

## GOD LED LEADERSHIP

(JOHN 1:6-8;19-23) 01/15/12

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ATCHISON, PASTOR LEE HENDON

TODAY IS LEADERSHIP SUNDAY FOR FIRST CHRISTIAN CH. A SPECIAL DAY ON WHICH WE WANT TO SAY THANK YOU TO & HONOR THE LEADERS OF OUR CONGREGATION. WE HAVE MANY WONDERFUL LEADERS: OFFICERS OF THE BOARD, CHAIRPERSONS OF MINISTRY TEAMS, BOARD MEMBERS (ELDERS, DEACONS, DEACONESSES, TRUSTEES), SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, YOUTH GROUP SPONSORS, LEADERS OF OUTREACH MINISTRIES, C.W.F. LEADERS, ETC. OUR CONGREGATION IS MADE STRONG & CONTINUES TO GROW BECAUSE OF THE PARTICIPATION OF SO MANY LEADERS! GOD KNOWS IT IS NOT EASY TO BE A GOD LED LEADER - GOD HAS CALLED FORTH GOD LED LEADERS IN ALL GENERATIONS - YOU ARE TO BE GOD LED LEADERS FOR TODAY! WE HAVE MUCH TO LEARN ABOUT GOD LED LEADERSHIP FROM JOHN THE BAPTIST.

GOD LED LEADERS ARE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE NOT ONLY TO GOD BUT ALSO TO THEIR CONGREGATIONS. EACH OF THE FOUR GOSPELS AGREE THAT JOHN THE BAPTIST, A MERE MORTAL - LIKE YOU & ME - PLAYED A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE IN JESUS' MINISTRY. CONSIDER THAT ONLY TWO OF THE FOUR GOSPELS HAVE BIRTH NARRATIVES BUT ALL FOUR GOSPELS SHOW HOW IMPORTANT JOHN THE BAPTIST WAS! THAT IS HUGE! I ALWAYS WONDERED WHY? WHY IS THE STORY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST CLUTTERING UP THE GOSPEL STORY ABOUT JESUS? THE ANSWER FINALLY IS OBVIOUS TO ME - GOD NEEDED JOHN THE BAPTIST TO PREPARE THE WAY FOR & TO POINT THE WAY TO JESUS - GOD NEEDS LEADERS TO LEAD OR GOD'S MESSAGE MIGHT FALTER & FAIL. JOHN WAS A KEY PLAYER - A FRANCHISE PLAYER IN JESUS' MINISTRY. NEVER, EVER UNDER-ESTIMATE THE EXTREME IMPORTANCE OF YOUR ROLE AS A XN LEADER IN SERVING GOD'S PURPOSES & DIRECTION. IT HAS ITS UPS & DOWNS & MUNDANE ROUTINES FOR SURE BUT THAT WHICH YOU DO AS LEADERS IS ALL IMPORTANT TO GOD - YOU ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE! GOD NEEDS YOU TO PUT FLESH ON HIS PRESENCE WORKING GOD'S WILL & WAY UPON EARTH. NO SMALL TASK!

JOHN THE BAPTIST'S MANIFESTO WAS REVEALED BY APOSTLE JOHN, "THERE WAS A MAN SENT FROM GOD, WHOSE NAME WAS JOHN. HE CAME AS A WITNESS TO TESTIFY TO THE LIGHT, SO THAT ALL MIGHT BELIEVE THRU HIM. HE HIMSELF WAS NOT THE LIGHT BUT HE CAME TO TESTIFY TO THE LIGHT." AS GOD LED LEADERS THAT IS OUR MANIFESTO AS WELL:

THERE WAS A PERSON SENT FROM GOD, WHOSE NAME WAS (YOUR NAME.) HE/SHE CAME AS A WITNESS TO TESTIFY TO THE LIGHT SO THAT ALL MIGHT BELIEVE THRU HIM/HER. HE/SHE WAS NOT THE LIGHT BUT CAME TO TESTIFY TO THE LIGHT. THIS IS WHAT WE ARE ALL ABOUT AS GOD LED LEADERS.

1. YOU ARE TO HAVE A SENSE OF DIVINE MISSION ABOUT CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP - SENT FROM GOD. IN A SENSE THIS MEANS YOU DID NOT CHOOSE GOD, GOD CHOSE YOU TO BE LEADERS. THIS GIVES YOU A GREAT SENSE OF FREEDOM OR RECKLESSNESS IN FOLLOWING GOD. MATTERS NOT WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU IN THE WORLD AS LONG AS YOU ARE FOLLOWING THE LORD'S LEAD. IF GOD IS FOR YOU...THEN WHO CAN BE AGAINST YOU? WHEN GOD CALLS, GOD ALSO EQUIPS & ENABLES. DARE NOT THINK GOD HAS MADE A MISTAKE IN CALLING YOU.

2. YOU ARE CALLED BY NAME TO LEADERSHIP. THIS IS A VERY PERSONAL MATTER - BETWEEN YOU & GOD. THE PREACHER CAN'T TELL YOU TO DO IT, NOT YOUR MOMMA, NOT YOUR POPPA, NOT YOUR SPOUSE - GOD CALLS YOU BY NAME. YOUR LIFE WILL NOT BE CONTENT & SATISFIED UNTIL YOU SATISFY THE LONGING OF GOD'S HEART. YOU CANNOT OUT RUN OR BEAT GOD AT HIDE & SEEK - 'CAUSE WHERE ER YOU GO, THERE GOD IS! IF YOU WANT YOUR LIFE TO BE ALL IT CAN BE YOU WILL HAVE A TIME WHEN YOU WILL COME TO YOURSELF & GIVE IN TO GOD'S CALL FOR LEADERSHIP. THERE ARE NO CHEAP SEATS

IN THIS CHURCH - NO COUCH POTATOES WELCOME HERE - SEEK YOUR CALLING, FIND IT, THEN SAY YES TO GOD - HERE I AM SEND ME!

YOU MIGHT THINK YOU ARE TOO BUSY, STRETCHED TOO THIN, NOT A GOOD TIME FOR YOU, NO TALENT AFTER ALL. WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT & YOU ARE LOOKING IN THE MIRROR THE QUESTION REALLY BECOMES, "WHY NOT ME?" ALL OF YOUR EARTHLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS WILL WITHER UP & BLOW AWAY WITH THE WIND - ALL EARTHLY HONORS END AT THE GRAVE - ONLY THAT WHICH YOU DO FOR GOD WILL HAVE ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES. YOU, BY NAME, WILL HAVE A VERY UNIQUE & PERSONALIZED WAY TO ACCOMPLISH THAT TO WHICH GOD IS SENDING YOU. THAT IS WHY GOD HAS CHOSEN YOU & NOT SOMEONE ELSE TO DO IT.

3. YOU ARE CALLED TO BE WITNESSES. NO ONE CAN WITNESS TO THAT WHICH THEY HAVE NEITHER SEEN, HEARD OR EXPERIENCED. HEARSAY EVIDENCE WILL NOT GET YOU OUT OF THE STARTING BLOCKS. NA-A- BABY, YOU HAVE TO WITNESS JESUS ALIVE IN YOUR LIVES. THAT IS WHY GOD WANTS A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU. JOHN HAD A VERY UNIQUE CALLING - JOHN WITNESSED TO JESUS - THE LIGHT - WHICH HE HAD NOT YET EXPERIENCED - JOHN PRECEDED JESUS, YET KNEW THERE WAS MORE TO COME - THEN HE EXPERIENCED JESUS & BACK FILLED HIS WITNESS WITH HIS "AHA, YES, YES, JESUS IS THE ONE! JESUS IS THE LIGHT FOR WHICH MY LIFE HAS ACHED & YEARNED."

WE ARE NOW IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT - WE HAVE THE TESTIMONY OF LAW, PROPHETS, JOHN THE BAPTIST, OLD & NEW TESTAMENT & THE HOLY SPIRIT TO SET JESUS LOOSE IN OUR LIVES. WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR - DO NOT EXPECT THE WORLD TO GIVE YOU WITNESS-PERMISSION - FIND IT IN YOUR OWN HEART & LIFE - THEN WITNESS TO THE LIGHT OF GOD IN YOUR OWN LIFE. IT IS JESUS!

4. GOD LED LEADERSHIP FINDS ITS TESTIMONY IN JESUS, NOT IN OURSELVES. SHEW! THANK YOU GOD! ANYTIME YOUR LEADERSHIP GETS ALL ABOUT ME, ME, ME - WATCH OUT, BABY, YOU HAVE CROSSED THE LINE INTO THE TWILIGHT ZONE - AWAY FROM JESUS. IT IS ALL ABOUT JESUS, JESUS, JESUS - ALWAYS HAS BEEN NOW & FOREVER. NEVER BEEN ABOUT OURSELVES.

WHAT A RELIEF THAT IS!!! AGAIN, WHAT A RELIEF THAT IS!!! DID NOT TAKE YOU LONG TO SEE THAT MY TESTIMONY COULD NOT BE ABOUT ME - DID NOT TAKE ME LONG TO SEE THE SAME IN YOU! THAT IS NOT WHAT WE ARE ABOUT - THIS IS NOT THE ME, MYSELF & I CLUB - IT IS THE JESUS CLUB - MEMBERS WANTED, THAT SEE IT THAT WAY. DO NOT BE SO SURPRISED WHEN YOU DISCOVER YOUR BROTHER OR SISTER IS NOT THE LIGHT! JESUS IS THE LIGHT. POINT TO, TESTIFY TO THE LIGHT - TO JESUS.

I NEARLY WORE MYSELF OUT WHEN I WAS A BRAND NEW MINISTER - FOR SOME REASON - I THOUGHT THIS NEW MINISTER (ME) IN THE CHURCH GAME WAS GOING TO SAVE THE WORLD - STARTING WITH MY CONGREGATION. DID NOT TAKE ME LONG, SORRY TO SAY, IT DID TAKE ME TOO LONG TO DISCOVER THAT I AM NOT GOD. YOU ARE NOT GOD. WE ARE NOT - BUT JESUS IS. TAKE YOUR FOCUS OFF YOURSELF - PUT IT ON JESUS.

PERHAPS YOU REFRAIN FROM GOD LED LEADERSHIP BECAUSE YOU THINK YOU ARE NOT GOD/LY ENOUGH. OKAY, SO WHAT? JESUS IS THE LIGHT - JESUS IS GOD ENOUGH - THAT IS ALL WE NEED TO KNOW IN GOD LED LEADERSHIP!

JOHN WAS MAKING SUCH AN IMPACT - THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS - THE SPECIALIST - THE PROFESSIONALS - WHO WERE NOT MAKING ANY IMPACT AT ALL - CAME TO JOHN TO SAY, "WHO ARE YOU?" IF HE HAD NOT BEEN ACCOMPLISHING ANYTHING THEY WOULD HAVE JUST IGNORED HIM BUT THEY COULD NOT - WHO ARE YOU? IT IS TIME FOR US TO SET THAT LIGHT LOOSE IN OUR MIDST. GET TO WITNESSING & MAKING MORE & MORE OF A DIFFERENCE HERE IN ATCHISON - SO THAT OTHERS SAY, "WHO ARE YOU?" OUR REPLY, WE ARE NOT THE LIGHT - LOOK TO JESUS! WHAT A BORE WE BECOME WHEN WE SIT AROUND TO NAVEL GAZE & OUR WITNESS IS NO MORE....