

DEVOTION: DILIGENT--LEADERSHIP

Romans 12:8c if it is leadership, let him govern diligently...

Thoughts for Today:

I have been in business over 35 years. Managed many successful jobs, making sure they were completed in excellence. You see leadership is recognizing and getting in front of problems before they occur, not reacting once it's too late. Look at the Titanic tragedy for example. Was the captain's leadership and courage demonstrated by going down with the ship as the band played (theatrical version)? Or would all have been better served if icebergs and ensuing calamity were avoided altogether? Shipwrecks can provide opportunities for leaders to shine while saving lives. On the other hand, sailing uneventfully across the Atlantic might be boring to some, but certainly is a lot more productive and places far fewer people in jeopardy. Which do you think is God's intention for your life? What about Royal Rangers and your church?

Paul tells us leadership is to be performed "diligently". It comes from the Greek word *spoude* and means "earnestness in accomplishing, promoting, or striving after anything." So what is the leader to strive after? No man can truly exercise leadership over others unless he is conscious of the fact that he himself is ruled. When the Centurion requested that Jesus heal his servant in Luke 7:8, he said, "For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he will come. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." In other words, he said to Jesus, "You do not have to come; I understand the chain of command, and recognize Your authority. I have those above me, but I also have those below me. I am in a chain of authority and I can say I know what authority is all about."

The Bible establishes many chains of command or levels of authority. But God is always at the top. Unless a man is aware that he is governed by God, is responsible to God, and will have to answer to God, that man is not qualified to lead. When authority is given to anyone who is not governed by God, they will soon take advantage, make mistakes, and pervert authority to their own benefit. Crisis and catastrophe will become the norm. No man can rule who is not ruled -- understanding this, the leader's question should be: "Who or what is ruling my decisions? Is it my ego or desire to be needed? Could it be selfish ambition? Am I neglecting my responsibilities and the authority God has given me?" Any leader who does not diligently govern with awareness that, "I am responsible to the One who is higher than me, and I will ultimately answer to Him," is not fit to rule. 2 Samuel 23:3 (KJV): "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."

Questions to Ponder:

Years ago I gave my business over to the Lord. I began diligently to seek His will and direction in my work life (not just my personal life). I applied this principle we've been discussing today, I am simply in the chain of command with God at the top. No longer am I racing from one fire to another, always in great demand and need. Why? Because there are really very few crises. The Lord was now in control and that's just the way He chooses to operate. The business has become a hundred times more stable and successful. And I have a lot more free time from my business. Giving has become a lot easier as I learned how He wanted me to serve Him in other ways. Who leads your life? Do you, or does the Lord? Have there been a lot of recent emergencies or disasters? You might want to take a close look at your own diligence and preparedness. Are you allowing God to lead?

**"ready" in His service,
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