

We tend to think of leaders as action heroes. Springing into action, they save the company from going down to financial ruin, they speak to the fearful employee masses creating a new sense of vision and purpose, they boldly confront the competition, they are all about action.

Doing something as a leader is important, however, we tend to stay too busy doing leaderly stuff at the expense of simple reflection. A leader's ability and effectiveness in doing is often compromised due to lack of reflection. Reflection seeks to put the activity in perspective. It is the mental labor that instructs who we are and what effort we are to lead. We down play the importance, because, frankly, we like to be seen doing something. It is the leader ego that longs to keep us out in front, marching to our next conquering activity. Yet, when we lead without reflection we are blind to the context in which we move. Reflection gives us that sense of contextual perspective that ensures our activities are relevant and beneficial.

Good leadership is a channel of water controlled by God; he directs it to whatever ends he chooses. Proverbs 21:1 The Message

The ultimate reflection as a leader is that of spiritual reflection. It is in this reflective activity that we discover God's desire for our leadership and in doing so we discover how we can be a better leader. This verse describes the ancient practice of irrigation using numerous channels and water gates to direct the sustaining water supply to parts of the fields that had the greatest momentary need. The flow of water was an important life saving activity for the crops, but it was directed by a larger plan that considered the overall perspective. Our leadership is like the water that is placed in crucial areas. We are not the mastermind of the overall strategy. God is the designer of the plan. We execute according to His plan for our life and the people we lead. Without His direction we are still able to seemingly lead, but we are leading according to our own plan, which will be less effective and meaningful. Reflection on God's desire for our leadership life is essential.

Create times of reflection in your busy leadership routine. Think deeply about who you are and what you are placed here on this earth to accomplish. Discover the root of your purpose. Determine who you are meant to be as a leader. Set aside the action hero desire for movement and be still to better understand the course your water will take as it irrigates your organization.