

LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM ELISHA #8 "The Personal Touch"

2 Kings 4:32-37

Researcher Tiffany Field, a leader in the field of touch, found that preterm newborns who received just three 15-min sessions of touch therapy for 5-10 days gained 47 % more weight than premature infants who'd received standard medical treatment. Need to see – the personal touch.

I. MINISTRY AT A DISTANCE

A. For some the idea of ministry is attractive – but often there are selfish motivations

1. Attention 2. Power 3. \$ d. What people are going to do for me

B. This plays out in our ministry to people/their needs

1. **2 Kings 4:31** Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but there was neither voice nor hearing. Therefore he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, "The child has not awakened."

a. Bare minimum ministry: Least amount of contact/effort – at a distance

1. Technically he is involved – but there is actually minimal contact/effort expended

2. This is how many people approach ministry to others

a. Disciples: Send them away/don't trouble the master....these people are a bother!

3. Modern day ministry: a. Follow up by text b. Ministry by Facebook/church App c. Internet:

a. Danger when our ministry is solely technical: Sound/video/printing – but doesn't involve people

C. This approach will be lacking the blessing of God

1. People can tell whether you care: **V26** Shunemmite doesn't want to tell Gehazi – she knows he doesn't care

a. Crucial factor in pioneering: You have to get people to like you before they will love Jesus!

2. God can tell: The God of compassion doesn't bless selfish/lazy ministry

a. **V31** the child did not awake....but he was doing what he was told! Going through the motions

Robert Nardelli CEO of Home Depot. Amongst many other faults... far more concerned about his processes than his people. Had a private elevator to his 22nd floor office. His exclusive use of it eliminated any chance he'd share an elevator ride with an employee. Was fired in disgrace...

II. PERSONAL MINISTRY

A. Ministry has to flow from the heart – not merely a technique

1. What's clear is that Elisha cared – that's why there was a difference in actions

a. **Matthew 9:36** But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

1. MZ: Change in ministry...what made the difference? We just didn't like people very much...

2. Every disciple has to settle this with God – for themselves PM: Pray – give me a burden for souls, and a love for people

B. Our scrip shows us the need for a personal touch in ministry

1. **2 Kings 4:33** He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the LORD.

a. Not a crowd or mass setting get alone – personal effort to connect/work issues through

2. **2 Kings 4:34** And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm.

a. Stretch out....doesn't come automatically b. Commitment: Didn't work the first time

C. Our job is to create an environment for a personal touch

1. Accessibility: 2. Altar ministry: Create ways to personally touch/pray for people

a. **Mark 1:41** moved with compassion he touched him... Laying on of hands...

1. I teach Pastors to do this – especially in times of rebellion: You can lift something

3. Personally praying for people: Vs. a phone-in/internet prayer request line

4. Follow up: Nothing beats face-to-face!

5. Working with people on their level: **V34** began to grow warm/sneezed 7 times

a. Compassion continues working with them even though they don't respond perfectly

1. Not expecting too much too soon. Convert killers...get up/ push ups/ run around the block...

III. MINISTRY RESULTS

A. Our scrip shows that God blesses ministry that involves a personal touch

1. **Supernatural dimension:** God does more than we can do

a. More than salesmanship: Hey – have you lost weight? b. **V35** the child came alive! Resurrection life

2. **Inspiration of personal ministry**

a. People recognize those who care – those who can be approached/touch you

b. Creates a momentum of influence: People who are touched – spread the word

1. Jesus touched Leper...word spread; They were trying to touch Jesus!

a. Woman issue of blood b. **Mark 6:56**

2. People who are touched by compassion are most likely to spread the word!