

# BibleWise

## Good to Great

In Jim Collins' best seller *Good to Great*, he distinguishes between good businesses and great businesses. Collins explains that "good" is the enemy of the "great." We don't have great schools because we have good schools. Few people achieve greatness because they are content with goodness. Collins discovered a few principles that moved businesses and people from good to great.

- Good to great companies don't focus on how to be great but on what not to do and what to stop doing. Doesn't this sound like God giving us the Ten Commandments?
- Collins found great leaders are:
  - Modest
  - Quiet
  - Reserved
  - Humble
    - Definitely not a Julius Caesar or General Patton.
    - Great leaders first get the right people on the bus and the wrong people off the bus. Isn't that what God had Moses do with the 12 spies? The ten who didn't get it had to get off the bus. They didn't get into the Promised Land. The two who got it right, Joshua and Caleb, got to move with God.

There are five levels to this hierarchy of service. I'm going to use Joshua as an example for each level.

- **Level 1 - Highly Capable Individual - makes productive contributions through talent, knowledge, skills, and good work habits.** Joshua certainly seems to start his career here. Highly capable. In the movie, the Ten Commandments, he is an integral part of the process of the Exodus. Biblically, however, we aren't introduced to him until Moses gives him the order to choose out men to defeat Amalek. In Ex. 17. This is one of my favorite stories in the Bible. You remember that during the battle Joshua's men are successful as long as Moses keeps his hands in the air. You know how difficult that is. When he put his hands down, the Amalekites would rally and take over. Aaron and Hur solved this problem by getting a rock and seating Moses on the rock and standing on either side of him holding up his arms until Joshua and the army won.

- **Level 2 - Contributing Team member - contributes to the achievement of group objectives and works effectively with others in a group setting.** After the battle, we learn Joshua is probably promoted to Moses' minister (Ex. 24:12-18). When Moses goes up mount Sinai to speak with God (getting tablets of stone with the law written on them as well as instructions on building the tent of meeting), he takes Joshua. Aaron and Hur are left to tend to the needs of the people. Joshua presumably remained on the lower slopes in order to prevent any person from trying to follow Moses or interfere with Moses' mission. The new IB contends that this is similar to foreshadowing in literature. It is establishing a visual image of Joshua as successor. He is obviously not afraid to follow Moses up the mountain.
- **Level 3 - Competent Manager - organizes people and resources toward the effective and efficient pursuit of predetermined objectives.** While not specifically written in the Bible, no doubt if Joshua is Moses' minister (lieutenant), he is intricately involved in the building of the tent of meeting. In verse Ex 33:11 we are told he is serving in the tent of meeting.
- **Level 4 - Effective leader - catalyzes commitment to and vigorous pursuit of clear and compelling vision, stimulating higher performance standards.** This is a shining moment for Joshua. He is selected as one of the twelve spies to "examine" the land. His ability to see the good in the land and their ability to conquer the land with God's help outweighs any negativity. It is going to require trust in God. So what else is new. Caleb knows that with God they can do this. The people, however, see the glass half empty and are prepared to stone Joshua and Caleb.
- **Level 5 - Executive - builds enduring greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will.** The IB dictionary states that Joshua was almost a second Moses.

  - He has the presence of God as Moses did;
  - He is obeyed as Moses was;
  - He sanctifies Israel before God's wonders, as Moses did;
  - He is exalted before Israel as Moses was.
  - The crossing of the Jordan on dry ground corresponds to the Red Sea crossing.
  - When the angel speaks to Joshua before Jericho, he speaks to him the same way God spoke to Moses at the burning bush.
  - Joshua like Moses, wrote the law on stones.
  - God hearkens to Joshua's voice as he had with Moses.

- When Joshua brings the tribes to Shechem for the covenant ceremony, he summarizes Israel's history similar to Moses' summary in Deuteronomy.
  - Both distribute land;
  - Both speak as prophets;
  - Both have God's promise that God will be with them.
- We have seen how Joshua has advanced through the five steps of leadership. Collins contends humility is essential to be a great leader.

Humility, as we see it in the Bible, is an act of surrendering human will and ego and blending it with the ability to listen and obey God.

- Collins further defines greatness as a matter of conscious choice. Let's define "conscious choice" as a desire to let the divine will govern all our actions.
- Joshua showed all the elements of greatness - humility and the ability to make conscious choices.