

LEADERSHIP OR SERVANTHOOD?

LEADERSHIP! Isn't that the hot word today? Have you ever heard of a "Servanthood Conference"? I haven't. Who would come? But put out the word on a "Leadership Conference" and the turnstiles start spinning. The term "leadership" kinda titillates your ego, doesn't it? Interesting, is it not that Christ had little to say about leadership, but spoke profusely on servanthood? For example, "*Whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*" (Mk. 10:44b, 45) (Jn. 12:26; 13:2-17)

Dr. R. Edmund understood the Biblical perspective on leadership and servanthood in stating, as Christian educators and disciples, "our job is to train servants. It is God's responsibility to raise up leaders."

We often find the idea of "servanthood" similar to a wedged chicken bone in our throat because:

- We don't like to be treated like a servant. Yet, we like to be known as one: "Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh." (I Pet. 2:18)
- We don't like to serve when the visible results are meager or nonexistent: "Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." (I Cor. 15:58) (I Thess. 3:5)
- We don't like to be taken for granted: "So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.' " (Lk. 17:10)
- We don't like to be maligned, misunderstood, or judged for our efforts: "As servants of God...: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger." (2 Cor. 6:4,5) (1 Cor. 4:13)
- We don't like what it costs us in terms of time, resources, comfort or safety: "Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain [salvation]" (2 Tim 2:10a,c) (I Cor. 9:19-24; 2 Cor. 6:4,5; 11:23-29)

Christ's true ungrudging toilers anticipate the day when He will utter to them, "*Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!*" (Matt. 25:21b) (2 Cor. 5:9)

QUESTION: Is that your anticipation?