

LESSON 2

THE SEARCH FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERS

“For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.” (Psalm 75:6-7)

“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.” (Ezekiel 22:30)

1. When God finds such a man who conforms to His spiritual requirements, who is willing to pay the full price of discipleship, He uses them to the limit, despite his patent shortcomings.
2. In a sense it has been always true that that type of dedicated leadership has been in short supply, for the simple reason that its demands are too stringent.
3. The overriding need of the Church, is to discharge its obligation to the rising generation, is to a leadership that is.

A. Authoritative. People love to be lead by one who knows where they are going and who inspires confidence. They follow, almost without question, the person who shows himself wise and strong, who adheres to what he believes.

B. Spiritual. Leadership that is unspiritual, that can be fully explained in terms of the natural, although ever so attractive and competent, will result only in spiritual fruitlessness, corruption₃ and immorality.

C. Sacrificial. Modeled on the life of the One who gave Himself a sacrificial for the whole world, who left us an example that we should follow His steps

4. It is the binding duty of those in positions of leadership to face-up-to the situation and do all in their power to see that the torch of a truly spiritual leader is passed on to the younger.

5. Leadership is often viewed as the product of natural endowments and traits of personality, intellectual capacity, force of will, and enthusiasm. These God-given talents do greatly enhance

leadership beyond question, but those are not the factors of paramount importance in the spiritual leader.

6. The real qualities of leadership are to be found in those who are willing to suffer for the sake of objectives great enough to demand their wholehearted obedience.

7. Spiritual leaders are not made by election or appointment, by men or any combination of men, nor by conferences. Only God can make them. Simply holding a position of importance does not constitute one a leader, nor do taking courses in leadership or resolving to become a leader.

8. The only method is that of qualifying to be a leader.

9. Religious position can be conferred by bishops and boards, but not spiritual authority; which is the prime essential of Godly leadership.

10. That comes, often unsought, to those who in earlier life have proved themselves worthy of it by spirituality, discipline, ability, and diligence, workers who have heeded His call.

11. Spiritual leadership is a thing of the Spirit and is conferred by God alone. When His searching eye alights on a servant who has qualified, He anoints him with his Spirit and separates them to their distinctive ministry.

“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.” (2 Chronicles 16:9)

12. Samuel Logan Brengle, a truly great spiritual leader of the Salvation Army outlined the road to spiritual authority, and leadership in these challenging words:

“It is not won by promotion but by many prayers and tears. It is attained by confession of sin, and much heart searching and humbling before God; by self surrender, a courageous and uncomplaining embracing of the cross, and by an eternal, unfaltering looking unto Jesus crucified. It is not gained by seeking great things for ourselves, but rather, like Paul, by counting those things that are gain to us as loss for Christ. That is a great price. but it must it must be unflinchingly paid by him who would be not merely a nominal but a real spiritual leader of men, a leader whose power is recognized and felt in heaven, on earth and in hell.”

13. The highest positions are reserved for those who have qualified in secret. It is that element of sovereignty that begets awe and a great humility in those to whom leadership is entrusted.

“The Church is painfully in need of leaders. I wait to hear a voice and no voice comes. I love the back seat in conference. I would always rather listen than speak, but there is no clarion voice to listen to.”