

Qualifications for Spiritual Leadership - Part 1

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon emphasizes that true spiritual leadership is rooted in spirituality, divine selection, and a deep relationship with God through the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 59:42

Scripture: Proverbs 29:18, Jeremiah 20:9, Matthew 6:33, John 15:5, John 15:16, Ephesians 1:22-23

Topics: "Spiritual Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having a vision from God. He encourages believers to seek a vision that aligns with God's purpose and involves them in His plans. The speaker uses the example of Moses, who had a sense of his destiny to deliver his people from slavery. However, Moses took matters into his own hands and killed an Egyptian who was mistreating a Hebrew. The speaker highlights the need for leaders who are distressed by the vision God has given them and who seek guidance from the Lord.

Transcript

May we just read two verses from the Gospel according to John, Chapter 15. John, Chapter 15, Verse 5. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit.

For without me ye can do nothing. Verse 16. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and have set you that ye should go, and that ye should bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide, that whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he may give you.

Last night we mentioned that the Lord is looking for men that can be spiritual leaders among His own people. God's purpose is to gather to Himself a people, a people who will be His bride, the bride of the Lamb. But, in order to arrive at that purpose, in God's working, there is a divine principle.

And that divine principle is God must have spiritual leadership among His own people. But spiritual leadership is not something that comes from man. It is not something that is established by man.

Spiritual leadership must come from God. It is God's divine sovereignty. It is a divine act of God.

The Bible says, you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. In the case of spiritual leadership, it is purely God's choice. But God chooses those whom He has prepared.

Or, in other words, God will choose those who are allowed Him to do a certain work in their lives. And when God is able to do a work in the lives of certain people, then on the basis of what He has done, God will choose. So, dear brothers and sisters, as we see God is working today on this earth, God is awakening His people everywhere on this earth.

This is the time that we should inquire of the Lord. We should ask the Lord to raise up spiritual leaders, to give to the Church, to His own people, spiritual leadership. And we shall also be before Him, knowing that spiritual leadership is not based upon anything natural.

So every one of us should be before Him and allow Him to complete His work in us. If He wants to use us, let us be before Him. And I do believe that this is an urgent need among God's people today.

We mentioned also last night that in order to get spiritual leadership, we must first be willing to be disciples of our Lord Jesus. Because spiritual leadership comes from discipleship. Unless we are willing to follow, we are not fit to lead.

This evening we would like to go on a little bit. First of all, we would like to consider together what are the qualities that God is looking for in leadership. In other words, what must God do in us in order to get the leadership that He wants to have for His people? Now, of course, there are a great number of qualities that will constitute spiritual leadership.

But for our fellowship this evening, we will just mention a few as examples. Number one, spirituality is a must in spiritual leadership. Of course, it is very evident.

Because here you'll find God is not looking for leadership in the things of this world. If you want to look for leadership in the things of this world, then you have to find leaders who may have a dynamic personality, who may have a very strong will, or who may have a very big mind, highly intellectual, or a person who is very gifted, very talented, a great administrator, people with good solid background, good training, good connection, and so on and so forth. Now, these are the essentials for leadership in the things of this world.

But God is not looking for these things. The one thing that a spiritual leader must have, and that is spirituality. Or, if you want to, you may use other terms, such as maturity.

Now, what is spirituality? Spirituality is not that you know a lot. You have a great deal of knowledge, that is to say, mental knowledge. You have accumulated a great deal of information, religious information.

Spirituality is a matter of the measure of Christ in you. What God is looking for in a leader is a secret, hidden life with himself. Spiritual leadership is based upon a history with the Lord.

It is not that suddenly someone appears to be a spiritual leader. It is not an instant thing. As we know in this country, we like everything to be instant.

We are so impatient. Not only in the things that we use, we like instant things, like instant coffee and even instant tea. But you'll find even in spiritual things, we are always trying to look for some way that we may be an instant spiritual person.

Oh, if only we can get to this thing, then instantly we are fully matured. Instantly we are spiritual. We are fit to be leaders.

But, dear brothers and sisters, there must be a history. There must be a secret and hidden life with the Lord. In secret, God is preparing spiritual leadership.

In secret, God is working himself into that person. And when the time comes, God will reveal and manifest that leadership. For instance, in the life of David.

We all know that David, before he appeared before the children of Israel, he was almost unknown. He was the youngest in the family, and his father didn't think too much of him. His elder brothers actually looked down upon him and misunderstood him a great deal.

He was sent out to the field to tend a few sheep. Nobody knew about David, but this lad, as he was tending the sheep, he was not just tending a few sheep. While he was tending the sheep, he had real experience with God himself.

And his experience with God was secret and hidden. Nobody knew about it, not even his father or his brothers knew about it. In the whole world at that time, there was only another young man who noticed David.

You remember a young man who stood before King Saul? And when King Saul had problems and was looking for a man, then this young man said, Well, I have seen a son of Jesse. He was a mighty man of God, and he can play beautiful music. Only a young man noticed this David.

Nobody else. And yet, dear brothers and sisters, he had such a hidden, secret life with the Lord. If he did not tell the story himself, nobody would know about it.

There he was, his father sent him to see his brothers who were on the battlefield, and he went there, and everybody was afraid, and he offered to go and fight the Philistine. King Saul inquired after him and tried to find out what was his background. Now, how do you know that you can go out and fight the Philistine? What training did you have? What background did you have? And there you'll find David related his secret and hidden life with the Lord.

When he was there tending his father's sheep, he learned to know God in the most practical way. When the bears come, when the lions come, and by the strength of the Lord, he tore the lion apart. He delivered the sheep out of the lion's mouth.

And he said, if God can deliver me from the paws of the lion and from the paws of the bear, certainly God will deliver me from the hands of the Philistines. He had a secret, hidden life with the Lord. Dear brothers and sisters, the Lord is looking for spiritual leaders.

It is not a matter of your aspiration. It is not a matter of your ambition. We mentioned last night, for people who are ambitious, they are already disqualified.

But for the sake of the Lord, for the sake of the Church, for the sake of God's purpose to be realized, oh dear brothers and sisters, how we need to be before the Lord, that we may have a secret, hidden life with the Lord. In our daily life, in very small things, these are the things that we learn to know the Lord. And in our daily life, in these small things, God will test us.

And God will begin to deal with us until he can get the quality of leadership in us. How often we are looking for great experiences. How often we think that if ever God is going to raise up a leader, then he has to lead

him through spectacular experiences.

But dear brothers and sisters, it is in our daily life, in the little things of our life, that God is dealing, God is training, God is working out his purpose. What is spirituality? Spirituality is Christ being known, apprehended, experienced. It is Christ that fills our being.

Oh brothers and sisters, this is true spirituality. What is true spirituality? True spirituality comes from the Holy Spirit. The very word spiritual connects us with the Spirit of God, a person who lives in the Spirit.

He is not a person that lives in the flesh. How can a person who lives in the flesh and suddenly become a spiritual leader? A person that is to be a spiritual leader has to be one who lives in the Spirit and under the Holy Spirit. As you read the book of Acts, you will find in the book of Acts, God raised up many leaders.

God raised up leaders in these men who are called apostles. And not only the apostles, but even you find God raised up men to serve in the church. Even to serve the table.

Or even those who are to look after the widows in the church. And one qualification, one thing that they were looking for in the persons that were to fill any position, to fill any responsibility, to be in any leadership, whether they were apostles or they were what were later called deacons, one qualification above all things. And that is full of the Holy Spirit.

It is true. There are other things that are needed. People who are honest, people who live an honest and good life, that they may have testimony before the world, people who are not double-tongued and so on and so forth.

In other words, you find there are many other qualifications. But there is one qualification that is an absolute necessity. And that is a Spirit-filled person.

What do you mean by Spirit-filled person? Brothers and sisters, forgive me to say this. I often met people who say so-and-so is a Spirit-filled person. So-and-so is a Spirit-filled person.

Now, what do you mean by a Spirit-filled person? In the mind of most people, when we mention so-and-so is a Spirit-filled person, it means that once upon a time they have an experience. That experience of the Holy Spirit may be ten years ago, may be five years ago. Certainly, when they have that experience, they are Spirit-filled.

No doubt about that. But it was five or ten years ago. And yet they are still called Spirit-filled people.

Dear brothers and sisters, what is the true meaning of Spirit-filled? What do you mean by being filled with the Spirit? In Ephesians you find it is a being not drunk, which is debauchery, but to be filled with the Holy Spirit. We have the Holy Spirit. We who are born again, we are born again by the Holy Spirit.

He that is born of the Spirit is Spirit. And after He has born us, He comes into our new spirit and dwells in our spirit. Therefore, the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

Every child of God has the Holy Spirit. And you know who the Holy Spirit is? He is the Divine Person. He is the Another Comforter.

He is God Himself who dwells in our spirit to be our Comforter, to be our Strengthened, to be everything to us. Every child of God has the Holy Spirit. The problem today with God's people is not whether you have

the Holy Spirit.

The problem today with God's children is whether you are filled with the Holy Spirit. Now, to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to possess the Holy Spirit are very different. You have the Holy Spirit, but you may be using Him.

But to be filled with the Holy Spirit is to let Him use you. What do you mean by to be filled with the Holy Spirit? It simply means that you have so surrendered your life to the Lord, you have so given yourself over to the Lord, to allow the Holy Spirit who dwells in you to have full charge of your life. In other words, you have handed yourself to the Spirit of God and be under His full control.

To be controlled in your life by the Holy Spirit, you are filled by Him, full of the Holy Spirit. It speaks of a state, not just an experience. We may have an experience, but an experience comes and goes.

But a state is something that continues. If we have given ourselves to the Lord, if we have committed ourselves to the Lord, abandoned ourselves to the Lord completely, the Holy Spirit will come and take over our life. He is going to take full charge of us.

He is going to guide and lead us. He is going to do everything that He seems deems necessary to incorporate, to organize Christ into us. This is what the Holy Spirit is doing in us.

And dear brothers and sisters, this is a state that needs to be maintained day after day. You may be filled with the Holy Spirit yesterday, but that doesn't mean you are filled today. As the Lord is leading you on, as the Lord begins to shed more light upon your life, as we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all our sins.

God is light. If we walk in the light, as God is in the light, yesterday's light may not be today's light. God's light is shining within us, and as His light in us begins to shine, we walk in the light of life.

And as we walk in the light of life, that is to say, we walk according to the Spirit. He fills us. We are Spirit-filled.

If tomorrow, God's light in you has grown a little bit larger, and there is a greater light of life shining upon your path, and if you are disobedient, if you do not cooperate, then, brothers and sisters, even though you were filled yesterday, you are to be yet to be filled today. It is a daily thing with the Lord. And, dear brothers and sisters, true spirituality comes from a life that is completely given to the Lord, and given by the Holy Spirit.

And this is to grow in us day after day. The Holy Spirit in us has an important work to do, and that is to form Christ in us. We have Christ, but Christ has to be formed in us.

And it is the work of the Holy Spirit. In the measure of the formation of Christ in us, in the measure of Christ's growth and increases in us, this is the measure of true spirituality. True spirituality is measured only by Christ Himself.

How much is Christ increased in you? And that is maturing. And it is only with that you find God will use you as leaders for the people of God. John the Baptist says, He must increase.

I must increase. And this is the way to spirituality. So dear brothers and sisters, the first quality that you need, God is looking for.

The first quality that must be in a spiritual leader is spirituality. Number two. To be a spiritual leader, you must have vision.

A spiritual leader is supposed to be one who sees. If a spiritual leader does not have vision, does not see, then it is the blind leading the blind. Now brothers and sisters, by vision, first it doesn't mean that you have to see something physically.

Of course, even today, God is able to give people physical vision. No doubt about that. But that is not the point.

By vision it means that to you, God unveils His mind. God unveils His heart to you. God reveals to you the purpose that He has purposed in Christ Jesus.

Now that is vision. By vision, we do not mean here a little and there a little. In other words, every Christian must have seen something.

And as you go on with the Lord, certainly the Lord will show you something. Now some people say, now this morning, as I'm reading the Bible, I see something. Oh, I'm so happy I see something.

There is a passage in the Scripture that puzzles me always, but suddenly I have light. I began to see it. I know how to explain that verse.

We do not mean that. Now thank God if God gives you some light on some passages. Thank God for that.

But dear brothers and sisters, a spiritual leader needs to have a clear and comprehensive vision. In other words, not just this little vision or that little vision, but a spiritual leader needs to see a clear and comprehensive vision of God. To put it in other words, it is the vision that Paul, that Saul saw on the road to Damascus.

Towards the end of his life, you'll find when Paul was being judged, he could stand before his judge, he could stand before the people and said, I am not disobedient to the heavenly vision. In other words, Paul was a person who had caught a vision. And that vision had caught him because he had seen.

Therefore he said, there is one thing, and that is not to be disobedient. In other words, his whole life afterwards was to obey that vision. Dear brothers and sisters, what God's people need very much today is people, leaders, who are really given a vision of God.

Does God give you a vision? A vision of what is really in His mind? A vision that controls the working of God from one eternity to another eternity? Do you see what God is really after? Is it that God is just after you as an individual person? Of course God is interested in you. Highly interested. But dear brothers and sisters, have you seen that God has something far greater? As our brother has been trying to tell us these few sessions, God has a wonderful, marvelous purpose.

And He is to involve you in that purpose. He is going to show you what that purpose is. Oh, that Christ today may have a body.

He is the head. God has made Him head over all things. To the body.

He needs a body. And as this body is mature, and as this body is built up, and as this body is fully grown, then He will come back to claim that very body to be His bride. Brothers and sisters, this is a vision that we

must... A vision is not something that you just mentally try to grasp.

A vision is something that comes from revelation. When God reveals, then it becomes a vision to you. Are you caught up with that vision? Brothers and sisters, a person who has a vision has a burden.

A person who does not have vision does not have burden. Oh, how... how we need to have the burden of the Lord. Now you look through the prophets, and you find oftentimes in the case of these prophets, you find it is the burden of the Lord comes upon me.

It is a burden. Now where comes such burden? Why is it that some people are burdened and other people are not? In other words, you find things happen on this earth, and yet some people are burdened before the Lord. Other people may see the same thing, and yet they do not have a burden.

Why? Because those who can see beyond, who can see beyond the... that which is visible, who can see beyond everything into the very purpose, the very mind of God. And when you begin to see that, you get a burden. And when you get a burden, you cannot get away from it.

I mentioned last night that in 1957, when we were together with Brothers Fox, and he talked to us on leadership. Now he said another thing. Notice this.

He said, leadership is not based on ambition. It is based on distress. Not because you aspire.

Not because you are ambitious. Not because you want to be in that position. Not because you seek after that.

Therefore, you get the leadership. Quite contrary. Leadership comes by distress.

You are deeply distressed. And because you are so distressed, you are so burdened before the Lord, you lay yourself before the Lord and seek and inquire after Him, and you'll find God said, Go. Look at Nehemiah.

Nehemiah, he was at that time, the king's cupbearer. Even though he was actually attentive in the Persian court. And he was the king's cupbearer.

At that time, the king's cupbearer was a very high official place in the court. It was not just a waiter, in the modern sense. But the king's cupbearer was the king's most intimate friend.

Why? Because in those days of the kings, they were despots. And because they were despots, they were always fearful that somebody would like to take their life. They were always fearful somebody wanted to murder them.

Therefore, you'll find, even when they drink, even when they eat, they would want to make sure that there was no poison there. But whom he could trust? The king's cupbearer was one who was closest to the king. He was his friend.

Intimate friend. Confident. The king trusted his life to the cupbearer.

Before the cupbearer handed the king the cup, he would drink it first. And then handed the cup to the king to drink. In other words, the king trusted his life to the cupbearer and the cupbearer was willing to sacrifice his life for the king.

If there was poison, he would die. And Nehemiah was the king's cupbearer. And certainly, in such a position, he was trusted by the king.

Certainly, he lived a life of comfort, a life of luxury. Everything that you could desire. And yet, dear brothers and sisters, he was concerned for his brethren who were in Jerusalem.

And when his own brother and several others came back from Jerusalem, they brought the news to him and said, the people in Jerusalem, oh, they were in great affliction. They were under great reproach. Why? Because the wall was broken and there was no gate.

They were exposed to the enemies and they had absolutely no protection, no defense. They were just trodden down. Oh, they were in such state that if nothing was done, they might be completely annihilated.

And many have left and returned to captivity. But dear brothers and sisters, when Nehemiah heard that, the Bible said, he wept before the Lord. He fasted before the Lord.

He fell down before the Lord. He was a person in distress. He was deeply distressed by what he heard.

He sought the Lord because of that distress. He looked to the Lord to open a way for him. And there you'll find, God sent him back to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem.

A man in distress. Dear brothers and sisters, are you ever in distress? Oh yes. We are in distress for ourselves all the time.

A little discomfort, a little thing that may not satisfy us, we immediately complain and murmur. Look at the children of Israel in the wilderness. If God was a little bit slow in doing what they want, they murmur.

But dear brothers and sisters, who are the people who are distressed? Why are they distressed? Because they saw that what God desired to have among His people, He did not have. Because they saw that God's people are far, far short of the glory of God. They were so jealous for God.

They desired so much that God would have what He desired. And yet they saw that God didn't have. They saw that the people of God just do not care.

And brothers and sisters, because of these things, they were in deep distress. How do they solve this problem? Not just shaking their heads and just too bad, too bad. And what can we do? Being passive.

But when a person is deeply distressed because of the vision that God has given to him, there is no way out but to go to the Lord and inquire of Him. Oh, brothers and sisters, what the church needs today are leaders, people who are distressed because of the vision that God has given to them. They cannot help it.

Some people say, why are you so dissatisfied? Isn't everything all right? The church in Lille this year, you remember, they say, why, we are fine. Oh, we are so rich. We lack in nothing.

Why is it you always say something is wrong? Why are you always in distress? Oh, brothers and sisters, if you catch a vision of the Lord, if you see what God wants to have among His people for His own beloved son, if you see what Christ has given Himself for, you cannot help. Not that you just have a disgruntled, murmuring character, just like to complain and never be satisfied. On the one hand, we should be contented in the Lord.

That's true. But dear brothers and sisters, on the other hand, if God has given you a vision there is no way out. You have to be before the Lord until that burden is destroyed.

Do not think that those who have vision of the Lord have a good time. If you want to have a good time, close your eyes. If the Lord should open your eyes and see His heart, His mind, you cannot rest anymore.

In one sense, you do rest in the Lord. But in another sense, you cannot rest. Just like David said he cannot allow his eyelids to close upon him.

Why? Because there is a burden in his heart to build God a house, to find a place for the ark of God. Dear brothers and sisters, do we have a vision from the Lord? When the Lord has apprehended a person by showing him what God desires, he will have a very difficult time. Remember the prophet Jeremiah? How often he told the Lord I'm going to give up.

I'm not going to continue anymore. I haven't chosen this. It is something that is put on me by You.

I cannot bear it anymore. I don't want to see it anymore. I'm going to close my ears and shut my eyes.

I don't want to see anything. Don't want to hear anything. I am going to close my mouth and not going to say anything as if I haven't seen.

But Jeremiah said when I shut my mouth, I just refuse to speak for God. It just burns in my bones. I cannot help it.

That's leadership. He got a mandate from God. Oh, brothers and sisters, we need vision.

Because through vision we get burden. And with burden we get distress. And this is the quality of leadership.

Certainly. Our brother has already mentioned brokenness is another quality that God is looking for in a spiritual leader. Or if you like to, you can say humility.

Why? Because humility comes from brokenness. There is no other way. Naturally speaking, we are not humble.

The most humble person can be the proudest person. You know why? This country seems always to rub the wrong way with other nations when they supply all their food and give them all these aids. And yet you always rub them the wrong way.

Why? Because the poorest nation are the proudest nation. You trust their pride. Brothers and sisters, naturally we are all proud.

Do not say that you are naturally humble. When you say you are humble, that is the proudest sign you can ever have. But look at Christ.

The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of humility. But humility is not natural. Humility comes from brokenness.

Dear brothers and sisters, God does not need a perfect vessel. God does not need a person who is so perfect in himself. God cannot use that person.

The only vessel that God can use is a broken. We have the treasure in the earthen vessel. Thank God we have the treasure.

The treasure is Christ. And we are but earthen vessels. But you know, earthen vessels do not allow the radiancy of the treasure to come forth and to shine.

Earthen vessel is such in nature that when you put a treasure in an earthen vessel, the brilliancy of the treasure is hidden. And if you desire to have the radiancy, the brilliancy of the treasure to shine, there is only one way. That vessel must be broken.

Dear brothers and sisters, how do you help people? How do you lead people? When people come in touch with you, whom they are in touch with. When people come to you, do they notice you? It is your cleverness. It is your knowledge.

It is your ability. It is your energy. It is you.

Now, if when people come to you, or you come to people, and all that you can impress upon others, all that you can impart to others is nothing but the earthen vessel. That is to say, but you. How can people be helped, be built up spiritually? But for people to meet Christ in you.

For you to be able to minister life to other people. There is only one way. And that is, this vessel must be a broken.

Self-preservation is an instinct. A human instinct. We all like to preserve ourselves.

We all like to keep ourselves intact. But dear brothers and sisters, unless we are willing to lay down our life, the Lord said, if you want to follow me, deny yourself. Take up your cross and follow me.

Otherwise there is no way. And what does it come to? It simply means, be broken. Be broken.

Dear brothers and sisters, are we a broken vessel? Do people see us? Or do they see Christ? Are we imparting Christ to others? Or are we imparting ourselves to others? Brokenness is a quality in leadership. A very clear illustration is in the case of Moses, which we have mentioned time and again. Here you find Moses in the palace in Egypt.

He was trained, educated, brought up in the Egyptian palace, the greatest nation in the world at that time. He was mighty in word and in deeds. And here you find Moses, a great man in the Egyptian court.

Intact. Perfect. Complete in himself.

And he did have a sense of his destiny. He felt that God had raised him up to deliver his people. And on the basis of that, when he was forty years old, he went out to see his brethren, the Hebrews that were slaves at that time.

And when he went out and saw what happened to them, he did something. An Egyptian was evilly treating a Hebrew. So he beat that Egyptian to death and buried him under the sand.

And the next day he went out and saw two Hebrew brothers. They were fighting against each other. So he entered into them and pushed them aside and said, You are brothers.

Don't fight. And they pushed him aside and said, Who are you? Who has made you our leader? Who do you think you are? Now, Moses fully thought that certainly they knew that God had raised him up as their leader. But they didn't know.

It was a surprise to them. Why is it that God could not use him at that moment? Because he was too perfect. He was too intact.

He was too complete. He thought too much of himself. He was too capable.

Mighty in words and in deeds. And because of this, God had to break him. Oh, brothers and sisters, when Moses was rejected by his own brethren and he had to flee for his life there in the wilderness in 40 years, 40 years were not a short period.

But during those 40 years, he must have gone over that scene again and again a million times and tried to find out where went wrong. Until he discovered it went wrong right in him. Right in him.

God used 40 years to undo him. To finish him. To break him.

To shatter him. He lost his ambition. He lost his eloquence.

He lost his might. He lost everything. He came to the end of himself.

He didn't even expect God would ever use him. This message continues on SK6018 Qualifications for Spiritual Leadership Part 2

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