

Take Heed to Yourselves TS005

Three Keys to Successful Leadership 4097

I. Introduction

- A. Acts 20:28—*Take heed to yourselves*—and the *flock*. (Balance: *elders* are *overseers*—but *among* the flock, not *over* the flock.)
- B. 1 Tim. 4:16—*Take heed to yourself*—and to the *teaching*. In each case, “yourself” comes *first*. Motivation: not from selfishness, but because the further we can go in God, the further we can lead others. Carries *tremendous responsibility*.

Keys to success in walking as God’s people:

II. Cultivate Hearing God’s Voice

- A. We *recognize* God’s voice by *getting to know Him*. Every voice is individual.
 - 1. Examples: Safe that only opens to one voice.
 - 2. The sheep know the Shepherd’s voice.
- B. Ex. 15:26—“I am the Lord who heals you.”
 - 1. It was *God’s initiative* to reveal Himself as His people’s doctor.
 - 2. Four conditions:
 - a. *Diligently heed* the voice of the Lord (Heb.: “listen listening”)
 - b. *Do that which is right*
 - c. *Give ear* to His commandments
 - d. *Keep* all His statutes
- C. Ex. 19:5–6—To *keep the covenant* we must *hear His voice*.
- D. Deut. 28:1–2; 15—*Blessings and curses*: hearing God’s voice determines which of these will overtake us.
- E. Ps. 95—Verses 7–11 are quoted in Heb. 3:7–11, 15; 4:7
Key theme is *rest*. The way into *rest* is *hearing God’s voice*.
- F. Jer. 7:22–23—Offering *sacrifice* is only acceptable if it springs from hearing God’s voice.
“Obey me and I will be your God . . .” A central theme of the Bible.
- G. John 10:27—*Relationship* based on *hearing* and *following* the Lord’s voice.
 - 1. Requires *sensitivity* and having *right priorities*.
 - 2. One key: be *relaxed*.
- H. 2 Cor. 3:2–3—God’s words have the quality of *permanence*. The only person who can write on the hearts of God’s people is the Holy Spirit. To exercise *faith*, be prepared to *take risks*. Personal example of buying a home.

III. Pray Things through before They Happen

- A. Phil. 4:6–7—“. . . in *everything*, by prayer.”
 - 1. John Wesley: “I am persuaded that God does everything by prayer and nothing without it.”
 - 2. Prayer produces *confidence* in life’s situations.
 - 3. When we pray according to God’s will, our words are charged with *divine*

authority.

- B. Two examples of personal prayer for Israel:
 - 1. Ps. 125:3—"The scepter of the wicked will not remain over land allotted to the righteous."
 - 2. Ps. 129:5–6—Anything that opposes the purposes of God will wither before it comes to fruition.
- C. Job. 22:27—It is possible to make *divine decrees* in our prayers.
- D. Jer. 23:29—God's *Word* is a *hammer*. The hammer is guaranteed; the rock must break.
- E. Exhortation to cultivate harmonious husband-wife prayer.

IV. Walk in Our Calling

- A. God wants us to *succeed* where He has called us.
- B. 2 Tim. 1:8–9—When God *saves* us, He also *calls* us.
 - 1. Not based on what we can do, but according to God's own *purpose* and *grace*.
 - 2. Our calling is *from eternity*.
- C. 1 Thess. 5:24—The One who *calls* is *faithful*. God accepts responsibility for what He has called us to do.
- D. 2 Peter 1:10–11—Course of Christian development. *Be diligent* in what God has called us to do.
- E. Ex. 23:31—God *fixes our boundaries*.

Four More Keys 4098

Acts 20:28—*Pattern* and *challenge* presented to the elders of the church at Ephesus

Keys to success (continued):

V. Practice Being Thankful

- A. Problem is often not the *situation*, but the *attitude*
- B. Eph. 5:17–21—Marks of being *filled* with the Spirit
 - 1. *Speaking* and *singing* (praise, worship)
 - 2. *Giving thanks* to God
 - 3. *Submitting* to one another
- C. 1 Thess. 5:16–22—*Rejoice, pray, give thanks*. Greek: "giving thanks" (*eucharisto*) related to "grace" (*charis*). The *grace of God* is expressed in *thankfulness*
- D. 2 Tim. 3:1–5—*Progressive degeneration* of human character—includes *unthankfulness*
- E. *Thankfulness* must be cultivated—it is a *decision*

VI. Let God Choose for You

- A. John 3:26–27—We can *receive* only what is *given*
- B. John 10:29—"What the *Father* has *given* me is *greater* than all"
 - 1. Provides *rest* and *security*
 - 2. *Insecurity* hinders successful ministry. We cannot find ultimate security in

“horizontal” relationships—true security must be found in relationship with the Lord

- C. Ps. 23:1—The most *complete* statement of security: “I shall not lack”
- D. Marks of insecurity:
 - 1. Frightened by challenges
 - 2. Looking for approval on horizontal level
 - 3. Easily “flies off the handle”
- E. Matt. 5:5—We *win* by *yielding*
Example of Abraham and Lot: Abraham allowed Lot to choose first, knowing God’s promise (his inheritance) could not fall
- F. Ps. 37:1—Do not fret because of the wicked

VII. Rest in Inheritance

- A. Example from book of Hebrews. *Goal: Inheritance – Rest – Perfection*
- B. Key theme: *High priesthood* of Jesus
- C. Key thrust: *Forward*
- D. Deut. 12:9—There is *no rest* for the people of God outside of their *inheritance*
- E. Deut. 25:19—The *rest* is *only* in the *inheritance*. If we are restless, we need to find our inheritance.
- F. Heb. 4:9—The devil may *delay* God’s purposes but not ultimately frustrate them. God patiently continues to say His people will enter their rest.
- G. How do we take a Sabbath rest?
Communal—example of Sabbath in Jerusalem
- H. Benefits of rest:
Historically, keeping the Sabbath has kept the Jews a separate people more distinctively than any other single ordinance
- I. Num. 23:9—Balaam’s blessing: the Jewish people are not “reckoned among the nations”
- J. Jer. 1:12—The *Word of God* rules history. God watches over His word to see it fulfilled
- K. Tithes/Sabbaths
 - 1. *Tithes* are 1/10 of our *money*
 - 2. *The sabbath* is 1/7 of our *time*
 - 3. The principle: God wants more of our *time* than of our *material wealth*
- L. Time must be *sanctified*. The root concept of *sanctification* is setting something apart exclusively to God”
- M. Benefits of our inheritance:
 - 1. Living in health—we must deal with the “fifth column”
 - 2. Moving in rhythm with God
- N. 1 Thess. 1:9–10—God’s people are a *waiting people*
- O. Two important aspects of the Christian life:
 - 1. *Serving God*
 - 2. *Waiting* for His Son from heaven

VIII. Do Not Sell Your Birthright

- A. Heb. 12:14–17—*Difference* between *Jacob* and *Esau*: Jacob wanted God’s blessing; *Esau* did not value his inheritance
- B. If we have Jacob’s motivation, God can deal with our *character*. Jacob limped

back into his inheritance—but Esau lost his completely.

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