



# NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Creating servant leaders for the African Church

## **MODULE 3** **SERVANT LEADERSHIP:** **LEADING FOR THE MISSION**

*Learning Leader Guide*

**Servant Leadership Programme  
for Alumni**

# Servant Leadership Goal and Definition

---

Many people around the world have come to know the term “servant leader”, first coined by Robert K. Greenleaf, in 1970. However, many Christians’ writing on leadership point to Jesus of Nazareth as the greatest role model when it comes to understanding and adopting the servant-leadership approach in one’s ministry.

*Leading like Jesus is “love-based leadership”  
where leaders are committed to developing others, achieving results,  
and extending grace and forgiveness.*

## The Goal of Servant Leadership

*“The goal of servant leadership is to create a more caring and just society where the less able and the more able serve each other with unlimited liability.”*

He raised powerful, enduring questions for leaders and their organizations:

- *How do we get out of our own way and listen deeply to others and ourselves?*
- *How do we develop others who will become regenerative forces in our organizations and institutions?*
- *How can we, mere mortals, become more serving in a turbulent world?*
- *How can institutions correct deficiencies in their service to society?*
- *How to make big also beautiful? To create community inside large institutions?*

## The Definition of Servant Leadership

*“It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. This is sharply different from the person who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions.”*

## Servant Leadership is Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is, “A style of leadership where one or more individuals engage with others in such a way that leader and follower raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality (James McGregor Burns).”

Others define transformational leadership as:

- Visionary agents with a mission who are capable of motivating followers to accept new goals or ways of doing things (Hodgetts, Luttans, 2000)
- The ability of the leader to create a shared vision and strong identification with team members, based on more than rewarding completion of a project or task (Keegan, Hartog, 20014)
- Leaders who demonstrate a strong consideration for, and support of individual and team needs; develops connections to help other achieve their full potential (Parker, Craig 2008)

# Reflection: Who Helped Me?



Think of a time when someone showed servant leadership in a profound way.  
Record as much as you can below.  
After you have finished, share your stories with your table mates.  
Do the servant leaders in your stories share similar traits or behaviors?

1. Name or relationship to me

---

---

2. A moment I remember

---

---

---

---

3. What he or she said and did

---

---

---

---

4. How they made me feel

---

---

---

---

5. What I learned or took away from the moment

---

---

---

---

# Key Characteristics of Servant Leaders

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. -Corinthians 13 4-8*

Laub (1999)	Dennis and Bocarnea (2005)	Barbuto and Wheeler (2006)	Wong & Davey (2007)	Sendjaya, Sarros and Santorra (2008)	van Dierendonck and Nuijtn (2011)
Developing People	Serving and Developing Others	Altruistic Calling	Empowerment	Transforming Influence	Empowerment
Providing and Sharing Leadership	Consulting and Involving Others	Emotional	Trust	Voluntary subordination	Humility
Displaying Authenticity	Humility and Selflessness	Healing	Humility	Authentic Self	Standing Back
Valuing People	Modeling Integrity and Authenticity	Persuasive	Agape Love	Transcendental	Stewardship
Building Community	Inspiring and Influencing Others	Mapping	Vision	Spirituality	Authenticity
		Organizing		Covenantal	Forgiveness
		Stewardship		Relationship	Courage
		Wisdom		Responsible	Accountability
				Morality	



## Individual Reflection

When you review the characteristics of servant leadership identified by these scholars, what stands out to you as a common theme in your leadership?

---



---



---



---

# The Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership

---

*“Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn her seven pillars (Proverbs 9:1).”*

21<sup>st</sup> century leadership studies are concerned with understanding who a leader is and is becoming, and how he or she responds to others. The Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership synthesize the key characteristics and competencies of servant leaders found in the research over the past twenty years. Embedded within each pillar are three core leadership traits or competencies (behaviors, skills, attitudes).

<p><b>Has Foresight</b></p>	<p>Imagines possibilities, anticipates the future, and proceeds with clarity of purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Visionary</li> <li>● Displays Creativity</li> <li>● Takes Courageous and Decisive Action</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leads with Moral Authority</b></p>	<p>Worthy of respect, inspires trust and confidence, and establishes quality standards for performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Accepts and Delegates Responsibility</li> <li>● Shares Power and Control</li> <li>● Creates a Culture of Accountability</li> </ul>
<p><b>Compassionate Collaborator</b></p>	<p>Strengthens relationships, supports diversity, and creates a sense of belonging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Expresses Appreciation</li> <li>● Builds Teams and Communities</li> <li>● Negotiates Conflict</li> </ul>
<p><b>Systems Thinker</b></p>	<p>Thinks and acts strategically, leads change effectively, and balances the whole with the sum of its parts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Comfortable with Complexity</li> <li>● Demonstrates Adaptability</li> <li>● Considers the Greater Good</li> </ul>
<p><b>Puts People First</b></p>	<p>Helps others meet their highest priority development needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Displays a Servant’s Heart</li> <li>● Is Mentor-Minded</li> <li>● Shows Care and Concern</li> </ul>
<p><b>Person of Character</b></p>	<p>Makes Insightful, Ethical, and Principle-Centered Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintains Integrity</li> <li>● Demonstrates Humility</li> <li>● Serves a Higher Purpose</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skilled Communicator</b></p>	<p>Listens Earnestly and Speaks Effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Demonstrates Empathy</li> <li>● Invites Feedback</li> <li>● Communicates Persuasively</li> </ul>

## Servant Leadership Practices

1. **Listening.** A deep commitment to listening intently to others accompanied with periods of reflection.
2. **Empathy.** Assumes positive intent; does not reject others personally even when one does not accept their behavior.
3. **Healing.** Care of self and others; in search of “making whole” those who have suffered or experienced emotional hurts.
4. **Awareness.** Self-awareness means being “sharply awake” to issues involving values and ethics; able to find inner serenity in the face of volatility, uncertainty and complexity.
5. **Persuasion.** Exercise influence and build consensus rather than rely on positional authority.
6. **Conceptualization.** Conceptualize and communicate concepts on balance with day-to-day demands and workload.
7. **Foresight.** Captures lessons learned from the past and considers the realities of the present to inform decisions for the future.
8. **Stewardship.** Hold their institutions in trust for the good of society.
9. **Commitment to the Growth of People.** Deeply committed to nurturing the whole person.
10. **Building Community.** Model the way and create cultures of community by being in integrity with core values, collaborating and acting with transparency.

## The Best Test

Greenleaf provides four foundational questions to determine the servant leader:

- Do those served grow as persons?
- Do they, *while being served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?
- What is the effect on the least privileged in society?
- Will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?

# Jesus as a Role Model for Servant Leadership

---

*The most important thing in leadership is the leader; and the most important part of the leader is his or her heart; and the most important connection to a leader's heart is God.*  
(Blanchard et al, xi)

Sylvanus N. Wosu, in his book, *Leader as Servant: The Laws of Integrative, Transformative Leadership* (2014), recognizes Jesus as the greatest leader of all time. He explains that Jesus' leadership was so effective because he was fully present to his disciples and his followers by choosing to lead through serving.

When Jesus said, "If I then your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet (John 13:13)" he demonstrated to his disciples that he recognized his leadership role, however, he was confident enough in Himself to lead, not by lording his power and authority over, but by modeling a serving attitude.

We can view Jesus' leadership through the lens of the 4 H's:

## **Jesus' Motivation (Heart):**

Ken Blanchard and his colleagues claim that "the most important thing in leadership is the leader; and the most important part of the leader is her heart; the most important connection to a leader's heart is God (Lead Like Jesus, 2016)." *"By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me (John 5:30)."*

Jesus led with his heart. Out of love for his followers, and as an example to those who believed in Him, he submitted himself to God's will. In times of temptation, doubt, and fear, His spiritual strength and fortitude was nourished through prayer and contemplation – asking "Whose Am I?" and "Who Am I?" *"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed (Mark 1:35)."*

## **Jesus as an Effective Communicator (Habits):**

Jesus was an outstanding communicator. In less than three years he was able to train his disciples to emulate his principles and values, and prepare them to share his message.

He invited others into His vision and mission, and was clear in his expectations.

He offered support to his disciples, recognizing "teachable moments" and using inquiry, active listening, and joint decision-making to discover their personal purpose and guide them toward meaningful action.

## **Jesus as Teacher (Head)**

As a teacher, Jesus encouraged and guided his disciples in their spiritual growth, attending to their unique needs and empowering them in their ability to share their knowledge and the Gospel more broadly. *"Go and do Likewise (Luke 10:37)."*

## Jesus as Healer (Hands)

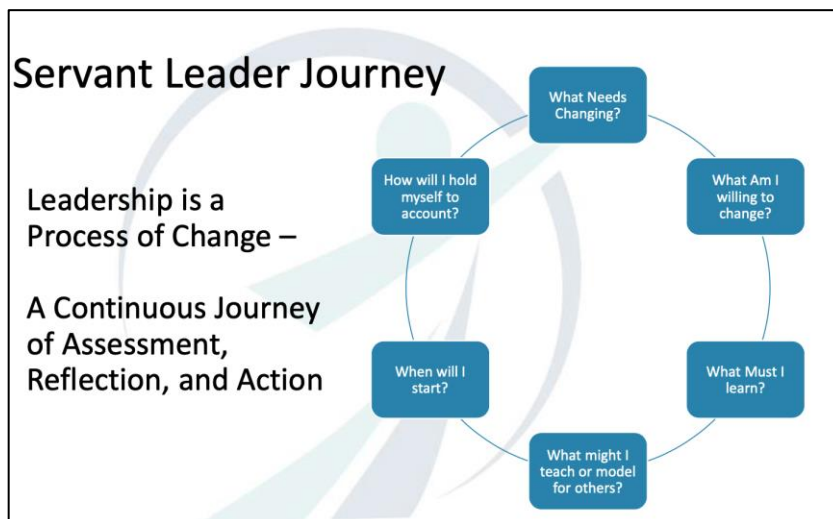
Matthew 9 shares the stories of Jesus' healing works in the synagogues, towns, and villages. As Jesus shared the good news, He healed disease, and He ate with sinners. *"When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, 'why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' On hearing this, Jesus said, 'it is not the healthy who need a doctor but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' I have not come to call the righteous, but the sinners. (Matthew 9:11-12)."*

Expressing empathy and compassion, and acting with humility, Jesus' leadership is directed at building community by nurturing all with His empathy and acceptance. According to Sylvanus Wosu, author of *Leader as a Servant Leadership Model: The Laws of Integrative Transformational Leadership*, leading as servant "seeks to lead and empower followers both as individuals and community to serve each other" in order to build a better functioning society. Change and transformation, Wosu claims, begins at the leader-follower, or student-teacher level, but then needs to be fostered at the departmental, institutional, and societal level.

Jesus demonstrated this by teaching and mentoring others to become disciples locally and by empowering them to become influencers at the community level. *"When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest (Matthew 9:36 – 38).*

## The Servant Leader's Journey

---



Individual and organizational transformation is a change process where the leader continually assesses themselves and the environment, identifies new learning and practices to meet or improve the conditions, and takes action to achieve concrete results.

# Questions for Leaders

## **Ask Yourself, What Needs Changing?**

- *What are my strengths? Where do I have room to grow?*

## **Express a Desire to Change**

- *Am I willing to commit to changing my behaviours?*
- *What investments am I willing to make with my time, energy, resources?*

## **Find and Claim Incentives to Change**

- *What results would I expect to see as a result of a change?*

## **Acquire the Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes and Abilities Needed to Change**

- *What opportunities exist to acquire new knowledge and skills?*  
*What resources are available to me?*

## **Apply**

- *Practice, practice, practice, test, test, test*
- *Where can I try out new practices? Am I willing to seek and obtain feedback? From whom?*
- *How will I hold myself accountable? How will I know that I have developed new habits?*

## **Meet the Best Test**

- *Do my new habits meet the Best Test? Am I contributing to the greater good of my community, organization, and society?*



## **Synodal Reflection**

A core tenet of synodality is **HUMILITY**.

Take a moment to reflect, in any way you like (journaling, silent prayer or meditation) on how the Holy Spirit might be asking you to be humble.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## Self- Assessment Reflection

Choose an image that best describes your servant leadership strengths and opportunities for growth **today** and write down a brief explanation for why you chose the image.

---

---

---

Now, choose an image that best describes where you would like you to be **6 months** from now in your servant leadership and write down a brief explanation for why you chose the image.

---

---

---



If I invest time in my personal growth and development, I will expect to see the following changes:

---

---

---

## Additional Resources for Leading and Learning

	<p><b>Articles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Practicing Servant Leadership by Larry Spears</a></li><li>• <a href="#">The Servant as Leader by Robert Greenleaf</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Teacher as Servant Leader by Richard Bowman</a></li><li>• <a href="#">All Things Connected by Linda Belton</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Article: What Can Hunter-Gatherers Teach Us About Servant Leadership?</a></li></ul>
	<p><b>Lessons and Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Vincent on Leadership: The Hay Project at DePaul University</a></li></ul>