



The above picture is the amphitheatre in ancient Ephesus. Leaders throughout the ages have shared good principles that have developed from their experience that we would do well to take note of and remember. Here are a few quotes that have the power to impact our lives.

*Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without strategy. Gen. H. Norman Schwartzkoft.*

I feel the battle going on inside me as a leader, as I reflect on these two important aspects of leadership. I love thinking future - planning and strategy, vision and multiplication. These words are some of my favourites. However, at the end of the day, Jesus reminds us that the beatitudes are the foundation and that without love we just become a clanging symbol. Our ultimate goal is always to become like Jesus. All the surveys carried out with employees seem to share the same result – what they look for in their leaders is integrity. What is integrity but a strong foundation of godly character. They want to be able to trust their leader, to know that what he says he will do and to know what he says is true. What's easier – planning a strategy or becoming like Jesus? One's a skill to be developed, the other is all about who we are.

*I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat. Winston Churchill.*

Winston Churchill was the prime minister of UK during World War two. The vision was clear - to protect his country and maintain its freedom. The offer - blood, toil, tears and sweat. He knew it was going to cost everything they had and he asked for it. What do we have to offer our teams and potential followers? Do we set the bar low in order to recruit as many people as possible? Jesus challenged his listeners – if you want to become my disciple, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me. It was going to take blood, toil, tears and sweat! Perhaps we need to raise the bar in our recruiting!

*The paradox of courage is that a man must be a little careless of his life in order to keep it. G.K. Chesterton.*

There seems to be a new doctrine that is becoming popular in this current generation called 'entitlements'. This doctrine sends the message that, 'I am entitled to a certain amount of support, finance, time off, comfort, the latest computer and phone, the latest cool fragrance, the new fashionable look, and on it goes.' Back in the 70's and 80's a key message that was being shared was 'giving up rights', but that word seems to have gone out of vogue! When it comes to following

Jesus, life won't always be in balance. There will be seasons of being afraid, lonely, lacking finance, stressed, tired and weary, that is all part of doing his will. It's not a pampered life that Jesus calls us to. Sometimes our bodies will suffer. Let's face it, Christians are being persecuted for their faith all over the world. It's not an easy life that Jesus called us to but a life of loving the God who has rescued us and given eternal life.

*Kind words can be short and easy to speak but their echoes are truly endless.*

*Mother Teresa.*

I recall a clip from a film called, 'Little Manhattan.' A father and son are talking. The boy asks his dad, 'Why does love have to be so difficult?' His dad talks about his lack of relationship with his wife and how lots of little things were left unsaid. The boy responds and asks his dad, 'Well why didn't you just say those things Dad?' So easy, so simple and yet for some reason those little things were left unsaid.

How often do we miss the opportunity of sharing those kind, short, easy to say things? We are surrounded by people, friends and family. We have thousands of opportunities every day to say some meaningful words, blessing words, affirmations, encouragements but they so often go unsaid – lets change that!

*Try not to become a man(or woman) of success but rather a man (or woman) of value.*

*Albert Einstein.*

Personally I have never enjoyed failure! I kind of like to be successful. I enjoy when things go well, when people are encouraged, when there is fruit from the ministry. I think we can all agree. The issue is what drives us. Is success the goal? That sense of personal accomplishment! That recognition that you are the man! You are the woman! No, we are looking for significance. We want to influence the world for Jesus and play our role in making an impact. It's our life that speaks, not the success. Let's keep our focus right.

*I am convinced that the best service a retired general can perform is to turn in his tongue with his suit, and to mothball his opinions. Omar N. Bradley.*

What does finishing well look like for leaders? I understand the challenge for leaders letting go of their roles but still having that desire to be involved in decision making and. If they have been in that leadership role for a long time, it's hard to let go. My opinions are important – after all it's my leadership that got us to where we are now. My words, my teaching, my vision, my advice, my voice should be heard! Shouldn't it? The challenge is for elders to move to that influence role of being invited in, to come alongside, to love, share and support.

*The true statesman doesn't despise any wisdom, howsoever lowly may be its origin.*

*Mark Twain.*

Who do we take advice from? Who do we consult with and how often? Sadly, often not enough, and not with enough people. Wisdom doesn't always come from above. Out of the mouth of babes can come truth and challenge. It's not failure to ask our peers, to ask our spouse, to ask our team members advice, as to what they think we should do, where we should go and how we should get there. It just takes a humility to admit we don't have all the answers.

*The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it.*

*Theodore Roosevelt.*

There's nothing quite like micro-management to take away someone's confidence, creativity and sense of value. Why is it we feel we have to meddle to have it done just so! There are so many ways of getting from A to B – my way is just one. Let others put their stamp, their shape, their influence on the project at hand.

*It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit.*

*Harry S. Truman.*

God is calling us to community, to corporate humility, to partner, 'to make every effort to maintain our unity in the spirit.' If our goal is not for recognition but for the kingdom to be extended, then who gets the credit doesn't matter. A good leader will give the credit to the team and not allow others to hold a view that it was only due to their leadership!

*We, the people, elect leaders not to rule but to serve. Dwight D. Eisenhower.*

All of us have our own definition of leadership. That definition is often determined by the nation we are from, the parents that raised us and the authority style of the teachers in our school and the leaders in our church. We tend to imitate those that lead us. Leaders are the living curriculum, read by all those they lead. It is an awesome responsibility as a leader to model a godly style. How much we need to meditate on the gospels so we can live, love and lead like Jesus.

*If a man hasn't discovered something to die for, he isn't fit to live.*

*Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.*

Here is a passionate statement spoken by a passionate man. It's true that the only reason we are living is to serve the purposes of God in our lives. God has something for all of us to accomplish that is of great importance. 'Let's take a hold of that for which Christ Jesus has taken hold of us.'

*To be a king and wear a crown is more glorious to them that see it than it is pleasure to them that bear it. Elizabeth 1*

Leadership is one of those things that is the ambition of many, the goal they are looking toward, the longing to have the influence to bring about major change. However, when you get there, you recognise there is a lot more to it than you thought. Leadership is a high calling and requires all the energy we can muster. Blessings on all of you who are seeking to live that calling out.

There are so many quotable quotes – I hope these were encouraging and challenging for you. If one of them really touched you, take some time to meditate on it and decide how you can apply it to your own life.

Until next month,

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