Servant Leadership and Christianity

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Author Note

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To help others so that the help you in return is not a new idea. It has been present for a long time. Robert Greenleaf built the servant leadership model based upon the idea, in which he reshaped the roles of leading and serving (Greenleaf Center, 2016). A servant leader is expected to have a number of qualities, such as awareness, empathy, listening, persuasion, foresight, and commitment towards the people. Moreover, he should be focused on conceptualization, stewardship and community building. The bible also portrays the concept of servant leadership through the teachings of Jesus. These leadership qualities are characterized by love, care, humility, and dedication. Jesus said, “whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20:25-28, NIV).

A number of similarities between the servant leadership perspectives that Greenleaf spoke about can be also be seen within the bible. Both agree that servant leadership is, in fact, a transfer of power and authority down to the people instead of power concentrating in the hands of one. The leader, therefore, is simply a messenger and agent representing his or her people. (SLI, 2018). Jesus, in the bible, can be seen demonstrating key characteristics of servant leadership on multiple occasions, in a more loving and peaceful manner. However, for Greenleaf, servant leadership is also about taking risks and focusses on the little beginnings a servant leader is supposed to take.

In contrast, the Bible views that any person can serve others within their capacity. A key aspect of Greenleaf's idea of servant leadership is that a leader should not be submissive since that is not what is meant by being a ‘servant first'. Instead, the servant leader has a strong inclination towards understanding other people's needs and making sure that he is able to meet them. In this regards, the Bible, while embodying many principles of Greenleaf's concept, emphasizes humility and being down to earth when dealing with others, in order to reach out to them in a loving and compassionate way.

# References

Greenleaf Center. (2016). *What is Servant Leadership?* Retrieved February 3, 2019, from Centre for Servant Leadership: https://www.greenleaf.org/what-is-servant-leadership/

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