



Title: Jethro's Leadership Wisdom

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Introduction

- What is the role of godly wisdom and common sense in Christian leadership?
- If they have a role, how is Christian leadership different from secular leadership?

Story of deliverance

Exodus 18:13-26

¹³ The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening. ¹⁴ When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, "What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?" ¹⁵ Moses answered him, "Because the people come to me to seek God's will. ¹⁶ Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God's decrees and instructions." ¹⁷ Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. ¹⁸ You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. ¹⁹ Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. ²⁰ Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. ²¹ But select capable men from all the people - men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain - and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. ²² Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. ²³ If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied." ²⁴ Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. ²⁵ He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. ²⁶ They served as judges for the people at all times. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but the simple ones they decided themselves.

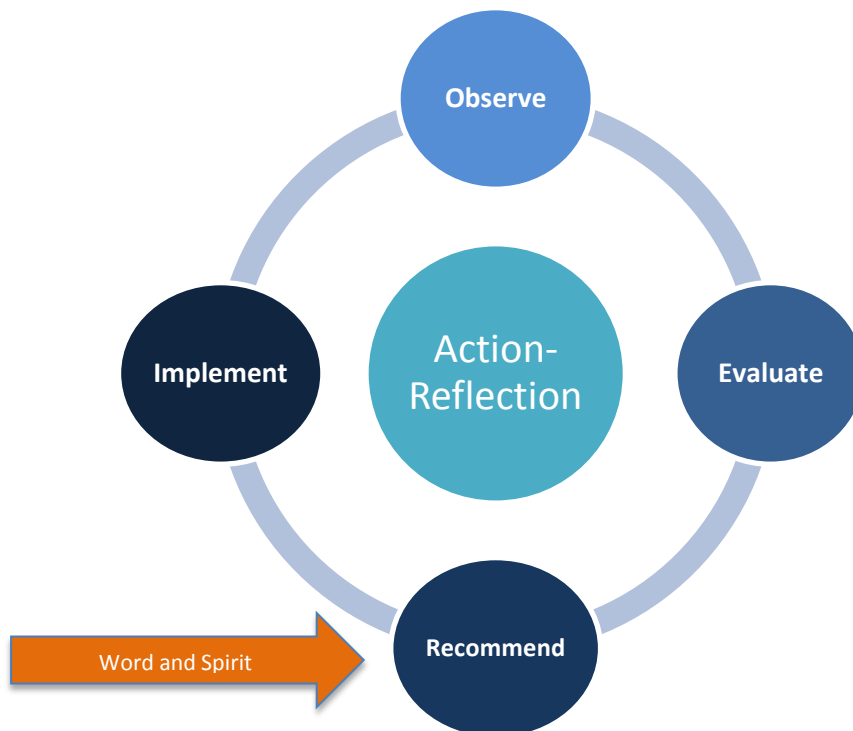
Outline

- 18.1-7: Jethro comes in peace
- 18.8-9: He hears Moses' testimony
- 18.10-12: He worships God with Israel
- 18.13-16: He observes Moses' leadership practice
- 18.17-18: He evaluates Moses' leadership practice
- 18.19-23: He recommends improvements
- 18.24-26: Moses implements his advice
- 18.27: Jethro goes in peace

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Jethro observes (v. 13-16)

- All improvement starts with observation.
- Note how Jethro uses questions.
- Moses helps the people to 'seek God's will', which includes:
 1. resolving disputes and
 2. teaching God's laws.

Jethro evaluates (v. 17-18)

- 'What you are doing is not good'
- Comp. Gen 1.31; 2.18
- Leading people is good, but doing so alone is 'not good'.
- This situation is bad for both leader and followers (v. 18)
- Plurality of leadership: It is a team sport!

Jethro recommends (v. 19-23)

Moses should:

- Represent the people to God
- Teach the people
- Judge the hard cases
- Look for 'capable men' who:
 1. are from among the people,
 2. fear God,
 3. are trustworthy,
 4. hate dishonest gain.
- "appoint these 'capable men' as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens."
- Everyone led by those they trust.
- Proportional representation.
- 'If you do this and God so commands,' 1) you will survive and 2) the people will be satisfied.

Moses listens (v. 24-26)

- Moses chose capable men and appointed them.
- They decided simple cases and deferred hard one to Moses.
- The Pareto Principle (80/20 Rule) shouldn't apply to the Body of Christ (Eph 4:11-16)