

The Marks of a Spiritual Leader, by John Piperⁱ

2021 February Leadership Seminar

For each of John Piper's characteristics given, I have organized them in categories, included a main text of Scripture, and a brief description. *To the left of the trait, rank yourself from 1 to 10: 1 being "not there (yet)", 5 being "evident but in need of development" and 10 being "one of my greatest strengths." As a helpful exercise in the future, ask 2-3 friends to evaluate your leadership traits.*

A Spiritual Leader is a visionary guided by God's calling not personal ambition.

- _____ 1. Restless: (Phil 3:13-14) I have a holy discontent with the status quo, a desire to improve, set goals and increase ministry.
- _____ 2. Optimistic: (Rom 8:28-32) I am optimistic not because I am good but because God is in control. I have confidence in God's sovereignty and the leading of the Spirit and the Word.
- _____ 3. Theologically Oriented: (Col 3:17) All things relate to God. There is a theological coherence to all that happens that gives me stability as I follow God's purposes.
- _____ 4. A Dreamer: (2 Kings 6:15-17) I can envision how things could be in God's will with God's help; I can see how the power of God can overshadow the problems of the future.

A Spiritual Leader invests and expends himself in God's calling and people.

- _____ 5. Intense & Energetic: (Rom 12:11; Eph 5:16) I have zeal and diligence in serving and leading others. I fight being lazy.
- _____ 6. A Hard Thinker: (2 Tim 2:7) I think carefully and critically. I am not driven by fads or trends, but seek to be prayerful, dependent on grace, the Spirit and the Word.
- _____ 7. A Good Judge of Character: (Matt 7:15-20) I discern who is fit and gifted for what work; I focus on developing character and direction- not pigeonholing people rigidly.
- _____ 8. A Lover: (Eph 5:25) I love sacrificially, not sacrificing those I love (especially my family) for the sake of my leadership pursuits and processes.

A Spiritual Leader communicates clearly and carefully and leads directionally.

- _____ 9. Organized and Efficient: (Prov 16:9) I am organized, purposeful and productive, making plans to accomplish goals.
- _____ 10. Decisive: (1 Kings 18:21) I decisively and prayerfully make decisions, trusting God's sovereignty, while taking responsibility for mistakes I know I will make.
- _____ 11. Articulate/Able to Teach: (Col 4:4; 1 Tim 3:2) I can communicate my thoughts and plans clearly so that others can follow. I use clarity and conviction, not coercion nor charisma to motivate others. I ask questions that foster understanding, foresee objections, and use language my followers understand.
- _____ 12. Tactful: (Col 4:5-6) I am careful not to embarrass self or others, not insensitive nor inappropriate. I realize grace wins the confidence of people.

A Spiritual Leader handles difficulties and opposition with full reliance on God's sovereignty.

- _____ 13. Thick-Skinned: (Gal 6:10) I am not controlled by the need to please others, nor defeated by criticism. I listen considerately. I can be humbled, but not lose heart.
- _____ 14. Self-Controlled: (1 Cor 6:12) I master, with God's help, sinful or enslaving desires. I give up good things that are not best for pursuing God's will. I am not enslaved to ease, entertainment, or self-indulgence.
- _____ 15. Perseverant: (Gal 6:9) I can keep on through difficulty, drought, or discouragement, following God's will by God's grace until fruit is born. I do not give up easily.
- _____ 16. Restful: (Psalm 127:1-2) I plan and work diligently, but ultimately the results of our labor are in God's hands. I am also a good steward of my life and health, conscious of diet, sleep, recreation and rest.

¹ This material is taken from our reading for this year from John Piper's *The Marks of a Spiritual Leader* (Minneapolis: Desiring God, 2014). This book is available by paperback or free download at <https://www.desiringgod.org/books/the-marks-of-a-spiritual-leader>. The organization, summary and notes of "The Outer Circle of Spiritual Leadership" characteristics are by Pearson Johnson, Director of Student Care & Discipleship.