

E.J.H Nash “Bash”

Portrait of an ordinary leader

Biography

(1 Corinthians 1) ²⁶ Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

“There was nothing particularly impressive about him. He did not possess any of those qualities which normally appeal to boys. He was neither athletic nor adventurous. He claimed no academic prowess or artistic talent.”

“It’s true that he possessed certain gifts that would have been useful in any field...but the secret of his remarkable influence lay deeper than this...ultimately...it lay in his whole hearted and single minded devotion to Christ.”

Secrets of Spiritual Influence

Goal oriented and focused

“Focus matters. You can have all the abilities and opportunities in the world, but if you don’t have focus, you’ll never get anywhere—not in your life and not in your service of God.” (Eric Mason)

“The only way to be focused is to know and value what God has called us to do. We have to develop an affection for the will of God that allows us to not only know what he wants but also to value it when he shows it to us.” (Eric Mason)

REFLECTION

- What could be the benefits of greater focus in your ministry?
- What tends to distract you?
- What are two things you could start doing this week to become more strategic in your ministry?

Realistic and spiritually confident

“First there was his realism, an almost ruthless ability to see things as they really are, rather than as sentiment, convention, prejudice, or regard for good form, might dictate how they should be seen.”

“When we’re fearful of something that is not God, it becomes an idol. We worship it by fearing it—it takes a place in our minds and our hearts that is higher than God’s...that’s what the enemy of God’s glory wants.” (Eric Mason)

(1 Corinthians 4) I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.

REFLECTION

- How might nursing your fears lead to a diminished view of God?
- What ministry moves would you make if you weren’t afraid?
- What key biblical truths should you cling to for confidence?

Dedicated to prayer

“If one’s vision of the prayer warrior is the saint who gets up at four in the morning, Bash does not fit this stereotype at all. Convinced of the primary importance of having adequate sleep, he had no intention of getting up early.”

REFLECTION

- How do you pray for the people God has sent you to serve?
- What do you think people learn through the way you pray?
- Have you ever prayed God would send you a future leader?

Taught the Word

“The points he repeatedly urged were...the very basic tenets of the Christian gospel. Man’s need; God’s provision in Christ; the possibility of forgiveness, followed by a life of discipleship.”

“His instincts taught him these were the essentials so badly needed by most his hearers, and he was reluctant to move far beyond them.”

“...when a curious observer later inspected the ‘sermon notes’ he found they ran – ‘Christianity: historical, institutional, personal, A (admit) B (believe) C (come) Rev 3:20.’”

REFLECTION:

- How do we keep our teaching simple and relevant without diluting or avoiding key portions of scripture?

Dogged discipleship

“His expectations for all those whom he led to Christ were extremely high...If a clear doctrinal or moral principle was at stake, he was fearlessly outspoken.”

“He was well acquainted with the parable of the sower, and longed to keep his men from being unfruitful. He wanted to see every true Christian at his post fighting valiantly...”

“...and so he would exhort, encourage, and cajole us. Many will receive greater rewards in heaven as a result of Bash’s promptings, even late in life, than if he allowed them to pursue unprofitable courses unchallenged.”

“[He was] so anxious to bring others forward and see them develop, that he took extraordinary risks and gave some people responsibilities which were well beyond their years, experience, or capacity...he went out of his way to encourage others, especially young men at the threshold of their ministry.”

REFLECTION

- What is your specific vision for the people you are discipling?
- How are you communicating that vision?
- Are you watchful for what could knock them off course?

Compelling example

“I sensed he was a man who knew God, was confident about that relationship and longed that others should be also.”

“We knew that Bash would never ask us to do something he would not be willing to do himself.”

“In spite of controlled efficiency, he was a relaxed character. Furthermore he wanted others to relax also. He sought to protect camp from becoming too busy or hectic...He never wanted to see young people under strain and he felt that...humor...would deliver from any fear of intensity.”

REFLECTION

- Why do you think some examples are followed and others ignored?
- How is God calling you to better lead by example?

Conclusion

Bash had major weaknesses like the rest of us

Get your focus off what you don't have

- <https://dwellcc.org/learning/essays/leading-when-youre-not-gifted-leader>

Give your whole-self to God

God can do incredible things through young people