



IN THE MARKETPLACE
Christian Women

"Equipping Women to Run the Race"

Movers, Shakers And Culture Shapers

Small Group Study Guide
Volume 2



IN THE MARKETPLACE *Christian Women*

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WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP: ABIGAIL

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for positioning me where You have me. Thank You that because of You, I can make a difference. Help me to recognize opportunities to bring glory to You and point others to You. Teach me, dear God, how to be a better leader, to love people like You do. Give me Your wisdom and discernment, dear Lord, to be all that You created me to be.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

“As you prepare yourself to become a better leader, use the following guidelines to help you grow:...Let go of your ego...Become a good follower first...Build positive relationships...Work with excellence...Rely on discipline, not emotion...Make adding value your goal...Give your power away...”¹

John Maxwell

What do you believe makes a good leader? _____

Which of the guidelines above are easier for you to adopt? _____

Are there situations or individuals around you that make it more difficult to exhibit such leadership characteristics? _____

Opening Scripture

“Now there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel, and the man was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And he was hearing his sheep in Carmel. The name of the man was Nabal and the name of his wife Abigail. And she was a woman of good understanding and beautiful appearance; but the man was harsh and evil in his doings. He was of the house of Caleb.”

I Samuel 25: 2-3

¹ Pages 7-9, John C. Maxwell; *The Right to Lead*

Scriptures for discussion

I Samuel 25: 14-42

What leadership characteristics does Abigail exhibit in these verses? _____

Are there opportunities in your work situation where exhibiting such behaviors might enable you lead better?

Additional References

Proverbs 6:6-8

“Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest.”

Habakkuk 3:17-19

“Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls – Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will job in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer’s feet, and He will make me walk on my high hills.”

MODEL THE WAY

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for positioning me where You have me. Thank You that because of You, I can make a difference. Help me to recognize opportunities to bring glory to You and point others to You. Teach me, dear God, how to be a better leader, to love people like You do. Give me Your wisdom and discernment, dear Lord, to be all that You created me to be.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

“Find your voice by clarifying your personal values...Set the example by aligning actions with shared values...”²

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

Are you clear with your personal values? _____

What do you value most? _____

Do the people in your workplace know what your values are? _____

Do they share those values? _____

Opening Scripture

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put perverse lips far from you. Let your eyes look straight ahead, and your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or the left.”

Proverbs 4:23-26

² Page 22, *The Leadership Challenge*, James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

Scriptures for discussion

Judges 4:4-6

What thoughts are triggered as we read that Deborah is rendering commands while sitting under a palm tree?

Has she clarified her values? _____

How can you find your voice by clarifying your values? _____

Judges 4:8

Does this verse reflect insubordination? _____

What else might it reflect? _____

How would you have responded? _____

Judges 4:9-14

Do Deborah's actions align with her values? _____

How do your actions align with your values? _____

Judges 4: 15-24

What does Jael value? _____

When confronted with difficult decisions, do you hold true to your values? _____

Judges 5: 1-2

Do Deborah's actions here align with her values? _____

Has she led in such a way that her values are shared? _____

Judges 5:3-9

In verse 7, what traits does Deborah exhibit? _____

How do her comments align with her values? _____

Model the Way

Judges: 5:19-22

Is there evidence of shared values? _____

Judges 5:23

When the leader has clearly defined values, will everyone align and follow? _____

What do you do when they don't? _____

How do you celebrate the contributions of those who do? _____

Additional References

Matthew 6: 1 – 7: 27

IMAGINE POSSIBILITIES AND INSPIRE COMMON VISION

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for positioning me where You have me. Thank You that because of You, I can make a difference. Help me to recognize opportunities to bring glory to You and point others to You. Teach me, dear God, how to be a better leader, to love people like You do. Give me Your wisdom and discernment, dear Lord, to be all that You created me to be.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

“Envision the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities...Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations...”³

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

How do you set goals for the future? _____

What significant events in your past have influenced the direction you have taken? _____

If you were to chart those events, do they take the form of peaks and valleys? _____

Does any pattern or dominant theme emerge? _____

Do themes emerge that might provide information about what you are likely to find compelling in the future?

What work do you find absorbing and thrilling? _____

What is unique about your hopes, dreams and aspirations? _____

How do you enlist others in your vision? _____

Opening Scripture

“(Then came the daughters of Zelophehad)...Why should the name of our father be removed from among his family because he had no son? Give us a possession among our father's brothers.”

Numbers 27:4

³ Page 2139, 159, *The Leadership Challenge*, James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

Scriptures for discussion

Numbers 27: 1-11

What would have happened to Zelophehad's possessions if these women had not envisioned and pursued a different possibility? _____

Numbers 27: 1: 15-23

What do we learn about Moses' vision and/or passions by this scripture? _____

I Chronicles 22

I Chronicles 28

I Chronicles 29

Is David clear about what he sees for the future? _____

Does he develop a shared sense of destiny? _____

How does he enlist the people in common purpose? _____

Is his communication powerful? _____ Positive? _____

Can it be visualized? _____

Is he speaking from the heart? _____

Additional References

I Chronicles 23-27

Nehemiah 2

SEEK INNOVATIVE WAYS TO CHANGE, GROW, AND IMPROVE

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for positioning me where You have me. Thank You that because of You, I can make a difference. Help me to recognize opportunities to bring glory to You and point others to You. Teach me, dear God, how to be a better leader, to love people like You do. Give me Your wisdom and discernment, dear Lord, to be all that You created me to be.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

“Search for opportunities by seeking innovative ways to change, grow and improve...Experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from mistakes.”⁴

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

How often do you ask yourself how you can do something innovative or different that will move your company and yourself a few steps forward? _____

When was the last time you challenged your existing processes and procedures? _____

What can you do this week to affect positive change within your organization (or home)? _____

Do you create an environment where people are encouraged to be creative and innovative? _____

Do you look for opportunities for positive change when things are going well or do you find that you are more motivated to be innovative during times of adversity, uncertainty, transformation, etc.? _____

Opening Scripture

“Wisdom calls aloud outside; she raises her voice in the open squares. She cries out in the chief concourses, at the openings of the gates in the city she speaks her words: ‘How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? For scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge’...For the turning away of the simple will stay them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them;”

Proverbs 1: 20-22, 32

⁴ Page 194-223, *The Leadership Challenge*, James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

Scriptures for discussion

I Samuel 17: 40- 51

Tough David stated clearly that his strength came from God, he used a method that was familiar to him to slay Goliath. He used his own unique talent and strength, and he prepared for the challenge ahead of him.

What unique talents, skills, and strengths do you possess that you can use to make positive change in your work and home? _____

I Samuel 18: 17- 30

How does David continue to set to tone for others to be innovative and take risks? _____

I Samuel 19: 11- 16

Michal took considerable risk by helping David escape. What might have helped her feel confident in doing so? _____

I Samuel 20: 18 – 25, 35 – 42

This is one example of Jonathan finding a way to help David. Each time he did so, it was at great risk. What led him to have such deep affection for David and to take such risks? _____

Additional Reference

Galatians 6: 9

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”

Zephaniah 1:12-13

“And it shall come to pass at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and punish the men who are settled in complacency who say in their heart, ‘The Lord will not do good, nor will He do evil.’ Therefore their goods shall become booty, and their houses a desolation; They shall build houses, but not inhabit them; They shall plan vineyards, but not drink their wine.”

EXPERIMENT AND TAKE RISKS

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for positioning me where You have me. Thank You that because of You, I can make a difference. Help me to recognize opportunities to bring glory to You and point others to You. Teach me, dear God, how to be a better leader, to love people like You do. Give me Your wisdom and discernment, dear Lord, to be all that You created me to be.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

“Experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from mistakes. Set up little experiments and develop models. Make it safe for others to experiment. Break mindsets...Give people choices. Accumulate yeses. Admit your mistakes. Conduct pre-and postmortems for every project.”⁵⁶

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

Do you ever take risks? _____

Can you recall a time when you or someone in your workplace took a risk that lead to meaningful results? ____

How did that action affect the work and/or lives of others? _____

Do you make it safe for others to take risks? _____

Can you think of a difficult problem or challenge that you are confronting where you believe there is a possible solution, but to do what you believe necessary might put you at risk in some way? _____

Are there some small steps you could take that would take you toward that solution? _____

Opening Scripture

“So He said, ‘Come.’ And when Peter had come down out of the boat he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, ‘Lord, save me!’ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him and said to him, ‘O you of little faith, why did you doubt?’”

Matthew 14: 29-31

⁵ page 237, *The Leadership Challenge*, James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

Scriptures for discussion

Daniel 1: 1-14

What is the experiment? _____

Did Daniel make it safe for the chief of the eunuchs to cooperate? _____

Daniel 1: 15-21

How might this one incident set the tone for others to be innovative and take risks? _____

What does it tell us about Daniel's character? _____

It is impossible to lead without establishing core values from which we operate. Though we may make mistakes and we may fail, so long as risks taken are in support of our core values, through them a leader can set the tone for values-based innovation and have peace with whatever the end result.

Daniel 2: 24-30

What are Daniel's motives for taking this risk? _____

Daniel 2: 45-49

Does he change any mindsets? _____

Daniel 3: 7-18

Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego took a risk that by disobeying King Nebuchadnezzar and were, as a result, confronted with what we might see as a bad result. What do you believe helped them keep their resolve, even when confronted with such a drastic punishment? _____

What lessons can we learn here about keeping our resolve when things don't seem to be going well? _____

Daniel 4: 18

Why did Nebuchadnezzar call Daniel to interpret the second dream? _____

Daniel 5: 22-29

Daniel courageously interprets King Belshazzar's dream, even though the message was not one that would be appealing to the King? Yet, he was promoted, as promised. Daniel and his friends had accumulated wins and "yeses" by being consistent with values, being honest and courageous, regardless of the risk and were never deterred by what might seem to be an undesirable outcome. How is this relevant in your work today? _____

Experiment and Take Risks

Daniel 6: 1-12, 19-23

When risks are values based, it is more difficult for others to find fault, but in many situations, people look to find ways to interfere with the success of others. Daniel's rise was not immediate, nor was it always without setback. How can we use the sequence of Daniel's actions, setbacks and successes to help us to determine when and how to experiment and take risks? _____

Additional Reference

Numbers 14: 9

Deuteronomy 1: 21

Ezra 10: 4

FOSTER COLLABORATION

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for positioning me where You have me. Thank You that because of You, I can make a difference. Help me to recognize opportunities to bring glory to You and point others to You. Teach me, dear God, how to be a better leader, to love people like You do. Give me Your wisdom and discernment, dear Lord, to be all that You created me to be.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

“Collaboration is the critical competency for achieving and sustaining high performance.... It won't be the ability to fiercely compete but the ability to lovingly cooperate that will determine success.”⁶

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

What do you do to stimulate collaboration in your organization?

How much face to face interaction do you initiate with peers and subordinates in your organization?

Opening Scripture

“that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

Ephesians 4: 14 –16 (NKJ)

How is Kouzes and Posner's message above similar to the messages found in this scripture? _____

⁶ page 242, *Leadership Challenge*, James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

Scriptures for discussion

I Kings 5: 1 – 18

In essence, Solomon was promoted. King Hiram set the tone for a relationship with King Solomon
by _____

The two kings might have seen each other as competitors. King Solomon exhibited wisdom and leadership by

How can you use the example in this passage to improve the way you work with others? _____

II Chronicles 10: 1 – 19

What did King Rehoboam do to facilitate loving cooperation? _____

Before a group will engage in loving cooperation, there must be a climate of trust. What did King Rehoboam do to facilitate a climate of trust? _____

To foster collaboration a good leader must encourage face-to-face interaction and facilitate positive interdependence. The leader still must listen, evaluate and discern which individuals and which counsel to follow. What mistakes did King Rehoboam make in fulfilling this responsibility? _____

II Chronicles 13: 1 – 22

What did King Abijah do to facilitate loving cooperation? _____

What did he do to facilitate a climate of trust? _____

What further indicates that King Abijah facilitated loving cooperation and exhibited discernment in leading his people? _____

Additional References

Philippians 2: 2 – 4

“fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interest, but also for the interests of others.”