say,
God's Going to Lay 10 Serious Plagues On You**



Moses, if God Punishes Me, I'm Holding You Personally Responsible!

In the movie, **The Prince of Egypt**, we have an animated version of the story of the Exodus. Born a Hebrew, Moses was raised in the “strength and wisdom of the Egyptians.” He is raised as a son of Pharaoh, along with the Pharaoh’s true son, Ramesses. As adults, the brothers are split by Moses’ recognition of his true heritage and the suppressing system his brother is about to inherit, willing to carry it on. Fleeing from the city in despair, Moses finds himself being called by God. He is given the task of being the messenger in order to free the Hebrews and to lead them into a country where milk and honey flow. To see a video of this scene, go to http://www.wisejargon.com/thinklead.htm#Prince_Egypt.

Digging Deeper

Imagine what it would be like to be in a situation where you are comfortable, and life is rewarding you with what you feel you deserve. But you’ve always been Number 2. Then, one day, you get a shot at the top spot. Someone wants to hire you away from your current company to put you in charge of a new competitor. Or maybe the Board of Directors has fired the boss, and they want to put you in charge. What ever the situation, all of a sudden, you have the opportunity to “be the man.”

That’s what happened to Moses.

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Early in his career, he'd been "the Prince of Egypt." He was the "Prince in waiting," after his half-brother, Ramesses. Some how (the Bible never really tells us how), Moses learns that he is in fact a Hebrew. He determines that he is the Deliverer promised to the Hebrews. Acts 7:23-25 sheds some light on Moses' state of mind and provides us some insights into how this affected him. We read as follows:

But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel. And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him; but they did not understand.

What a shock! Here Moses, a Prince of Egypt, was taking the side of the Hebrews. But instead of seeing that he was their deliverer – that he, Moses, a man educated in the wisdom of the Egyptians, "powerful in word and deed," was here to save them – they instead scorned him. So, Moses fled Egypt and went into the wilderness.

For the next forty years, Moses worked in the service of a man named Jethro, marrying one of his daughters, and then tending the man's sheep. Now, sheep are fairly docile animals. They go where you lead them. They don't talk back, and generally don't play office politics, conspiring to cause you harm. Moses had spent forty years learning the wisdom of the Egyptians, including the art of power politics – and then spent the next forty years unlearning those lessons. ***During those second forty years of sheep herding, God was remaking Moses into a vessel which He could use for His divine purposes.***

At the Burning Bush, God told Moses that he was the man who would deliver the Hebrews from Bondage. In Exodus 4:1-17, Moses gave three excuses as to why he shouldn't go. What a difference from the self-confident man Moses had once been! Once a leader of Men, Moses thought his only leadership ability was that of herding sheep. God answered each of Moses' objections – but God's key point was that He didn't want just anyone for the job – not even Aaron, Moses' brother. It is important to recognize that God was going to use the experience which Moses had gained during his years in the Egyptian Court and combine that experience with the patience and humility God had taught him during his years as a shepherd.

It is one thing for us, as students of the Bible, to read how God guided Moses more than 3,000 years ago. It is another thing entirely to realize that God told Moses up front exactly what was to come. In Exodus 4:20-23, God warned Moses of what he could expect. God basically said to Moses.

1. That He would harden Pharaoh's heart. "Pharaoh's not just going to lie down for you. You're going to be in for a major confrontation over this."

2. Before it's all over, Pharaoh will lose his first born. "Don't think for a minute that Pharaoh's going to say 'well, yes of course Moses, it's not your fault my son's going to die – no hard feelings.' No, Moses, you've got to recognize you will come under attack."

What Moses was about to do would require courage – courage which only God can give. To drive this point home, God required a sign of Moses' total commitment to what he'd been asked to do. Without total commitment to God's calling in his life, Moses would not be able to succeed.

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But Moses was still reluctant. He didn't want to be the front man to go back into the Egyptian court and face his former brother, Ramesses. With the knowledge of the trials that awaited him, Moses returned to Egypt. God prompted Aaron to meet his returning brother, to whom Moses told all God was doing. Moses accompanied Aaron, who assembled the elders of Israel to tell them of the mission God had sent Moses to accomplish. (Exodus 4:28-31):

Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which He had sent him, and all the signs that He had commanded him to do. Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the sons of Israel; and Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses He then performed the signs in the sight of the people. So the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD was concerned about the sons of Israel and that He had seen their affliction, then they bowed low and worshiped.

Note the people's response in Exodus 4:31 – that when the people heard that the Lord was concerned for them, ***they bowed down and worshiped God.***

Here is the key question which must be asked: Would this have occurred forty years earlier when Moses decided to take things into his own hands? I believe the answer is "Not a chance"! Because Moses at age eighty sought to honor God, and not himself, his courage came from the Lord and not his own abilities. That is why, at the end of his life, Moses could say (Deuteronomy 31:6):

Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you."

And so, the first principle for being a Godly leader is this:

Gain Courage by Trusting the Lord.

Image Source:

https://statici.behindthevoiceactors.com/behindthevoiceactors/_img/movies/banner_597.jpg

Questions

1. When you look back on your life, can you think of one or two experiences which influenced you, giving you a deeper understanding of how to get along with others?
2. In Moses, we see how God took the raw talent of Moses' life and molded him into the kind of leader He wished Moses to become. Can you think of how God might be molding you?
3. As a young man, Moses, was proud. As an older man, he was humble. What are the evidences of pride and humility in the lives of people who lead you? Of yourself?

It's A Wonderful Life & Leadership Principle 2

Do I Choose to Stay with the Building & Loan, or Go To Work for Mr. Potter?



How Do I Know Which Choice will lead to a REALLY Wonderful Life?

In the movie, **It's a Wonderful Life**, George Bailey (played by **Jimmy Stewart**) wants nothing more than to leave the sleepy little town of Bedford Falls and “see the world.” However, due to a sequence of circumstances that play on his sense of duty to others, George never gets to follow his dreams. Instead, he spends his life looking out for the needs of others – and has a tremendous impact on everyone around him. To see a video of this scene, go to http://www.wisejargon.com/thinklead.htm#Wonderful_Life

Digging Deeper

In the movie, George Bailey wishes he'd never been born. His guardian angel, Clarence, comes to earth and shows George what the world would be like if he'd never been born. During this experience, George sees Bedford Falls transformed from a happy, prosperous community to one in which gambling, drunkenness and other vices abound. It reminds me of the passage from C.S. Lewis' book, **Mere**

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Christianity, in which Lewis talks about what it might take to create a truly Christian society. He writes:

A Christian society is not going to arrive until most of us really want it: and we are not going to want it until we become fully Christian. I may repeat ‘Do as you would be done by’ till I am black in the face, but I cannot really carry it out till I love my neighbor as myself: and I cannot learn to love my neighbor as myself till I learn to love God: and I cannot learn to love God except by learning to obey Him.

In the movie, George Bailey is offered a job by his nemesis, Mr. Potter. The job will take care of all George's financial problems, allow him to travel - all the things he's ever wanted to do. In other words, George will be able to put himself and his desires first for a change. George almost gives into the temptation – but then he realizes that by doing what he wants, the people of Bedford Falls will suffer. In this moment George Bailey faces his crisis of commitment. He sacrifices his dreams to obey that still small voice commanding him to look out for his fellow man.

In John 6:22-40, the multitude was following Jesus – not because they wanted to learn more about God, but because they wanted Jesus to feed them. They pleaded with Him to perform more signs and wonders, “that they might believe.” But Jesus understood that doing magic tricks to make the crowd like Him wasn’t His purpose in life. In verses 38-40, Jesus said:

For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I, Myself, will raise him up on the last day.

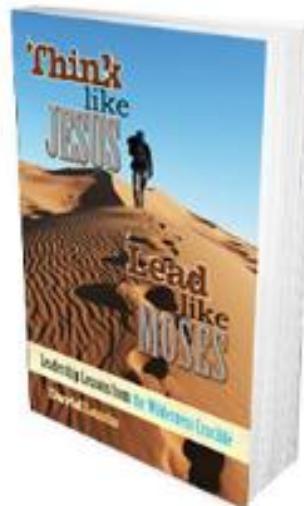
Because Jesus said that He was the “bread of life”, the Jews grumbled. Jesus didn’t tell them what they wanted to hear, or do what they wanted Him to do. Instead, He understood His purpose in life, and stayed true to that purpose. In our lives, God tells us that the way to have a “Wonderful Life” is to serve others, rather than live for ourselves. Like George Bailey, we must stay true to the mission God has called us to.

And so, the second principle for being a Godly leader is this:

Understand God’s plan for your life, and be committed to its execution.

Image source: https://3.bp.blogspot.com/-T6qblDwnJ3w/W-dIEjPpa7I/AAAAAAACRkU/IF-9iG7SLsoY5XzikbCB47LZbAa5JInegCLcBGAs/s1600/Its_A_Wonderful_Life_coloring.filminspector.com_46.jpg

**Think Like Jesus
Lead Like Moses**

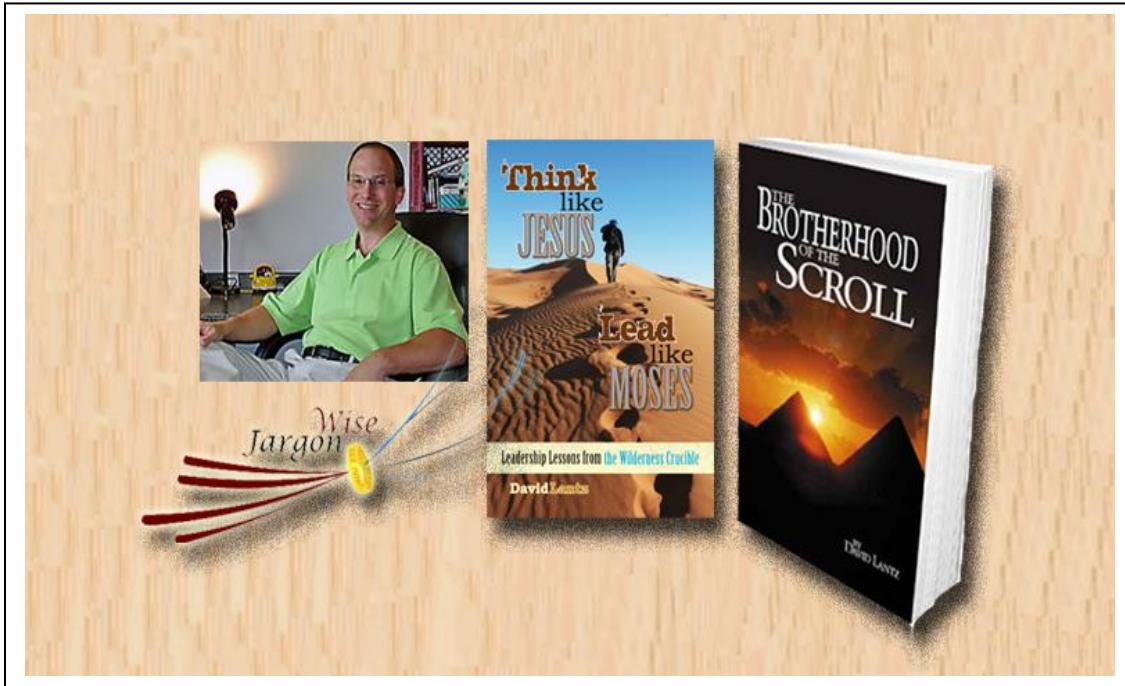


Order Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses for the Kindle.

Discovering Godly Leadership at the Movies

Questions

1. Take a moment to read John 4:7-42. Notice that Jesus offers us living water, but we must first rest from trying to do things in our own strength. In what ways are you struggling with resting from self-reliance?
2. Do you thirst for the living water Jesus offers, and the courage His strength can provide as you face the challenges and opportunities of daily living?
3. Staying the course is never easy. All of us face our own personal crisis of commitment. Have you ever faced such a moment? Tell someone about what that moment was like – and what happened.



To learn about the books I've written, visit my Amazon Author Page by clicking on the above image, or [clicking here](#).

Spartacus & Leadership Principle 3

Ok, As I see it, We've Got Two Choices. Either We Can Be a Gang of Drunken Raiders, Or ...



We Can Be an Army of Janitors and Clean Up the Church!!

Digging Deeper

In the 1960 version of **Spartacus**, Kirk Douglas plays the role of a lowly Thracian slave who is trained as a gladiator. Circumstances cause him to lead a revolt against the Roman government, in which he gathers to himself an army of slaves seeking their freedom. Based on the historical accounts of the slave revolt of 73 B.C., **Spartacus** tells the story of how a “band of brothers” worked together to mount an almost unstoppable challenge to the greatest army in the world. By the end of the movie, Spartacus had so completely won the trust and respect of his inner circle that when told all would live if they simply turned over “the man called Spartacus,” one after another rose and declared to the Romans: “I’m Spartacus. I’m Spartacus. No, I’M SPARTACUS!” They would rather die than surrender their leader. To see a video of this scene, go to <http://www.wisejargon.com/thinklead.htm#Spartacus>

Forming a Group of Godly Advisors

If you’ve ever had to manage a group of people, be it volunteers, employees, or even family members, you’ve learned this lesson: It’s one thing to have a vision which imbues you with passion. It’s another to have other people “catch” the vision and get excited about it. Some people employ a command and control mentality to achieve “buy-in” to “their” vision. This motivation by fear, however, is not the way of our Lord. God desires righteous leaders who have a keen sense of justice, developing buy-in to the vision by encouraging their followers – not by trying to instill fear in their hearts. It is this model of developing trust and support for the vision of a people in covenant relationship to God which Moses followed as he began the process of helping the Israelites catch the vision. Key to this approach was the

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formation of a group of advisors to counsel him and share his burdens. Leaders who attempt to “go it alone” will fail if they do not follow this practice. Such was the case for Moses.

Some time during the second year of their sojourning in the wilderness (Numbers 10:11), the Israelites left Mt. Sinai and traveled into the wilderness of Paran. Again on the march, being forced to leave their comfort zone, the people returned to their practice of complaining. Not satisfied with the manna, they wanted more. Their anger, which was focused on Moses, was more than he could bear. In his turn, Moses complained to God, and in Numbers 11:14-15, said:

I alone am not able to carry all this people, because it is too burdensome for me. So if You are going to deal thus with me, please kill me at once, if I have found favor in Your sight, and do not let me see my wretchedness.

It is at this juncture all who lead must sooner or later come: The realization that the job is too big for us, the burdens too heavy, and that we cannot do it alone. We must either share that burden - **and the limelight of leadership** – or be crushed by that burden. Remember when Moses first came to Egypt to lead the people out of bondage? In Exodus 3:16, God commanded him to go and gather the elders of Israel, telling them that God was indeed concerned about their wellbeing. God desired Moses to use these individuals as a support group. Moses, however, took some time in learning this lesson.

From his perspective, Moses was working hard to meet the needs of the people - a thankless, draining task. Again and again, Moses encountered this problem as he led the Children of Israel into the wilderness and away from Egypt. In another instance, while in the Wilderness of Zin, the grumbling of the people became very great, causing Moses to fear for his own life (Exodus 17:4). Then God gave Moses this commandment, one which is instructive for anyone in a leadership position:

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. (Ex. 17:5)

God finally had Moses’ attention! What is instructive is that God told Moses to take some of the elders – Moses’ “inner circle” if you will – to bring forth water from the rock. Once again, as the crisis deepened, God was telling Moses that it was OK to rely on the help of others to spread the vision. In turn, by having others share in the task of meeting the needs of the flock, their own commitment to the cause was strengthened. This is a keen observation of group dynamics – an observation which underlies a key aspect for developing buy-in to the vision employed in God’s training of Moses: Forming an advisory group with whom to share the burden of leadership.

But up until this point, Moses had failed to rely on this inner circle as God had intended. In Numbers 11:16-25, God instructed Moses to gather 70 elders upon whom He would pour out His Spirit, which until then had been bestowed solely upon Moses. These elders gathered at the tent of the meeting, where the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, causing the elders to prophesy. This was the beginning of a critical phase in Moses’ life, as he began to trust others to communicate God’s vision in a just and fair manner.

From this, I distill the third principle for being a Godly leader:

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The Godly Leader will attract lieutenants in whom he can place his trust, and then trust them to accomplish the vision.

Image Source: <http://lovalkng.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/250-Introductions-of-185-People-Groups-Things-by-MoPapparani-Movie-Introductions-Featuring-Spider-Man-Spartacus-Mortal-Kombat-Matrix-Arnold-Schwarzenegger-Much-More.jpg>

Questions

1. Have you ever been tempted to give up, but continued to push forward anyway? What did you learn from that experience?
2. Do you believe God has a plan for your life, but you just never seem to get around focusing on it?
3. If you lack peace, if you face tremendous stress in your life, could it be that the Lord has called you to a work which is more than you can bear in your own strength? What would it take to focus on God's plan for you?

The screenshot shows a course page for 'An Introduction to Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses'. The top navigation bar includes links for 'HOME', 'ALL COURSES', 'WISEJARGON MAKE A DIFFERENCE', 'SIGN UP', and 'LOGIN'. The main title 'Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses' is displayed prominently. Below the title, a subtitle reads 'LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE WILDERNESS CRUCIBLE'. The course image features a person walking through a desert landscape with the text 'Think like JESUS' and 'Lead like MOSES'. Another image shows a person standing with arms outstretched in a desert, with a sign that says 'Promised Land'. At the bottom of the page, there is a button labeled 'Enroll in Course' and a 'Powered by Zer' logo.

Click to take the course [Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses, 1/3rd off the normal prices](#)

Star Trek Generations & Leadership Principle 4

Why should I come out of retirement and help you?



To get shot at? To save Veridian III from a madman? To make a difference? Sounds like fun!

In the movie, **Star Trek: Generations**, Captain Picard (**Patrick Steward**) must stop a madman by the name of Soran (**Malcolm McDowell**) from using an energy ribbon to destroy a planet. This same energy ribbon hit the Enterprise some 80 years earlier, trapping Captain Kirk (**William Shatner**) in it. Now, Captain Picard is also trapped in this ribbon, called “The Nexus” and desperately needs Kirk to come back in time with him to save Veridian III and the Star Ship Enterprise from the madman, Soran. At first, Kirk doesn’t want to leave the comfort he’s come to know. But then he realizes that nothing in the Nexus is real – that “nothing really matters” – and that by putting his own comfort before others, he no longer makes a difference. **To see a video of this scene, go to**

http://www.wisejargon.com/thinklead.htm#Star_Trek

Digging Deeper

Imagine what it would be like to be in a situation where you are comfortable, and life is rewarding you with what you feel you deserve. Then, all of a sudden, you have someone come along and ask you to risk everything on behalf of people you don’t know.

That's what happened to Moses

Early in his career, he’d been “the prince of Egypt.” Acts 7:23-25 sheds some light on Moses’ state of mind and provides us some insights into how this affected him. We read as follows:

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But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel. And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him; but they did not understand.

What a shock! Here Moses, a Prince of Egypt, was taking the side of the Hebrews. But instead of seeing that he was their deliverer – that he, Moses, a man educated in the wisdom of the Egyptians, “powerful in word and deed,” was here to save them – they instead scorned him. So, Moses fled Egypt and went into the wilderness.

For the next forty years, Moses worked in the service of a man named Jethro, marrying one of his daughters, and then tending the man’s sheep. Now, sheep are fairly docile animals. They go where you lead them. They don’t talk back, and generally don’t play office politics, conspiring to cause you harm. Moses had spent forty years learning the wisdom of the Egyptians, including the art of power politics – and then spent the next forty years unlearning those lessons. ***During those second forty years of sheep herding, God was remaking Moses into a vessel which He could use for His divine purposes.***

This is such a vitally important point. God has a purpose for your life and mine – and God certainly had a purpose for Moses’. There comes a point in each of our lives where we either choose to fulfill that purpose, or reject it. When Moses was ready, God confronted him with the purpose of his life. At the Burning Bush, God told Moses that he was the man who would deliver the Hebrews from Bondage. In Exodus 3:1-2 and 4:10, we read.

Now Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the West Side of the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. ... Then Moses said to the Lord, “Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since Thou hast spoken to Thy servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.

Here, we see Moses as anything but self-confident, content to lead sheep – not men, and anything but a charismatic speaker. When we list out these attributes of Moses as described in these two sets of verses, it is as though we are seeing two totally different people. In point of fact, we are. In Acts, we’re seeing Moses as he was at age forty. In the Exodus passage, we’re seeing Moses as he had become by age eighty.

The Christian is called to a life of service. Like Kirk in the movie, we learn that merely doing what pleases us “doesn’t really matter.” We come to realize that the only way to make a difference is to be willing to take a stand in difficult times and risk being rejected.

What about you and me? When God calls, will we choose comfort, or will we choose the chance to “make a difference?”

From this, I distill the fourth principle for being a Godly leader:

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The Godly Leader is One who will Champion His Followers – Even at His Own Expense.

Image Source: <http://www.agentsofguard.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/HORSES.jpg>

Questions

1. Do you feel you have sacrificed for others in your work, your marriage, in your social relationships? I mean, really sacrificed – consistently putting the needs of others before your own?
2. Has God given you a decent job and living? Given you children to raise or employees to oversee? Has he put you in a place of authority? If you answer yes to any of these, can you say if – and how – you've made a difference in the lives of those who depend on you?
3. Captain Kirk, like Moses, saw that the only way to make a difference is to take a stand in difficult times and risk being rejected. Have you ever faced such a trial in your life?

As you're reading ***Discovering Mere Godly Leadership At the Movies***, I hope you're finding the themes I've selected to illustrate the ten principles of Godly leadership of interest. If you like it, please be sure to go to my website at www.wisejargon.com/at-the-movies/ to see additional e-books I've created based on my newsletter, ***Conversations with the Culture***. And don't forget to sign up to receive this free monthly newsletter in the future! ,

At The Movies



In 2005, God laid on my heart the concept for a newsletter I've come to call ***Conversations with the Culture***, to talk about the truths of the bible with an increasingly secular society. Since starting, I had no idea where the journey of writing it each month would take me. I've written about 150 issues over years. And now, I'm starting to organize them thematically so that you can order/download them as PDF documents. If you are someone who wants to identify trends in society, discuss current events, and see how to reach the culture around us with a biblical world view, I think you'll find this series I'm calling ***Discovering Truth At the Movies*** a valuable tool – especially if you work in youth/young adult ministry.



Discovering Truth at Movies:

Discovering Mere Christianity at the Movies In his book, ***Mere Christianity***, C.S. Lewis dealt with all sorts of questions about God and Jesus. It is a book that has had a profound effect on my life, and I encourage you to buy a copy and read it yourself. I've compiled a series of newsletters based on Lewis' work, using movies from the last 25 years to illustrate his points.

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Armageddon & Leadership Principle 5

Wow, Save the World? This is Deep Blue Hero Stuff. Sure, I'm In!



**And while I know Saving Mankind from Certain Doom is Why
We're all Doing This, If it Helps Me Meet that One Lady
Over There ... Gravy!!**

Digging Deeper

In the movie, **Armageddon**, a planet-killing meteor is just 18 days away from hitting the Earth. NASA enlists the help of Harry Stamper (**Bruce Willis**), an expert deep core driller, to train their astronauts and help them drill into the asteroid and plant a nuclear bomb. But Harry figures the astronauts can't be trained in time and opts to go with his own oil drilling crew. NASA realizes it must trust Stamper and his crew, and so, reluctantly, delegates the job of saving the planet to a bunch of crime-skirting, push the envelope "roughnecks" who are the best in the world at what they do. At the end of the day, the government must put aside politics in order to save the world. **To see a video of this scene, go to <http://www.wisejargon.com/thinklead.htm#Armageddon>**

Moses and Delegation

In Exodus Chapter 18, we find a classic case of the need to delegate authority, and the barriers (from Moses' perspective) to making this process work. To set the stage, it had been less than three months since the Israelites left Egypt. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, met Moses at Mt. Sinai, where he brought his daughter Zaphora and the children to be reunited with Moses (vs. 8-12). In the course of their reunion, Jethro observed that Moses was wearing himself out because he refused to delegate the task of judging the disputes of the people. It didn't take Jethro long to see that this was a recipe for disaster. He counseled Moses, saying (vs. 19-22).

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"You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God, then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do. Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place *these* over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. Let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you."

In each instance, Jethro was telling Moses that he had to give up control over the micro details. In return, Moses would gain a better grasp of the overall picture of where the people were going. What did Moses risk by giving up control over the minor details? He risked that others would rise to prominence and he would diminish in status; that he would lose control, that the job of judging wouldn't be done right, and so forth. What Moses stood to gain is contained in verse 23:

"If you do this thing and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace."

The key words are "and all these people also will go to their place in peace."

Moses did as his father-in-law recommended. Additionally, as we will see in a future newsletter, Moses trained up Joshua to take his place as the leader of the people. In all situations, Moses considered his alternative courses of action, and consistently chose the one which would benefit his people. Moses' focus was on taking the Israelites to the Promised Land, not in building a personal following which was dependent upon his own personal charisma.

From this, I distill the fifth principle for being a Godly leader:

The Godly Leader is One who Shares Authority Through Delegation in Order to Ensure the Success of the People, Placing others' Needs Above His Own Ambitions.

Image source: <https://image.tmdb.org/t/p/original/lI3qV4kiSg0BvE6gelzV0tPAoFK.jpg>

Questions

1. Sometimes, we keep our dreams and goals to ourselves. As a result, they stagnate from the lack of a fresh perspective on how such dreams can be changed from concepts to actions. What are YOUR dreams? Your goals?
2. Think about work or close relationships. Do you tend to operate on a philosophy of "if you want it done right you've got to do it yourself," or do you reach out to people who can help you?

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3. We all know people who have our best interests at heart. Who are some people you could sit down with and form a mutual brain storming group who can help each other with ideas and concerns?

Summary

In looking at the fifth principle, David examines how Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, encourages him to delegate the work he's doing. To help illustrate the importance of making sure that the people's interests, not the leader's ego, is most important, he uses the movie "Armageddon" to demonstrate why we need to delegate tasks to competent people.



Click to preview a lesson from the course [Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses](#)

Braveheart & Leadership Principle 6

Wallace, Why Didn't We Stay Back at the Castle, Eat, Drink and Take it Easy?



Because Doing the Hard Work That No One Else Wants To is What it Means to be Noble

In the movie, **Braveheart**, William Wallace (**Mel Gibson**) is made a Knight of the Scottish Court. Immediately, he turns to his chief aids and places small necklaces about each of their necks. He isn't there to win titles of nobility, he is there to win freedom for his people, and he acknowledges his men who are serving with him. Wallace pledges to use his position to help the people of Scotland gain their freedom. The opposite is true of the Scottish nobles, who "squabble over the scraps from Longshanks' table." The Scottish Nobles are more interested in how they can use William Wallace to make themselves King than to serve the people they rule. **To see a video of this scene, go to <http://www.wisejargon.com/thinklead.htm#Braveheart>**

Digging Deeper

Egoism and vanity are fatal to the success of a leader. The leader who fears that one of his followers may be seen to outshine him is particularly sure to realize that fear sooner or later. Only by edifying those around him, recognizing their talents and abilities, can the leader build a truly cohesive, team spirit of mutual cooperation. In Exodus Chapter 35, we see an example of how Moses understood this concept and used it to build up those around him – not to manipulate them for his own purposes. In verses 30-35, we see how Moses affirms key artisans by name:

"See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. ... He also has put in his heart to teach, both he and Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. He has filled them with skill to perform every work of an engraver and of a designer and of an embroiderer, in blue and in purple and in

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scarlet material, and in fine linen, and of a weaver, as performers of every work and makers of designs."

Not only did Moses praise the efforts of Bezalel, Oholiab and Ahisamach, he mentioned their tribes as well. Imagine the sense of pride that these people felt. By edifying the craftsmen, and the tribes from which they hailed, Moses encouraged many of his followers. More importantly, he took none of the credit for their accomplishments (he could, for example, have diminished their efforts by playing up the fact that it was he who had delivered the blueprints).

As the craftsmen set to work to build the ark and the tabernacle, they soon discovered that there was more than enough material to do the job! They went to Moses, begging him to ask the people to stop bringing their treasure for them to use. And so, in Exodus 36:6-7, Moses issued this pronouncement:

"Let no man or woman any longer perform work for the contributions of the sanctuary." Thus the people were restrained from bringing *any more*. For the material they had was sufficient and more than enough for all the work, to perform it."

Many sermons have been preached on this text and used to encourage Christians to contribute to the church building fund. Certainly, this is one application of the text. But from this passage, one thing jumps off the page that I believe is vitally important for all consider themselves leaders should learn:

Moses gave genuine praise for the common people who had contributed to the success of the project. In this way, Moses was saying to each man and woman of Israel that who they were and what they did mattered. Moses was telling them that each person was needed for the success of the whole.

So many times, leaders use praise in a selfish way to manipulate others to achieve only their own ends. Moses' conduct in edifying the craftsmen who did the work, and the tribes from which they hailed, reveals the sixth quality of the Godly leader:

From this, I distill the sixth principle for being a Godly leader:

He is content to see the honors go to his followers, affirming their self-worth and the knowledge God cherishes them.

Questions

1. Think about the times you praise people. Why do you praise them? Honestly?
2. When someone praises you, which moves you most: To show gratitude to you? To encourage you to work harder/smarter for your benefit? Some other reason?
3. Sometimes, we praise others with the ulterior motive of actually benefiting ourselves. When have you seen that done?

Dave & Leadership Principle 7

If You're Not Willing to be a Servant, Then Maybe You Don't Belong Here in the First Place



Oh, and Don't forget: Jobs are Temporary, but Character Lasts an Eternity

Digging Deeper

The movie, **Dave**, is the story of a presidential look-alike who finds himself in the oval office 'filling in' for the president. After the real president has a stroke and lies in a coma, Dave (**Kevin Kline**) becomes a permanent "temp" worker and is manipulated by the "evil" chief of staff, Bob Alexander. Lacking the political savvy of the real president, Dave proceeds to govern the country with a refreshingly straight-forward approach. (**To see a video of this scene, go to <http://www.wisejargon.com/thinklead.htm#Dave>).** In a climactic finish, Dave goes before Congress to confess to the sins of the "real" president and says:

See, there are certain things you should expect from a President. I ought to care more about you than I do about me... I ought to care more about what's right than I do about what's popular... I ought to be willing to give this whole thing up for something I believe in... If I'm not... Then I don't belong here in the first place..."

The movie **Dave** illustrates how, sooner or later, even the best intentioned leaders encounter a spirit of jealousy from those who surround them. When the occasion demands, especially in dealing with jealous rivals, truly great leaders are willing to do any sort of labor which they would ask another to

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perform. This is the mark of a humble servant leader, and was perhaps one of Moses' greatest character strengths. In Moses, we see that "humble is as humble does." In Numbers 12 we read of how Moses was forced to confront the jealousy of Miriam and Aaron, his own flesh and blood. The two confronted Moses, saying in vs. 2:

"Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us as well?" And the Lord heard it."

Why were Miriam and Aaron accusing Moses of being self-serving and flaunting his position to aggrandize himself? This in fact was the furthest thing from the truth! In the very next verse, we read that Moses was more humble "than any man on the face of the earth." Miriam and Aaron were jealous of Moses' position, and sought to gain equal stature with him to serve their own egos..

Another example of the challenges to Moses' authority is found in the 16th chapter of Numbers. Korah, a descendent from the priestly tribe of Levi, gathered 250 VIPs of Israel and came to confront Moses and Aaron over the way they were leading the Israelites. Like Miriam, Korah accused Moses of believing he alone was holy. Miriam and Aaron had said in Numbers 12:2 that Moses wasn't the only person God had chosen to speak through. Korah mirrored their comments, stating in Numbers 16:3:

"You have gone far enough, for all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?"

Moses' response to Korah in Numbers 16:4 was to fall on his face and ask the Lord to judge between the two as to whom should lead the people. Miriam's punishment was to be temporarily struck by leprosy. In the case of Korah stirring up the people, nearly 15,000 people died because of one man's jealousy. Consider again the charges against Moses:

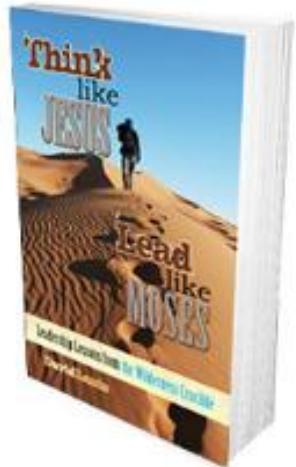
Miriam & Aaron: Has God not spoken through us as well?

Korah: All the congregation are holy, so why do you exalt yourselves over the rest of us?

Both Miriam and Korah accused Moses of being "holier than thou." However, as we read in Numbers 12:3, Moses was more humble "than any man on the face of the earth." Driven by their jealousy for Moses' position, Miriam and Korah projected their own character flaws onto Moses. How often it is that those who accuse people of arrogance and pride are themselves the ones who are truly the guilty parties.

In the movie, **Dave**, the main character didn't lash out at his accusers. He was honest with the American People, and allowed others to defend him. That's the same thing Moses did. Instead of using his authority to have his accusers punished, he sought the Lord.

**Think Like Jesus
Lead Like Moses**



Order **Think Like
Jesus, Lead Like
Moses** for the
Kindle.

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From this, I distill the seventh principle for being a Godly leader:

Resist the Temptation to Retaliate and Justify One's Self, and Allow God the Opportunity to Defend You

Images Source:

https://foreignpolicymag.files.wordpress.com/2009/04/090420_kevinklineindave-jpeg21.jpg?w=200

Questions

1. What do you think of people who stir up controversy needlessly?
2. When others accuse you of character flaws, do you lash out in anger, or allow God through the words or actions of others to defend you?
3. How would you advise your coworkers / employees / children to deal with unjust criticism? With criticism that is deserved?

Kingdom of Heaven & Leadership Principle 8

What Man is a Man Who Does Not Make the World Better?



Do the Right Thing. God Wills It!

In the movie, **Kingdom of Heaven**, Balian (**Orlando Bloom**) is a peasant blacksmith living in France in 1184. He is visited by Godfrey of Ibelin (**Liam Neeson**), who reveals to Balian that he is his father, and he asks Balian to come with him to fight in the Crusades. Though he refuses at first, Balian decides to join his father after murdering the village priest in an argument over his wife, who recently committed suicide. Through many engaging plot twists and turns, Balian finds himself as the commander of the Christian army organizing a defense of the city of Jerusalem against a siege by the Muslim army.

A bloodthirsty Christian crusader by the name of Guy de Lusigan is married to the sister of Baldwin IV, King of Jerusalem. Because Baldwin is childless and dying from an advanced case of leprosy, de Lusigan is next in line to the throne by virtue of marriage. Knowing that the advancement of de Lusigan to the throne would be disastrous for his subjects, King Baldwin offers Balian a deal: Murder Guy de Lusigan, and marry his sister, Sibylla (**Eva Green**). Then, Baldwin will abdicate the throne and Balian will be made King of Jerusalem. **To see a video of this scene, go to**

<http://www.wisejargon.com/thinklead.htm#Kingdom>

Digging Deeper

Though the deal would benefit Balian, and would prevent an evil man from becoming king, he refuses Baldwin's offer. In so doing, Balian reminds the king of his own words:

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A King may move a man, a father may claim a son, but remember that even when those who move you be Kings, or men of power, your soul is in your keeping alone. When you stand before God, you cannot say, "But I was told by others to do thus." Or that, "Virtue was not convenient at the time." This will not suffice. Remember that.

Doing the Right Thing: The Three Wise Men

Christmas is a time when we focus on the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Only briefly does the Christmas Story focus on the Magi, and then only in the Book of Matthew. Legend has it there were three of them, though the Bible is silent as to their exact number. We are told, however, of a meeting they had with King Herod, and of a decision they made to do the right thing – even though it may have endangered their own lives to thwart Herod's will. You see, the evil King Herod wanted to use the Magi as spies to discover where the baby Jesus was so that he could kill Him. The story of how Herod attempted to use the wise men to this end is told in Matthew 2:7-8, 12:

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The Magi, being the wise men they were, understood that though “virtue was not convenient at the time”, they could not simply obey when “told by another to do thus.” Though they were from Persia and were without the Law of God, ***they instinctively knew what righteousness demanded of them, and did the right thing.***

Doing the Wrong Thing: The Elders and Nobles of Israel

In 1st Kings Chapter 21, we read of the story of a man called Naboth who, it seems, had two problems. First, he had a very nice vineyard that was the envy of his neighbor. Second, his neighbor was the evil king Ahab and his devious queen, Jezebel. Now, Ahab became jealous of the Naboth's vineyard, but instead of offering a just price, he told Naboth to simply give it to him. When Naboth refused, Ahab went home, sulked, and told his wife. Queen Jezebel told him not to worry, and set to work to hatch a plot to kill Naboth and have his vineyard given to Ahab. In I Kings 21:8, she wrote letters to the Elders and Nobles about her plot, which we read in verses 9 – 11:

Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the head of the people; and seat two worthless men before him, and let them testify against him, saying, 'You cursed God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death." So the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them.

Unlike the Magi, the Elders of Israel had access to the Word of God. But, unlike the Three Wise Men, they were in fear of the one who commanded them, and so took the path King Baldwin in the movie

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Kingdom of Heaven warned against. In effect their excuse was: "**But I was told by others to do thus.**" They pleaded their cause, adding: "**Virtue was not convenient at the time.**"

Application for Daily Living:

Evil rarely presents itself in such stark, black and white contrasts as it did with Herod or Jezebel. Rather, as in the movie, **The Kingdom of Heaven**, evil surfaces behind the mask of what is “best for the greater good.” King Baldwin could have gone straight to Guy de Lusigan and had some “straight talk”. Yes, this would have had some negative consequences. However, it’s hard to imagine they would have been worse than what latter happened in the movie (sorry, you’ll have to watch to find out!).

Is there someone in your life with whom you need to have some “straight talk”? Or, is it your habit to work your will behind the scenes through the “elders and nobles” because you do not have the courage to face issues squarely and head on?

And what about the other actors in such circumstances? When asked to participate in such schemes, will we play the part of the Wise Men, or the part of the Elders and Nobles? May God give us wisdom to discern our roles in such circumstances, remembering always another line from The Kingdom of Heaven:

"Holiness is in Right Action and Courage on Behalf of Those Who Cannot Defend Themselves"

When we do this, we display the eighth principle for being a Godly leader:

Invite the Holy Spirit to flow through you, so that He might choose and disciple others with a heart for the vision God has given you

Image source: http://madeinatlantis.com/movies_central/2005/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/the-kingdom-of-heaven2.jpg

Questions

1. As you grow into the leader God has called you to become, are you genuinely willing to serve others?
2. Are you surrounding yourself with a group of believers committed to one another to grow in the encouragement of God’s Spirit?
3. And, are you preparing and promoting them so that when you are no longer there, they will execute the vision to which God has called you?

Messenger & Leadership Principle 9

Hey down there. Yah, Joan of Arc, I'm Talking to YOU!



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REMEMBER in Whose Name You're Fighting. I have STANDARDS, Ya Know!!!

In the 1999 movie, *The Messenger* depicts the life of St. Joan of Arc, the 15th Century French war heroine. Played by **Milla Jovovich**, the movie traces her as a young girl through to her being burned at the stake. **Dustin Hoffman** plays a character at the end of the movie called "The Man," and has a conversation with her while she waits in her cell to be executed. No one else but Joan can see the man, and they have the following conversation:

JEANNE Yes! We fought and killed in His name... the King of Heaven! MAN Really?
FLASH: Jeanne is seated in her saddle before Orleans, raising her standard with the cry – JEANNE Let all who love me follow me! Back in Jeanne's cell: MAN "Let all who love me follow me"... Where does God get mentioned? (Jeanne is cornered) Come on Jeanne, be honest. You fought for yourself, in your name.

To see a video of this scene, go to <http://www.wisejargon.com/thinklead.htm#Messenger>

Digging Deeper

Moses had led the Israelites in the wilderness for forty years. Just as he had led sheep for forty years under the guidance of his father-in-law, Moses had guided Israel under the watchful eye of God. In Numbers chapter 20, we read that they had come once again to the wilderness of Zin, an area that is known as the northern part of the Negev. This was the same area from whence Moses had sent the

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twelve spies into the Promised Land (Numbers 13:21). Once again, as they had so many times in the past, the people grumbled. This time, they complained because there was no water.

Moses and Aaron came to the doorway of the Tent of Meeting, and fell on their faces before God. The Lord spoke to Moses, saying (Numbers 20:8):

Take the rod, and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation *and speak to the rock before all their eyes*, that it may yield its water. (emphasis added)

Once before, in Exodus 17:5-6, God had instructed Moses to bring forth water by *striking a rock*. This time, Moses was told to simply *speak to the rock*. Moses disobeyed God in how he brought forth water from the rock, but his sin was not so much in what he did, but why he did it. In Numbers 20:9-11, we read:

So Moses took the rod from before the Lord, just as He had commanded him; and Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, “Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you from this rock?” Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly. (emphasis added)

Note that, before he struck the rock, Moses lectured the people, asking them if he and Aaron should bring forth water for them. There was no mention of God being the one performing the work. Psalms 106:33 records Moses' first sin: "**He spoke rashly with his lips.**"

Certainly, Moses was tired of hearing the "same ole same ole" from the people, but God did not approve of the way Moses handled the situation. After forty years, God expected Moses to trust Him completely and give Him the glory for actions on behalf of the people. By showing his frustration with the people and claiming credit for the miracle of bringing forth water, **Moses was in one sense saying this to God: "OK God, you're obviously not as in control of this situation as I thought you were. I'm going to have to throw my weight around to show them I mean business."**

And when Moses struck the rock – twice – to bring forth water – that's exactly what he did.

Think about this for just a moment, and ask yourself this question: Which is more dramatic – which visually demonstrates your command of the situation to two million people watching your every move. To speak softly to a rock, or with a flourish of sweeping motions, strike it with your staff? By striking the rock with a flurry, Moses hoped to demonstrate that he was in control.

Only he wasn't. God was. Moses' sin was that he forgot that very key fact, but worse, that he tried to make others forget it too. Moses had fallen into a trap that – if we're honest – probably would have ensnared the vast majority of us as well. Sooner or later, a leader falsely comes to believe that his success, and the success of the people he leads, are one in the same. Such a leader fails to recognize that in the course of building a church, a business, or an organization, he needs and receives help from others. That is why, when a leader has guided those he leads through the turbulent times of building the organization, he must guard against the temptation to let success go to his head during the good times.

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Therefore, our ninth principle for the Godly leader is:

Acknowledge the Temptation to let Success go to Your Head - and Ask Your Advisors to Help Hold You Accountable.

Image source: http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-pjVE9p89Np8/VG4wV_kuLsI/AAAAAAAABUo/LmCg7pRWQkY/s1600/messenger_0.jpg

Questions

1. Have you ever been in a position of authority or leadership in which you felt that someone – the people you lead – “them” – owed something to you? Did you take action on such feelings?
2. This is what Moses did – and so God prevented him from entering the Promised Land. In your experience, have you / someone you know, been penalized by acting on the emotion of “they owe it to me?”
3. How would you suggest that people guard against this type of emotional trap in which we can let success go to our heads?



To order **Discovering Mere Christianity at the Movies**:

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300 & Leadership Principle 10

Some Men Care Only for Themselves, But You Have Been Called to Care for Your People



Only Be Strong and Courageous, for the LORD YOUR GOD is the One who Goes with You!!

Digging Deeper

In the movie **300**, the Spartan king, Leonidas (**Gerard Butler**) defies the religious leaders of his kingdom and leads 300 of his fellow warriors to stand against the invading Persian army at a place called Thermopylae. In spite of facing insurmountable odds, their sacrifice inspired all of Greece to rally against the Persians. In the movie, the loan survivor, Dilios (**David Wenham**), recounts the vision of King Leonidas: "Long I pondered my king's cryptic talk of victory. Not just for Sparta, but for all Greece and the promise this country holds. 'Remember us.' As simple an order as a king can give. 'Remember why we died.' For he did not wish tribute, nor song, nor monuments nor poems of war and valor. His wish was simple. 'Remember us,' he said to me. That was his hope, should any free soul come across that place, in all the countless centuries yet to be. May all our voices whisper to you from the ageless stones, 'Go tell the Spartans, passerby, that here by Spartan law, we lie'." **To see a video of this scene, go to <http://www.wisejargon.com/thinklead.htm#300>**

Will Those Who Follow You Enter the Promised Land?

We began this study of the life of Moses by seeing how he had learned the secret of becoming strong and courageous through trust in the Lord. It is only fitting that we end our study by picking up that thread once more to draw one final but important lesson on leadership. At the end of his tenure as a

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leader, it is not enough to ride off into the sunset and enjoy his retirement years. The 10th and final attribute of the Godly leader is this:

He paints a vision of what the Promised Land will be, and Gains Commitment to its Achievement Without Him

The Vision

In Deuteronomy 29:1-15, Moses gathers the Children of Israel together one last time to prepare them for the task which lay ahead. While Moses had been leading them, God had been providing. In a very short time, they will enter the “Promised Land”, but Moses won’t be going with them. And so, Moses tells them that they are standing before the Lord: (vs. 12-13):

... that you may enter into the covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath which the LORD your God is making with you today, in order that He may establish you today as His people and that He may be your God, just as He spoke to you and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Nearly all these people had been born in the wilderness. Except for Joshua and Caleb, none were first-hand witnesses to the Exodus out of Egypt. In many respects, Moses was recounting his testimony, just as you and I might.

Creating Buy-In To the Vision

Having finished painting the vision for the people of God’s covenant relationship with them, there remains one final task for Moses to perform. In order for the Israelites to buy into this vision, he must pass the leadership mantle to his successor, Joshua – and do so publicly for all to see. In Deut. 31:1-8, Moses explains to them that he will not be crossing over the Jordan River with them. Speaking first to the people, he says (vs. 6):

Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.

Next, he ceremoniously turns to Joshua, and in the “sight of all Israel,” says to him (vs. 7-8):

Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance. The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.

Moses knew, however, that there would come a time when the people would fall away from the Lord. In order to give Joshua as much support as possible, he gathered the elders together to impress upon them the importance of doing all he had commanded. (Deut. 31:28-29). Through this story, we see three keys to insuring the passing of the torch and creating buy-in to the vision which the leader is presenting.

Discovering Godly Leadership at the Movies

1. Moses publicly commissioned Joshua to become his successor so there would be no question as to his desires.
2. By initiating a ceremony for the reading of the law, Moses established a way to reinforce the vision with future Israelites.
3. By charging the Elders to support Joshua and carry out his commands, Moses helped him establish his own inner circle of advisors.

Moses didn't enter into the Promised Land, but he wasn't bitter about it. He accepted God's will and set about doing all the Lord asked him to prepare Joshua and the people for the next chapter in their lives. No doubt, Moses would have been satisfied with the epitaph "well done, good and faithful servant." But for Moses, God reserved a special commemoration (Deut. 34:10):

Since then no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew fact to face.

From this, we find our tenth and final principle for being a Godly leader:

Live a life of genuineness, demonstrating a true sense of empathy and understanding for your followers, inspiring them to act courageously as they pursue a vision to enter the "Promised Land".

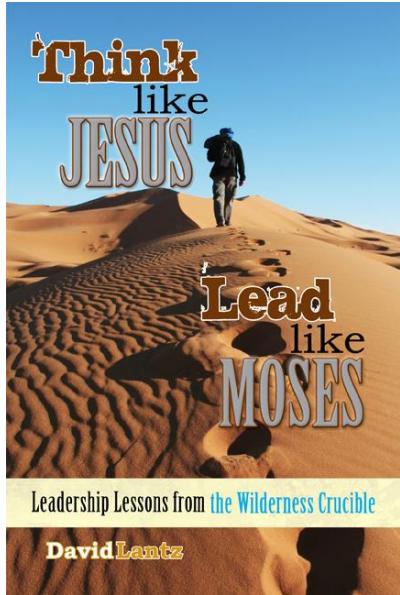
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Questions

1. The bible says that "without a vision, the people perish." What does it mean to provide a vision of the future for those who come after you in your set of circumstances?
 2. The vision God gave to Moses wasn't about getting to the promised land and then "taking it easy." It was about providing an environment to ensure the wellbeing of future generations. What steps are you taking to provide a positive legacy for those who will come after you?
 3. In your personal and professional life, are you the "real deal," or are you just pretending to have the best interests of others at heart?
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Discovering Godly Leadership at the Movies



I hope you've enjoyed this series on the Ten Principles of Godly Leadership through my newsletter, *Conversations with the Culture*.

You can find the full discussion, as well as life application and “Points to Ponder,” in my book, *Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses: Leadership Lessons from the Wilderness Crucible*.

You can order it as a [Kindle Book](#), or a hard copy by going to my [website](#).

Additionally, consider signing up for my course on church leadership titled **Pursuing Your Mission from God** (20% off) by [clicking here](#). Thanks, and God bless!

David Lantz

About the Author



David Lantz was the State Director of the Indiana Christian Coalition from 1992 to 1995, and has served as a political consultant to several political campaigns for statewide office. Since 2004, Mr. Lantz has served as an Adjunct Professor of Business Management and Economics for the University of Phoenix, and teaches for several other Indiana colleges, including Ivy Tech and Indiana Wesleyan University. He was named the 2005 Faculty of the Year by the first graduating class of the Indianapolis Campus of the University of Phoenix. He has worked for such organizations as the Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute and as a Budget Analyst for the Indiana Legislature.

He prepared a socio-economic analysis of Central Indiana for Dr. Billy Graham's 1999 Indianapolis Crusade.

An adult Sunday school teacher at his church for the last twenty years, he has had several articles published in Christian magazines such as *The Lookout* and *Sunday Digest*. He is the author of two Christian historical novels, **The Brotherhood of the Scroll** and **The Sword of the Scroll**, and two non-fiction books, **Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses: Leadership Lessons from the Wilderness Crucible** and **The Unraveling of We the People**.

David lives in Indianapolis, Indiana, with his wife, Sally. They are the proud parents of three children and 4 grandchildren – so far!

Visit him on his website at www.wisejargon.com/davidlantz