

SERMON NOTES

SERIES: **Exodus**
TITLE: **Wilderness Leadership**
DATE: February 05
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We are in a series on the Book of Exodus from the Old Testament. Why study this book? Exodus is the Old Testament story of the salvation of God's people that points forward to the great salvation that comes to us by faith in Jesus. Exodus helps us better understand what it means for God to *set us free* from our broken, messy lives so we can *live free* in loving, personal relationship with God.

When does leadership fail? Maybe when leaders become more power-hungry than people-focused. Maybe when a leader decides to promote their preferences over what is clearly better for those they are leading. Leadership fails when it isn't delegated. The list could go on.

What about Christianity and leadership? How do those relate? Jesus defined leadership as servanthood. He talked about how the world's leadership is usually top-down and exercised with authority and control. And as followers of Jesus, we have to think about the relationship between the servanthood of Jesus and the top-down leadership of the world. In all of this,

Is there a way to think about leadership that will elevate our view of God, and empower those who lead and those being led?

At the end of Exodus 17 and for all of Exodus 18, we have two pictures of Moses' leadership over Israel. And thinking well about these two stories will help us think well about leadership.

In both of these stories, Moses leads. And in both cases he leads strenuously all day. Then he gets tired. Then others are chosen to help him lead. It's a simple pattern that the writer of Exodus wants us to see. Furthermore, stepping back from these stories, we can see that,

Biblical leadership is ultimately about responsibility - responding to God and for others.

This means that any area of responsibility you have is also an area of leadership. And any area of leadership you have is both vertical *and* horizontal. Your responsibility is *to* God and *for* others.

Also, if we're taking notes on Jethro's advice to his son-in-law Moses, we will see another part of God's intention for leadership.

God has designed leadership to be shared. Therefore, unshared leadership hurts those who lead and those being led.

This principle is clear in both stories in Exodus. It's also clear in the Christian family and in the New Testament church. Shared leadership and responsibility guard us against pride and burnout, but often yield action and trust and much more.

Finally, we have to view our thinking about leadership through the gospel. In Jesus' own ministry, he shared leadership. He call twelve to help share God's love and power. He calls us to do the same today.

But more than this, Jesus laid down his life for sinners. He didn't come to be served, but to serve. And our following his lead means that our lives should be characterized by service, sacrifice, and leading others to Jesus' love and grace.

Thinking of leadership along these lines helps us think more highly of God, and should likewise empower us as leaders and followers.

For Discussion:

1. When do Christians fail as leaders?
2. Where in your life has God given you leadership responsibility and influence?
3. What does sacrificial servant-leadership look like in the spheres in which God has given you responsibility and influence?