The Temptation of Leadership

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Nehemiah 5:14-19

“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!” 1 Cor. 10:12

I. THREE TEMPTATIONS OF LEADERSHIP

1. YOU WILL BE TEMPTED TO MISUSE YOUR POSITION

“The early governors placed a heavy burden on the people and took forty shackles of silver from them in addition to food and wine.” (vs. 15a)

2. YOU WILL BE TEMPTED TO ABUSE YOUR POWER

“Their assistants also lorded it over the people” (vs. 15b)

*Leadership is not Lordship

3. YOU WILL BE TEMPTED TO PROFIT FROM YOUR PRIVILEGES

“the Governor's Food Allowance” (vs. 14, 18)

II. HOW TO KEEP YOUR INTEGRITY AS A LEADER

1. DEEPEN MY REFERENCE FOR GOD

“Out of reverence for God I did not act like that.” (vs. 15c)

* Realize God put me in this position

“For promotion and power come from nowhere on earth, but only from God. He promotes one and deposes another.” Ps. 75:6 (LB)

* Realize God is holding me accountable

“Shouldn't you walk in the fear of our God...?” (vs. 9)

Prov. 1:7, 2 Cor. 5:11, Gen. 39:9

“Obey your spiritual leaders and be willing to do what they say. For their work is to watch over your souls and God will judge them on how well they do...” Heb. 13:17 (LB)

“...submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you.” Heb. 13:17 (NIV)
*There is no authority without accountability*

"... we who are teachers will be judged with greater strictness than others." James 3:1 (GN)

2. **DEVELOP A LOVE FOR PEOPLE**
   
   Examples: vs. 6, 17-18

   *Losers focus on what they can get
   *Leaders focus on what they can give

   "David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skill he led them." Ps. 78:72

   (Paul) "Because of our love for you, we were ready to share with you not only the Good News but even our own lives. You were so dear to us!" 1 Th. 2:8 (GN)

3. **DISCIPLINE YOURSELF FOR ETERNAL REWARDS**

   "Remember me with favor, O my God, for all I have done for these people." (vs. 19)

   1 Cor. 9:1-27

   *Losers focus on their rights, Leaders focus on their responsibilities

   "Moses preferred to suffer with God's people rather than to enjoy sin for a little while ... because he kept his eyes on the future reward." Heb. 11:24-25 (GN)

   "God ... will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them." Heb. 6:10

   "to the elders... Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers - not because you must, but because you are willing ... not greedy for money but eager to serve, not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away." 1 Peter 5:2-4

   Matt. 25:2