
The Genesis of Leadership

by: Ronald L. Dart

Who would you say in the Bible is the greatest example of leadership—apart from Jesus, of course? Now, without a doubt, you may come up with Moses, for example, or some other individual, but there is no contest—the man is David. When it comes to David, we don't need modifiers. You don't have to call him King David, you don't have to call him David, the son of Jesse. If you said David, any Bible reader knows precisely who you are talking about. One of the reasons is because his name occurs over one thousand times in the Bible and, as far as I've been able to determine, no one else in the Bible was ever named David. And that, by itself, is truly remarkable. You'd think someone, somewhere would have named a boy David, after David, because David was such a powerful figure in Israel's history.

Well, names in Hebrew mean something and until I began to prepare for this sermon, I never had looked up to see what the meaning was of David's name. I'll come back to that. Also, I had not thought much about the characteristics of this man that made him such an incredible leader. He was easily the most influential and the most dominant figure in the Old Testament and my question was, how early in his life did the stuff of leadership begin to show up in his life and in this man and what were the things that we can look at in his life that will help us to understand: what are the characteristics - the things that make up a great leader?

He was not a big man. He was the youngest of eight sons, not the oldest. He was also one of those rarities in life—he was a man who people will tend to call "beautiful," without meaning anything feminine about it. He was a beautiful man—fair-haired, good to look at and, frankly, a very remarkable person in so many ways.

Now, his brothers looked at him in a little different point of view, as brothers will. His brother—I guess his oldest brother—thought he was arrogant, thought he was "too big for his britches." Now the story of how this begins to develop is very, very familiar to all of us. You can almost recite for me probably, if you're a regular Bible reader and you've been to church very much, because the story is told so often from sermons and sermonettes or Bible studies—it's such an incredible example.

Well, we all know that there came a day when Israel was arrayed in battle against the Philistines. All of David's brothers, all of Jesse's sons, except him, were in the army and were up there ready to fight with the Philistines. Now, in those days, the provisions, let's say, that were made for an army were nothing like they are today. You kind of had to carry your own food. You had to provide your own uniforms and, chances are, you had to get your own weapons, too. It's just not like it is now, in fact, you don't have to go all that far back in history to find circumstances

where the Captain of an English man-of-war had to provide uniforms for all the men on his ships. It wasn't the government at Whitehall that did it, he had to do it out of his own, personal fortune.

So, on this particular occasion, Jesse sends David, his youngest son, with food—bread—to carry up to his brothers, who are on the front line of the battle. And so, in I Samuel 17, the story begins:

I Samuel 17:20: Early in the morning, David left the flock with a shepherd, loaded up and set out as Jesse had directed. Now he reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle position shouting the war cry. {21} Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other.

Now, another peculiar thing about war in that day and age and one that held, really, among Arab peoples for a long, long time, down into this millennium, I think, certainly, into the last millennium, would be that the armies would get themselves up in array and would engage in displays. They would ride their horses, perhaps, back and forth, waving their scimitar in the air. The armies would line up opposite one another and rattle their swords and shields, and shout and so forth—all this intimidation going on against the other side. It was also not uncommon in those days for two champions to fight the battle. I remember this line from Patton, who looked back on that age of jousting with great memories and thinking to himself how good it would be if he could button himself up, first meet Rommel on the field of battle, shake hands with him, each of them get in his tank, button up and do battle—one man against one man and the outcome would decide the war. Kind of a bloody, binding arbitration. It worked in some cases in ancient times, at least for a while. Well, that was what was going on here—all kinds of brandishing of weapons, shouting back and forth across the lines, building up the courage of the two armies.

David, when he heard all this going on, left his things with the keeper of supplies and ran to the battle lines and greeted his brothers. Now, as he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine, the champion from Gath, stepped out of the lines and shouted his usual defiance and David heard it. Now, as I said, this is typical of some of these old, warring traditions—let's let two champions fight and determine the outcome of this; who gets this piece of land, who gets this border moved, whatever it's going to be, let the champions fight and whoever dies, the winner gets to decide. Bloody, but, I gather, it must have worked in ancient times.

I Samuel 17:24 Now, when the Israelites saw the man, they all ran from him in great fear.

Not just because this man was a great fighter, he was huge. He was a giant of a man. His shield and his sword and his spear were huge—it would take a man his size to even be able to use them in combat.

I Samuel 17:25 And the Israelites were saying, you see how this man just keeps coming out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his father's family from taxes in Israel. Now I might do a few things, you know, short of risking my life to get rid of the IRS for the rest of my life. Anyway, David heard all this, and he says:

I Samuel 17:26 What? What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the Living God?

For David the equation was simple. This man was defying not just Israel, not just Saul, he was defying not just the armies of anybody but of the Living God. And, for David, that clarified the issue enormously. He was an uncomplicated man—very definitely an uncomplicated man—he was able to see the issue clearly. He was able to brush off all the extraneous stuff and go straight to the heart of a matter.

Now, in my experience, complicated men do not make great leaders. Shall I say it again? In my experience, complicated men do not make great leaders. When we were taking a course in real estate, oh, many long years ago, Allie and I were listening to this fellow and he made this statement about real estate and about making money in real estate. He said, "If you want to make money in real estate, stick your finger in a light socket and take twenty points off your IQ." His point was that, highly intelligent people don't make money in real estate. You don't have to be smart. The problem is, he says, is that intelligent people are afflicted with what he called "the paralysis of analysis". They'll be sitting there analyzing every angle, from making up charts, adding up figures, working out all the details, whereas the simple-minded guy—the guy who's not so particularly intelligent about all these things and wouldn't have any idea how to load up a spread sheet, just goes out and buys the property and makes money. You know, he learns from his experiences and goes on down the road.

Now, I don't mean to suggest from this that David was simple minded, rather, that he was single minded. And there's a huge difference between the two. He immediately saw that what was at issue was simple. Someone must fight this man and win. Analyzing him wasn't going to make it any easier or any better. It was not going to change the outcome. Somebody just had to go out there and fight and win and the quicker, the better. It calls to mind what James made in his statement. He said:

James 1:8 A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.

And what he's talking about here is the difference between the single-minded man and the complicated, or double-minded man, who can't make up his mind about stuff. He is unstable in all his ways. It isn't necessarily even talking about being two-faced. It's talking about the ability to see something and decide and act.

The double-minded man is likely to consider the single-minded man as reckless, stubborn, arrogant, rash—take your pick. But the double-minded man will look with contempt upon the single-minded man and think this poor fool just doesn't understand what it is he's getting on to. The double-minded man doesn't want to rush into anything; he wants to analyze the problem, think it through, get advice, get help in solving the problem and marshal that around and then maybe, someday, make up his mind to actually go out and do something. Now it's been a long 70 years that I've been through in my lifetime learning some of these lessons rather bitterly and I can remember many, many times when I would have just been a whole lot better off, if I'd have just done it, instead of sitting around trying to figure the angles on things.

A Leader is Single Minded

So, I've derived from David a principal of leadership; a leader is single minded. How early in David's life did this appear? Well, it was there when we first hear of him. It was there when we first hear of the man. It wasn't something that showed up after many, many years of experience. In verse 27,

I Samuel 17:27 They repeated to him what they had been saying and they told him, "This is what will be done for the man that kills him." {28} Now Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, and he got hot under the collar and said, "Why have you come down here? And with who did you leave that handful of sheep in the desert? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is. You came down here to watch the battle."

Eliab saw David as arrogant and conceited and people who know their own mind are often seen that way. Think about that. People who know their own mind, know who they are, know what they stand for, know what they're going to do and what they're not going to do, are often seen as conceited and arrogant.

I Samuel 17:29 David said, "Now what have I done? Can't I even speak."

Typical brothers. I mean just typical brothers, one of them gets on the other one's case and the other one says "what have I done this time? Get off my back!"

I Samuel 17:30 Then he turned away to someone else and he brought up the same matter and the man answered him just like before. {31} Now what David said was overheard and reported to Saul and Saul sent for him. {32} And David when he got there, he says, "Don't let anyone lose heart because of this Philistine, your servant will go out and fight him."

I'll do it—don't let anybody worry about this guy. I will fight him. Cocky, isn't he? Oh, certainly his brothers thought he was cocky.

I Samuel 17:32 Saul replied, "You can't go out and fight this Philistine, you're a boy. He's been a fighting man since he was a boy!" {33}. But David said to Saul, "No, I was keeping my father's sheep when a lion and bear came out and carried off a sheep from the flock. I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it! Your servant killed both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them because he has defied the armies of the living God."

Not because I'm a better fighter, not for any particular reason, but I'm not afraid... Here is a young man who had fought—engaged in hand-to-hand combat—and had killed with his own hands, both a lion and a bear. And you know, if you've ever wrestled with your dog you understand how strong animals can be. A big dog can be very, very strong and a bear is beyond the capabilities of most men. But, of course, he had a knife and he killed this bear and he killed the lion and he was not afraid. Now, he may have been cocky, I will grant that, but he also had guts. He had guts to go with it and so he was ready. For David, the equation was simple: when

you are faced with danger, you face up to it and you fight. That's what single-minded people do. And, you do it sooner, rather than later. Do it now.

To quote Patton, who was quoting somebody else (I don't know who), he said, "L'audacieux, toujours l'audacieux!", which, in French, means "Always be audacious!" And the definition of audacity is, "intrepidly daring, adventurous, recklessly bold." Be bold. Be reckless. Your enemy will never figure you for it, especially if he is a 'complicated' man.

So, there is some justification in accusing a bold leader of being reckless. Sort of like the Normandy Invasion, that began the end of World War II. It was an audacious scheme. It was reckless and the Germans, because they thought it was reckless, did not defend against that scenario. Eisenhower was a great leader.

A Leader is Audacious

My second characteristic of leadership, according to David, is courage; but more than courage, it's audacity. I would call that active courage, because there is such a thing as passive courage. There is the characteristic in a person to bear up under great pain, to be courageous in facing challenges—not so much by what he does, but by not running—that's passive courage. David had active courage—audacity. But there was something else driving David here besides just his own personal characteristics. He said in verse 37:

I Samuel 17:37 The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from this Philistine.

A Leader must have Simple Faith

So, you got to crank into this equation one more thing, simple faith. Faith is, in the end, a very simple proposition. You either have it or you don't. You either trust God or you don't. This is not something you can analyze, it's not weighed in the balances, it's not analyzed and dissected and put under a microscope. You can't do that with it. You either trust God, or you don't. And it has nothing to do with your fears, because courage doesn't mean anything unless a person knows what fear is. And so, it is with this particular question of faith. You don't need faith if you have no fear. Faith is necessary to make a decision to trust God when you are afraid. It involves trust, also, regardless of the outcome.

Now this is an interesting thought all by itself. Job, when he was way down the line in his trial, made this statement:

Job 13:15 Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.

Now all of his friends had been through this thing, his wife had told him "curse God and die," he had struggled with the whole thing and had no idea what God was trying to do with him, but he said, I don't care, if He kills me, I will trust Him, all the way to death.

And then there's another interesting example; it is so fascinating when you read it, because you often hear people talk about faith in terms of outcomes. But there was this occasion where the Hebrew children, who were in captivity in Babylon, were told that they would either bow down to this idol that they created over here, or they would be thrown into a fiery furnace over there and burned to death. And, of course, when people threw them in there, the fires were so hot, they killed the soldiers who were throwing them in there! And they made the statement to the king, they said,

Daniel 3:17 We are not going to bow down to your idol, because God will deliver us from you.

But then they went on and said something truly astonishing. They said:

Daniel 3:18 Even if He doesn't, be it known to the king we're not bowing down to this idol.

They made the decision to trust God, regardless of the outcome and, as I said, that is a simple proposition. Either you decide to trust Him, or you don't. There isn't really any in-between ground on this.

So, we managed to drag three important characteristics of leadership from David's very early example. They are already there when we meet the man: he is single minded, he is audacious, he is also a man of faith, who is willing to trust God. So, Saul said to David:

I Samuel 17:37 ...Go and the Lord be with you. {38} Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic, he put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head and David fastened the sword over the tunic and tried walking around in them (he wasn't used to them). He said, I can't go in these; I'm not used to them. And he took them off.

A Leader is Realistic

Now, what do you take from this? I take from it that a leader is realistic. He says, 'there is no point in me going out there dressed in these things. I'll die if I do. I don't need them, I will go without them.' He knows his limitations, he engages in no pretense. A man of ego would have worn the armor and died, as simple as that.

I Samuel 17:38 So David took his staff in his hand and he chose five smooth stones from the stream and put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag, with his sling in his hand he approached the Philistines.

A Leader is Prepared

Why five stones? You probably have heard sermons before asking the same question. Why five? Why not one? If he's just got all this faith, he knows what he's going to do and so forth, hey, he realized he might miss with the first one. He was good. He didn't think he was perfect. In a sense, taking five means he did have some measure of realism, some measure of humility that's involved in it but, I take from this that a leader is prepared. He is prepared with the weapons he has, not with somebody else's weapons. David was good with a sling. He probably wasn't worth

a flip with a sword and, since that was the case, he went with his weapon. He went prepared; he had his ammunition as well. He didn't go out there with one stone thinking with arrogance, 'I'll do it with one.' And he came to fight.

I Samuel 17:41 Meanwhile, the Philistine with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. {42} He looked David over and he saw he was only a boy. He was ruddy and handsome, and he despised him. {43} He said to David, "Am I a dog that you come out here with a stick?" And he cursed David by his gods {44} and said, "Come here and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" {45} David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with a sword and a spear and a javelin. I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied."

A Leader Comes with Authority

A leader also comes with authority. He had faith, he trusted God and he walked out there with God's authority, which causes some people to call him arrogant. You know, it's just the way it is. You speak with authority, people are going to think you're arrogant. They're going to think you're conceited. They're going to think you're full of yourself, they're going to think all kinds of things about you. The important thing, though, is, that you know who you are.

A Leader Assumes Victory

And, also, there's another thing from this—a leader assumes victory. He doesn't go out there expecting to lose. He goes out there expecting to win; not timid, not hedging his bets, not saying well if this doesn't work I'll try that, he goes to win.

I Samuel 17:46 This day, he said, the Lord will hand you over to me and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today, I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air, the beasts of the earth and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. {47} All those gathered here will know that it's not by sword or spear that the Lord saves, for the battle is the Lord's and He will give all of you into our hands.

Confidence, man. Assumption of victory—I'm going to win this thing.

A Leader Acts Quickly and Decisively

I Samuel 17:48 As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle to meet him.

There was no hesitation. Not a moment. As far as we know he didn't even stop to pray. All he said was, I'm here in the name of the Lord God of Israel, you've defied Him, you've defied His armies, you've insulted God. He acted immediately,

I Samuel 17:49 reaching into his bag, taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, he fell face down on the ground. {50} So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, without a sword in his hand.

He struck down the Philistine and killed him!

I Samuel 17:51 And David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword, drew it from the scabbard. After he had killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran.

A Leader is Not Afraid to Kill

What else have we got about leadership from this man? He was not afraid to draw blood; he was not afraid to kill. There are people—I hope you understand this—there are people in this world who need killing. One of the characteristics of a leader, whose job it is to defend is, he is not afraid to kill people who need killing. I don't know if you know this or not but, in the old days in Texas, you could go into court and you could make a defense in a case of a killing that "the man needed killing." If the jury agreed with you, you went free because everybody knew there are people who need killing. The world will be just a whole lot better off with them dead. Now, you'll find this theme throughout the Bible; don't get upset with me about it. I gained it from there, I didn't invent this out of my own heart and my own mind, it comes from a lot of years of reading this Book.

The true leader—how are we going to phrase this in terms of leadership—he is able to do what he must, even when he would rather not. In other words, he's not squeamish. He knows when it is time to kill. Remember Ecclesiastes 3?

Ecclesiastes 3:1 To everything there is a season, a time to every purpose under heaven. {2} A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to pluck what's planted. {3} A time to kill and time to heal.

So, there is a time.

So, we've learned a lot about leadership in this one day of David's life. Now, I want you to think about this list. I'm going to read you our list here; that if you're a follower of a man, what it means to you to know that these characteristics are present. He is single minded. He is audacious. He's a man of faith. He's realistic. He's prepared. He is authoritative. He assumes victory. He acts quickly and decisively. He comes to fight, not to talk. He knows when it is time to kill.

I think you might see why that would breed confidence in the people who would follow him—that they know precisely who he is, they know precisely where he is going, they know what kind of a man he is, they know where his center is, they know what his core values are, and they know they can depend on him to be the same way tomorrow that he was today. This is a man who can inspire confidence if you're not afraid of him. That's the key. Either way, it describes the kind of person you and I might call charismatic. But there is a lot more than this to be learned from David—a lot more—this is only the beginning of a list of the characteristics of leadership that we could pull.

For example, in I Samuel 18:14, it says this:

I Samuel 18:14 David behaved himself wisely in all his ways and the Lord was with him. Wherefore, when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.

A Leader Manages his Behavior and his Conduct

A leader manages his behavior, he manages his conduct and he values wisdom. A person like this can be intimidating to a fearful person, as David was to Saul. Because when the Spirit of God departed from Saul, this man who himself had been a warrior of no small merit, at one time in his life, who was head and shoulders - physically - above all the people of Israel at that time and was a great combat commander, he was not really a leader. When the Spirit of the Lord departed from him, he became fearful, easy to intimidate—frankly, a little bit crazy—and he was intimidated by David.

I Samuel 18, the story here is fascinating because one of the little awards David was supposed to get was Saul's daughter to be his wife. Now I don't know what that meant to David altogether, but what it meant socially was an enormous position of authority, visibility and power; to be married to the king's daughter. Saul said, here's what we're going to do, say this to David.

I Samuel 18:25 The king doesn't want any dowry for his daughter, what he wants is one hundred foreskins of the Philistines to be avenged of the king's enemies. But what Saul thought was to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

He thought, I'm going to send him out there to fight these people and he'll die in the process.

I Samuel 18:26 Now when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son-in-law and the days hadn't expired.

He's fascinating—they come and tell this and he doesn't say, "Oh, good grief, a hundred foreskins of the Philistines; you know how dangerous that's going to be?" When they told him, it pleased him. He said, "Oh, hey, that's a good deal. I can handle that." And he went out and did so.

I Samuel 18:27 David arose and went, he and his men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred men. (I presume he killed them before he collected the foreskins.) And they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him Michal, his daughter, to wife.

A Leader is a Fighter

A leader is a fighter and doesn't hesitate when the time comes to fight. Now, I've noticed something; you may have heard this and it's a good time to observe it, we're in a political campaign right now. A lot of politicians like to talk about being fighters. They describe themselves as fighters and say, "I will fight for you!" Now they are going to fight for you on Social Security, they're going to fight for you on health care, they're going to fight for you on jobs; they've got this whole list of things they're going fight about. Now, here's what they mean. They mean they are going to argue on your behalf. They mean they're going to go into the halls

of Congress and argue to get you what you want as a person, to try to provide you with these things. They mean that they're going to go into Congress and cut deals. "I will vote for your bill, but you've got to vote for mine." And they will sell two or three things down the river, in order to get this thing that they said they would fight for. What they really mean is "I'll trade for you, I'll bargain for you, I'll argue for you", but that's not what they say. They say they will fight for you. They will talk a man to death for you, is what they mean.

But, you see, when we're talking about the office—let's say of the President (which we're all going to be going out and voting for, I trust, before long)—is whether or not they are prepared to shed blood in the defense of the country. David was. Are they prepared to shed blood? Ours and the enemies? Because you can't fight a war if you're afraid to shed your own blood. You can't fight a war if you're afraid to have even one of your men killed. You have to realize that battle is dangerous, that war is a terrible thing. You've got to hate war in order to be a good leader and to fight it, but you also got to fight it.

Would they go out and be prepared to shed blood in defense of the country or would they rather talk endlessly to diplomats while killers roam at large? This is the question and, so, the leadership question we're talking about here. I know these politicians will talk a good fight for me but which of them is prepared to bring me one hundred foreskins of the Philistines?

What Does David's Name Mean?

Oh yes, I mentioned to you earlier the meaning of David's name, didn't I, and I said we'd come back to that. David in Hebrew means, "loving." You can almost understand why they would name their daughter David and why many men might not name their sons David, I suppose. But his name means "loving" and I think there's something really important in this. You remember in I Samuel 18, after this great victory and after everybody was praising David to high heaven,

I Samuel 18:1 It came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan, Saul's son, was knit with the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. {2} And Saul took David that day and would let him go no more to his father's house. {3} Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own life.

You know, you can't bind like that with people who aren't capable of loving. It just doesn't happen. That both of these men—David and Jonathan—were men very capable of loving and this stupid foolishness people talk about there being a homosexual relationship somehow between David and Jonathan, are completely without understanding. Because the Bible said that it passed the love of women, which is the Bible's way of saying this transcended any sexual relationship at all. It was not like that. There is such a thing as male bonding and it's very real. It can be very strong, and it can last longer than, frankly in many cases than I think many people would ever realize that it would. So, the love that was there was powerful.

Now, you probably, also, if you've read your Bible, realize there is some fascinating scriptures in here between II Samuel chapters 18 and 23, where it describes the men who followed David. These were men who had bark on. These were the kind of people who wore their clothes out from the inside. They were tough. They were hard. They were fighters. They were in incredible

physical condition. They could run over hill and dale mile after mile after mile after mile and never slow down. They were staggering in their accomplishments in battle and yet, every one of these men would have given his life for David. They would have followed him anywhere. As they say, he would have "charged Hell with a bucket of water for David." These are the kind of men that he was able to inspire this leadership in.

Now, how did he do that and what was it about David that enabled these men to do that? Well, all these things that we read before are important, but there is one thing that is even more important than that. And you will find it in II Samuel 23:14 in a curious little incident. Any man who has ever sat for very long around a campfire and swapped yarns with other guys, knows just exactly how this kind of thing can happen.

II Samuel 23:14 David was in the hold and the garrison of the Philistines was in Bethlehem at the time. {15} And David longed and said "Oh, I wish someone would give me a drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, the one by the gate. Oh, that is the sweetest water."

There they are drinking water out of skins, you know, that has taste to it and all this and he said, "I'd really love to have that." So,

II Samuel 23:16 the three mighty men broke through the host of the Philistines (killing, I have no idea, how many of them to get there), drew water out of the well of Bethlehem by the gate, took it and brought it to David.

Now some kind of leaders would have swaggered over that, drank the water in their presence and, you know, made great posturing of it. Not David. He wouldn't drink it. He poured it out to Jehovah, on the ground and he said,

II Samuel 23:17 Far be it from me, O Lord, that I should do this! Is not this the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?" Therefore, he would not drink it.

Why? Because he loved these men, that's why. And this gesture, in one way, it humbled them. In one way it was a correction to them, but it showed tremendous admiration for them on his part and love for them, that he was not willing for them to risk their lives over something trivial. He wasn't willing for them to risk their blood, so he could have a drink of water. He loved them.

A Leader Must Have the Power to Love

And this may well be the most important of all the characteristics of leadership that I have mentioned for you. It is the power to love. I was so struck when I read Rollo May's book on Love and Will, when he made the statement that, "when men lose the power to love, they often substitute power over." And, candidly, this is what a lot of men who seem to be and posture to be and act like they're leaders in the world and assume that they're leaders in the world, have. They have a love of power. They exercise power over as their form of leadership. The kind of leader you want is the man who still has the power to love.

So, we have an incomplete list of the characteristics of leadership that we can learn from David, but we have still picked up a great deal from this.

A leader is single minded. He knows his own mind and knows what he has to do and does it. He's audacious. He is also a man of faith, who believes in God, consults God, trusts God. He is realistic. He has to face what has to be done, but he knows what the risks are. A leader is prepared. He takes the necessary steps to see to it that he has what he needs to win. He's authoritative. He does not proceed on his own authority, he proceeds on the authority of God. He assumes victory. He doesn't go out with a defeatist attitude, saying "Oh, woe is me, I'm going to lose this for sure." He goes out thinking he's going to win. He acts quickly. He acts decisively. He comes to fight, not to talk. He knows when it is time to kill, he also knows when it's time not to kill. A leader manages his behavior. He manages his conduct. A leader values wisdom. A leader is a fighter and killer if he has to be. And a leader is a loving man, who cares deeply about the people whom he leads.

And I wonder if, perhaps, in going through this whole list of things here, we have stumbled on to an explanation of why it was that David was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22.)

The late Ronald L. Dart was a Christian evangelist whose teachings still inspire thousands of people around the world. His legacy spans decades. For more information about the teachings of Ronald L. Dart, visit RLDEA.com where you will find booklets, articles, sermons, Bible studies, and books by Mr. Dart.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you agree with Mr. Dart that David is the greatest example of leadership after Jesus?
2. What is the first thing that you think about when you think about David?
3. Do you find it interesting that God chose the youngest son rather than the oldest to become king?
4. Have you ever considered the possibility that David was most like a teenager when he faced Goliath?
5. Do you agree with Mr. Dart that people: *who know their own mind, know who they are, know what they stand for, know what they're going to do and what they're not going to do, are often seen as conceited and arrogant?*
6. If so, why do you believe people like that get misjudged?
7. Do you like the idea of "simple faith," and how faith doesn't mean you aren't afraid, it just means you trust God despite your fears?

8. Do you have any other traits to add to Mr. Dart's list of what makes a good leader?
9. Have you ever considered how humble Jonathon must have been to recognize David as the true ruler of Israel instead of himself being the next in line to rule?
10. Why do you think God called David "a man after God's own heart"?