



HOW JESUS TRAINED LEADERS

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Every person or committee given the job of selecting potential leaders comes to the task with an agenda; a specific set of beliefs about leadership. There is usually a list of qualifications and a clear job description, plus other essential leadership qualities. Leadership is too serious to be left to chance.

I have seen job descriptions for selecting preachers that neither Jesus, Paul nor Timothy could qualify as candidates; neither could prophets like Jeremiah, Amos or Jonah measure up the standards dreamed up by persons or committees given the job of selecting leaders.

The church in many places has fallen into the trap of using standards for selecting leaders that aren't Bible based or in harmony with the tenor of Scripture. And few are trying to follow the example of Christ in selecting and training leaders.

In my opinion Jesus was the greatest leader ever to walk on the earth created by His Father. We have no record of Him having completed a leadership training course; yet, He not only was a great leader but a great trainer of leaders. He and His leadership team changed the course of history for time and eternity.

A casual reading of the Gospels reveals His leadership training techniques. He was a teacher come from God (John 3:1-3), which obviously gave Him an advantage no other leader had ever had, or has had since. Here is a brief listing of some of His methods in selecting and training leaders for a global mission:

1. He obviously knew He needed a leadership team; even as the Son of God He knew He could not do the work alone.
2. He knew what a leader needed in order to be effective and trainable for a global mission. He was concerned not so much with proven skills as with potential.
3. He selected men many would have overlooked as candidates for change agents in a worldwide movement.
4. Jesus went to where the men were engaged in work. He never approached a lazy or idle man to be on His leadership team (Mark 1:16).



5. He issued potential followers a personal invitation; He didn't work through an agency or committee recommendation list (Mark 1:17).
6. Jesus made the followers a clear promise: "I will make you fishers of men" (Mark 1:17). There was no doubt on the part of those who followed: they were going to have to change.
7. Jesus taught and trained His men chosen for leadership, not in a classroom or out of a manual; He trained them via the "discipling" process. He was continually with them and educated them out of a personal relationship.
8. Jesus' training method included the following qualities:
 - a. He demonstrated His love for them in word and deed.
 - b. He treated them as friends.
 - c. He obviously trusted them.
 - d. He took them into His confidence.
 - e. He opened His heart and soul to them.
 - f. He accepted their weaknesses.
 - g. He let them "rebuke" Him.
 - h. He challenged their thinking with parables.
 - i. He demonstrated ministry to them by the way He lived and served others.
 - j. He taught them numerous vital lessons.
 - k. He sent them on trial runs to practice what they had been taught by word and example.
 - l. Jesus practiced what He taught others to do.
 - m. He taught them how to pray.
 - n. He told them about the cross and suffering.
 - o. He served them—He washed their feet.
 - p. He taught them about the "secrets of the Kingdom of heaven."
 - q. He inspired them with heaven and warned them about hell.
 - r. He warned them about false teachers and even called some by name: scribes and Pharisees.
 - s. He asked them many questions on a variety of subjects.
 - t. He promised them hard times, suffering and even death if they followed Him.
 - u. He allowed them to fail—loved them anyway.
 - v. He assured them of success in the Father's eyes.
 - w. He taught them in order to be great you had to serve one another.
 - x. He died for them (and all people).
 - y. He gave them a global mission.



- z. He promised to be with them forever.
- aa. He sent them out in pairs.
- bb. He delegated authority to them.
- cc. He taught them about the importance of the church.
- dd. He taught them the importance of stewardship and handling money.
- ee. He taught them to deny self.
- ff. He taught them the urgency of the harvest.
- gg. He taught them, as He was doing, to do the Father's will.

What do we learn from this brief review of some of the methods Jesus used to train His leadership team? How can we apply them today? What are some of the challenges presented by Jesus' method of training leaders?