



Creating a Gracious Place

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Decisions produce alignments with one perspective and not the other. The importance of creating an atmosphere for grace lies in the opportunity to learn from experiences through self-reflection. Grace, as unmerited favor, is plausible in leadership and leader development, moving from simple to more complex skills, emotional, and metacognitive growth. Creating a space for grace takes the opportunity to view leader and leadership development from a biblical perspective. Through the exegesis tool of inner texture analysis, the pericope of John 8:1-11 revealed the presence of self-efficacy and selflessness in the narrative to identify six contemporary leadership principles. Alongside the variables, the pericope examined two dimensions of grace-fed leader and leadership development (inclusion and justice). Believers are to be selfless, sacrificial, and practice inclusionists as they consider the needs of others while imparting fairness and justice when effectively wielding bestowed power. Incorporating grace into leader/leadership development can strengthen organizational relationships, decrease negative emotions, and support truth and connectivity. The inner texture analysis revealed an essential message for

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leader and leadership development about the importance of creating a grace-fed atmosphere from careful management of words and actions, and care of human resources, where leaders improve alongside followers.

Grace is a concept most of the public is familiar with but finds itself nascent in the context of global organizations and leadership. Multiple definitions of grace have breached the world's stage of religion and academia. The study of leadership practice defines grace as "doing good to others and demonstrating kindness in a pragmatic environment requiring decision-making and judgment" (Thomas & Rowland, 2014, p. 99). Grace has roots in the Christian tradition as God's unmerited favor (Sells et al., 2009). Grace is also wrapped tightly with justice, a yin-and-yang pairing that promotes "balance, safety, freedom, and responsibility within a relational dyad" (Sells et al., 2009, p. 208). Boesser-Koschmann (2012) posited that the capacity of grace could help endure life's challenging moments. Grace carries the burden of the second chance to alter behaviors and transform an individual or group into contributing members of the team/society. Moments of grace exist between acts of compassion and forgiveness. Compassion and forgiveness are considered characteristics of grace in organizational culture (Thomas & Rowland, 2014).

Leadership theorists have predominantly been concerned with identifying potential leaders and developing leadership traits without considering the Scriptures. Grace is evident in the model of leadership Jesus used to develop His disciples. Collinson (2005) noted that Jesus modeled intentional, informal relationships grounded in community that remained focused on people. Thomas and Rowland (2014) echoed similar attributes seen in participative leadership, "grace and kindness can be perceived...in being considerate, treating staff fairly, and demonstrating integrity" (p. 104). Creating a place for grace in leadership has historical, biblical, and cultural relevance inside the modern leadership development framework.

INSIDE THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

The Gospel of John is a biographical narrative concerned with the deeds of Christ (Minear, 1991) that targeted the humanness of the reader (Klink III, 2016). John placed particular emphasis on the deity of Christ (Packer & Tenney, 1980). John explained “how Jesus acts on behalf of God in the human story” (Klink III, 2016, p. 81). Researchers consider the book of John an oral tradition set in late first-century or early second-century Palestine (deSilva, 2018; Klink III, 2016). The structure of the Gospel of John is profound; it does not provide direct dates, places of origin for the narrative, identify a specific audience, or confirm the assumptions of theologians (deSilva, 2018; Klink III, 2016). John wrought to construct a “particular ethos for the Christian communities, an ethos marked by love, mutual help and service, and unity” (deSilva, 2018, p. 352). John is seeking the ideal reader, who will respond positively to all the cues and invitations given in the story (deSilva, 2018). John’s audience, commonly called the Johannine community, was reconstructed from the language within the narrative (deSilva, 2018). Klink III (2016) summarized, “It is better to assume that the Gospel was intended for a broader readership and was intended to cooperate with the general witness of early Christianity” (Klink III, 2016, p. 65). John spoke to his intended audience in 20:31 when he mentioned the purpose of his writings was to transform unbelievers. John’s acknowledgment of the audience allows the message to be timeless and relatable to the human experience. At best, the Gospel of John is allusive and commonly referred to as the Johannine Problem, where everything known about the narrative is disputable (Klink III, 2016). John firmly asserted that Jesus is the One sent by God. He is God that became man; God with us.

Johannine Community

Although all four Gospels are interpreted through the lens of a reconstructed audience, John has “almost required that it receive the most robust and detailed reconstruction,” earning it the title of the Johannine community (Klink III, 2016, p. 61). Jesus was inclusive; He taught “all the people” that came (*English Standard Version*, 2001/2011, Jn 8:2). The pericope depicts the various classes of the community in those who gathered; followers (v. 2), leaders (v. 3), and outcasts (v. 3). The Old Testament relied heavily on the Mosaic Covenant to determine what

was acceptable communally. The observance of the Mosaic Covenant was under the watchful eyes of the scribes and Pharisees. The Jews did not worship or behave as their unbelieving neighbors, the Romans. The scribes were the scholars of Jewish Law, and the Pharisees were widely respected model Jews committed to the law (Alexander & Alexander, 1999). Some of the tension between the Pharisees and Jesus was founded in keeping collective holiness that had no room for blasphemy (deSilva, 2000)—Jesus had called Himself the Son of God (Jn. 5:18) and for this they sought to kill Him.

The 1st-century culture was built on honor, patronage, kinship, and purity (deSilva, 2000). The pericope explores purity laws and judgment. A portion of Scripture provides extensive comments on “how purity is lost and how it is to be regained” (deSilva, 2000, p. 241). Purity codes were a way of making sense of one’s culture; they dictated what was acceptable, proper, and clean. Purity codes defined how things ought to be and instituted a fear for those things out of order (deSilva, 2000). This created cultural pollution. The community believed God would remove His blessings when pollution had not been atoned (deSilva, 2000). The pollution spoke to crossed boundaries; it encompassed a person’s identity (deSilva, 2000). “These concepts were...essential for the creation and maintenance of group boundaries, ethos, and identity as the holy people” (deSilva, 2000, pp. 242–243).

Judgment and Grace

John expressed grace as part of Jesus’ identity and ministry. The Gospel of John contains four mentions of grace in the prologue. The Greek translation for grace is *charis*—“the state of kindness and favor towards someone, often with a focus on a benefit given to the object; by extension: gift, benefit; credit; words of kindness” (Strong et al., 2001, p. #1653). The first mention of *charis* in John 1:14 as a description of Jesus, “full of grace and truth” (ESV, 2001/2011). The second mention is a double occurrence in verse 16, highlighting the results humanity receives from the fullness of God’s grace through Jesus, “grace upon grace” (ESV, 2001/2011). The last mention in 1:17 is a repetition of v. 14 but presented as a contrasting statement—“the law was given through Moses: grace and truth came through Christ” (ESV, 2001/2011).

John 8:1–11 demonstrates two literary forms found in oral tradition: controversy and symbolic gesture (Minear, 1991). The scene is set on

the Mount of Olives, the place where Jesus rested while teaching at the temple (Lk. 21:37). Ben-Eliyahu (2016) identified two Old Testament biblical distinctions for The Mount of Olives that John's original audience would have related to within the narrative. The mountain carries a theme of crisis and judgment for the Gentiles (Zech. 14:4), and it symbolizes the revelation of God's glory for the Jews (Ezk. 11:23). John's retelling of the event exploits the common knowledge regarding the Mount of Olives as a significant location for the impending controversial test against Jesus. The Mount of Olives would eventually evoke judgment again as Jesus prepared for the cross (Lk. 21:37–38).

METHODOLOGY

An interpretive analysis is about learning the true nature of something through its relation to other things, gleaning from past and present voices (Gowler, 2010). In other words, it answers how the text affects every reader and hearer while accounting for possibilities of cultural interference that can distort the message delivered to the original audience (Henson et al., 2020). Robbins (1996) defined socio-rhetorical criticism (SRC) as “an approach to literature that focuses on values, convictions, and beliefs both in the texts we read and the world in which we live” (p. 1). SRC is like a flashlight used to understand the historical context and language inherently interwoven into the text. Robbins (1996) argued that all SRC resources are available to the interpreter, but they are doubtful to be used in one pericope. SRC offers five frameworks: inner texture, intertexture, social and cultural texture, ideological texture, and sacred texture (Robbins, 1996). The review of the pericope uses SRC's inner texture analysis to negotiate the meaning of the discourse by excavating the layers of language within the text itself (Robbins, 1996) to explore the intersection of grace and leadership development. The frameworks can be independent of each other or work together to reveal additional textures within the pericope. Robbins (1996), the creator of socio-rhetoric criticism, suggested beginning with inner texture because it focuses on exegesis (reading out from the text) versus eisegesis (reading into the text), and it “is a way of trying to gain complex and intricate knowledge of the wording, phrasing, imagery, aesthetics, and argumentative quality of the text” (p. 5).

Inner texture analysis is used to search for truth. Inner texture uses a scientific, systematic, and holistic approach to inquiry and observation;

its purpose is to examine the medium of communication (Henson et al., 2020; Robbins, 1996). Inner texture uses six analysis methods (repetitive, progressive, narrational, open-middle-closing, argumentative, and sensory-aesthetic) to systematically review words, sentences, and paragraphs to understand textures and patterns within the text (Robbins, 1996). The pericope did not have results for progressive texture.

Repetitive Texture

Repetition occurs when a word is used more than once in discourse to help identify movement within the text (Robbins, 1996). Repetition can be found in topics, words, pronouns, conjunctions, negatives, or adverbs (Robbins, 1996). Ancient writings used repetition to add emphasis to the message (Henson et al., 2020). Robbins (1996) stated that repetition “introduces interpreters to the overall forest” (p. 8), allowing more insight. The pericope’s repetition represents Jesus as the main character; in 10 of the 11 verses, He is named or given a title (Table 7.1).

Strong et al. (2001) added that the name Jesus is *lesous* (p. #2424) meaning Yahweh saves. Jesus as Savior is mentioned nine times out of the 10 verses. In the final verse Jesus is also called Lord. McKim (2014) defined Lord as an expression of complete commitment. Strong et al. (2001) explained that the underlying Greek etymology for Lord is *kyrios* (p. #2962), a term that addresses someone in higher status. The pericope repeatedly identifies Jesus as the Savior, and then He saved (v. 11) and was called Lord, implying the woman is committed to Christ. The repetition

Table 7.1 Repetition

1	Jesus					
2	He/Him					
3		woman	caught/adultery			
4	Him/Teacher	woman	caught/adultery			
5	You	woman				
6	Him/Jesus	her		bent	wrote	
7	Him/He			stood		sin
8	He			bent	wrote	
9	Jesus/Him	woman		standing		
10	Jesus	her/woman	condemned	stood		
11	Lord/Jesus	she	condemn			sin

shows the full capacity of the main character. There are seven repetitive instances for the woman which placed her as a character of interest. She enters the scene (v. 3) immediately after the narrator sets the context (vv. 1–2) as an imposter positioned to appear as the main character. A topic of focus for the narrator is the repetition of physical action used to position (vv. 3–10) Jesus as the main character. The scene opens with only Jesus and while others enter, the scene closes with only Jesus while everyone exits. The double mention of sin (v. 7, 11) reflects an additional theme.

From an analysis of repetitive texture, the actions of the scribes and Pharisees were intent on communicating with Jesus through the theme of various actions. What appeared to be a condemnable offense Jesus' actions created a place for grace. Scripture identifies that God's plan for humanity is to imitate Jesus (1 Pt. 2:21). Human transgressions are expected; the pericope highlighted how leaders, those who have authority, should respond to critics and transgressors. The last person in the temple was Jesus, the only sinless person among them, the only one who could throw a stone. He chose to give unmerited favor. The biblical model showed that providing grace was a choice that Jesus made because He knew that no one outside of Himself was sinless. Sin is repeated twice in the text, but with additional research, the Greek word has two different definitions. The Greek translation for sin, Strong et al. (2001, p. #361) (v. 7), is *anamartetos*, meaning never having sinned. The second sin (v. 11), *hamartano*, is defined as an un-repentive act contrary to God's will (Strong et al., 2001, p. #264). Jesus demonstrated viewing the circumstance from multiple vantage points; bent down (in alignment with the women's position) and standing (in alignment with the Jewish leaders). His response allowed self-awareness to enter the space (v. 9). Jesus demonstrated to those in His midst that sin was a part of everyone's life, from the oldest to the youngest (v. 9).

Leadership Principle #1

Lead by example and allow space for grace to cover even the most apparent transgressions. Grace is for everyone, and leaders can choose to bring resolution and justice to areas of dysfunction through the practice of grace.

Narrational Texture

Authors signify transitions in theme or breaks in consciousness through narrational units (Robbins, 1996). Each voice (narrator, character, or written text) contributes to the unfolding of “some kind of pattern that moves the discourse forward” (Robbins, 1996, p. 15). The voices within the text are key to identifying narrational textures (Robbins, 1996). The pericope has six narrational scenes (Table 7.2) derived from who spoke (e.g., narrator or character) or what is spoken (e.g., commentary or questions). Two scenes are narrated and depict context, character actions, and placement (vv. 1–3, 6, 8, and v. 9). The remaining scenes are reported speech consisting of an accusation (v. 4), two questions (v. 5 and v. 10), and one call to action (v. 7). The final scene (v. 10 and v. 11) introduced dialogue. The woman, who speaks only once, identified Jesus as Lord. The narrational pattern depicts voices followed by action.

Leadership Principle #2

Acknowledge the potential in a person to develop self-efficacy. Creating a place for grace includes providing the necessary motivation (or call to action) to make better choices. By believing in someone, they begin to develop the confidence to reach their fullest potential (Brookfield, 2013, Schunk, 2020).

Table 7.2 Narrational units

<i>Vs</i>	<i>Narrational unit</i>	<i>Narrational pattern</i>	<i>Type of interaction</i>
1	1	Narrator	Scene context
2		Narrator	Scene context
3		Narrator	Scene context
4	2	Reported speech (religious/legal leaders)	Accusation
5		Reported speech (religious/legal leaders)	Question
6	3	Narrator	Commentary
7	4	Reported Speech (Jesus/leader)	Response/Call to Action
8	5	Narrator	Commentary
9		Narrator	Commentary
10	6	Reported speech (Jesus/leader)	Question
11		Reported speech (leader/follower dialogue)	Response/Call to Action

Open-Middle-Closing Texture

The opening-middle-closing (OMC) texture represents the plot from the author’s perspective. Henson et al. (2020) described four distinct traits of OMC. The first is shalom, the beginning or innocence of the narrative. The second trait is the middle or shalom shattered, where a crisis has entered the plot. The third element is shalom sought, signifying the protagonist’s desire to restore shalom but with no success. The last trait is denouement, which is the final resolution, restoration of shalom, or the release of tension. OMC (Table 7.3) was identified within the six narrational units (Table 7.2). Each unit provides a shift in how the message was delivered through the narrational use of voices.

The audience experiences shalom when Jesus returns to teach among the gathered (vv. 1–3). An interruption in the teaching presents tension; the cultural leaders create a disturbance by public shame (v. 3). This woman was brought to Jesus as physical and undeniable evidence of cultural pollution, undesirable behavior (v. 4). This offense was “off the purity scale entirely” and only “the death of the guilty would suffice to expunge the pollution” (deSilva, 2000, p. 268). To not stone such a woman (v. 5) would bring a loss of God’s favor upon them (deSilva, 2000). The release of tension arrives when no one (v. 11) condemned her but judged themselves and left the temple (v. 9). The denouement is in verses 10 and 11 when the women accepts the gift of grace.

Grace allowed room for what culture categorized as an “off-the-scale” offense. The scribes and Pharisees expected to entrap the blasphemous

Table 7.3 OMC texture

<i>Vs</i>	<i>Narrational unit</i>	<i>OMC</i>	<i>Texture</i>
1	1	Open	Shalom
2		Open	Shalom
3		Open	Shalom
4	2	Middle	Shalom Shattered
5		Middle	Shalom Shattered
6	3	Middle	Shalom Sought
7	4	Middle	Shalom Sought
8	5	Middle	Shalom Sought
9		Middle	Shalom Sought
10	6	Closing	Denouement
11		Closing	Denouement

Jesus. The Jewish cultures goal, however, was for the broken boundaries to be restored and God's favor to not be removed. "Purity has to do with drawing the lines that define the world around us" (deSilva, 2000, p. 243). When policies and procedures have been overlooked, broken, and outright violated, the organizational culture demands that order be restored, chaos be removed, and the ship uprighted. In the Jewish community, some things are unclean (a corpse), and some people (adulterers) are unclean and capable of "transmitting their uncleanness" (deSilva, 2000, p. 244). The Israelite micro-culture would need to have God's favor restored by adhering to the Mosaic Covenant, which required stoning of the woman and the man caught in adultery (deSilva, 2018). Without both parties, Jesus knew their intent was not honorable.

Leadership Principle #3

Leadership is an affair of the heart. Essential for leadership development is advocating for a response or call to action that removes chaos and releases tension and strife, requiring listening and understanding the context and content of the audience (Kouzes & Posner, 2010). The pericope modeled the selfless behavior of Jesus towards the accused women, the care of people came before Himself.

Argumentative Texture

The authors' ability to use literary devices to get the hearer to respond in a predetermined direction represents its argumentative texture (Robbins, 1996). The goal of argumentative texture analysis is to discern the author's argument in presenting the text to the ancient audience (Henson et al., 2020). The discourse will present a particular viewpoint or assertion and then produces logical "reasons, clarified through opposites and contraries" (Robbins, 1996, p. 21). John opened the pericope with all the people gathering to solidify the legal proceeding that was to come (Klink III, 2016). Jewish custom required witnesses to raise their hands before a stoning could happen (Dt. 13:9), and with the introduction of the scribes, the reader is prepared for the legal tension ahead (Klink III, 2016). Identifying the presence of a thesis, rationale, contrary, restatement, analogy, a testimony of antiquity, and conclusion assist in knowing the authors' reason for the discourse (Henson et al., 2020). All seven elements can be present to identify argumentative patterns or only a few.

The scribes and Pharisees delivered to Jesus only the accused adulterous woman (v. 4); the adulterous man was not present. The thesis is about what the legal and spiritual authorities could do to tempt Jesus into contradicting the Mosaic Law or Roman law, which did not give Jews the authority to condemn someone to death (Alexander & Alexander, 1999). The scribes and Pharisee's intention behind interrupting Jesus' teaching was to have a reason to accuse Jesus directly of a crime (Klink III, 2016). "It is Jesus who is on trial as the named defendant" (Klink III, 2016, p. 392). Breaking Roman law would give substance for Roman courts to judge Him; breaking Jewish law would give substance for the Jewish community to dishonor Him, therefore, allowing cultural power and authority to remain with the scribes and Pharisees. The person they asked to judge (v. 4) was being tested (v. 6), and their (scribes and Pharisees) actions revealed real intentions (Klink III, 2016). The scribes and Pharisees provided as their rationale the law of Moses (v. 5). Jesus offered a contradiction by writing with His finger in the dirt (v. 6) instead of verbal speech. The scribes and Pharisees continued to restate the question (v. 7), and Jesus offered a double contradiction by asking for the first stone to be thrown and then returning to write in the dirt (v. 7, 8). The accusers and crowd internalized their situation with the actions taken by Jesus and began to leave (v. 9). They all left, one by one, in order of their age, signifying no one was without sin (Rom. 3:23).

Leadership Principle #4

Grace is an option in leader/leadership development. Making space for grace does not remove consequences but adds room for self-efficacy to build confidence "through the reflection of meaningful experiences, modeling others, being encouraged by others, and successfully handling emotional cues" (Komives et al., 2006, p. 414). The pericope demonstrated that when left to self-reflection, one can consider their actions and choose an improved path.

Sensory-Aesthetic Texture

The readers' comprehension of the intended message is assisted through sensory-aesthetic texture (Table 7.4). There are three zones to consider: emotion-fused thought, self-expressive speech, and purposeful action (Henson et al., 2020). Emotion-fused thought embodies "emotion/feeling or thought/knowing"; self-expressive speech focuses on all

Table 7.4 Sensory-Aesthetic Pattern

<i>V_s</i>	<i>Emotion-fused</i>	<i>Self-expressive</i>	<i>Purposeful-action</i>
1			went to
2		taught	He came/people came/sat
3			brought/caught/placing
4		they said	been caught
5		you say	commanded us to stone
6	God imagery	they said/wrote	test Him/charge/bent down/
7		ask/said	continued/stood up/throw
8	God imagery	wrote	bent down
9	conscience	they heard	went away/left alone/standing
10	Jesus saw	said	stood
11		said/said	go

aspects of communication, including hearing and speaking; purposeful action includes any physical action involving appendages (Henson et al., 2020, p. 94). Henson et al. (2020) noted that the text may or may not have a sensory-aesthetic idiom attached to each expression, but it is worthwhile to consider the existence of one.

Self-Expressive Speech: The pericope demonstrates the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. John advocated that self-expressive communication (9 instances) is just as crucial as purposeful action in the message (11 instances). Throughout the pericope for each self-expression, there was an action (Table 7.4). The author built tension when the accused character did not speak in defense or identify her lover. The woman held speech and action until her moment of grace with Jesus. When developing leaders, Jesus modeled that the person is independent of the action, bonding actions and words together.

Leadership Principle #5

Grace Leaders actively support words with action and action with words. Barclay (2001) advised leadership to understand why a transgression happened. Jesus demonstrated presence through listening and emotional intelligence. In a contemporary context, the actions of followers, colleagues, and cohorts are critical to organizational welfare. The actions and words of leaders and followers require oversight so that effective communication happens.

Purposeful Action: Klink III (2016) identified that the narrator spoke through action and symbolism when he chose not to emphasize the content of the lessons Jesus taught in the temple or the message written on the ground. John identified that the words of Jesus at this moment would not overshadow His actions (Klink III, 2016). Purposeful action appeared immediately in the opening scene when the narrator acknowledged the crowds (v. 2) because their participation was required for the story to have cultural relevance. The impending action from the crowd was critical to the entrapment of Jesus because Jewish law required an audience. The accusers delivered only the woman but they knew the Jewish law required the man and woman to be stoned under particular conditions (Crim, 1976). The conditions for stoning had not been met (Klink III, 2016), and their act of willful omission signified that the scribes and Pharisee's actions were pre-meditated for entrapment (v. 6).

The narrator's emphasis on Jesus' finger writing on the ground confirms action as an essential texture in delivering the message. The mental imagery produced is of the finger of God (Ex. 31:18). The narrator described that Jesus repositioned His body twice (v. 6, 8) to write with His finger in contrast to Him speaking three times (v. 7, 10, 11). The descriptive details of the bodily movement aids in the author recounting the incident. The descriptive style provides more than a cognitive connection; it awakens the audience's senses on multiple levels. Connecting physical movement with the verbal world, one needs to remember that oral traditions were recited to static audiences.

In addition, the author connects emotionally; the finger points back to the action from God when He wrote the Ten Commandments (Klink III, 2016; Minear, 1991). This choice of words would have cultural significance. Many adhere emotional intelligence to the development of leadership. "Leadership is intrinsically an emotional process, whereby leaders recognize followers' emotional states" and attempt to evoke, influence, and manage their states to promote "effectiveness at all levels in organizations" (Kerr et al., 2005, p. 268). God is all authority, and the author shared the significance of Jesus' connection to the Father. The author is attempting to infuse a deeper level of comprehension. Earlier in the Gospel of John, Jesus provided His testimony. He stated I was "given authority to execute judgment...I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just because I seek not my own will but the will of Him who sent me" (*ESV*, 2001/2011, Jn. 5:27, 30).

Leadership Principle #6

Having authority is just as important as knowing whose authority is being represented. Leadership development focuses on the organization's development, and leader development focuses on aiding the individual to reach their highest potential. Jesus knew the thoughts of God, and the Jewish leaders knew "the book" (Alexander & Alexander, 1999, p. 528), the Mosaic laws. By knowing where authority originates allowed Jesus to show concern for the details, for people, and not let it overshadow the law itself (Alexander & Alexander, 1999).

APPLICATION WITHIN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The adult development process is a life-long journey (Bryman et al., 2017). Leadership development promotes organizational growth, and leader development promotes personal growth (Johnson & Hackman, 2018). "Transforming leaders through leadership development also transforms organizations" (Bryman et al., 2017, p. 38). Leadership involves understanding the relationship between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2019). Leader development helps to build one's capacity, over time, by presenting opportunities for learning (Bryman et al., 2017, p. 402). Leadership is co-created, leaders use power to influence, and followers grant, comply, or challenge power (Northouse, 2019). The leader–follower relationship is a phenomenon receiving increasing attention in the world of social science and psychology (Blom & Lundgren, 2020). Researchers have turned from a leader-centric model to focus on how understanding followership attitudes and behaviors can help conceptualize leader effectiveness and influence (Popper & Castelnovo, 2019; Yukl & Gardner, 2020).

"Leaders change the way people think about what is possible" (Northouse, 2019, p. 14). Research identified three perspectives to leadership: as a process or relationship, as a combination of traits or characteristics, or as a skill (Amanchukwu et al., 2015). When followers perceive leadership as competent and caring, they grant leaders access to how they think about what is possible (Northouse, 2019), and then shared goals are achievable (Popper & Castelnovo, 2019). According to Yukl and Gardner (2020), "followers can contribute to the effectiveness of a group by maintaining cooperative working relationships, providing constructive dissent, sharing leadership functions, and supporting leadership development" (p. 292). A follower may also be a leader and must navigate

the two roles (Yukl & Gardner, 2020). “I can be a leader even when I am not the leader” (Komives et al., 2005, p. 605). Leadership is a collaborative and relational process experienced by the titled leader and their following (Bryman et al., 2017). The term leadership holds varied and largely intuitive definitions within different cultures, people groups, and industries. This diversity in definition leads to the absence of a global consensus among researchers, scholars, and practitioners (Northouse, 2019). In consideration of this chapter, leadership is defined as a process whereby an individual has the capacity to influence an individual or a group to achieve a specified goal (Engstrom, 1976; Northouse, 2019).

Grace

Biblical faith attributes grace as a characteristic of God and designates it as one of the most distinctive features of Christianity (Buttrick, 1962; Crim, 1976). While Jesus modeled grace during His ministry, it is not an exclusive act of the Holy Trinity. The granting of grace flows from an authority (Crim, 1976). Grace outside religion “in a pragmatic environment requires decision-making and judgment” (Thomas & Rowland, 2014, p. 99). McKim (2014) defined grace as unmerited favor that extends salvation and forgiveness through Jesus Christ for sinful behavior while withholding deserved judgment. Buttricks (1962) provided a definition inclusive of the Old Testament and New Testament—“God’s unmerited, free, spontaneous love for sinful man, revealed and made effective in Jesus Christ” (p. 463). Barclay (2015) agreed with Buttrick and added that “God gives freely and without strings attached, and believers are to do likewise” (p. 57). The previous chapters identified the three variables of grace (self-efficacy, selflessness, and sacrifice) and three dimensions (inclusion, justice, and potential). Believers are to be selfless, sacrificial, and practice inclusion as they consider the needs of others and not for themselves, passing on the unconditional love of Christ (Barclay, 2015).

Grace-Fed Leadership Development

Grace-fed leadership intentionally guides a person or group to achieve a specific goal while extending the variables of grace without personal and/or organizational benefit as the primary focus. Grace-fed leadership is people-centered. If believers imitate God, then grace-fed leadership

development requires a self-giving service that is not grudging or obliged, but given cheerfully, willingly, and freely, simply out of a “pure concern for others” (Barclay, 2015, p. 57). Peter encouraged leaders to willingly provide oversight of followers “as God would have you” (*ESV*, 2001/2011, 1 Pt. 5:2). Leaders lead like God.

God expressed grace in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Creating a place for grace in leadership development grows out of the narrative of God’s generous and sacrificial gift “expressed definitively and once-for-all” in Jesus Christ (Barclay, 2015, p. 57). In receiving this gift, believers learn that unmerited favor is given at a cost to the giver and not the receiver. God gave His Son so humanity would be saved. God chose not to abandon humans to dysfunction but to take the steps needed to bring resolution (Crim, 1976), providing a model for contemporary leadership to follow. God’s grace to humankind was in His just actions (Klink III, 2016). Leaders can choose to bring resolution and justice to areas of dysfunction through the practice of grace.

The context of leadership is constantly evolving in both global and local organizations, but the content is generationally the same (Kouzes & Posner, 2010). Ayers (2006) noted that the crisis of leadership is a crisis of character, stating that what is in the heart of a leader is “worthy of fervent investigation” (Ayers, 2006, p. 27). Research regarding grace and leadership development is paltry, and what constitutes as an attribute of grace is inconclusive (Thomas & Rowland, 2014). With the expanding damage created by global leaders towards economics, equality, sustainability, and human capital, the decades of leadership research at its precipice are poised for new styles and theories. A jump to embrace authentic, honest, integrous leadership may prove to be just the answer—it is a condition of the heart that is the denouement to the research. Perhaps leadership is more about identifying organizational motivation with individual motivators to discover best fits for leader and leadership development. McDonald (2019) stated the core concern is ethical—what is inside a person. Kouzes and Posner (2010) cited leadership as an affair of the heart: “There is no integrity and honor without heart...no commitment and conviction...no hope and faith...no trust and support...no persistence and courage...no learning and risk-taking without heart. Nothing important ever gets done without heart” (p. 136). Research is proving that self-efficacy may assist in identifying and developing certain skill levels (How to Increase, 2019) that may enhance the capacity of leadership development (Day et al., 2013). Johnson and Hackman (2018)

stated, “leadership can be learned...at any age...people do learn, grow, and change” (p. 402). Lifelong learners are the focus of leader development. Leader development (personal growth) leads to more effective leadership (Johnson & Hackman, 2018).

The Hebrew perspective of adultery violated the covenant between God and His people (Jer. 5: 7–9). The Ten Commandments placed adultery as an immoral act (Dt. 5:18; Galpaz-Feller, 2004). It was considered a sin against Yahweh (Lev. 18:20). Adultery was one of the harshest punished crimes; it was a double crime against God and the spouse (Galpaz-Feller, 2004; Wells, 2015). Jesus demonstrated in one act of grace that one of the highest crimes within the culture could receive a judgment of ‘do better next time.’ Not a verdict of innocence but one of looking forward. Organizations seek leaders that exhibit self-efficacy (competence), practice selflessness and sacrifice through inclusion and justice. Leadership is the theory of changing how leaders/followers think about possibilities (Northouse, 2019).

Jesus exhibited the desire to remain in covenant with the accused. Sells et al. (2009) pointed out that conflict engagement has a pattern, and by setting the pattern, Jesus was establishing His approach of grace with the woman and the crowd. Jesus did not enter a ring of tit-for-tat dialogue with the scribes and Pharisees (v. 7). The great teacher used wisdom to know and understand the issue and address the root of the distress and accusations. This points to the dysfunctional cycle between Jesus and the scribes and Pharisees (Sells et al., 2009). Mutual respect develops into a perspective of fairness and trust in relationships (Sells et al., 2009). Unfortunately, a 2009 international study revealed that people trust a stranger more than their leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2010). Day et al. (2013) stated that leadership development is impacted by the degree of mutual trust between leaders and followers.

CONCLUSION

The Gospel of John presents Jesus as an example of the Christian community that reflects servanthood, love, and unity (deSilva, 2018). The actions of Jesus modeled for leadership an approach to conflict resolution. Leadership is about the journey, getting to the end, and finishing well (Mt. 25:21; Clinton, 1988). Finishing well includes developing effective leaders to continue the objectives of the organization. An effective

leader develops a road map that includes individuals becoming proactive and taking responsibility for their personal development (Johnson & Hackman, 2018). The aim of organizational leadership training is twofold. Training may focus on leadership development, the interpersonal component that enhances leadership capacity, or the intrapersonal component of individual leader development (Day et al., 2013). Leadership theories and models have a century of qualitative, quantitative, valid, and admiral attributes that span a vast global pool of critics and researchers.

In comparison, leadership development has a relatively “short history of rigorous scholarly theory and research on the topics of leader-leadership development” (Day et al., 2013, p. 64). Identifying excellence in the leadership-followership dyad will satisfy the well-being of the organization and the stakeholders.

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