

## 10. The Biblical Foundation for Growth in Ministry Multiplication

The last four topics have looked at four of the five priorities that were given to Moses to help him develop godly leadership. We have seen that all four of these priorities are also priorities for helping our physical and spiritual children. The same is true for the fifth priority given to Moses. To review these five priorities as they apply to our children, we are to:

- Pray for our children
- Help our children grow in knowledge
- Help our children grow in godly character
- Help our children grow in ministry skills
- Share ministry with our children

Today, we will focus on the fifth of these priorities as we look at Biblical principles about sharing ministry with our children.

In Exodus 18:21, Moses was told, “Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.” Moses was told to share the ministry with qualified men. We are called to help our children become spiritually qualified and then share ministry with them so that they are being equipped for ministry throughout their lives. The verse begins by telling what character qualities Moses was to use as he developed and selected men to share the ministry. We need to develop these character qualities in our children if we want to see them develop an effective ministry as they mature.

First, Moses was told to select able men. The word that is translated “able” is used 244 times in the Old Testament. In Genesis 47:6 we read, “The land of Egypt is before you. Have your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land; let them dwell in the land of Goshen. And if you know any competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock.” Here, we see that the word is translated “competent” to be the chief herdsman over the livestock of Pharaoh. This meant that this person was able to lead others. In Proverbs 31:10, the female form is used to speak of the virtuous wife, “Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.” In these two verses, we see that these are people who have become qualified to lead others because of their ability and character. We want to help our children develop the character and the ability to lead others.

Second, Moses was told to select men that feared God. This speaks of having a reverence for God. We also want to help our children develop a reverence for God. This will usually only happen as our children see that we have a reverence for God. As they observe our example, there are two key characteristics that we want to develop in their lives so that they will become adults that fear God. In John 4:24, Christ told the Samaritan woman, “God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” Then, in Ephesians 4:15, we read, “But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ.” We help our children learn to fear God as we show them to speak the truth in love so that they develop spiritually and worship the Lord in spirit and in truth.

Third, Moses was told to select men of truth. Christ told how we develop people so that they speak the truth in John 8:31-32. Those verses say, “Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’” Our children become people who are able to speak the truth as we show them, by example, the importance of abiding in the Word of God. As we help our children learn to abide in the Word of God by studying it with them, memorizing it with them, showing them how to meditate on the Word and helping them learn how to apply the Word of God to their lives, these verses tell us that the Word of God will also set them free.

This statement that the Word of God will set them free is a key to understand. Genesis 3:10 says, “So he said, ‘I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.’” When Adam sinned, he became controlled by fear, guilt and shame. Every person since Adam has been motivated by that same fear, guilt and shame. Christ wants to transform our children and sent them free from those original consequences of sin. Galatians 5:13 explains what this freedom will do for their lives when it says, “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” As our children grow in their understanding of the liberty they have in Christ, they will become individuals that are led by love instead of being individuals that are driven by fear.

Fourth, Moses was told to select men that hated covetousness. 1 Timothy 6:6-8 says, “Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.” Here, we see that we want to show our children how to be content with what the Lord has given them. Then, 1 Timothy 6:9-10 says, “But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” Here, we see that the desire for riches leads people to fall into temptation and a snare and those are things that we want our children to learn to avoid in their lives.

Fifth, Moses was to select people to be leaders of groups of various sizes. The basic unit for group leadership is ten as Moses was told to select leaders of tens, fifties, hundreds and thousands. One of the things that we want to show our children is to learn how to lead a group of ten people. Then, if we also show them how to develop each of those ten people so that they can learn to lead a group of ten, we will multiply their ministry and service for the Lord.

A key principle for helping our children learn to lead a group of ten people is given in Mark 10:42-45, where we read, “But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, ‘You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.’” We help our children learn to become godly leaders by showing them how to become a slave to all.

A person who drives people will drive them until they can get out of the way. A person that leads people can lead them as far as he himself has gone. A person who serves people can help them develop their full potential. As we show our children how to serve other people and help those people develop their full potential, we are equipping them to lead a team. Then, in order to lead a team effectively, they need to understand their purpose in life.

We help our children develop a purpose in life as we show them how to put 1 Corinthians 10:31 into practice in their lives. That verse says, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” As we help our children become focused on bringing glory to God in all they do, the Lord is able to work in their lives and through their lives in a mighty way. We need to show our children that God is able to work in their lives and then through their lives. Then, we need to help them to understand that the Lord wants to make their lives count for eternity. Many parents push their children toward worldly success. We must choose to lead our children to build a loving relationship with Christ that will give them the power to impact the lives of others for eternity. As a boy, a statement I often heard from my parents was, “Only one life will soon be past. Only what’s done for Christ will last.” Our desire as parents should be to realize that we can help our children learn to make their lives count for eternity.

Ephesians 3:20-21 says, “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” Paul spoke these words after he gave five things that he prayed for the Christians in Ephesus. Paul prayed for the following five things for his spiritual children:

1. That they would be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.
2. That Christ would dwell in their hearts by faith.
3. That they would be rooted and grounded in love.
4. That they would know the love of Christ that passes knowledge.
5. That they would be filled with all the fullness of God.

Paul knew that as he regularly prayed for these things to become true in the lives of his spiritual children, the Lord would do great things in their lives and through their lives. In fact, the Lord would do far more than they could ever imagine, because it would be the power of the Lord instead of their human strength that would be working in their lives. The result would be that they would also bring glory to Christ by what the Lord accomplished through their lives. May the Lord richly bless you as you pray for the spiritual growth of your children and show them how to develop and lead a team that can work together to serve the Lord.