

**Principles of LDRSHIP: Army Values – Biblical Basis**

LDRSHIP is the acronym the US Army uses to describe The Army Values. LDRSHIP stands for *Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless-service, Integrity, and Personal-courage*. Soldiers wear a copy of The Army Values on their dog tags and carry a card with the values on it in their wallet. Why? Because the Army sees the importance of holding such high values. It is these values that I will adopt as my personal leadership philosophy because like most of leadership principles they are universal and fit biblical principles rather well. **Loyalty**

*To bear true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, your unit, and other soldiers* and I would add, to God. Loyalty influences actions. There is a tradition in the Army that takes place at a Change of Command Ceremony called a Pass-in-Review. At that time the new commander walks down the line of the soldiers in the unit in which nowadays is purely ceremonial, but in the age of the kings and conquerors, a new commander would actually walk down the line of soldiers and look them in the eye to see if they would be loyal to him, reason being: his life depended upon their loyalty (US Military History Class/Army Traditions). The Army leaves out a very important principle of loyalty, being loyal to God. In Matthew 6:33 Jesus calls His disciples to a life of loyalty saying “but seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (NASB). While the life of Christ is not dependant upon our loyalty, the further proclamation of His message is. The Christian Leader must be above all loyal to the cause of Christ. **Leadership Goal:** *To understand that my loyalty influences my actions and choose carefully to whom/what I give my allegiance.*

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## **Duty**

*To fulfill your obligations.* Sounds simple, right? By no means, well, at least for me its difficult. It is this point of leadership that I struggle with most because the fundamental requirements to fulfill ones duty are discipline and diligence. Paul speaks of the two requirements. In Romans 12:8, a leader is required to lead with diligence and in 1 Corin. 9:26-27 a leader is responsible to discipline himself for the task he is to accomplish. J. Oswald Sanders writes in *Spiritual Leadership* “Discipline is yet another responsibility of the leader, a duty often unwelcome.” (Sanders, 1994, p126) I find it so easy to get side tracked. I am a dreamer. One who comes up with great ideas and great plans but after the plan has been in effect for a while, I am off dreaming about the next thing I want to do and seem to forget about finishing the task I’ve already begun. I am so convicted when Paul speaks in Rom 12:8 “if its [ones spiritual gift] leadership, with diligence.” I do believe I have the gift of leadership, but possessing a gift does not make one affective. To lead, I must be diligent. ***Leadership Goal:*** *To keep my heart with all diligence, not give up, to not look back once I put my hand to the plow.* **Respect**

*Treat people as they should be treated.* The golden rule, taught in Sunday schools and public schools. It is easily forgotten but vitally important. To respect another person takes a lot of humility, patience, and compassion. Ephesians 4:31-32 speaks of this by saying “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” To respect someone they must recognize the intrinsic value of a human being. Leith Anderson in *Leadership that Works* says “The Dan Keslar Principles 3 Org Leadership effective leader cares about people and enables

them to find satisfying relationships” and an important aspect of relationships is respect.

***Leadership Goal:*** *To learn to respect people for who they are and treat them the way God would have me.*

### **Selfless-Service**

*Put the welfare of the nation, the Army, and your subordinates before your own.* It is to this cause that all leaders, especially Christian leaders, are called to. While the Army emphasizes the nation and army, I would emphasize the Kingdom of God and the Church. Christ displayed selfless-service in the way he lived His life, the way He interacted with His disciples and the way He interacted with the unbelievers in Mark 10:45, “for even the Son of Man didn’t come to be served but to serve, and to give his life...” NASB). The Apostle Paul also set a standard/example of selfless-service when he states:

For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more. To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.

1 Cor 9:19-22 (NASB) Despite the fact that he had full liberty in Christ Jesus to do as he pleased (“for though I am free”)

he willingly humbled himself (“I have made myself a slave”) all for the purpose of fulfilling his duty, and used his power and authority for the purpose of putting the welfare of the Kingdom of God and the Church of believers. **Leadership Goal: To**  
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*become a man of God who willing places the needs of the church and the needs of others before myself.*

## **Honor**

*To live up to the Army Values.* When I think of honor, I can’t help but think of the “Medal of Honor”, our nation’s highest military medal. One receives this medal by acting selflessly in the face of grave danger; one who willingly puts himself at risk for the hope that others may be saved. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary defines honor as: “person of superior standing, one's word given as a guarantee of performance.” While that is a good definition, the concept of honor is hard to grasp. It is used a lot in the Word of God, mostly regarding believers; they are to honor God, honor parents, etc. But Mark 7:6 points out an interesting point, it is this point that the Army is referring to, and it is this point that the Word of God requires. Mark 7:6 says “the honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.” True honor is lived out, performance based. It includes a verbalization of what values one holds to and then an action on those values. One never receives the Medal of Honor by simply saying they will be brave and bold, one receives the medal by actually living it out! Leaders understand that. **Leadership Goal: To not just talk the talk but truly walk the walk. To live out what I hold to be true, to be a man of Honor! Integrity**

*Always do what’s right, legally and morally.* The importance of integrity cannot

be over emphasized! The book of Proverbs is filled with proclamations of the need for integrity: He who walks with integrity walks securely (Prov 10:9), the integrity of the upright will guide him (Prov 11:3), a righteous man who walks in integrity – how blessed Dan Keslar Principles 5 Org Leadership are his sons after him (Prov 20:7). The reason integrity is so vital is because many a leader has fallen because of a lack of integrity. An interesting thing is that often I think of integrity as a man chosen activity. Jack Hayford, pastor and author, has an interesting take on integrity saying “A leader’s character will never rise beyond the flow level of his obedience to the Holy Spirit’s dealings with his heart. Although our standard of character is outlined in God’s Word and expressed through the person of Christ, the substance of character is fashioned by the accumulated responses of the heart to the Spirit’s refining Work” (Barna, 1997, p.78) **Leadership Goal:** *To be obey God and allow His Spirit to work the integrity of my heart from the inside out.*

### **Personal Courage**

*Face fear, danger, or adversity (Physical or Moral).* In the HBO series “Band of Brothers” a young lieutenant was leading his company into the town of Bastogne, as they approached the outskirts, he froze. Fear got the best of him. If a leader is void of personal courage he will freeze at the point that could very well be his finest hour. A biblical model of personal courage is the incident between Joseph and Potifer’s wife. He didn’t lack the personal courage to do all possible to get him out of the situation he was in. The most interesting, thought provoking, and down right honest quote on courage I have ever heard on the topic of courage was from the movie *Princess Diaries II* in which the girls father left her a letter that said “Courage is not the absence of fear, its

determining that something is more important than fear itself.” There are many aspects of life that can provoke fear within a person and the leader is not somehow free from that. But what differentiates the leader from the average Joe is that the leader chooses to act despite fear because there is something more important than that fear itself. Jesus the Dan Keslar Principles 6 Org Leadership Christ is a perfect example of this, who for the joy set before Him, endured the cross. He determined that although he was fearful of the separation from God He would face (Mark 14:34 – “My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death”), it was more important to do the will of God (Luke 22:42). *Leadership Goal: To be a man of courage, one who bravely conquers fear for the cause of Christ.*

## **Conclusion**

When I look back at my life and my leadership opportunities I honestly can't help but be reminded of what Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes: “Vanity of Vanities” says the preacher, “vanity of vanities, all is vanity. What advantage does a man have in all his work which he does under the sun...” He then goes on to talk about how he has tried to do everything in life, to gain wisdom, knowledge, understanding, wealth, women, and the list goes on. And then concludes in a similar fashion to how I hope my life to conclude, by saying “Therefore let us hear the conclusion of this whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.” My leadership philosophy in a sentence is this: To fear God, and keep His Commandments. For this is the cause to which I am **Loyal** to, this is the **Duty** I which I will fulfill, **Respectfully**, **Selflessly**, **Honorably**, with **Integrity** and **Personal courage**... for everything else is a vanity of vanities, a chasing after the wind.  
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