

## ***Lead Like Ezra: 6 Habits of a Godly Leader***

**Leadership.** Every business needs it. Every team needs it. Every family, every classroom, every church—needs leadership.

**Whether you have the title or not, throughout life, God will give you opportunities to lead.**

So the question is: **What kind of leader do you want to be?**

When it comes to leadership, I believe most people fall into one of two categories: **First, there's the kind of leader who loves being in charge.** They love the spotlight, the control, and the ability to call the shots. **Then there's the kind of leader others *love having* in charge.** They lead with humility and wisdom.

So... **which one do you want to be?** I believe the greatest leadership manual ever written is the Bible. And today, we're going to open the Bible and look at a man named **Ezra**—a godly leader. And if there's one truth I want us to take away from Ezra chapter 8, it's this:

## GODLY LEADERSHIP IS THE BEST LEADERSHIP.

So, how do you lead in a godly way? How do you **lead like Ezra**? I want to show you **six habits** of his leadership that he lived by - 6 habits of godly leaders.

### **Habit #1: *Godly leaders know their people (Ezra 8:1-14; John 10:14).***

Have you ever worked for someone who didn't even know your name?

Jesus—the perfect model of godly leadership - God in human flesh —said in John 10:14, *“I know my sheep, and my sheep know me.”* True leadership isn't about barking orders to get things done. It's about caring for the people entrusted to your guidance.

Ezra was leading thousands on a dangerous four-month journey. But before he set out, he didn't start with a strategy meeting or a logistics chart—he started by **knowing** the people. He made it a leadership priority to recognize them by name, face, family, and background.

## **Habit #2: *Godly leaders raise up new leaders (Ezra 8:15-20; Luke 6:13).***

Have you ever worked under someone who clearly didn't trust anyone else to lead? They wouldn't say it out loud, but it was obvious—they thought no one could do the job as well as they could. That's not how godly leaders think. Godly leaders don't make leadership about themselves. They make it about the mission—and that means raising up others to lead.

That was a habit of Ezra's leadership. If you lead in any capacity, I want you to ask yourself: **Am I empowering others—or am I powering over them? Am I raising up others? Or am I raising up myself?** Godly leaders invest in people so that one day, those new leaders will **outserve, outgrow, and outlead** them.

## **Habit #3: *Godly leaders demonstrate walking by faith (Ezra 8:21-23; Luke 23:34).***

We've all seen leaders who claim to live by faith, but in real life, they don't exactly demonstrate it. They may say all the right things in church, but their everyday attitude tells a different story. They lack peace. They snap when things don't go

their way. They don't demonstrate love, joy, peace, or patience.

Ezra was not ashamed to share his faith. But then came a test—**would he live it out?**

But after speaking so boldly about God's faithfulness, Ezra was ashamed to ask the king for a military escort. It was time to demonstrate walking by faith. Ezra didn't just rush ahead. He didn't panic either. He gathered the people and led them in fasting and prayer. He modeled dependence on God.

**Habit #4: *Godly leaders build systems of integrity (Ezra 8:24-30; Luke 16:10).***

One of the fastest ways to sink a ministry, destroy a business, or fracture a family is through a **lack of integrity, especially with money.**

Ezra understood that, so he built a system of **accountability, transparency, and shared responsibility.**

**Habit #5: *Godly leaders pace their team to finish well (Ezra 8:31-34; Mark 6:31).***

Have you ever worked for someone who just wouldn't slow down? They always want more, faster, sooner... On the flip side, maybe you've worked under someone who never finishes anything. Always dreaming, but never delivering. Always starting, but rarely closing. That's exhausting too.

But godly leaders—*they pace well*. They finish well. Ezra paced his team well enough to get them to the finish line—without burning them out and without compromising the mission.

Maybe you're leading at work, or in your home, or in ministry. Ask yourself: *Are you pacing your people to finish well? Or are you pushing them so hard they can't catch their breath? And are you sticking to the job at hand? Or are you exhausting your team with too many new ideas?*

**Habit #6: Godly leaders foster a culture of holiness (Ezra 8:35-36; Luke 6:40).**

If you're a leader—what do you ultimately want for the people entrusted to your care?

After four months on the road with him, the people he led were different. When they arrived in

Jerusalem, no one had to *tell* them what to do next. Ezra didn't force it. He simply led by example—and it rubbed off on them.

Do the people around you become more like Jesus because of your influence?