

# Principles of Leadership

#0726

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—November 6, 1964

Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee!  
E'en though it be a cross That raiseth me!  
Still all my song shall be, Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.

Though like a wanderer, Daylight all gone,  
Darkness be over me, My rest a stone;  
Yet in my dreams, I'd be Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.

There let the way appear, Steps up to heaven;  
All that Thou sendest me, In mercy given;  
Angels to beckon me Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.

Then, with my waking thoughts Bright with Thy praise,  
Out of my stony griefs Bethel I'll raise;  
So by my woes to be Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.

Or if, on joyful wing Cleaving the sky,  
Sun, moon, and stars forgot, Upward I fly,  
Still all my song shall be, Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.  
*Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, #473.*

That's what we want, isn't it, nearer to Jesus?

Well now, last week you remember in our vesper service, we found that it would be well for us if we would spend some time each day in what? Contemplation. Contemplation of what? The life of Christ.

"We should take it point by point and let the imagination vividly grasp each scene, especially the closing ones..."  
*Testimonies for the Church, Volume 4, page 374.*

And as we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our love for Him will be quickened, and our faith strengthened, and we'll be more deeply imbued with His Spirit. In other words, friends, is this one of the ways in which we're to be drawn nearer to Christ, as the girls were just singing. Is this the way? That's it, friends. As we behold, we are drawn.

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me” John 12:32.

Let us come and look. What do you say, friends?

So, tonight we’re going to gather in again the upper room with Jesus on the night of the last supper. We’re going to go to Luke the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter beginning with the 24<sup>th</sup> verse, and we’re going to get a view again of that group of men gathered around the table there at the Passover hour. This is just before Jesus washed their feet. This is *why* He washed their feet and found the experience that we shall see represented here. And He gave a lesson, and He gave it by example, of course, as well as by word.

“And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest” Luke 22:24.

You know, friends, we’ve just had an election in this country. And in all 50 states of the union, I suppose this experience has been repeated, certainly on the nationwide stage, but all the way through, men are seeking for what? The highest place. And elections are supposed to determine who gets that.

Well, the difficulty this night was there were twelve candidates, and of course, only one office. Because “the greatest,” that’s *one*, isn’t it? Yes.

“And there was...a strife among them, which of *them* should be accounted the greatest” Luke 22:24.

They were sure it was one of *them*, for Christ had chosen them, the twelve.

But the question was, “Which one of the twelve?”

He had told them on the way up to Jerusalem that all things should be fulfilled that the prophets had spoken. And of course, they had preached under Christ’s direction that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. And to them, that meant (well, you know what it meant), crowns and thrones and rulership. And of course, Jesus was to be *the* King.

And that Sunday before this Thursday night, He had allowed the multitudes to hail Him as King. He had mounted the colt and ridden into Jerusalem and received the acclamation of the multitude.

And they thought, “Well, of course, the kingdom is going to be set up any time now. This is the hour. But Jesus hasn’t yet said who was to be the prime minister. Which one will it be?”

Which one, indeed.

“And there was...” Luke 22:24.

A what?

“...a strife among them...” Luke 22:24.

“...a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest” Luke 22:24.

Now, these weren't the rabble. These weren't the mob. These weren't those who had followed Jesus afar off. These were His chosen inner circle. Oh, my friends, human nature dies hard. Doesn't it? And human principles fade out very slowly in most lives.

Well, He said unto them, these men, each one of whom was a candidate—really, if you'd passed out ballots there that night, do you know how many you would have had? How many names? Well, each one would have gotten one. That's right.

“And He said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve” Luke 22:25–26.

Various translations give that “leader” instead of “chief.” Whoever is going to be leader, let him serve.

“For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as He that serveth” Luke 22:27.

And of course, Jesus had already been demonstrating that to them all His life, and now He crowned that example by girding Himself with a towel and washing their feet, beginning at Judas, serving Peter, and finally coming to John. Having served them all, He spoke of what He'd done as an example.

I want to study it with you a little tonight, dear friends. I have several reasons. You and I need these lessons as individuals. In our class in Christian administration, we've been studying some things on leadership, and I thought this might be helpful not only to the class but to all of us.

Then, another reason I've chosen to study it this particular night—this is the time of year when in all our churches and branches, consideration will be given to nominating committees in the choosing of officers and leaders for the coming year. And I would like to have us review the lessons that Jesus has given regarding leadership. I would like to have us think of the principles that underlie all this.

In the book *Sons and Daughters of God*, page 255, I came across this little gem the other day:

“The principles of heaven are to be carried out in every family, in the discipline of every church, in every establishment, in every institution, in every school, and in

everything that shall be managed" *Sons and Daughters of God*, page 255.

Does that leave anybody out here tonight? How many of you, friends, are a part of a family, either a leader of a family or part of a family where somebody else is a leader? May I see your hands? Well, that takes in most everybody here.

How many of you are a part of a school? May I see your hands? That takes in several. How many of you are a part of an institution? May I see your hands? Yes, quite a number here. How many of you are a part of a church? May I see your hands? Yes, all right.

Well now, may I read this again:

"The principles of heaven are to be carried out in every family, in the discipline of every church, in every establishment, in every institution, in every school, and in everything that shall be managed" *Ibid*.

Now, that's why these things that we've studied here at the vesper hour are just as much for people who don't live *on* the campus as the ones that *do* live on the campus, provided they bring a tray to take it home with them, or a sack, or something like that, you understand.

It would be too bad to come to a picnic dinner and have something to eat and find that there was plenty left to take home provided someone had brought a basket or a sack to carry it home. I say it would be too bad to be in that position and not have something ready to take it home in. Did you ever find yourself in that position? Or maybe you were out in the country, and you found out there were apples free just for the taking, or peaches, or something.

You'd say, "Oh my, I wish we had some bushel baskets here, or some sacks, or something."

Well, I hope you brought along something tonight to carry home these wonderful principles. Hope you brought a pencil and paper, and at least I'm sure we've all brought eyes and ears and willing hearts. Oh, that the Spirit of God may anoint us all to learn these wonderful principles.

My point is, friends, what we're going to study tonight applies to *you*, whether you're in an institution, or simply in a home, whether you are in a school, or whether you are not. If you are a member of a family or a church, this applies to you. And it applies to you whether you're the leader or whether you're a follower.

Someone was telling about an experience where a certain university sent out, in their application blank one of the questions they asked was, "Are you a leader or do you aspire to leadership?"

Something along that line and this question came to one prospective student, and he thought about it, and very frankly, he put down, “No,” he wasn’t a leader. He was a follower. He didn’t know whether he’d be accepted.

But when the response came back, the college said that they were glad to accept him because they had had several hundred responses of leaders, and they thought there should be at least one follower.

And so, if there are any of you tonight that can’t be leaders, remember, every leader needs at least one follower. Is that right? And some leaders need more than one. So, we need a plentiful supply of both.

However, there is a relationship between the two things. I suppose you know that. There’s a relationship between the follower and the leader in God’s plan. The man that God is getting ready to *be* a leader is first a follower.

*Gospel Workers, 75:*

“They must learn to obey before they are fitted to command” *Gospel Workers*, page 75.

Learn what? To obey. Before what? Fitted to command.

Did Joshua learn that with Moses? Yes. He served Moses for 40 years. Some people would think that was a long apprenticeship. Some people would think 40 months was a *very* long apprenticeship. Forty minutes would be long enough for some. But with Joshua, it was 40 years (think of it!) serving Moses.

Did he turn out a good leader? Why yes, friends. He made a wonderful record. Read the book of Joshua. He had a wonderful training.

And there was Elisha. He served as a trainee under whom? Elijah, yes. How long, we don’t know, but it was quite a period of time.

And some of his work was very menial because afterward, after Elijah had gone to heaven and they were looking for a prophet, somebody said, “Well, there’s at least Elisha here, and he used to” do what? “Pour water on the hands of Elijah.”

So they said, “Send for him.”

And he did the work, thank the Lord. There’s one thing about helping a leader, friends. The more you help him, the closer you get to him, and the more you can learn, whether it’s in welding, or medical work, or farm work, or Bible work, or whatever it is.

So, if you are one of the followers now, it may be that God has you in training to be a leader, to be a *great* leader (that could be!), whether you’re a 14-year-old boy, or a 40-year-old man, or whatever your age or position. God has His eye on you, and He knows what you can be.

You know, one of the greatest joys that I have in my life—it's one of the compensations for getting older. You notice I didn't say "getting old." I just said, "getting older." But it is one of the compensations for getting older. One of the great joys is to see men and women that I have helped to train develop into leadership. And some of them, I'm happy to tell you, are doing a greater work than I could ever do. But I get the joy of seeing what God has helped them to be. Isn't that a joy, dear friends? Yes.

And so, as I say, remember God has His eye on you. And whether you're a leader now or a follower, you may *be* a leader. And remember, we must learn first to what? Obey, before we are fitted to command. All right.

Now, let's go back to these disciples in the upper room who are wondering about the election, wondering who's going to be the chief, the leader, under Christ, of course, but above *them* all. Who will it be?

Will it be Judas? Well, who thought that Judas would make a good leader? Judas did, yes. Yes, Judas did. Would it be Peter? Did anybody think Peter would make a good leader? Peter did, yes. What about James and John? Well, they had already announced their candidacy. They had sort of jumped the gun a bit, much to the dismay and anger of the other ten, you remember. They had even gotten their mother to lobby for them.

I wonder why Jesus didn't just kick them all out and start over again with some decent people. You know, there are some people who think that that's what God ought to do today.

Ah friends, there are two reasons God didn't do that. In the first place, He couldn't find any better. And you may wonder why God couldn't. You may think you can. You just try. But in the second place, God loved those men.

“...Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end” John 13:1.

And in the third place, He looked ahead and saw Pentecost. And He saw those twelve men, save for the lost Judas, He saw those twelve men standing there before that vast multitude and witnessing in a way that men had never witnessed in all the years of human history, and with results such as never before had appeared. He saw *those* men, those very men under the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Oh, friend, how powerful are the motives of faith and hope and love, and Jesus had them all. He had faith in what God would do for and through those men. He had hope, bright hope, and He had love. And if God can give *us* faith and hope and love, we can work with men who are as faulty as those men were and can look ahead and see them doing exploits for God.

Now, there are three things in Christ's efforts to open the eyes of those men that I want you to think of tonight and three things that will be a lesson to us. The first is the nature of the kingdom, the nature of the kingdom. It is God's kingdom and not man's, not man's.

Now, before Christ had taught His disciples to pray that prayer which we've all been taught to pray—let's say together the first part of it:

“... Our Father Which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come...” Matthew 6:9–10.

Whose kingdom? God's kingdom. It's not the kingdom of man, friends. It's the kingdom of God. And therefore, God is the Ruler, not man. This is not democracy. This is theocracy. You know the difference, don't you? Democracy is the government of the people. And it may be all very well for human governments today, with things as they are. But God's government is a theocracy, and He is the King. He is the Ruler.

“...Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” Matthew 6:10.

If the disciples had understood that, friends, fully, they wouldn't have been arguing about which of them was going to be the greatest. They would have already known that God was the greatest. Well, they did, in a sense. But oh, as I say, if they had really understood the nature of the kingdom, that this was God's government, they would have been so happy for the tiniest place in it that their hearts would have been filled with joy in that. And also, they would have been perfectly willing to leave all the matter of position with God.

But they, of course, we're thinking of a human government. They were thinking of generals and captains, of prime ministers and treasurers, and they misunderstood. God's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom.

Turn over to Luke the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter verses 20–21. It's in the hearts of men.

“And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation”  
Luke 17:20.

The margin says “with outward show.”

“Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is...” Luke 17:21.

Where?

“...within you” Luke 17:21.

And if the disciples had understood that, they wouldn't have been arguing among themselves. They would have been seeking each for himself a spiritual experience with God. Is that right? That's right.

Now, let us go back, friends, to Luke 22, and I want you to notice that in Christ's effort to explain the nature of the kingdom, He shows that it's a government of love and not of force. And we read it here, after He saw the strife, He pointed out that the Gentiles, the heathen, they "exercise lordship," they "exercise authority."

And by the way, friends, isn't it an exercise? The clinched fist, the shoe that's pounded up and down on the table, the raising of the voice, the barking of the military officer, they "exercise authority." Indeed, they do.

"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" Luke 22:26.

So, the leader is to be the leader in what? Serving, serving.

"Minister," you know that word "minister," we use it today, but let's not forget what it means. The Spirit of Prophecy says the work of a minister is to? Is to minister. We have a book called *The Ministry of Healing*. We're all in a sense to be ministers.

"We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of medical missionary work" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 7*, page 62.

And the One who knows has told us that every minister and Bible worker should be as well prepared by training and experience to meet the needs of the body as to heal the sin-sick soul.

It's one of those tremendous statements in the Spirit of Prophecy, friends, which I cannot fully explain, but I believe it even if I can't explain it. It gives us a goal that we should ever seek to attain. God wants every one of us to be ministers, hunting for people to help.

And if you're a leader, why you're supposed to be right out there in front helping more people in more ways. That's what Jesus did. And as I say, if the disciples had understood that, they wouldn't have been trying to have an election there. They'd have just gotten busy and gotten the basin and the towel, for the opportunity to serve was there, wasn't it? Yes. They didn't need to have an election to do *that*, dear friends. No, no, not at all. And neither did they need to have any strife.

Do you suppose, friends, if Peter had reached for the pan that John would have grabbed it out of his hands? I think not.

Do you think if Matthew had taken the pitcher and poured the water that Thomas would have said, "No, sir. Can't do that. I'm going to do that"?

I don't think so, no. Those things are usually not grabbed out of the hand. Those opportunities are usually not the occasion of strife. It's what men think of as



the honorable thing, you know, the rewards, the prizes, and that all comes from false conceptions which we haven't time to spend a great deal of time on tonight.

But oh, friends, remember, Jesus sought to get those ideas clear out of the minds of His disciples, for He knew that they could never be leaders in His kingdom until they understood *what* the kingdom was and what it was about. It was a kingdom of love for service, not a kingdom of force for authority and selfish human advantage.

And these principles—what did I read? They're to be carried out:

“...in every family, in... every church, in every... institution, in every school, and in everything that shall be managed” *Sons and Daughters of God*, page 255.

That's right, friends, a government of love for service, not a government of force in order to exercise authority and human power to get what I want.

Well now, listen. When the nominating committee meets, if they ask me to be Sabbath school superintendent, isn't that so I can get a chance to do what I want?

“I hope they ask me because I know how it ought to be done, and I'm just hoping they're going to ask me.”

Is that it? Is that it?

“Oh, I hope they'll ask me to be elder because that has more power than the Sabbath school superintendent. And I think there are some things that need to be straightened out. And if I could just get to be elder...”

Isn't it interesting the ideas of what leadership is? Yes. Well, that leads me to the next point, and that is the work of leaders. And my dear friends, it's to lead and not drive, to lead and not drive.

Let's go to John 10 on that, 2<sup>nd</sup> verse beginning. It's right here in these verses, but I want to take another look at it from another parable. Jesus is talking about Himself.

“But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and...”  
John 10:2–3.

What's the next word?

“...leadeth them...” John 10:3.

“...leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice” John 10:3–4.

Now, I know there are some other ways of doing things with sheep. I've been out in the west, Utah, Idaho, Arizona, some of those places where they have thousands and thousands of sheep. But if I may say, and it's more than a difference in words, friends, they have not shepherds but sheepherders. And there's one thing that a sheepherder needs. He needs some good dogs. He surely does, for he drives.

And I shall not criticize the sheepherders of the west. I shall simply say that the shepherds of the east that Jesus is talking about were something different. That we must understand. And it is possible in family government, in church government, in institutional leadership to be a sheepherder instead of a shepherd. It is possible to drive, or at least to seek to drive. By the way, if you're going to succeed in it, you need several good dogs. If you don't have them, you'll make a fool of yourself. And if you do, all you'll do is make a sheepherder of yourself.

But oh, to be a shepherd, to lead and not drive. The sheep follow the shepherd, Jesus says, because they hear his voice. He goes where? Before them, and they follow. I wonder why.

Well, the 5<sup>th</sup> verse says:

"And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers" John 10:5.

Again, the 11<sup>th</sup> verse:

"I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep" John 10:11.

Ah, that's it, friends. The shepherd gives his life. It may be like Christ, actually give it in sacrifice. But oh, Christ gave it in service before he ever gave it on the cross, didn't He? It wasn't just at Calvary that He laid down His life for His sheep. All the way through, day by day, as He was with those disciples and with the multitude, He was pouring out His life for them. And those that were His sheep recognized that love, and they were drawn to Him, and they wanted to be where? With Him, and they wanted to go where He went.

Even Judas, poor, selfish, covetous Judas came and said:

"...Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest"  
Matthew 8:19.

Now, it's true he had some selfish motives, but it's also true that deep down in his heart, he had a need and a sense of need, and he hoped that that need would be met by connecting himself with Jesus. And he got so close to getting that need met that when Christ was bathing those soiled feet, he *almost* yielded and went along with the Lord. Oh, the power of loving leadership, love that lays down its life.

But how different it is from the barking sergeant that says, "Do this."

“Why?”

“That’s the order. Do it.”

And I don’t mean by that that Christ was lacking in authority.

After He had washed their feet at this last supper and taken His garments and was sat down again, He said, “Do you understand what I have done to you?”

“Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am”  
John 13:13.

Jesus didn’t resign His position when He washed their feet. He didn’t cease to give the directions because He had served them, not at all. And what we’re studying tonight isn’t a weak, sentimental lack of leadership. Not so, brethren. A leader must be strong, aggressive, forward-thinking and forward-moving. But he leads, not drives.

I like the way it’s put here in a word to teachers, *Volume 5*, 653:

“Ever try to lead them, but never drive them” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 653.

By the way, every word here is meaningful.

“Ever *try* to lead them...” *Ibid.*

Why doesn’t it just say “lead them”? Well, my dear friends, because when you’re dealing with human beings, they have a what? A choice. Jesus *tried* to lead His disciples. He finally got there with eleven out of the twelve. Up in Heaven He *tried* to lead the heavenly host, and one-third of them did what? Revolted, rebelled. So, the words, I say, are apt:

“Ever *try* to lead them...” *Ibid.*

May I pause on this point and say friends being elected or appointed to an office does not make you a leader. It merely gives you an opportunity to exercise your gift. That’s all.

I can illustrate it in this way. Any of you, perhaps, before you found something better to do, might have spent time in hunting or fishing. Well, you’re supposed to get a hunting license. Did they furnish the deer or the quail when you got a license? Oh, no.

“Well,” you say, “what good is it if I can’t find the deer or the quail and get them?”

Well, indeed, what good is it? But nevertheless, when you get a license, all that means is that you can go try now and see what you can do. Is that right? Yes.

And if you're a parent, that's your license to try your skill in leadership. If you're a Sabbath school teacher or a Sabbath school superintendent, that's your license to try your skill. If you're a foreman or a superintendent, if you're an elder, whatever it is, in an institution, in a factory, in the home, or in the school, in the church or wherever, a position of responsibility small or great is just like a license. Remember, it doesn't give you success at all. And it doesn't mean that you automatically succeed.

And if you *try* to do what you've seen somebody else do, remember Saul's armor may not fit young David. Better be sure you know the agencies, the facilities that God wants you to use. Very well.

The shepherd draws by love. He calls and the sheep follow. They're his sheep. He gives his life for them.

“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto,  
but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many”  
Matthew 20:28.

All right. Now, number three. Who decides who shall be the leader? That's the question. In God's government, whether in Heaven, or in earth, whether in the family, or the institution, the school, or the church, who decides who shall be the leader? Who decides who shall be elder? Who decides who shall be superintendent? Who decides who shall be the teacher? Who decides who shall be the leader? Who decides who shall be a follower?

I say to you, friends, the answer is very simple. God decides, for this is a theocracy. If this were a democracy, the people would decide.

You say, “But don't we have an election and vote?”

Yes, we do. And right there, right there lies the danger. And right on this point, somebody here tonight's going to get a thought. All of you now, study and weigh it very carefully. Why do we vote in a church election? Let me tell you first why we don't—I mean the reason that is *not* the reason. It is *not* to find out who the people want.

“Oh,” you say, “what other reason could there be?”

Well now, when they had the election here last Tuesday, it was to find out who the people wanted for president and who the people wanted for senator. Is that right? But listen. When we have the election in the church, it's not to find out who the people want. And if you're on a nominating committee and don't understand that, you'll make a botched job of your work.

The purpose of the election is not to find out who the people want at all. It's to find out who God wants. That's all. That's its only purpose. And the fact that God has let His people have a part, all of them, in finding out who it is should never get

them to usurp God's place. That's the spirit of antichrist. That's the spirit of the papacy. And we're not to worship the beast, or his image, anything like him.

Turn over to Acts the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter, the 24<sup>th</sup> verse. Let's look at something very interesting. This is 50 days later, not quite 50, after this experience in the upper room. The disciples had learned some things by this time. And after they'd had some seasons of prayer and confession and humiliation and had gotten close together in love and unity, Peter one day recognized that there was a gap, there was a lack in the total leadership.

I think if they hadn't gotten hold of this Spirit, they would have been perfectly willing to have one less candidate for the chief, you understand, with Judas out. But no, they recognized that Christ had chosen twelve, and they needed twelve, and so they set about to find out who that twelfth one would be. And they talked it over and studied, and then what did they do?

"And they..." Acts 1:24.

What?

"...prayed and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two..." Acts 1:24.

That is, which one.

"...Thou hast chosen" Acts 1:24.

Oh, dear ones, every one of you, whether you serve in an institution, or in a church, or in any capacity in helping to decide who shall serve in any position, high or low, take this verse, commit it to memory, know it by heart and know it *in* your heart.

What did they do? They got down on their knees and said, "Oh Lord, You know the hearts of all men."

That is to say, "We *don't* know their hearts."

And second, "Lord, *You* know which one You've already chosen. Now, Lord, show us."

Oh, I have been made sad on more than one occasion in seeing committees get together and rush into a nomination with a perfunctory prayer, sometimes not even pausing to get on their knees, just get around a table and bow the head, have prayer, and "Let's get into business," start passing out slips or discussing.

Oh, dear ones, this is God's government, not man's. This is *not* a democracy. This is a theocracy. And men have a part in it, not to find out who *they* want, not to find out who *people* want. They have a part in it because God in His great love longs to include His children, all of them, one way or another, in helping to find out His will, what He has already chosen.

That simplifies the whole matter, but it exalts the whole matter. Doesn't it, friends? Oh, with what fear and trembling on the one hand and yet with what glad confidence on the other should we come to every opportunity for choosing men and women to hold positions, whether in the institution, the school, the church, or wherever. What do you say, brethren?

Now, I want you to notice a comment of the Spirit of Prophecy on this statement in Acts 1. This is *Volume 9*, 264:

"From these Scriptures we learn that the Lord has certain men to fill certain positions" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9*, page 264.

Has He got a place for you, Brother Wilson? Has He got a place for you, Brother Miller? Has He got a place for you, Brother Barker? Well, whose place do you want? Do you want my place? Why, no, you don't want my place.

The dear man that trained me in the ministry, I've heard him say a hundred times, I think, "I covet no man's position."

And brother, I hope you never get into another man's position because you couldn't fill it anyway. You may think of it as higher than yours or lower than yours. It doesn't make any difference whether it's higher or lower or across the aisle. You can't fill another man's position. There's only one man's place you can fill, and that's yours. And you'll have to have God to help you fill that.

The difficulty with Lucifer was that he did what? He coveted what? Somebody else's position. And that's where sin started. Don't covet what's your neighbor's.

And do you know what the other half of that wonderful truth is? And that's this: nobody can *take* your position. That's right. Nobody can take it away from you. Of course, *you* could. Lucifer left his position, and one-third of them got sullen and sulky and left with him, you remember. That's one way to lose your position.

But if you're willing to be restful in God's hands and just do what God wants you to do, it's up to God to get you in the right position and up to God to keep you there. You never have to fight for it.

We once had a leader among us that had been a leader a long time. The time came when his brethren thought that the Lord wanted a change. But oh my, it was very hard for him. And he went and prayed about it, and he said the Lord showed him what he ought to do. And he battled right down to the end.

But you know, after it was all over, and his own friends had to go up and say to him, "Brother, that's enough. Put somebody else in," you know, it wasn't very long before that dear brother was just happy and glad to devote the closing years of his life to holding up the hands of other men that God had put in positions of the larger leadership.

Oh brethren, I tell you truly, God's government is a wonderful government.

All right. Now, let me read this again:

"From these Scriptures we learn that the Lord has certain men to fill certain positions. God will teach His people to move carefully and to make wise choice of men who will not betray sacred trusts...We are to present every case before God and in earnest prayer ask Him to choose for us"  
*Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, page 264.*

Isn't that wonderful, friends? So, who chooses the leaders in God's work? God does. Does He use people to help Him find out? Yes. I say to help Him find out, I mean does He use people to help His people find out? He already knows, of course. And that's what committees are for, and that's all they're for.

Now, let me give you another interesting principle in choosing leaders. This is from the book *Testimonies to Ministers*, 342–343:

"The president of the General Conference should have the privilege of deciding who shall stand by his side as counselors... It was his privilege at least to express his preference as to the men who should be his counselors"  
*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pages 342–343.

Every leader, if he's leading very much, he needs counselors, helpers, associates. Now, in the light of this statement, *who* should a nominating committee, whether it's in a church, or a conference, or an institution, who should (ordinarily, at least), who should that nominating committee concern itself first with? Who? The overall leader. Isn't that right? That's right.

And then what? Why then, he ought to be called in and given an opportunity to share in at least suggesting what? Helpers, associates. That's a wonderful principle, friends. Do you see why that is? Why, it's very simple. If the brethren should ask me to be Sabbath school superintendent, I'd like to have at least an opportunity to suggest who I think would be good assistant superintendents and secretaries. Wouldn't you, if you were going to be superintendent? Sure. It recognizes this principle that God has arranged certain people to work together in various capacities.

Now, this doesn't mean that he's to be a dictator, no, but it says that he should at least have the opportunity to express what?

"...His preference as to the men who should be his counselors" *Ibid.*

Oh, I'm glad for these principles. Aren't you?

Volume 5, page 617:

“It would be well for all our ministers to give heed to these words...” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, page 617.*

The words of Paul to Titus had just been quoted, as you’ll see when you read the page.

“...and not to hurry men into office without due consideration and much prayer that God would designate by His Holy Spirit whom He will accept” *Ibid.*

Oh, do you mean that it might be possible for a committee, or even ministers, to select certain men for elders and deacons, and the Lord wouldn’t accept them? That’s what this says. Well, I wonder how you’d ever know the difference. Some people wouldn’t, friends. They’d rush right on all through the year and never know whether God had accepted them or not. God pity us as a church and as individuals, friends when we’re that blind and deaf and dumb. Oh friends, let us sense this fact, that unless God anoints men with His Spirit all our elections don’t mean a thing. All they do is muddy the waters.

This says we’re to, with much prayer, find out who God will accept. We’d better ask Him. What do you say? And listen, brother. If *you* think that God has called *you* to be a leader in a higher or lower capacity, remember this. God will have ways of letting His people know it. And if not, you’d better just wait on God and don’t let it worry you because, listen. If God couldn’t get the brethren to see that He wanted you to be leader, how in the world could *you* ever get them to see it, you see. So, leave the problem with God.

Of course, it could be that you were the one that was mistaken and not the brethren. But even if you were right, God has problems on His hands, too, doesn’t He? God selected Saul. And for a while, Saul did beautifully. Then, he got lifted up, puffed up, bigoted, stubborn, rebellious. And God set him aside.

But for a long time, he continued to be king. I wonder why. God was getting another man ready, but it took a long time. What was his name? David, yes.

And I suppose there were people in Israel that said, “Why can’t we have David now? Why do we have to put up with that man up there that’s a maniac half the time?”

Was he? Yes. Well, why indeed? Simply this, friends. David wasn’t ready. That’s all. David wasn’t ready. It took all those years of fleeing before Saul to get David ready, didn’t it? And what are we told?

“God permits men to be placed in positions of responsibility. When they err, He has power to correct or to remove them. We should be careful not to take into our hands the work of judging that belongs to God”  
*Ministry of Healing, page 484.*



Well, I see my time is up, friends. I trust that God has blessed and will bless as we think, first of all, of the nature of the kingdom. This is God's government, not man's, whether in the family, the school, the church, or wherever. This is God's government. The nature is a spiritual kingdom, not one of this world. It is based on love, not on force.

Second, what is the work of the leader? To drive? To lead. Through what? Through love, not force.

And then, third, how are leaders chosen? Who selects them? God. Does He use people to help find out? To help find out whom He has already chosen. And churches, if they understand that, will be crying to God for wisdom. Nominating committees as they study the thing and weigh the matter, instead of hunting to see what the people want, they'll be looking heavenward to find out who God wants. And God will hear their prayers, and we can have a wonderful time in working together. This is true in the home, the institution, the church and wherever.

Shall we bow our heads?

Dear Lord, we thank Thee with all our hearts for a little heaven below to go to Heaven in.

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" Matthew 6:10.

For Jesus' sake, amen.

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