

Chapter Title - God as a Leader

Contributors

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3.1 He establishes his relationships on love (unconditional love)

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines love as a feeling of strong or constant affection for a person (Merriam-Webster, 2014). The Bible also explains Love as a nature of God while also comparing the knowledge of God with love (1 John 4:7-8). From the beginning of creation, God has always expressed his feelings in his dealings with man and even though he got angry with his own people on several occasions, he corrected them with the intention of drawing them closer to himself.

Examining how God has always dealt with his people, we discover that there has always been the expression of his affection to man and interestingly, it has been the unconditional type. In the book of Genesis 2: 17, God commanded that man may eat freely of every tree of the garden but must not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

“And the Lord God commanded the man saying, of every tree of the garden though may freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, though shalt not eat of it: for in the day that though eatest thereof though shall surely die. (KJV) ” Genesis 2:17-18

The serpent (The Devil) tempted Eve, Adam's wife after a while and she disobeyed God by eating of the tree God commanded that they should not eat and also gave her husband to eat. Man fell (Genesis 3: 1-10). When God knew of what Adam and Eve had done, he punished them for their disobedience but did not wipe them out of the face of the earth even though he could have. He sent them out of the garden so that they may not have access to the garden to access the fruit that will make them live forever. God was angry enough to curse Adam, Eve and the serpent but was also kind enough to made Clothes for Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21).

“ Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them”



God thus relates with man on the basis of his love for man even when man does not deserve such honour and respect. It is on this note that even King David had to ask questioning why God still favours man considering the nature of man and how often man disobeys God. Psalms 8:4-9

“What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Though madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; though hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea”

Since the fall of Adam and Eve, the relationship between God and man had been strained though God had always sought ways of restoring man to himself even when man did not merit such relationships. In the days of Noah, God regretted that he had created man because man had drifted too far from God’s plans for man and God decided to destroy almost everything he had created (Genesis 6-9). The question we could easily ask is whether God could afford to destroy every living thing existing then or whether God had the power enough to do it? Truly God could afford to destroy every living thing existing then while also having enough power to do it (Jeremiah 32:27) but he chose not to destroy everything he had created including man because of the love he had for man (Ezekiel 18:23). Even before God sent the flood to destroy some of the things he had created, God still gave people the chance to come back to him by sending Noah to preach to them but they all refused the invitation. Animals were also saved because God knew man was going to need them for different reasons.

Another expression of love as a nature of God is in him being fair to all men even to those who hate him. Matthew 5:45 explains that better:

“That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

Relating with people on love makes it easier to deal with the different attributes and characteristics people may have. 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 explains why this is so.

“Love suffers long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil”

The above passages help us understand better why God relates the way he does with us and why he seem too nice sometimes even when we know we have missed it and should be punished. We then discover that it will be easier to relate with fellow human beings if we can learn to relate with them as God does to us, i.e. relating with them on love having the characteristics of love in mind.

Does God relating with us in love mean he will not punish us when we misbehave? No. The Bible explains that by saying that whatever corrections we get from God originates from his love for us.



“For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.”
Proverbs 3:12

Another lesson we can learn from that verse is that the motive of all corrections we make on others should be based on love and not out of revenge or with the mind to inflict pain only.

The ultimate expression of the love of God to man was the sending of his only begotten son to die for man.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

He had to sacrifice someone very dear to him to achieve this goal. The bible describes Christ as having no sin yet he sacrificed himself also in order to restore us back to God. God then throws the door open for all those who are interested in accepting his offer of fellowship.

If we are then to be like God, then we must relate with people in love as he does always with us.

3.2 He leads with creativity and innovation

Creativity involves the use of imagination or original ideas to create something novel (Oxforddictionaries, 2014). The business dictionary defines innovation as the process of translating an idea or invention into a good or service that creates value or for which customers will pay (Business dictionary, 2014).

Another attribute of God that we can covet and show forth as followers of his are his creative and innovative attributes. The first expressions of these attributes recorded in the bible are found in the creation story. The first chapter of the book of Genesis clearly explains how many of the things that are came into being. The creative and innovative acts of God at creation were classified according to the days he created them as we have briefly explained below:

- Day 1: God decreed light and divided it from darkness. He then called the light day and darkness he called night.
- Day 2: God created the firmament and divided the waters under the firmament from waters above the firmament. The firmament God Called heaven
- Day 3: God created the seas, dry land, grass, herbs, and fruits
- Day 4: God created the Sun, moon and stars
- Day 5: God created sea creatures and air creatures
- Day 6: God created the land creatures

One of the creative acts of God was in the creation of man. In Genesis 1:26, God decided to create man different from every other thing he had created.



“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth ” Genesis 1:26

At that point, God decided to replicate himself in man and give dominion to man in order to take care of all other things he created. Considering the complexity of man, we can conclude that God actually was creative in creating man. According to Jeffrey Small, God can thus be referred to as the creative source of existence or better still, we should all see God as the ultimate centre of creativity. (Small, 2014).

It is also important to note that God is not just creative but that he also desires that we exhibit this attributes. Using the Bible as our main reference, we find many verses that talk about God giving man creative abilities. One notable reference was God’s choice of Bezalel and the impartation of ability, intelligence, knowledge etc to device artistic designs. Going through the text in Exodus 31:1-6, we understand that God wanted a tabernacle to be built for worshipping and so He made provision for everything that was needed including intellectual and creative resources.

See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee; The tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that is thereupon, and all the furniture of the tabernacle, And the table and his furniture, and the pure candlestick with all his furniture, and the altar of incense, And the altar of burnt offering with all his furniture, and the laver and his foot, And the cloths of service, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office, And the anointing oil, and sweet incense for the holy place: according to all that I have commanded thee shall they do. Exodus 31: 2-11

Going through different chapters of the Bible, we see God not only giving unto his people intellectual resource of creativity but we also have him giving them a picture of what He wanted his tabernacle to look like to the smallest detail of the lengths and breadths of such buildings according to Exodus 26.



Often, when the word creativity is mentioned we often think solely of artists, musicians, sculptors and writers. Interestingly, creativity is not limited to these professions but should be expressed by all who have life in them. Since being creative implies playing with ideas, it means anyone can be creative. Thinking through the different career paths we have people who have changed and are still changing the ways we do things because they have been able to generate ideas that bettered the ways things were previously being done. They were able to do positive things simply by doing things in novel ways. We can picture Albert Einstein (Theory of Relativity), Isaac Newton (Laws of Motion), Thomas Edison (Light Bulb), Marie Curie (Research on Radioactivity), Richard Branson (Virgin Airlines), Steven Jobs (Apple), Bill Gates, Henry Fayol, Henry Ford (Ford Motors), Abraham Lincoln (Former US President), Larry Page (Google), John Mars (Candy), Michael Dell (Dell), Jeff Bezos (Amazon.com) and Reverend Martin Luther King Jr (Rights Activist) etc. who tried causing changes in different areas and are noted for such endeavours.

A term that may not be easy to separate from creativity and innovation is risk. The fear of risk taking is thus a major enemy to creativity and innovation which is a result of the fear of failure and subsequently loss of time and resources. So what is God's remedy for such? God does not encourage fear.

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”
2 Timothy 1:7

When we are faced with such fears, when God expects from us is to believe in ourselves and trust him fully. Just as many who have tried different approaches to life, it does not necessarily mean that we may not be faced with challenges but what God truly wants us to do is to be hardworking and diligent.

“Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.” Proverbs 22:29

Since God is creative, it will therefore be wrong of us not to be.

3.3 He leads with truth and in holiness

“Truth” means the true and actual state of a matter. So, to say the truth is to say things the way they really are. Holiness is the quality or state of being holy (Dictionary.com). To be holy is to be distinct and separate according to God's standard.

To say God leads with truth and in holiness will simply mean that God leads fairly with a standard only set by him. Every known quantity is measured against standards that are agreed upon and that is why the units of measurement remain the same everywhere. As Christians, the only standard for determining the correctness or wrongness of our actions are those set by God as written in the Bible. There is the serious need to stress the yardstick for measuring the



correctness of the things we do because of the varying interpretations given to actions by different people and to settle those misinterpretations, the Bible is set as the standard.

The Bible explains holiness as a nature of God and describes everything around him as being holy.

“Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” Exodus 15:11

For God to lead in truth, it implies that God is not partial in his dealings with men and is not respecter of anyone. It also implies that God is not moved by whatever position anyone has attained.

“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:” Acts 10:34

Summarising the leadership of God in terms of truth and holiness then implies that his leadership style cannot be faulted since he sets the standards for all our dealings.

3.4 He is a Leader of Integrity

Thousands of years ago, Roman centurions would inspect each legionnaire every morning. The soldiers would thump their breastplates over their hearts – the most vital part of the breastplate. As each soldier struck their armor, they would shout "integritas", which means being whole and unbroken. Their commanding officer listened not only to their words but also to the sound the armor made when struck, for solid armor rings differently than flawed armor. Sometimes this seemed like make-work to the soldiers, but the centurion knew that the integritas of their armor protected their vital organs. It protected their heart. When they lost their integrity, they would lose their life. (Davis, n.d)

The introduction above vividly illustrates integrity as a matter of the heart. It is not just a core component of a quality and godly life, taking it literally; it is a matter of life and death. The absence of integrity as shown above could spell doom, while a life of integrity elongates life. Integrity is “the quality of being honest and fair, the state of being complete and whole” (Merriam-Webster, 2014). The word comes from the Latin integritas, which means ‘wholeness,’ ‘entireness,’ ‘completeness.’ In relation to a person, one can be said to be a man with integrity, if he is not divided, that is not living a double life, has nothing to hide and nothing to fear. (Weirsbe, 2008 cited in Kitchen, 2011).



God cherishes integrity and encourages his children to live such a life. In 1 Kings 9:4, God encouraged Solomon, to take after his father David in integrity: “and if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments”. Also, Jesus while instructing his followers in what has been popularized as the sermon on the mount said;

“be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”. Matthew 5:48,

So it is clear that God’s intention for all his children is nothing short of perfection, being flawless and without reproach, which also incorporates integrity. Psalms 15:1-5 further describes in specific terms, what God requires of his children who long to live with him in his kingdom

However, it is interesting to note that God does not only compel his children to live in integrity, he displays integrity himself, thus leading by example. Matthew 5:48 cited earlier reveals that God himself is perfect. Perhaps, according to Thieme (n.d) it is an understatement to say that God displays integrity. To him, “God has always possessed integrity as part of His eternal, infinite, perfect essence”. In a further description of God’s integrity, Thieme asserts that it “assures mankind that absolute trust in the perfect God is always well-placed. The unbending strength of God’s essence is fully behind everything He does or sponsors. All the attributes of His essence form one consistent, indivisible whole—His total person—and each attribute works together in complete harmony for the ultimate good of the believer”. Also, Campbell (n.d) writes; “God Himself, Who created all things, adheres perfectly and completely to all the moral codes and laws that He has created. There is no impaired condition with God. He is complete and undivided.”

The integrity of God will be studied under two outlines in this chapter. The first is the truthfulness of God, while the second is the faithfulness of God. While it may be argued that there are more attributes to God than these two, it is the position of this chapter that of all the many attributes of God, these two stands out in relation to the theme of integrity.

3.4.1 The Truthfulness of God

“...Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, His work is perfect: For all His ways are judgement, a God of truth and without iniquity; just and right is He.” (Deuteronomy 32:3-4).

This passage of the Holy Scriptures showcases the nature of God, and among the very many listed all across the scriptures is the fact that God is a God of truth. The concept of truthfulness connotes telling the truth, much more; it is described as being disposed to telling the truth. Hebrews 6:18, says, “... it is impossible for God to lie...”. God is an embodiment of truth, not by the mere fact that He tells the truth, He himself is described as being the truth. John 14:6, Jesus,



the express image of God, speaking of himself, said; "... I am the way, the truth and the life....Therefore, God is truth personified.

It is also important to establish certain characters of God's truth. The first, according to Psalms 146:6 is that the truth of God is forever. Also Psalms 100:5 establishes that God's truth endures to all generations. The implication of this is that God holds truth in perpetuity without any alteration. No wonder Malachi 3:6, corroborating this, states that God does not change. He can be seen as tenaciously holding onto what he believes in. He does not trade his truth; neither does he compromise his truth. Another character of God's truth is that it is abundant. Exodus 34:6: ... ***"The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth"*** expressly points out that God is not miserly with his truth. He does not withhold the truth like men, nor does he speak 'half-truth' (Numbers 23:19). While men seek to be economical with the truth, hoping to protect their interests, God's overriding interest in all things is for the truth to prevail. Romans 3:4 stresses this point: ***"... yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."*** This passage further states why God sticks to the truth. The first reason is that it is the basis, on which all of God's words are justified, and the second is that it makes God prevail in justice; in other words, it makes him unambiguous when judging.

The third character of God's truth is that it is inviolable, that is, it is too important to be ignored or treated with disrespect. The scripture points out severally the fact that God cannot lie. For instance, Titus 1:2: ***"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"*** also Numbers 23:19, one of the most instructive passages on God's truth reads: ***"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"*** Therefore, it is glaring and compelling to know that God is incapable of lying, and this truth cannot be ignored.

Lastly on the character of God's truth, it is important to note that God's truth is manifest, expressed or revealed in many things. The first is that it is revealed in his words. John 17:17 accurately tells us that the word of God is truth. Psalms 119:160 also lends credence to this; ***"Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever."*** The truth of God is also expressed in his ways; Revelation 15:3: "...Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." The works of God also expresses his truth. Psalms 33:4 ***"... all his works are done in truth."*** Similarly, Psalms 111:7 states that ***"The works of his hands are verity and judgment; ..."*** Daniel 4:37, records the testimony of a repentant king; "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment..."

3.4.2 The Faithfulness of God

The concept of faithfulness can be seen from many sides. However, for the purpose of this chapter, it will be taken to mean; the virtue of keeping one's promises or doing what one is supposed to do (Merriam-Webster, 2014). Indeed, it is consoling to know that in this compromising world, where unfaithfulness in every realm is fast becoming the order of the day,



there is one who remains faithful. Faithfulness is the very nature of God, as he would not be God without it. It is on the basis of his faithfulness that our confidence is built as his children. “He never forgets, never fails, never falters, and never forfeits His word. To every declaration of promise or prophecy the Lord has exactly adhered, every engagement of covenant or threatening He will make good” (Pink, n.d).

Several scriptures attest to God’s faithfulness, across both the old and the new testaments, assuring believers of their trust in the Almighty. In Deuteronomy 7:9 ; Moses in his writings, describes God thus; “... *he [is] God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations*”. This passage shows that it was the faithfulness of God that earned him the title, “*Covenant-keeping God*”. Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:9, as well as in 1 Corinthians 10:13, says “*God is faithful*”. In Romans 3:3-4, Paul establishes a very important point, when he argued that even if all men refuse to believe God and acknowledge him as God, that does not change who God is. This is because his attribute of faithfulness is constant and is not dependent on what man does or does not do. In fact, verse 4 states clearly “*God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar...*” In other words, God’s faithfulness is not based on popular support; he remains faithful, at all times and in all situations. In Lamentations 3:22-23, Prophet Jeremiah affirmed, “... **great is thy faithfulness**”.

The concept of the faithfulness of God is far-reaching. It is used to describe his word or covenant as true and to be trusted. One very key passage of the scripture on the subject of God’s faithfulness is Numbers 23:19 which reads; “*God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*” This passage clears every doubt as to God’s capacity and capability to actualize his words and promises. In fact, the books of Matthew 24:35, Mark 13:31 and Luke 21:33 states that; “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*” Also Psalms 138:2 “...*for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*” The implication of these passages is that for every word or promise God makes, he possesses a corresponding ability to ensure that it is fulfilled. The book of Isaiah 55:11 puts it succinctly; “*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*”

At this juncture, we shall examine some of the very many scriptural evidences of God’s faithfulness as a measure of his integrity. The most profound of all is found in Genesis 8:22, “*While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease*” God made this pronouncement many thousands of years ago. Since then, every year that comes manifests a fresh witness to God’s fulfillment of this promise (Pink, n.d). After many years of Abraham walking steadfastly before the Lord his God, he yet remained without a child. In Genesis 15, God made him a promise, telling him he was going to have a son from his own loins. In Genesis 17 and 18, even after he, together with his wife, Sarah had misconceived God’s promise and have had a son, Ishmael through her maid Hagar, God was still resolute to fulfill his earlier promise and so he reassured them of this promise. In Genesis 21:1-2 God fulfilled his promise, “*And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD*



did unto Sarah as he had spoken.” Though it took some time, eventually, the promise of God came to pass.

Also in Genesis 15:13-16 we find that the Lord God declared unto Abraham, *"Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them. . . . But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again"*. Centuries ran their weary course. Abraham's descendants groaned amid the brick-kilns of Egypt. At last, in Exodus 12:41, *"And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt."* (Pink, n.d)

God made promises to Joseph through dreams in Genesis 37, though he went through some difficult times, yet the word of the Lord was fulfilled in Genesis 41. The promise of a saviour was made through Prophet Isaiah, in Isaiah 7:14 the Lord declared, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel". *"Again centuries passed, but "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). "God is true. His Word of Promise is sure."*(Pink, n.d)

3.5 He disciplines when he should

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:5-11)

To be sure, the term discipline connotes "to punish or penalize for the sake of enforcing obedience and perfecting moral character." (Merriam-Webster, , 2014). Among many other issues, this passage establishes that God is love, just and righteous. It also links God's love to discipline, what is referred to as chastening. It is the just and righteous nature of God that compels him to punish evil and all forms of unrighteousness. For it will be ungodly for God not to punish evil doers, because that will violate his rule. The relationship between God's love and his discipline is directly proportion, that is the greater God's love for a person; the greater the discipline when such a person errs. Proverbs 3:12 corroborates this; *"for whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighted."*



God demonstrates one of the key traits a leader should possess. While it is true that love is vital for leadership, it is equally true that discipline is essential, if leadership is to be effective and transformational. God demonstrates these twin traits of leadership all across scripture, both the old and new testament. A few of such instances will be examined, but we must be quick to point out that God did not just discipline his people in scriptures; he also punished those who had no relationship with him.(Pratte,2007)

The first record of God's discipline was recorded in Genesis 3 and this was towards Adam and his wife, Eve. In Genesis 2: 15-17, God had given Adam an instruction, when he placed him in the Garden of Eden. Verse 17, spells out clearly what was expected of Adam and the consequence, in the case he disobeys. Adam eventually disobeyed, with the cooperation of his wife, who was misled by the serpent (Satan). God's verdict came upon all three, which included; suffering, eventual death and banishment from the Tree of Life and entirely from Eden.

In Genesis 19, when God could no longer bear the atrocities in the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, he decided to destroy the land. However, he had to arrange for the escape of Lot, a righteous man who lived in the land. Before their departure, God gave them stern warnings in verse 17; ***“and it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.”*** Unfortunately, Lot's wife disobeyed one of these orders by looking back and she became a pillar of salt as recorded in verse 26.

In Leviticus 10:1-3 Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, the Priest offered incense in an unacceptable manner. Therefore God sent fire from heaven to devour them. Note that the sin in this case is what most people will tag “little sins”, but from God's perspective, it was a heinous crime deserving death. In Numbers 16, Korah, Dathan and abiram attempted to overthrow Moses. God disciplined them by causing the earth to swallow them, and also consumed some other 250 associates with fire. About 14,700 of the congregation of the children of Israel died when they objected to the manner of discipline God meted out on Korah and his associate. (Pratte, 2007).

Even Prophet Moses, a mighty prophet and highly esteemed before God, who was described as “very meek” in Numbers 12:3, was not spared from God's discipline. In Numbers 20: 1-13, it was revealed how Moses instead of speaking to the rock to produce water, smote it. This single action cost him entry into Canaan.

An instance in the New Testament is recorded in Acts 5:1-11. The story of a couple, Ananias and his wife Sapphira, who decided to lie to the Holy Ghost. The punishment for their wrong doing was their untimely death. At this juncture it is important to state that God did not just discipline people in the bible times has evidences have shown; he still disciplines today and will continue to do so. Matthew 25:41,46, 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9 and Revelation 20:11-15 lends credence to God's determination to punish the unrighteous in eternity

As stated in the opening scriptural reference in this section, the purpose of God's disciplinary measures on people is for their profit to enable them partake of his holiness (Hebrews 12:10). Pratte (2007) further discusses four purposes of God's discipline towards his people, Israel. The



first is to motivate sinners to repent. In Judges 2:11-3:15 — the period of judges was a repeating cycle in which Israel would sin, God would bring foreign oppressors to chastise them, they would call on God, then He would send a judge to free them from the enemy, etc. In these and other cases, God brought suffering on the people to motivate them to repent. The second purpose is to warn other people and remove harmful influences. Ecclesiastes 8:11 says; *“because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”* Here discipline serves as a deterrent to other people intending to carry-out evil acts. Deuteronomy 13:10-11 and 17:12-13, elaborates further on this.

The third purpose is to maintain respect for God and His people in the eyes of society. Examples cited in Exodus 32:25, reveals that sin among God’s people makes them a derision to God’s enemies. Chastisement is needed to restore a good reputation. Also in 2 Samuel 12:14, David’s sin gave great occasion to God’s enemies to blaspheme, so God insisted he be punished. Finally, God disciplines to ensure that his commands are obeyed. In Joshua 7:10-13 — God would not be with Israel nor could they stand before their enemies until they punished Achan’s sin.

3.6 He leads without Partiality

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons,... Acts 10:34

Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD every aspect of be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts. 2 Chronicles 19:7

For there is no respect of persons with God. Romans 2:11

The scriptural references above, among many others all across the scriptures, show a very peculiar nature of God. This character is also essential in every aspect of human relations and leadership, but it is still only desirable, as what exists is a far cry, when compared to God’s expectation. (Berkley, 2010). Also it is important to state, before delving into the crux of this issue, that the use of the phrase, “no respect of persons” as seen in the references above and other scriptural references relates to the impartiality, particularly from the King James Version and does not transmit the sense that God does not regard man or that he disdains man, the phrase is an old way of referring to impartiality.

What then does it mean to be impartial? The word impartial is the opposite of partial, which means to be “inclined to favour one party more than the other”. It is also to be biased, one-



sided, and prejudiced. Therefore, to be impartial would mean not biased, one-sided or prejudiced. It is to be dispassionate, objective and candid. (Merriam-Webster, 2014). The word partiality in the Hebrew is *aprosopoleptos* which is derived from a Hebrew idiom meaning "to receive the face" of someone which meant to show partiality or favoritism. This word is rooted in the respectful oriental greeting in which one humbly turns one's face to the ground when greeting another person. If the person greeted raised the face of the man, this was a sign of recognition and esteem. The idea is that of looking to see who someone is before deciding how to treat them. In other words, one judges by appearance and on that basis giving special favor and respect (or refuses to give respect).

However, the word under consideration here is the opposite or negative aspect of this well known practice and thus means "does not receive face." In relation to God as a leader, it literally means God does not receive anybody's face. He is impartial. His relation with men is not based on outward appearance, wealth, culture, social position, family background, education, beauty, or intellect.

To properly grasp the theme of impartiality, particularly in relation to God, we will consider some passages of the scripture.

Romans 2:6-12

“Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.”

Piper (1998) in an extensive study on the passage of the scripture above came up with some interesting conclusions which we will share in this section. The first is that God judges everyone according to his or her deeds. This reminds one of what Galatians 6:7 says; “be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” The implication of this is that nobody can ever get away with breaking the laws of God, no matter the status of such. All are judged by the same measure.

A fundamental question is posed here by Piper, if God is going to judge everyone based on the deeds and impartially too, how can that be achieved when “God gave the Law of Moses only to the Jews, and so they have access to what deeds are required of them, and the rest of the world doesn't. So how can you say that God is impartial to judge according to deeds when he has only told one group of people what the deeds are that they should do?” The response is as interesting

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as the question; premised on verse 12: he emphatically responded that even in that situation God is impartial ***“because all who have sinned without the Law [that is, nations who don't have the Old Testament Law of Moses] will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law [Jews who have the Law of Moses] will be judged by the Law.”*** So God judges in this matter based on the truth one has at his or her disposal. No wonder Apostle Paul was quick to add in Colossians 3:23-25; ***“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons”***.

The next point will be considered from Matthew 5:44-45, Jesus speaking at the Sermon on the mount said: ***“...That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”*** By this statement, Jesus enjoins his followers to emulate God in the display of impartiality. God, in this great demonstration of impartiality, does not discriminate in the distribution of his natural blessings, the sunlight and rain, which he freely lavishes on the good and the evil. This does not allure to God lowering his standard on righteousness, rather it showcases his magnanimity and benevolence to all regardless of the state of the heart.

Another point worthy of note is God's perspective on matters. While it is human to assess a person or a matter on face value, God takes an exception to this. In 1 Samuel 16:7, Prophet Samuel said to Jesse, David's father; ***“... for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.”*** As Berkley (2010) rightly notes “we need to know that God, our Father, judges “without partiality.” Whether you are black or white...Male or female...Rich or poor... Handsome or ugly...”. Rather than looking at the superficial composition of the sons of Jesse in the passage above, God decided to go to the heart and its intent, and found David worthy of being King over Israel. The point is that although God sees all this externalities, He chooses to see through them and go to the heart of the matter and is not partial to appearance and circumstance.

Finally on this note, God expects nothing less than the standard of impartiality he has laid down from his children. Leviticus 19:15 ; says ***“Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.”*** Also in Deuteronomy 1:17; ***“Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great...”*** James 2:1-9 summarily points out that partiality is “inconsistent with faith in Christ.” (Colley,2004)

3.7 Conclusion

Examining God as a leader, we have briefly gone through some of the things we can learn from him as our perfect example of who a leader should be and some of the different areas of leadership that we should take serious notice of. If we are made in God's image and we desire to be like him, then our leadership style should be like his. Understanding the person of God thus brings out all the things we need to learn from him.



We also should not forget that all the attributes we have mentioned are God's nature and not just mere principles to be read and adhered to. To be a good leader, we must learn to make these godly attributes our lifestyles.

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