



# **LEADERSHIP** **MOSAIC**

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**5 LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES  
FOR MINISTRY & EVERYDAY LIFE**

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**DANIEL MONTGOMERY**  
WITH JARED KENNEDY

“Leader, this book is a deep, transforming well. Draw from it and drink the water of divine wisdom. Dive in, splash around, drink again, swallow slowly, and savor. Daniel Montgomery and Jared Kennedy don’t offer you their collected leadership wisdom—they offer you your Lord. He is the water that not only quenches a leader’s thirst but also quiets his heart and transforms the way he leads. I wish I had this book forty years ago!”

**Paul David Tripp**, President, Paul Tripp Ministries; author, *Dangerous Calling*

“*Leadership Mosaic* is easily the most stimulating book I’ve read on leadership in the past ten years. What grabbed my attention and heart the most was Daniel Montgomery’s commitment to ground leadership culture in the dynamic life and beauty of the Trinity. To acknowledge that each of us has been made in the image of God is to affirm that *we* have been made in the image of God—not just individually but collectively as the people of God. Revealing our God as leaders is way more important than simply delivering our product. Thank you, Daniel, once again, for turning my thoughts heavenward.”

**Scotty Smith**, Teacher in Residence, West End Community Church, Nashville, Tennessee

“I’ve interviewed thousands of pastors over the years and know that Daniel Montgomery is a rare find. *Leadership Mosaic* reflects Daniel’s unique combination of artistic and intuitive talent with systematic thinking. Reading this book will expand your leadership and give you a system for constant growth.”

**William Vanderbloemen**, CEO and President, The Vanderbloemen Search Group; author, *Next: Pastoral Succession That Works*

“I’ve been in some form of leadership in the local church for almost twenty years, but I’ve often wondered if I was ‘doing it right.’ What makes a godly leader effective? Daniel Montgomery helps us answer that question with perceptiveness and nuance. Writing from a place of vulnerability and honesty, he offers hard-won leadership insights, gleaned from both wins and losses across a sustained season of ministry. And his answer makes room for leaders of all kinds to recognize and effectively deploy their unique gifts in service to the church.”

**Jen Wilkin**, author, *Women of the Word* and *None Like Him*

“Daniel Montgomery is a leader of great ability and theological conviction. For over a decade he has faithfully led Sojourn Community Church and the Sojourn Network of churches planting other churches. *Leadership Mosaic* is a careful and compelling portrait of leadership built on doctrinal principle. This book is a much-needed resource for evangelical leaders and an articulate call to biblical leadership.”

**R. Albert Mohler Jr.**, President, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

“Books, both secular and religious, on leadership principles and practices abound. Christian leaders are searching for help in leading their churches and the teams that work in them toward successful ministry. Most of the books can be categorized as ‘somewhat helpful’—you know, the sort of thing that CEOs of corporations first learned in their MBA classes. But *Leadership Mosaic* is different. Taking the paradigm of the Trinity, Montgomery has crafted a truly God-centered model of leadership based on the love, mutual respect, submission, and unity found among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as they work as one to bring about the salvation of souls and the glorification of one another. I’m really thankful for this book and hope that it will foster a revival of unified, other-centered ministry in our churches.”

**Elyse Fitzpatrick**, author, *Counsel from the Cross*

“*Leadership Mosaic* is a creative and challenging book about leadership and life. Author Daniel Montgomery connects leaders and their leadership to our great eternal God. Montgomery not only helps us understand leadership, but also shows us how to lead in this critical hour in the church and in America. If you want to grow in your life and as a leader, then read this book. It is worth sharing with your friends and colleagues!”

**Ronnie Floyd**, Senior Pastor, Cross Church, Springdale, Arkansas

“Have you ever considered how the Trinity relates to leadership? I hadn’t—until now. Montgomery takes us on a theological journey into leadership that both challenges and inspires. He helps us identify the type of leaders we are, some of our pitfalls, and the beauty in the way God has made each of us for his glory. This book envisions holistic leaders who embody each of the aspects of leadership while also embracing our differences so we might be a beautiful mosaic.”

**Trillia Newbell**, author, *Fear and Faith* and *United: Captured by God’s Vision for Diversity*

“In *Leadership Mosaic*, Montgomery calls us to leadership that is simultaneously convictional, creative, courageous, collaborative, and contemplative. No small order, to be sure. But unlike other paradigms that rely on our will, charisma, or natural giftedness, Montgomery calls us outside ourselves to a vision of leadership that reflects the nature of the triune God. If you’re looking for gimmicks or magic formulas, move along. This is nothing less than spiritual formation. Nothing less than being transformed into the image of Christ himself.”

**Hannah Anderson**, author, *Made for More: An Invitation to Live in God’s Image* and *Humble Roots: How Humility Grounds and Nourishes Your Soul*

“*Leadership Mosaic* shines a light on key insights for leading in a manner that honors Christ above all. By making the practice of leadership a theological issue, this book makes the ‘how’ of leading an opportunity to spotlight the beauty of God as Trinity. I am confident that this book will not only improve the way we lead our churches, families, and organizations, but also shape our hearts for the glory of God.”

**Kevin Peck**, Lead Pastor, The Austin Stone Community Church, Austin, Texas; coauthor, *Designed to Lead*

“In *Leadership Mosaic*, Daniel Montgomery and Jared Kennedy provide a top-notch Christian leadership resource that builds its case on the nature and character of God, not selected proof texts from a few Scriptures. This book is a gift to the church and its leaders.”

**Ed Stetzer**, President, LifeWay Research; author, *Subversive*

“Writing from his unbounded enthusiasm, creative clarity, and doctrinal convictions, Montgomery connects Trinitarian theology to leadership in a way that makes sense, makes disciples, and makes a difference. If you’re aspiring to leadership or looking to improve your leadership, the next step is in your hands!”

**Dave Harvey**, Executive Director, Sojourn Network; Founder, AmICalled.com

“Using a fivefold leadership model grounded in the doctrine of the Trinity, *Leadership Mosaic* helps us connect theology and practice. I’m grateful for the ways this book has challenged my paradigm of leadership, and I’m confident it will do the same for you.”

**Bob Thune**, Lead Pastor, Coram Deo Church, Omaha, Nebraska

“Christian leadership is a topic jumbled with a cacophony of competing voices, each one claiming to have found the key that everyone else has missed. In *Leadership Mosaic*, Daniel Montgomery and Jared Kennedy avoid such overblown claims and speak with clarity, calmness, and grace. They don’t pretend to offer any magical keys to leadership. Instead, they trace the complex contours of a wisdom that the triune God has woven into his creation and exemplified supremely in Jesus Christ. The result is a settled and substantive exploration of leadership to which you will return again and again.”

**Timothy Paul Jones**, Associate Vice President for the Global Campus,  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

“Combining a theology of leadership with practical ways to understand more of yourself as a leader, *Leadership Mosaic* helps us identify the complex issues facing Christian leaders, orders them into helpful categories, and offers the resources and ideas necessary to learn how to implement different leadership styles in your ministry. This book will make you think deeply, and it will help you lead effectively.”

**Kyle Idleman**, Pastor, Southeast Christian Church, Louisville,  
Kentucky; author, *Not a Fan*

# LEADERSHIP MOSAIC

5 LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES FOR MINISTRY  
AND EVERYDAY LIFE

DANIEL MONTGOMERY

WITH JARED KENNEDY

FOREWORD BY RUSSELL MOORE

 **CROSSWAY®**  
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To

Mr. K., a sixth-grade teacher  
who inspired a wild child.

My mother,  
who welcomed a prodigal home.

Ed Stetzer, who gambled on  
a twenty-four-year-old church planter.

Rich Plass, who helped a desperate pastor  
find his first love again.

The pastors of Sojourn and Sojourn Network,  
who have made it all worth it.





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# FOREWORD



Most of the leaders I know face one of two temptations. Some leaders are tempted toward a kind of reckless confidence. They see their power as inhering within some quality that makes them special. This can be beneficial in some ways, fighting back the paralysis that accompanies fear. But it comes at the cost of a lack of accountability and community. This sort of leader grows more and more prideful, and more and more isolated, until he or she falls.

Some leaders are tempted toward a lack of confidence. These leaders constantly compare themselves with others who they feel have more natural talent or seem to have everything together. Seeing this, the confidence-lacking leaders believe themselves to be imposters, making things up as they go along, fearful of ever being exposed as not quite the experts they seem to be. This can sometimes be beneficial too, keeping organization-compromising risks from happening. But, again, the cost is too high. These leaders typically operate out of fear and risk aversion, which lead to paralysis.

Most of us find ourselves, at some point or another, in both of these categories. That's why most of us, whatever we are called to lead, need some wise counsel when it comes to leadership. And that's why I'm grateful for this book, written by two men who don't just know the theory of Christian leadership but also have modeled it in remarkable ways.

*Leadership Mosaic* is a look at how the gospel and biblical theology provide us with five reliable principles of leadership. These principles are founded on scriptural truth and are illuminated with insights from theologians, leadership experts, and social scientists. As you read, you will see yourself and the challenges you face, along with practical wisdom about how to improve your leadership. You will also recognize that, whatever your situation, you are not alone.

Each chapter comes with a set of exercises at the end, small tasks to help you absorb and put into practice the content. This key feature of the book is designed to build habits, starting small, in ways that can grow into a life of renewed leadership.

This book can benefit Christian leaders of all sorts. Some lead, as these authors do, in churches and networks. Others lead in workplaces or in their homes or in community organizations or on mission fields. This book presents practical wisdom that can be applied in a variety of settings and contexts. The ultimate goal, though, is not leadership for the sake of leadership. It is to see leaders conformed into the image of Christ Jesus, the one who taught us to lead by serving, and to serve by leading.

Russell Moore



The mind of the Christian is not satisfied until every form of existence has been referred to the Triune God and until the confession of the Trinity has received the place of prominence in our thought and life.

**Herman Bavinck, *The Doctrine of God***

The triune nature of this God affects everything from how we listen to music to how we pray: it makes for happier marriages, warmer dealings with others, better church life; it gives Christians assurance, shapes holiness and transforms the very way we look at the world around us. No exaggeration: the knowledge of this God turns our lives around. Spooky, huh? There is, of course, that major obstacle in our way: that the Trinity is seen not as a solution and a delight, but as an oddity and a problem.

**Michael Reeves, *Delighting in the Trinity***

Christians believe that the Triune God created the world, and that should have some implications for the kind of world that it is. Many Christians have acknowledged the perichoretic shape of the life of the Trinity, and that in particular should leave some trace in the world that has been made and remade by the Father, Son, and Spirit.

**Peter J. Leithart, *Traces of the Trinity***

As we take up our journey on the Sea of Complexity, we find that organizations also can no longer be considered as machines built component by component and then reliably and predictably “run” by talented managers. Instead, we find that organizations themselves are agents in the quantum world where they are understood best as organisms that reside within a complex web of internal and external relationships with myriad other agents.

**Jack Burns, *Organizational Leadership***

## *Introduction*

# THE COMPLEXITY OF LEADERSHIP AND OUR TRIUNE GOD



**Summary:** *There is a leadership crisis in the local church. When we look around, we see different visions of leadership competing for our devotion. We set these visions against one another—the convictional theologian against the soulful contemplative, for example. We choose the one we think is best. Living from insecurity, we exaggerate our favorite leadership image, and it crowds out the others. God didn't intend this. If we step back, we can see that God's own leadership is a beautiful mosaic. God's own complexity is the most appropriate model for leadership in a complex world. This book unpacks a fivefold vision of leadership rooted in the Trinity. You will see that God's redemptive leadership in the world is the basis for understanding the nature, purpose, and eternal impact of our own leadership.*

It had been a busy, fun week in Chicago.<sup>1</sup> My wife, Mandy, wanted just one more thing before we left town—cupcakes. I ran out to fulfill her



last wish before our exciting time in the city came to a close. She saw sacrificial valor. I saw an opportunity to go for a run in the early morning haze and bustle of downtown. I wanted to run along the lake, clear my head, and burn off a hearty dinner from the night before.

The run began well. I found the lake, and its breeze left a gentle mist on my face as I paced myself. Then I turned back to find coffee—perhaps the greatest of coffees—Intelligentsia. With my coffee in hand, I cautiously sipped and ran.

As I write this now, it seems ludicrous. Why run with coffee? It was not the best idea. But with caffeine coursing through my veins, I headed for the cupcakes. I ran and ran. Google Maps shouted directions. *Turn here. Turn there. Dodge taxi. Avoid nicely dressed folks who don't want a splash of my coffee.*

Then I realized the light overhead was gone. I was running through a tunnel. This can't be right. Wait? Where am I? How far is this cupcake boutique? Surely Google knows. I stopped. I tried to recalibrate my map app. My mind wandered as I paced, trying to find my bearings and strength. But once cell-tower reception was back, I found myself checking the fiber content on the cupcakes. Should my wife and I split one *or* should I get two for all this effort? Distracted, I tried to refocus and analyze the map. Then the texts started.

MANDY: "Daniel, our flight is in 90 minutes. Are you almost back to the hotel?"

With urgency I took off with the latest Google directions. No matter how far I ran or how many turns I made, the "how long to cupcakes" timer didn't budge. The texts increased in frequency, but my pride and shame kept me from texting back. Nearing exhaustion, I found the cupcake shop, ordered four cupcakes (lay off—there was a discount for four), swiped my credit card, trashed the coffee, and set off toward the hotel. I opened Google again, *but wait . . . what's the name of the hotel?*

MANDY: "Daniel, where are you? Are you lost? Come back. The hotel is at 33 W. Illinois St. We only have an hour before our flight!"

I was over a mile away and wiped out. Saved by grace and a rational, loving wife, I hailed a cab.

*So let's start here: we are all lost in Chicago.*

You are a church leader. And this means you're a sojourner on the road of leadership. As you look ahead, you can see that this road has many challenges. The journey will be difficult.

Maybe you're just starting out, fresh off your first internship. Now you're three months into your first church role. You are asking, "What is my identity? What will I do with this role? Who am I becoming as a leader? How do I handle this new responsibility I've been given? Wait a minute. *Am I a leader?* Around what person or organization or conviction should I organize my life?"<sup>2</sup> You've been in ministry just long enough to realize you never had a class on how to help your team see eye to eye. Managing conflict is one thing, but giving direction when you are discovering that your new team has major philosophical differences is another.

Maybe you've been in ministry for a while and you feel like you're moving from crisis to crisis—marriages failing one after another or a fellow minister and friend bailing on the faith. The number of funerals has caught up with the number of marriages. Your authority is increasing, but the creative juices that were there at the beginning are no longer there. You're asking, "How do I cope with the demands being made on me? How do I teach on being a great husband or dad when I'm short with my wife and yelling at my kids? Why am I so disappointed in others and myself? Am I making a difference? Am I making a contribution?" How do you process your own grief and limitations and still press on? Where do you find the motivation to keep leading week after week when you're so exhausted? You're realizing that the work rhythms that got you this far won't be able to sustain you as you move forward.

Maybe you're nearing the end of the road, and you're putting together a transition plan. You're asking, "Why is time moving so fast? Why don't I have the time to do all the things I want to do? When do I stop doing the things that have defined me?"

Too often ministers are lost on the road of leadership—wandering down streets they don't know and hoping not to be struck down by a motorist who is texting and driving.

## **Looking for Direction**

Think about the last time you got lost. Maybe you were at a leadership conference looking for that elusive breakout session tucked away in a hidden corner. You're looking for room 217, and you've walked past 216 and 218 at least three times. Where could it be? One of our first inclinations when we're walking around lost is to look for someone to follow. You say to yourself, "He looks like he could be going to that breakout, and he's walking pretty confidently. I'll follow him—maybe not actually ask him for directions, but see where he's going."

When we're lost, we look for leaders. After all, they seem to know where they're going. The trouble is that as you look at other leaders, they all seem to be going in different directions.

We live in a world of pictures. People spend hours watching television and surfing the Internet. George Cladis has argued that this "flow of images across our brains is training our minds to think more in images than in words."<sup>3</sup> Whether we know it or not, we all have an image in our heads that drives our work as leaders. I argue that, more often than not, our image of leadership is adapted from the images of leadership we see around us. Like young children acting out the latest Disney movie as they play, we've followed after the culture and we don't even realize it.

There are five distinctive images of Christian leadership in the American church:

1. *The theologian*. He's a thinking man. His congregation sits eagerly and attentively to hear his nuanced insights about the Bible. He also has convictions of steel. His mantra: "Here I stand." You admire how his tribe knows what is right and stays committed to truth in the midst of a hostile culture. Back when you were in seminary, this was the person you aspired to be.<sup>4</sup>
2. *The innovator*. He's the young cutting-edge guy whose teaching is engaging and relevant. He doesn't just preach it. He lives a life of creative contextualization, effectively reaching others and doing the work of an evangelist. This leader always has new ideas for reaching his community, and they always seem to work.

3. *The activist.* She's the millennial dream packaged up as a professional minister.<sup>5</sup> Her rapidly growing nonprofit feeds the homeless, cares for crisis pregnancies, or wins prostitutes to Jesus. When you're tempted to become a complacent Christian, you hear her cry, "Take the hill!" Her passion is inspiring.<sup>6</sup>
4. *The good manager.* He's a business executive who could do anything but has decided to order his church like a well-oiled machine. His motto: "Get it done." Does your church have budget troubles? Marriages falling apart? Kids misbehaving? He has a discipleship program for that. Since you picked up a book called *Leadership Mosaic*, it's likely you're attracted to his team-based, collaborative approach. Do you have more business leadership books on your shelf than books on pastoral care? Maybe you could follow this organizational CEO.<sup>7</sup>
5. *The soulful leader.* She hasn't been to a conference in years, but everyone at the Christian retreat center knows her by name. Her prayer life is powerful. Her life is marked by radical transparency, deep vulnerability, and holy desire. Her constant prayer is "Abba Father, I trust you." You admire her, because she always seems to be at the pinnacle of emotional health.

These differing visions of leadership are all necessary within the church, but unfortunately they often compete for our devotion. It's easy to set them against one another and then choose the one we think is best—the convictional theologian against the soulful contemplative. Whenever we exaggerate one version of leadership, it crowds out the others. Soon we see there's something missing. The truth is we're still lost.

### **From Complicated to Complex**

We're lost because the church-leadership world is complicated. How can a minister lead with truth, relational connection, a missional focus, solid management skill, and depth? We can't all be omnicompetent.

We're even more lost because the world we live in is changing. Researchers suggest that Christians in American are about to become a distinct minority group.<sup>8</sup> Church leaders—even really competent



Five Contemporary Images of Christian Leadership\*

<b>Theologian</b> All about: Truth	Conviction Clear beliefs Propositional/analytical thinking Theological purity
<b>Innovator</b> All about: Connection	Creativity Relevance Cultural engagement Community contextualization
<b>Activist</b> All about: Mission	Courage Change Visionary strategy Social advancement
<b>Good Manager</b> All about: Organization	Efficient collaboration Process Team-based strategy/management Planning/structure
<b>Soulful Leader</b> All about: Depth	Communion Relationships Contemplation/reflection Emotional health

\* Adapted from Gary Bredfeldt, *Great Leader, Great Teacher: Recovering the Biblical Vision for Leadership* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006), 163.



ones—find themselves less and less in a position of power in society. We need more than greater competency to handle it all. We need a new way of thinking in a changing world.

Similar shifts are taking place in the worlds of science, business, and even warfare. Science has moved from the modern, reductive, and efficient ways of Newtonian physics to the complex, indeterminate, and integrated models of quantum mechanics. The business world has moved from scientific and bureaucratic management systems with clear, top-down authority and bottom-line results to systems of process and responsibility where minimum-wage workers are empow-



## Strategic Paradigm Shifts

	<i>Old-School Paradigms</i>	<i>New-School Paradigms</i>
Science	<i>Newtonian thinking:</i> atomistic, fragmented, reductive, determinate	<i>Quantum thinking:</i> holistic, integrated, both-and, indeterminate
Business	<i>Scientific and bureaucratic management:</i> top-down authority, results-oriented, decisions made remotely, bullet-proof strategic plans	<i>Lean management:</i> empowerment, process-oriented, decisions made on the spot with facts, organic strategy based in contingency and systems theory
Military	<i>Modern military:</i> race for newest and mightiest technology, chess match for greatest efficiency, decisions made by the brass	<i>Counterinsurgency:</i> long duration of engagement that seeks to change hearts and minds in order to change the political situation, each unit empowered to create strategy



ered to stop the assembly line for the sake of quality control and safety. Even the military looks less like a top-down chess match. Nations now fight with counterinsurgency methods. The days of throwing money at problems or simply thinking technology will solve all the problems are coming to an end. Conducting business as usual in a way that lacks understanding and empathy or using merely complicated solutions to attack complex problems is no longer viable.<sup>9</sup>

What we learn from these changes is that leadership in the world today is more complex than it was before the information age. We've moved from a merely complicated world to a complex and unpredictable one. The difference between a complicated system and a complex one, according to General Stanley McChrystal, is akin to the difference between a car and ocean currents.<sup>10</sup> A car should work if all its parts are in working order. A failure of one part, like the fuel pump, has a

predictable outcome: the car stalls. On the other hand, ocean currents can be so complex that, in one situation, the migration path of a pod of whales may change the direction or force of a current, and in another situation, the same pod will change nothing. The number of factors is so vast and their interactions so complex that any prediction is defied.

Complexity and unpredictability can make a leader anxious. It's frustrating when old ways of leading stop working. What is a leader to do? Should we fight against the change or embrace it? Donella H. Meadows describes the tension we feel:

There's something within the human mind that is attracted to straight lines and not curves, to whole numbers and not fractions, to uniformity and not diversity, and to certainties and not mystery. . . . Another part of us recognizes instinctively that nature designs in fractals, with intriguing detail on every scale from the microscopic to the macroscopic. That part of us makes Gothic cathedrals and Persian carpets, symphonies and novels, Mardi Gras costumes and artificial intelligence programs, all with embellishments almost as complex as the ones we find in the world around us.<sup>11</sup>

As our world increases in complexity, I believe that Christians should be on the leading edge of embracing and even celebrating this change. We cannot simply grow in our competency to fix predictable ministry problems. We need a new way of seeing. We need this paradigm shift because the complexity of the world is a witness to the complexity and greatness of our God.

### **God Is Our Master Image**

An artist gathers together pieces of stone and glass. Each piece has a different shape and color. Slowly she arranges the pieces into a bigger picture—a *mosaic*—that gives shape and meaning to variegated tesserae. Some images—what George Cladis describes as controlling or master images—“can have a profound, though sometimes subtle, effect on how we perceive reality . . . an effect on how we order the world around us.”<sup>12</sup> That's what we need. We need a master image that can

provide a clear and practical critique of our own leadership journey and the competing contemporary visions of Christian leadership.

But we need even more. I gravitate toward studying leadership because I was born into a leadership crisis. My mom raised me by herself for the first nine years of my life. My father wasn't present. I grew up in a broken home, sandwiched between the suburbs of Orange County, California, and the barrio. All the chaos I experienced as a child has given me a burden for leadership in life, home, and church. But I wasn't able to put the complexity together on my own. I needed more than a master image to order my life around. I needed the Master.

Paul S. Fiddes writes, "A complex God is the most appropriate creator of a complex world."<sup>13</sup> In other words, a God-sized world needs God-centered leadership. When we look to the Bible, we shouldn't merely look for a theology of leadership. We must look for the Trinitarian God who leads.

Herman Bavinck was a theologian possessed with a God-sized vision of the world. This is what he wrote about the place of the Trinity in the Christian life:

The thoughtful person places the doctrine of the Trinity in the very center of the full-orbed life of nature and mankind. The [Trinitarian] confession of the Christian is not an island in mid-ocean but a mountain-top overlooking the entire creation. And the task of the Christian theologian is to set forth clearly the great significance of God's revelation for (and the relation of that revelation to) the whole realm of existence. The mind of the Christian is not satisfied until every form of existence has been referred to the Triune God and until the confession of the Trinity has received the place of prominence in our thought and life.<sup>14</sup>

Our Trinitarian doctrine of God is not a mathematical formula we must solve in order to pass an orthodoxy test. That makes it sound like the Trinity is optional. Rather, God—in all of his complexity—must be the operating system for our lives and our leadership. Only he can empower us to lead meaningfully in every situation and circumstance. That's why the apostle Paul writes, "Be imitators of God" (Eph. 5:1).



But don't think this is merely our confession. It's a beautiful vision. The glory of this truth is that God has lived eternally in community. When he made mankind in his image, he invited every human person to participate in his mission and leadership in the world. Leadership at its source is relational and not merely functional. As Christians, we don't simply lead *like* God. We lead *with* God.

### **The Trinity, Our Mosaic**

Persecution often forced early Christians into secrecy and seclusion. But when Constantine won control of the Roman Empire in the early fourth century AD, he eventually elevated Christianity to favored status. Soon Christian leadership began to build beautiful meeting places. By the end of the fourth century, Christians were adorning the walls, ceilings, and open aisles of their basilica-style buildings with the mosaic art form. At Santa Costanza in Rome, you will see mosaic depictions of cherubs gathering grapes and making wine. You can visit the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and find an original mosaic floor with geometric patterns in the Roman style. At the vaulted Tomb of Julii near the crypt below St. Peter's Basilica, you can find mosaics that tell the stories of the Good Shepherd with his sheep and Jonah and the great fish.

But those mosaics might never have been built if it hadn't been for a pastor in Alexandria whose enemies called him "the Black Dwarf." The pastor's name was Athanasius. Within the first decade of Constantine's rule, a young pastor by the name of Arius began teaching that the Son—Jesus—was a created being, not eternally divine. "If God is the cause of all," he argued, "then how can the Son, who received his being from the Father, be uncaused?" Arius was persuasive and popular. Many followed him. It seemed like the whole world would go astray. Athanasius dedicated his life to proving just how catastrophic Arius's teachings were for healthy Christian living.<sup>15</sup> "Our redemption isn't possible," he wrote, "unless Christ himself is eternal—the image of the eternal Father."<sup>16</sup>

To forge unity, Emperor Constantine gathered the contending parties and representatives from throughout the empire to a council in the city of Nicaea in 325. Standing alongside Athanasius was a mosaic of

Christian leaders who both articulated Trinitarian doctrine and modeled it in their unity and love for truth. Bishop Alexander represented the embattled old guard from the West. He'd endured bloody persecution under Emperor Gaius and slander in his own parish.<sup>17</sup> St. Nicholas—yes, indeed, *that* St. Nicholas—was part of a fiery contingent from the East. They were a diverse crew. Yet, in the end, they stood together with conviction and courage; out of more than three hundred representatives from churches throughout the world, only two bishops sided with Arius against the biblical and apostolic understanding of Jesus. Through the unity that emerged from this diversity came a beautiful and biblical affirmation of faith that developed over time into the Nicene Creed. The Arian heresy was defeated. Trinitarian orthodoxy had won the day.

The Council of Nicaea shows us that we need diverse personalities and leadership styles to contend for the faith. Like assorted pieces of rock and stone, leaders come in all shapes and sizes. If you're searching for a vision of leadership that encompasses the whole, it's easy to get lost. My prayer is that *Leadership Mosaic* will help you see how God holds all the diverse pieces together.

*Leadership Mosaic* is a fivefold vision of leadership rooted in five Trinitarian doctrines. The Trinity is our mosaic. The triune God himself, the Master, is our master image. In theological terms, we say that our God is transcendent and immanent. He's the God of the big picture and the God of the details. He allows us to see the beauty of the whole and the beauty in the pieces.

When we look to the Trinity, we find that God's mission transcends every cultural change and yet speaks to us immanently—in time, in place, in body. He is God over every leadership image in the Bible, in the culture around us, and even in our personal history.

He is the God who forms the church in his image. Church leaders don't simply have to compare themselves to one another or parrot the leadership images they see around them. We don't have to choose between being maverick parachurch leaders or sycophants in a megachurch system. We can find our vision of leadership by looking to God

wherever we serve. His redemptive work in the world is the basis for understanding the nature and purpose of our leadership.<sup>18</sup> When we think of leadership, our first thought should be the triune God.

Just think. You have all kinds of leaders at your church. When the board meets, you have some guys who come in wired to lead as CEOs. Other guys—maybe staff members—think more pragmatically. Others are theologians. If you have seven different leaders, there are seven different family histories. There are seven different ways of viewing the world. And—whether we recognize it or not—there are probably seven thousand different principles driving their leadership. We don’t have simple solutions that can cut through all of that complexity, but we know the One who can.

The goal of *Leadership Mosaic* is to dive deeper into the doctrine of God in order to understand how the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—*informs* and *transforms* our life as leaders. Leadership is knowing where people need to go and taking the initiative to get them there in God’s way and by God’s power.<sup>19</sup> God is our model for leadership because God the Father shows us where to go. Jesus has already taken the initiative to get us there. We have the power to join him because the Holy Spirit goes with us on our way.

I believe only the Trinity is big enough to address everything leadership involves. A pastor recently told me: “I have a robust theology over here and a robust ministry philosophy over there. But it’s hard to see how they connect. There is only pixie dust in between.” I believe God not only defines doctrine but also guides leadership. He is big enough to knit together our theology and our church budgets. He can join a leader’s spiritual life and his strategic planning.



Leadership is knowing where people need to go and taking the initiative to get them there in God’s way and by God’s power.



Over this book's five chapters, I will unpack five perspectives on leadership. My goal isn't to compare and contrast them. Don't pick just one. Rather, I believe each of these leadership visions can be rooted and redeemed in our doctrine of God. The best leaders exemplify them all. The best teams are those where each of the strengths is present.

- First, *convictional leaders* embody their beliefs. Many leaders are blown and tossed around by the latest ministry fads. But when God speaks, he is always true to himself. We need conviction to listen to God's voice and get in line with what he says.
- Second, *creative leaders* imagine the way forward. God has a plan to take your leadership chaos and make it beautiful. He has given us imagination so we can inspire others to follow his redeemed vision for the future.
- Third, *courageous leaders* take risks. Since God has sent us and the Spirit empowers us, we can leave behind what hinders and step out in faith. We can move forward to meet the challenges within and the challenges ahead.
- Fourth, *collaborative leaders* empower others. They know that working with others is better than leading alone. God has created us for community. We need a team to grow, develop, and strengthen one another for bigger and better things.
- Finally, *contemplative leaders* are fully awake to God. For leadership to be sustainable over the long haul, we need communion. We must abide in God in order to encourage the hearts of those we lead.

Christian leader, are you lost? If you are, I have an invitation for you. Stop chasing simplistic and reductionistic leadership philosophies; instead taste and see that the Lord has a better way forward. Gaze with me—not merely at the diversity of leaders we find in the world but at the varying ways the triune God himself leads his people. Take a step back and take in his complexity. Behold him.

Now consider. Piece by piece, he's transforming you into his own image. Gazing at him is the pathway to growth. Beholding is the way to becoming. The big picture—the whole mosaic—for how we lead is found in him.



**Leadership Mosaic**

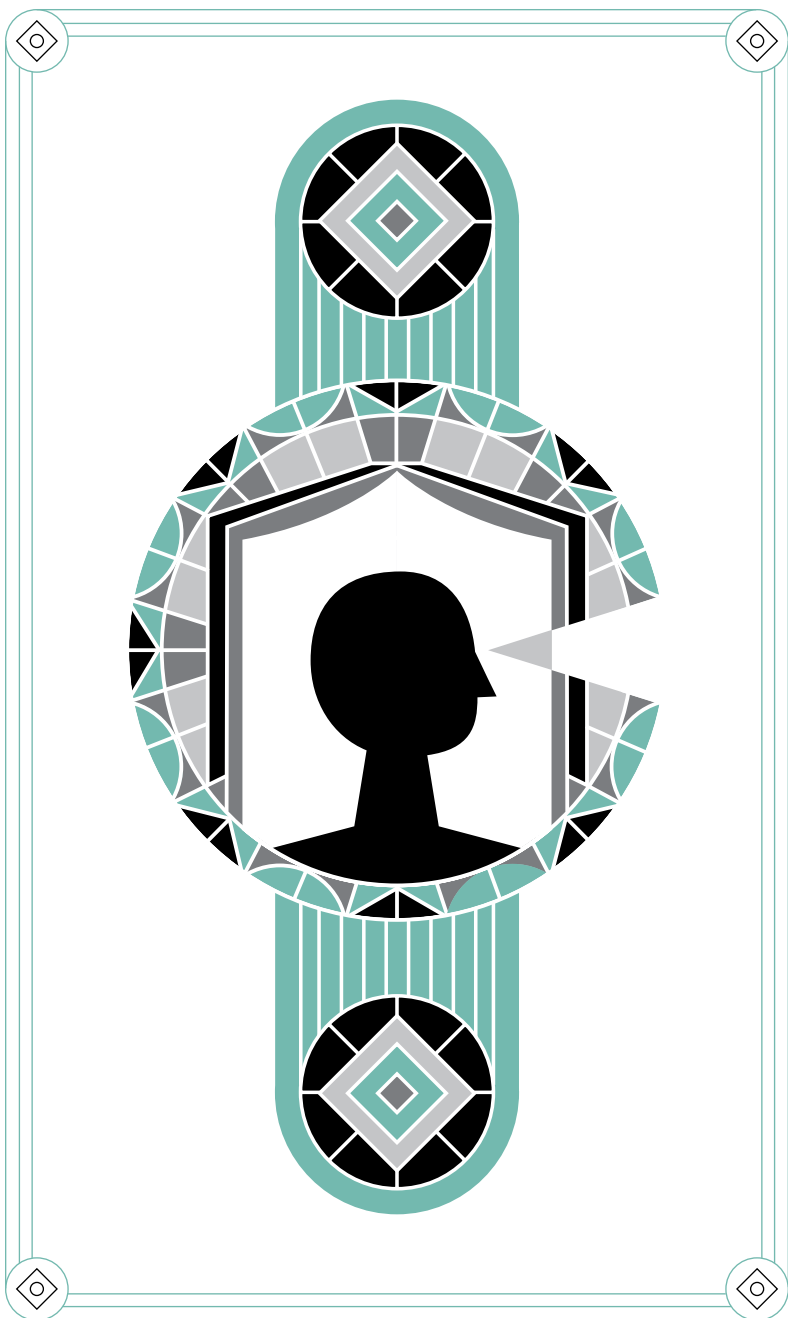
<i>Leadership is</i>	<i>This requires</i>
knowing where people need to go	a convictional leader, a creative leader,
and taking the initiative to get them there	a courageous leader,
in God's way and by God's power.	a collaborative leader, a contemplative leader.



*Part 1*

# THEOLOGICAL VISION







# THE CONVICTIONAL LEADER



In the creation of the universe by the triune God lies the guarantee that nature also, as far as it extends, provides a trustworthy revelation of the being of God. It is not as if the natural revelation must lead to Unitarian results and then suddenly, in a totally unprepared fashion, the idea of the Trinity appears before us on the basis of God's supernatural revelation. The more and better we get to know nature, the more will we be brought face to face with the triune God.

**Geerhardus Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics***

A purely mental life may be destructive if it leads us to substitute thought for life and ideas for action. The activity proper to man is not purely mental because man is not just a disembodied mind. Our destiny is to live out what we think, because unless we live what we know, we do not even know it. It is only by making our knowledge part of ourselves, through action, that we enter into the reality that is signified by our concepts.

**Thomas Merton, *Thoughts on Solitude***

Behavior from important people in an organization, contrary to the vision, overwhelms all other forms of communication.

**John Kotter, *Leading Change***

If a person does not become what he understands, he does not really understand it.

**Søren Kierkegaard, *The Diary of Søren Kierkegaard***

Knowing and doing, hearing and obeying are integrally connected for people whose convictions are truly and deeply Christian.

**Steven Garber, *The Fabric of Faithfulness***

Every man of humane convictions must decide on the protest that best suits his convictions, but we must all protest.

**Martin Luther King Jr., "Beyond Vietnam"**



# 1

## THE CONVICTIONAL LEADER

EMBODYING WHAT YOU BELIEVE

**Summary:** *We live in the information age, a world awash with data. Our culture believes that if we mine this data for the right solutions, we'll solve all the world's problems. But we don't necessarily need more information. We need God's revelation. Wisdom for leadership begins with the conviction that God speaks. He makes himself known through his world, Word, and works. Because the Father is sovereign over his world and the Son's salvation is revealed in his Word, we have a grid for understanding reality—in all its complexity and particularity. Because the Holy Spirit still works today, the first step for leaders is listening for God's voice. When a leader has heard from God, he can move beyond mere values to deep convictions felt in his heart and embodied in his life.*

In the first two weeks after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the FBI asked the nation to provide potential leads to the case; the

response was an avalanche of information. Over 260,000 tips were received from concerned citizens via the Internet and phone calls in the first twenty-one days. As a result, approximately four thousand agents were reassigned nationwide to assist in chasing the new leads.<sup>1</sup> Within a matter of weeks, the FBI had to adjust from not having enough information to information overload.

In our age of technological advancements—faster processors, expanding memory, and wireless Internet—there has been an explosion of data and consumers with insatiable appetites for more. In 1971, the average American was targeted by at least 560 daily advertising messages. Twenty years later, that number had risen sixfold. From 1980 to 1990, there were nearly three thousand new magazine startups. By 2003, the Internet boasted three hundred million web pages.<sup>2</sup> *The New York Times* now contains more information than the average man or woman in seventeenth-century England was likely to come across in a lifetime,<sup>3</sup> and the paper doesn't print all that's written for its website. According to *Science Daily*, 90 percent of the world's data has been generated over the past two years.<sup>4</sup>

Let's be real. The information age has provided us with instant access to information, but there is more information than we can handle. In 2010, Basex, a technology watchdog group, conducted a survey of knowledge workers—those whose daily tasks focus on creating content, thought, and reflection, sharing knowledge, and networking.<sup>5</sup> Over 50 percent believed that the amount of information they were presented with each day was detrimental to productivity. Ninety-four percent of those surveyed had at some point felt overwhelmed by information to the point of incapacity. Researchers suggest that the stress of information fatigue causes weakened vision, high blood pressure, and heart disease.<sup>6</sup>

## **Solutionism**

How should leaders respond to this info-glutted, fact-bogged world? Google, Amazon, and the other Internet-based companies in Silicon Valley have made an industry out of it. Order with one click and the newest book is at your door in two days—or on your device in seconds.

Search engines and Wikipedia are so popular because they help individuals make sense of the increasing mass of data (at least in theory). Technology has been so successful that Silicon Valley executives are now giddy about the potential for the future. Eric Schmidt, the executive chairman of Google has said: “In the future, people will spend less time trying to get technology to work . . . because it will just be seamless. It will just be there. The Web will be everything, and it will also be nothing. It will be like electricity. If we get this right, I believe we can fix all the world’s problems.”<sup>7</sup>

Schmidt is an optimist and a technological futurist. He believes tomorrow is bright. If you listen long enough to the tech companies’ hopes and dreams, you might think that we can solve all of humanity’s problems—obesity, insomnia, global warming, etc.—if we can just create the right apps. After all, tech companies like Google have plans for improving everything under the sun: politics, publishing, cooking, and even garbage collection. The need to fix things runs high.<sup>8</sup> Evgeny Morozov, author of *To Save Everything, Click Here*, observes that “‘Fitter, happier, more productive’—the refreshingly depressive motto of the popular Radiohead recording from the mid-1990s, would make for an apt welcome sign in the corporate headquarters of [Silicon Valley’s] many digital maven.”<sup>9</sup>

Morozov has a name for the tech sector’s utopian ideology. He calls it *solutionism*.<sup>10</sup> He explains:

I borrow this unabashedly pejorative term from the world of architecture and urban planning, where it has come to refer to an unhealthy preoccupation with sexy, monumental, and narrow-minded solutions—the kind of stuff that wows audiences at TED Conferences—to problems that are extremely complex, fluid, and contentious. These are the kinds of problems that, on careful examination, do not have to be defined in the singular and all-encompassing ways that “solutionists” have defined them.<sup>11</sup>

Solutionists see new ideas as culturally neutral. “What works in Palo Alto is assumed to work in Penang,” Morozov observes.<sup>12</sup> But



### The Trouble with Solutionism

*Solutionism* recasts the complexities of the human condition in terms of neatly defined problems with definite, computable solutions.

- Solutionism is *reductionistic*. It oversimplifies.
- Solutionism is an *abstraction*. It's divorced from reality.



solutions crafted for one context can rarely be abstracted for another without careful adjustments. The trouble with solutionism is not the solutions themselves so much as this inattention to the complexity of the human plight. It's reductionistic. Solutionists oversimplify the world's brokenness. "Solutionism presumes rather than investigates the problems that it is trying to solve, reaching 'for the answer before the questions have been fully asked.'"<sup>13</sup>

In a world awash with data, it's easy to think that if we mine the information for the right solutions, we'll solve all the world's problems. But we don't simply need more information or more solutions. We need God's revelation. Wisdom for leadership begins with the conviction that God speaks. God makes himself known through his world, Word, and works. Because the Father is sovereign over the world, and salvation through the Son is revealed in his Word, we have a better grid for understanding reality—in all its complexity and particularity. When a leader has heard from God, he can move beyond quick solutions to deep convictions that are felt in his heart and embodied in his life.

### Knowing, Being, Doing: From Values to Conviction

As vulnerable as Silicon Valley's solutionism is to critique, we must admit modern evangelical Christianity isn't all that different. Methodological pragmatism focuses churches and missionary enterprises on "what works"—that is, programs and initiatives that yield immediate results—rather than on faithfulness to God's Word.<sup>14</sup> Consultants have

told our church leadership team that to grow we should narrow our focus to a few key ministries—worship music, preaching, and families. It sounds like a slick pathway to success, but following their advice would mean shutting down our ministries to the poor or our focus on international missions. In reality, that “solution” skirts God’s commands to look after orphans and widows (James 1:27) or go into the whole world to preach the gospel (Matt. 28:18–20).

Leaders typically express their wants and needs and those of their followers as *shared values*. They use values to measure and assess the goals and outcomes they’re seeking to achieve.<sup>15</sup> Shared values are helpful for charting an organization’s direction. “The clearer you are about your values, the easier it is for you and for everyone else to stay on the chosen path and commit to it.”<sup>16</sup> This kind of guidance is especially needed in difficult and uncertain times. Shared values broker partnerships and unify teams.

But values aren’t enough. Gene Wood and Daniel Harkavy remind us that one reason we hear so much about values today in the church is that Christian leadership has borrowed so heavily from the business model. Every business has values, but *no* business has convictions. R. Albert Mohler defines convictions as those “foundational beliefs that shape who we are and establish our beliefs about everything else.”<sup>17</sup> A value is something to which you will commit, but conviction is a belief you’ll sacrifice for. With values, you count the cost, but with convictions, no cost is too great. Values are negotiable, but convictions are nonnegotiable. We could adopt the Bible, the gospel, and excellence as values and find healthy direction for our church, but those values aren’t equal. I’ll die for the authority of God’s Word. I’ll take a bullet for the cross of Christ. But if our pursuit of excellence falters because the PowerPoint doesn’t work on Sunday or the children’s ministry runs out of goldfish crackers, I’m just going to get over it. A business’s values may be high and lofty, but convictions are the sole domain of religion. Believers discover what is right and wrong from sacred revelation, and that is not subject to change.<sup>18</sup>

Sojourn Community Church’s Midtown campus, where I pastor, is located in Shelby Park, one of Louisville’s historic neighborhoods. The



Values versus Convictions

Values	Convictions
I will commit to.	I will sacrifice for.
I will contemplate the cost of.	No cost is too great for.
Are negotiable.	Are nonnegotiable.
Last for a season.	Last for a lifetime.
Can be changed by vote.	Cannot easily be changed.
Allow for external compliance.	Require internal ownership.



area has a rich history and a beautiful sixteen-acre park. But in recent decades, the average household income has fallen to less than twenty thousand dollars per year. Most houses are more than a hundred years old, and many need repair; some have been abandoned. Jobs are scarce, along with quality education and alternative activities for children.<sup>19</sup>

Church plants and mercy ministries are increasingly popular in inner-city contexts, but the difficulties often overwhelm many well-meaning Christians. Some churches have great hopes of change but lack wisdom and experience. It’s easy to burn out and become disillusioned. Being in Shelby Park is both challenging and exciting. We thank God for locating us in this place. Sojourn’s Pastor of Community Development, Nathan Ivey, tells the story this way:

Early on we did a lot of listening. We started prayer walking and listening to God. We joined our neighborhood association, met business leaders, and interviewed government officials. We listened, and then we loved. We chose 30 needs we could address and commissioned our small groups into the neighborhood. We filled up hundreds of bags of trash, washed more cars and dogs than we can remember, cleaned gutters, raked leaves, and washed windows. The key was simple: Word-

and-deed ministry. We didn't have a budget, but we didn't need one. What we needed and what God provided was a desire to reach our neighborhood with the gospel. We've been faithful, and we've kept at it. Today, relationships that began eight years ago have led to conversions and ministries that now address basic needs, medical care, affordable housing, economic development, and leadership training.

What keeps us here? Pastor Nathan explains: "It began with the conviction that God commands us, the gospel compels us, and the Holy Spirit empowers us to go, show, and proclaim the love of God among the poor and vulnerable."

Convictional leaders have moved from values to deeply held convictions. And they go one crucial step farther. *Convictional leaders embody their beliefs*. They live them out. Leaders like Simon Sinek tell us leadership begins with knowing *why* we do what we do.<sup>20</sup> Leaders like Esther Lightcap Meek tell us leadership is all about character—*who we are*.<sup>21</sup> The time management experts will convince us that great leadership is about how much you can accomplish—*what we do*.<sup>22</sup> In truth, effective leadership embodies all three. Convictional leaders consider why they do what they do, they know the importance of character, and they are passionate about acting on their convictions. It's not enough to know the right answers. It's more than being the right kind of person. Conviction requires a threefold dynamic—*knowing, being, and doing*.<sup>23</sup>

When a Christian leader sits under God's Word and it cuts her to the heart, she is changed and moved to live out her belief. The prophet Jeremiah described it this way:

But if I say, "I will not mention his word  
or speak anymore in his name,"  
his word is in my heart like a fire,  
a fire shut up in my bones.  
I am weary of holding it in;  
indeed, I cannot. (Jer. 20:9 NIV)

The truth God spoke to the prophet wasn't merely a value. Values don't burn inside our hearts. Truths believed and embodied are convictions.





**Leadership Vision 1: The Convictional Leader**

Convictional leaders embody their beliefs.

**Convictional  
leadership  
requires . . .**

**With . . .**

**With an effect upon . . .**

Knowing	Your head	Your outlook and intellect
Being	Your heart	Your attitude and emotions
Doing	Your hands	Your actions and relationships



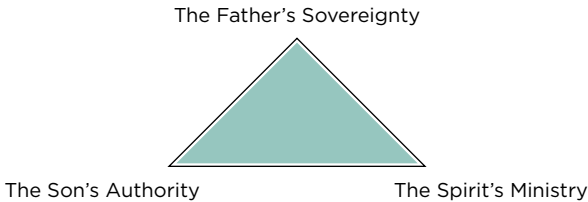
Mohler says, “Convictions are not merely beliefs we hold; they are those beliefs that hold us in their grip.”<sup>24</sup>

We may know what to say, but if it hasn’t changed the way we live, then we’re not convictional leaders. When we are captured by God’s love, he moves us beyond merely *knowing* information. God changes our very *being* and empowers us for *doing* his mission. In Acts 1:8, Jesus tells his disciples, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” The Holy Spirit changes who we are and moves us to action. He doesn’t merely reveal more information about God. We come to know him, and he changes the way we live.

**The Father’s Sovereignty: From Information to Revelation**

Sadly, Christian teaching can become nothing more than repetition of dry information. When that happens, leaders fall into the trap of presenting abstract concepts, disconnected from daily life: “If you husbands lead like Christ and she follows like the church, then your marriage will be a beautiful picture!” But how does this help the husband whose wife says, “Nope, I’m not in the mood, baby”? How does

## Trinitarian Doctrine 1: Revelation



In his revelation, God speaks. He makes himself known through his world, Word, and works:\*

- The Father's sovereignty over his *world*
- The Son's authority by his *Word*
- The Spirit's ministry, his particularizing *work*

\* Adapted from John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013), 519ff.

this help the wife who grew up in an abusive household and struggles to trust any man? What does leading like Christ and following like the church even *mean* in real life? A conversation guide for couples and a list of sacrificial date night ideas may not sound particularly spiritual, but they help by making meaningful connections to daily life. We can have the right answers, but if those answers remain fluffy abstractions and not concrete practices, they have no power.

We don't need more information. We need to practice what we preach. God is inviting you out of the library where you have control over simple solutions. He wants you to come outside into the complexity and reality of his world and his Word. Convictional leaders hear from God and have power to live out what he says. So to understand conviction, we must begin with the doctrine of revelation.

When God speaks through his world, we call this *general revela-*

tion or *common grace*. General revelation is “the knowledge of God’s existence, character, and moral law that comes through creation to all humanity.”<sup>25</sup> David sang about this truth:

The heavens declare the glory of God,  
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. (Ps. 19:1)

But “general” revelation is a pretty boring name for it, because there’s nothing general or common about how God speaks through his world.<sup>26</sup> Maybe we should call it awesome revelation—or even outrageous revelation! God speaks through the heavens above us and nature around us so that his presence is plain to us, even if we reject him (Rom. 1:19–21). God speaks through our consciences so that what God requires is written on our hearts (Rom. 2:14–15).

In fact, life in the world is intelligible to us because the Father speaks through what he has made. When Paul spoke to the Athenian philosophers, he explained it this way:

The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth. . . . He himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. “For in him we live and move and have our being.” As some of your own poets have said, “We are his offspring.” (Acts 17:24–28 NIV)

We can learn about God’s world and grow to know more about God through living in the world, because God has created a world where knowing is possible. God created us for a relationship with his world—“He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth” (Acts 17:26 NIV). He created us for a relationship with him—“that we would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him” (Acts 17:27 NIV). We have an epistemology—a doctrine of *knowing*—precisely because of our doctrines of creation, humanity, and *imago Dei*. Colin Gunton says, “There can be revelation because the world is so

made that it may be known.”<sup>27</sup> Every insight is under God’s sovereign control—part of his incredible work of revelation. We are able to know because God has made us to know.

Sometimes, a sense of wonder and curiosity about the Father’s world doesn’t mark the lives of Christians. Even if someone is thirsty for the wisdom of general revelation, they aren’t sure how to connect their curiosity with their Christianity. You might have a Christian medical student who is fascinated by the human cardiovascular system—and she wonders how her thirst for learning about capillaries and arteries can possibly connect with her faith. Another individual may love the structures and storylines of novels, but he feels a sense of shame because he is interested in something that seems so “secular.” Is he making his passion for literature into an idol? No. Our passion to know more should never be a source of shame. We long to know because we’ve been created to know God and his world.

This is our Father’s world. When God speaks in his world, he speaks as the King. God speaks as the one who is sovereign over history, culture, and leadership. Moreover, God—as Abraham Kuyper reminds us—delegates sovereignty in particular “spheres” such as the society, state, and church. But God rules it all. The determinative principle for our lives, our leadership, and our learning is “the Sovereignty of the Triune God over the whole Cosmos.”<sup>28</sup> God is not just King over our spiritual lives. He is King of *every* sphere.

That truth alters a leader’s posture toward so-called “secular” disciplines. Have you noticed how defensive Christian leaders can be? Have you noticed how we often choose sides before we understand an issue? The evangelical tribe I’m a part of has a tendency to be anxious and combative about anything we deem “secular.”<sup>29</sup> We’re worried that a naturalistic worldview has influenced our psychology and our politics and our music. But we’re inconsistent. We don’t have the same anxiety about the business principles that inform our leadership. How do we filter them? If we’re honest, we don’t even think about it most of the time. Don’t misunderstand me. I’m not suggesting we take a defensive posture toward business principles. What I *am* suggesting is that we

pay attention, with discernment, to everything that may help us lead. We must put into practice our belief that “this is our Father’s world.”

In Acts 17, Paul wasn’t afraid to listen to (and even quote!) pagan philosophers like the Cretan Epimenides and the Cilician Stoic Aratus. Paul didn’t quote the pagans uncritically; in fact, there’s a good chance he was mocking the way that the philosophers of Athens appropriated these sources. But he knew what they had written, and he quoted them without apology. Paul’s example should teach us to be attentive. Psychology, anthropology, biology, communications, and the world of business aren’t off-limits. We shouldn’t have a combative posture toward these other disciplines. As Donella Meadows states:

In spite of what you majored in, or what the textbooks say, or what you think you’re an expert at, follow a system wherever it leads. It will be sure to lead across traditional disciplinary lines. To understand that system, you will have to be able to learn from—while not being limited by—economists and chemists and psychologists and theologians. You will have to penetrate their jargons, integrate what they tell you, recognize what they can honestly see through their particular lenses, and discard the distortions that come from the narrowness and incompleteness of their lenses. They won’t make it easy for you.<sup>30</sup>

Leaders in those fields know truth—not completely, not with an awareness of Christ as the one in whom all things hold together, but they have glimpsed some measure of truth. Wise leaders recognize and apply truth even when it comes from the lips of a pagan. As Gunton has said, “All truth is a species of revelation.”<sup>31</sup> Read that again. Confidence should mark our posture toward learning, because everything there is to know belongs to our heavenly Dad. All truth is God’s truth.

There is not one monolithic discipline of leadership. The streams of leadership in the world are many, moving, and changing. That’s true for the political streams as well as for leadership in business.<sup>32</sup> But before we begin to explore leadership truth from those fields, we should confess God’s sovereignty over them. God turns the king’s heart like waters in his hand (Prov. 21:1). He holds all these streams. He’s the Lord of government. He’s sovereign over the businessman hustling sheep on

the Ein Gedi plain, and he's sovereign over the businessman sculpting the latest skyscraper in Dubai. He's the Lord of trade.

Convictional leaders must pay attention—always listening for God's voice in the world. When we hear something that rings true about the Father's world in the voice of an economist or community leader, our ears should perk up. That truth was revealed by God's common grace. As Kuyper declared, "No single piece of our mental world is to be hermetically sealed off from the rest, and there is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over *all*, does not cry: 'Mine!'"<sup>33</sup> That's right. The Pulitzer is God's. Quantum mechanics is God's. There is not a square inch of knowledge that doesn't belong to God.

### **The Son's Authority: From Mastery to Mystery**

It's humbling. We'll never know everything God could reveal to us. But it's also inspiring; a robust doctrine of revelation frees us from thinking we have to master all truth. Thank God we don't have to group and utilize all of the world's information. God wants to move us from the drudgery of mastering it all to the joy of mystery—the joy of discovery. This is the difference between studying a novel for a test and enjoying a novel with a friend. You don't have to memorize every player's stats to appreciate a good baseball game. You don't need to know astrophysics to gaze in wonder at the stars. And you don't have to master theology in order to know God and enjoy him. You only need to live in his world with listening ears.

Has your leadership journey become drudgery? Try reading about and exploring God's world outside the disciplines you typically study. Stray away from theology and ministry books for just a bit. Put down the commentaries for a day or two. Do you like film? Pick up a book on cinematography. Do you like football? Pick up Mark Schlabach's captivating biography of John Heisman.<sup>34</sup> Read about business or cultural anthropology. But don't be surprised if exploring the world raises questions that drive you back to the Bible and deeper into the mystery of leadership. It should.

Theology is the queen of the sciences because the Bible is our authority.<sup>35</sup> Where do we learn to live life in God's world? Where do we learn to love, trust, and obey God? We learn this in the Bible (Ps. 119:11, 104–5). Paul tells us, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for *every* good work" (2 Tim. 3:16–17). The Bible is true. The Bible is inerrant. The Bible is our rule. The Bible is sufficient to equip God's people for all of life.

The most important thing about the Bible is that it tells us the story of Jesus (Luke 24:27). Jesus is the Lord of the Bible. He gives the Bible its authority. The Bible is not primarily a book of doctrines, a manual of theological answers for life's big questions. As Geerhardus Vos stated, "The Bible is not a dogmatic handbook but a historical book full of dramatic interest."<sup>36</sup> When we say that the Bible is sufficient, we don't mean that it teaches us everything God would have us know. What we mean is that it is sufficient for revealing Christ, and Jesus's story gives us our worldview, our lens for explaining life in God's world. The Scriptures are sufficient because, in their unity and clarity, they give us the big picture that helps us understand the big questions we have about life.<sup>37</sup> The Son's Word helps us look at the Father's world and live in it with sobriety, sanity, and skill.

When Christians feel anxious about "secular" learning and have a hostile posture toward the world, there's a fallacy you'll sometimes hear. It goes like this: "God's Word is authoritative and sufficient. So, we don't need any truth from the culture. We just need the Bible." But that completely misunderstands what theologians mean when we say the Bible is authoritative and sufficient. As John Frame states, "Scripture contains all the divine words needed for any aspect of human life."<sup>38</sup> John Piper explains it this way:

The sufficiency of Scripture does not mean that the Scripture is all we need to live obediently. To be obedient in the sciences we need to read science and study nature. To be obedient in economics we need to read economics and observe the world of business. To be obedient in sports

we need to know the rules of the game. To be obedient in marriage we need to know the personality of our spouse. To be obedient as a pilot we need to know how to fly a plane. In other words, the Bible does not tell us all we need to know in order to be obedient stewards of this world.<sup>39</sup>

The Bible was never meant to be a manual for surgeons or auto repair. The Bible is not a book of leadership methods that, when implemented properly, will change the world. To the overly fundamentalist religious leaders in his own time, Jesus said, “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me” (John 5:39). The Pharisees knew the Old Testament inside and out. They had all the information, but couldn’t see what was right in front of them. Those religious leaders wanted to have the Bible as a book of quick religious solutions. They didn’t want the more complex and difficult answer—living in the Father’s world with Jesus as their lens.

Let’s confess our sins together. We want quick-fix answers for all the world’s problems. Father, forgive us. We’ve reduced Christianity to a privatized religion for elite fixers. Christ, have mercy. We’ve adopted a form of spirituality that is abstracted from embodied life in the real world.<sup>40</sup> God, have mercy on us.

Unlike the faithless Pharisees, we do acknowledge Jesus’s authority, but we construct our theology with solutionist proof texts.<sup>41</sup> We want a 140-character, Tweet-able gospel. We acknowledge biblical authority, but then we make the Word a manual of methods. We reach for answers before questions have been fully asked. We’ve assumed that doctrine is flatly revealed in the Bible with little difference in meaning between a first-century and twenty-first-century context—supposing that theological truth is culturally neutral. This assumption impacts our understanding of theological education, Bible translation, and church planting. We’re unaware of our cultural bias—thinking that what works in Tennessee will also work in Thailand.

We look to the *professor* leader with his big library and quick answers, and we think he’s the definition of biblical conviction. In reality, he’s a distortion. Our Christian solutionism is dangerous, because, like



the Silicon Valley version, it's permeated with a misplaced eschatological hope. The buzz about the latest conference, book, and blog is that they'll help us "reach up to the heavens." But that's not the message of the Bible. It's the message of Babel (cf. Gen. 11:4–7). We somehow think that knowing the right answers will bring the kingdom. We believe that having the right information will bring salvation. But while solutionism may work in principle, it fails in practice. Ministry doesn't function as simply as we hoped, so we just get angry, frustrated, and overwhelmed. Like the Pharisees, we think that life is about mastering the Bible. Convictional leaders haven't mastered the Bible. The Bible has mastered them.

The Bible gives us the storyline of redemptive history—a worldview complex enough to provide an explanation for all of reality. The Bible tells us that God made mankind in his image to reflect his nature and cultivate his rule in the world. It tells us that Adam and Eve rebelled against God and that human nature since their time has been hostile toward God and his ways. The Bible's story explains the world's great achievements and humanity's great atrocities. As Richard Lints says, "The Bible, in its form and its content, records the dramatic story of God reaching into human history and redeeming a people for himself."<sup>42</sup> And the Bible promises us that God the Son one day will return to restore our broken world. It's a story that explains our longing for a better future.

We can think about the Bible's storyline in terms of four movements: creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Timothy Paul Jones writes, "For believers in Jesus Christ, the same old story of God's work in human history is what continually reveals the truth about our world and us. It is through this story that God forms, reforms, and transforms our lives."<sup>43</sup>

Imagine if your church or Christian ministry read the Bible differently. What if we began to view the world with a nuanced and flexible perspective—one that takes into account the complexity of reality? The Son's Word provides us with a worldview that allows us to incorporate business and sociological principles into our leadership with discern-

### God's Storyline\*

- *Creation.* God created the cosmos and positioned Adam and Eve as corulers under him to rule and care for his world (Gen. 1:26–31). By establishing limitations on humanity's choices, God demonstrated that he remained the sovereign ruler and King of the universe (Gen. 2:15–16).
- *Fall.* Adam and Eve sinned and ceased to subject themselves willingly to God's reign. God exiled the first family from Eden and revealed his plan to redeem and reign over humanity through the offspring of Eve (Gen. 3:15–24). The story of Israel is the story of God's preservation of the people through whom he would bring this royal seed into the world.
- *Redemption.* Through Jesus the Messiah and King, God broke the power of the curse that resulted from the fall and of the condemnation that came through the law (Gal. 3:10–14). Through his suffering on the cross, Jesus endured God's wrath in the place of sinful humanity (Rom. 5:9–11). Through his resurrection on the third day, Jesus demonstrated his royal triumph over death—a triumph that, though already real and true, will not be fully realized or recognized until the end of time (1 Cor. 15:20–28).
- *Consummation.* In his own time and way, God will consummate the reign that Jesus Christ, the “King of kings” (Rev. 19:16), has already inaugurated. The city of God will descend to earth. God himself will dwell among his people and make all things new (Rev. 21:1–5).

\* Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan, 2011), 72.

ment. It gives us the lens to see what is wheat and what is chaff. Let's think about leadership in light of the biblical storyline:

Where do we see evidence of God's *creation* in leadership? The world of leadership has God's creative fingerprints all over it. Historically, leadership has developed through two streams—community and commerce.<sup>44</sup> These are gifts we can trace back to the garden. When God said, “Let us make man in our image,” he was creating the first man and woman for community (Gen. 1:26–27). When God placed the man in the garden to work and take care of it (Gen. 2:15), he made him a worker

and gave him a vocation. Rick Langer observes, “Leading is normal human activity.”<sup>45</sup> God ordained people to rule the created order. At times that includes leading other people to accomplish God’s purposes.

Where do we see evidence of the *fall* in leadership? Everywhere. People use their gifts of leadership to pursue money, power, and sex. That’s why we have to lock up CEOs for insider trading. That’s why politicians are always apologizing for scandals. And that’s why pastors are constantly being fired or dividing churches. This is the corrupting world system John warned us against—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15–17). The gifts of leadership are given by God to enable us to be stewards. We must reject all forms of leadership that seek to exploit the creation and other people in it for personal gain.<sup>46</sup>

Where do we see evidence of *redemption* in leadership? For one thing, we should see that leadership itself is a grace. God makes leaders. God gives leadership. Further, we must see that God sends leaders with a purpose. He sends them to change or alter conditions that are not pleasing to him, whether that is, as Langer states, “slavery in Egypt or slothfulness in Crete (Ex. 3:7–9; Titus 1:5, 12–13).” That’s why God sent Jesus. At the climax of the Bible’s storyline, God entered into the broken human culture. He made paraplegics walk and made the blind to see. He met real human needs in their embodied expressions. He gave up his life as a bodily sacrifice for sins so the Father’s purpose to justify for himself a people and the creation might be fulfilled.<sup>47</sup>

Where do we see evidence of *consummation* in leadership? Leadership has a goal. All great leadership shines a light ahead to God’s ultimate purposes. We know this. Preachers are called to lift the eyes of their congregation toward their final calling and destiny. Leaders move their congregation toward substantial change today with hope for final transformation on the horizon.

### **The Spirit’s Work: From “Finding Your Voice” to Hearing the Voice of God**

Lack of clarity is a great downfall for a leader. A recent study shows that clear communication makes a leader 40 percent more effective. A

leader is perceived to be more credible when he is clear about his most “deeply held beliefs—the values, standards, ethics, and ideals—that drive him.”<sup>48</sup> In other words, before you can become a credible leader, you must find your voice. This requires knowing what you care most about, what defines you, and what makes you who you are.<sup>49</sup>

Christian leaders, before we can find our own voice, we need to hear the voice of God. So the first and most important leadership skill we need to learn is the skill of listening—listening for God’s voice.



### Listening

Listening is seeking to hear and understand God’s voice in his world, Word, and works.

- *This does involve listening to our inner self.* We hear God speak through our consciences. We’re embodied beings, so although his voice is dampened by our sin, we can even hear God speak in our longings and desires.
- *Beyond ourselves, we listen to God speak in nature*, in its beauty and its brokenness. Creation’s glory echoes God’s glory. We hear his greatness in the mountains’ grandeur, and we taste his richness in a glass of wine. We hear God speak in the midst of loss and disability. The Father’s world cries out for redemption. We hear his voice through the world’s praises and laments.
- *We listen for God’s truth in the world*, believing that he has revealed himself to all people by common grace. We can listen to the world of psychology, medicine, and sociology for evidence of his voice. God is speaking even there.
- *We listen for the Holy Spirit as he speaks through the church.* God’s voice sharpens us when God’s people confront our sin. We hear his voice encourage us as we listen to testimonies about how God is at work in people’s lives. We’re built up as we hear his wisdom sung in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
- *We listen for the Holy Spirit as he prompts our hearts*, convicting us of our sin and our preconceived notions about life and leadership. We hear his voice in our inward groaning. He speaks for us even when we don’t know what to pray for.
- *Most importantly, the Holy Spirit illumines our understanding of the Bible.* He gives us understanding and convicts us that what God says in his Word is true.<sup>50</sup>



We listen for God's voice in the world. We listen to our inner self. We hear God speak through our consciences. We're embodied beings, so although his voice is dampened by our sin, we can even hear God speak in our longings and desires. Beyond ourselves, we listen to God speak in nature, in its beauty and its brokenness. The glory of creation echoes God's glory. We hear his greatness in the mountains' grandeur, and we taste his richness in a great feast. We hear God speak in the midst of loss and disability. The Father's world cries out for redemption. We hear his voice speaking through the world's praises and laments. We believe that God has revealed himself to all people by common grace. We can listen to the world of government and business for truth about leadership, because God is speaking even there.

Most importantly, we listen for God's voice in his Word. The biblical storyline doesn't just provide us with a framework for understanding leadership in general. The story provides the lens for helping us live our personal leadership story as well. Redemptive history intersects with our personal history.

*Listening for God's voice in his world is hard for us, because as leaders (and sinners) we like to hear ourselves talk.* Listening requires our silence. We must quiet our expectations and try to hear others speak. We must quiet our hearts. I need to soothe the anxiety I feel when I'm trying to have quiet time but feel like I'm not getting enough done. We must listen well if we're going to hear God's voice in the noise.

*Listening for God's voice in his Word is also hard, because the Bible judges our leadership.* It exposes our arrogance, our greed, and our lust for power.<sup>51</sup> It shows us where we've reduced God's truth. It shows us where we've disconnected truth from reality and where we've failed to put it into practice. We need to stand under God's authoritative Word, and we need to receive the wounds it brings. Richard Lints puts it like this: "God's voice seems strange to us, different. It has a haunting ring to it. Its redemptive quality is paradoxically wrapped in clothes of judgment. The voice reveals God and it reveals us—only too painfully."<sup>52</sup>

*Listening for God's voice is also hard because one of the consequences*

*of sin is that it has darkened our ability to understand (Rom. 1:21).* Abraham Kuyper dedicates an entire chapter of his *Principles of Sacred Theology* to the topic of “Science and Sin.” He tells us that sin’s effects aren’t limited to the sphere of our choices and will. Sin also affects our ability to perceive. We all must admit that our background, context, and experience affect our perspective on life. Our interests govern our outlook. As Kuyper says, “Everybody preaches for his own parish.”<sup>53</sup> Self-interest darkens a person’s ability to hear what his spouse is really saying. A leader’s experience and perspective may prevent her from seeing an issue from her coworker’s point of view. In the same way, we struggle to hear God’s voice in his world and Word because our expectations cloud our ability to hear. Hoping the Bible will say one thing, I am often disillusioned that it says something else. So I interpret it to mean something that was never intended. I listen but I’m not really listening.<sup>54</sup>

*Listening is hard for us because we’re bad at loving.* We listen best to what we love the most. Lints says, “Our knowledge of God is impoverished to the extent that he is not always our first love.”<sup>55</sup> Kuyper explains it this way: “A friend of children understands the child and the child life. A lover of animals understands the life of the animal. In order to study nature in its material operations, you must love her. Without this inclination and desire toward the object of your study, you do not advance an inch.”<sup>56</sup>

Thankfully, the Bible gives hope to bad listeners and bad leaders. “Hope resides in the conviction that God has not left himself without a witness in our lives.”<sup>57</sup> That witness is the Holy Spirit. Jesus tells us that the Father sends the Spirit in order to “bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” (John 14:26). One of the first works of the Holy Spirit is to help us hear God’s voice. He gives us understanding about what God has spoken.<sup>58</sup>

The Holy Spirit helps us hear God’s voice because he warms our hearts toward God and helps us love him. He clarifies our convictions as our thoughts, words, and deeds are captivated and captured by his love.<sup>59</sup>

## **Convictional Leaders Model the Way**

In November 2006, Sojourn moved into its first building. We called it the 930 Art Center. The renovated public school housed our church offices, gathering place, and children's ministry area. But we also saw the building as a community center. For our first few years there, the 930 operated a public gallery space for local artists and a music venue for local independent music artists. Our dreams and ambitions soared at the beginning. We wanted to break down the false divide between the secular and the sacred. We wanted to create natural connections between our church and our neighbors. We wanted to inspire curiosity about God's world and celebrate whatever was worth celebrating. We wanted to serve artists at various stages in their pursuits and meet their needs. Our mission statement described all this as "a shared space where people of various backgrounds and beliefs could come together for a shared vision of a more beautiful world." Sometimes these good desires found fulfillment. Sojourn's Director of Arts and Culture, Michael Winters, described it this way:

I'd like to think that occasionally, as people tried to make sense of why a church would host something like a giant cardboard fighter jet kissing a goose, or a concert by rough-around-the-edges bands like Shellac, their curiosity turned into a little bit of awe. One time, I remember watching a guy across the room in the glow of concert lights. He had gone through addiction, a divorce, and a dissatisfied relationship with another church. The previous church was strict, serious, and ungracious. Now, he was new to our church. His eyes lit up in the glory of live rock and roll, wonderfully confused at how this could be happening in a church, a church he would soon call "his" church. I doubt he'd credit that show as the reason he committed to our church community, but I'm sure it played a part. It made a qualitative difference. On some nights, the mixture of song and light and laughter was really beautiful.<sup>60</sup>

But in April 2008, a little over two years into the space, our vision began to crash. An article in a local paper opened with these words: "They're young, involved and socially aware—and they think being gay

is a sin.”<sup>61</sup> It was true. We hold to traditional biblical views on marriage and sexuality. These views have led to no shortage of public scorn and mockery, including a series of articles in the local press seeking to embarrass and shame us. It was painful. We couldn’t see the implications of standing firm on what we believe when it was happening. But the bad press eventually threatened the financial sustainability of the 930 arts-and-community-center ministry and led to its end.

Painfully, we learned that having convictions sometimes means losing friends and letting go of some dreams.

Convictional leaders work hard to align their actions with God’s voice even when there are consequences. Leaders must practice what they preach, because followers do what they see. Only when leaders embody and live out their foundational beliefs—only when they model the way—do they have credibility and integrity. As leadership scholars James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner explain it:

Words and deeds must be consistent. . . . Through their daily actions, [leaders] demonstrate their deep commitment to their beliefs and those of the organization. . . . “Leading by example is more effective than leading by command. If people see that you work hard while preaching hard work, they are more likely to follow you.” One of the best ways to prove that something is important is by doing it yourself and setting an example.<sup>62</sup>

Convictional leaders embody their foundational beliefs. God speaks. We hear from him, and we want to hear more. We ask questions of God’s Word and his world to help us understand. We listen for the Spirit and then we join his work. We test out God’s truth and discover how it works. We grow in skill and then call others to follow us as we follow Christ.

Living out your convictions *will* mean opposition. You can ask the prophet Jeremiah just how much the fire in his bones got him into trouble. But a leader’s character is forged as he lives in the Father’s world under the Son’s Word and as he listens to the Spirit. It’s Martin Luther’s classic paradigm: true knowledge is born out of trials. Luther





### Leadership Skill Set 1: Listening and Living

Embodying what you believe requires . . .

- *Listening.* Seek to hear God's voice in order to clarify your convictions.
- *Living it out.* Practice what you preach, because people do what people see.



said, "I myself . . . am deeply indebted to my papists that through the devil's raging they have beaten, oppressed, and distressed me so much. That is to say, they have made a fairly good theologian of me."<sup>63</sup> Luther knew that true conviction—true theology—is born out of obedience to God in the midst of life's fire. Conviction isn't born simply out of reading books. True conviction is born when you are facing sexual temptations. It's born when you are tempted as a leader to be greedy and arrogant. Convictions are most clear when continuing to take a stand means losing some friends or church members.<sup>64</sup>

I've been at Sojourn Community Church for seventeen years. As we've had an impact locally, we've also had a growing influence regionally and nationally. People sometimes ask me, "When are you going to move on?" I think what they mean by that is "When are you going to move on to the conference circuit or to work for a denominational entity or network?" But I believe the best thing I can do is stay grounded in a local community and model the mission.

I believe that everything God says in his world, in the Word, and through his people matters. Everything has a place. All of God's revelation is important. How do I show its importance? I must live it out. I must model the way. It doesn't mean much if I teach catechism to my kids but act cantankerously toward my neighbors. The best way for me to teach my kids about grace is to model grace. I don't come to know that a leader has passion for the lost through his programs or sermons. I see his passion for the lost in his presence with them over dinner laugh-

ing and engaging. I see it in the way he boldly speaks gospel truth even when he knows it won't be received. Leaders who live out their convictions gain credibility. Both philosophers and leadership experts confirm this reality. Søren Kierkegaard says, "If a person does not become what he understands, he does not really understand it."<sup>65</sup> John Kotter says, "Behavior from important people in an organization . . . overwhelms all other forms of communication."<sup>66</sup>

Conviction is essential because only a convictional leader can be followed with confidence. Until you are living out your core convictions, it's unlikely many will be inspired to follow you or sacrifice to make your leadership vision a reality.<sup>67</sup>

How about you? What do you believe? What are the truths that burn inside you? A conviction is a belief about which you are thoroughly convinced. It's a truth about which you can say, "I've heard from God." You stand on that truth, and you're willing to die for it.<sup>68</sup> What nonne-

## Chapter Summary

Leadership begins with *knowing where people need to go*. The first part of direction is having the integrity and credibility to lead with *conviction*.

<i>Leadership Vision</i>	<i>Trinitarian Doctrine</i>	<i>Leadership Skills</i>
<b>Convictional leaders</b> embody what they believe.	<b>Revelation:</b> God speaks. He makes himself known through his world, Word, and works.	Embodying what you believe requires . . . <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Listening.</i> Seek to hear God's voice in order to clarify your convictions.</li><li>• <i>Living it out.</i> Practice what you preach, because people do what people see.</li></ul>

gotiable convictions do you bring to the organization you lead? What are you willing to be fired for? What would you die for?

Have you heard God's voice? Do you believe that God has spoken a word for you? Now is the time to trust him and put your belief into practice. Don't just say you believe it. Practice what you preach. Be a convictional leader. Live it out. Model the way.

## **Exercises**

Here is a selection of ideas and activities to help you practice the leadership vision discussed in this chapter. Pick out one or two and incorporate them into your regular leadership rhythms.<sup>69</sup>

1. Choose a quiet place. Stretch. Breathe deep. Sit in a comfortable position, then release your anxieties and task list to the Lord. Ask him to open your heart to his Word. Read Psalm 19. What feelings do you notice in yourself? Attend to what the Lord is saying to you about his Word.
2. Get out of your office and take a walk outside. The lilies and birds spoke to Jesus about God's care (Matt. 6:26–31). How is God speaking to you? Write it down.
3. Call a chaplain and then prayer-walk through the halls of a local hospital. What is God saying to you through those who are suffering and serving? Is God inviting you to any act of obedience?
4. Ask the members of your ministry team to reflect on their most deeply held convictions and priorities. Then meet together and share what you've come up with. Talk about how to better align your leadership with your foundational beliefs.
5. One of the best indicators of our level of integrity is our calendar. If you lack clarity about what is most important, you will find yourself making compulsive decisions about your schedule. Fill out a time log every day for a month. Categorize what you spend your time on and record the amount you spend in key categories (e.g., work, family, personal development, hobbies). After the month is over, evaluate the way you use your time in light of your stated priorities.

**Prayer**

*Our only Father, humble us Mary-like before the cross of your Son, our Lord, Jesus of Nazareth, so that through the Spirit we may be joined in the one body, the church, thus becoming your one mighty prayer for the world. Gracious God, whose grace terrorizes and sustains us, we pray for courage as we begin this course. Invade our lives, robbing us of fear and envy so we might begin to trust one another and in the process discover a bit of the truth. In this serious business grant us the joy and humor that comes from your presence. And for your sake, save us from being dull. Amen.<sup>70</sup>*

Is the Christian life about **missions**, **discipleship**,  
**worship**, the **cross**, or the **kingdom**?



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## A VISION OF LEADERSHIP ROOTED IN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD

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