

LEADING THROUGH LEADING

THREE ESSENTIALS FOR NAVIGATING UNCERTAINTY

Leading Through: Humanity

In an uncertain world, it's important for anybody in charge to make a simple, liberating admission: we don't have all the answers. So whether you find yourself leading your family, spouse, coworkers, or an even broader group of people during this season, it's worth taking a look at what the scriptures have to say about leadership, because successfully navigating uncertainty requires an ability to demonstrate humanity in the form of empathy. But empathy in leadership doesn't simply entail *worrying* alongside other people. It involves showing up in tangible ways, especially when things are uncomfortable and we don't know precisely what to say.

Start Talking

1. Let's say you and a group of friends have to survive a few weeks in unfamiliar terrain without pre-packaged food, water, or shelter. If you could pick any person from the past, present, or future to serve as your leader in this scenario, who would it be and why?
2. Think back on your favorite books, movies, and television shows. Who is the most empathetic leader who comes to mind? What about them stands out?

Looking Back

1. What did you do this week to create more clarity for the people you're responsible for? What opportunities to do this did you miss?
2. Where did you fall on the continuum of "unbridled optimism" versus "the-sky-is-falling-ism" over the past few days? How did this impact your messaging to those looking to you for direction and hope?
3. What was your primary leadership temptation last week: to be cynical, to be baselessly optimistic, or to pretend you had more certainty than you did?
4. When did you pray for humility and balance this week? What daily reminders did you leave yourself in order to make this happen?



What About You?

1. Have you ever been pastored or shepherded by someone through a difficult season? What did they do or say that made a difference?
2. Are you ever tempted to use fairness as an excuse not to engage? Are you ever tempted to hide behind: "Since I can't do it for everyone, I shouldn't do it for anyone?" Where did that way of thinking originate?
3. When have you held back on making contact with someone because you weren't sure what to do or say?
4. Why do you think we tend to expect empathy from leaders before we're willing to buy into their direction? Is it a good or bad tendency?
5. Have you ever taken the risk of allowing your humanity to show when you were in charge? How did it go? What happened?

Look It Up

Read the following passage before answering the questions below: Mark 6: 32 – 34. John 10: 3 – 4, 11 – 13.

1. Based upon Jesus's actions in these passages, how would you personally define the role of a "shepherd" for other people?
2. How does Jesus compare the actions of a "hired hand" to those of a "shepherd?" What's the difference?
3. What does love require of shepherds? How does this differ from the ways our culture thinks about leadership?
4. Do you think most people would find Jesus's description of leadership from these passages attractive or off-putting? Why?

Putting It All Together

1. Who needs to see more of your humanity during this season?
2. Do the people you're responsible for know you care? If asked, what do you think they would say in answer to that question? Would they have evidence for their answer?
3. Who are three people you can make contact with this week in order to connect on a personal level?
4. When you think about how you've modeled leadership during this season, what has gotten in the way of sharing your humanity with the people around you? How can you be more vulnerable moving forward?
5. What will you do to proactively seek out opportunities to demonstrate humanity in leadership this week?

