Modern Metaphors of Christian Leadership

Exploring Christian Leadership in a Contemporary Organizational Context

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Editor

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The use of metaphors is prevalent throughout the Scriptures. At the heart of Jesus’ ministry was the desire to convey eternal truths through paradigms that were relatable to His audience. While most agree that Jesus’ use of parables was confounding to His disciples (Bray, 1996), often the metaphors used in these parables were quite simple. The struggle came in trying to grasp the enormity of Jesus’ message in the simplest of terms. Yet, the common theme of Jesus’ use of parables “is the use of everyday experiences to draw a comparison with kingdom truths” (p. 292). Thus, we find the purpose of the use of metaphors in Scripture: to evoke memory and meaning through common language.

While preferring the term model, Dulles (1978/2002) asserts that the Church is a mystery, and, as such, since we cannot speak to mysteries directly, “if we wish to talk about them at all we must draw on analogies afforded by our experience of the world” (p. 2). Dulles writes that when the Bible “seeks to illuminate the nature of the Church, it speaks almost entirely through images, many of those…metaphorical” (p. 11). Metaphors provide us with common language so that we can better understand the message of the Bible as applied to our contemporary contexts. Given this, the use of metaphors helps us to conceptualize theory.

We see this evidenced throughout the New Testament as Jesus self-identified using metaphors: bread (John 6:35), light (John 8:12), door (John 10:7), shepherd (John 10:11), and vine (John 15:1).
Further, the Apostle Paul leaned heavily upon the metaphor of the household in his conceptualization of leadership offices in the local church as terms such as servant, steward, pastor, bishop, elder, and deacon were common terms in first-century Greco-Roman society (Gloer & Stepp, 2008; Osiek, MacDonald & Tulloch, 2006). Through these metaphors, the message and meaning of the Gospel were transferred from person to person, house to house, and region to region. Every metaphor, every office, and every image of the Bible is grounded in the social and cultural realities of the people of the Scriptures. They are emblematic of a world that existed at the time of the writing of the Bible.

However, as we consider the concept of common language, the problem of distance creates a chasm of meaning between biblical texts and contemporary application. How then do we, as contemporary Christian leaders, conceptualize and internalize the nuances of metaphors that are so foreign to us? While through commentaries and historical writings we understand in generalities terms such as servant, shepherd, pastor, and bishop, our understanding is far from a lived-reality.

Thus, we set out to answer the following question: If the New Testament writers were penning the words of Scripture in contemporary society, what metaphors would they use to convey the same message and meaning? It must be noted here, however, that it is not our intention to replace the metaphors of Scripture. Rather, to first ask what lessons can be learned from various exemplars from Scripture and Church history, and then view these themes through the paradigm of modern organizational metaphors.

The Scope

Recently, in a conversation with contributing authors Deborah Welch and Guillermo Puppo, the topic of common language was discussed. During our conversation, we began to consider the limitations of the use of metaphors. Can a metaphor ever incapsulate a desired meaning fully? We found that the metaphor, as a way to conceptualize meaning, is best understood as an opportunity to shift one’s perspective. Perhaps the Greek word for image, eikon, is helpful here. As a mirror, or stained-glass, the image or metaphor is like a picture. A picture is a representation used to depict something real. While a picture can be realistic, it can never replace the real thing in that the picture cannot convey the depth of the senses experienced in reality. While a picture of a bouquet of roses
may be lovely, we will never be able to touch its petals, smell its aroma, view it from every angle, or feel the pain of its thorns.

Not even Jesus was able to describe the Kingdom of God with one metaphor—thus His use of many. We recognize that no single metaphor can adequately portray the leadership of any of the identified exemplars nor do these exemplars cover the totality of biblical or Christian leadership. Given this, we seek to build upon the work of Christian scholarship and provide a fresh perspective on Christian leadership in the contemporary context.

**The Methodology**

Our research began by asking: What are some of the roles of leaders found throughout contemporary society, and how can these roles be conceptualized such that they are broadly applicable to Christian leadership across organizational contexts? After a designated period of reflective thought and research, the contributing authors presented the following metaphors: community organizer, agent of change, administrator, motivator, manager, servant, artist, coach, ambassador, educator, pioneer, crisis manager, missionary, storyteller, mentor, and role model. We recognize that this is a limited sampling of possible metaphors; however, these metaphors serve as a balanced sampling of both common and unique images of leadership.

Next, each contributing author selected an exemplar, or exemplars, from Scripture or Church history, whose life could serve as a possible source of data for research into each metaphor. As a group, the authors presented the selected exemplar(s) and collaborated with the editor for final approval.

**The Content**

Each chapter contains the following: (a) an introduction of the metaphor, (b) an overview of the exemplar(s), (c) themes extracted from the life of the exemplar(s), (d) an integration of themes from the exemplar(s) and organizational leadership theory, (e) principles derived from each theme, and (f) a summarizing table of integrated principles.

Chapter 1 explores the themes of Nehemiah as community organizer. Chapter 2 considers the themes of Elisha as agent of change. Chapter 3 examines the themes of Moses as administrator. Chapter 4 reviews
Nehemiah, Jesus, and St. Benedict of Nursia as motivators. Chapter 5 explores Nehemiah as manager. Chapter 6 researches Joseph, the son of Jacob, as servant. Chapter 7 examines Asaph as artist. Chapter 8 analyzes Ananias as coach. Chapter 9 explores Esther as ambassador. Chapter 10 researches Paul as educator. Chapter 11 reviews Peter as pioneer. Chapter 12 explores Karl Barth as crisis manager. Chapter 13 examines Paul as missionary. Chapter 14 researches C. S. Lewis as storyteller. Chapter 15 reviews Barnabas as mentor. Chapter 16 explores Job as role model.

Recognizing that no discussion of Christian leadership is complete without consideration of Jesus as leader, Chapter 17 examines the life and ministry of Jesus through the paradigm of the Gospel of John. This chapter explores each metaphor through the lens of Jesus Christ while viewing Christian leaders as imitators of Jesus. Thus, Jesus as the ultimate leader provides a template for Christian leadership in contemporary society.

REFERENCES


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2 Christian Leaders as Agents of Change: A Biblical Perspective with Practical Implications
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In the distinction of secular theories, sociologists exclude the possibility of the interaction between the human and the divine (Miller, 2017). The result has been a concept of spirituality that neglects the divine and reduces its instrumentation to organizational results (Case, French, & Simpson, 2012). That neglects the divine and reduces its instrumentation to organizational results (Case et al., 2012).

The organizational and social life of the church was the expression of the Spirit in it (Miller, 2017). In the same way that the Spirit offered gifts and abilities to build and organize Christ’s church, the Spirit desires to work with the God-given gifts and abilities of people in the marketplace to help them organize toward God’s plan for them (Miller, 2017). Therefore, the Spirit not only can but also must be the central element for Christian leaders as community organizers in today’s world (Adedoyin, 2016).
NEHEMIAH AS A COMMUNITY ORGANIZER

Nehemiah was the cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of the Persian court in the capital city of Susa (Rendtorff, 1991). When his brother Hanani visited him in the twentieth year of the king’s ruling and described the condition of his fellow Israelites, Nehemiah broke down in tears (Neh. 1:1–3, NIV). Those who survived the captivity were living in a city destroyed by fire (Patton, 2017). Nehemiah’s spirituality was central to all aspects of his life. His relationship with God filled him with compassion and a deep desire to seek God’s help. As a result, Nehemiah envisioned a new future for his nation. He leveraged his relationship with the king to be assigned as the governor of Jerusalem and begin its reconstruction. Part of his strategy included letters of recommendation that would allow him to deal with the questioning and the resistance of the enemies of his people. Nehemiah stayed focused and, by his example, encouraged others to work hard and believe God’s promises for them. Albeit he was the governor, his attitude of servanthood and solidarity inspired many and confronted others, fighting injustice and oppression among the Israelites. In many occasions, he had to adapt to challenges and circumstances swiftly, but he persisted to the end and saw the fulfillment of his dream of rebuilding Jerusalem’s walls in fifty-two days.

Nehemiah displayed many skills similar to those of today’s community organizers (Patton, 2017). Thus, had the concept of community organizing existed in the fifth century BCE, Nehemiah would have earned the title with high honors. Eight salient themes describe Nehemiah’s leadership as a community organizer: spirituality, vision, power, strategy, servanthood, role modeling, adaptability, and endurance. These eight themes were present in the life of this godly leader and are still essential elements of contemporary leadership theories such as spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003), charismatic leadership (Antonakis, 2012), servant leadership (Patterson, 2017), and transformational leadership (Tony, 2018).

THE CENTRAL ROLE OF SPIRITUALITY IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

When he heard the news about his people, Nehemiah sat down and wept (Neh. 1); he came before God to practice many disciplines that helped him understand God’s direction. Nehemiah fasted, prayed, read God’s word, interceded for Israel, confessed personal and corporate sins, and
worshiped God. The practice of the spiritual disciplines (Neh. 2) prepared Nehemiah for his conversation with the king (McNeal, 2000). By the time he met with the king, he had a deep awareness of God’s calling and favor upon him. Nehemiah was both humble and bold before the king. He asked for permission to leave, letters of recommendation, and money, all of which were granted by the king (Hoffeditz, 2005). Of all the strategies he could use, Nehemiah began his journey with prayer (Scott, 2014, p. 2).

The book of Acts shows a church that is highly responsive to the lead of the Spirit in matters of social and legal organizing (Billings, 2004). According to Clinton (1993), a leader must know God’s purposes for a group. Miller (2017) argued that humans in a meaningful relationship with the Spirit of God are the main instrument for God to accomplish his plans. To faithfully respond to God’s invitation, contemporary Christian leaders need a variety of intelligences that include emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and even pastoral intelligence among others.

In the case of emotional intelligence (EI), a study conducted by Jordan, Ashkanasy, Härtel, and Hooper (2002) demonstrated a positive correlation between EI team scores and team performance (p. 209). Bar-On described the first mixed model of emotional intelligence (EI) as follows:

The ability to be aware of, to understand, and to express oneself; the ability to be aware of, to understand and relate to others; the ability to deal with strong emotions and control one’s impulses; and the ability to adapt to change and to solve problems of a personal or social nature. (McCleskey, 2014, p. 46)

Emotional intelligence provides leaders the ability to connect with their context from a sense of self-awareness. Christian leaders and organization began to respond to EI with empirical applications such as Emmons’ (2000a) spiritual intelligence (SI). Emmons (2000b) presented the core components of spiritual intelligence as: (a) the capacity to transcend the physical and material world; (b) the ability to experience heightened states of consciousness; (c) the ability to sanctify everyday experiences; (d) the ability to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems; and (e) the capacity to be virtuous (2000a; Lamb, 2008, p. 81). Spiritual intelligence connects EI with God. Graham (2006) defined pastoral intelligence (PI) as a combination of EI and SI. He combines intrapersonal aspects of spiritual intelligence with interpersonal aspects of emotional intelligence (Lamb,
Therefore, while emotional intelligence connects the leader with the context, and spiritual intelligence connects the leader with God, pastoral intelligence connects the leader with God's leadership for the leader's context.

Principle One: Christian leaders as community organizers are worshippers who lead from their spiritual life.

THE DRIVING FORCE OF A VISION

Nehemiah had a vision before he spoke to the king. His vision for Jerusalem led him through the process of traveling, recruiting, organizing, and reconstructing the city. Three days after arriving in Jerusalem, he gathered the people and communicated the problem and his vision to solve it (Neh. 2:17). His plans successfully pointed the people toward the desired future goal, which was the convergence of God's plans and people's self-centered needs and hopes (Alinsky, 1971). His vision energized people and garnered commitment, gave them meaning to work, and established new standards of excellence (Hickman, 2010, p. 513).

Vision is an essential element for transformational leaders. Northouse (2013) describes transformational leaders as individuals who have “a clear vision of the future state of their organizations” (p. 197). Sashkin (1988) suggested that visionary leaders are comfortable with change, ideal goals, and working together. Visionary leaders create movements that are like magnets; they attract customers, employees, investors, and allies who want to be partners in its journey into tomorrow (Carson, 2002, p. 103). By proposing a better vision for the future, they encourage people to commit to the fulfillment of the vision (Taylor, Cornelius, & Colvin, 2014).

In their study of 300 North American nonprofit organizations, Taylor et al. (2014) concluded that visionary leaders comprehend the outside environment and respond with a vision that meets people's self-interest while challenging to go beyond it. Furthermore, Margolis and Ziegert (2016) concluded that the way mid-level leaders interpret the vision of the leader would have a direct impact on how much subordinates believe in that vision (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). Also, Groves (2006) placed a strong emphasis on the leader's communication style as a catalyst for focus, performance enhancement, and commitment (Grover, 2006). Westley and Mintzberg (1989) took it a step further by describing five visionary leadership styles.
1. The creator: This style shows the originality of ideas or inventions that occurred through a deep and sudden introspective process of inspiration. When this occurs, the leader is seized by an intense driving preoccupation (Westley & Mintzberg, 1989).

2. The proselytizer: This style shows an almost evangelical zeal to show people the future of a product, catalyzing vision as foresight. This leader does not create products, but concepts around products (Westley & Mintzberg, 1989).

3. The idealist: This style shows an introspective capacity to visualize the ultimate state of things. The idealist may alienate himself or herself in introspection at the expense of the support of stakeholders. Thus, it is vital that the idealist finds a healthy pragmatic balance from which to animate the vision and inspire followers (Westley & Mintzberg, 1989).

4. The bricoleur: This style shows the capacity for building from existing pieces. Unlike the creator or the idealist, the bricoleur does not invent or create. Instead, he or she has the social ability to assess situations and discern what is essential for others to understand future possibilities and generate synergy (Westley & Mintzberg, 1989).

5. The diviner: This style shows excellent insight, which comes with outstanding clarity in moments of inspiration. Although similar to the creator, the diviner tends to focus more on processes than in products (Westley & Mintzberg, 1989).

Principle Two: Christian leaders as community organizers are visionaries who can communicate a vision in ways that inspire others toward a future beyond themselves.

The Creation of Power and Influence

Nehemiah knew how to leverage his relationship with the king and his credibility as the cupbearer to exercise influence on the king’s decisions (Coggins, 2012, p. 45) and leveraging power toward his goal (Aryee, 2009, p. 1). The Missio Dei does not confine God’s resources to the religious life of the members of the Church (Miller, 2017). Instead, the Missio Dei encompasses the whole universe, the planet, human work, social movements, justice systems, economic models, educational institutions, artistic expressions, and cultural constructs (Adedoyin, 2016). Organizing these structures is the work of the Spirit in partnership with humans,
redeeming the social order (Couto, 2010), going “beyond the Church as both the end and means of this mission” (Miller, 2017, p. 219).

Emerson (1964) interpreted power as the degree of dependence between two parties. Thus, if A depends on B more than vice versa, then B has more power. In these terms, power is measured in terms of independence (Bass, 2008). Thibaut and Kelley (1959), however, interpreted power as an exchange between two parties in which both have something the other wants. Sources of power include personal, positional, and contextual (Bass, 2008). These sources can trigger either competitive or collective uses of power (Bass, 2008). Neither one is intrinsically good nor evil. Competitive power is used to overthrow adversaries, and collective power is used to unite forces toward a goal. What defines the virtue of each method is the intentions and motivations of the person with power (Pearce & Robinson, 2013).

Another way to understand power is as potential to influence (Bass, 2008). Nevertheless, power and influence are not the same. Although many times confused with power, influence depends on persuasion and the recipient’s ability to welcome or reject it. A laboratory study conducted by Bass, Gaier, and Flint (1956) demonstrated that participants tended to exercise more leadership when they were bestowed with more control over what they desired. In real life, control is bestowed through influence. Community organizers do not necessarily own the resources with which they work. Resources are bestowed to them via the exercise of influence over those who possess the resources. This influence comes through relationships, effectiveness, and reputation (Yukl & Fu, 1999). As they gain control over the bestowed resources, they are able to exercise power, redirecting resources and thus leading toward the desired goal (Simpson, 1994). Etzioni (1961) calls this type of power normative, as it rests on the retribution and manipulation of symbolic rewards and deprivations. Hall (1997) calls it moral authority, which is the only real power source inherently available to community organizers. Leveraging power adds skills and services to new partnerships (Murray, D’aunno, & Lewis, 2018). Leaders, however, must be careful to navigate the tensions that arise within the administration of bestowed power around issues such as authority allocation, benefits distribution, and personal agendas (Murray et al., 2018). Elements that may make-or-break the new partnerships include trust, fairness, and promise-keeping.
Principle Three: Christian leaders as community organizers are power brokers who foster relationships and integrity as their capital.

**Navigating the Strategy**

The requests of letters for governors and the keepers of the royal park (Neh. 2:7–8) show that Nehemiah developed a strategy for his vision. Humans have the freedom to join or distance themselves from the work of the Spirit in a community. They may decide to ignore God’s invitation, becoming obstacles or flat out enemies of God’s plans and servants. Nehemiah had to face the reality of Godless social order. Without God, or without God at the center, structures and systems become filled with pride, greed, hate, cruelty, and different forms of exploitation, violence, and oppression (Alinsky, 1971; Levad, 2019).

According to Schwartz (2010), people will interact with the leader in positive and negative ways; therefore, leaders must be prepared to operate in transactional and transformational styles. A transactional style fits best in institutional situations while the transformational style works best in interpersonal environments (Vera & Crossan, 2004). Crossan, Vera, and Nanjad (2008) argued that the study of leadership has mostly been anchored in a micro-oriented perspective (Crossan et al., 2008), undermining wholistic approaches. Arrow, Berdahl, and McGrath (2000) studied groups as complex systems in tridimensional space. First, the local level addresses the individual; then, the global level addresses the interaction between the individual and the group; last, the contextual level studies the effect the context has in both the individual and the group as it is impacted by them as well (Arrow et al., 2000). This approach allows the leader to consider a multi-directional, multi-layer dynamic among all factors (people, resources, and needs) in the organization’s strategy.

In their analysis of literature on empirical research on nonprofit strategic planning, Stone, Bigelow, and Crittenden (1999) made the following observations:

1. Strategy formulation: Organizations must consider elements such as changes in client population or needs in the planning process as much as they consider funding requirements (Stone et al., 1999).
2. Strategy content: The organization’s values and client needs must influence the content as much as the funding environment (Stone et al., 1999).
3. Strategy implementation: Organizations must identify interorganizational and organizational factors that may impact the implementation of strategy either positively or negatively and measure the effect of each of them (Stone et al., 1999).

4. Performance: Organizations need to measure performance across all parts of the strategy design (planning, content, and implementation) in terms of the impact that each part has in the outcome (Stone et al., 1999).

Rees (1999) studied how the most prominent community-based organizations in the USA strategize their efforts to advance their vision. The findings included town hall meetings in cities and towns, appealing slogans that connect with the target audience, support of local or national authorities, local media coverage, effective signage, op-ed articles in newspapers or social media, and interactive online presence (Rees, 1999).

Principle Four: Christian leaders as community organizers are strategists who plan considering a wide spectrum of leadership styles, opportunities, and obstacles.

**THE SERVANT COMMUNITY ORGANIZER**

Nehemiah cared deeply for the concerns of the people. He aligned with their values by addressing the need to reestablish proper worship to God, liberated the oppressed, and restore social justice (Scott, 2014, p. 2). He even renounced his privileges as governor to inspire others to take the same servant attitude. This posture is at the core of the work of the Spirit (Miller, 2017). Scriptures show the Spirit working in two directions: (a) in individuals to prepare them for interaction with their communities and (b) in communities to prepare them to impact the lives of individuals. Both ways produce and enhance relationships (Zizioulas, 1985), and the fruit of such relationships is agape, altruistic love, as described in Galatians 5:22–23 (NIV).

Servant leadership involves the process of interaction between followers and the leader (Northouse, 2013). Servant leaders pay close attention to followers’ needs and values (Marshall, 2001) and understand the importance of addressing peoples’ distress (Antonakis, 2012, p. 260). Studies revealed that servant leadership increases the levels of commitment to
the supervisor, self-efficacy, procedural justice climate, and service climate (Walumbwa, Hartnell, & Oke, 2010).

Neuschel (2005) compared the work of a servant leader with that of a shepherd of ancient times. Today’s managers increasingly face the need to operate in this area (Neuschel, 2005). Petrovskaya and Mirakyan (2018) argued that social entrepreneurship aims to create social value above profit, inviting leaders to pursue a higher purpose. In their studies on 600 Russian social entrepreneurs, they found that social entrepreneurs have a mission of social improvement that cannot be reduced to creating private benefits for individuals (Dees, 1998). Survey results indicate that social entrepreneurs scored higher than traditional ones (Saldinger, 2015) in four of the five perceived servant leadership attributes: altruism, integrity, trust in others, and empathy (Petrovskaya & Mirakyan, 2018).

The servant leader is one who helps followers to grow in several aspects of life—personal, professional, and social (Neuschel, 2005). Developing the qualities of a servant leader is difficult because the servant leader must be more selfless than selfish. The results, however, are highly beneficial. De Clercq, Bouckenooghe, Matsyborska, and Raja (2014) concluded that when followers’ needs are a goal in itself, and not merely a means to the goals of the organization (Brown & Leigh, 1996; Greenleaf, 1977; Shuck & Herd, 2012), there is an increase in work engagement, commitment to the leader, and a higher sense of meaningfulness. Also, investing in personal relationships outside of work settings (Lazarova & Taylor, 2009) helps the servant leader to enhance his or her perception among followers (Uzzi, 1997) and facilitates the flow of more honest feedback (De Clercq et al., 2014).

Principle Five: Christian leaders as community organizers are servant leaders who are on a mission to create value in others by developing meaningful relationships and empower them.

Role Modeling Shalom

By refusing to enjoy the privileges of the governor’s role while his brothers and sisters were in distress (5:17–18), Nehemiah set the example for all people in power in Jerusalem. His display of solidarity, social justice, and empowerment was the faithful expression of God’s heart. His exemplary behavior allowed him to confront other leaders in their corrupt practices. Nehemiah also led by example when he and Ezra read the book of the
Law to all the people (8:2), rededicating their lives to offer their worship and service only to the God of their ancestors. In his dedication to work alongside all of his brothers, Nehemiah showed humility and commitment to the work before them (Palmieri, 2009, p. 21).

Arguably, a behavior is learned not only by conditioning but also by imitating persons of influence (Burns, 1978, p. 63). Transformational leaders inspire by their example, elevating the standards and expectations of their followers (Northouse, 2013, p. 191). Ethical leaders share values and attitudes through their influence on the multi-level ethical culture of the organization (Schaubroeck et al., 2012). Ethical leaders influence direct followers as well as indirect peers and subordinates by creating a culture of moral excellence. Their psychological effect empowers followers to aspire and emulate positive behavior and work engagement (Ahmad & Gao, 2018).

Contrary to the idea that top-level management is a distant figure for employees, Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes, and Salvador (2009) found that supervisory ethical leadership mediates the relationship between top management ethical leadership and group deviance. Furthermore, Schaubroeck et al. (2012) concluded that, while their studies found limited support for simple trickle-down mechanisms in the military, that was not the case for multi-level models that consider how leaders influence the organization at different levels, including cognitive and behavioral effects. The study also found that ethical leaders influence not only directly but also indirectly at all levels of the organization in a cascading effect (Schaubroeck et al., 2012). This effect is real even in the most ethically challenging industries such as that of retail sales (Badrinarayanan, Ramachandran, & Madhavaram, 2018).

Perry (2018), nevertheless, argued that, although a person does not have to be religious to apply biblical principles, ethical leadership without a biblical basis is weak. For example, leaders may face expectations or opportunities that challenge their personal, moral, or ethical standards. The internal or external pressure may push the leader toward sacrificing his or her standards for the sake of expediency in advancement, the achievement of goals, financial gain, or even preservation of personal comfort and status (Ball, 2016, p. 3). Ball (2016) concluded that only biblical ethical leadership is fully functional, fully effective, and powerfully influential under such predicaments.
Principle Six: Christian leaders as community organizers are role models who influence directly and indirectly based on their biblical understanding of ethics, morality, and excellence.

**The Adaptable Community Organizer**

Albeit his clear vision, Nehemiah faced many challenges to which he needed to adapt quickly (Neh. 4). Prayer was always his first step, but he had to adopt new working and defense strategies that allowed people to move forward amid adversity and opposition (Pearce & Robinson, 2013). First, he charged people to work full time in the reconstruction (Chapter 3). As their enemies arose (Chapter 4), Nehemiah developed a defense strategy placing armed men at every open space. Later, he changed the working strategy as well; half of the workers functioned as soldiers and the other half worked with their sword on the one hand and their tool on the other. Over time, Nehemiah felt confident of returning to the king and delegate the ruling of the city to others (Chapter 7). In turn, he came back and corrected the problems he found. Thus, Nehemiah knew how to adapt to different phases of his project.

DeRue (2011) developed a theory of recurring patterns of leading—following interactions that produce new leader—follower identities, relationships, and social structures that enable groups to develop and adapt in dynamic contexts. Instead of a one-way leadership dynamic, the theory proposed that a leader moves between both leading and following within the environment. Organizational change creates particular circumstances that make it imperative for leaders to combine rigid and flexible practices in order to not only survive but also excel (Yaghi, 2017). Also, Yukl (2013) described the situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1997) as one that describes the different types of leadership behavior based on the situation. The subordinate variable here is subordinate maturity. The lower the maturity, the more directive a leader needs to be. The higher the maturity, the more supportive the leader needs to be.

According to Yukl and Mahsud (2010), some of the situations that require flexibility, adaptation, and innovation from a leader include increased globalization, rapid technological change, a more diverse workforce, and concern for outcomes besides profits. Arguably, the degree of adaptive leadership is the extent to which a leader makes appropriate changes in strategies and tactics to deal with threats, opportunities,