

**Series: Better Together**

**Message: Follow the Leader – 1 Chronicles 28:1-8**

**By Senior Pastor Tom Harrison**

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In “A Tale of Two Cities,” Charles Dickens wrote *“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness.”* King David had been **wise, heroic** and had known **success**. (How he related to **Saul**, his faith in eliminating **Goliath**, and his conquering **Jerusalem**). He had also tasted **depression** & crushing **despair** (**Bathsheba, Absalom, Census**). Let’s give him credit – he **finished well**. He lined things up to the best of his ability and he ended with a great **legacy**. As Israel’s leader, it was time for him to speak to his nation. He empowered his successor (his son, Solomon) to follow well.

There are 2 ways: wisdom and foolishness. There are 2 ways: my kingdom and God’s kingdom. There are 2 ways: blessing and cursing.

Noted author, John Maxwell, claims, *“Leadership is **influence**.”* Effective leadership inspires us to do more than we could on our own. Leaders cast vision. They plan and prepare. Leaders unite people. Without leadership, we do our own thing.

*“Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint but blessed is he who keeps the law.”* (Proverbs 29:18) The book of Judges concludes with a depressing and chaotic result of the absence of leadership: *“In those days, there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”* (21:25) Judges is a black hole of *“the worst of times.”*

King Hezekiah followed the Book of Judges and was self-absorbed. Here's his response to being told by Isaiah the prophet that judgment would fall on Israel after he was gone.

***Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the Lord: Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the Lord. And some of your own sons, who shall be born to you, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, "The word of the Lord that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "Why not, if there will be peace and security in my days?" 2 Kings 20:16-19***

If we are not thinking in terms of legacy as parents and grandparents, then we fall into our natural bias of self-absorption.

Leaders influence. But leaders do not operate in a vacuum. They have limitations. If they are to succeed, they must inspire others to follow in sacrificial ways. I saw where David had his "mighty men." I looked it up and the term "mighty men" or is found 59 times in the Bible. Joshua and Nehemiah – both men of conquest and building, had "mighty men." These were the "Navy Seals" – the elite, trusted forces. David's mighty men are named and their heroic deeds are described in 1 Chronicles 11:10-47. They mostly fought Philistines (and Moabites), but they also helped David. One time he was at Bethlehem, which the Philistines occupied, and he said he was so thirsty and wished he had some water from the well at Bethlehem. Three of the mighty men rushed in and got him water. He was astonished when they brought it to him. He took it and poured

it out in both appreciation and lament – that these “mighty men” would risk their lives for him to have a drink of water. They were THAT attentive to him. The word for “mighty men” in Hebrew is “**gibborim.**” I hear that term and I think, “I want to be a mighty man for God, too.”

Asbury has some “Mighty Men.” Let’s not get hung up on gender, here. David didn’t draft women into his Mighty Men arsenal, but women played a key role in Israel. And we’re not out killing Philistines, but we are about Helping Others Follow Jesus. We have some Gibborim at Asbury, I think. Some of these can be found in our Governance Committees.

**SLIDES:** Trustees – Bob Perugino, Chair (actually pushed me on BT to do it the best it can be done); Finance – Randy Cloud, Chair (asked hard Q’s about \$); SPRC – Barry Ewy - chair (we must have the “Mighty Men” on our Staff –aligned with us who will 100% support our vision of HOFJ). They all report to Administrative Council (Rob/Jamie Schaffitzel – co-chairs), and our Lay Leaders (Ryan/Janell Carter).

In his book, “The Leadership Engine,” Noel Tichy describes the 4 dynamics of effective leadership: Good ideas, energy, values and timing. Good ideas need energy to execute. Ideas and energy deficient in good character destroy. Yet, no matter how smart, energetic and noble, opportunities did not exist had we lived in the Himalayas in the 1400s. Ecclesiastes 3 famously says there is a time for everything to come together.

**APPLICATION:** Asbury’s leadership has prayerfully determined “Better Together” is a great plan. “Better Together” energizes us. Just as King David brought people together to support his initiative, we believe now is the right time to act. We pray for a people like Nehemiah led, who had a “mind to work.” We pray

for a unified church who, shortly after Pentecost, came together with one heart.

1 Chronicles 28 and 29 is our text for the next 5 Sundays. This is the twilight of his rule as a king. He wants to end well. He really wanted to set up his successor for success. He had one thing he really wanted to communicate. He began by assembling his leaders and telling them his vision...he wanted to build a Temple where God could be honored and worshiped, but he was disqualified for being a warrior.

### **1 Chronicles 28:1-8**

*David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel, the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of thousands, the commanders of hundreds, the stewards of all the property and livestock of the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty men and all the seasoned warriors. <sup>2</sup> Then King David rose to his feet and said: "Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord and for the footstool of our God, and I made preparations for building. <sup>3</sup> But God said to me, 'You may not build a house for my name, for you are a man of war and have shed blood.' <sup>4</sup> Yet the Lord God of Israel chose me from all my father's house to be king over Israel forever. For he chose Judah as leader, and in the house of Judah my father's house, and among my father's sons he took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel. <sup>5</sup> And of all my sons (for the Lord has given me many sons) he has chosen Solomon my son to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel. <sup>6</sup> He said to me, 'It is Solomon your son who shall build my house and my courts,*

*for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. <sup>7</sup> I will establish his kingdom forever if he continues strong in keeping my commandments and my rules, as he is today.' <sup>8</sup> Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the Lord, and in the hearing of our God, observe and seek out all the commandments of the Lord your God, that you may possess this good land and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you forever.*

### **Exegesis**

He recognized **God's call** & sovereignty (personal & national)  
He was part of a **faith tradition**. Others came before him (Judah) – God chose him. Others would follow. David wanted to set Solomon up with a great inheritance  
He never stopped loving God – this was his most endearing quality. And he was passionate about it. He didn't do anything halfway. He won big and lost big. He was far from perfect, but he led to the best of his ability with all his heart. But now, his sword has been retired in his final years. He was very concerned about his transition team. He wanted to finish well.

### **Our application:**

**David** had a vision. But he was only one man. He turned to those leaders and asked for their help. We need leaders. What is leadership ultimately about? Influence. Leaders influence by their attitude, behavior and commitment.

When I think of vision, I think of **Martin Luther King, Jr.** who had a dream. ***"I have a dream that my four little children will one day be able to live in a nation where they will not be***

***judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”***

My dream is similar to what David wanted: to build a **facility** where God could be loved and honored. My dream is like MLK's, too....my primary concern is for **children/student**. My dream is about Helping Others Follow Jesus. The best time for a person to start following Jesus is before they turn 18. It happened for me when I was 14 ½.

David knew God would do His part, but there was a lot that David had to do, too. David called together those he trusted, shared the message God had laid upon his heart with them, helped them be as organized as possible so he could set up his son, Solomon, to be as successful as possible. David did his part. He was trying to set up the next generation. He understood the importance of “Better Together.”

Between now and October 13 is a pivotal time in the life of our church. We won't have this opportunity again. I'm thinking of my successor and I want that person to have the very best in facility, finance, staff, program and administration possible. Good leaders plan ahead so their successors can succeed and not fail. We have a mighty crew. We can do great things.

**2 invitations:**

- 1.) Bus tours (this coming weekend)
- 2.) Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00 p.m. in CLC