

Follow Me as I Follow Christ

You have probably heard the saying, "To be a good leader, you must be a good follower," and that is true! You can learn from anyone, but the greatest leaders you will know will be genuine **followers** of Jesus Christ and the Word of God. While some will be in the ministry, others will be "lay people" or solid brothers & sisters that have lived a life of following and loving Jesus. Paul boldly said to follow him... **AS** he follows Christ. There is one direction to maturity and that is through following the precepts of the Word of God. Thankfully, in most instances, God gives his people examples to follow - by sending seasoned men and women that have paid the price for the gospel. When there aren't godly examples to follow, God will raise up "somebodies from nobodies" to provide leaders for his people.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 11:1, Hebrews 13:7, 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9

- *Discuss some teachers, mentors and/or leaders you have had in your life (those in ministry and/or not in ministry) and how their walk with Christ has impacted you. Do you believe you can be that example to someone else? Will you pay the price to follow Christ, not just for yourself, but for those that will follow you because of it?*

Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing

As we grow in our understanding of our identity in Christ, God reveals the plans He's prepared for us, and the standards for walking in leadership. We've all been given the ministry of reconciliation (sharing the gospel of Christ) and, we have all been given **unique** gifting and callings. It's **our** responsibility to **find out**, and to **live out** what He has given us to do, with integrity of heart and action. Some don't fulfill everything God has called them to, for various reasons - lack of understanding, fear, little to no relationship with God, lack of priorities, ect.. Others can begin to carry out God's calling for their lives, but lose sight of purpose in the process, producing complacency and lack of endurance. Leaders are those who make their calling and election sure. Then they endure. They continue to Abide in the Vine, and they keep the main thing the main thing.

Scriptures: 2 Peter 1:10-11, 1 Timothy 4:12-16, 1 Timothy 3:1-13

- *Discuss ways to guard your gifting and calling. How can you keep the fire burning and stay passionate while working, and living day to day life?*

A Lifestyle of Godly Leadership - Shining Brightly in this World

The Lord empowers us to live with utmost integrity in all we do and say. Some people will persecute you for living uprightly, while others will **be drawn** into relationship with God through it. They will be drawn to follow you as you follow Christ.

A great gauge of godly leadership is found within one's home. Does your spouse see you authentically following Jesus? What about your children? Paul instructed the church to not have a person in ministry who wasn't able to lead his home well. This can be challenging, but this is an integral part of Christianity. One of the best ways to lead by example is to repent when we are wrong, and for our family to see us make it right. Can you think of more ways to lead your family by example?

From there, our call to leading by example flows into our community, our church, our workplace, our friends, and other places we go. Wherever He has called you, He has placed His mantle **within** and **upon** you, to shine brightly in this world.

Scriptures: Ephesians 5:1-2, Matthew 5:14-16, Colossians 3:23-25

- *How important is integrity in our lifestyle of godly leadership? Do you see yourself as a leader? How has God shone through you to your family, friends, employees, co-workers? How will you let Him do so in the future?*
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Leading in Hardships and Uncertain Times

During uncertain times, people look to their leaders. There is a responsibility on leaders to know how to handle hardships, and tough times. And, if he/she does not immediately know what to do, there is trust that he/she will go to prayer and hear directly from God on the matter.

This requires deep rooted faith and maturity. Paul warned of not putting a novice into ministry. The tests of life, if handled properly, produce strong leaders that will endure in the face of the storm.

Those who lead by example will also lay their lives down, in the good times, and in peril. The cause of Christ has overtaken them, and they are fully sold out to the gospel. Even if it costs them their life!

Scriptures: Genesis 50:19-21, Proverbs 28:1, 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, James 1:2-8

- *As we just read, both Joseph and Paul endured terrible things for the saving of others lives. Would you be willing/prepared to endure suffering for the cause of Christ and souls? Do you count it all joy when you experience various trials? Are you willing to stay with Christ for the long haul, and to grow to maturity in the faith?*
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