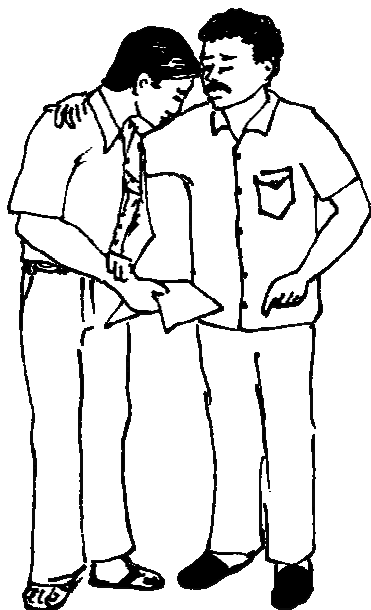


A biblical model of leadership

The Bible gives many examples of how God provided leaders for his people. Jesus is the role model for all leaders. He had more power, wisdom and insight than any leader could hope for, yet his ministry was always one of service and encouragement. His teaching was inspiring and challenging. We can learn so much from Jesus' example of leadership. Other inspiring biblical leaders include Moses, Joseph, Nehemiah and Daniel. Different situations may require different kinds of skills in leadership – organisation, wisdom, humility, strength and vision.

Jesus had a deep knowledge and understanding of the scriptures. He often used this knowledge to highlight important teaching or to answer challenging questions. He also spent much time in prayer and was clearly guided by God in all he did.



Jesus resisted all temptations. Other biblical leaders sometimes failed in this. But all had a vital and close relationship with God, dependent on prayer, study of the scriptures and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Though they made mistakes, God showed patience and forgiveness in his dealings with them.

Biblical leaders often shared the burden of leadership and trained others to take leadership responsibilities. For example, Jesus spent much time with his twelve disciples; Daniel had three close friends; Joseph and Nehemiah organised well and delegated responsibilities to others.

Discussion

- What examples of inspiring leaders are there in the Bible? (For example, Moses in Exodus chapter 3, chapter 4:1-17 and chapter 17 and Daniel in Daniel chapter 6.) What is it about them that inspires us? How much were they called and inspired by God?
- In what ways is Jesus the role model for all Christian leaders? Make a list of all the leadership qualities that Jesus shows.
- Read 1 Samuel 16:7. What does God say he looks at when selecting a leader? What does this mean for us?
- Read the following passages: Exodus 3:11, Judges 6:15, 1 Samuel 9:21, 1 Kings 3:7 and Jeremiah 1:6.
 - o What sort of people is God choosing for leadership roles in these passages?
 - o What were their attitudes?
 - o Can we think of examples of such leaders today?
- How do our leaders serve and encourage others?
- Who makes the decisions in our church? How much are church members involved in prayer and support for leadership?
- Draw a diagram to represent the structures within our church. How are people given opportunities to serve or to lead?
- Are there opportunities for leaders to meet regularly with other leaders? How could such meetings encourage open sharing of work issues and pressures? Could they encourage leaders to be more accountable to others?

Source: *PILLARS Guide: Mobilising the church*, Tearfund 2004, pages 18-19

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