

Two Worlds

by Herbert Henry Farmer

True leadership requires the ability to navigate two worlds simultaneously: one's own vision and the perspectives of others.

Scripture: Proverbs 11:14, Proverbs 16:9, Matthew 20:22, 1 Corinthians 13:2, Philippians 2:3

Topics: "Christian Leadership", "Spiritual Guidance"

Description

Herbert Henry Farmer delves into the complexities of leadership, emphasizing the challenging dynamic between a leader and their followers. He highlights the delicate balance leaders must maintain - being ahead yet not too far ahead, speaking two languages simultaneously, and seeing truths that followers may not yet grasp. Farmer underscores the essential quality of a leader's ability to understand and empathize with their disciples' perspectives, even when those perspectives differ from their own, as crucial for effective leadership.

Transcript

"Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?...They say unto him, We are able"

(Matt. 20:22).

There is always a certain obliquity, a certain element of cross-purpose, a certain displacement of perspective and vision, between a leader and his followers. That is what makes leadership the most difficult and sometimes the most heart-breaking of tasks. To be a leader you must be ahead of others; yet not too far ahead. You must talk two languages at one and the same time, your own and theirs. You must be one of them and yet not one of them, in their world and yet out of it, sometimes entirely out of it. You must see things which they do not see and for the time being perhaps cannot see, things which, none the less, alone determine the path you want them to choose to follow. A leader has to work with his two eyes as it were out of focus, one apprehending the truth, the other the half-truth, or even the untruth, which holds the minds of his disciples in thrall. If he lacks the capacity for this, if he cannot put himself in his disciples' shoes and look out on life in some measure through their eyes, he lacks the first essential of leadership and is doomed to failure. And, of course, the more transcendently great he is in character and vision and desire the bigger the distance between him and followers, the more he towers above his contemporaries--then the more urgently necessary, and the more impossibly difficult, will this essential quality of appreciating two worlds at once become.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/herbert-henry-farmer/two-worlds/>

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