

Leading Strong Men and Women

Part 3

Welcome to the 5 minute Leadership podcast. We busy dealing with the subject of leading powerful, strong men and women; people who are like generals in an army.

Every leader and pastor is obligated to look after the widows, orphans and those in distress, as well as strong men and women. Leading strong people takes another set of skills - a different tool kit.

Learning from King David

In this four-part series we've been focussing on 1 Chronicles 12 and, in Parts One and Two we looked at six things that David did when leading powerful men. Today we continue with number 7.

Lead them as individuals

David didn't lead these strong men as a pack - he led them individually.

Verse 20 mentions the names - *Addna, Josabad, Michael, Elaho and Zelate* - of the strong guys he was leading. David knew their names. He knew them as individuals; not just the mass of humanity.

My grandfather was a very well-known principal at both Maritzburg College and Hilton College and he was known for calling all his teachers "lads" and every boy that he knew "boy". He would never use the name. He had this authoritarian leadership style, which suited him well in the 1940's and -50's. But that's not how you would lead strong men and women in contemporary times. You need to learn their name, notice them in crowd, call them individually, take them on trips and have one-on-one meetings with them. They want to be heard and have a chance at shaping your mutual destiny.

Not only do you want to handle them in a one-on-one way, you want to build relationally with them. It's so important to have some fun with them.

1 Chronicles 12:38 it says that

all these were fighting men, who volunteered to serve in the ranks. They came from Hebron fully determined to make David king of all Israel. And all the rest of Israelites

were of one mind to make David king over Israel. But the men spent three days there with David, eating and drinking for their families had provided provisions for them.

He didn't just say "strap on your swords, we're going!" - he ate and drank with them for three days; laughing and relaxing.

Know them as people

An ability to build relationally is huge, when it comes to leading strong men and women. I remember once being led by a very strong man. He wrote me a letter and said "Anne (his wife) and I love you dearly." He used those words - *love you dearly*. In the land of "bruh" and "brother", slang and cliches, he had a way of expressing and connecting with me emotionally.

Go play golf if you play golf, have meals together, watch their kids playing sport - get involved in what they're involved in and show an interest - David did.

In African culture a handshake is not like how the old British shake - barely a touch of hands and they move on - they linger on their handshakes. I remember the first time an African man shook my hand and hung on to it for more than three seconds - it was so awkward! Even now, an African guy can hold your hand for like a minute! Let him hold it. He is expressing affection, and connection. David was like that too; he was able to build relationally.

Lead them to success

Finally, we're going to look at the idea of setting someone up for success. When you release a strong man or woman you don't want to set them up for failure because if they've achieved something once, if they've smelt success once, they'll go back and do it again and again.

You want to equip them ahead of time and show them the success factors. Show them the things that will really make the thing fly.

Often, when I release someone to run an event, I'll talk to them about the X-Factor that will set the event apart. They know they can handle the run of the mill things, but it's the X-Factor that will make the event memorable.

Let me talk about preaching for a moment. When you're setting up a strong guy to preach, set him up for success *beforehand*. Tell him how long the subject is, what you expect and train him before he even gets up because not everybody can preach, so teach him how to speak as opposed to correcting him afterwards.

I have a serious issue with the method of leadership that says that you ought to 'crit' people afterwards. Train them before and then let them watch a recording of themselves afterwards and they will 'crit' themselves. It works much better that way.

There is another way of doing it - you can simply say *do what I do* and then come in afterwards, sit back as the professional and tell them what they should and shouldn't have done. I don't suggest that, in fact, I forbid it with our preachers. I forbid people criticising a preacher. For a preacher to watch himself or listen to himself, I find, is the best way to see how he or she is developing as a preacher.

Check your inbox next week for the last part of this series on leading strong men and women.