

## A LEADER YOU CAN TRUST

Ezra 6:1-15 Rev. Brian W. Secor

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**When God wants something done,  
he sovereignly sends a person or persons  
to do his work and his will.**

1. In the providence of God, he brings forth leaders who can be trusted to lead his people.

### I. EZRA DEMONSTRATES THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRUST-WORTHY LEADER

#### A. He knows who he \_\_\_\_\_ to get the work done. V. 15-20

1. Ezra was committed to teaching & practicing the Law of God. He finds he is lacking one important group. Has priests, but no Levites.
  - a. Priests = direct descendants of Aaron & his sons, first high priests. Oversee & perform acts of worship in the temple itself.
  - b. Levites = descendants of Jacob's son Levi. Lived throughout Israel & were sent into various towns to serve as local ministers & teachers of the law. During & after exile, become head of synagogue system.
2. Ezra needs men who will help him \_\_\_\_\_ people the Law of God.
3. 38 Levites respond to Ezra's summons & with them 220 temple servants who did miscellaneous work around temple.

#### B. He trusts the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_. V.21-23

1. Ezra had made such a big deal about God's providence that he did not want to ask Artaxerxes for military escort.
2. God alone would protect them in their journey. Prayers of the people of God were answered.

#### C. He entrusts others with \_\_\_\_\_ tasks. V. 24-30

1. Ezra did not take care of everything by himself, he didn't do it all. Rather he entrusts trustworthy men with important task.

#### D. He takes into consideration the \_\_\_\_\_ of his people. V. 31- 32

1. You will note he takes his time. He did not push the people.
2. Once arrive, they have three days to rest up.
3. Trustworthy leader cares about needs & condition of his people & treats them with compassion & courtesy.

#### E. He practices \_\_\_\_\_ in accountability. V. 33-34

1. When it comes time to make sure that all treasure has arrived, Ezra did not check it out in secret. Transfer takes place in open & in public.

#### F. He worships the Lord with an eye to \_\_\_\_\_ the body of Christ. V. 35-36

1. Fulfills his civic responsibilities by passing on king's command to satraps over provincial areas around Jerusalem.
2. He leads the exiles in joyful, thankful worship by sacrificing large number of animals—197 in all. v. 35 ---1 bull for each tribe & 8 rams for each tribe. Its as if Ezra & they are saying they expect more people to come back & be added to God's people.
3. A trustworthy spiritual leader cares about the people he currently leads but always has an eye out & is aware of those yet to come to Christ. Christ's body is an ever-expanding one, not a \_\_\_\_\_ one.

### II. APPLICATION TO OUR SITUATION

#### A. A healthy church needs trustworthy leaders who \_\_\_\_\_ the leadership principles seen in Ezra.

1. Aug. 20<sup>th</sup>, email from *American Vision* by Dr. Joel McDurmon. *Poll Confirms Pulpit Cowardice & Moneygrubbing: Let's Address This Now.*

2. In the Church & in culture, \_\_\_\_\_ of the leadership soon become the values of the people. Its why there is a lack of understanding of what makes for a healthy church today. Way too many pastors & way too many churches don't really understand that character counts.
3. What we're going to see as we go through rest of Ezra is that while he is a trustworthy leader, he is a \_\_\_\_\_ leader. He cares enough to tell it like it is & lovingly but clearly lead Israel back to the kind of commitment needed for God to bless & truly restore the nation.
4. Our human tendency is to be enamored with sizzle. In the Christian life, its not the sizzle that counts but the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Thank God we have leadership here that is trustworthy & a congregation that appreciates that. Our deacons & pastors are men of integrity & honor, men that love the Lord & are committed to leading in trustworthy ways in the style of Ezra.

#### B. What you can do to ensure that pastors, deacons & other leaders are trustworthy.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ for us who are in leadership.
  - a. I'm going to say something you may find shocking. I do not believe in the power of prayer. I do believe & am firmly committed to the power of God who answers prayer. Note v. 23
  - b. When we pray, we demonstrate our faith in our God to do what is best for us, to act in ways that will provide evidence of his grace & power to change us, change lives & change situations. Prayer is our declaration of \_\_\_\_\_ upon God Almighty & our affirmation that he is truly supreme in our lives, one who changes things.
  - c. I know many of you are already praying for us in leadership.
    - i) Don't ever stop, please don't ever stop.
    - ii) Pray that we will always be, in private & in public, men of integrity
    - iii) Pray that we will be courageous enough to share the Gospel.
    - iv) Pray for us that we will deal with the tough issues & teach always the truth of God no matter what.
    - v) Pray for us that we will be devoted to our wives & caring fathers to our children.
    - vi) Pray for us that we will be thoroughly Christian
  - d. And while you pray for us, we will pray the same for you & for yours.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ us to continue to be trustworthy leaders.
  - a. In your prayers & our relationship, if you are blessed by God through trustworthy leadership, don't be afraid to say so. Relish God's blessings upon us through one another. It's right thing to do.
3. Get your \_\_\_\_\_ right.
  - a. Our Lord alone does miracles. Ss we lead, have realistic expectations about what we can & can't do. Power for good that happens is not from us. It is from God. Give him the glory. Put him on a pedestal, not us.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ us as we make decisions for the growth of the body of Christ.
  - a. As we go forward, we will be making decisions as your leaders to emphasize bringing people in. We'll be suggesting changes so that the Gospel will have greater impact, not less.
  - b. This is an example of transparency in leadership. I don't want you to be surprised by us. Rest assured that no suggested changes will ever be made without talking it through. Trust us enough to come & talk with us. When agreed upon course of action, will do so because think it best for sake of Gospel, the glory of God & the good of the church.

Godly, trustworthy leadership is essential for a \_\_\_\_\_ church.