

Nov 15th 09

Leadership: How to get real influence/ QUESTIONS

Matt 20:20-28

Q. Who wants more influence?

We all want influence! If we are honest.....Power/Authority

e.g. Children: I want to stay up later/want to sit in the front

e.g. teenagers: I want to wear what I like/ want to be liked and be cool not rock the boat

e.g. friendship: I want to be listened to/don't want to be taken for granted/ want to matter

e.g. work: want my voice to be heard/don't want to work that shift/want more money

e.g. Saoirse: we want Godly influence over Dublin

Q. How can we see success in gaining more influence and power

One way of putting it is how can we grow in authority

Authority is the power to shape things.....

Jesus answers this one day when James and John's mum comes to him v21

- He quickly recognises that she is asking for power /authority
- She is asking for cabinet positions, influence
- V24 the other disciples are indignant, why? They want it!

Look carefully as to how he answers:

v22 you have it all the wrong way round. You are seeing authority as being about externals, position

Story: we live in a culture that does not invest much in internals but massively in externals

e.g. a walk Blanchardstown Centre. What house/What job/What watch/What bank/What clothes/what possessions/what mobile phone you have

Rather real authority is about what is on the inside, internals

V22 Can you drink the cup meaning what you put into yourself is what is key

"We can!" Thinking he is talking about externals

V23 Indeed you will.....knowing what they will go through...but to sit at my right and left is not for me to grant

i.e. internals ...yes you are going to be growing in that whole area but as for externals, that is not for me to grant

So two kinds of authority:

1. v25 worldly, external, limited and relatively weak
2. Kingdom of God, internal, unlimited, and relatively strong

What does this internal authority look like?

A. Secure. Confident in who they are. Don't have to try and be anyone else but themselves
Not pride, but it is not abasement.

See it clearly in 1. Failure (don't have to blame) and **2. Criticism** (don't need to squirm cos I am secure)

If you have that sort of security on inside then don't need external trappings to make them feel good or have impact.

The issue of who they are has been settled so they can focus on other things.

James and John hadn't got past that point yet

B. Integrity. Doesn't feel need to keep covering up or exaggerate. They are the same in private as they are in public

External authority will be about the car, the big office, the title, the pastors big suit, and will be characterised by telling people what to do.

At best it will bring compliance but not deep ingrained respect

Internal authority, will be about the heart, the character, people sensing this, seeing it in action and then giving such people permission to have authority over them. They will want to be like them, have them speak into their lives

- **So in this way, most effective authority is given not taken**
- **External authority requires, demands, to shape and influence**
- **Internal authority works because authority has been given, "please influence and shape me"**

Q. How do we gain more of this? Get it in first place?

1. Internal Authority comes as we deal with the things of heart

Matt 7: 15-20 Matt 12: 33

Success starts with the heart

We find that hard cos the external stuff is easier and costs less and is more instant.....rather than let God do surgery in our hearts.

e.g. It is easier to go and buy new clothes to look/feel good than deal with anger

Q. How does God grow this? Allows you to go through suffering and difficulty

Chris story: I am not engaged in a project ...I am the project!

Q. What is tough for you at the moment?/ not pleasant/ suffering/ hardship

Q. What is being developed in the heart at the moment?

Q. What are you running after externally that needs to be put down.

Story: Steve Nicholson working with Heroin addicts

"one thing I learnt quickly they are not impressed with guitars and small groups..they are looking for more"

Issue is, do we SAOIRSE have what it takes to truly influence DUBLIN What about our marriages, What about our hearts? What about our friendships?

2. Internal Authority comes as we are certain of the call of God

1 Corinthians 1; 1-9

Intro: The primary purpose of letter is correction:

e.g.

- V1 His calling to be an Apostle, necessary due to opposition agst him (doesn't do this in Phillipians for example)
- V2 Holy. i.e. alludes to the ethical implications of gospel, call of God on them to be holy, much that was not good within the church: (1 Cor 1:17 deviations from the gospel message; 1:10 and 3:3 division and conflict; 3:21 & 4:19 pride and arrogance; 5:1ff sexual immorality, with even sons sleeping with fathers wives; 5:11 drunkenness; 6:1ff disputes and lawsuits; 11: 2-34 meetings not honouring God (drunkenness at communion celebrations) etc)
- v4-7 adjusting misuse of gifts

Therefore he is writing to bring adjustment to a church with problems

But his attitude is what gives his challenge so much authority

Q. If you were serving a church like Corinth and had to write a letter addressing this, how would you start? What heart would you communicate?

Paul's attitude is one of affection and faith .. **But How?**

Key: Paul has God's perspective of and for them. He is clear that Gods call is bigger than their problems

- v1 his calling for himself as an apostle, serving the church with all its problems
- v2 their calling to be holy as a church (and therefore to be different from what they are now)
- v9 their calling into community with God and His church (to be effective in their city)

Summed up, seeing calling = "this was His idea in the first place and He thought of me/them as worthwhile to invest in, His ability is therefore bigger than my/their mess"

Awareness of God's call on our life and church produces faith for change and perseverance for the process that has to come

3. Internal Authority comes as we learn to trust Luke 6:38

Steve Nicholson discipling a young man, capable church leader in the making but then turns round and says that he is leaving to join another church. Steves disappointment but willingness to give of his best. Within the year God had given him many other similar young men

Q. What did God teach him through that?....you can trust me!

People who trust God are exciting to be with /bring faith. They have huge internal authority.

Q. How are we doing in giving away, not due to external pressures.. "I must" but cos we are trusting God

Money (primarily we give cos it belongs to God, but God also encourages us to give so that we learn about his trustworthiness)

Tithing is not God's way of raising money but of raising his children to maturity with internal authority
Apply same to gifts/possessions/truth/time/energy

Q. Are we willing to die to fear, status quo, mammon and begin a journey?

4. Internal Authority comes as we grow in unity

Psalm 133: 1-3

"How good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity....for there the Lord bestows a blessing"

If we want to grow in influence and authority, learn how to resolve conflict.

Unity doesn't just happen. Eph 4:3 "Make every effort"

Cost: Have to die to passivity and fear, to pride

Takes time and is inconvenient BUT it grows huge internal authority in us

Questions:

1. Currently, think of different examples of external and internal authority that you have gone to and used recently either at work, in the family or with friends.
2. What is tough for you at the moment/ not pleasant/ suffering/ hardship, that God would want to use to grow internal authority in you? Can you describe what it is developing in your heart?
3. What are you running after externally, as a form of authority, that God would want you to put down?
4. Which of the four ways of growing internal authority do you need to invest in this week?
 - a. Investing in your heart and letting God change it, touch it as shown by time spent reflecting, letting God show you what needs to change
 - b. clearly knowing you are chosen, wanted and called by God
 - c. Giving of time, gifts, money, energy, things
 - d. Do the hard work of resolving conflict and prizing unity