

## **Made from Mud: The Spiritual Leader**

Nick - June 10, 2018

**Series Big Idea:** Men and women are created in the image of God. While we share this design blueprint, we represent different variations of his uniqueness. Instead of placing higher and lower values on our representations of God, we need to embrace how our uniqueness is lived out. This series explores four pillars of biblical manhood: the protector, the spiritual leader, the lover, and the connector. When we live out these four pillars, we step into intentional living and purposeful leadership of our families.

**Message Big Idea:** Headship is often confused with dictatorship. Sometimes we have this distorted view of leadership where we have to be the one calling all of the shots and telling everyone what to do. This doesn't just happen in the home, but can happen at work and with friends. Our servanthood is defined by Jesus (Matthew 20:16 First/Last, Mark 10:42-45 Become the servant). Chief servanthood and spiritual leadership begins at the cross. We cannot embrace our call to lead spiritually if we don't embrace Jesus.

**Main Idea:** Leaders don't demand submission, they lead others in service.

**Main Text:** Philippians 2:1-8, Ephesians 5:21-25

**Supporting texts:** Mark 10:42-45, James 1:19

### **Reflection/Discussion Questions:**

1. Think of a time in your life when you had a leader that wasn't the best role model. What about that leader made you not want to follow them, respect them, or imitate them? Share with the group. Why do you think they act that way?
2. Read Philippians 2:1-8. Mark and talk about any parts of this scripture where servant leadership is mentioned. What is Philippians saying about how a leader should act?
3. Read Ephesians 5:21-25. While we typically focus on verse 22-24, I want you to direct your attention to verses 21 & 25. How do these two verses impact our interpretation of verses 22-24? What does this change?
4. Everyone is a leader in some capacity. Share with the group ways that you're a good leader. Share a couple areas where you can grow as a leader. How can you move forward in growth?
5. Great leadership begins at the cross. It's where we meet Jesus and see his model for leadership. Jesus paid the price for our sins and in turn, gave us the opportunity to start fresh. How does your relationship with Jesus impact your leadership? Do you meet him at the cross?

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Good morning, my name is Nick Farr and I'm one of the teaching pastors here at Pantano. If you missed last week, we kicked off a new series called "Made from Mud-Unique not Better." The idea is that God created both male and female intentionally to reflect different parts of his personality. Men and women are unique and neither is better than the other.

My journey hasn't always provided a good example of "unique not better."

I remember growing up in church and seeing this divide among men and women. Each had VERY defined roles. In my childhood churches, women were supposed to tend to the kids, teach kids church, and serve behind the scenes. Men were supposed to take charge in all leadership capacities. Men were there to help me become a better follower of Jesus and a better leader. Women were responsible for teaching children's stories.

As I grew up, I could certainly see how the people around me came to these conclusions, but on further examination of scripture, God didn't relegate women to behind the scenes roles. You have Deborah, Rehab, Phoebe, Ruth, Esther, Priscilla, Mary, Martha, and so on. Yes, we have different expressions of God's uniqueness, but in the end, both have a place in leadership.

Pantano has very thoughtfully addressed this and we've come to the conclusion to scripture supports women playing an active role in leadership. This is evidenced in the fact that we have women pastors, women leaders, and so on. Women were even crucial to helping me prepare this teaching series. While we affirm a woman's role in leadership in life and at church, I want to take this message today and talk to men today about how we can become better leaders in all aspects of our lives, especially with spiritual leadership. While today is specific to men, truth is present here for any leader.

So men, how do we feel about leadership? Some like to jump in head first and others like to wade into the waters pretty slowly. Regardless of where we come from God has provided us a way. No matter the decisions you've made, whether you've stood in silence or been too aggressive, Jesus is good to forgive. Each of us can learn to become a great spiritual leader.

Early on in my marriage with my wife Laura, I had decided that I would be an aggressive leader.

I remember a couple weeks into our marriage, Laura and I were having a conversation about our expectations of spiritual leadership. It was in this conversation that I shared my ideas of what it meant to be a leader of our household. I went to my favorite verse in the Bible dealing with spiritual leadership and quoted away. I remember saying that her job was to take care of everything inside the house and I would take care of everything outside the house. I've heard this marriage advice given many times by men and women over the years. Looking back now, I can remember the look on Laura's face. She would have never said anything just a couple weeks into our marriage, but I could tell she was disappointed. Not knowing how else to be a better leader, I forged ahead.

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At the time, I thought that being a good leader meant that I had to tell everyone what to do. I thought that great leaders commanded attention and took charge. Since my church and the Bible college I attended didn't really say much about spiritual leadership, I had to take what little I knew and draw conclusions. I'm embarrassed to share this because it sounds so silly now, but I based a lot of my leadership advice on a not so realistic tv show. From the countless episodes I watched of Star Trek growing up, everyone listened the captain and everyone understood the chain of command. If the Captain issued a command everyone got into line. So here I am in our marriage...brand new...and I'm basing my leadership on a couple of verses I didn't fully understand and all the episodes of Star Trek I had scene. I thought if Picard can do it, so can I. So I'd figuratively tell Laura to "Make it so #1."

These bad ideas of leadership played themselves out in my work life and at home. I remember reading Philippians 2:1-8 and thinking about the meaning of this passage. Turn with me there. [Philippians 2:1-8 \(pg. 802\)](#).

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

<sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature<sup>[a]</sup> God,

did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

<sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing

by taking the very nature<sup>[b]</sup> of a servant,

being made in human likeness.

<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself

by becoming obedient to death—

even death on a cross!

I would think, "This is great leadership stuff" and I would take notes. Then I would think, "What else do I know about being a leader?" I would turn to Ephesians 5:21-25 which says,

<sup>21</sup> Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ...

Well that's great too. So how do I lead? Somehow and in some way, in my reading of scripture I just zoomed past entire sections of meaning. I would read Philippians and only from on verses

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6-8. "Wow, Jesus was pretty great. He really humbled himself." Then I would go to Ephesians 5 and only process verses 22. "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands." Wives are women. Women should submit themselves to men which will also be husbands.

This logic is so messed up and this is where a lot of us get it wrong. We can't pick and choose what we want to follow in scripture. I'm convinced that there are men in here like men. We want to lead the best we can. We try our best to do our best, but sometimes we get a little lost. As I've been reflecting on this, I think I know why. I was trying to prove something. If you noticed, I ignored all of the parts of scripture dealing with me lowering myself, serving, putting others first. Instead I took verses and either dismissed them as not dealing with me or read them through the lens of power.

Looking back now, the reason I focused on verse 22 in Ephesians 5 so much is because I felt like I needed to prove myself. I needed to feel in charge, feel like the big man, be the one making all the decisions.

This happens all the time in workplace and political leadership. In order for leader to feel big he has to make others feel small.

What I had done was weaponize scripture to support my leadership. If I was ever challenged, then I would raise my shields and talk to Laura about her submitting. But all of this was a cover for my own insecurity.

Men, in all honesty, I think a lot of us in this room struggle with this. We command, domineer, and in most situations, someone has to be the loser. We're really acting that way because of our own fear and insecurity. We're out to prove ourselves. But the Bible suggests a different way. Let's go back to Philippians 2:1-5, "Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

<sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus..."

And now Ephesians 5:21, <sup>21</sup> Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." and verse 25, <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her..."

How does scripture define biblical leadership? Service.

Which leads me to my main point for today:

**Leaders don't demand submission, they lead others in service.**

Catch these phrases: Submit to one another, love your wives as Christ loved the church, Do

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nothing out of selfishness, value others more than yourself, look to the interest of others.

This doesn't just apply to marriage, this applies to our entire lives. Our relationships with friends, roommates, co-workers, family, and so on. We lead in some way in each of these areas and we need to be known for our service, for our love for others.

It's natural for guys to be aggressive. After all, God did form us out in the wild and not in the safety of Eden. But we can't allow our uniqueness to destroy others purpose.

### Leaders don't demand submission, they lead others in service.

So how do we go about serving others using our leadership instead of using our leadership to get people to serve us?

First:

- **Initiate service. Don't try to be the boss.** You start. You serve first.
  - If this is at work, serve your co-workers around you.
  - This doesn't mean you become a doormat, but you can still have drive to excel without leaving a trail of destruction behind you.
  - If this is at home, be proactive. Look for ways to serve those around you. Instead of being asked to do something, notice it before it gets that far. Help your roommates out, give them the benefit of the doubt. Help your wife before she asks for help.

Second:

- **Value others more than yourself.**
- **Mark 10:42-45 says,**
  - <sup>42</sup> Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup> Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

### Leaders don't demand submission, they lead others in service.

So what are some real life examples and these will be on MyPantano.Church for those that want the notes:

1. James 1:19, "Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry" Ask yourselves, are you talking more than listening? True leaders allow others to add value to the conversation before sharing their opinion.
2. Are you serving your wife more than she's submitting to you? We can't start serving until we start praying. Pray for her, pray for your kids. It all starts in the heart. Once the heart

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is correctly aligned then you'll "do nothing out of vain conceit." If you don't know how to pray. It can be easy.

3. Are you only looking out for your own advantage or career path? Jesus says to look out for others. Again, it's not bad to have goals, but we can't get lost in our own plans. I like to call this being content. We don't normally think about contentedness as being a leadership quality, but it is. When we're not content, we're restless, not for the betterment of others, but because we're bored. When we're content then we can truly focus on what's around us. You don't have to climb the corporate ladder in 12 months. Slow down, focus, and be content. Check out Philippians 4:12,13.

All of this today, really hinges on one thing. Jesus. In order to be the best leaders that we can be, we need to know the best of them all--Jesus.

How long are we going to try and do all of this on our own? Spiritual leadership starts by deciding who we're going to follow. Giving our lives to Jesus is the best decision that we can make.

Jesus allows us to come with all of our sin and struggles to be made new. He gives us a fresh start.

If you don't know Jesus or haven't accepted him, today is the day for you to step forward.

We have everything you need in order to be baptized today. Private changing areas, clothes to change into, towels, everything. In just a moment we're going to sing a song together. During this time, if you need to make that decision, come forward and meet me down here in the front by the door.

Jesus never demanded submission, he lead us through his own service. Leaving heaven to come to earth, so that we may have new life is a powerful servant leader move.

Jesus wants us to make a move today. Will you as we stand and sing?