

# Characteristics of Godly Leaders

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**Introduction:** Open your Bibles to **2 Samuel 5**. Our message this evening is entitled "Characteristics of God's Leaders".

We enter again into the life of David. He was a man after God's own heart. He wanted to please God in the big and small things. Probably from age 20 to age 30, David was an exile in his own country. In **2 Samuel 5:4-5**, we read "**David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. 5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah**".

We turn a corner tonight in David's life. He goes from exile to King of Israel.

- I. Godly Leaders are **Chosen** by God and men. Of course David was approved and ordained by God probably over a decade earlier. God told Samuel to go to the house of Jesse to anoint the next king of Israel. Samuel was convinced it would be the oldest Eliab, and Jesse was convinced, it wouldn't be David, because he had left David doing the menial job of tending sheep in the field.

We read in **1 Samuel 16:6-7** "And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD'S anointed *is* before him. 7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

David was a man after God's own heart, and that day in Bethlehem, David's home town, David was anointed to be King by Samuel and approved by God.

We read of David's anointing in **1 Samuel 16:10-13**, "Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these. 11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. 12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he *was* ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this *is* he. 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward."

David had been approved by God for a decade or more. But finally in **2 Samuel 5**, David would be approved by men to be the king. When it was time for David to be king, multitudes from all over Israel came to meet him in Hebron.

**A. Look at the Multitude of Armies that came to meet David **2 Samuel 5**. He had been reigning in Judah for about seven and a half years, but now a massive delegation from all over Israel descended upon David in Hebron. We read in **2 Samuel 5:1a**, "Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh."**

Turn over to **1 Chronicles 11:3**, "Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron; and David made a covenant with them in Hebron before the LORD; and they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD by Samuel."

Just as Samuel had said years earlier, David was finally made king over all Israel. But consider the multitude that came. **1 Chronicles 12:23** says "And these *are* the numbers of the bands *that were* ready armed to the war, *and* came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the LORD." And if you count all the numbers of the soldiers in the armies through **verse 40**, you come out with a total of **339,600** men. Those who did the negotiating with David according to **1 Chronicles 11:3**, were the elders. Some have estimated based on the numbers of elders, generals, and leaders in the army, that approximately 120,000 out of that number came to David to negotiate with David to be the king. These men had soldiers in the hundreds of thousands standing by to support David! What a multitude!

**B. Look at the Message of Approval these leaders gave to David.**

The leaders have seen what self-centered leadership is in Saul and Ishbosheth. A true leader does not have to lead by force, but is entreated to lead. David had so many opportunities to get ahead of God go ahead of the Lord's time table. But David resisted that temptation. So the men of Israel came to David with a message. **Verses 1b-2**, "Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh. <sup>2</sup> Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel".

1. They looked to David's **heritage**. **Verse 1b**: "Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh". God said this heritage was necessary in **Deuteronomy 17:15**, "Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: *one* from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which *is* not thy brother."

**Application:** Obviously, the leaders of Christians should also have the same heritage, not of Abraham, but of Christ. The churches of Great Britain began to die when they stopped emphasizing the new birth. Our churches will die if we lose the new birth. If we stop preaching the need for the new birth, then before long, you will have an unregenerate pastor in this pulpit. We've got to have the same heritage!

2. Secondly, they looked at David's **heart** for them. David loved these people, and I think we see this in these verses. **Verses 1b-2a**, "Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh. <sup>2</sup> Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel". David

risked his life for his brothers in Israel. He slew Goliath. He won great battles. The people could see that leadership is not in a title but in a total commitment of love to the people!

**Application:** If you want to be a leader, it's not enough to have the gift to be able to teach. You've got to love and serve people. Paul says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal" (**1 Corinthians 13:1**). If you do not have a heart for people to love and serve them, then your teaching though it is theologically correct and gifted, it is a bunch of noise.

When I look for leaders in the congregation, I'm looking for those men who are faithful and who love God's people. It's not enough to be gifted, but are you here for God's people. Are you here for Sunday School, for the morning, for the evening, for Wednesday? Are you in people homes caring for them, praying for them?

3. Thirdly, they looked at David's **humble maturity**. They could see that David was the real deal. They watched him go from a shepherd boy to the one who would shepherd Israel. **Verse 2b**, "the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel".

They trusted David's leadership and growth. He was trustworthy. He never got out of line or did anything for himself. (He had plenty of opportunities to do so). God's leaders ought to be observed, but in time they build a trust with people. People notice their progress and maturity.

### C. Look at the **Majesty of the Anointing**

We read in **verses 3-5**, "So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel. 4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. 5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah".

David had ruled for 7 and a half years in Hebron, and he would rule an additional 33 and a half for a total of 40 years as King, dying at the age of 70. The time period from **2 Samuel 5-10** represents 13.5 years of his time over all the tribes of Israel. In **2 Samuel 11**, David begins a downturn in his family with Bathsheba, and then more family problems with his son Absalom. Yet at this time in David's life, he had been faithful in little, and he would reap great bounty for the rest of his reign, and even to this very day.

**Application:** David was faithful through his years of exile in the little things, and now God would give him responsibility over much. This morning we said this was the case. David is the perfect example of this. Jesus said in **Luke 16:10-11**, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. 11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?". If you are faithful in little, God will entrust you with more. This was the result of David's crowing. **Galatians 6:7**, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Sow to the flesh, and you'll reap

destruction. Sow to God's Spirit, and you will reap a harvest that takes you to eternal life!

II. Godly leaders are **Proven** by God and men.

- A. Leaders are proven through **mockery**. **Verse 6**, "And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither." The Jebusites mocked David. They basically said, "David is so weak, even the blind and lame could keep him out of Jerusalem". Great leaders stand up to great challenges.

**Application:** All leaders need to have thick skin. If you are going to run at harsh words, then you are not cut out for leadership. You've got to be able to see through empty threats and harsh words to the heart. You've got to see that the power of words are nothing compared to the power of God!

So did David prove himself? Look at **verse 7**, "Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David". Yes, David won. He won convincingly, and that first city after uniting the monarchy became the most important city in the world from that time until this very day.

By the way, David had a sense of humor. He returned the Jebusites' mockery back to them. Look at **verse 8b**, "Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house." I can just see David's grin on his face. His new nickname for the Jebusites from that day forward was "the blind and the lame". And he said, "They are not welcome in my palace". He took their city from them and eventually built his palace there.

- B. Leaders are proven through **mentoring**. Look at **verse 8**, "And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain." David does not call out for Joab to lead as General over the Jebusites. Remember Joab had killed Abner, and David called out to anyone in Israel to take the Jebusites and their city. We are glad for our leaders, but we need to continually challenge the younger to come up and join the leadership!

**Application:** We are all called to be mentoring someone. I'm calling our older believers to step up to the plate and mentor our younger believers. I'm calling our young believers to put your hand to the task and be willing to be an assistant in a Sunday School class, or come out as an observer in evangelism. Get involved in the life of the church. David had the city of the Jebusites, and he turned it into the "city of peace". Who will turn Hanover Park into the city that is "at peace with God"?

- C. Leaders are proven through **maturity**. **Verse 9**, "So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward. <sup>10</sup> And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him." David was a great leader because he kept growing. This time of David's life was the most prosperous because he kept growing. The Lord was with him!

In the New Testament, Paul gave the same advice to Timothy, who at about 40 years of age became the pastor of the church at Ephesus. He told Timothy to keep growing!

Look at **1 Timothy 4:13, 15-16**, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine... 15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting [progress] may appear to all. 16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee". Timothy was in his early forties, but he was a new pastor. His youth was his inexperience. Paul was calling Timothy to massive change (profiting or progress). As we devote ourselves to the Scriptures and to applying those Scriptures to our lives, our "profiting [progress] [will] appear to all".

- D. Good leaders are tested by the **mountaintops** of life. We read in **verses 11-12**, "And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David an house. 12 And David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake." Other kings are recognizing him and praising him. He's proven himself in so many ways, and I think this is a glimpse of what we have later. David is right that God is prospering him. We don't know what was going on in David's heart, but remember mountaintops are notoriously barren. We've got to remember that the fruit grows in the valleys. Here on the mountaintop is where leaders often fall.

It is on this point David wavers. **Verses 13-16** tell us: "And David took *him* more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters born to David. 14 And these *be* the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem..." listed in **verses 15-16**. We never read their names again. It was quite possible that David capitulated to the other kings around him. The Law is clear that kings were not to multiply wives and concubines. David fails in this area.

**Application:** Be careful when you find yourself on the mountaintop. Mountain tops are barren, but in the valley is where the fruit grows.

**Conclusion:** Remember that God's leaders are chosen by God and by men. If you desire a place of leadership, you desire a good thing. But you must be chosen by God for it, and that is seen in God's gifting of you which will become obvious to those around you.

Remember that you must be proven. God will not allow a leader to be a novice. Be faithful in the little things, and God will give you responsibility over greater things. Are you maturing and growing? Are you mentoring someone now? Are you able to endure the mockery or criticism of people? Are you careful of the praise and popularity of men. The most fruitful leader wants only one accolade: "Well done my good and faithful servant!"

It is my prayer that God will raise up leaders among us, leaders in this congregation that will turn Hanover Park into a city of peace for Christ. Who will go for the Lord? Who will stand for Him?