

PAULINE LEADERSHIP EXAMPLE TO TIMOTHY

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by  
Olayiwola Owoade OLADELE  
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## Abstract

Many Christians confuse secular leadership with Christian leadership. Therefore they tend to forget that Jesus Christ's model of leadership is the servant-leader model that He Himself personified in His earthly ministry as well as prescribed to us. To alleviate the confusion, this essay defined leadership generally and distinguished secular leadership from spiritual leadership, identifying the qualities that advance the nature and character of spiritual leadership beyond the secular.

In elucidating biblical leadership perspective and situating Paul's leadership model to Timothy within it, this essay discussed Old and New Testaments' models for leadership, including Moses, Joshua, David and Nehemiah. It observed that those leaders were people just like us, who God called, commissioned as well as empowered by His Spirit to do His will, and who responded in humble obedience and service of God and His people. It focuses Jesus Christ whom those godly leaders of the Old Testament foreshadowed, and emphasized His call to servant-leadership that He personified. The essay then concentrated on the Apostle Paul, a man like us, who followed the leading of Jesus Christ, and by so doing modeled leadership to Timothy. It evaluates Paul as a role model in Christian leadership, particularly to Timothy in his two epistles to the latter. It focuses the call and commission of Paul, his role model, motivation, dedication, exemplary living, leadership goals and style as well as ministry success. It identified servant-leadership, leadership by shepherding, obedience and tolerance, reproductive and exemplary leadership as lessons Christian leaders ought to learn from the relationship of Paul and Timothy. It concludes that servant-leadership in the shepherding, obeying

exemplary, tolerant and reproductive manner of Jesus Christ in whose footsteps Paul followed and encouraged Timothy so to do is the one that the Church needs.

## CONCLUSION

Paul had only one pleasure – to please the Lord. He served the Lord thankfully for giving him the grace and strength to serve Him out of mercy, not because he found him fit (1 Timothy 1:12). He wrote to the Philippians, “But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.... Join with others in following my example” (Philippians 3: 14, 17 NIV). Paul calls out to Timothy and to all Christians today, “...join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us to a holy life – not because of anything that we have done but because of his own purpose and grace” (2 Timothy 1: 8, 9). Because the Lord leads the way of servant-leadership and requires us to follow, we must follow Him.

Timothy followed the leading of the Apostle Paul and both of them followed Jesus Christ. One important factor was his willing and humble obedience. As Paul abandoned himself to the cause of Christ, so did Timothy. Consequently, both did everything with the consciousness that they did it for Jesus Christ. As they did all that, they drew upon their endowment and grace from God. They meticulously prepared for the task of leadership as well as made themselves available at the fullness of time so that God could work through them to accomplish His purpose for His world.

In Paul, one has found a leader worthy of emulation. Timothy learnt from Paul, and Christian leaders ought to learn from both. Following the footsteps of Paul, Timothy was a servant (Philippians 2:19-24), a teacher taught and trusted by Paul (1 Timothy 1: 1-

3) as well as a leader prepared, not only by her grandmother and mother respectively, but also by Paul who joined with other elders to empower Timothy.<sup>86</sup> In addition, Paul prayed for his follower and reproduced leader, Timothy, saying “I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers” (1 Timothy 1: 3 NIV). All leaders owe their followers these and other God-ordained duties

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<sup>86</sup> *The NIV Standard Lesson Commentary 2002-2003*, pp. 214-216.