

10 ATTRIBUTES OF A BIBLICAL LEADER

“I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

When leading others, following biblical principles is perhaps the most important thing a leader should aspire to. Although it doesn't always appear to make sense to us, if we follow God's ways instead of our ways, we will have a more effective ministry. As Jesus' words above teach us, **“apart from God we can do nothing.”** When we rely on our own intuition, talent, or experience, we often end up in places that not only cause us problems or harm, but likely dishonor God as well. We may possess tremendous leadership ability, but if it is not based on the Word of God, then we will likely lead our followers in the wrong direction.

A Christian leader, therefore, is someone who stays connected to God by reading and applying His Word, who relies on the Holy Spirit working in and through them, and leads others into a deeper walk with Jesus. The Bible provides us with many examples of leaders who demonstrated effective leadership skills. A review of Scripture reveals that there are **10 attributes** that an effective leader exhibits:

1. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER MUST BE A VISIONARY

The Bible says in **Proverbs 29:18**, **“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”** A leader must look to God for the vision or goal He wants them to achieve. Without a vision or a goal to work towards, the leader is not likely to achieve anything significant for the Kingdom. A leader must be able to communicate and articulate that vision in a way that inspires and encourages others to come along with them.

2. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER MUST BE MISSION-MINDED

An effective leader must remain concerned with reaching non-believers. No matter what ministry one is leading, it is imperative that the leader continues to reach out to those who need to know Jesus and receive His free gift of grace (**Matthew 28:19**).

3. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER MUST BE PASSIONATE

As a leader you must care deeply about your ministry and be committed to it. Your passion for the ministry will encourage others and enable you to succeed when obstacles arise. And when these times occur, the only thing that will get you through them, besides the Lord, is your passion (**Proverbs 16:3**).

4. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER MUST BE SPIRIT-LED

The effective leader knows that ministry is a partnership between the leader and God. God gives us our part to do and then He does His part. But we can never work alone or trust in our own power or abilities. An effective leader also knows that they must seek God first in all they do to make sure they are in the center of His will and purpose for their ministry.

5. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER MUST BE A SERVANT

As our Lord and Savior **“did not come to be served, but to serve” (Matthew 20:28)**, we too must serve and not be served. This runs contrary to what the world teaches leaders to be. So, a leader is called to serve his followers and not be served by them. Consequently, a servant leader helps his followers grow and succeed.

6. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER MUST BE FOCUSED

A leader often has many responsibilities and duties to carry out in their position. It is critical for a leader to avoid being distracted by issues unrelated to their vision and mission. When your vision and mission are clear it is easier to stay focused on the goals God wants you to accomplish for the Kingdom.

7. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER MUST BE COURAGEOUS

Courage is the ability to stick to one’s beliefs when they are under attack, and to lead with conviction. The world is full of leaders who pander to the wishes of their followers, which is not really true leadership at all. A leader with courage demonstrates that they are willing to step out in faith, and to rely on God to equip them and give them the strength they need to do what God has called them to do.

8. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER MUST BE TRUSTING

A leader trusts in God, who alone is faithful and true. It can be said that faith is a measure of how much you trust God. So an effective leader puts his trust in God and God alone, and relies on Him to do what His Word has promised. **“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5).**

9. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER MUST BE PREPARED

A leader must expect the unexpected and be prepared to lead, manage or minister as needed in any given situation. Preparation takes sacrifice and planning ahead. Virtually all successful leaders have had a major crisis that required their leadership, and being prepared for that situation is what allowed them to be successful **(2 Timothy 4:2).**

10. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER MUST BE OPPORTUNISTIC

Successful leaders are those leaders who are able to navigate through difficult times as well as take advantage of new opportunities. Leaders should take advantage of the opportunities God gives them today and not just plan for the future or stay stuck in the past. In order to do that a leader must be prepared and alert for those opportunities. Success happens where opportunity meets preparation **(1 Peter 3:15).**

While this list is not exhaustive, it does provide a good foundation for the attributes a Biblical leader should pursue.