



— From the Pen of —
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Management in the Bible

Is the subject of management scriptural? Is it biblical? Can we honestly study this subject of giving the Word of God the preeminence in guiding our thinking? I think we can. I believe that every basic, honorable principle in management has its root and foundation in the Word of God.

Joseph

Take, for example, the life of Joseph. Is there in all of history a more magnificent example of leadership and good management than Joseph? Preparing for that monumental harvest, then the horrible years of famine, delegating, planning the whole operation, distributing the materials, the foodstuffs, satisfying the complaints, and handling the grievances—all the challenges are there. The people he had to work with were no better than the people you and I work with. As a matter of fact, he might have had worse people than some of us have. His leadership is a magnificent example of organization. And did God just drop it down into his brain so that he did it instinctively without ever thinking? I do not think so. God seldom works that way with us. Generally, he will guide us to the subjects we need to study and learn.

Nehemiah

Or take Nehemiah and his exploits. If you read the Book of Nehemiah carefully and seek to find the management principles in it, you will discover that it contains every major management principle we know about today.

If I were to give a biblical exposition on the subject of management, I would unhesitatingly turn to the Book of Nehemiah. It is all there in lucid and succinct form.

Jesus

Is there organization in Scripture? I think so. Dr. Robert Coleman in his book, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, studies the life of the Lord Jesus in his relationship with the apostles, and shows his selection of them, then his association with them: impartation, demonstration, delegation, supervision, and reproduction. There were intense organizational activities in the life of the Lord Jesus and in his relations with his disciples. Of course, the classic source of information regarding the Lord and his twelve is the volume by A. B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*.

Moses

I attended a management seminar taught by Louis A. Allen, a noted management researcher. When he came to the subject of delegation he said, "I've got one example of delegation for you—Moses." This is a classic example of delegation in the Word of God. Delegation did not solve all the problems for Moses, but it solved some of the major ones. It created some others, but when we solve one problem, we create other problems. In fact, the last question to always ask yourself when you implement a decision to solve a problem is, "What is going to go wrong when I implement this decision?"