

Blessed Are the People

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What I know about leadership came mostly from books, watching people I admire, my own experience both good and bad, and a large part by observing other people's mistakes. *Blessed are the people whose leaders know how to lead.* I think there are four wonderful qualities people most appreciate in their leaders.

Clear Communication

A leader who communicates well is a joy to work with and follow. He (or she) has received a call, a vision from God, a mandate, and walks a clear purposeful path leading to its fulfillment. From the pulpit and in conversation he communicates this clearly, and continually. *This imparts a sense of destiny.*

But all is not vision and values. He also operates with administrative acumen. Along the way he lets his people know exactly what is expected of them, when and where things are going to happen, and why things are done as they are. There are few unpleasant surprises.

Knowledge is power and control. This leader's clear communication eliminates confusion and second guessing. *It empowers his people.* Those who serve under him are not full of frustration, uncertain, confused, flying by the seat of their pants. All the guesswork is removed. When he appoints a position or requests a task be done, the appointment and the task come with a clear and concise job description with plainly stated goals, regular performance reviews, and freedom to do the job without unnecessary interference. If there is a change of plans or program, co-workers and the people most affected hear of it first, from the leaders, not through the gospel grapevine, or in a public announcement. *This imparts value to people and equips them with a mind to work.*

A good leader makes effective use of email and social media. He engenders a culture of honor by reading emails, completely, and answering them promptly. He knows that most people live online, so Facebook and other social platforms are used with positive effect, to instruct and inspire, connect with the church, and better reach the community. Ministry websites display a spirit of excellence and are kept current. Church signs are interesting and accurate, and include website and Facebook information. *These things done well inspire confidence.*

The Ability To Listen

A good leader listens, not to answer, but to hear. He wants to understand what a person is saying, to find out where they are and what they need. *He listens without interruption.* He lets people finish their sentences and their thought before giving a thoughtful reply. *He listens responsively.* He makes sure, doubly sure, he knows what is being said. He uses sentences like, "What I am hearing you say is . . ." *He listens with vulnerability.* He is able to listen first and then answer, especially to suggestions, because he is secure in who he is and the knowledge that his co-workers, staff, supporters, and followers only want to help. *He listens because he wants to know and people need to be heard.* If we listen they will share the depth of their dreams and desires. People with leaders who listen rarely feel a need to complain and grumble to each other about this and that and something else. *Listening well promotes a culture of peace, and cooperation.*

Integrity & Excellence

A good leader conducts himself with integrity and excellence. Integrity simply means doing what he said he would do, when he said he would do it, the way he said it would be done, within the stated time frame. This is so ingrained in his character that he never makes a statement without first considering if he can do what he says. And he considers it his responsibility to actually remember what he said. *This integrity of speech and action brings a rest to those who follow his lead.* A spirit of excellence means he runs an efficient organization with high standards. A place for everyone, with everything and everyone in their place. *Because he models integrity and excellence, he can expect it of others.* This congregation never develops a "wait and see" uneasiness because they know that if it is planned, barring exceptional circumstances it is going to happen.

There are many more qualities to being a good leader, but these four are foundational. If you are a good listener, communicate clearly, actually do what you say, and do it well, you will stand head and shoulders above everyone around you. Your people will be blessed. *And a happy confident congregation is so much easier to lead.*