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SECOND-TIER LEADERSHIP

Building **Healthy, Faithful, and
Trustworthy** Leaders

FAITHFUL
PEOPLE
BUILD
STRONGER
MINISTRIES



By • PASTOR •
DAMIETTA JEFFRIES

PEOPLE | PRINCIPLES | PURPOSE | A STRONGER TOMORROW

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Building Healthy, Faithful, and Trustworthy Leaders

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SECOND-TIER LEADERSHIP

Building Healthy, Faithful, and Trustworthy Leaders *By Pastor Damietta Jeffries*

INTRODUCTION

Second-tier leadership is one of the most important yet least celebrated dimensions of ministry leadership. Many people desire visible leadership, but few understand the power of supporting leadership faithfully, humbly, and consistently. Behind every strong ministry, healthy church, effective organization, or impactful vision are leaders who know how to serve under leadership with integrity. Second-tier leadership is not “lesser leadership.” It is leadership that functions through stewardship, trust, responsibility, humility, and partnership. These leaders help carry vision, stabilize ministry environments, solve problems, strengthen culture, and help leadership remain effective. Many ministries are damaged not because of external attacks, but because internal leadership lacked maturity, loyalty, emotional discipline, humility, and accountability.

A second-tier leader must understand

- Leadership is stewardship, not ownership
- Influence must be handled carefully
- Character matters as much as gifting
- Faithfulness matters more than visibility
- Loyalty is proven in difficult seasons
- Healthy leaders remain teachable

FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURE

Exodus 18:21 (NKJV)

“Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.”

This scripture reveals that healthy leadership structures require trustworthy people who can help carry responsibility. Moses could not carry the burden alone. God established tiers of leadership to strengthen the people and preserve order.

1. WHAT IS SECOND-TIER LEADERSHIP?

Second-tier leadership refers to leaders who serve under visionary leadership while helping carry the mission, culture, responsibilities, and burdens of ministry. They may not always be the visible face of leadership, but they are essential to ministry health and stability.

Second-tier leaders

- Carry vision faithfully
- Protect ministry culture
- Support leadership with integrity
- Help solve problems
- Remove burdens instead of creating them
- Strengthen organizational flow
- Serve consistently without demanding recognition

Second-tier leadership is not passive. It requires wisdom, discernment, maturity, stability, and humility.

Key Leadership Principles

- Leadership under leadership
- Helping carry vision without seeking recognition
- Removing burdens instead of creating them
- Serving with humility, loyalty, and consistency
- Supporting the mission with time, talent, and integrity

Romans 12:10–11 (NKJV)

“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”

Matthew 20:26–28 (NKJV)

“Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

1 Corinthians 4:2 (NKJV)

“Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”

A healthy second-tier leader understands that ministry is not about platform-building, self-promotion, or competition. It is about faithfully stewarding what God has entrusted to them.

2. BEING LEADABLE

One of the greatest signs of maturity in leadership is teachability. A leader who cannot be corrected cannot continue growing. Many people desire authority but resist accountability. However, spiritual maturity is revealed by how a person responds to instruction, correction, redirection, and leadership oversight.

Key Leadership Principles

- Healthy leaders remain teachable
- Correction is part of growth
- Humility protects leadership
- Submission is strength, not weakness
- Pride isolates leaders

Scripture Foundation

Luke 4:1 (NKJV)

“Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.”

Even Jesus demonstrated submission to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Proverbs 12:1 (NKJV)

“Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, But he who hates correction is stupid.”

Hebrews 13:17 (NKJV)

“Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account.”

James 4:6 (NKJV)

“God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

Pride causes leaders to become defensive, isolated, unteachable, and difficult to guide. Humility keeps leaders growing.

3. INFLUENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Leadership influence flows in three directions:

- Upward
- Downward
- Sideways

Healthy leaders understand how to steward all three responsibly.

A. Influencing Upward Through Support and Communication

A strong second-tier leader makes leadership stronger, not heavier.

Key Leadership Principles

- Anticipate needs
- Care about what your leaders care about
- Never allow leadership to be blindsided
- Communicate clearly and proactively
- Remain emotionally stable under pressure
- Honor leadership's time and capacity
- Bring solutions, not only problems

Habakkuk 2:2 (NKJV)

“Then the Lord answered me and said: ‘Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it.’”

Proverbs 15:22 (NKJV)

“Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counselors they are established.”

Strong communication protects vision.

B. Influencing Downward Through Consistency and Example

People are impacted more by what leaders model than by what leaders say.

Key Leadership Principles

- Motivate your team toward the vision
- Correct attitudes without humiliating people
- Redirect unhelpful behavior wisely
- Protect ministry culture
- Model consistency daily

1 Timothy 4:12 (NKJV)

“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

Titus 2:7–8 (NKJV)

“In all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works...”

Second-tier leaders help create healthy ministry environments through consistency and example.

C. Influencing Sideways Through Unity and Collaboration

Ministry was never designed to function through competition.

Key Leadership Principles

- Work collaboratively, not competitively
- Communicate updates clearly
- Close communication loops
- Honor fellow laborers publicly
- Refuse comparison and territorial behavior

1 Thessalonians 5:12–13 (NKJV)

“And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves.”

Philippians 4:3 (NKJV)

“And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel...”

Psalms 133:1 (NKJV)

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity!”

Unity strengthens ministry effectiveness.

4. PROTECTING THE ATMOSPHERE AROUND LEADERSHIP

The atmosphere around leadership matters greatly. Dishonor, gossip, division, and confusion weaken ministry environments.

Second-tier leaders help preserve peace, order, honor, and trust.

Key Leadership Principles

- Do not participate in gossip or dishonor
- Protect confidentiality
- Do not spread confusion
- Help stabilize ministry environments
- Use access wisely and humbly

Scripture Foundation

Proverbs 11:13 (NKJV)

“A talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.”

Proverbs 26:20 (NKJV)

“Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.”

Ephesians 4:29 (NKJV)

“Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification...”

A trusted leader does not use private information carelessly.

5. EMOTIONAL DISCIPLINE IN MINISTRY

Gifted leaders without emotional discipline can create instability.

Second-tier leaders must learn how to remain emotionally stable under pressure, correction, conflict, disappointment, and frustration.

Key Leadership Principles

- Respond instead of reacting emotionally
- Process frustration maturely
- Remain stable under pressure
- Do not allow emotions to control decisions
- Do not shift blame instead of owning up to failure
- Accept accountability even when uncomfortable

Scripture Foundation

Proverbs 25:28 (NKJV)

“Whoever has no rule over his own spirit Is like a city broken down, without walls.”

Ecclesiastes 7:9 (NKJV)

“Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, For anger rests in the bosom of fools.”

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV)

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...”

Self-control is evidence of spiritual maturity.

Example: Aaron's Failure Under Pressure

Exodus 32:19–23 (NKJV)

19 So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf *and* the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. **20** Then he took the calf which they had made, burned *it* in the fire, and ground *it* to powder; and he scattered *it* on the water and made the children of Israel drink *it*. **21** And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought *so* great a sin upon them?"

22 So Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. You know the people, that they *are* set on evil. **23** For they said to me, 'Make us gods that shall go before us; *as for* this Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'

Aaron allowed pressure from people to override obedience to God. Immature leaders often compromise under pressure instead of standing firm.

6. OFFENSE AND COMPARISON

Offense is one of the greatest destroyers of ministry relationships and comparison creates insecurity, jealousy, resentment, competition, and division. But healthy leaders celebrate others genuinely.

Key Leadership Principles

- Comparison creates division
- Offense quietly damages leaders
- Celebrate others genuinely
- Faithfulness matters more than visibility
- Guard your heart against resentment

Scripture Foundation

Galatians 5:26 (NKJV)

"Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."

Proverbs 14:30 (NKJV)

"A sound heart is life to the body, But envy is rottenness to the bones."

James 3:16 (NKJV)

"For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there."

Gehazi: A Warning Against Corrupt Motives

2 Kings 5:20–27 (NKJV)

20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but *as* the Lord lives, I will run after him and take something from him." **21** So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw *him* running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "*Is* all well?" **22** And he said, "All *is* well. My master has sent me, saying, 'Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.'"

23 So Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed *them* to two of his servants; and they carried *them* on ahead of him. **24** When he came to [a]the citadel, he took *them* from their hand, and stored *them* away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed. **25** Now he went in and stood before his master.

Elisha said to him, “Where *did you go*, Gehazi?” And he said, “Your servant did not go anywhere.”
26 Then he said to him, “Did not my heart go *with you* when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? *Is it* time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? **27** Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever.” And he went out from his presence leprous, *as white* as snow

Gehazi’s downfall began internally before it became visible externally. Wrong motives eventually produce destructive behavior.

7. ACCESS, INFLUENCE, AND PROXIMITY

Some leaders become dangerous when proximity creates pride, entitlement, or familiarity.

Access is a privilege, not ownership.

Key Leadership Principles

- Access is not entitlement
- Do not misuse private conversations
- Remain humble even when trusted closely
- Handle influence with integrity
- Steward trust carefully
- Do not mishandle proximity

Scripture Foundation

Luke 16:10 (NKJV)

“He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much...”

Proverbs 27:18 (NKJV)

“Whoever keeps the fig tree will eat its fruit; So he who waits on his master will be honored.”

1 Peter 5:2–3 (NKJV)

“Shepherd the flock of God... not as being lords over those entrusted to you...”

Healthy leaders do not manipulate access for personal advantage.

8. BURDEN-BEARING WITHOUT BURNOUT

Second-tier leaders often carry heavy responsibilities emotionally, spiritually, and practically. Without balance, leaders can become exhausted, discouraged, emotionally drained, and spiritually depleted.

Key Leadership Principles

- Rest is biblical
- Healthy leaders establish boundaries
- Prayer and renewal are necessary
- Burnout often begins with imbalance
- You cannot pour effectively from an empty vessel

Scripture Foundation

Mark 6:31 (NKJV)

“And He said to them, ‘Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.’”

Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV)

“But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength...”

Psalms 23:2–3 (NKJV)

“He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul.”

Rest is not weakness. Proper rest strengthens longevity in ministry.

CONCLUSION:

Second-tier leadership is not about titles, recognition, applause, or visibility; it is about faithful stewardship, godly character, humility, and unwavering commitment to the vision God has entrusted to the ministry. True leadership is revealed not merely by gifting, influence, or public platform, but by integrity, loyalty, emotional maturity, and the ability to remain teachable under pressure, correction, and responsibility. Healthy leaders understand that ministry is not competition, but service; not ownership, but stewardship. They protect unity, guard their hearts from offense, carry responsibility faithfully, and remain stable even in difficult seasons. God is not only looking for gifted leaders, but trustworthy leaders who can be trusted privately, serve faithfully, handle influence with wisdom, and honor leadership with humility and integrity. As we labor in the Kingdom, we must remember that all we do is ultimately unto the Lord and not for the praise of men. Holy Bible reminds us in Colossians 3:23–24, “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men,” and our ultimate desire should always be to hear the words of the Master in Matthew 25:21, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” Therefore, stay teachable, stay stable, stay faithful, protect the vision, serve with integrity, and let your character always be stronger than your gifting.

FINAL LEADERSHIP REMINDERS

- Faithfulness matters more than visibility
- Correction is not rejection
- Protect unity and culture
- Do not allow offense to grow silently
- Leadership is stewardship, not ownership
- Healthy leaders remain teachable
- Ministry is about serving, not competing
- Character sustains what gifting attracts
- Loyalty is proven in difficult seasons
- Stability is a form of spiritual maturity

CONCLUSION

Second-tier leadership requires:

- Humility
- Discipline
- Emotional maturity
- Loyalty

- Integrity
- Wisdom
- Stability
- Teachability

Second-tier leaders must continuously guard:

- Motives
- Integrity
- Humility
- Loyalty
- Private character

Ministry may reveal giftings, but it will also reveal character. The strongest ministries are built by leaders who can carry responsibility faithfully even when nobody is clapping, applauding, recognizing, or rewarding them publicly.

God is looking for leaders who can:

- Be trusted privately
- Serve faithfully
- Protect unity
- Carry responsibility maturely
- Stay submitted
- Remain emotionally healthy
- Steward influence wisely

FINAL CHARGE

Stay teachable.

Stay stable.

Stay faithful.

Stay humble.

Protect the vision.

Honor leadership.

Serve with integrity.

And let your character be stronger than your gifting.

All that we do in the kingdom we must remember to do it wholeheartedly.

Colossians 3:23–24 (NKJV)

“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men...”

Remember we are all working faithful in the kingdom to hear, “well done”

Matthew 25:21 (NKJV)

“Well done, good and faithful servant...”