A Biblical Model of Leadership

Session 2

Picture of Jesus, 250 CE
Seminar Outline

Session 1: • Transforming work into worship

Session 2: • A Biblical Model of Leadership

Session 3: • The Formation of Spiritual Leadership
The Need for Authentic Christian Leadership

Something is seriously wrong in our organizations today. Many suffer from what Albert Schweitzer once referred to as a “sleeping sickness of the soul.” Its symptoms are loss of vision, community, morality and compassion. Many voices have been raised to lament the loss of soul and heart in our corporate jungles, where leaders blinded by fear either cower under the pressures and demands of the day or betray the fragile trust given to them with brazenly self-centered attitudes of dominance.
Leading from the False Self

“For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.”

– James 3:16
Presentation Outline

Vocation and Leadership

Iconic Leadership

The First Picture of Jesus

The Values of Iconic Leadership

Interaction
Vocation and Leadership

Vocare

Vocation

Abaudire

Obedience

Deaf

Surdus

Picture of Jesus, Fourth Century
28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

- Romans 8:28-29
Iconic Leadership

Picture of Jesus, Fifth Century

Ikon Window

Icon Iconic
5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,
6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,
7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.
8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.
9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,
11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- Philippians 2:5-11
The Philippians hymn (2:5-11) challenged the notions and principles of the prevalent shame/honor social matrix of Roman societies by offering an alternative set of behaviors and values that stood on stark contrast with those of the dominant culture.
The Function of the Philippians Hymn

Philippians hymn functions in this context as a *cursus pudorum* (a course of ignominy), standing in stark contrast to the socially pervasive and accepted practice of a *cursus honorum*, the formalized sequence of public offices that marked out the prescribed social pilgrimage for those aspiring to public status and acclaim in first-century Roman societies.
Iconic Leadership Model

“All true imitation is a transformation that does not simply present again something that is already there. It is a kind of transformed reality in which the transformation points back to what has been transformed in and through it. It is a transformed reality because it brings before us intensified possibilities never seen before.”
- Gadamer (1986, 64)
## Iconic Leadership Model

### Deliberate Actions of Status and Role Reversal in the Philippians Hymn

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<th>Kenosis</th>
<th>Servant Posturing</th>
<th>Embracing Humanity</th>
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<td>“but emptied himself” (2:7)</td>
<td>“taking the form of a slave” (2:7)</td>
<td>“being born in human likeness. And being found in human form” (2:7)</td>
<td>“he humbled himself” (2:8)</td>
<td>“and became obedient to the point of death even death on a cross” (2:8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν”</td>
<td>“μορφήν δούλου λαβών”</td>
<td>“ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος”</td>
<td>“ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν”</td>
<td>“γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου”</td>
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Iconic Leadership Model

- Place of Privilege
  - Active/Voluntary Behavior by Leader
    - Kenosis/Self-emptying
    - Servant Posturing
    - Embracing Humanity
    - Humility
  - Mimesis

- Status Reversal
  - Passive/Divine Exaltation & Glorification
    - Obedience

Jesus Christ
The Values of the Iconic Leadership

Kenosis, Servant Posturing, Embracing Humanity, Humility, Obedience
Kenosis

The values of kenosis as appropriated to leadership have been described as, (a) voluntary self-limitation, (b) vulnerability, (c) present to the “other”, (d) voluntary powerlessness, (e) continual purification from self-centeredness, (f) humility, (g) self-sacrifice, and (h) openness to the “other”.
Kenosis

The values of kenosis allow the leader to transcend narrow selfhood, to locate the “other” in the mutuality of love and to truly enter into the world of the follower where the leader becomes the servant of the “other”.
It is important that the hymn here does not speak of mere service, but the radical quest to take the form of a slave. Framing Jesus as a slave was “to assign to Him a position of greatest opprobrium in the social world” of the Philippians, living the in the “most status-conscious city in the Roman East”. These words must have challenged the “dominant view of reality” for the citizens of Philippi who “valued their imperial connections, their privileges, and their advantages as subjects” of the Emperor.
Servant Posturing

“...consulting our self interest is the pestilence that most effectively leads to our own destruction, so the sole haven of salvation is to be wise in nothing and to will nothing through ourselves but to follow the leading of the Lord alone.”

- John Calvin
Embracing Humanity

“…suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I was theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It was like waking up from a dream of separateness, of spurious self-isolation.”

- Thomas Merton
“As only Christ was able to speak to me in such a way that I was helped, so others too can only be helped by Christ alone. However, this means that I must release others from all my attempts to control, coerce, and dominate them with my love. In their freedom from me, other persons want to be loved for who they are, as those for whom Christ became a human being, died and rose again, as those for whom Christ won the forgiveness of sins and prepared eternal life. Because Christ has long since acted decisively for other Christians, before I could begin to act, I must allow them the freedom to be Christ's. They should encounter me only as the persons they already are in Christ.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer
Humility asserts truth not to bolster ego with control or with triumphs in debate, but as service to Christ and love to the adversary.”

- John Piper
Humility

“In this way, the ethics of lowliness in the New Testament can combine with a theology of the cross, which presents a stark challenge to the comfort ethos and individualism that permeates much of middle-class Western culture. True freedom in Christ means the freedom to enter into relationship with persons who bring one outside of one’s socioeconomic or religious comfort zone – freedom to break bread with the outcasts, the poor, and all of the other ‘neighbors’ that Christians are commanded to love. Yet this [is] Christologically grounded humble courage…”

- J. T. Billings
Obedience

“I must not attempt to control God’s actions, I must not count the stages in the journey He would have me make. I ask Him to make a saint of me, yet I must leave to Him the choice of that saintliness itself and still more the choice of the means which lead to it.”

– Mother Teresa of Calcutta
“The fundamental explanation of our conversion was not that we were wiser or morally superior to others in choosing God, but that God chose to have mercy on us and intervened in our lives, revealing our need for His provision of the gospel. Our salvation is owed completely to the sovereign grace of God.”

– C. J. Mahaney
The Promise of Iconic Leadership

“Place your mind in the mirror of eternity; Place your soul in the splendor of glory; Place your heart in the figure of the divine substance; And, through contemplation, transform your entire being Into the image of the Divine One Himself.”

- Clare of Assisi
“The world in which we live is no more welcoming of this story, no more open to this ‘mind’, than was Roman Philippi. We are inundated with narratives what promise life found in superior force, in acquiring the best looks, the best bank accounts, the best weapons, the best ‘stuff’. We are told that life is secured by our winning – socially, economically, politically, religiously – and everyone else losing. There is little room for the claim that the obedient death and resurrection of Jesus is the story of God’s ultimate loving victory, the defining reality for all the world.”

- D. Peterson
“Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’”

– Mark 10:42-45, NIV