A GENRE ANALYSIS OF THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS AS IT RELATES TO KELLEY’S FOLLOWERSHIP TYPES

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Genre analysis, as an investigative tool, examines and applies passages of Scripture based on the type of literature. Luke 19:11-27 is a parable genre and as such, is suited for contemporary application of leadership because of the genre’s multiple layers of meaning, the intersection of the spiritual and secular, and the use of the listener as a participant. Through Jesus’s presentation of the parable genre’s characteristics of major and minor points, earthiness, and listener-relatedness, Luke 19:11-27 relates to contemporary leadership and followership. Further, the parable of the pound’s characters outlines the followership types presented by Kelley (1992). The three slaves, the bystanders, and the citizens in the parable of the pounds all represent Kelley’s followership types as revealed through the Biblical descriptions and the research. However, the parable of the pounds describes an additional followership type not presented by Kelley being the saboteur follower. The parable of the pounds also challenges Kelley’s assumptions about the goodwill of followers in the dyadic relationship with leaders. This paper has value in that this is the first paper to use Luke 19:11-27 to refine Kelley’s followership model.

I. INTRODUCTION

The parable of the pounds, as found in Luke 19:11-27, is a passage that relates truth through the use of a story (Nicoll 1942). Specifically, the parable of the pounds deals with the relationship between a leader and follower. Followership is a significant aspect of leadership. The one requirement to be a leader is to have a follower. Further, most leaders were, or continue to be, a follower in some form. There are several different types of followers as developed by Kelley (1992), and the parable of the pounds demonstrates each of these followership styles. The principles that Jesus outlined in Luke 19:11-27 can be applied to organizational leadership. The characteristics of the parable genre appropriately leverage Luke 19:11-27 to convey truths about followership.
Osbourne (2006, 291) contended that the parable genre contains the “most written about” passages in the Bible and is often useful for preaching. TeSelle (1974, 630) argued that parables unite the “ordinary” with the “extraordinary” through “language, belief, and life”. The purpose of a parable is found in Mark 4:11-12 which states,

He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that, “they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!” (NIV)

Osbourne (2006) interpreted this passage to mean that Jesus utilized the form of a parable to communicate heavenly truths to earthly listeners and encourage the listener to become engaged in the parable itself. TeSelle (1974) confirmed this conclusion by stating that the parable genre uses secular facts to impart religious truths.

II. METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this exegetical study, this paper will utilize a genre analysis by examining the characteristics of the parable genre. An examination of these characteristics will reveal the organizational leadership theories within the text. The parable form is valuable for discovering hidden leadership truths. TeSelle (1974, 632) argued that the parable genre is “thick” with meaning and the reader discovers more lessons beyond the superficial and easily observable. Further, TeSelle (1974) described the parabolic tradition as a combination of the religious and the secular, which transitions the parable of the pounds into the organizational leadership field. Since Jesus delivered this parable, it reveals Jesus’s perspective on leadership and followership.

A genre analysis is a useful hermeneutical technique which uses the passage’s literary function as a way of understanding and interpreting the Biblical text. An analysis of the characteristics of the parable genre may reveal organizational leadership principles and application. The first part of this paper analyzes the parable genre’s characteristics as it applies to the parable of the pounds presented in Luke 19:11-27. Through an examination of the passage in conjunction with relevant research, Luke 19:11-27 is revealed as a parable. This paper also investigates and reveals how the characteristics of the parable genre distinctly relate ancient truths to modern theories. In the second section of the paper, the genre’s characteristics enlighten the application of Scripture to contemporary leadership theories, namely followership. The characters within the parable represent distinctive followership types as demonstrated through the passage.

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF PARABLES

The characteristics of a parable are earthiness, conciseness, repetition, conclusion, listener-relatedness, reversal of expectations, kingdom-centered eschatology, kingdom ethics, and God and salvation, and major and minor points (Osborne 2006). An analysis of each characteristic reveals that Luke 19:11-27 is a
parable. Further, the characteristics of a parable make the passage applicable to contemporary organizational leadership.

*Earthiness*

The first characteristic of a parable, earthiness, refers to secular or worldly images (Osborne 1999; Kostenberger and Patterson 2011). TeSelle (1974) found that the listener was not removed from the secular world when hearing a parable, but rather entered a two-dimensional world of both the secular and religious. When articulating a parable, Jesus often used “pictures from home life” so that the ancient listener comprehended and understood the story (Osborne 2006, 296). This technique is reflected in the parable of the pounds.

Van Eck (2011a) framed the parable of the pounds in light of 30 CE Palestine. Van Eck (2011a) identified the patron-client relationships, stratification between the rich and poor, and varied social classes in the parable of the pounds found in the Roman Empire. Van Eck (2011a) described the historical framework for the parable as the listener understood it. In the first century, Rome ruled Palestine via a tributary system (Benson 1846). The elite brought gifts to Rome in an attempt to earn favor and be granted land and nobility (Braun 2012). The gifts presented by the elite were earned by taxing the peasantry (Van Eck 2011a). The Herodian dynasty depended on Rome for ruling power and granting of kingdoms (Benson 1864). The historian Josephus even documented a specific case where Archelaus traveled to Rome to request a kingdom and took control of the government (Dempster 1999; Van Eck 2011b). A delegation of 50 citizens also traveled to Rome to oppose the appointment of Archelaus (Dempster 1999; Van Eck 2011b). Barnes (1962) documented two other occasions when Herod the Great and Agrippa (the grandson of Herod the Great) travelled to Rome to obtain the favor and confirmation of the government. Therefore, a noble who left his home to seek a kingship only to return to take the earnings of slaves was a familiar framework to the ancient listener.

Further, Jesus used worldly references, such as the *mina*, which was a menial monetary form with the approximate value of 100 days’ wages for an unskilled laborer (Vinson 2008). Nicoll (1942) argued that the small amount proved to be a better test of the slave’s business acumen. This monetary amount reflected the statement made in v. 17 that the slave was faithful in a small matter. Jesus’ description of the mina in the passage demonstrates the mina was small enough to be wrapped in a cloth (Gilmour 1980). The tale itself, and the reference to the worldly items, demonstrates the story’s earthiness and satisfies the first characteristic of the parable genre. The earthiness characteristic relates the parable genre to earthly concepts allowing the listener to apply the principles of the parable of the pounds.

*Conciseness*

Lockyer (1963) showed that the essence of a parable is conciseness, which supports Thiessen’s (1934) findings that the parable of the pounds only contains 286 words. Crossan (1974) argued that it was an essential requirement that a parable embrace brevity. Kostenberger and Patterson (2011) noted that parables are concise in
nature, often only depicting a few characters and plots. There were only a few main characters within the parable of the pounds, which are the nobleman and the three slaves (Dowling 2011). However, even though there are only a few main characters, each character plays a distinct role and is important in terms of contemporary leadership application.

Repetition

According to Osbourne (2006), repetition occurs to highlight the main points within the parable genre and are seen in the repetition of the setting or statements. Parable repetition is inclusive of parallel passages as Osbourne (2006) found repetition in both Matthew 18:12-14 and Luke 15:1-7. Likewise, repetition in the setting is seen through the similarities of Luke 19:11-27, with Matthew 25 being the parable of the talents (Thiessen 1934). Hultgren (2000) recognized several similarities and differences with Matthew 25:14-30. The main theme repeated in both passages is a leader’s entrustment of money to three slaves during a long departure where the leader returned and expected an account of the money (Gilmour 1980). Two slaves were profitable while one slave hoarded the money and was punished for doing so (Gilmour 1980).

There was a repetition of the plot in both Luke 19 and Matthew 25. Snodgrass (2008) found repetition in three other parables, the man going on a journey in Mark 14, the wicked tenants in Matthew 21, and the unfaithful servant in Matthew 24. These three parables address the themes of “entrusted possessions, a master’s absence, and a later reckoning” (Snodgrass 2008, 531). Also, within the parable of the pounds is the repetition of calling forth each of the slaves in v. 16, v. 19, and again in v. 20. The king called for an account of the money and one by one, each slave came before the king with the results. This occurred three times within the passage.

Braun (2012) found repetition in the specific word choice of emprosthen, which was repeated multiple times throughout the passage (447). Emprosten in Greek means “before” or “in front of”, specifically referencing a place or time (Braun 2012, 447). The repetition of this word indicated the location of Jesus when he told this parable, which was outside of Jerusalem prior to Jesus’ entry on a donkey (v. 11, v. 29-34). The parable of the pounds depicts several accounts and forms of repetition.

Conclusion

Jesus often provided a conclusion at the end of each parable in the form of a statement, question, or a direct interpretation (Kostenberger and Patterson 2011). Osbourne (2006, 298) elaborated that the conclusion in the form of a statement is a “terse dictum to conclude a parable”. The terse dictum concluding the parable of the pounds is Jesus’s statement in v. 26 which states “He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away’” (NIV). This conclusion was repeated throughout the New Testament in Mark 4:25, Matthew 25:29, and Luke 8:18 demonstrating repetition even in the conclusion. The conclusion could apply to the main purpose of the parable or to other routine and daily circumstances (Kostenberger and Patterson 2011).
Listener-relatedness

Another characteristic of a parable, listener-relatedness, refers to the concept that a parable is designed to provoke a reaction from the hearers (Osbourne 2006). TeSelle (1974) insisted that the listener became a participant in the story through the uniqueness of the parable genre. In modern terms, the speaker and hearer are the text and reader respectively (Vanhoozer 1998). The participant understands the parable from the individual's point of view and interprets it as such giving credibility to contemporary application of the parable (TeSelle 1974). Pianzin (2008) discovered that listener-relatedness was deeply rooted in the parable of the pounds as the listener hears the parable and is forced to make a decision; specifically, the listener must decide whether the characters’ actions are justified. The parable of the pounds “raises the issue of wicked vs just behavior” presenting two sides in juxtaposition leaving the listener to make a judgement on the moralities of the story and its characters (Weinert 1977, 510). The listener of the parable of the pounds relates to the story and therefore, must apply the morals of the story.

Reversal of Expectations

Borsch (1984) found that the reversal of expectations characteristic is found in most of Jesus’s parables. The reversal of expectations is the way in which Jesus used a parable to surprise or astonish listeners through an “unexpected turn of events” (Osbourne 2006, 299). Borsch (1984, 200) described this characteristic as the “twists and turns” in the parable. The purpose of a reversal of expectations was to force the listener to reexamine the meaning of the parable so as to reveal the heavenly truth (Osborne 2006). Wilder (2014, 80) described the reversal of expectations as a “shock to the imagination.” Vinson’s (2008) analysis of the parable of the pounds showed that the purpose of the parable was to establish a contrast in the listener’s mind before Jesus entered Jerusalem. The reversal of expectations in the parable of the pounds, according to Van Eck (2011a), is the king’s reaction to the third slave. The king was described as a harsh man who reaped what he did not sow, yet the king merely labeled the slave as evil and allowed the slave to leave as found in v. 24. Van Eck (2011a, 8) called this the “surprise in the parable” because it is not expected by the listener. Based on the description of the king and the king’s statements, the listener anticipated the execution of the third slave, however, the third slave was merely rebuked.

Kingdom-centered Eschatology

Kingdom-centered eschatology refers to the presence of the kingdom throughout the parable (Kostenberger and Patterson 2011). A parable is both secular and religious combining the earthly world and the heavenly kingdom (TeSelle 1974). Juza (2016) argued that the purpose of the parable of the pounds is to reveal the truth about the kingdom of God in that it will not appear immediately as many of the ancient listeners believed. Wainwright (1992) echoed Juza’s (2016) interpretation that the Parousia, the second coming, would be delayed. This was an accurate conclusion as observed in v. 11, which states the purpose of telling the parable of the pounds was “because he was
near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once" (NIV). The king in the parable of the pounds is compared to Jesus given that the ruler went away to receive a kingdom wherein the king then returned to the people (Vinson 2008). In this way, the parable was not about God, but about the kingdom of God (Johnson 1982). Thiessen (1934, 181) detailed the kingdom-centered eschatology by revealing the central theme of the parable of the pounds being “the ascension and the return of Christ to set up an earthly kingdom.” This is just as the nobleman went into a far country to receive a kingdom and then returned home as king as depicted in v. 12. The role of the kingdom is a predominant theme in the parable of the pounds.

Kingdom Ethics

Osbourne (2006, 301) defined kingdom ethics as the “higher ethical stance” revealed for Christian followers. Beck (2006, 60) found that a parable can contain “the core vision of his kingdom ethics.” Some of the kingdom ethics revealed in the parables were compassion, the stewardly use of money and resources, and radical followership (Osbourne 2006). These ethics are also revealed in the parable of the pounds. The king demonstrated compassion toward the third slave even though the third slave failed as seen in v. 22-24 (Vinson 2008). The parable of the pounds also highlighted the wise use of money and resources as the two profitable slaves were rewarded and the unproductive slave was punished (Thiessen 1934). Finally, the parable of the pounds emphasized followership as demonstrated by the characters of the three slaves, the bystanders, and the delegation. The parable of the pounds demonstrates kingdom ethics through the virtues of compassion, stewardship, and followership.

God and Salvation

In a parable, God is presented as a king, judge, father, and other forms (Kostenberger and Patterson 2011). These God-like characters offered salvation through forgiveness accompanied by a decision to accept salvation (Osbourne 2006). The salvation message was seen in the parable of the pounds as the king offered grace to the third servant in v. 22-24. Further, Thiessen (1934) argued that the two servants who received cities as rewards were transformed into citizens of the kingdom demonstrating a salvation message. God and salvation are seen in the parable of the pounds through the God character’s salvation framework.

Major and Minor Points

TeSelle (1974) argued that a parable has multiple points to teach about a lesson. A parable is described as a “story [which] has a meaning beyond the story” and is revealed through the details of the parable, such as the characters (TeSelle 1974, 632). Osbourne (2006) suggested that there is a main point, but the reader must also be open to minor points. Bloomberg (1990) argued that there is a point for every character presented and Brown (1962) even suggested that there is a point for every detail within a parable. The emphasis of the slave characters and the function of the pounds presents a second teaching within the parable (Johnson, 1982). The major point of the parable of the pounds is revealed in the section on kingdom-centered eschatology,
however, a minor point of the parable of the pounds is indeed followership as presented by the setting and the characters.

*Parable Genre related to Leadership*

The parable genre is well suited for contemporary leadership application. Osbourne (2006) stated that a parable is indirect and that parables have multiple meanings as demonstrated in the major and minor points of the genre analysis. Even single-point parables have deeper meaning and multiple levels of explanation (Osbourne 2006). The parable of the pounds demonstrates this principle as a deeper meaning is found in the followership types of the characters involved. Scott (1989) asserted that parables are earthly pictures and the reader must interpret the major and minor points. TeSelle (1974) echoed this belief by saying that parables have multiple dimensions in both the spiritual and secular, with leadership application. This highlights the parabolic characteristic of earthiness as the parable genre specifically applies to the secular realm. This genre characteristic of a parable relates the literary biblical message to the earthly narrative of leadership and followership. TeSelle (1974) articulated that the listener of the parable does not discard the secular when becoming religious. This also highlights the characteristic of listener-relatedness. The listener of the parable becomes an active participant and as such, must apply that information in daily life. Therefore, the listener of the parable of the pounds must be involved in the message and apply that message to modern life, namely followership. The parable's genre characteristics of earthiness, listener-relatedness, and major and minor points all capture the purpose of relating the ancient text of Luke 19:11-27 to contemporary leadership and followership. The passage is additionally related by the characters.

Osbourne (2006) argued that the characters in the parables are significant. In the parable of the pounds, the followers are revealed as notable, as well as their followership types. Further, the use of the parable genre is applicable in contemporary leadership theory, because parables are unlike other portions of Biblical text in that a parable is not as "time-conditioned" and can have modern applicability (Via 1967, 32). Consequently, this paper will leverage the parable genre to refine Kelley’s (1992) followership model.

**IV. FOLLOWERSHIP**

There are different followership models developed by various researchers. This paper, however, adopts Kelly’s (1992) followership model because Kelley treated followership as a collaboration between leader and follower, just as this parable views the characters in relation to the king through the patron-client relationship. Previous definitions of followership often define followership in companionship with leadership indicating that this process is relational (Crossman and Crossman, 2017). However, this paper presents a broad view of followership operationally defining the construct as anyone who is influenced by a leader (Yukl 2013). This includes subordinates, employees, or other members who are affected by another regardless of strict hierarchal authority. Kelley (1992) identified five types of followers based on a two-dimensional taxonomy of critical thinking and engagement. Critical thinking describes
independent thought, while uncritical thinking depicts a lack of innovation and dependency (Kelley 1992). Active engagement describes behaviors where the individual takes initiative and energetically participates, while passive engagement defines slothful, lazy, or otherwise non-participatory followers (Kelley 1992).

The five types of followers are alienated, exemplary, passive, conformist, and pragmatist (Kelley 1992). An alienated follower employs critical thinking however, they are passive in engagement (Kelley, 1992). An exemplary follower is both active and critical thinking (Kelley 1992). According to Kelley (1992), a passive follower is not actively engaged and does not utilize critical thinking. A conformist follower is active yet does not critically think (Kelley 1992). Finally, a pragmatist follower falls within the middle of the scale on both engagement and critical thinking (Kelley 1992). Each follower type, as will be shown, is present within the parable of the pounds. Additionally, this paper refines Kelley’s (1992) followership model and expands the knowledge of dyadic relationships between follower and leader as presented by Jesus.

There are several followers identified in the passage which are the citizens, the delegation, slave one, slave two, slave three, and the bystanders. An examination of the parabolic followers reveals the followership types, which aligned with Kelley’s (1992) followership model. The followership style of the characters is determined based on the description of the characters in the Biblical text and also in the research.

**Slave One**

Thiessen (1934) argued that the nobleman tested the slaves as evidenced by the negligible monetary amount, and Smith and Scales (2013) argued that the purpose of the test was to measure both the loyalty and capacity of the slaves. The nobleman entrusted the slaves with a small task to determine their fitness to rule other cities (Thiessen 1934). As such, the slaves were rewarded based on their diligence. The slaves were not reward based on the monetary return, but rather, the slaves were rewarded because of their loyalty as demonstrated by the return (Smith and Scales, 2013). Slave one and two shared similar descriptions by researchers. Van Eck (2011a) described the first and second slave as faithful, watchful, stewardly, graceful, trustful, accountable, bold, and fulfilled the expectations of the nobleman. Schultz (2007) described the first and second slave as trustworthy and faithful.

Vinson (2008) specifically addressed slave one by arguing that it took savvy and patience to make a return of 1000%. This slave was the most faithful as evidenced through the high return and as such, he was verbally rewarded with a “well done, my good servant” by the king in v. 17 (Schultz 2007; NIV). Further, this slave was most accountable above the other slaves with the entrusted coin, so the third slave’s coin was given to the first slave in v. 24 (Schultz 2007). The first slave demonstrated active engagement in fulfilling the leader’s order of “put this money to work” (v. 13, NIV). Further, Vinson (2008) noted that it was time-consuming and difficult to achieve a 1000% return; therefore, the first slave utilized independent and critical thinking to achieve the goal outlined by the leader. Slave one is an example of an exemplary follower. Exemplary followers are innovative, autonomous, and apply their skills to the advantage of the organization, as demonstrated by the first slave in his patience and ability to make such a large return (Kelley 1992). Exemplary followers are crucial to
organizational success, which is why the nobleman granted the first slave dominion over ten cities (Kelley 1992).

**Slave Two**

The second slave did not generate a return as high as slave one and stated that “he only increased his stake five-fold” and as a result, “gets no atta-boy” (Vinson 2008, 75); rather, the rewards were proportional to the invested return (Lin and Vanderlin, 2006). Nicoll (1942) suggested that the second slave received “half as much, implying less capacity, diligence, [and] conscientiousness”. The difference between the first slave and second slave was a contrast in ability, therefore, the reward was reflective of this standard (Schultz 2007). The nobleman gave each of the slaves the same monetary amount, and, therefore, each slave was rewarded correspondingly based on the return, which explains why the first slave received a more substantial reward than the second slave (Benson 1846). The second slave was an active participant in the nobleman’s vision and was accordingly actively engaged, yet the second slave did not utilize critical thinking to develop a return close to the first slave’s return. Nicoll (1942) stated that the second slave was “deemed trustworthy, but of less capacity.” The second slave was a conformist follower who was dedicated to the leader and active in following the nobleman’s direction; however, this slave did not critically evaluate how to achieve those ends (Kelley 1992). The second slave possessed one of the valued dimensions of an exemplary follower. However, the second slave must also engage in critical thinking to become an exemplary follower (Kelley 1992).

**Slave Three**

The character of the third slave was immediately realized by the ancient listener through the introduction of the third slave in v. 20. Jesus introduced and described the third slave as another or *heteros*, which means “another of a completely different sort” demonstrating the instant contrast between slave one and slave two with the third slave (Rydelnik and Vanlaningham 2014, 1588). Smith and Scales (2013) described the third slave as having a fear of failure, playing it safe, and making excuses. Also, the third slave protested against the instruction of the nobleman (Van Eck 2011a). Burying money beneath a house or structure was common in the ancient Palestinian world, according to Vinson (2008), however, wrapping a coin in a cloth was viewed as careless as was done by the third slave. Thiessen (1934) found the third slave was not a true believer, while Rydelnik and Vanlaningham (2014) described the third slave as a counterfeit follower.

Further, the third slave was irresponsible because the slave directly ignored the clear guidance the nobleman gave the slaves prior to departing in that they were to do business and “put this money to work” while the nobleman was away (v. 13, NIV; Smith and Scales, 2013). Vinson (2008) reasoned that the third slave buried the money out of fear and characterized the third slave as unprofitable, unproductive, and careless, stating that the third slave made a poor choice. If the slave really believed the accusations leveled against the nobleman, the slave should have attempted to mitigate the nobleman’s wrath by giving the coin to the money-lenders to make a marginal profit.
as the nobleman argued in v. 23 (Vinson 2008). Schultz (2007) agreed with this sentiment by saying that the third slave’s actions were contradictory to the statements and thus, the slave was judged by that standard. The slave’s statements were further disproved by the nobleman’s actions because the actions of the nobleman were just (Schultz 2007). It is not merely the lack of return by the third slave, but also the attitude of the third slave in response to the nobleman that demonstrates the third slave’s character (Smith and Scales, 2013). Dowling (2016) called the third slave inactive and disobedient of the master’s order to trade the coin by wrapping the coin in a cloth and Braun (2012) depicted the third slave as lazy with a lack of vigilance.

The third slave acted passively as found by Dowling (2016) and others. However, the third slave did use critical thinking in that the third slave could articulate the character of the nobleman and the consequences of the decision to wrap the coin in a cloth; nonetheless, the third slave’s passive nature caused the slave to take no action to prevent those consequences as found by Vinson (2008) and Schultz (2007). The third slave is an alienated follower. An alienated follower is vocal in their challenge of the leader and critical against the leader’s goals as demonstrated by the third slave in v. 21 (Kelley 1992). An alienated follower is cynical and does not apply their best efforts as seen when the third slave criticized the leader’s honor in public in v. 21. Perhaps most telling is that the third slave acted as if his actions were justifiable. This response by the third slave portrays Kelley’s (1992) findings that alienated followers often have a higher self-opinion than the leader’s perception of the follower. Alienated followers can be hazardous to an organization, however, one potential solution for this type of follower is presented in the parable of the pounds. The nobleman removed all responsibility from the third slave and denied the slave any potential for future leadership over a city (Johnson, 1982). It might be best for the organization to remove all responsibility and leadership from an alienated follower. The third slave perfectly depicts an alienated follower by using critical thinking but acting passively.

The Citizens

The character of the citizens is mentioned in v. 14. Dowling (2016) argued that the phrase hoi politai autoi is an unqualified definite article, which indicates that it was every citizen who hated the nobleman (40). Nicoll (1942) suggested that the hate was indicative of either something wrong with the nobleman or something wrong with the citizens. It is unknown why the citizens hated the nobleman, as the nobleman was not accused of a crime or neglect; however, the offense could have stemmed from the relationship between the two groups (Benson 1846). Van Eck (2011a) described the relationship between the nobleman and the citizens through social stratification because of the agrarian society ruled by the nobleman. According to Van Eck (2011a), there were multiple ways for the citizenry to protest and resist. One such method was the “hidden transcript” or a coded form of speech that undermined the rule of the nobles (Reed 2006, 100). Additionally, citizens protested by slowing down or dragging their feet (Van Eck 2011a). However, the parable of the pounds did not mention this behavior by the citizens. This demonstrated that the citizens disapproved of the nobleman yet as a group, did nothing to prevent the appointment of the nobleman to king, because the peasantry depended on the ruling nobleman for protection and power (Van Eck 2011a).
The citizens were passive in their engagement and dependent on the nobleman. Although the citizens disapproved of the nobleman, the parable of the pounds did not show that the citizenry articulated this disapproval. The citizens represent passive followers in that they were not engaged and uncritical. Passive followers are dependent on the leader for decision making and rarely attempt new things as evident by the actions of the peasantry in the parable of the pounds (Kelley 1992; Van Eck 2011a). Just as the peasants, passive followers do not journey beyond their role (Kelley 1992). The citizens represent passive engagement and uncritical thinking as passive followers (Kelley 1992).

The Bystanders

The bystanders were additional characters presented at the end of the pericope. Schultz (2007) speculated that the bystanders were the other seven servants mentioned in the passage in v. 13 awaiting to give an account to the king. The bystanders did not interject until the end of the pericope leaving the nobleman to decide the fate of the first and second slave without protest. It was not until the treatment of the third slave that the bystanders interjected. Ellicott (2015) noted that the bystander’s interjection was not included in the story for dramatic flair but rather to show the marvel or indignation of the punishment of the third slave. Van Eck (2011a) and Downing (2016) described the bystanders as protesting the decision of the nobleman, while Braun (2012) characterized the bystanders as complainers. The actions and descriptions of the bystanders indicates that the group was neither active nor passive within the passage. When the bystanders did eventually interject, they spoke the truth in a logical manner however, the bystanders did not fully consider that the coin belonged to the nobleman and was given at the king’s leisure. This demonstrated a marginal ability to critically think. Further, once the king responded to the bystanders, the bystanders did not speak again. The bystanders were neither active nor passive and neither critical thinking nor uncritical thinking, which categorized the bystanders as pragmatic followers (Kelley 1992).

Pragmatic followers are seldom dedicated to group goals, but also avoid conflict as demonstrated by the lack of involvement of the bystanders during the interaction between the nobleman and slave one and slave two (Kelley 1992). Pragmatic followers are mediocre employees and ambiguous when making decisions, which the bystanders represented when confronted with conflict from the king in v. 25-26 (Kelley 1992). Although the bystanders initially challenged the king in v. 25, none of the bystanders were willing to make a decision to continue conflict with the king. The bystanders were pragmatic followers as demonstrated by their insignificant engagement and undistinguished critical thinking.

The Delegation

Kelley’s (1992) followership model identified five followership types, however, there is an additional followership style found in the parable of the pounds reflected in the delegation. The delegation attempted to obstruct the nobleman’s appointment to king. The delegation was active in their involvement, because they took extensive steps
by travelling to a faraway land and petitioning the ruler to block the nobleman’s request, as found in v. 14. The delegation also demonstrated critical thinking by representing the citizenry and developing an argument against the nobleman’s appointment, as seen in v. 14.

Weinert (1977) described the characters that comprised the delegation as acting with hostility to the nobleman, threatening the nobleman’s goals, and disloyal to the leader. The punishment issued in v. 27 was a reflection of the “gravity of their offense and the futility of their effort” (Weinert 1977, 507). Weinert (1977) labeled the delegation as rebellious with wicked character, which addressed the delegation’s intent as toxic to the leader. The relationship between the nobleman and the delegation demonstrated a betrayal that was personal in nature (Weinert 1977). This was because the delegation was comprised of fellow countrymen whose opposition and hate were solely against the nobleman as an individual and not against the position as king (Meyer 1883). The delegation was “motivated by personal antagonism” (Weinert 1977, 511). The delegation betrayed the nobleman by clandestinely following after him and striking at him from a distance (Weinert 1977). This followership style is best depicted as a saboteur follower. A saboteur follower is both active in behaviors and critical in thinking. Kelley (1992) described an active and critical follower as an exemplar because Kelley assumed that a follower’s intentions are to benefit the leader, however, this is not always the case as demonstrated by the delegation who had detrimental intentions for the leader.

Ivancevich, Konopaske, and Matteson (2014) cautioned that acts of sabotage within the workplace continue to rise, and Yukl (2013, 9) described negative follower actions as “sabotage of equipment or facilities.” Ivancevich et al. (2014) applied sabotage to the person as well, saying that sabotaging people include damaging a career or reputation, such as the delegation attempted to accomplish in v. 14. Further, Analoui (1995) found that saboteurs predominantly choose to act covertly rather than overtly indicating clandestine behaviors. The saboteur follower could further Kelley’s (1992) followership model as this type of behavior continues to increase.

The parable of the pounds depicted a saboteur follower with harmful critical thinking and active engagement behaviors, which challenged Kelley’s (1992) assumption that all followers operate with honorable intent in cooperation with the leader. Followers engage in sabotage when there is conflict with the leader’s interests or values (Analoui 1995). All followers do not operate with goodwill toward leaders and the organization, therefore, an additional followership type of the saboteur follower is necessary to develop a robust model of followership. This was best demonstrated by the description of the delegation found in v. 27a labelling the delegation as enemies of the leader (Rydelnik and Vanlaningham 2014). Modern saboteur followers are also enemies to the mission and goals of leaders. The parable of the pounds depicted a saboteur follower as clandestine, hostile to the leader’s mission, damaging to the leader’s vision, and disloyal. Leaders must use caution when dealing with a saboteur follower.
V. CONCLUSION

Luke 19:11-27, as a parable, is useful for imparting leadership truths for modern application. The characteristics of a parable, being earthiness, conciseness, repetition, conclusion, listener-relatedness, reversal of expectations, kingdom-centered eschatology, kingdom ethics, God and salvation, and major and minor points, are beneficial for understanding and applying cross-cultural and ubiquitous followership truths. The characters presented in the parable of the pounds demonstrates various followership styles which Kelley (1992) defined. However, Kelley’s (1992) followership model is refined via Luke 19:11-27 by presenting an additional followership type of the saboteur follower and challenging the assumptions proffered in the model. This paper is significant in that there is no literature relating a parable, namely Luke 19:11-27, to Kelley’s (1992) followership types. This is the first time the parable of the pounds is related to Kelley’s (1992) followership model to both challenge and improve the contemporary understanding of followership.

About the Author

Sarah Rolle and her husband Brian serve as police officers in local law enforcement. Sarah has had tremendous support from her family as she obtained a M.A. in Management and Leadership from Liberty University and is currently a Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership candidate at Regent University. Sarah has received multiple law enforcement awards and her passion is to benefit the law enforcement community.

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