

Men Need to Lead **07-20-16 AM**

In Judges 4:4-9, we read of God raising up Barak to judge and lead Israel against the oppressive Canaanites. When called, Barak instead turned to the prophetess and judge Deborah, and refused to lead without her presence. This was an act of weakness, turning down the role of leader of the people of Israel, and for this we are told in verse 9 that the glory of victory would be given to a woman. There is a lesson here: men need to lead, and women need to enable that leadership.

Our society is suffering for a distinct lack of men who are willing to lead¹. We might blame this on feminism, or on affluence, or other negative factors of society. But such was not present in Barak's time; he just did not rise to the place God called him. Deborah rightly stood to enable his leadership, but Barak failed his test.

Men need to lead in their homes (1 Timothy 2:11-15). They need to lead their families in the call to worship and join themselves to the church (Hebrews 10:25). They need to lead by example in spiritual growth (2 Peter 1:5-7). They need to lead the prayers of the home (1 Thessalonians 5:17), and in general all of the walk of faith (1 John 1:7-9). They need to lead by example, not by dictation.

Men need to lead in the church (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). They need to prepare themselves for works such as teachers, preachers, elders or deacons (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, 2 Timothy 2, etc.). They need to lead class discussion, or church works. Again, they are commanded to lead by example, and not by dictation.

When men lead, something good happens. We see characteristics like courage, diligence and effort exerted (and causing us all to gain a sense of empowerment). We see a desire for spiritual things that is contagious. We see gentle and humble leadership that others want to follow.

Women need to enable and empower this leadership. Empower means to give the power to act; women have the obligation to empower men to their work. Deborah attempted to empower Barak.

Women need to empower in the home (Titus 2:3-5). They need to empower husbands, fathers or sons to their God given duties. The need to empower the call of the brethren (Hebrews 10:25). They need to empower others by their efforts for spiritual growth (2 Peter 1:5-7). They need to empower others WITH prayers and BY demonstrating prayers (1 Thessalonians 5:17), and generally in the walk of faith (1 John 1:7-9).

When women empower, something wonderful happens. They demonstrate the patience of our Lord in working with people (men) who, like Barak, may not want to be the leader. They give the encouragement of Barnabas to those around them, and their enthusiasm is contagious. Their kind words and gentle encouragements ensure faithful service of others. Finally, again, patience is the chief virtue of the work of empowerment, knowing that such labor does not accomplish its purposes overnight.

What does failure look like? For one thing, men who fail to lead in a Godly manner turn to a more viscous or tyrannical leadership, one rejected by Scripture (1 Peter 3:7). The other extreme is the apathetic leader, who has no interest in bring in their family to God. It leads to bitterness between married partners, parents and children, brothers and sisters in Christ. It leads to death

Men need to lead in the church and in the home. Women need to be the source of the power of that leadership, either in the church or in the home.

¹ <http://www.newsweek.com/dear-dads-save-your-sons-195470>