

# Government and leadership: Teacher's topic guide

## God is Truth Year 8

### Spiritual Awareness

God's law is true and perfect. His laws are upright. Governments that are founded on God's laws and principles will be blessed. The Bible gives examples of the correct use of political power. God is Lord and King, and He is ultimately in control of every nation.

A servant leader

The Bible also gives instruction on the most essential requirement for leadership: service and humility. Jesus said, "Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant" (Matthew 20:26).

### Values: Our response to 'God is Truth'

- **Honesty:** Speak the truth; Never cheat, steal, lie or exaggerate
- **Trustworthiness**
- **Integrity:** Be true to our word and keep promises.
- **Life-long learning:** always seeking the truth
- **Faith** in the word of God being the truth, and that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life
- **Trust** in the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us into all truth.

**Outcomes:** Students will

- study various authority structures
- understand the need for local and state governments
- identify key figures and events that led to our country's Federation, including overseas influences on our system of law and government
- see the need for obedience to government
- briefly outline the structure of local and state governments
- list Biblical guidelines for government and those governed

### Bible stories and passages

Genesis 11:1-9 - The tower of Babel is a story of people wanting to build their own kingdom, excluding God.

Exodus 20 - The Ten Commandments

Esther - A story of God's hand in ruling a nation

Kings and Chronicles – Kings of the Old Testament – Saul, David, Solomon, Absalom, Jeroboam, Rehoboam

Matthew 1 & 2 – The genealogy of Jesus shows royal descent. Jesus was born as King

Isaiah 9:6-7 – A child is born to us. He will govern and reign. His power will be right and just.

Revelation 19:12, 13 & 16 – Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Exodus - God's rule won over Pharaoh's rule.

Romans 13:1-7; 1 Tim 2:2 Pray for those in authority.

Psalms 85 – a prayer for the nation's welfare

Mark 10:35-45 – Servant of all.

### Bible Verses

Psalm 19:8 - The laws of the Lord are right and those who obey them are happy. The commands of the Lord are just, and give understanding to the mind.

Psalm 66:7 – He rules forever by His might and keeps His eyes on the nations.

Psalm 47:8-9 - God sits on His sacred throne. More powerful than all armies is He. He rules supreme.  
Matthew 20:26 - Jesus said, "Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant".

### **Key Questions**

What is God's law?

Why does the Bible say that God's law is perfect?

How does God want a leader or ruler to act?

Why could we say that God is the perfect King or ruler?

How does Jesus qualify to be a king?

Which rulers in the Bible honoured God's laws?

Which laws of our land are based on the Ten Commandments?

Are there any laws of our land that go against God's laws?

### **Activities**

- Research key figures and events in the history of your country's government.
- Draw a time-line showing the history of government in your country including the succession of Prime Ministers.
- Define a democracy and identify other alternatives.
- Compare governments around the world: those based on Judeo-Christian ethics and those that are not.
- Compare laws of our country with the Ten Commandments. Discuss the passing of acts which are opposed to God's law, e.g. abortion, laws against freedom of speech.
- Research the Bible for guidelines for those who govern, and responses of those who are governed.
- Study the various authority structures e.g. democracy; dictatorship.
- Make a list of the presidents or prime ministers of different nations.
- Study examples of monarchs in the past, including Biblical figures, (David, Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar, Esther, Pharaoh).
- Discuss the rule of the Roman Empire at the time of Jesus on earth.
- Study examples of monarchs today, around the world.
- Explain how someone becomes a king or queen e.g. descent.
- Describe the role and functions of monarchy, past and present.
- Describe their lifestyle, wealth and power.
- Discuss the servant-leader role model.
- Give students opportunities to lead activities such as group work and discussions.

### **Assessment**

1. Present a speech with a partner on a controversial issue in our society. Say why it is controversial and gives God's opinion.
2. What have I learned from the study of government and leadership...
  - about God?
  - about doing what God wants me to do?
  - about the Bible?

## **Learning Connections**

### **English:**

1. Make a list of ideal qualities of a good leader.
2. Write letters to a mock Member of Parliament and present opinions and ideas on laws that should be changed, or issues which are pointing to a departure from our Judeo-Christian foundation.

**Health:** Government laws that affect health, e.g. should there be stricter laws against harmful chemicals in food products and against junk food advertising?

**Thinking skills:** Leadership

**Beacon Media research cards:** Leadership

**Biographies:** Martin Luther, John Wesley

# Values education Year 8

## God is Truth

### Respect for truth

To have respect for truth we need to...

- find out what is true and what is false
- look to the Bible as the only measure for truth
- be alert, and watching out for things that are not right
- act according to what we know to be true and right

#### **Truth in the world around us**

Can we rely on the media to show us what is true?

The media can be biased, giving favour to the most popular opinion.

The most popular opinion is not necessarily the right one.

In fact, many people in the world would rather do what pleases them, even if it means hurting someone else.

What consequences might these things have for others, if they were implemented?

- Freedom to smoke in any building
- No limits on alcohol for under 18 years
- Making recreational drugs legal
- Condoning abortion

#### **Bible passages about truth:**

- Matthew 7:15-21 Wolves in sheep's clothing
- Matthew 7:7 Seek and you shall find.
- Matthew 7:13-14 The broad and narrow way
- James 1:22 Be doers of the word and not hearers only.
- Proverbs 8:7 My mouth shall speak truth.
- Proverbs 12:17 When you tell the truth, justice is done.
- Proverbs 11:1 The Lord hates dishonest scales. But He is pleased with correct weights.

# Art Year 8

## God is Truth

### Government and leadership

**Biblical wall art and text:** The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20:28

#### **Jesus, the servant leader**

Depict the triumphal entry scene: What kind of a leader was Jesus? What kind of a leader were the people expecting Him to be?

Use drawing or painting to illustrate Bible scenes involving leaders other than Jesus. Put them into two categories, e.g.

**Good leaders:** Moses, Joshua, Esther, Paul

**Bad leaders:** Herod, Pharaoh, Jezebel

Thinking Skills Truth Yr 8

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Leadership 1</b></p> <p>Design an interview with a leader of your choice. Ask 10 questions.</p>                | <p><b>Leadership 2</b></p> <p>Make a time line of the life of any leader you choose, past or present.</p> |
| <p><b>Leadership 3</b></p> <p>Write a list of 5 qualities of a good leader.</p>                                      | <p><b>Leadership 4</b></p> <p>Write a list of 5 things a good leader would not do or say.</p>             |
| <p><b>Leadership 5</b></p> <p>Make a list of 10 changes you would make if you could be prime minister for a day.</p> | <p><b>Leadership 6</b></p> <p>The answer is “truthful”.<br/>Give five questions.</p>                      |

## Leadership 1

### Student activities

### Leaders need a right understanding of truth.

Leaders do what is right, not what is popular.

Leaders need to know what they believe and why, and be able to communicate this with others.

Leaders need to be a model to their team, based on their understanding of truth.

1. A class is given the responsibility of choosing a fundraising activity. The majority of the class want to sell junk food but a few think that this is not a good idea. As class captain, how would you handle this situation?
2. A youth leader chooses not to take the youth group to a showing popular movie that involved bad language. What would his reasons be and how would he explain it to the youth group?
3. List some key parts of the Bible that give us an understanding of truth, and principles to live by.
4. Governments that base their laws on the Ten Commandments have a justice system based on truth.
  - a) Write some laws that are based on the Ten Commandments
  - b) What would happen if the majority of the society decided they didn't want these laws?



## Leadership 2

### Leaders need to have a definite goal.

Leaders need to know *why* they want to achieve their goal.

They must check whether motives are right. Is the goal for personal gain or benefit of others?

Leaders need to know the right timing for the different parts of the project to be put into place.

Leaders must be able to explain the goal clearly to the team and inspire the team to work towards the goal. They must work out strategies which involve all team members in reaching the goal, and not just use certain people who have specific talents.

Imagine that you are a leader of a team that is going to clean up your town or city, and prevent littering in the future.

1. Choose a city or town, and decide how big your team will be. Describe the age-range of your team members.
2. How would you explain your goal to your team? Include the 'why'.
3. Make a project plan, outlining the steps you would take over a 6-month period.
4. How will you involve your team members?
5. How will you choose leaders and what will their leadership roles be?

**S**pecific  
**M**easurable  
**A**ppropriate  
**R**ealistic  
**T**ime-Bound  
**GOALS**



## Leadership 3

### Leaders need to know themselves.

Leaders need to know their own strengths and engage them.  
They need to know their weakness and work on them.

Imagine you are a leader of a team that is going to make a difference to your school. Your whole class is the team and you are the team leader. The project could be:

- To build a school garden
  - To raise money for the school
  - To fix up broken desks
  - To help children who can't read
  - Or any project you like
1. Choose your project according to the gifts and talents YOU have.
  2. How will you organize your team? Make a plan.
  3. What areas of weakness might you need to work on personally to help you be a better leader?



## Leadership 4

### Leaders need to know and understand their team.

Leaders need to know the strengths of their team members and engage them. Leaders have the responsibility of encouraging the followers to use their gifts (Eph 4:11-12).

Leaders also need to help develop good character in team members.

Leaders need to know the fears, frustrations, dreams and identity needs of their team.

These are important and should not be overlooked.

Leaders need to inspire the team and enable them to act. Leaders can do this by being positive and energetic.

Imagine you are leader of a mission trip to an African country where there is war, famine and people are dying due to lack of medical help. Many are living in tents because their homes have been destroyed.

1. What might some of the fears of your team members be? How would you encourage them not to be afraid?
2. How could you prepare your team to be better equipped, before setting off?
3. Outline the different abilities of team members that could be utilized. How would you organize them into smaller teams?



## Leadership 5

### Leaders need to listen and understand.

Leaders need to have insight into the hearts of others.

They need to be sensitive to people's personalities and respect their concerns. Everyone is different.

1. Make a list of some of the different personality types you might have on a team.
2. As a leader, how would you give advice to someone who was shy and sensitive, if you wanted them to do something differently to how they are doing it?
3. What would you do if someone on your team had a real concern about the way the project is going, and could see that there may be problems down the track?
4. What are the qualities of a good listener?



## Leadership 6

### Leaders need to take advice from others.

Accountability is being responsible to someone for your actions.

Accountability shows willingness to admit your mistakes.

A leader needs to have a mentor. This is someone who you can learn from because they have walked the road you are walking on now. It is someone you can have regular discussions with.

A mentor in a Christian setting is someone you can pray with, and someone who prays for you.

We can also learn from great leaders in history. Jesus was the greatest of these. We can search the past to make a difference in the future.

1. What is a mentor?
2. If you were a team leader of a sports team, what kind of person would you choose for your mentor?
3. If you were a Sunday School teacher, who would you choose for your mentor? Why would you choose this person?
4. What can we learn from Jesus as a leader?
5. Name another person in history that we can learn leadership skills from. Why was this person a good leader?



## Leadership 7

### Leaders need to train up new leaders.

If you are a leader, don't try to do all the work yourself, even if you think you can do the job better. Give your team freedom and control to make decisions.

There should be clear roles of leaders and team members. Team members should know who their leaders are and respect them. This is team work.

A leader can choose and train new leaders who can be responsible for different areas of the project. The new leaders can lead smaller teams, each with a specific task. This is called 'delegating' responsibility.

Imagine that your church is running an after-school kid's club program. You have been put in charge. Ten people have volunteered to help run the program.

1. Draw up a survey form for the ten volunteers to find out in what areas they think they could help.
2. Make a list of ten imaginary people and next to their names write their skills that could be useful in running a kid's club.
3. If you have three people who like to do arts and crafts, how would you organize their involvement?
4. What is the meaning of the word 'delegate'?



## Leadership 8

### Leaders need to encourage their team.

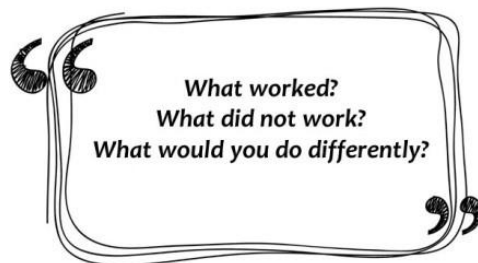
A leader should give the team feedback. Feedback can be positive or negative.

Positive feedback is praise for an effort well done. People like to be thanked for their efforts, and like to be told that they have done a good job. After an event, it is good to have a discussion on how everyone thinks the project went. A leader can encourage discussion.

Sometimes negative feedback might be necessary concerning particular issues. A leader will give information on what needs improvement. The leader should allow the team to give their ideas and opinions on how the direction of the work on the project could have been improved.

Allowing the team to talk about their successes and failure is better than straight out criticism from the leader. This only puts people on the defensive and they won't open up. If things go wrong, it's better to talk to team members and find out *why* things went wrong, rather than just "dumping" criticism on them.

1. You are the director of a dance performance. The performance has been a great success. What will you do to encourage your dance group?
2. You are the captain of a sports team that has lost three games in a row. What will you do?



## Leadership 9

### A leader has to show humility.

Jesus washed the disciples' feet. He walked on dusty roads from town to town, healing people and helping people. As a leader, He was an example to the disciples and us. He didn't make Himself great, even though He was.

A leader is a servant. The leader aims to reach the goal God's way, as a service to God. He wants to reach the goal by encouraging the gifts, knowledge and skills of the whole team. The goal for the leader is not to make himself look great, but to serve God and others. The leader must be willing to do the lowly jobs, the hard jobs, the jobs that no one notices.

A leader must have the courage to take risks, even if it means he doesn't look good if he fails. He must admit when he is wrong and be open and honest with his team. This is humility.

1. Write out this Bible verse: Matthew 20:26.
2. If you are leading a group of young people on a camping trip, what are some of the serving jobs you might have to do?
3. Why might you have to do some of these jobs?
4. When might a leader have to take a risk?
5. What should a leader do if the project fails?



## Leadership 10

### A leader must prioritize.

To prioritize means to do the most important things first and the least important things last. It could also mean to use most of the money on the most important things and less money on the least important things. This is good management.

A leader must look at the big picture and think about which jobs are most important, which jobs should take up the most time, money and energy. A leader should put first things first and not get bogged down in the less important details.

1. If you were prime minister, list 5 areas that you would see as being most important for spending taxpayer's money.
2. Your family is expecting visitors for dinner in half an hour. The house is a mess. There are children's toys on the floor, dishes unwashed, dinner unprepared, the baby is crying and your three-year old has tipped out the cat food and is eating it. Mum has asked you to take care of everything except for the dinner which she is about to cook. There is only you and your sister to do the work. Make a list of the jobs, starting from the most important to the least important, and who will do them.



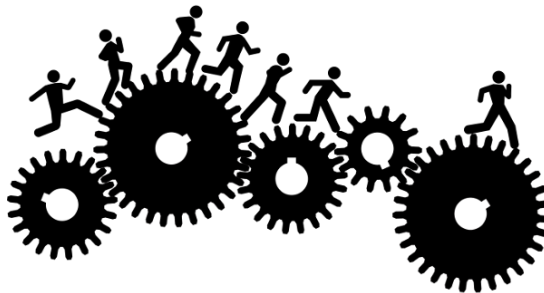


## Leadership 11

### Attributes of a good leader

- Modeling (by example)
- Instructing
- Encouraging
- Evaluating
- Developing gifts of team members
- Humility

1. List these attributes. After each one, explain how a good leader would put the attributes into practice.
2. Read Phil 2:5-11. What does this tell us about the leadership of Jesus?



## Leadership 12

### Seven things a leader should not do

- Dominate
  - Put others down
  - Threaten (*"if you don't do this I will..."*)
  - Avoid an issue that needs discussion
  - Compete with others
  - Treat people like objects
  - Show favouritism
1. Make a list of the seven. After each one, explain why a good leader would not do these things.
  2. Name a leader in history that practiced these things and brought about disaster. What were the consequences?



## Leadership Styles

### A. A Dictatorial Authoritarian Leader

This is a leader who:

1. shows their own authority and power; dictates by telling people what to do; disciplines by punishing people if they don't do what they are told or don't do things the leader's way, or don't do things properly
2. is very strict
3. is more concerned with work and time and systems rather than how people are feeling.

Some countries are governed by dictators; people who come into power backed by the army and who make laws without an elected government. They are not elected by the people, so the people have no say in deciding what rules they would like to govern their society.

Do you know any countries ruled by a dictator? Would you like to be ruled by a dictator?

A benevolent dictator is one who is not elected by the people and who has 'absolute power', but who is kind and good to the people they rule over. We could say that God is a 'benevolent dictator'.

A teacher is also a benevolent dictator. They have authority, but they rule over the classroom in a way that benefits the students.

### B. A Democratic Leader

A democratic leader is one who:

1. Likes to call meetings of the people involved in a task before they start work;
2. Asks peoples' opinions and Listens carefully to what others suggest;
3. Thinks of everyone else as equal, even though they lead others;
4. Believes that everyone has a right to an equal say in decision-making, and an equal share in any reward, profit or benefit; and,
5. Waits to make a decision until all or most people are in agreement.

Name countries that have democratically elected governments (All Commonwealth countries for example)

How do we elect a democratic government? (By voting)

### C. Laissez-faire Leadership

This style of leadership:

1. Allows people a lot of freedom to make their own decisions;
2. Doesn't make too many rules or laws;
3. Doesn't necessarily try to get people to agree (as in democracy) but is happy for everyone to do their own thing.

### Questions

1. What leadership style would your teacher be using if they:

a) appointed a class prefect

b) asked the students to choose a class prefect; or,

c) didn't appoint any prefects but allowed the students to make their own rules and do what they liked.

2. What styles of leadership were operating in Acts 6:1-5? Acts 8:26-27?

# Dictators

1. **Herod** was the king who ordered the slaughter of the innocents. Jesus could have perished but Mt 2:13 records what happened to change this possible outcome. Herod could not accept any rivals and was like modern dictators. King Herod tried to impress the Jews in his reconstruction of the temple, but it was obvious to everyone that he was a Roman puppet. He ruthlessly killed some of his own wives and children. Herod is thought to have died in Jericho about a year after Jesus parents hid him in Egypt.
2. **President Idi Armin** took control of Uganda. He had the former prime minister and chief justice killed along with up to 500 000 of his citizens. He martyred Archbishop Joseph Mubiru as well as many brave Christians. Armin took the properties of Indian citizens as well as pushing Europeans to leave the nation. His policies and reign of terror were disastrous for the nation and its economy.
3. **Augusto Pinochet** was president of the Junta, which overthrew the elected government of Chile. He made his opponents “disappear” and imprisoned and tortured many other pro-democracy Chileans. He moved into secret bank accounts vast amounts of wealth. The president kept a brutal control of the country and caused many to flee to other nations.
4. **Mao Zedong** gained control of all of China after world war two. Tens of millions of people died due to his policies. He helped modernize China but at a horrific cost in human suffering. Mao hated the Christians and persecuted the church. He created a personality cult, which meant he was all but worshipped. A book of his writings was thought of as being Bible like in its teachings and literary value.
5. **Queen Jezebel** was from Phoenicia and a devoted follower of the god Baal. She married the Jewish king and led the nation into the practice of fertility cults. Her ways of leading were ruthless and violent. Jezebel was keen to kill Elijah after he won the contest on Mt Carmel. She failed in this and was eventually thrown from a height in all her finery to have her body ravaged by dogs.

## Activities

- a) Make a list of the attributes common to these rulers.
- b) Look at the current world news. Are there leaders acting in the ways of dictators through the ages? Explain your answer.
- c) What do you think changes a young man or woman from being a regular person doing relatively normal things to go through transformation becoming a brutal ruler?
- d) Read the following and consider what a Christian should do if in government or in the public service advising and serving the government.

Proverbs 8:15, 16, says that governments should use wisdom to rule and to make laws that are just. Proverbs 17:7 says governments should not lie. Proverbs 20:26 says wise presidents always try to punish the wicked. Proverbs 28:2-4 and 29:4 urge government to maintain order justly, to follow God's moral code and to avoid oppressing the poor. Romans 13:3-6 and 1 Peter 2:13-15 say that government officials, are ministers and servants of God who punish and restrain criminals, and commend those who do good works according to God's moral code. Deuteronomy 16:18-20 records Moses as saying of government that the people should do the following:

“Appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes in every town the Lord your God is giving you, and they shall judge the people fairly. Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you.”

List the attributes of a government that is following the spirit of what the Bible reveals as being good government.

- e) Paul extended his life by appealing to the Roman authorities, and the hated Roman army when the Jewish leaders were trying to have him killed. Is it legitimate then to work with despots and their police and army or should Christians oppose them in every way and have no dealings with any organisations related to the despot? Daniel and Joseph both supported, in a loyal way, tyrants. Answer in a way that explains your response.
- f) Jesus lived in a country ruled by an alien invader. He faced the corrupt religious leaders, Roman army and Herod the tyrant. How did He resist their authority and in what ways did he defer to their power?
- g) “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely,” wrote Lord Acton, in a letter to Bishop Creighton in 1887. Explain what Acton meant and then write a list of arguments in support of the idea. Then list arguments against it. Is political power evil in its very nature?
- h) William Wilberforce was in the UK parliament and for 20 years he waged a tireless campaign to end slavery. What characteristics are necessary for a person to use political power successfully to change a nation and eventually the world as Wilberforce did?
- i) Jesus could have come to earth as a triumphant political leader. He could have paraded into Jerusalem on a stallion with an army behind him. He could have chosen his disciples to be brilliant economists, publicity officers, lawyers, bankers, military generals, civic leaders, academics and celebrities.

How then did God set up the most significant and powerful organization in history?  
How does /did God use power and influence in ways that are different to most modern politicians?