

The
FLOW
Adult CURRICULUM

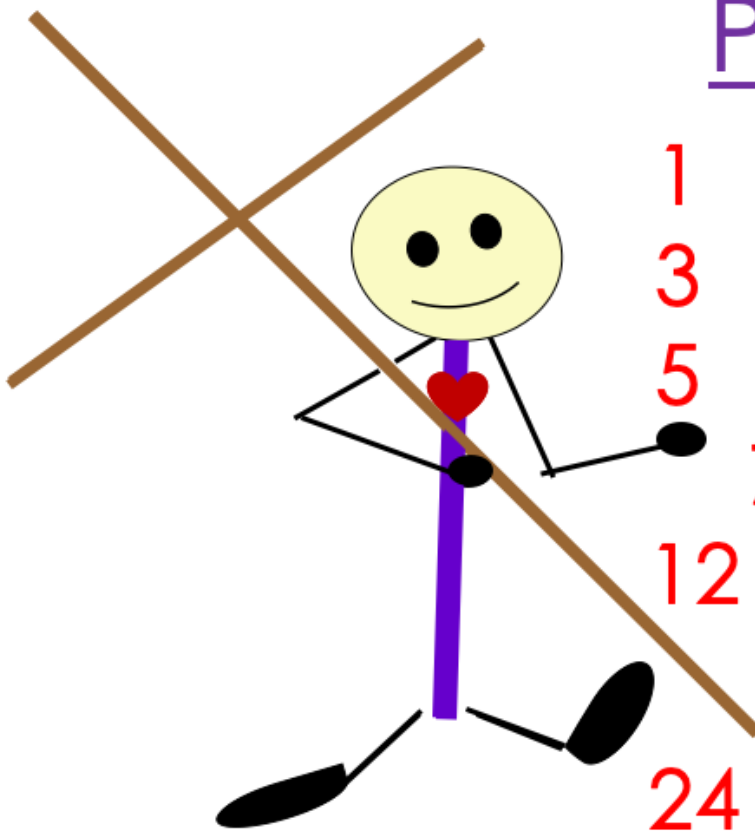
#8

LEADER

Acts 9:10-19

(Come And See Christianity book pages 30-31)

The FLOW

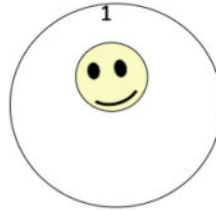


PREVIEW:

- 1 Design
- 3 Divisions
- 5 Disciples
- 7 Details
- 12 Disciplines
- 24 Distinctives

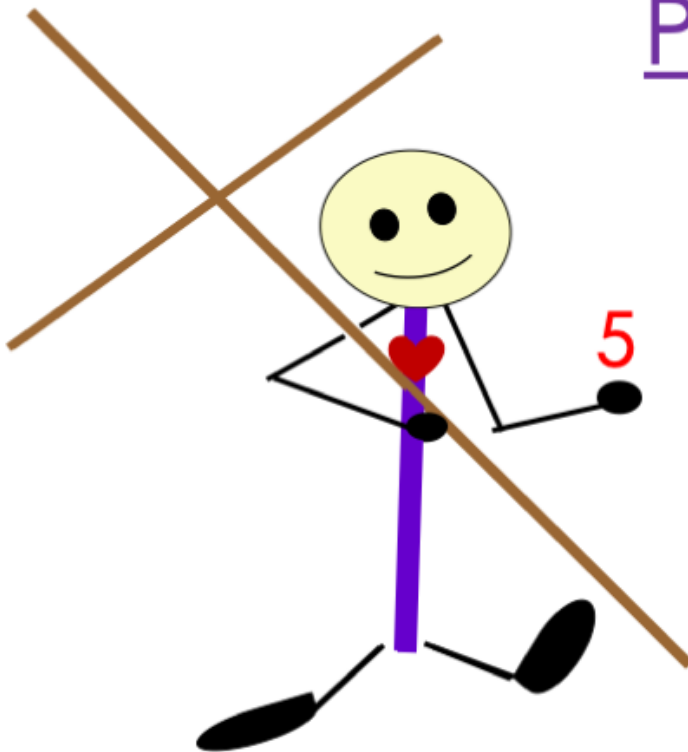
SECTION THREE: 5 Disciples

The
HEAD

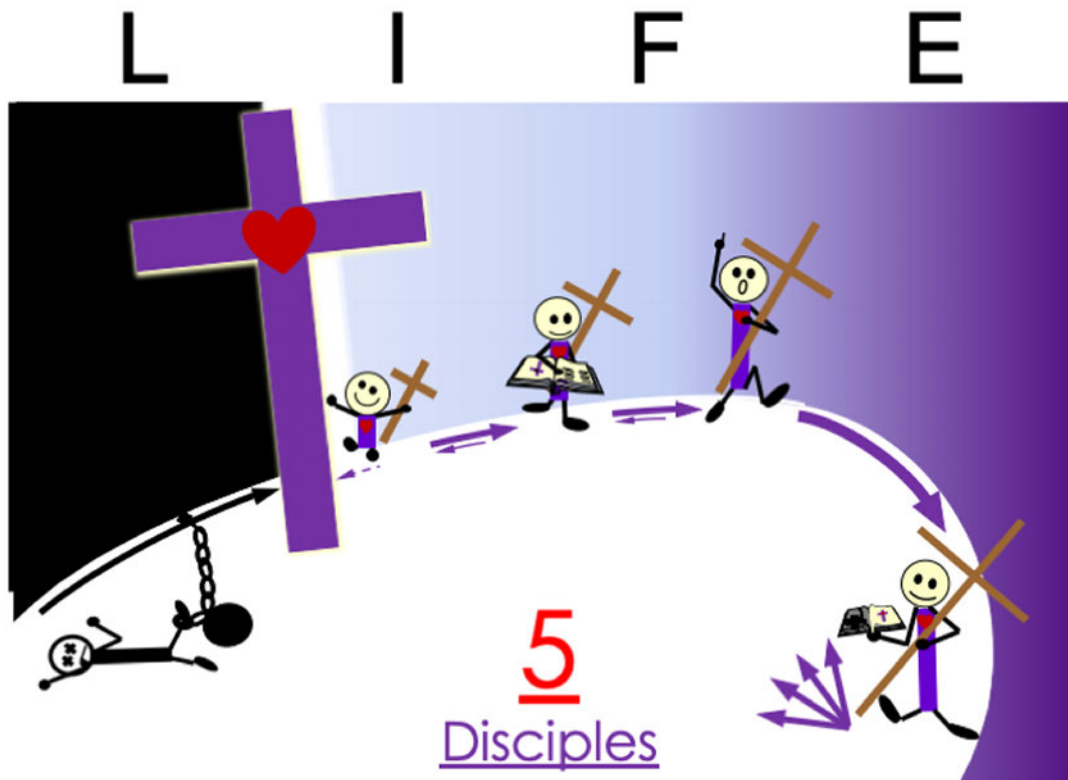


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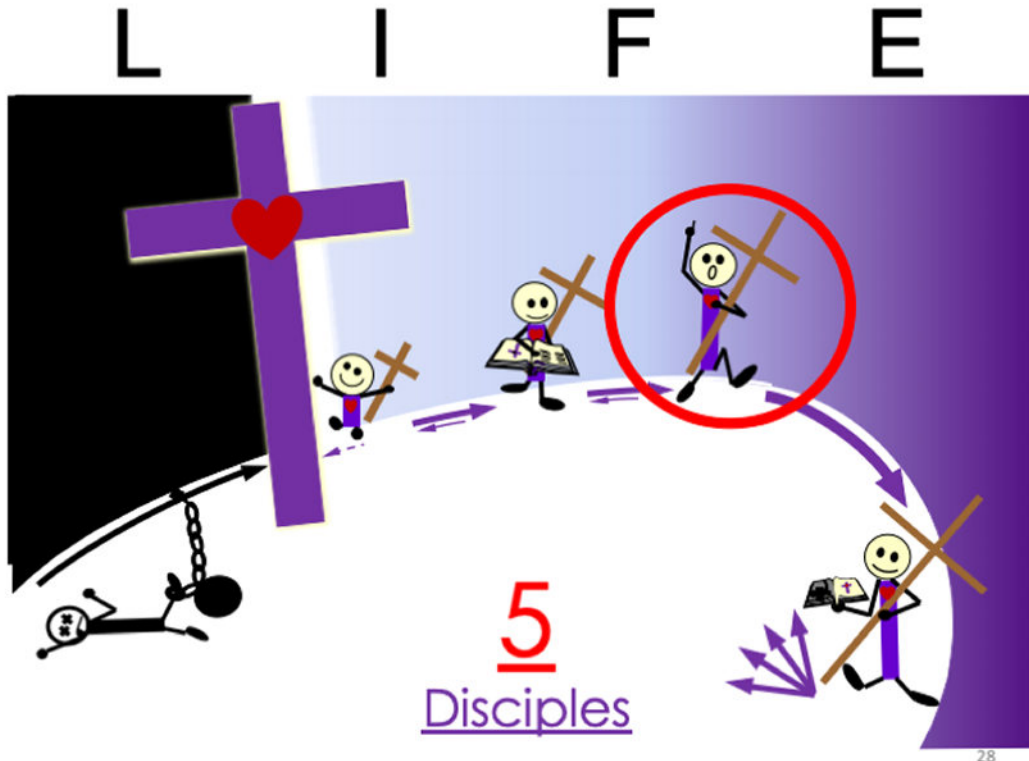
PREVIEW:



5 Disciples



5 DISCIPLES: The world is made up of 5 different types of people (a.k.a. “disciples”). Spiritually speaking, everyone fits somewhere in this biblical & progressive blueprint... Are you amongst the Lost, Lovers, Learners, Leaders, or Lifers?



The
LEADER

A stable, born again, spiritual-adult; a disciple whose DNA & discipleship (both inward & outward) are producing a pattern of missional, Christ-like, servant-oriented, multiplying-fruit, in the context of faithfully following the Lord Jesus Christ... **Leaders** are fishers of men; spiritual pillars, koinonia-championing chaperones; &/or spiritual "parents" in the family of God.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

INTRO:

Welcome back to Section Three, where we are continuing to discuss the “5 Disciples.” Herein we will show where and how Christianity can give an account for EVERY human being... past, present, and future. In other words, Christianity has a valid designation and description for every person, everywhere, throughout all human history. No exceptions. Zero! Moreover, our “Framework” diagram (also known as the “LIFE Cycle” in earlier training materials) offers a user-friendly, visual, and comprehensive tool that aids in the spiritually-defining and missional-placement of each individual on earth. EVERY single person. Bar none.

Having said that, being able to define and describe all of humanity is both valuable and validating for any professing worldview. In the case of Christianity, our worldview is unique, in part, to the extent that we recognize the reality and relationship that exists between the 5 types of disciples who make up the world’s population.

At the risk of overstating the obvious, take note, without a cohesive comprehension of how the people of the world relate to one another, at the core of their humanness, it would be hard to advance, with any viable seriousness, a credible worldview. Fortunately, the God of the Bible has been more than forthright when it comes to engaging and explaining the human condition from birth to burial, from the Garden of Eden to each soul’s eternal destination.

Finally, before we begin, just to be clear, let us briefly review Section One (“1 DESIGN”), Section Two (“3 DIVISIONS” – HEAD, HEART, and HANDS), and how they have begun the “FLOW,” which now cascades down to Section Three and the “5 DISCIPLES.”

Seeing the holistic connection between Come And See Christianity’s FLOW sections is critical for one’s long-term understanding of the definitions and dynamics that make up a biblical worldview AND Christian discipleship. Stated differently, God’s one divine design calls for the sharing of THE Gospel, per God’s Word, will, and ways (a.k.a. a biblical worldview). At the same time, the missional “design” of Almighty God calls for the miraculous transformation of each person’s three core “divisions” – their HEAD, their HEART, and their HANDS. Now we are ready to address humanity in whole.

PRAYER:

LORD, we seek to bless You with all that is within us. Help us here, we pray, to be that blessing as we come to better understand You and Your eternal truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). Help us to see with Your eyes and love with Your love, all that You would reveal to us through Your Word, Your will, and Your ways. May we grow in our grasp of Your realities, Your means of restoration, and Your mission of reproduction. In the holy name of Jesus we pray. Amen and Amen

CONTEXT:

Macro

In our previous lesson, we looked at the third type of the world's five disciples... the LEARNER. By definition, in that study, we realized that God's design calls for all Christians to grow and BE sanctified.

As we begin to focus on the LEADER, it is important to note that everything which defines and describes the LOVER and LEARNER remains in the LEADER. To that end, developing into greater Christ-likeness is the key difference and dynamic at all transitional stages. Consider, in the same way that a baby changes and grows into a teenager, so it is with the baby LOVER who grows into a spiritual adolescent (also known as the LEARNER). Similarly, LEADERS are born when LEARNERS "graduate" and move into their higher privileges and responsibilities. Notice that the growth process, in both the physical AND spiritual examples, can be quite dramatic and very noticeable, while never altering the person's DNA.

Next, it is absolutely essential that the Holy Bible, God's inspired and inerrant (without error) Scriptures, be used, in full context, to define and describe ALL aspects and dynamics that prove to be relevant to our topic. In short, God's Word is both the Almighty's absolute AND authoritative truth. In our study and in our lives, if God said it, that settles it!

Finally... it is important to recognize that any thorough attempt to explain what Christianity means by "saved" must, at the very least, expand upon and explain some foundational, biblical, spiritual, personal, and eternal relationships. For example, there is a need to understand the relationship between Creator God and created man (John 1:1-18); between the Savior of souls and the enemy (1 Peter 5:8) of souls; between the Word of God and the opinions of the world... All of these and more have a part to play when it comes to understanding the cause, affect, grace, and blessings of the LEADER.

NOTE:

When we speak of the four (4) “saved” types of disciples (LOVER, LEARNER, LEADER, & LIFER) in a collective, historical, and global sense; together (in contrast to the LOST), they make up the biblical Christian Church (capital “C” intended). Herein, you will find true and authentic (while still sinful and imperfect) Christianity.

Micro

While the Bible speaks of the capital “C” Church in an “all-Christians” everywhere context, make no mistake, the global-macro family portrait of Christianity is nothing more than a culmination of all the micro, individual, and personal Christians being pooled together as the Church. In other words, biblically speaking, being a LEADER (a.k.a. a “stable, mature, and fruit producing adult” Christian) is a very personal and, by God’s grace, eternal condition. Amen! Consequently, Christ’s best ambassadors personally Engage, Explain, Equip, Empower, and Exemplify Christlikeness when discipling LEADERS (and/or discipling as LEADERS)... always hoping to grow in, while simultaneously helping to share with others, Christianity’s “gospel” (a.k.a. “good news”).

At this point, we would be well served to revisit our “Framework” diagram, which divides all of humanity into 5 specific types of DISCIPLES: the LOST, the LOVER, the LEARNER, the LEADER, and the LIFER. Remember, from our introduction to Section Three, every human being belongs, at any given point in their lives, in ONE of these five DISCIPLE groups, at any given time. Moreover, each person’s positioning is based on their current spiritual relationship to Creator Christ and all that His cross represents.

To be clear... in saying (above) that, “each person’s positioning is based on their current, spiritual relationship to Creator Christ and all that His cross represents,” there are three biblical truths that should be undergirded.

1. “Current” implies that changes can occur... because they can and they should. In short, God’s divine design calls for spiritual growth.
2. Having said that, also note that the spiritual path between the LOST and LOVER only goes one way. The good news is that the “current” LOST can become, by God’s grace, a future “LOVER” (Ephesians 2:1-10). The even better news is that **it is impossible for a born-again LOVER to lose their salvation and go back to being LOST** (cf. John 5:24) – Amen!
3. Finally, the word “current” underscores that we are highlighting and explaining the broad, 5 step, potentially dynamic process of spiritual growth that Christianity reveals. Moreover, in the same way that one can review a physical life from pre-birth, to infancy, to adolescence, to adulthood, to senior citizenship, so it is spiritually when we describe the LOST, the LOVER, the LEARNER, the LEADER, and the LIFER.

Message

Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One who is leading.
- Oswald Chambers

BIG IDEA: **The LEADERS are MATURE and STABLE, fruit producing Christians.**

PREVIEW:

1. The LEADER's VALIDATION
2. The LEADER's MATURATION
3. The LEADER's DEDICATION

The follower is as important as the leader.
- Jack Hyles

TEXT: Acts 9:10-19
Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord"...

1. The LEADER's VALIDATION

Illustration:

In the early days of our church, shortly after we had begun inviting the public to join our worship services (in the local elementary school cafeteria which served as our sanctuary) a self-described "prominent" woman in our community came to me and offered two things: 1). a copy of her book on Christian ministry; and 2). the "blessing of her leading our women's ministry." With a somewhat high-brow, puffed up posture, this woman wanted me to recognize just how gracious she was being with her offer, and how blessed our church would be if her leadership were to be grafted into our ministry.

My immediate response included a cordial, “Thank you, but what we really need is some help with the servant’s work of setting up and tearing down the school each week.” Thinking that I must not have heard or understood her offer, the woman ignored my response and sharply restated her original offer. With an uncomfortably awkward pause and literal replay, I restated my response... to which the woman did not respond. She simply turned at that point and walked out of the school cafeteria.

One might think the story ends there... but it did not. That night I read the woman’s book from cover to cover. Further, I highlighted the entire book with two different colors. Everything (in both colors) that I highlighted was good, sound teaching or encouragement. While much of the book was worthy of reading and helpful, I found the content to be divided into two categories (and now two colors): 1). truths with which I had no cause for questioning; and 2). truths that were solid theologically, BUT, at the same time, truths that her behavior betrayed the day before in our conversation.

Next, the following day, I went to where the woman told me she worked. With her book in my hand, I asked if we could talk in a public but semi-private setting. Before I could say any more, she exclaimed, “Oh! I see you have my book with you... I’m glad to see that you changed your mind and that you have come to take me up on my offer.” In another awkward moment, I said, “No. Thank you again for your offer, but that is not why I have come.” To which she replied, “Oh... Well, then I guess you have come because you want me to sign my book for you.” Again, an awkward pause... followed by, “Thank you. But that is not why I have come. Can we talk about your book in a different setting?” Sadly, there were people beginning to gather around as she sought to make sure that everyone could hear our exchange, for reasons that she assumed would make much of herself.

Seeing my obvious discomfort with our setting, she insisted, “Anything that you want to say or ask of me about my book can be said in front of these people.” Before I could get out another request for a change of scenery, she forcefully restated, just as she had done the day before, what she had just said. At that point, I told her that I had read and highlighted, with two distinct colors and purposes, her entire book the night before. She looked at the book as I flipped through the pages. At that point she proudly gloated, “There is a lot of highlighting in there. You must have liked what you read.” I replied, “Yes. I think that everything I highlighted is excellent.” She then asked about the two colors... I told her that one of the two colors represented my reason for coming and wanting to talk. Understandably, she assumed that I must have had comprehension or application questions with a significant portion of her work.

Here comes our QUALIFICATION lesson for LEADERS...

I again had to say, "No. Unfortunately, that is not why I came to talk. Instead, I want to discuss the contrast between what you wrote in your book (as detailed with this certain color of highlighting) and what you did and displayed yesterday in our conversation – to include your ignoring of my response and request for help in serving." In near shock, she exclaimed, "Hang on! Let me get this straight. You are calling me a hypocrite... You are asking me why I did not do what I wrote?!?" I affirmed, "Yes. Exactly." At that point, our discussion came to a screeching halt as she roared: "This meeting is OVER!" and walked out.

"Take heed to yourselves, lest your example contradict your doctrine,... lest you unsay with your lives what you say with your tongues; and be the greatest hinderers of the success of your own labors."

- Richard Baxter

Explanation:

The very first thing which needs to be said about Christian ministers (LEADERS) of all kinds is that they are "under" people as their servants rather than "over" them. Jesus made this absolutely plain. The chief characteristic of Christian leaders, He insisted, is humility not authority, and gentleness not power.

- John Stott

Tell me not of your justification, unless you have also some marks of sanctification. Boast not of Christ's work for you, unless you can show us the Spirit's work in you.

- J. C. Ryle

Earnest souls who are attempting sanctification by struggle, instead of sanctification by faith, might be spared much humiliation by learning the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount.

- Henry Drummond

The faith which has not a sanctifying influence on the character is no better than the faith of devils. It is a "dead faith, because it is alone."

- J. C. Ryle

*None can know their election but by their conformity to Christ;
for all who are chosen are chosen to sanctification.*

- Matthew Henry

*Those who have been justified are now being sanctified; those who have no
experience of present sanctification have no reason
to suppose they have been justified.*

- F.F. Bruce

Application:

In one sense, every true Christian is a spiritual leader. To the extent that they can lead others to Christ by sharing their personal testimony and The Gospel which saved their soul, they are a light and leader in a dark and lost world.

At the same time, the LEADER in our Come And See Christianity discipleship materials is a bit different. Here, the LEADER is a structural understanding that is based on one's advanced spiritual maturity. Consequently, it is important to measure and assess all potential, acting, and/or professing LEADERS by one standard, their learning, loving, and living of God's Word, will, and ways.

Be blessed in knowing that consistent and stable, biblical Christlikeness, NOT a churchy resume, is the real and righteous QUALIFICATION for biblical LEADERS... no more and no less.

2. The LEADER's MATURATION

Illustration:

*According to Scripture, virtually everything that truly
qualifies a person for leadership is directly
related to character.*

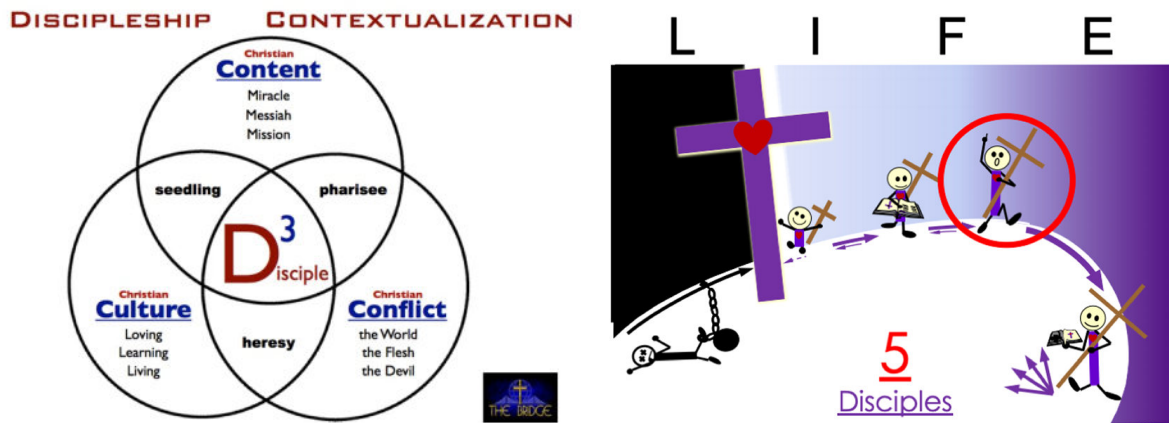
- John MacArthur

Explanation:

Biblical LEADERS are those true Christians who have grown, by God grace and for His glory, through the LOVER and LEARNER stages of spiritual development. Like all followers of Christ, they are far from perfect. Instead, what differentiates them from the LEARNER is their capacity and desire to serve and multiply. Moreover, the LEADER recognizes and attributes their talents, abilities, giftedness, and fruit to the grace and providential workings of Almighty God in them... and through them.

The LEADER's maturing and stable HEAD, HEART, and HANDS can be seen, subtly but importantly, in the FRAMEWORK diagram... To that point, note that the LEADER is placed to the right of the LOST, LOVER, and LEARNER (representing spiritual development). At the same time, notice that unlike the LOST, LOVER, and LEARNER, the LEADER's trajectory is NOT going up. Rather, **there is a horizontal, "pouring out" posture with the LEADER.** Stated differently, the healthy spiritual LEADER realizes that like Christ, they are "not to be served, but to serve and give their lives as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

When we see the Discipleship Contextualization diagram alongside the LEADER's placement in the FRAMEWORK graphic, the holistic nature of spiritual growth begins to make more sense and visually harmonize.



*A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way,
and shows the way.*

- John C. Maxwell

*A true shepherd leads the way.
He does not merely point the way.*

- Leonard Ravenhill

While a study of biblical leadership could consume a lifetime, for our purposes, let us focus on five famous portions of God's Word that can help and serve as inspirational guidelines for LEADERS to know and grow into. In other words, like spiritual adults who live with and look after God's babies, children, and adolescents, when LEADERS are living out the holistic Word, will, and ways of God, they are serving their King and His kingdom, in part, by discipling others through their missional patterns of loving, faithful obedience and inspirational Christlikeness. See and study the following Scriptures as a start to better understanding and recognizing the standards of God and the spiritual signatures and faithful fingerprints of His LEADERS.

- A. Pastoral Epistles: 1st Timothy; 2nd Timothy; & Titus
- B. Fruit of The Spirit: Galatians 5:22-23
- C. The Beatitudes: Matthew 5:2-12
- D. The Love chapter: 1 Corinthians 13
- E. The Full Armor of God: Ephesians 6:10-20

Application:

1 John 3:18

"Let us not love with word and tongue but in action and in truth."

BE the real deal!

3. The LEADER's DEDICATION

Illustration:

The fear of the Lord helps us recognize our accountability to God for the stewardship of leadership. It motivates us to seek the Lord's wisdom and understanding in difficult situations. And it challenges us to give our all to the Lord by serving those we lead with love and humility.

- Paul Chappel

Explanation:

True and healthy Christlike Christian leadership is marked by a number of virtues. One of the most endearing and impactful aspects of the LEADER's character is the commitment levels that he or she consistently upholds. By divine design, the dedication and devotion that LEADERS display in their learning, loving, and living are used by God to inform, inspect, and inspire others.

To that end, through the Holy Spirit's empowerment (Acts 1:8) and the abiding grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 15:4), LEADERS, like good shepherds, courageously serve and sacrifice for their sheep... no matter what! By contrast, selfish "hirelings" tend to have their heartless cowardice exposed when they cut and run in the face of danger and discomfort (John 10:11-12).

LEADERS, a category of mature and missional disciples who come from all walks of life, are like Ananias from Acts 9... They are imperfect yet passionate disciples whose love and devotion lead them to say, "Yes, LORD!" when others tend to grumble and whine, "Why, LORD?"

*A great leader's courage to fulfill his vision
comes from passion, not position.*

- John C. Maxwell

*Experience has taught me that the Shepherd is far more
willing to show His sheep the path than the sheep are
to follow. He is endlessly merciful, patient, tender,
and loving. If we, His stupid and wayward sheep,
really want to be led, we will without fail be led.*

Of that I am sure.

- Elisabeth Elliot

LEADERS lead with a Christlike commitment, character & compassion.

LEADERS love with a Christlike heart that truly longs to help others.

LEADERS live as fully devoted, trusting, zealous disciples of Christ.

LEADERS last... by grace... with faithful passion for God's purposes.

Application:

A spiritual leader will first and foremost, have a calling from God. His work will not be his profession, but his calling.

- Zac Poonen

Leaders must be close enough to relate to others, but far enough ahead to motivate them.

- John C. Maxwell

REVIEW:

**The LEADERS are MATURE and STABLE
fruit producing Christians!**

CLOSE:

Father, make of me a crisis man. Bring those I contact to decision. Let me not be a milepost on a single road; make me a fork, that men must turn one way or another on facing Christ in me.

- Jim Elliot

For What?

The effectiveness of leadership is measured in terms of influence. When you see someone's influence reflected so profoundly in the lives of other people, you have identified someone who is by definition a leader.

- John MacArthur

A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus.

- Martin Luther King Jr.

So What?

*A man who wants to lead the orchestra
must turn his back on the crowd.*

- Max Lucado

Now What?

The chief occupational hazard of leadership is pride.

- John Stott

*It takes more than a busy church, a friendly church, or even
an evangelical church to impact a community for Christ.*

*It must be a church ablaze, led by leaders
who are ablaze for God.*

- Wesley L. Duwel

PRAYER

Dear heavenly Father, thank You so much for the Truth and Love of Your Word, will, and ways. Please help us to absorb and apply ALL that You have shared and commanded in the Bible. May our heads be infilled with Your defining Scriptures, for the express purpose of informing, inspecting, and inspiring our sanctified hearts and serving hands.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen and Amen

Related SERMON:

"God's Great 'YES!' Man" (part 1&2)

Acts 9:10-19

September 2&9, 2007

Sermon Series: Special Messages