

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

AN AJET EDITORIAL

The cry for better leadership often portrays the fact that the existing leadership is wanting be it in the secular, political or Christian circles. The kind of leader that people often seek has some set standards depending on the context where such a leader exercises authority. However, two qualities stand out on the topic of Christian leadership – competence and character – the skill, ability, being and the relationship of these within the given context.

Character plays a key role in a Christian's leadership. Character, it is said, is the only quality that returns home with the mourners after a leader's funeral service. This statement points out that the 'how' of a person's leadership speaks volumes in terms of humility, integrity, purity, honesty, servant-hood, holiness of life, use of spiritual gifts and other virtues. These characteristic qualities portray a life that is truly lacking in pride and other self-seeking vices.

The lead article, *Christianizing spiritual manifestations: worldviews and spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12-14*, Dr. Steve Bryan writes, "Since spiritual gifts are manifestations of God's Spirit, it is commonly assumed that the way in which Christians manifest the Spirit through the practice of spiritual gifts will always be pleasing to God." Basing his discussion on the 1 Corinthians, he underscores Paul's teaching about spiritual gifts, and in the process differentiates the practice of the gifts of the Spirit from notions about spiritual manifestations which the Corinthians carried forward from their pre-Christian worldview into their Christian faith.

In the second article on '*Are Pastors Human?*' *sociological and theological reflections on ministerial identity in contemporary Africa*, the author, Gregg A. Okesson, argues against some objections on how pastors who are human are sacralised and deified in leadership ministries of the African church. The effect of this hero worship rapidly causes pastors to lose their spiritual credibility. For "the moment we distance ourselves from others, we separate our primary

powers from the community, and decrease our efficacy” (p.). Leaders must be vulnerable to the congregants and learn from them not just minister to them. He calls on them to consider their own humanity as foundational to their ministerial calling. He rightly states that Jesus Christ provides the model for joining spiritual power with humanity. Hence all pastors need to embrace Jesus Christ’s life as the pathway for discovering their own personhood (humanity) and subsequently, their authority in a broken world. “Jesus alone is the consummate image of God” (p.37).

A biblically relevant topic today is the third article in which the author, Enock Okode, looks closely at *Theocracy in Crisis* against the backdrop of Israel’s leadership crisis when the sons of Samuel forsook the righteous requirements of the law. Okode outlines some theological and practical implications from the message of the text by discussing questions which touch on disloyalty of the people; dissatisfaction of the existing administration; opposition to the request; Yahweh’s decree for a monarchy; defectiveness of leadership; and what kingship is all about.

The next article on *The Spirit Motif in Luke 4: 14-30; Acts 1:8 and the Church Today* examines ways of continuity between the ministry of Jesus, the early church and the church today particularly with regard to the role of the Holy Spirit. The author, Dr. Joseph Koech, states that the Holy Spirit upon Jesus was unique in certain features but in some aspects the early church duplicated and is expected to continue in the church today. Jesus’ mandate has not changed and the nations still need to be set free like in the time of Jesus and the early church. Modern problems are even more severe and complex than during the New Testament times. The power of the Holy Spirit is needed even today for empowerment to proclaim God’s message and to release people from problems encompassing all dimensions of life: spiritual, psychological, social, political and physical.