

John the Baptist Taught 4 Clear Principles of Leadership

Consider the leadership of John the Baptist.

We first note by our introduction to John in Matthew 3:1-3 that he was an excellent communicator. His message was clear and oft-repeated:

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

He had many followers and all understood John’s powerful and convicting message. His clarity produced instant results.

Second, John was not focused on his personal image before others. He wore camel’s hair and ate locusts. John didn’t appear to be the type of person who could energize a crowd. Yet, he attracted the masses for baptism in the Jordan River. He did not lead with his external image. People wanted what John offered even though he didn’t dress for success.

Third, in the face of visitors sent to determine what John was up to, he maintained his integrity and strong convictions. The Sanhedrin body of Pharisees, Sadducees and town rulers came to the river to investigate John and do the baptism thing. He greeted them powerfully:

“Who suggested to you that you would escape the coming wrath?”

John made it clear that baptism would do them no good without repentance. He was not intimidated by ruling authorities. Yet, we learned that John was ready to submit to Jesus.

The final point about John’s leadership character is that he knew how and to whom to submit.

“I need to be baptized by You, and do you come to me?” Notice the radical difference in how John spoke to Jesus as opposed to the ruling Sanhedrin. Then John submitted to Jesus and baptized him.

I doubt John had many formal classes or read books on leadership. Yet, John was a definitive model of a leader led by God.

John gave no room to the flesh. He didn't care what others said or thought of him. He did not suffer legalism but submitted to kingdom authority.

The Holy Spirit will lead us to lead in the Spirit. Hopefully, this will not require a diet of locusts.

Today's Scripture

“In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.”’

“This same John had clothing made of camel's hair, a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him, and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

“But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said to them, ‘O generation of vipers, who has warned you to escape from the wrath to come? Therefore, bear

fruit worthy of repentance, and do not think to say within yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father," for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is put to the tree roots. Therefore, every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire'" (Matt. 3:1-10).