

SERVANT LEADERS: You Were Created to Lead

[Download PDF](#)

```
[responsivevoice_button voice="US English Male"
buttontext="Listen to this Feature" buttoncolor:"blue"]
```

I believed early on that God had something special for my life, and I strongly believe He has something special for your life, too. You are His workmanship, and that means you are His masterpiece. God created the sky, stars, galaxies, water, vegetation and animals, and when He finished, He “saw that it was good,” (Gen. 1:10). But when God created mankind, which includes you and me, “God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good,” (Gen. 1:31).

As God’s workmanship created by His hand, we were given responsibilities by Him. His Word tells us that God created us to “rule over” or “have dominion over” the world He has made. In Genesis 1:28, God told Adam and Eve to “have do-minion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” The words “over every” in this verse mean “the whole...(hence), all, any or every.”

God created you and me to lead! In Genesis 2:15 we read, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.” God was telling Adam that He was placing him in the garden, and he was to work, serve, nurture, and guard the garden. God intend-ed the people He created to lead and serve over His creation. There were no specific guidelines, no books to read, no seminars to attend. God told Adam and Eve to do what they were created to do: to have dominion over, to lead.

Soar With Eagles

Today we often seek leaders who are already leading. We look at those who are moving up in a corporation or who appear to have already arrived. We look up to people who have titles in a business or lead a large church or organization and naturally regard them as leaders because they are at the top of their game or earn big paychecks. I'm not saying such people aren't leaders; what I'm saying is that you are too!

We often compare ourselves to such people and mistakenly think we are not leaders or that we're not capable of leading. All through the Scriptures, God shows us that we can lead, no matter who or where we are. He's given us dozens of confidence-boosting examples of how ordinary men and women became extraordinary leaders by walking closely with Him.

We must understand that, as He did in biblical times, God calls us to lead wherever He has planted us. He has planted some of us in business. He has put us at desks or at home with the kids. He may have us taking care of parents or driving trucks. We may be fixing powerlines for power companies or picking up trash or working in a hospital or government job.

God put Adam and Eve in a garden, and they messed up that assignment. They were not obedient and ate from the only tree He told them not to eat from. There were consequences to their decision, and He moved them outside the garden. From that moment forward, Eve was told that childbearing would be hard, and Adam was told that he would work the ground and it would be difficult. (See Genesis 3:16–19.) God tells us we can and should lead, no matter who we are or what our back-ground is. He grants us all the capacity to lead right where He plants us. God puts unlikely people in places to do extraordinary-nary work for His perfect will.

Let me tell you what I mean.

Your Team Needs Your Contribution

I love Nehemiah because he is one of the most overlooked leaders in the Bible. He was not ordained, nor was he a prophet or priest. His job was that of a cupbearer working for Artaxerxes, the Persian king. The cupbearer was not a prestigious role. His job was to take the first drink from the king's cup to see if it had been poisoned. If the cupbearer did not die, then the king knew it was safe to drink from the cup. So, in three simple words, Nehemiah was expendable. If Nehemiah died, that was fine. The important thing was that the king didn't die. Nehemiah was expendable—to everybody but God!

You may feel that you are expendable or that you don't matter—like you're a cupbearer. You may feel that your income or your position in the workplace determines your worth. I understand.

As I was growing up, I played sports. I remember one Saturday practice that ended at noon, and my mama and stepdad had told me they would come back to get me. I waited and waited and waited. It started getting dark, and I was still there waiting. Finally, one of my parents pulled up and said, "We just forgot about you." That was my life. As I've grown older and close to God through Jesus Christ, I've taken great comfort in the fact that I matter to God. This is what I want you to know: You matter to God. You are His creation, made in His image. He loves you and He cares deeply about you.

If you know Christ as your Savior and Lord, you are God's child. What's amazing about Nehemiah is that he approached King Artaxerxes about the wall of Jerusalem being in disarray, and the king allowed him to return to Jerusalem, purchase what he needed, and lead people in rebuilding the wall in just fifty-two days (Nehemiah 6:15)! The guy who was expendable in the king's court went on to accomplish important things for God.

Nehemiah shows us what leadership is: serving and caring for other people. During the Babylonian invasion of Judah,

Jerusalem's wall had been destroyed. Babylon had taken the strongest, smartest, and best-looking Jewish people captive and left others behind in Judah. Subsequently, Persia defeated Babylon, and many of the Judean hostages were taken to Persia.

This is when Nehemiah became cupbearer to King Artaxerxes. Eventually, visitors from Jerusalem brought news that the people in Jerusalem were in great distress, the wall remained in ruins, and the city gates had not been rebuilt. Jerusalem was not safe, and the people were extremely worried. Nehemiah was heartbroken. "As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days" (Nehemiah 1:4). He cared for his people.

Often, a leader will step up and lead from his or her greatest hurt. I can tell you that has been true for me. There have been times when I was made fun of for my accent. I spent nights falling asleep practicing how to say words like fire and tire. In my early days as a pastor, I didn't have enough money to buy books, so I would watch Billy Graham to get a free book at the end of his message. I also made frequent trips to the library to check out books so I could increase my learning. I never enrolled in a college, so I earned my degree through correspondence, mailing my work in.

But see how God has worked through these challenges: I certainly do not make fun of anyone with an accent. But more importantly, when people visit our church or watch online, it is sometimes because of my accent! I want everyone to be able to have a book, so I price my books so people can afford one. I made sure my daughter, Savannah Abigail, was able to go to college, and now she has her doctorate. God has accomplished so much more through me than I ever could have accomplished on my own. He has allowed me to experience challenges and hurts so that my heart for people stays tender and I can better care for them. That is leadership—caring for those with whom God allows me to have influence.

Yes, You Are Supposed to Lead

Have you ever considered that you were created to lead? Be very honest with yourself. What is holding you back from leading your family? Please do not use the excuse that your spouse will not let you. Leadership is all about care and influence.

What is keeping you from being a leader where you work? You could say that your boss has overlooked you for promotion. You might think you don't want to invest the time, expense, and hassle of getting management training in hopes of being promoted. And that's fine. How can you best care for and influence those around you? What can you do to lead in those ways where you are right now?

Yes, you can lead where you are, just as you are—and make a world of difference!

Here's the first step: Lead yourself first. It is hard to care for and lead others if you do not prioritize caring for yourself. So our next three chapters will show how I've learned to first take care of myself in order to better lead my wife, family, staff, church, friends, and others. I call this "inward leadership." My prayer is that when you finish this book, you will fully embrace these life-changing truths.

You are important to God and to the people He has placed within your reach.

As you walk closely with Him and first take care of yourself, He will enable you to influence and care for the men, women, young people, and children of your life in ways that both edify them and glorify God.

He will create in you the confidence to lead well—wherever you are!

You were created to lead.

Benny Tate, PhD, has served as senior pastor of Rock Springs Church in Milner, Georgia, since 1990, growing it from 80 to more than 8,000 attendees across multiple campuses. Former president of the Congregational Methodist denomination, he hosts the Leads Club podcast and Defy the Odds conferences. His new book, *Yes, You Can*, is available now at .