

## COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP

“Now therefore, let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take care and do it, for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, no partiality, nor taking of bribes...Behave courageously, and the Lord will be with the good.” 2 Chronicles 19:7,11b.

The reforms of Jehoshaphat included establishing judges throughout the land. These judges included some of the Levites and priests who were to judge in all matters of the Lord. Jehoshaphat clearly warned them to let the fear of the Lord be on them, to act without partiality and not to take bribes.

The ‘fear of the Lord’ is the understanding that everything I do as a leader is seen by God and will be judged by God. Therefore, every decision I make must be with that understanding. I will give an account of my leadership to God one day. Leadership carries with it great responsibility. This is why in the New Testament James tell us “...let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.” (3:1).

To be a righteous leader one must act courageously, not fearing man, but God alone who will judge the judges for their decisions. As leaders in God’s kingdom there must be impartiality. This will be challenged at times. People close to us will look for favoritism. Others will offer favors to be excused for their sins. When it comes to making tough decisions the man of God must be firm and courageous. He must be willing to suffer insult and slander from those who resist his decisions. He must be loving but firm and not wavering. Let him remember that as he seeks only to please the Lord and do good, that God will be with him. Even if all are against him, he will stand strong with the Lord on his side.

The temptation to be corrupt and to give way to the fear of men will come to every leader. No one likes to be disliked or rejected but a godly leader must be willing to stand alone if necessary. Leadership is often a lonely place. You will always have someone who does not approve of what you are doing. If you fear man more than God and give place to partiality, or even to the taking of bribes for your own benefit, you are unfit to be a leader.

What is necessary in one’s life to prevent us from falling into this temptation of partiality or the taking of bribes? Think about what your response should be next time someone requires a bribe from you and write it down.