

BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP AS A MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

Leadership is seen as the capacity to influence, inspire, rally, direct, encourage, motivate, induce, mobilize and activate others to pursue a common goal while maintaining commitment, momentum, confidence and courage. Therefore, leaders in any group should refine, reflect, and reconstruct acceptable and agreeable standards of development. But in Nigeria, it is obvious that poor leadership is the major problem of development. So, the major argument of this paper is that for any meaningful development to take place in Nigeria, it requires a functional leadership. This implies that the quality of leadership in Nigeria determines the level of our national development. This research aimed at finding out what leadership is all about. This paper discusses Biblical leadership as a model for the development of Nigeria. It aimed at finding out the types of leadership and biblical leadership as a model for a good leadership. This study aims to provide a framework for effective leadership that can foster sustainable development in Nigeria. The research found out that leadership is the problem of underdevelopment in our society. It also found out that lack of transparency, accountability and consistency, as well as institutional weaknesses such as in the legislative and judicial systems, provide fertile ground for growth of corrupt/bad leadership in Nigeria. Observation method, primary and secondary methods were used. It was recommended that those found guilty will be sanctioned without mercy.

Introduction

Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, has struggled to realize its full potential due to ineffective leadership. The country's development has been hindered by corruption, poor governance, and a lack of vision. As a result, Nigeria continues to grapple with challenges such as poverty, inequality, and infrastructure deficits. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in exploring alternative leadership models that can address these challenges. One such model is biblical leadership, which is rooted in the principles and values of the Bible. This article argues that biblical leadership offers a unique and effective framework for leadership in Nigeria's development by examining the characteristics and principles of biblical leaders. This study aims to provide insights into how Nigerian leaders can adopt a more effective and sustainable approach to leadership. There are some negative elements which affect the administrative effectiveness in Nigeria. These include: tribal affinity, religious bigotry, and corruption. Instability in governance, ethnic/religious rivalry, constant conflicts and institutionalized fraud are pointers to an administrative laxity. The Nigerian leadership problem emanated from a short-sighted ethnic consciousness. This was as a result of immaturity with which these ethnic differences are handled. The splitting of the country into regions after the first republic for easier governance instead of serving its purpose of grassroots development became a weapon of disintegration which led Nigeria to the civil war. Okoye A. C. (2009), in his book 'Nigeria and the Crises of Development' states that, the quest for national

unity in Nigeria became a fact that may not be realized since this unity has been sacrificed on the altar of ethnicity, betrayed by marginalization and eternally walled off with suspicion by the event of the war between two nations living as one. In other words, Okoye's study highlights the complexities of achieving national unity in Nigeria, given the country's diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural landscape. There is marginalization directed against the others that are not from the same tribe. This indicates that the Nigerian problem began from the root.

The Nigerian leadership problem also resulted in the issue of zoning in the (PDP) People's Democratic Party, for the candidacy of the 2011 general elections. Since the country is now ethnically divided, it must be ruled in turns and not by the quality of who goes in but the tribe from where he comes. During the transition programme of 1998, the Nigerian leadership (led more by the northerner) accepted to compensate the west with leadership since M.K. Abiola who was seen to have won the election and commence leadership on June 12, 1993 was annulled by Gen. Ibrahim Babangida. Evidently, there is a sidelining of the justice and discipline which should have accompanied the act of transition. According to Hassan Kukah (2009), "...The 1998 transition programme initiated by the Gen. Abubakar regime did not commit itself to the philosophy and discipline underlining transitional justice. This left the nation with a vulnerable project. Liable to manipulation and fraud...The logic of transition goes this way...A cabal agreed that power had to go to Yoruba land since they had been wronged by the annulment of June 12, 1993 elections". Kukah's work emphasizes the importance of democratic governance, human rights, and the role of civil society in promoting national development. There is an apparent dishonesty and tribalism in the selection of the Nigerian leadership. Each leader in the Nigerian experience sum to perfect the agenda of his people thus there is an uneven development and gross in justice.

The abuse of human rights and gross mismanagement of funds show the impotence of law in solving certain ills in the society. According to Hassan Kukah (2009), after the military era in 1999, a legal body was set up - 'Oputa Panel', to investigate the crimes of the past dictators: this would have been an avenue for the law again to show its potency but it was stifled by the administrative imbalance of the leadership. In the Nigerian leadership, there is a neglect of the people's right and desires. The gap between the leaders and the people they led is much. The leaders have the responsibility to improve and better the life of the people instead they resorted to mindless and endless expenditures. One cannot expect anything other than penury, underdevelopment and furthermore crises and competition for survival. The leadership of Nigeria has its root in dictatorship, favouritism and corruption. This foundation of Nigerian administrative makes it difficult for any political and socio-economic development.

Need For Nigerian Development Through A Good Leadership And Responsible Governance

The Nigerian administration needs to be re-organized and stable for a sustainable development. We have political 'power' as the foundation for national development. Administrative power therefore, indicates a capacity to influence and control others. Persons vested with administrative powers have the function of controlling, influencing, manipulating and restructuring of the place under their charge. According to Talcott Parsons (1959), power is a systemic requirement that enables societies to achieve collective goals. He viewed power as a currency that facilitates getting things done, especially when there is resistance present. Parsons' perspective on political leadership highlights the importance of institutions in regulating and mediating power distribution through norms and regulations. This ensures the smooth functioning of society. In

essence, Parsons saw political leadership as an embedded aspect of the social system, rather than a characteristic of individual leaders.

The development of any state depends on the leader who by his power and position works effortlessly to achieve stability and order in that state. The success of a leader lies on the extent of development experienced in the state and by the people. For a positive result in development, the mindset of the people must be reconstructed and channeled positively into believing in the goodness of one's state. The development of a state is assessed in terms of the external impact from the environment. As a leader, one is acknowledged to develop his personality and develop the state as well. J. C. Johari (2006) emphasized the importance of self-development in leadership, stating that leaders must continually work on themselves to enhance their skills, abilities, and personal qualities. Johari highlighted that self-development is essential for leaders to: improve self-awareness, develop emotional intelligence, enhance cognitive abilities, build resilience and adaptability, and foster a growth mindset.

Nigeria runs a democratic system of government where power lies in the hands of the people who have the right to elect their leaders and representatives. Within the tenure of office, the leader is expected to actualize through his administration, what he had pledged as his operative plan. The Nigerian experience has not been very successful in the implementation of the administrative plan which translates eventually into development. The Nigerian past seem to have contributed immensely to the underdevelopment of the nation. The operation of the Nigerian leadership by virtue of tribal inclination seems to put a question mark on the unity of Nigeria. This problem however hinders the development of the country and also generates unrest and instability. The leaders that emerge from the Nigerian politics grow into a given platform which lacks the discipline, ideology and maturity required to govern a complex state such as Nigeria. This brought about the inability of the leader to build and handle issues objectively and equitably. This inability to perform draws the leaders into some illegitimate activities that are grounded by corrupt practices.

However, history of the leadership of Nigeria is filled with leaders who are corrupt, incompetent, rigid, intolerant, insensitive, callous, egoist, visionless and tribal. Little wonder, these leaders have not been able to harness the human and economic resources of the country to bring about an enviable development. The level of corruption in Nigeria seems to cut across all sectors of leadership making it impossible for anyone to check the other. The peoples quest for peace and provision could not be attained because the leadership focuses on himself, his group and a selected few. As a result of this, every sector of the country's system begins to suffer since less attention is paid to them. This problem of Nigeria can be fixed if only a more responsible and conscious leadership steps in.

Leadership Theory

Transactional and Transformational Leadership Theories:

James MacGregor Burns (1978) in his book "leadership", introduced the concepts of transformational and transactional leadership. Under transformational leadership, he described transformational leaders as those who: inspire and motivate followers to achieve a shared vision, who empowers followers to take ownership and make decisions, who foster a sense of community and experimentation, who lead by example, demonstrating high moral and ethical standards. Under transactional leadership, Burns characterized transactional leaders as those who: Focus on exchanging rewards and punishments for specific behaviours, who emphasize task completion and efficiency, who use power and authority to achieve goals, who prioritize stability and maintenance of status quo, who lead through formal authority and hierarchical structure. Burns argued

that transformational leadership is more effective in bringing about significant change and achieving long-term goals, while transactional leadership is better suited for maintaining stability and efficiency in established systems.

However, in his work, he used the term transforming, instead of transformational. Distinguishing between transactional and transforming styles of leadership, Burns notes that whereas transactional leadership focuses on exchanging extrinsic tangible rewards for the work and loyalty of followers and it “occurs when one person takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things. Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs was the inspiration behind Burn’s conception of the transformational theory. Maslow recognizes that the effectiveness of people depends on the degree to which their needs are met. In collaboration with Maslow, Burns aver that in raising the people to higher levels of motivation and morality, the transformational theory fits into and appeals to the higher needs of self-esteem and self-actualization on the hierarchy. Unlike transactional leadership which is based on “give and take” relationship, transforming leadership creates change by redesigning ideals, values, perceptions, expectations and aspirations of people. Burns is clearly the first theorist to introduce the concept of change into leadership theory as the goals of a leadership model. There are many other leadership theories but we will take that of Burns for its relationship to the topic at hand.

Leadership Styles

Three main types of leadership styles, namely, autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership shall be discussed in this section.

Autocratic Leadership

A leader who has complete control over his team is called an autocratic leader. They never bend their beliefs and rules for anyone. This form of leadership according to Swarup (2013), is often referred to as the classical approach. Swarup (2013) defined autocratic leadership as well-structured and qualified leadership style where one person has complete control and makes all the decisions. In this style, the manager is the most powerful entity, primary decision-maker, and authority, directing and controlling their team members. Swarup also noted that autocratic leadership is classical approach, where leaders are seen as good managers who oversee and guide their teams. Autocratic leaders are characterized as having little trust in their supporters. Autocratic leadership is a form of leadership where the leader decree rules and makes decisions without an initial consultation of his staff. This position was buttressed by Gordon (2013). In his argument Gordon states that: employees under autocratic leadership style are expected to follow the orders of their manager even if they do not agree or do not receive any explanation. She further stressed that rewards and punishments are major factors of bringing out the best out of the workers.

Laissez-faire Leadership

Laissez-Faire is derived from a French word that means ‘allow to do’. “The practice of non-interference in the affairs of others, especially with reference to individual conduct or freedom of action,’ (dictionary.com.). According to Alan (2013), laissez-faire leadership is a style of leadership characterized by: Minimal supervision and guidance, giving employees complete freedom to make decisions and take actions, avoiding direct involvement in decision-making processes, providing little or no feedback or evaluation, focusing on individual initiative and self-motivation.

Alan noted that laissez-faire leaders trust employees to make good decisions, encourage autonomy and independence, avoid micromanaging, focus on overall goals and outcomes rather than specific tasks. Alan suggested that laissez-faire leadership can be effective in certain situations, such as with highly motivated and experienced teams, but may not be so in all contexts or organizations. This further buttresses the fact that leaders can emerge from the lower cadre of employees. In this type of leadership, team members have the freedom to perform their job according to their will. They are given the freedom to bring in their perspective and intelligence in performing business functions.

Democratic Leadership

This type of leadership is referred to as a participative leadership. As the name implies, it is a type of leadership which takes into consideration the participation of workers. In collaboration with this, Johari (2008), described participative leader as ‘one who encourages the participation of staff in solving problems and decision making in a daily operational matters’. In this type of leadership, team members and leaders contribute to actualizing business goals. They work together and motivate each other to achieve their personal goals too. This type of leadership leads to a positive working environment.

The Concept Of Leadership

In his book “The trouble with Nigeria”, Chinua Achebe pointed out that the problem of Nigeria is with her leaders. Omolayo, (2006), defined Leadership as ‘a kind of direction, which a person can give to a group of people under him in such a way that these will influence the behaviour of another individual, or group’. In other words, Omolayo emphasizes that leadership is not just about occupying a position, but rather about inspiring, motivating, and empowering others to work towards a common goal. Effective leaders possess certain qualities, skills, and attributes that enable them to inspire, motivate, and empower their followers (Cole 2000). CIPM (2013), emphasized the importance of leadership in achieving success in any organization or nation. They highlighted that leadership is crucial for individual members, and it’s a form of leadership where leaders prioritize the growth and development of their team members. Thom-Otuya, (2007), asserts that ‘Leadership is crucial to any successful organization or nation’. According to Ngambi (2001), leadership is a vital component of organizational success, and effective leaders possess certain qualities, skills, and attributes that enable them to inspire, motivate, and empower followers. He emphasizes the importance of visionary leadership, emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, servant leadership and contextual leadership. Ngambi (2011), as cited in Jeremy (2011), defined leadership as ‘a process of influencing others’ commitment towards realizing their full potential in achieving a value-added, shared vision, with passion and integrity. The nature of this influence is such that the members of the team cooperate voluntarily with each other to achieve the objectives which the leader has set for each member, as well as for the group’. According to R.J. House in Thom-Otuya (2007), ‘leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization of which they are members’. According to Jeremy (2011), effective leadership is not about achieving success through personal efforts, but about following Christ and being guided by His teachings. He stressed that true leadership is about serving others, rather than seeking power or recognition. Thom-Otuya emphasizes that effective leaders possess certain qualities, skills, and attributes that enable them to inspire, motivate, and empower their followers. He stresses the importance of building a positive and productive leader-follower relationship, which is characterized by mutual

trust, respect, and open communication. Armstrong (2012), defined leadership as a process of inspiring people to do their best in order to achieve desired result. He further stated that this involves developing and communicating a vision for the future, motivating people and securing their engagement. According to Utomi (2004), leadership is the art of mobilizing in a least cost manner to achieve a clear goal. Leadership is concerned with how the leader affects followers. According to Utomi (2004), leadership is crucial factor in driving social, economic, and political change in Nigeria. Utomi emphasizes that effective leadership requires a combination of vision, integrity, and the ability to inspire and empower.

According to Keith Davis, Leadership is the ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives enthusiastically. It is the human factor which binds a group together and motivates it towards goals. Leadership according to online dictionary is “the capacity of someone to lead”. The idea of leadership is tied to administration and guidance. Leadership is a responsibility of governance and a vocation of administration, guidance and direction of a particular group by a selected head. Good leadership entails a leap into the ability of decision making. Bad leadership lies in the inability of proper decision making which also consists in not having a firm ground for a particular leader’s decision. Plato pointed out wisdom as the bedrock of good leadership. The Lockean idea of leadership as per a leader being the keeper of the law and being a servant to the people are some worth adoptable to the democratic system of governance as we run here in Nigeria.

Concept Of A Leader

A leader is one who equips, trains, and influences one or more follower(s) to willingly and enthusiastically expend spiritual, emotional, and physical energies in a concerted coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives. The development of the lead is placed in the hands of the leader. A leader must guide the people placed under him and he must provide for them and ensure there is relative peace and quiet within his constituency. The success or failure of the state lies in the hands of the leader. A leader must be a person of substance and energetic in character. A leader is faced with daily challenges of decisions which could permanently make or mar the progress, peace and security of a particular state under his charge. A leader often times finds himself in a state hurting the people to get the best solution to the problem.

John Locke (1942) held that leaders derive their authority from the consent of the governed, rather than from divine right or inherent power. Locke argued that the primary responsibility of leaders is to protect the natural rights of citizens, including life, liberty, and property. Locke emphasized that leaders are accountable to the people and should be subject to checks and balances to prevent abuse of power. Locke advocated for limited government, where leaders do not have absolute power and are restricted by laws and institutions. Locke believed that leaders should possess virtue and wisdom, and should prioritize the common good over personal interests.

Leaders motivate people. They concentrate on the personal development of their team besides working towards achieving organizational goals. They envision their team’s future growth and work towards achieving that. A leader analyses and assesses every situation to achieve new and better results. Pierce and Newstrom (2011) state that: Leaders are individuals who are capable of taking ambiguous situations, interpreting these situations, and framing for the followers an understanding of the situation and what needs to be done to move forward. John Newstrom (2011), emphasized that leadership is a continuous process of learning, growth, and self-development. He stressed the importance of self-awareness in leaders, including understanding their strengths, weaknesses, values, and emotions. He noted that effective leaders are able to inspire and

motivate their followers by creating a shared vision, setting clear goals, and providing feedback and coaching. The best parameter to measure the success of a leader is how successful the people he leads are. Jeb Blount (2012) states thus: As a leader, if your team succeeds, you succeed. If your team fails, you fail. So, it follows that your job is to help your people succeed. Through leading, managing and coaching, you must create an environment in which they can develop their skills, leverage their talents and win. You must remove roadblocks so that they can get the job done. You need them more than they need you. Anything that you do to impede their success hurts you. According to Milan Kurber (2005), followers are likely to resist the change initiated by a leader if they lack conviction, that is, the leader is not able to convince them, dislike the imposed change, dislike surprise, entertain the fear of the unknown, are reluctant to deal with unpopular issue, have the fear of inadequacy and failure, do not trust their leader. Leadership position is a call to service and one must not go into it simply because he is persuaded to go for it and when he knows that he cannot carry the load.

Qualities/Attributes Of A Good Leader

Be knowledgeable: A leader must be a man/woman of good knowledge. He must know what the people do not know. He is a teacher and his people are his students. If a teacher does not know better than his students, there are bound to be problems in the class which will sometimes lead to confrontation. The knowledge here is the ability to know what the real problem is and how to tackle it. Plato in Makinde (2002), emphasis this in his book; Republic.

Be a man of Principle: Principle is another attribute of a good leader. Leaders are driven by principles and they are known by their principles. Blount (2012) lays emphasis on principle as 'a driving force of great leaders'. According to Blount; Great leaders rely on firm set of principles and values. Principles are basic truths, morals and ethical standards. We are inherently guided by our principles. Principles make leaders to be focused and committed to their goals even when events are not to their best wishes but they continue to follow them mainly because they are aware that people have identified them with those principles and that they can easily predict their reactions and responses to given situations.

Vision and ability to communicate: Leaders are visionaries. They have a clear idea of what they want and how to achieve it. Being good communicators, leaders can share their vision with the team successfully. Roger (2012) states that: Leadership is about vision and having the courage to do the right thing. The power of vision is the ability to see the future from the present. Apart from having vision, a leader must possess the ability to communicate the vision to his disciples and the people he leads. It is the understanding and the sharing of the vision that would make the people to follow the leader's direction and instruction. Most leaders fail not because they do not have good and correct vision but because they lack the capacity to communicate the vision to the people they lead. Leaders are known to do well when they are connected to the people they lead. Being connected to the people implies that a leader shares in the pains and gains of the people. He is happy when they are happy, and sorrowful when they are in sorrow. In fact, the happiness of the people is the joy of a good leader. Blount (2012) states on the point of being connected thus: Most important, when your people are connected to you, they will be willing to accept your training, coaching, feedback, direction and vision which are critical to getting them in position to win. Strong connections are hard to break and they are the foundations of truly prosperous, long-term relationships built on mutual trust.

Quality service: Another attribute of a good leader is having the mind to serve. The Lord Jesus told His disciples that any of them that desired to lead must be ready to serve.

Leadership is a call to service and anyone coming to leadership position must bear that at the back of his mind. A more reason why good leaders are rare is because they value their positions more than the responsibilities attached to the positions. According to Greenleaf, as quoted by Roger (2012): the servant-leader is servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. He or she is sharply different from the person who is a leader first perhaps because of the need to assuage power drive or to acquire material possessions. It follows, therefore, that any leader who fails to meet these basic standards cannot deliver and should therefore be regarded as a bad leader. Barbara (2004) listed some traits of a bad leader to include: incompetence, rigidity, intemperate, callousness, corruption, insular and evil.

Empathy: A leader should be an emotional and empathetic fellow because it will help him in developing a strong bond with his team. Furthermore, these qualities will help a leader in addressing the problems, complaints, and aspirations of his team members, a good leader should be objective.

Intelligence: A good leader must be intelligent enough to arrive at business solutions to difficult problems. Furthermore, a leader should be analytical and should weigh the pros and cons before making a decision. This quality can be polished with an all-inclusive leadership training program.

Creativity: A good leader is someone who is open to new ideas, possibilities, and perspectives. Being a good leader means understanding that there is no right way to do things. Therefore, a good leader is always ready to listen, observe, and be willing to change. They are also out-of-the-box thinkers and encourage their teams to do so. If you enroll for a leadership course, all these things will be a part of the curriculum.

Patient and inspirational: A good leader understands that a business strategy takes time to develop and bear results. Additionally, he also believes that 'continuous improvement and patient' leads to success. Leaders are self-motivating, and this makes them great influencers. They are a good inspiration to their followers. They help others to understand their roles in a bigger context.

Flexible: Since leaders understand the concept of 'continuous improvement, they also know that being adaptable will lead them to success. Hence, being flexible and intuitive helps a manager to hold his ground during complex situations.

Concept Of Biblical Leadership

Mike Ayers (2021) defined a biblical leader as a person of *character* and *competence* who influences a *community* of people to achieve a God-honoring calling by means of the power of **Christ**. Mike Ayers (2021) stated that biblical leaders must possess a strong moral compass, with qualities like honesty, courage, integrity, humility, perseverance, and decisiveness. These traits flow from a deeper structure within the individual and are connected to their identity in Christ. Biblical leaders according to Ayers are driven by a sense of purpose received from God, rather than self-centered ambition. This calling provides focus, accountability, and endurance in the face of challenges. He also stated that effective biblical leaders possess skills that complement their character, such as communication, delegation, and project management. These competencies are developed through a combination of natural abilities, spiritual gifts, and experience. Biblical leadership according to Ayers is centered on transforming lives and building relationships within the community. He also stated that ultimately, biblical leadership relies on the power of Christ, rather than human strength or wisdom. This leadership is a walk of faith, trusting in God's guidance and empowerment. Biblical leadership is distinctly different from that described and defined by the world. The distinct on above

help Christian leaders understand the unique way the Bible describes one person's influence upon another, the motivation behind that influence, the eventual outcome of that influence, and the source of power to guide and sustain that influence.

Biblical leadership is defined by Jesus in the Bible. Biblical leadership is servant-leadership. The leadership must always be a walk of faith. It is a leadership acted upon with trust in God. This accomplishes through the humble and obedient leader that which can only be ascribed to God's ability. In the end, the leader sees limitless possibilities for what can be achieved. When the task is complete it is God, not the leader, who receives the glory.

In the book of Matthew 20:25-28, Jesus teaches about leading, authority, and service:

But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great one's exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ... even as the son of man came not to be served but to give his life as a ransom for many. (ESV)

Biblical leadership is different from that of the world. Leading and authority and service in the Kingdom of God is about submission and service. Servant-leader is exemplified in John 13:2-17: when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. "...when he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them..." (NIV) Jesus, the ultimate servant-leader, demonstrated leadership by humbling service.

Possibly the saddest occurrence coinciding with the rise of the study of leadership in the twentieth century was the drift of God's people away from the Bible as the standard of truth. The church, like the world, bought into the "whatever works" paradigm. Thus, the widespread, secular notions about leadership became pervasive and difficult for God's people to withstand. This eventually led to the people of God accepting the wholesale assumptions of worldly leadership, and the church began to take its leadership cues from a secular culture. The problem still exists today. The business sector in particular is celebrated as the ultimate source of truth about leadership—as opposed to God's Word.

Biblical leadership is needed now more than ever. As Christians, we have a unique and wonderful calling to address the leadership crisis—and we have solid ground on which to stand. If we will recommit ourselves to the standard of God's Word as opposed to taking our beliefs from the culture, we may catch a glimpse of the brilliant possibilities for biblical leadership and the stark, colorful difference this kind of leadership will make in the middle of a world full of shades of gray. If all the leaders toe the foot-step of Jesus Christ as a model leader, things will come to normal.

Biblical leadership is about serving others. According to Raphael Warnock, (2015) Biblical leadership is about serving others, not seeking power or authority. He emphasizes that true leaders must prioritize justice, equality, and compassion, reflecting the value of the gospel. Leadership is not about position, privilege, or power. Biblical leadership is not about self, but about others. A Biblical leader asks how others can be served, how their needs can be met, how others can be lifted. Service is about seeing a

need and meeting a need. It is personal. It is giving. It is other-oriented. Biblical leadership is about selflessness and sacrifice. Warnock (2015) highlights the importance of humility and selflessness in leadership. He believes that leaders should be willing to listen, learn, and adapt, rather than imposing their own will on others. The Biblical leader's core attitude and motivation are selflessness and sacrifice. It is selfless and sacrificial if it costs the leader and benefits others. Biblical leadership is about pointing people to God. The aim is to point people to God. The lost need God and pointed to God for the gospel of Jesus Christ. They need the salvation, forgiveness, and acceptance in Jesus. The saved, Christians, need God and pointed to God for the Lordship of Jesus, surrendering to Jesus' leadership, submitting to God's commands, principles. Leadership is seen as the capacity to influence, inspire, rally direct, encourage, motivate, induce, mobilize and activate others to pursue a common goal while maintaining commitment, momentum, confidence and courage.

Characteristics And Principles Of Biblical Leaders

Biblical leaders, as depicted in the Bible, possess certain characteristics and principles that enabled them to lead and inspire others effectively .

1. **Servant leadership:** Biblical leaders prioritized serving others, rather than seeking power or personal gain. They recognized that leadership was not about self-aggrandizement, but about serving others. Example was Jesus' teaching on servant leadership in Mark 10:45, where he says that the Son of Man came to serve, not to be served. We can also see that on (Exodus 3:10-12) about Moses, (1 Samuel 23:1-12), about David. These leaders demonstrated servant leadership by putting the needs of others before their own. They prioritized serving God and serving others.
2. **Legacy and Stewardship:** Biblical leaders viewed their positions as temporary, recognizing that they were stewards of God's resources. They prioritized responsible management of resources and recognized their accountability to God. Biblical leaders demonstrated a concern for their legacy and stewardship. Example is the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30, where the master holds his servants accountable for their management of his resources. David's prayer for his successor Solomon, is a notable example (1Chronicles 29:10-19). This principle highlights the importance of recognizing that leadership is not just about personal achievements but about the impact one has on others and the legacy one leaves behind.
3. **Justice and Fairness:** Biblical leaders promoted justice, fairness, and equality. They recognized the importance of treating others with dignity and respect. The prophet Micah wrote, "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). This principle highlights the importance of promoting justice, fairness, and equality in all aspects of leadership.
4. **Integrity and Accountability:** Leaders like Daniel (Daniel 1:8-21, 6:1-28) and Joseph (Genesis 39:1-23, 41:1-57) showed integrity by standing firm in their values and being accountable for their actions. They demonstrated transparency, honesty, and moral uprightness.
5. **Humility and Self-Awareness:** Biblical leaders like king Solomon (1 Kings 3:1-15) and the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 15:9-10) demonstrated humility by

recognizing their limitations and seeking guidance from God. They acknowledged their weaknesses and dependencies.

6. **Vision and Purpose:** 4:1-17, 5: 1-14) had a clear vision and purpose, which guided their decision-making and actions. They were driven by a sense of mission and destiny. Leaders like Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1:1-11, 2:1-20) and Esther (Esther 4:1-17, 5:1-14) had a clear vision and purpose, which guided their decision-making and actions. They were driven by a sense of mission and destiny.
7. **Empowerment and Delegation:** Biblical leaders like Moses (Exodus 18:13-27) and Jesus (Matthew 10: 1-15, 28:18-20) empowered others by delegating tasks and authority, which helped to build capacity and achieve shared goals. They multiplied their impact by raising up others.
8. **Prayer and Dependence on God:** Biblical leaders like David (Psalm 23:1-6, 51:1-19) and the apostle Paul (1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18, Philippians 4:6-7) demonstrated a deep dependence on God through prayer. They sought God's guidance, wisdom, and strength in their leadership.
9. **Compassion and Empathy:** Leaders like Jesus (Matthew 9:35-38), 14:13-21) and the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 9:19-23, 2 Corinthians 1:3-7) showed compassion and empathy towards others, demonstrating a genuine concern for their well-being.
10. **Courage and Perseverance:** Biblical leaders like Joshua (Joshua 1:1-9, 10:1-43) and the Apostle Paul (Acts 20:22-24, 2 Timothy 4:6-8) demonstrated courage and perseverance in the face of challenges and adversity. They stood firm in their convictions and remained committed to their mission.
11. **Accountability to God:** Biblical leaders like Abraham (Genesis 18:17-33, 22:1-19) and the Apostle Paul (Romans 14:10-12, 2 Corinthians 5:10) recognized that they were accountable to God for their actions and decisions. They lived with a sense of responsibility to their Creator.

Insights Of Biblical Leadership For Nigerian Leaders As A Solution For Leadership Problem In Nigeria

Based on the characteristics and principles of biblical leaders, Nigerian leaders can adopt a more effective and sustainable approach to leadership by:

1. **Prioritizing Servant Leadership:** Focus on serving the people and the nation, rather than personal interests.
2. **Embracing Integrity and Accountability:** Demonstrate transparency, accountability, and integrity in decision-making and actions
3. **Cultivating Humility and Self-Awareness:** Recognize limitations and seek guidance from diverse sources, including experts, stakeholders, and the general public.
4. **Developing a Clear Vision and Purpose:** Establish a shared vision and purpose that guides decision-making and actions, and communicates this effectively to stakeholders.
5. **Empowering Others:** Delegate tasks and authority to build capacity, promote inclusivity, and achieve shared goals.
6. **Seeking Good's guidance:** Recognize the importance of seeking divine guidance and wisdom in leadership.

7. **Demonstrating Compassion and Empathy:** Show genuine concern for the well-being of citizens and stakeholders.
8. **Exhibiting Courage and Perseverance:** Stand firm in convictions and remain committed to their mission.

Conclusion

In conclusion, biblical leadership provides a timeless and universal model for leadership that can be applied to the development of Nigeria. The principles of servant leadership, humility, integrity, accountability, stewardship, love, and compassion are essential for effective leadership and can be found in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the examples of biblical leaders. As Nigeria continues to face various challenges, including corruption, poverty, and inequality, it is essential to adopt a leadership model that prioritizes the well-being of citizens and promotes sustainable development. Biblical leadership offers a framework for leaders to make decisions that are guided by a sense of purpose, morality, and accountability.

Furthermore, biblical leadership emphasizes the importance of leaders being role models and examples to their followers. This means that leaders must demonstrate the values and behaviours they expect from their citizens, including honesty, integrity, and compassion. By adopting biblical principles, Nigeria can promote sustainable development, reduce corruption and poverty, and improve the overall well-being of her citizens. Ultimately, biblical leadership offers a powerful model for leadership that can help Nigeria achieve her full potential and become a beacon of hope and prosperity for Africa and the world.

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