

## I. Introduction to Leadership Principles

I've told you this before: I don't do a lot of things well in life. I really don't. I've never been very athletic. I'm not good at athletics. I wasn't very smart in school. I had to bribe the teacher to get out and graduate from high school. There are a lot of things I don't do well. I'm not a very good mechanic. I've told you before, I always envy the guys that when they see a car stuck on the side of the road, can open a hood, get a screwdriver, stick it down in there, and start the car. I have more respect for that person than anybody in this world. I tried it one time, burnt my hand and a screwdriver, so I'm not good at that. My lawnmower stops, I'm ready to sell it. I don't know what's wrong with it. I'm the kind of guy that goes to the place and the guy says, "You got a short circuit." I want to know how much it costs to make it longer. That's where I'm at with fixing things.

There's only one thing I do well, and God gave me the ability, and I can talk about it because it's the only thing I have to talk about. That is, I understand how to take young men and young ladies and train them into leaders. I didn't say I did it good; I just said I know how to do it. That's what God's called me to do. I know I'm a pastor, and I pastor this church, but I look at being a pastor as just a means to an end. Being a pastor just gives me the ability to take people—husbands and wives and their kids, and all the singles that we have in here—and be able to do what God has given me the ability to do best. That is to take young men and young ladies and train them to be what God wants them to be.

The last time we were together, we began a miniseries on leadership. We're going to start the book of Proverbs in a couple of weeks. Proverbs is our handbook for leadership. I've already told you that the book of Proverbs has everything in it that you'll need to be everything that God wants you to be. We use the term, and we hear it a lot, "by the book." That would be the book of Proverbs. I told the kids Thursday night that if there was one book in my mind and my world that I could get total recall on and really understand it completely and have access to it in everything that I do, it would be the book of Proverbs.

I told you how important it was to get the basic fundamentals down of leadership because, and I live by this, everything in life, everything you do, everything in this church, everything the rest of your life you want to remember, everything rises and falls on leadership. Leadership is key. There's never been a time in the world where we're so lacking in leadership. You know what's coming our way? We talk about the Antichrist and all the things in prophecy and all that. It's real simple: in our world, in our country, in every country around this world, there was no one to step up to be a leader. Now the world is in such chaos that they're looking for someone to be the leader. The devil is going to fill that slot one of these days in the near future. He's going to show up, and they will accept him because this world, this country, and everything in it is in such dire need of leadership, and they're going to buy into that so quickly.

I wanted to take a couple of weeks before Proverbs and set the stage so that you'll better understand the principles of leadership, and when we start this book, it'll make things a lot easier. You remember the last time we were together, I gave you six fundamental principles of leadership—six fundamental things that I look for in people's lives to help develop them to be leaders. I told you also that this church is an untapped reservoir; it's an untapped goldmine of potential leadership.

I told you the first thing:

1. Good leaders are always good followers. You see that in men and women who are good leaders; they're good followers. I'm going to bring this all around at the end and show you how it all applies to what happened and what God did last week.

The second thing I gave you:

2. Leadership preserves and keeps order and discipline. It's the structure within the church. God gave the church pastors; He gave the church deacons. We have in the church elders, and along with them, their wives, who represent strong leadership, so that when something happens in the church, and I told you, much like the military, you lead from the top down, from the pastor right on down the line.

The third one I gave you is that:

3. Real leadership follows a code. They follow a code of loyalty. They follow a code of honesty. They follow a code of faithfulness to the things of God and to the work of God.

I gave you the fourth thing:

4. Leadership is not about ability. We think all the time that leadership is about ability. Leadership is not about ability, but rather leadership is about taking responsibility. That's what a leader does. A leader has to take responsibility for those that he leads.

I gave you the fifth one:

5. There are different levels of leadership. All of you are on different levels spiritually. Some of you have been around a long time, some of you not so long. Some of you have been with me since the flood back in Noah's time. We go back a ways together. You're all on different levels of leadership. My encouragement to you last time is whatever level you're on, begin to lead on that level, and it'll take you to the next level. My door is always open to you. I have a policy in our church that I'll spend an hour a week with anybody that wants to learn the Bible, or you want to go through leadership principles, or you want to really find your way. Hey, that's my job. That's what we do. I realize that in dealing with men and women and your children, there are different levels of leadership. You take a person where they're at and develop them from there. I think pastors have made a mistake all through my ministry. I've seen it. I've been in this business for quite a while now. Most pastors, when they deal with people with problems or issues, I always make it like the pastor stands at the top of the steps because he's got all of his problems solved, and the person with the problems is down at the bottom of the steps, four or five landings down. What most preachers do is they stand up

there and scream at that person to get up where they're at. That's not leadership. Leadership goes down each one of those stairs, puts their arm around him, and walks him up one step at a time. That's what leaders do. That's what you have to do. There are different levels of leadership.

Then the sixth thing I gave you was that:

6. Real leadership begins at home. I gave you the great verse in 1 Timothy 3:5 about that. We'll talk more about that here in just a little bit as we move on through here.

## II. Context of Exodus 32

Today, I'd like to invite you to turn to Exodus chapter 32. It's in the Old Testament, your second book in the Bible, and chapter 32 in particular. We'll begin to look today at our second installment. Last time I gave you the principles. Now what I want to do today is I want to show you two men. I want to show you two men, and we'll begin to look at these two guys who were in a leadership role. In fact, these two men are really the first real practical examples in the Bible that we have of what a good leader and a failed leader is. They're all in the same chapter. It's kind of like a side-by-side comparison. In this chapter, chapter 32, we're going to look at two men: Moses and Aaron. We're going to see by their lives and their style of leadership, we're going to see the principles that I talked about last week. I want you to see as this story unfolds, we see exactly what I gave you the last time we were together: the areas of the character of a leader in your life, and either they have it or they don't.

Moses is an exceptional leader. He really is. For us, and we talked about this Thursday night, Moses is the type. Moses is the picture. Moses was a real man that lived, but Moses is a modern-day example of what we should be as leaders. He's certainly an example to me of what I should be as a pastor. I think he's an example to every pastor what they should be. He's also an example of a leader that we can learn so much from him in the five books that he writes. Aaron, on the other hand, is a terrible leader. Aaron is a failed leader, and yet he represents for us what I believe today to be the failure of so many churches and the failure of so many pastors and the failure of so many leaders. I think that these two guys really give us the understanding once we lay down those last six things.

Permit me to do this: let me save a little time today instead of reading this whole chapter. By the time we're done, I guarantee you, you'll basically have a good grasp of it. But allow me to explain what's going on in this chapter because I want to save as much time as I can to devote it to the major areas that I want to develop with you today. Let me put Exodus 32 in context for you.

If you look down at verse one here, you know that Moses is up on Mount Sinai. He's getting the Ten Commandments from God. He's up there for all 40 days, and he's delayed in coming down. In verse one and on verse two, the people get discouraged. They begin to murmur. They begin to complain, and they come to Aaron. They say in verse three and four, "Make us gods. Make us a god. Moses has not come down. Moses is gone. We don't know where he's at. Make us gods, a graven golden image so we can worship it." So they break off all the gold rings and the jewelry

that they have, and they melt it down. You know how the story goes: they make a golden calf. Just a little side note here: this is the beginning of Baal worship with the nation of Israel. This golden calf mimics the fifth cherub that Satan represents. That's why you have Baal worship. It all goes back to this thing, but we don't have time to get into that today.

Moses is up on that mountain with God, getting what God wants to give him for God's people. God tells Moses, "Moses, there's something wrong down in the camp." This is verse seven, eight, nine, ten. God's anger gets kindled. I mean, He's mad. He's hot. He wants to go down and kill them all. God does. In verse 11, you find where Moses intervenes for the people. I think this is a great study. We don't have time to develop it today. You want to find what a real relationship with God is, study Moses and God in every relationship. It's one of the most incredible stories, studies you'll ever take. You really want to know, most God's people, in my own humble opinion, they have no idea what a relationship with God is. They think God is some stoic person up there that you can't ever approach. When you do pray to Him, you've got to close your head, bow your head, put your hands together, and assume the position, and you pray to Him in great terms that would impress anybody, including God. That's just not the way it works. If you want an understanding of what your relationship and my relationship should be, and our relationship with God, study Moses. There are times when God is so mad, and He wants to go down and kill them. There are times when Moses is so mad that Moses wants to go down and kill them. You find Moses coming to God and saying to God, "God, why don't You just kill them? They're terrible people. Just kill them." Then God says, "Now, Moses, you know that I know they're just flesh, and I know they've got their problems, and we just got to walk them through it." Moses says, "Okay." There are times that God wants to kill them. God talks to Moses and says, "Moses, right here, I'm going to kill them all. I'm going to wipe them all out." Then Moses says to God, "Come on, God, You don't want to do that. Why? What's the whole world going to think if the God of the universe kills His own people? You can't do that." Most people have a tough time grasping having that kind of relationship with God. Moses was intervening for the people. That shows you the relationship that he had with God. God is your friend. God wants somebody that you can talk to like Moses, where He's speaking to God face to face like a man speaking with his friend. Oh, it's a great study. It works because God repents from the evil that He was about to do.

When we get into verse 15, Moses and Joshua head down off the mountain, and they get about a mile away. Joshua said, "Man, listen to that. It sounds like there's a war going on down there." When you get to verse 17, they get a little closer. We find out it's not war. It's singing, it's drinking, it's shouting. It's a real Woodstock praise band going on here. They've got an outdoor concert with Twisted Sister and Grateful Dead and Saturday Night Live, and it's all in Jesus' name. They're having a great time. Verse 21, Moses and Aaron, boy, they get into it big time when Moses finally gets back down there. Moses in verse 26 draws his famous line in the sand and speaks those famous words, "Who is on the Lord's side?" Well, verse 28 through 35, 3,000 people get killed. God plagues them, and it's a great story to study on so many levels.

There are a number of things that I want you to see today, but the number one thing I want to begin with, and I said this last time we were together, is that never has there been a group of people who are more dependent on good leadership than God's people. This is a classic example,

and it's true today. In the churches of Jesus Christ today, it is so true. God's people in the New Testament are totally dependent on good, strong, biblically based leadership, or they go into apostasy. You give them a great leader like Moses or Martin Luther or Billy Sunday or J. Frank Norris, and they'll turn the world upside down. You give them a leader like Aaron or 99% of the pastors today, and they'll go into apostasy. Everything, and I mean everything, rises and falls on leadership.

Now let's look at these two men here and their two styles of leadership, and we're going to make some comments on it, and I think that it'll help you before we enter into the book of Proverbs. Let's go to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to bless our time today.

Father, we come to You, and we thank You for the folks that are here today. Thank You for the great camp You gave us last week, and for the kids that we took to camp, and for the counselors and for the leaders that just made it such a success. Lord, I pray today that sitting in this room are not only the moms and dads who are the leaders of this church or have the potential to be leaders in this church, but these kids here, Lord, are the next generation of leaders that we need to begin now and build on what You did last week. It would be a terrible thing to have a great week last week, come home, get all excited about it, show the slides, sing the songs, and then just tuck it all away and forget it. Now's the time to build in these young lives what needs to be built. Now's the time for those same counselors that gave so much of their time last week to build those relationships, use those relationships to help now develop these kids into Your image and what You want in their life. Help us now today, and we'll thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for Your sake we ask it. Amen.

### III. Aaron: The Failed Leader

Aaron as a leader, and I told you this last week, I told you that the absolute importance of leadership is not about ability but about responsibility. Aaron as a leader, here's the first thing that I see here:

- Aaron as a leader, he cannot make the hard calls.

He can't. There will be times in your life, in your family, in your ministry, if you're a pastor in your church, you have to make the hard call.

Look at Exodus 32:1-4:

*And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.*

*And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me.*

*And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron.*

*And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.*

Come on, you know Aaron knows better than that. Aaron had been with them since before the Exodus. Now I know that Moses is up there getting the Ten Commandments, but you're not going to tell me that they didn't understand the first two commandments and God's jealousy. Commandment number one is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," and commandment number two is, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." Aaron knows exactly what the book says. He knows the drill. He's been there with them. He's watched Moses. He's watched him deal with this. He knows what God has done and the great miracles he's seen. And yet when faced with a group of people, God's people, who want to sidestep what God says, he can't stand up for God and the book. He's a weak leader.

Aaron as a leader, like many pastors today, like many Christians today, he's weak. He bends to popular opinion. He bends to the pressure. There's no steel to him. You see pastors today who will not take a stand on the King James Bible. You see them that won't take a stand on really any issue, but especially when it comes to that book. I've known Baptist preachers who believe the King James Bible is the Word of God, at least they said they did, and they believe that the Bible was the absolute infallible Word of God, but when it comes to their people, they'll never stand in that pulpit and call it for what it is. They'll never show the mistakes in the other Bibles. They'll never give the evidence why we believe that book. They'll never stand up and take it. You know why? Because they're afraid they'll offend somebody in their congregation. When you take that stand, you know what happens? The devil brings in every mess you can ever get. You've got to be able to take a stand on something. You've got to be able to take a stand on issues that come up. You've got to be able to tell your people why, show them the evidence, but they're afraid they'll lose people. They're afraid that it'll hurt the people who leave the church; it'll hurt their offerings or their attendance. They don't want to make an issue where people will get upset. They don't want to rock the boat. Let me tell you something: knowing the Bible is absolutely worthless if you can't apply the Bible when it's needed. It's just that simple, or you won't, or don't have the courage to. Aaron is a weak leader. He's a coward who cannot take a biblical stand when the popular opinion is against God. I've seen preachers, I've seen Christians who couldn't stand for anything in their life. He offers absolutely no leadership ability as to the commandments that God has given them and the statutes that God has given them, and he fails to go by them.

In verse one, the people say, "Up and make us gods. Moses is gone. We don't know when he's coming back." In verse two, Aaron said, "Okay, break off all the gold and let's make a golden calf." Then he says in verse four, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Really? Do you really believe Aaron thought that? I don't. I believe he knew exactly what. I believe he just didn't have the courage to make the stand that he needed to take. True leadership always makes the stand. Giving the people what they want instead of giving them what God wants. You know what gets us in trouble? Every one of us. You know what gets

us in trouble? It's real simple. What gets you and me in trouble is getting what you want or what I want in my life instead of what God wants in my life. It's not complicated. It's not hard.

I'll tell you the second thing:

➤ Aaron, like most pastors and most leaders today, he's playing church.

If you look at Exodus 32:5-6, he has everything a church has today except the Bible.

*And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD.*

*And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.*

Now, mark this in your Bible: this is the first time the word "play" shows up in your Bible. First time. The first time the word "play" shows up in the Bible is with a bunch of people who were God's people, who God told them exactly what He wanted them to do. They sidestepped that, they got a graven image, and wanted to do what they wanted to do, and they played at church. I mean, look at it. Don't take my word for it. They've got an altar. They declared a day for the feast of the Lord. They've got a burnt offering. They brought a peace offering. Oh yeah, and they've got an idol too. You don't want to forget that.

That's an exact picture of most churches today. Pastors today, God's people today, they talk about loving the Bible. They talk about loving God. They talk about believing the Bible. "Oh, I teach the Bible." But when we want to do what we want to do, we forget the Bible. I deal with people all the time that have been away from God and out of fellowship with God. I always try to help them because I never throw anybody under the bus, and as long as somebody wants to do what's right, I'm there to help you. I've had guys and gals come in, or couples come in, and they're just worn out. They're worn out. They'll say, "Bob, I'm tired. I'm just worn out. We're fighting this thing. We're fighting this thing, and I'm just worn out and worn out." I always ask them, "Do you know why you're worn out? Do you know why you're tired?" I'll tell you why it is. It's simple. You will wear yourself out when you keep trying to put God in your godless situation. It won't work. It'll wear you slick. It'll wear you out. That's what these people did.

As a leader, you never just take the Bible or the parts of the Bible that everybody likes and then throw out what they don't like. Paul says you've got to teach the whole counsel of God. You've got to preach it all, the good and the bad. I remember New Year's Eve when we did our whole thing through the Bible. Oh, everybody loved it. Everybody thought it was the greatest thing in the world. Everybody thought, "Wow, this was great. Where could you go that you could take four or five hours and go through and completely you got the whole Bible at your fingertip?" There wasn't one person that complained about that night. Everybody thought it was great. Two weeks later when I declared that this year was going to be the year of families ministering together, oh boy, that's a whole different picture. You see, you like what you like, but when you preach what you don't like or what you're not doing and what your family can't perform, you don't like that. You know what that Bible says? That Bible says He's the love of the honeycomb, even the bitter things are sweet. I love all of the Bible, especially the parts that I don't like. God's

people here are playing at being a church. Aaron's playing at being a leader. Instead of holding the line he knows to be true, Aaron caves in and becomes the leader of a group of people who pretend they're really with God when they've got everything in their church service except God and the Word of God.

#### IV. Moses: The True Leader

Now I want to switch for a moment and I want to look at a real leader. I think Moses is the greatest leader in the Bible, in my own opinion. I think he's the greatest picture of what a pastor should be in all the Bible. I mean, you talk about frustrations in ministry, he had them. You talk about goofy people, he had them. You talk about stupid problems, he had to deal with them. You talk about stupid issues that stupid people got involved in, boy, you want them, study Moses. His congregation ran 2 million plus, and he pastored that same congregation for 40 years. He led them through every trial and held the line with a book when they couldn't or when they wouldn't. Where Aaron has the position of a leader, Moses has the relationship with God that gives him the power to be the leader that God wants him to be. That's the difference.

Now watch this. Look at Exodus 32:7-8:

*And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:*

*They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.*

Now I want you to see the comparison of the two leaders. They both know the book. They both know what God has commanded. Both have seen God and the power, God and the miracles that God has done. One was faced with the issue, lacks the courage to stand and make the hard call—that be Aaron. The other acts immediately on God's behalf. To him there's no question, it's by the book. And if you don't like it, hit the road. That's where Moses is coming from. You see, a leader will always take God's side. Moses cares more what God thinks about him than he does what the people around him think about him. Now that's a very important part. That sounds like an easy thing to say, that Moses cared more about God than he did about what the people thought. But that's a potent thought because I want to tell you something. You've got to have some kind of relationship with God. He has to be some kind of friend to you. You have to have something going with God that you care more about what He thinks you do than the people around you do. I've had people that didn't like things that I preach, that didn't like things that I say, that come up and said, "I'm leaving the church." You know what my answer is to them? I'd much rather—I don't want anybody to go, and I love you to death—but bottom line, it's real simple for me. I'd rather have you leave the church than me not preach what's right and have God leave the church. Life's not complicated for me.

We've got to come to the place, leaders come to the place. It's the number one ingredient of a leader. It's the key concept. You have to care more what God thinks when the thing is biblical

than what people think who don't like the hard call you've got to make. When you have a real relationship with God, you do that. You simply do that.

## V. Leadership and Order

Now, I'll show you the fourth thing. I told you a leader, last time we were together, I told you that a leader maintains order and discipline. Let me show you something here because ultimately, when leadership fails, this problem always emerges. That's the noise here in Exodus 32:15-18, the noise of war in a camp.

*And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written.*

*And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.*

*And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp.*

*And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear.*

Now, the first thing I want you to see is verse 15. As soon as God tells Moses there's a problem, Moses heads straight for the problem. That's what a leader does. The longer you take to solve a problem that has to be dealt with, the worse it's going to be when you finally come to it. I see parents struggle with that all the time. The longer you wait to discipline your child, the harder it's going to be when you finally have to do that. It's just that simple. The longer a pastor waits to deal with an issue in his church, the harder it's going to be to fix it. When you're in ministry someplace and something goes sideways and you've got to deal with it, you may want to put it off and you may not want to deal with it. The longer you wait, the harder it's going to be. Oh, Moses, the leader that he is, he heads right down to the problem.

In verse 17, we've got another guy coming in here. It's Joshua. Joshua is a leader in training. Joshua is going to be the guy who takes over after Moses' death. I think that's a great thing in here. You're going to see him, he's with the right guy. There's a great principle there. You want to be a leader for God? Joshua is the example. He turns out to be a great leader with God. You want to be a great leader, you young guys? You older, midline people. You want to be a great leader for God? There's the example: hang out with good leadership. That's how you do it. You didn't see him staying behind with Aaron. I didn't say it and you can't prove it, but I know a little bit about human nature and I know a little bit about the character of Joshua. I know he knew Aaron was weak. It doesn't say that Moses and Joshua were before God. Moses went before God. Joshua pitched out someplace else. He just didn't want to be down under Aaron's leadership. You want to be a good leader? On whatever level you are, you want to get your leadership developed? I'll tell you how you do it. You young kids from camp, you want to go on from here? You want to be what God wants you to be? Then hang out with the kids and the

leadership of this church that are the right leaders. That's how you do it. It's so simple. It's so easy.

Now, Exodus 32:17-18 are two great verses that show what bad leadership produces. Verse 17 says it's the noise of war. Verse 18 says, "No, it's the noise of singing." You know what we get in this church? When you don't do what's right, in any church, it brings confusion. There's confusion here. You can't really tell if it's war or it's singing. Bad leaders will always produce confusion in the people because nobody really knows what they stand on anything. Nobody really understands what's going on because the leader will never stand up for what's right. Remember when we came through the book of 1 Corinthians? We saw that. That was the main issue in that church before they got straightened out. In fact, that's the great verse in 1 Corinthians 14:33 that says God is not the author of confusion. They had the same issue. 1 Corinthians 14:8 says, "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" People need to know as a leader where you stand. They don't need you to be in the middle of the road where you can't determine where you're really at. I've seen simple situations that should have gone so easy, get so blown out of proportion and so messed up and caused so many problems simply because the person in charge would not or could not take a stand and declare where they were at. Real biblical leadership will always be absolutely clear as to where they stand on any given matter. When you have a problem in a church and an issue arises, people look to the leadership from the top down. They look to the leadership for answers, for direction, for guidance. When a leader doesn't have the courage to declare the thing as it is, see Job 26:3, that's one of the things that the judgment seat of Christ. Their friends get in the way. Their friendships, their family get in the way. Your wife gets in the way. Your kids get in the way. He sends an uncertain sound to the people and they get confused. God is not the author of confusion.

I've never made any excuse for myself, and I probably never will. I've told you many, many times that this church is not for everybody. My style of ministry is not for everybody. I'm not one of these pastors that think that you've got to be in this church, or I just don't think that way. I know that the majority of Christians in the 20th and 21st century will not fit in here. If you're here and this is your home, there's something specially weird about you. I don't know what to tell you. You like abuse. No, you understand that in your home and in your life as a leader, you want the truth. Many of you don't care what the truth is, you just want it. When I got into the ministry, I was warned that I would never be successful because of the way I preach. The man told me, and he meant good by it, but he was a weak leader. He said, "You know what, Bob, you preach too loud, you preach too long, you preach say things you shouldn't say." And he says, "You're never going to build a church that way." He says, "In the ministry, you have to have results." And he said, "You know what, preaching the way you preach, you're never going to get the results." Now I appreciated what he said, but I looked him right back in the eyes and I said, "I appreciate it, but you know what, I'm not interested in results. I don't care about the results. I care about the truth." If more pastors and more leaders would worry about the truth and not the results, you'd get some things done.

But I say all that to say this: people don't like me. They don't like my style of preaching. They don't like the way I handle things. They don't like how I do this, but you'll never accuse me of

one thing. You'll never have to put your arm around me and say, "Bob, why don't you tell me what you're really feeling?" You won't be around me for 15 minutes and not know where I stand. You may not like it, as I said, some people love me, some people hate me, and some people love to hate me. The bottom line is, you know where I'm at. I mean, I understand. I'm not worried about being popular. I'm not in a popularity contest, not until we get to the judgment seat of Christ. Some people are not like me or my style of ministry. I've made it very clear. I'm not interested in just building Christians. I want 82nd and 101st airborne people. I want people that are a cut above the rest. I want people that can stand in the door. I want people that in any given situation, if they're followers, they'll turn into instantly leaders. I'm looking for somebody who's above the common ordinary Christian today. There are not many that way. But I'll take all I can get.

I have a simple rule that I follow, and I've followed it all my life. I had a family, a couple in the church here a while back, and they came to the place where I was working with a situation, and they felt like they wanted to work with a situation, never saying to me about it. But they started getting into this scenario and working with this particular person, and the woman, the wife, didn't like the way I was handling it. So she proceeded to tell this person that I was all wrong, didn't know what I was doing, and I was going to, and all this stuff like that would confuse the person, well, rightly so. So I, he called me up and we talked about it, and I said, "Okay." And immediately, I didn't wait till the next day, immediately, I called her on the phone. No, I wasn't mean. I wasn't mad. I wasn't angry. I realized that, you know what, I'm not going to prejudge anything. I have my suspicions, but I'm not even going to go there. So I talked to her and her husband on the phone. I got him on a conference call, and I talked to them, and I said, "Hey, look, so and so has told me that you have said this. And I want you to know, I called to explain to you why I took the course of action that I did. I want you to know, this is why I did it. This is the situation I was faced with. This is what the biblical principles call into play, and this is how I operated." And I said, "I just thought that, you know, that you didn't understand why I did what I did. I wanted to explain it to you," and I ended it by saying this: "From this point on, if you just do me this favor, I don't care if you don't agree with what I do. Nobody is always going to agree with what I do. I try to do everything as biblical as I can, but even in that, some people don't understand or they don't want it or whatever. I said, from this point on, if you have a question about why I'm doing something, instead of going to the person that I'm working with and confusing them, would you just pick up the phone and call me because I'll explain it to you just as the way I have tonight."

How do you think it worked for them? It didn't. You see, they weren't worried about anything other than the fact that they didn't like the way I handled it. And then in time, you hear those famous words that we all love to hear, "Well, it's just time for us to move on." You're right, it is. In fact, in my message, I have another word in there that I was going to put between "your" and "it is," but I didn't put it in. It's just the way it is. You know what? I expect you to hold me accountable for what I say and what I do. I really do. How many times have I told you? Don't, when it comes to the Bible, don't believe what I tell you. We get accused all the time of being a cult. People are stupid. They don't understand. I don't tell you folks what to think. I just work real hard to trying to get you to think. That's all. I mean it's a situation where, you know, if I

expect you to hold me accountable, if I preach something wrong, I know there's about 30 guys in here and about 20 gals that'll let me know that wasn't right. Well, why don't I get the same option? You know how I feel about it. If I say something, I own it. If you say something, you own it. That's what leaders do. But you find out very quickly who wants to be one and who doesn't. We find out very quickly who's playing and who's not.

## VI. Accountability and Responsibility

Now let's look at number five when Moses gets back to camp.

➤ The man who was in charge is now held responsible and accountable.

You see, there has to be a responsibility of leadership.

Look at Exodus 32:19-21:

*And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.*

*And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.*

*And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?*

Now remember, real leadership is not about ability. We now know that real leadership is about responsibility. When you're in charge, you have to take responsibility for all you're in charge of. I don't know what else to tell you. Moses does what a real leader should do. He holds all of them accountable. That's what he says. He takes that calf and he puts it in the fire and he grinds it to powder. He sprinkles it in the water and then he makes them drink it. Wow. Try that in your modern 21st century church today and see how far it goes. You see, a leader takes God's side. Moses didn't care what the people thought. He certainly had no respect for this false god. He had no respect for their holy day, for their peace offerings, for all the junk that they were playing. He got right to the issue. And boy, he dealt with it.

Moses said unto Aaron, "What did this people unto thee?" Let me translate that for you. He's saying, "What in the Sam Hill happened here? You were in charge, and how did these people get into this mess?" Now here it comes, verse 21, "that thou," not the people, "that thou, you Aaron, have brought so great a sin upon them." He's saying it was your responsibility as a leader to lead them and not allow them to sin against God. You and your inability to hold the line brought this sin upon them. And he says, "Aaron, what in the world were you thinking?" Everything rises and falls on leadership.

Now look at number six, Aaron's response to it. I call this:

➤ Classic coward.

Instead of taking responsibility for what has happened, he does what all failed leaders do. He passes the buck. He blames it on somebody else. And boy, do you see that today. When your church struggles and fails, it's the people's fault. When you don't have any ministry going on, well, that's the rotten people. When your kids won't do what's right and come to church, well, it's the people they hang out with. Or it's something that somebody said to them or some bad experience that they had. It's always somebody else's fault. Listen, true leadership will be about us taking responsibility for the church, for your family, for the ministry, for your prayer group, for your softball team, for whatever you're in charge of. That's how leadership works.

Now look at Aaron's response. Number seven, I love this:

➤ Classic coward.

*And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief.*

*For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.*

*And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.*

Aaron is the first evolutionist in the Bible. How lame of an excuse. My old drill sergeant used to say when I screwed up, "Alexander, I won't ask you for excuse because I know you don't have one." He's right. There is no excuse. I mean, he's saying, "Well, Moses, don't blame me. You know these people. They're just set on mischief. They came to me and said, 'Make us gods.' And Moses, you know these people are always trouble. Why Moses, I just, I just, I just, they gave me all the gold. I threw it into the fire. And Moses, out came this calf." Really? Let's check the record. Let's look at Exodus 32:4 again:

*And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.*

Quite a difference between the two, isn't it? Aaron's a failed leader. He has failed the leadership test by not taking responsibility, absolutely no responsibility for anything that happened. "It's the people. Oh no, no, no, Moses. It was the weather. No, no, Moses. It's the hot sun. Oh no, no, Moses. It's the bad family. No, Moses. It's the mixed multitude." No, Aaron. It was you. It was you. You and your failed leadership. If you're the leader, if you're the leader and it fails, it's ultimately on you.

You see it in politics all the time. Politicians drive me nuts. And the thing that drives me nuts about them is the fact when they get into a scandal and they get caught, it's never their fault. George Bush, and I thought he was a good president, but he used to drive me crazy. I don't think at any time in his presidency, he ever did anything wrong. Obama's the same way. I don't think every president's the same way. Now I understand that when you're the president of the United States, you have these people around you telling you what you can do or you shouldn't do, and

you want your popularity polls to stay up there. So you try to, but you know what? I'll be honest with you. The American people are not stupid. You're not stupid. American people would much more respect somebody to get up to that thing and say, "You know what, folks? I blew it. I didn't do what was right. I made a bad call, and I'm sorry. I ask you to forgive me, and I'm going to learn from my mistake, and I'm going to do better." Who wouldn't respect that? Well, what they do is they go hire a PR person. They hire somebody to spin it. This IRS mess. Instead of the head of the IRS saying, "It was on my watch. I'm in charge." We find somebody down in Columbus, some little person down there that did this. Why can't we just take responsibility for the things that we make mistakes in, learn from those mistakes, and then move on from there? That's what a leader does, but that's what Aaron can't do. You see it in people all the time. They get into something that's wrong and not right by the Word of God standards, very clear and plain. Instead of just saying, "I blew it and I was wrong, forgive me." No, it's always somebody else's fault. That's the leadership of Aaron in action, or maybe lack of it in action. He's weak. He's a coward. He's a failed leader. And when you're the leader, whatever happens, good or bad, you own it. You own it.

## VII. The Ultimate Test of a Leader

Now let me show you how a real leader handles people that are troubled. I think this is great. As far as I'm concerned, this is the place where every Christian has to get to in his or her life, if you're going to be a leader. And bless your heart, I know there's some of God's people that never get here. For me, it is the ultimate true test of a real leader and his responsibility in leading. So you want to mark this down. You don't want to miss this. This is, to me, this is the ultimate test right here. This is it.

Look at Exodus 32:25-28:

*And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies:)*

*Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.*

*And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.*

*And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.*

Standing in the door, standing in the gate and drawing a line in the sand, standing up to your family and drawing the line, standing up in your own personal life and drawing a line and saying, "You're not going to get in here," standing up in the door of the church and saying, "It ain't going to happen. We're going to do it by the book."

Last week I told you a great story, one that really in my young life really defined a lot of things for me about the great Normandy invasion and the 82nd Airborne and the 101st, how they

dropped behind the line before the invasion and how they were scattered and it was their training, and the fact that they were trained to be followers but they were trained to be leaders, and when the whole thing fell apart their leadership kicked in. I told you that great story how that 200,000 men were saved on the Normandy beachhead by 10,000 guys who when they jumped and got scattered didn't give up and say, "Oh, what do we do?" They took charge and they got the objective done. Great story, great story. But you know what? For them it all started with jump school. All these guys were volunteers. You didn't get drafted into the Airborne. The Airborne was a fairly new concept. The 82nd had been in Africa and Sicily and places like that but the 101st never made a jump till they got into Normandy. It was a fairly new concept. It was all volunteers. But with these guys, if you want to put one spot where they define themselves, it was when they went to jump school. Jump school was three weeks of hell. Jump school is three weeks that you run everywhere you go to build your legs up. Jump school is a thing where everything you do, the calisthenics that you do, three weeks of running, PLF, the parachute landing forms, physical fitness, the toughness, both mentally and physically. You've got these long telephone poles that weigh about 900 pounds and you put 30 guys on them and you all lay down and you grab them and everybody does sit ups with them for about an hour. You put them over your head and you throw them hand to hand. All the training, coordination and leadership. It's the hardest thing you ever go through but every piece of that training gets you ready for the day when they run you out of that warehouse, they strap you into that harness, they put that suit on your back and a reserve on the front, they load 26 guys into a C-47 or a C-119 and you put them in there and that plane rolls down the runway and you're circling about 1200 feet in the air and you're circling the field and you look down out that window, out that door and you see cars like their toys, you see people like their ants and then you hear those famous words, "Inboard size, stand up, starboard size, stand up, hook up." And then boy, all of your training and everything you learned and everything you did now come to one focus point when you stand in that door and you look down at that ground and if you don't jump you're out, if you do jump you made it and now it comes down to that point and when you jump out of there you're a paratrooper. When you fail and you can't stand in that door and make the decision mentally, physically to go out that door and your training doesn't kick in, they'll wash you out. You'll never be a leader, you'll never be worth your salt to God, you'll never be ready to, man or female, to your face with a spiritual decision as you've got to stand in the door and cry out, "Who's on the Lord's side?" It's all academics up to that point, it's all just training up to that point. It all means absolutely nothing until you're tested, until you're faced with something in your family, in your ministry, in your church where you have to stand in the door and cry out to God, "Who's on the Lord's side, let him come unto me." That's where it comes to, that's where it gets to. The day you stand in the door and what you do in that day will define who you are as a leader, and as a leader you'll never put all the training, the work that you've got. You'll never be the leader until in your life, your family, your church, you stand in the door and cry out, "Who is on the Lord's side?" and draw a line in the sand. A leader has to be able to say, "Get in or get out." A leader has to say, "What are you doing with your life? God saved you for a purpose. You want to waste it, go waste it someplace else." A leader has to understand that if Christianity is not contagious, then it's contaminated. And you've got to understand as a leader you've got to be able to stand in that gate.

Somebody a couple of weeks ago sent somebody a text in our church and talked about the fact that they didn't like our church because there were too many cliques in the church. Now if I'm really stupid, I don't open my mouth to show anybody how more stupid I am. I just solitude in my stupidity. But that's one of the most stupidest things I ever heard in my life. Every healthy church should be two cliques: who is on the Lord's side and who's not? You know what my job is? Keep the "not" side as small as possible. No offense, William. Loved Amazing Grace. It wasn't Amazing Grace. Okay, fine. That's alright. Got to give him some slack. He's getting married in a couple of weeks and he's really nervous about it. Amen. Two cliques in every church. If you've got a church, you've got two cliques at least. You should have two cliques at least. Any church that doesn't have cliques is not a church because when you preach the Word of God, it's going to develop two cliques: those that are on the Lord's side and those that are not. I love it. I wanted to text them back and say, "You know what, if stupidity was a crime, you'd be doing 25 years to life," but I didn't.

Exodus 32:26, you see great leaders stand, and sometimes they have to stand alone. Sometimes they have to stand when it's not popular, and sometimes they have to stand in the face of adversity. But true leaders, great leaders stand. Exodus 32:26, Moses stood in the gate. In Ezekiel 22:30, Ezekiel through God was looking for a man that would stand in the gap. Noah in Genesis 6 stood in the door of the ark and he preached, "Get in before God's judgment falls." Joshua, the leader that took over after Moses, in Joshua 24:15 he says, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD." I can't conceive that. But yet there's some of God's people who think that it's evil to serve God. He says, "If you think it's evil to serve the Lord," then he says, "choose you this day whom ye will serve." He drew a line in the sand. And he said, "but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." He drew a line. Real leaders draw lines. Who's on the Lord's side?

Look at Exodus 32:27:

*And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.*

Total Exodus 32:28 with 3,000 people killed. You know what that's a picture of? That's a picture of the men and the women who decided to stick with Moses and do what the book says, who weren't part of this mess. That's taking the sword, the Word of God, Hebrews 4:12, and wading into the problem and taking your stand for God and His Word. Bringing them to pieces with that book that God's given you. Taking your stand. That's the greatest concept. Hey, you're not a leader until you're faced with failure. You're not a leader until you're faced with fear. You're not a leader until you're faced with a decision that you've got to make. And if you don't make it, the people are going to get confused, and you've got to have the courage to stand and make that call.

## VIII. Leadership in the Home

Then I'll show you the last thing. This is the last thing I gave you last time where I told you a real biblical leadership begins in the home.

- A leader leads his family in righteousness.

Now I want to say this. I've got to preface this because I know that no kids are perfect. Though I've got to say to your parents, I want to tell you last week at camp watching your kids, it speaks well of whatever you're doing. I mean, we didn't have one problem. There wasn't one attitude. Those kids dialed themselves in. It spoke very well of what you're doing with your kids. And I want to commend you for that. Those kids, it wasn't one problem. Those kids were as workable and nice and as sweet as you could ever want to be. And it reflects back on your leadership in your home. I'm just telling you. But I want to tell you, even at that, I'm sure that you know, as I know, that no kids are perfect. And your kids will make mistakes. Your kids will do dumb things. And sometimes your kids will get to the place where they're just totally rebellious against you and it's just where it's at. I mean, there's no perfect guarantee that your child is going to grow up and never have any problems. Personally, I think that the reason why we have problems in our lives is because God wants us to learn from problems in our lives, even the ones we cause ourselves. I stand or take on it. I've told you many, many times. I don't care where you've been, where you've come from, what you've done in life or whatever is happening in your life. All I care about is where you're at right now, where you want to go from here. That's all. That's all. Because I know that God is the God of second chances and I know that God will take any situation wherever it's at. Sometimes it has to, but you've got to be able to make the hard call.

Turn over to Leviticus 10:1-2:

*And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.*

*And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.*

Now I want to talk for a minute about this concept of strange fire. In the tabernacle there were seven pieces of furniture. We've talked before how they line up to the seven furnishings you ought to have in your life as a Christian. But one of them was a censer, and a censer was something that he put incense in and they lit that incense and it gave off a smell in the tabernacle and they put it on the altar of incense, but the priest carried around and they put it on there and it gave off an aroma that was very pleasant in that tabernacle. But in a spiritual application that incense and the cloud that comes out and the smell is a picture of our prayer life and our relationship with God. Now here's the key. Most people don't know this. The fire that they lit that censer with and the fire that they lit that incense with had to come off the brazen altar. That's where they killed the sacrifice and made the sacrifice when they brought it to the tabernacle. And they had that fire going and that fire burned forever. It was a brazen great picture of God's judgment, made out of brass, picture of judgment. They took that fire off the brazen altar, lit the incense and that incense was always lit off the fire that came off the brazen altar.

The picture is this: this is a shock to most Christians. Everything in your life, your prayer life, everything you do, the fire that drives it better go back to the cross at Calvary where He died for you. You build your fire from someplace else in your Christian life and you're playing at church. It has to go back to the cross. When you pray, when you get in ministry, whatever you do in your mind and your heart, it has to go back to the day that He died for you. You keep that thought in your mind, you'll never stray too far off in what you're doing for God. You don't get that

concept, you'll wind up with a golden calf. Now these two boys got fire someplace else. And when they brought this fire in, they violated the principle of the Word of God unlike probably no other principle that could be violated. And God came down and killed them. And it's a picture of our relationship with God in their prayer life and it has to be always go back to the cross. If everything we do doesn't go back to what God did for us, then it's based on strange fire. And Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's sons, didn't obey the Word of God and brought the fire from someplace else. And that's why it's called strange fire. And see, Aaron as a leader failed in his family and got his kids killed. Now when you fail as the leader of your home, your kids will get killed spiritually.

Now I understand in a light to that, in a clause to that, that you can do everything right in your family and cross all your T's and dot all your I's and sometimes one of your kids or a couple of your kids will still get messed up in life, but you've got to deal with it. I never fault parents whose kids make mistakes. My kids have made mistakes as a kid. I made mistakes. But what you've got to do as the leader of your home, you've got to deal with it swiftly. You've got to deal with it biblically. You've got to deal with it the way the Bible says to be done. And if you don't know how to do that, you come and see me. I'll be glad to help you any way that I can. But don't get me wrong. I understand that all kids have issues and all kids will get into messes, but you've got to understand that you have to hold the line and draw that line and stand in the gate. And you see Aaron's boys' life is the exact same as Aaron's life. I mean, Aaron's life is a mess, though his boys' life is, both of his boys' lives are a mess. I'm saying I've seen good parents who love God and they'll raise their kids the best they can and you'll find it one sometime to sometime will get out and get messed up. It isn't a matter that they got messed up. It's a matter of how you deal with it. But Aaron here has a complete and total disregard for doing it by the book and now we see that his sons do also. Aaron as a father not only didn't take care of his family, but he couldn't drop the hammer when they cared so little about the things of God and the strange fire. He couldn't take care of the nation of Israel either. And I'm sure he and his wife blamed everybody else. I mean, believe me, if he's blaming everybody else for the golden calf, I guarantee you he's blaming everybody else for his two boys. But at the end, God killed them.

## IX. God Keeps the Record

Now in closing, let me show you one more thing, and you've got to love this. Aaron the bad leader. Aaron the man who couldn't make the hard calls. Aaron and his inability to stand up to the people when they go against God's Word. Aaron the pastor and the picture of the Christian who cannot draw a line in the sand and take his stand for God. Aaron, who when held accountable and responsible for his actions as a leader, does what all failed leaders do: blames it on the people, the circumstances, puts the blame on the very people group that he has been responsible for. But you want to get this: God always keeps the record of what really happens. You may fool your family. You may fool your friends. You may fool your husband. You may fool your wife. You may fool your preacher. But you're certainly, and you certainly fool yourself. But you'll never fool God.

Look at Exodus 32:35:

*And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made.*

He was the leader. And whether he didn't take responsibility for it, he wouldn't listen to Moses' responsibility for it, God took responsibility for him. See, you may not take your prayer group seriously, your ball team, or your counseling situation, your discipleship, or even your family or your wife, or your relationship with God. When you take a role in leadership, it has to go by the book, and God keeps the record. As far as I'm concerned, ladies and gentlemen, everything, and I mean everything, rises and falls on leadership.

I have never seen in my life, you go along in the ministry, you preach, you work hard at building people, you spend time and invest time with people. And you know, we do things, but, and you see things, but never, never, never did I see what God has done here and what the way we train people and the way we bring people together and the accountability we hold, that I ever see it pay off like I saw it pay off at camp last week. I saw, you know, the men who were in charge of it, Joe and Zach and Jenny and Christy, I saw all the counselors that went up there and worked and did everything that they did. And then I watched all the people in this church who didn't go to camp, but you sponsored somebody or you got behind a spaghetti dinner or this or that, whatever we did, bought raffle things. I watched this whole church come together and I watched a group of people that we have trained as leaders and given the material and given to, that was your day of standing in the door. And there wasn't one problem. There wasn't one issue. The camp was a success. I don't know of anything that we've ever done in this church or any church I've been associated with that somebody didn't like something about what we did. The only complaint I heard this last week that it wasn't long enough. It was absolutely you and your leadership skill. And you know what is warm to me about it and really makes me excited about it. I could have come back to church and ripped off another 40 or 50 people out of here that didn't go to camp. I could rip off another 40 or 50 people that never went up to that camp and I could have put another camp together and you'd done the same thing that they did. This church is built on training leaders because everything rises and falls on leaders.

And now we've got these kids. You see, you come back from camp and you think, "Wow, we had a great week," but our work just starts. Now we have to get you guys and you guys, we have to get you forward. We have to spend the time with you. We have to give you what you need. My mind's already going of what, how I want to do this. But I'm already thinking ahead of now how I want to take you and begin to use you to train you on whatever level you're at to be the leader God wants you to be. Dialing in your mom and your dad with it, bringing everybody involved in it, making this thing, as I said, when we started in January, the year of the family, that we get to that goal where families are ministering together. And if you have a child out there that's not where he needs to be or she's not where she needs to be, now's the time that we can work together, pull together, love that child and bring that child in God's time right back to where they need to be. Because the goal of the church and the goal of every Christian ought to be restitution. Bringing that thing back where it works. Giving that person and helping them whatever it takes, whatever I have to do, whatever anybody has to do to give that person whatever they need to get what they need done.

Now you kids, as far as I'm concerned, you showed me something last week. And I know all of you didn't go, but I watched all of you over the course of the time. Just because you didn't go doesn't mean that you're not included in my statement because I watch you and I want to tell you something. You proved to me something last week. You kids are the best. Absolutely the best. You've got courage. You've got character. You're now going to dare to be a Daniel. You've got all the elements that I look for. And that's a rare commodity in as young of life as you are right now. Don't let anybody take that from you. Let me help you. I'm not just a pastor to your mom and dad. I'm a pastor to you. You can call me up anytime. You need to go to lunch. You need to sit down. You need to come over. You've got the same benefits your mom and dad does. We need to take you now, mold you now, bring you along now and help you and you right into where God wants you to be. We had a great week last week, but it isn't over. Our work now begins. And you counselors, you made relationships last week. You made relationships with those kids last week. They trust you now. They love you now. They know you now. You're in the most formidable place in your life to make a difference in their life. Don't forget them now. Dial yourself into them and everything that you do. I want to take you young men and you young ladies and I want the other leaders in this church to develop you. I want to spend time with you. I want to help you. I was even thinking about putting some classes together where the older men and the older women can talk about leadership skills to bring you, to be part of what you're doing. We've already got ideas of some of the things that we're already doing, how to take you as a group and make you and mold you into a ministry group that we can work right side by side together. It speaks well of you. But I look at you as the future leaders of this church and I'm always thinking of that great concept that I live by every day of my life. That everything, I mean everything, rises and falls on leadership. And I make you kids a promise. You get involved, you get involved and follow our leadership. I'll take whatever time it takes to help you get where you need to be. If you've got kids that are out there, mom and dad, that are struggling with things, I'll be right there by your side. I can't promise you we'll fix it but I can promise you, as many of you know, you'll never have to go through it by yourself because that's what we do. That's what leaders do. And this church is about leaders and building men and women into leadership. Only thing I know how to do. But we do it because that's what it takes to make a strong church. I put some of you guys and yes, some of you women up against any pastor in this city as preaching and knowing the Word of God. I would. Honest to goodness, I would. Most pastors, when they don't get to do a wedding or they don't get to do a funeral or get to death, they go sulking or corner someplace. The greatest joy in my life is to watch you take over for me and do something as well or better than I would do it. I look at that. To me, that is the crowning point of my ministry, watching you do what I do better than I do it. You ought to be. You ought to be. You ought to be better than me. You ought to get to that point in your life where you know the book better than me, that you preach better than me if I preach good at all. You ought to get to that point in your life where you're a better leader than me. That's my job. My job, the day I come in here, was to train up my replacement. And boy, God has given us a bunch of leaders. You young kids, you're my new crop. And as my old drill sergeant used to say, I'm going to take a personal interest in you.