

## 2 Essential Characteristics You Must Have to Lead Men

I was talking to a friend of mine named Rick about a weekend he had spent shooting big guns, jumping from planes, and other testosterone building activities with a group of Navy Seals.

When I asked him what his take away was, without hesitation he said—"they made me and the other men around me better men. They told me I could do more than I thought, I was stronger than I appeared, and I would never be the same if I would listen and do what they said."

He went on to say how they yelled and even seemed annoyed at times with the entitlement attitude the civilian men had. At one point a commander told a man, who was carrying a few extra pounds and casually watching, he thought a ham sandwich might evoke him to get involved with the rest of the group. Not the most gracious statement, but the man did get involved.

Here's the crazy thing, these men paid thousands of dollars to be a part of the weekend. They actually paid money to be yelled at, cussed at, and called out in front of their peers. Why would they do such a thing?

I certainly don't condone yelling and cussing at the men. However, I do think there's a lesson to be learned. There's greatness inside every man who wants to be called up.

The problem is not all men are willing to pay the price for it. They want the benefits of biblical manhood without the process of becoming an authentic biblical man. Every man has to be willing to pay throughout the process of being forged in the pressure of adversity.

The question is, how do you know a man is willing to pay the price in time and effort before you spend too much time with

them?

It's not an easy task, but it's one that is necessary and possible. It's necessary because the percentage of men in trouble is at an all-time high.

As a leader, you need to learn the difference in one who is serious about change and those wanting the appearance of change. Let me share two principles I've discovered that have allowed me to establish healthy boundaries for leading men while also protecting my time, family, and ministry.

**1. Match the effort given.** Typically if I'm meeting with a man one on one, there has been some sort of infraction. A relational crisis, marriage issue, work problem or a personal sin has "snuck" up on them and they're looking for a way out. We know most issues never "sneak" up on a man. It's been a long process that's taken months even years to mature.

Galatians 6:7 says: *"Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap."*

In other words, what you sow is what will grow. The problem is most men don't know the evidence of what they've sown until it has grown. They don't like the taste of the fruit that's grown. They frantically call you with the fresh taste of bitter fruit and expect you to help them quickly undo what it took them years to grow.

The first question I ask a man is, "Are you here because you *want to* or because you were *made to*?" No matter their answer, I know the truth will eventually come out and that usually happens when we plan the next meeting which fits my schedule and not necessarily theirs. I've learned follow-up will always uncover the depth of willingness a man has to change and the depth of pain a man is feeling.

When a man is willing to do whatever it takes to change, the percentage of positive change increases dramatically. Although

I'm unwilling to give more to their change than they are, I am willing to match their efforts.

**2. Right or reconciled?** Here's a constant question to keep in the back of your mind: *"Is this man willing to lay down his own opinion of whatever he's facing in the chance someone else other than himself can be right?"* The fact is they are in their current situation because of their own thought processes and opinions. They are literally not thinking right. If that's the case, but they're unwilling to listen to sound reason or logical thinking, time with them will be on very limited basis. Again, I will match their efforts even a little beyond, but not at the risk of helping others who are really desperate for change.

The greatest gift you can give a man is the unwillingness to continue enabling his pride, selfishness, and fear.

Just like my friend Rick, men need to hear they can do more than they think; that they're stronger than they appear; and that they are better men than their current situation. They need another man to believe in them just like Jesus believed in Peter before anyone else saw his potential.

However, when leading men, be sure they really want their life to be transformed.

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