

Leadership in a Postmodern World

I. The Philosophical Influence of Postmodernism

- A. "There are no legitimate, overarching explanations of life and meaning."
- B. "The principle of authority is neither natural nor God-given but invented by those in power."
- C. "Submission is not a virtue but compliance by the weak with those in power."

II. The Cultural Confusion about Leadership

A. Among Those Who Lead

- 1. Abdication
- 2. Neglect
- 3. Authoritarianism

B. Among Those Who Follow

- 1. A Rejection of the principle of authority
- 2. A Rejection the positions of authority
- 3. A Rejection the persons in authority

III. The Biblical Foundations of Leadership

A. God is the only true, ultimate authority (2 Ch. 20:6; Ps. 115:34; 135:6; Dan. 4:35; Eph. 1:11).

B. God delegates authority to human beings.

1. Husbands in marriage (Eph. 5:22-24)
2. Parents over children (Eph. 6:1-3)
3. Elders over the function and membership of a local church (Acts 20:28; 1 Th. 5:12; Heb. 13:17)
4. Government over its citizens (Dan. 4:17; 5:18-21; Jn. 19:11; Rom. 13:1-4; 1 Pet. 2:13)

C. God has established limits on human authority in His Word.

1. Husbands (Eph. 5:25-33; Col. 3:19; 1 Pet. 3:7)
2. Parents (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21)
3. Elders (1 Pet. 5:2-3)
4. Human Government (Mt. 22:21; Acts 4:19; 5:29)

D. God is dishonored and angered by those who abuse their limited, delegated authority.

1. Consistent, Unrepentant Sin Against Them (Jer. 23:14-15; Mk. 12:40; 1 Pet. 3:7)
2. Physical or Sexual Abuse (Ps. 11:4-5; Pr. 3:31-34)
3. Dominating, Controlling, Unloving Leadership (Mt. 20:25-28)

IV. The Practical Duties of Leadership

A. The Summary in the Westminster Larger Catechism on the Fifth Commandment

Westminster: The Commands for Superiors

- Love (Col. 3:19; Tit. 2:4)
- Pray for (1 Sam. 12:23, Job 1:5)
- Bless (1 Kings 8:55–56; Heb. 7:7; Gen. 49:28)
- Instruct (Dt. 6:6–7)
- Counsel & admonish (Eph. 6:4)
- Countenancing (1 Pet. 3:7), commending (1 Pet. 2:14; Rom. 13:3), and rewarding such as do well (Esther 6:3)
- Discountenancing (Rom. 13:3-4), reproving, and chastising such as do ill (Pr. 29:15; 1 Pet. 2:14)
- Protecting (Job 29:13–16; Is. 1:10,17)
- Providing for them all things necessary for soul (Eph. 6:4) and body (1 Tim. 5:8)

Westminster: The Sins of Superiors

- Neglect of the duties required (Ezek. 34:2-4)
- Inordinate seeking of themselves (Phil. 2:21), their own glory (Jn. 5:44; 7:18), ease, profit, or pleasure (Is. 56:10–11; Dt. 17:17)
- Commanding things unlawful (Dan. 3:4-6; Acts 4:17-18)
- Commanding things not in the power of inferiors to perform (Ex. 5:10–18; Mt. 23:2,4)
- Counseling (Mt. 14:8; Mk. 6:24), encouraging (2 Sam. 13:28), or favoring them in that which is evil (1 Sam. 3:13)
- Dissuading, discouraging, or discountenancing them in that which is good (Jn. 7:46-49; Col. 3:21; Ex. 5:17)
- Correcting them unduly (1 Pet. 2:18-20; Heb. 12:10; Dt. 25:3)
- Careless exposing, or leaving them to wrong, temptation, and danger (Gen. 38:11, 26; Acts 18:17)
- Provoking them to wrath (Eph. 6:4)
- Dishonoring themselves, or lessening their authority by an unjust, indiscreet, rigorous, or remiss behavior (Gen. 9:21; 1 Kings 1:6; 12:13-16; 1 Sam. 2:29-31)

B. The Commands to Leaders in Ephesians 5:25–6:9

1. Love them (Eph. 5:25-33)
 - a. With a sacrificial love (25)
 - b. With a sanctifying love (26-27)
 - c. With a nourishing love (28-29a)
 - d. With a cherishing love (29b)
2. Don't provoke them to anger (6:4a)

3. Instruct them in God's ways (6:4b)
4. Treat them as you want to be treated (9a; cf. 7-8)
5. Don't use manipulation, threats, or intimidation with them (9b)
6. Remember that your authority over them is delegated (9c)
7. Remember that the Lord sees you as spiritually equal with those you lead (9d)