

CLI Leadership Bible Study: Lesson 5

How to positively influence the attitudes and actions of others for Jesus Christ

Lesson 5: Leading by Example (Day One) *Good or Bad Example*

After studying about the presence of God in Lesson 4 and living *daily* in His presence, you are ready to lead by example. God is with you and brings happiness and satisfaction as you listen and obey His instructions. Your joy will become more evident to others as you are led by the Holy Spirit and seek to glorify God. This in itself can be a striking example!

Have you ever heard the expression, “Do as I say, not as I do?” It means that I will tell you the right way to behave and you need to obey the rules **but** I am going to behave or act in another way. Similar phrases about actions and words are, “Actions speak louder than words” and “Walk the walk and not just talk the talk.” People watch what we do more than what we say.

Some years ago I went whitewater rafting on the New River in West Virginia. On the bus ride to the river, one of the leaders gave us a set of rules we were to follow. Each raft would have a leader-guide; there would be about six rafts that would follow along together. One of the rules was not to use the paddles to splash another person in your raft or in another raft.

After we had gone through a few of the rapids, we paddled into a calmer part of the river. The other rafts were close to each other at this point and we could all see the occupants of the other rafts. One of the guides started horsing around and good-naturedly used his paddle to splash another in his raft. That opened the flood gates with others in his raft and in the other rafts as well, using their paddles to splash each other. The other leaders and the wayward guide all had difficulty getting everyone under control again.

1. Why did the rafters stop obeying the rules when they saw the example of the leader?

****See end of lesson for repeat of questions and blank spaces for you to write your answers.**

When all the questions have been completed, return your answer sheets to CLI. You may keep this lesson for your own study or review. You may pass it on to another or discard.

2. Did the leader-guide display a good or bad example?

3. Why does what you do, rather than what you say, have a greater impact on people?

In this rafting experience, the people had accepted the guides as their leaders during the excursion (trip). They were willing to follow them and the rules that had been set up for everyone’s enjoyment and safety. However, when the young leader broke the rules, others

decided it must be okay to do the same. After all, if the guide is doing it, then they should be able to do it also.

The wayward guide gave the impression that this was not a rule that mattered; they could disobey this one. This is the same logic or principle that others will use in following your example. Therefore, you have a grave responsibility to keep your example pure so that as others are watching and following you, they are not led into sin (1 Corinthians 10:32-33).

Another reason that what you do has a greater impact on those you are leading is simply because they are *seeing* your behavior. Studies by educational researchers suggest that approximately 83% of human learning occurs visually, and the remaining 17% through the other senses - 11% through hearing, 3.5% through smell, 1% through taste, and 1.5% through touch. In addition, the studies suggest that three days after an event, people retain 10% of what they heard from an oral presentation, 35% from a visual presentation, and 65% from a visual and oral presentation.¹ This means that as a leader, your people will remember what they see you doing long after they have forgotten what you have said.

He had also built high places on the hills of Judah and had caused the people of Jerusalem to prostitute themselves and had led Judah astray. 2 Chronicles 21:11

Definitions: The high places were elevated sites on hills or mountains that were dedicated to worshipping false gods.² An idol is something or someone worshipped other than God. In the Old Testament idols are usually carved images or statues of some kind.

4. Read 2 Chronicles 21:11. What kind of an example did Jehoram, king of Judah, give God's people by building the high places?

Jehoram had led the people away from God into idolatry (idol worship). He was representative of most of the kings in the history of the Israelites. Instead of being a good example and having a beneficial affect on those in his care, he was a bad example and poor influence on God's people.

5. After considering how your example affects others, list one thing about your behavior that you recognize will have to change?

6. How might we pray for you in regard to your answer in question 5?

Sometimes God will miraculously cure a person of a bad habit or sinful pattern. Other times it takes years of persistent prayer and hard work to change an ingrained (rooted deeply) behavior.

¹ "Presenting Effective Presentations with Visual Aids" May 1996 OSHA Occupational Safety & Health Administration U.S. Department of Labor <http://www.osha.gov/doc/outreachtraining/htmlfiles/traintec.html>

² The average high place would have an altar, a carved wooden pole that depicted the female goddess of fertility (Asherah), a stone pillar symbolizing the male deity, other idols and some type of building. At these places of worship the people sacrificed animals and at some high places even sacrificed children. – Butler, Trent C., *Holman Bible Dictionary*, Nashville, TN, 1991, 645.

Do not give up if you fall into this second category. God's grace is sufficient (enough) and your determination will be rewarded with powerful living (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Personal Application:

7. Ask God to show you someone who has a bad habit or sinful pattern that needs your help. Connect with that person as God leads, share your own struggles and successes in Christ and ask if you might pray for him or her. However, remain cautious that you are not tempted to sin (Galatians 6:1). Share what happened:

In Lesson 1, *Building a Leadership Model*, we learned that Jesus is our leadership model. Another word for model is example. Jesus powerfully and perfectly demonstrated what He valued. He did not say one thing and do another. He was consistent and persistent in His teachings and His actions. He never asked anyone to do something that He had not already done or was not prepared to do.

When we follow someone's model or example we are acknowledging that he or she is worthy of imitation. Jesus is worthy to be followed. He is the supreme model. He is the ultimate and good example to follow. No one else even comes close.

By God's Spirit and grace we endeavor to think, act, and behave in the same way as Jesus. By following Jesus we are taking Him as our model and example for living. He is the One that we strive to imitate or copy.

The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me. John 12:25

8. Read John 12:25. To serve Jesus, be where He is, and receive honor from God the Father, what must we do?

Read Luke 9:22-24 and answer questions 9-11:

And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."²³ Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."²⁴ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. Luke 9:22-24

9. What was the example that Jesus set for us (v.22)?

10. Do you think following Jesus is easy or difficult (v.23)? Why?

11. What beneficial effect did Jesus' example of leadership into death gain for us (v.24)?

Personal Application:

Definition: Fear of man in the sense of the prayer below means that one is afraid of humiliation, rejection or physical harm from others and acts in ways to impress or satisfy those people. Pray the following prayer with a sincere heart:

My Lord and My God,

I pray for the courage and strength to follow You perfectly and without fear of man. Give me the grace I need to take up my cross and follow you daily. I pray that my thoughts, actions and deeds are pleasing in Your sight. Be glorified in my life and make me a holy and good example to others. Thank You for answering my prayer and being with me all the days of my life. Amen.

Lesson 5: Leading by Example (Day Two) The Light of your Example

Read John 8:12 and answer questions 12-14:

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12

Definition: Darkness is the absence of light. In the Bible it is used in both real and figurative (representative) ways. Darkness symbolizes chaos, sin, ignorance, judgment and punishment.

- 12. Who is the *light of the world*?
- 13. How do you have the *light of life*?
- 14. For those who follow Jesus, what promise do you have about darkness?

Jesus is YHWH, the great I AM (John 8:58). YHWH or Yahweh (יהוה) is the transliteration³ of the proper name of the God of Israel. When Moses asked God for His name, He answered I AM which is YHWH in Hebrew (Exodus 3:15).

YHWH, the triune God, is light (Psalm 4:6, 1 John 1:5). YHWH also created light (Genesis 1:3) and separated light from darkness (Genesis 1:4). In the new city of God, after the old things have passed away, there will be no need of the sun or the moon, for the glory of God will give forth all the light (Revelation 21:23). Yes, from beginning (Genesis) to end (Revelation), God is light.

Light has several meanings. For the scientifically minded, here is a definition in regard to *Physics*: **a.** Electromagnetic radiation that has a wavelength in the range from about 4,000

³ Transliteration is representing letters or words from one language to another.

(violet) to about 7,700 (red) angstroms⁴ and may be perceived by the normal unaided human eye. **b.** Electromagnetic radiation of any wavelength.⁵

We tend to think of light as a simple concept but when we consider a scientific definition and how it travels throughout the colossal universe, we gain a new respect for the God and Savior who is the light of the world (Psalm 8:3-4). For example, it has been estimated that there are 10 billion stars in an average galaxy and 10 billion galaxies that are observed by man. That would give us 100 billion stars! Think about that the next time you look into the night sky and see light from some of the stars in our galaxy.⁶

God is the Creator, the Scientist, the Designer, the Builder and the Architect of everything. Light is God's concept and one that is both complicated and simple at the same time. Light is the absence of darkness. It dispels (drives away) darkness. It is a brightness that comes with the rising of the sun, the lighting of a candle, the building of a fire or simply flipping a switch.

The word light is also used to illustrate enlightenment⁷ or understanding (Daniel 2:21-13). You might recall seeing cartoons with a light bulb over a character's head indicating that they have a "bright idea." Usually the character is mulling (deep thought) over a difficult problem when all of a sudden he thinks of a way that might solve it.

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6

15. Read 2 Corinthians 4:6. After considering the simple and complex nature of light, what meaning does this verse have for you personally?

Read Matthew 5:14-16 and answer questions 16-18:

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:14-16

16. Read Matthew 5:14-16. Who else does Jesus say is the light of the world?

17. Why do you think Jesus says that *you* are light of the world?

18. When your good deeds are recognized, who should receive the credit (honor)? Why?

⁴ Physics is the science of matter and energy and of interactions between the two.

ang-strom or ång-strom (ång!strem) *noun* - A unit of length equal to one hundred-millionth (10^{-8}) of a centimeter, used especially to specify radiation wavelengths. Also called *angstrom unit*. [After Anders Jonas Ångström.] – from Microsoft Bookshelf Dictionary, 1996-97 edition.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ A galaxy is a system of billions of stars that together with gas and dust are held together by gravitational attraction.

⁷ Enlighten is defined as clarifying information or freeing someone from ignorance.

Matthew 5:16 says that we are to let others see our good deeds so that they may praise our Father in heaven. Our light and good works come from God. Without Him each one of us is like a single, unconnected, light bulb. We have no power, no energy and no illumination; we have no value or use. Rightly, God is praised for the deeds He has enabled us to do. For without Jesus, we can do nothing (John 15:5).

19. How do you respond when you are complimented for a kindness or good deed?

If you do not already, consider responding or volunteering an answer like these. “Thank you; it is Jesus who enables me to help you.” “It is my pleasure to help as I try to honor God.” “God just wanted you to know that He loves you.” “Jesus is my example and I follow Him.”

My cousin likes to say, “Jesus is my hero, and I hope He will be yours too!” Whatever you choose to say in response to your good deed, you may not always get a nice response back. There are those who love darkness and are not interested in the light. Therefore, they are not happy that you are giving credit to the Lord. Jesus explained this to Nicodemus, a member of the Pharisees (Jewish religious-political party).

Nicodemus went to see Jesus to ask him some questions. The text specifically states that he went at night. Among the words that Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, the following verses are noteworthy.

Read John 3:19-21 and answer questions 20-24:

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.²¹ But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.

John 3:19-21

20. Why do men love darkness instead of light (v. 19)?

21. Who hates the light (v.20)?

22. Why won't evildoers come into the light (v.20)?

23. Jesus says that whoever lives by the _____ comes into the _____ so that it may be _____ plainly what he has _____ has been _____ through _____ (v.21).

Nicodemus went in the dark of night to see Jesus (John 3:1-18). He was a member of the Jewish ruling council and perhaps was overly concerned with what the others might think of this personal visit. We know the majority did not believe in Jesus and the truth that God was revealing through Him. Jesus takes the opportunity afforded by Nicodemus' nightly visit to teach on the darkness versus the light.

Definition: The word born refers to one's physical birth. "Born again" refers to the spiritual rebirth of human hearts by the Holy Spirit's action and the profession of faith in Christ. Being born again results in a transformed life and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Salvation (saved from death and sin) is another term for being born again.

Jesus also takes time to instruct Nicodemus on the spiritual truth of being born again. When Nicodemus does not understand, Jesus questions his right to be called Israel's teacher or spiritual leader. In other words, Jesus is saying, "If you do not understand spiritual truth, how can you possibly teach or lead others?" A leader must understand spiritual truth in order to model and guide others.

24. What lessons can we learn from Nicodemus' example of leadership?

A Christian leader has the most important job in the world: leading the sheep to the Shepherd. No shortcuts or joy runs, but a direct path to God. He is their real Leader, not you or me or anyone else.

If you, a lead sheep, are in the front and the younger (new believers) are behind, what happens if you stray or wander down a wrong path? It does not even matter if you wander off by mistake or intentionally. Those new believers that do not *yet* have a full view of the Shepherd, may just keep walking behind you and away from God.

The Shepherd was in Israel, but Nicodemus was not bringing the flock to Him. He was in danger of leading the flock (Israel) astray. He was a religious leader and should have been so close to God that he recognized the Messiah and His teaching. Nicodemus should have been in the midst of the crowd in the *light* of the day letting the people see that he honored and agreed with Jesus.

Sometimes the Bible does not clearly state that a person coming into contact with Jesus repented and followed Him. For example the woman caught in adultery (John 8:4-11) and the centurion at the cross (Mark 15:39). Of course we like to believe that the woman followed Jesus' instruction and turned from her life of sin and that the centurion witnessing the crucifixion understood the life-changing meaning of his statement.

With Nicodemus, we get a clearer picture of a transformed life. He took Jesus' words to heart that fateful night and dramatically stepped out into the light. When Jesus was taken down from the cross, he accompanied Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, in asking Pilate for His body (John 19:38-39). After receiving permission, they prepared His body on the first Good Friday before the sun set. Nicodemus also brought 75 pounds of myrrh⁸ and aloes for His burial; a large and royal amount of spices. Recall Jesus was also presented myrrh at His birth.

⁸ Myrrh is a sap-like substance extracted from various trees and bushes and used for perfume, incense, burials etc.

Personal Application: *Pray to be a good example and never to lead anyone astray.*

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you answer these questions and to personally change anything that is not appropriate to having the light of life. This section is between you and God and requires no written answers.

- A. Is there anything that I am doing under the cover of darkness?
- B. What are some things that I am doing in the light of day?
- C. Does my conduct transcend (surpass, exceed) those I am leading?

Lesson 5: Leading by Example (Day Three) Battling for the Good Example

A leader must be brave and courageous. Setting the right example is not always easy. Satan is not unintelligent. Many times he targets those who are affecting the Kingdom for good. If he can take out the leader, he has the potential to destroy a lot more folks or an entire flock. Satan even had the audacity to target God's Son. Of course we should not be too surprised because the devil even had the impudence (nerve) to try and compete with the all-powerful triune God long before Jesus was born of a virgin and walked the earth as man and God (Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:12-18).

Satan is like a fiery dragon on a chain. God has Satan's chain securely fastened so that his range is powerfully and permanently controlled. The serpent of old can only move or roam within the boundaries of what our sovereign God allows (Job 1-2).

Definition: Tempt is verb meaning to invite or try to persuade a person to sin by making the wrongdoing seem attractive.

God not only allowed Jesus to be tempted, but it was part of His plan. Many times it is also God's plan for Christians to be tempted. However, God is not the one who tempts but only allows the devil to do the tempting (James 1:13). In these cases, God is using the serpent and his temptations for His glory and our good.

Read Matthew 4:1-4 and answer questions 25-26:

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:1-4

- 25. How long had Jesus gone without food?
- 26. Was Jesus hungry? Yes No (Circle One) Have you ever been hungry? Yes No (Circle One)

27. How does your example hold up when you are hungry or tired?

28. Why did Jesus not give into His feelings of hunger and take the devil's suggestion?

Jesus gave us an excellent example of not giving into temptation under difficult circumstances. Perhaps that is one reason that God allowed Satan to tempt His Son. The Spirit led Jesus into the desert where He fasted and prayed. Although Jesus gave up food voluntarily and in obedience to the Spirit's leading, that does not mean that He did not experience hunger and even fatigue (weariness) because of lack of nourishment.

When you or I do not have food, when we are tired or experiencing any kind of physical or emotional ache, our bodies can certainly cry out for attention. "Feed me, let me rest, comfort me, and whatever happens, don't let me go through any pain! I'm angry and someone is going to pay. I'm frustrated and don't feel like trusting God. I'm lonely and I'll feel sorry for myself. I'm neglected and I'll force the attention that I think I need from others. I'm afraid and I won't do what God desires of me."

This is the stage on which Satan or his followers like to enter into our lives. Think of yourself on a theatrical stage going through one of the above situations. The beautiful, thick, red curtain is raised and you are playing to a packed house. All eyes are on you as the devil or most likely one of his demons starts giving you suggestions on how you should act. You can be assured that the suggestion will not be to act and respond like Jesus.

However, you have the Holy Spirit of God and you *can* act like Jesus. You *do* act like Jesus! Therefore, the demon slithers off stage and the people in the audience roar in applause. Of course you never know exactly who will be in your audience when the curtain is raised; there may be believers, non believers or angels.

Well, there is one who will *always* be in your audience. You can count on God being there watching and desiring your victory and success in every thing the devil throws at you. God loves you the most and will never take His eyes off of you. You can also count on His reaction to your overcoming temptation to be the grandest, even echoing throughout heaven!

Leaders may not always *feel* like doing the right thing. It may seem easy or expedient (useful) to act or go along with how we are feeling at a particular moment in time. But remember that Jesus had a real body and was really hungry. He put God above His human feelings and would not take anything from Satan, not even a suggestion to ease His hunger by turning stones into bread (Matthew 4:3-4). Jesus only followed God. The Father had not told him to turn rocks into food and therefore, He would not. Jesus lived on every word that came from God.

29. Is there any kind of temptation that you are struggling with? Yes No Sometimes

30. If you answered yes or sometimes for #29: What steps are you taking to overcome this temptation?

Christians may struggle with different kinds of sins and temptations. Sexual immorality is but one powerful device that Satan uses against God's people. He will tempt a person to start thinking or lusting after someone. After all he will suggest, "No one will be hurt by your thoughts." But we know that thoughts are sinful and they do give rise to actions, good or bad (Matthew 5:27-30, 15:19-20, Colossians 3:5-7, Proverbs 4:23).

Sex is a God-given gift and only to be engaged in by mutual consent between a man and a woman after they have been married (Genesis 1:27-28, 1 Corinthians 7:5). Satan perverts (distorts, misinterprets) the good with evil in various ways to destroy lives. For example, a couple love each other and are planning to be married so they decide that premarital sex (fornication) is all right in their situation. The truth is that sex before marriage is a sin (1 Corinthians 6:12-20, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6) no matter where you are in a relationship. Rape is not only a sexual sin but a violent act against another who bears God's image.

In the same way, adultery (sex with someone other than spouse) is wrong. Jesus even taught that by looking at someone lustfully we commit adultery (Matthew 5:27-28). If you have a problem thinking about children in this way, pray for help and a plan of action to overcome it. Understand: sex or sexual touching is not an appropriate way to show love to children but instead these kinds of things are acts of hate against them. Sex with children will alter and hurt their little souls with untold damage (Matthew 18:6-9).

Marriage and sexual relations between the same gender or same sex is sin (Genesis 18:20-21, Leviticus 18:22, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Do not be misled by Satan's lies. You may have strong feelings in this area and want to believe that since God made you this way, it must be right. I cannot address your particular DNA (hereditary characteristics) or what makes you tick. I do not even know what makes me tick. Everyone is born with certain characteristics both physical and mental that give him or her certain challenges in life. Environment and life circumstances can also play a part in how the devil may decide to play you.

Homosexuality, whether engaged in a sporadic (irregular) or permanent type lifestyle, is a sin. Like any sin, seek out help from Jesus. He understands your difficulty. He was not looking forward to being nailed to the cross and having mankind's sin poured into Him. But He overcame by focusing on the Father's will and the glory set before Him. In the same way you too can overcome by focusing on God's will and the glory that awaits you in heaven.

Perhaps you are not a perpetrator (doer) but instead are you have been a victim of sexual sin. The serpent of old is shrewd. After someone has been hurt in this way, either by adultery, rape, incest or some other heinous (terrible) transgression, the devil will use the pain to tempt the victim away from God. "God really doesn't love you or He would not have let this happen to you." "God could have prevented you from this pain." The truth is that God does love you and yes, He could have prevented it.

These two statements are not incompatible. God created everyone out of love. We live on this fallen earth for an exceptionally short time contrasted with eternity. When our time is up, we Christians will live free from all evil and heartache. Until then, our sin and the sins of others will

adversely (unfavorable) affect lives. God prevents some things and allows others; He is God and we are not.

The important thing to remember is that no matter what you are facing: **you will overcome (triumph) in His Spirit.** That is why God commands us to be strong and courageous. He promises to be with us wherever we go. Even if you were raised in a hellish home or had unspeakable things done to you, you do not have to follow in those evil steps.

Instead, follow Jesus. He surrendered to God and resisted the devil. Jesus placed Himself under the authority of God the Father and took a subordinate (lesser) role while He was on earth. Even though Jesus is equal to the Father in every way, He subjected (submitted) Himself to the Father and obeyed all God said or commanded while He walked the earth as a man.

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. James 4:7

31. In your opinion or personal experience, what is the most difficult aspect of resisting the devil?

32. How do you overcome or triumph when you are in a difficult situation?

In the Matthew 4 account of Jesus' temptation, our Lord quoted Scripture (Bible verses). We can also oppose Satan and his followers by meditating on or quoting from the Holy Scriptures. Another suggestion and a handy way to have Scripture available at all times is to write out verses on index cards or paper. Make them large enough to read easily but small enough to fit into your pocket or purse. When you begin to have wrong, sinful or depressing thoughts, take those cards and start reading and thinking about what God is saying.

33. Personal Application: Memorize the following verses:

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Deuteronomy 31:6

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father. Romans 8:15

Lesson 5: Leading by Example (Day Four) Setting the Example

Christian biographies (true accounts) are inspiring to read. They give us good examples of saints who have gone before us and produced good and lasting fruit. Actually Christian fiction (not a true account) can serve a similar purpose even though the characters are not real. Here is a letter that Christian Library International (CLI) received regarding a fictional story:

“I just completed reading *Land of the Brave and Free*, and wanted to write and tell you how it blessed me! ... My prideful arrogance put me here (prison) and here is exactly where God needed to put me to learn what the two main characters demonstrated: Corrie’s complete and total trust and surrender of her life and future to God’s care and Christopher’s unwavering faith and patience to allow God to work His plan, in His way, in His time, in his life.” Fred

Fiction authors can capture the essence of being a good Christian example by basing their work on God’s Word. The stories are helpful and motivating. However as a leader please remember that you must always seek God for yourself in His Word. [CLI provides free Christian books and materials to prison chaplains or qualified staff members for distribution to inmates.]

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve;³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 1 Peter 5:2-3

34. Read 1 Peter 5:2-3. Peter commands the elders among the church to be _____ of God’s _____ that is under your _____ serving as _____ not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to _____; not _____ over those entrusted to you, but being _____ to the _____.

An overseer is one who keeps watch over and directs the work of others, especially laborers. He “sees over” others like a supervisor or superintendent. Shepherd, elder, leader and overseer are really terms for the same kinds of responsibility. Peter is writing to early Christians scattered throughout much of Asia Minor, part of modern day Turkey. His epistle (letter) is known as a circular letter because it is meant to be circulated to more than one church.

Perhaps Peter had church organization in mind as he wrote his letter, but his instruction still pertains to all Christian leaders, whether serving inside or outside of the church. We are to lead with a willing spirit, eager to help others who are laboring with us in the field for Christ. **Pray:** O God, teach and empower me to be the kind of leader You desire. Amen.

In God’s sovereignty He has placed individuals in a leader’s life for their care and protection. He is also trusting the leader to help these folks know Him and to produce fruit. Yes, God wants both the leader and the follower to perform well. God is placing His confidence in you and relying on your character and ability in Christ.

Peter had learned how *not* to lead in a domineering, bossy, or authoritarian way from Jesus (Mathew 20:25-28). Leaders are *not* to act like a lord, noble or aristocrat. Leaders are to serve for the good of their people. The good of the people is found in trusting Christ as Savior and continuing to trust Him all the days of their lives.

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. 1 Peter 5:4

35. Read 1 Peter 5:4. When the Chief Shepherd Jesus returns, what will faithful leaders and those good examples to the flock receive?

The faithful will receive a crown of glory or a crown of righteousness. We will be ushered into the presence of our Chief Shepherd and dwell in His presence and glory. God is our treasure and our very great reward (Genesis 15:1b). A faithful Christian leader will receive the gift of God Himself because we have been made holy and righteous in the blood Christ Jesus.

Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:5-7

36. Read 1 Peter 5:5-7. Name some practical ways that you can be submissive (yield, agree, defer) to those who are older than you?

Just as leaders are not to “lord it over” the flock, those who are being led should follow in humility and submission. The basic principle is to submit (yield, agree, defer) to one another out of reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:21). Question 36 was designed for you to think about this principle and how you might work it out in practical ways for your own life.

The principle works very well in discussing relationships between younger and older people. If you are older, you may have experienced some age discrimination. Socially you may be patronized (considered inferior) or ignored altogether. Younger folks, you may have been guilty of discrimination by not making an effort to talk, listen or pay attention to those who are older.

Some practical ways to take a subordinate (lesser) place with another is to listen carefully. Seek out older saints and actively include them in conversations. Take their advice and prayerfully consider what they have told you. Always show them respect.

Older saints, you also have a responsibility in taking a subordinate role. You also need to actively listen and try not to monopolize the conversation. Allow the younger people to discuss topics that are meaningful to them without making critical or derogatory remarks. Do not arbitrarily dismiss a younger person’s advice but be willing to take it to the Lord.

Read 1 Peter 2:20-24 and answer questions 37-39:

But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.²¹ To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.²² "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. 1 Peter 2:20-24

37. In this passage Peter was giving advice to first century slaves. However the principle is appropriate in Christian leadership today. When you are doing good, and then you are mistreated and suffer unjustly for it, how are you to respond?

38. Who suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in His steps?

39. Share a time in your Christian walk when you suffered for following in Jesus' steps?

40. Personal Application: Memorize 1 Peter 2:21

Critical to walking in Jesus' steps and following His example is entrusting yourself to God. During the next day, meditate on how well you give yourself over to God for His direction, guidance, protection, comfort, care and performance.

41. What is missing in your complete trust and dependence on God?

42. How can we pray for you?

Lesson 5: Leading by Example (Day Five) Follow My Example

The apostle Paul became a role model that exemplified Christ. He lived out his beliefs so well that he had no problem telling others to follow his example. Paul was not looking for followers for himself but wanted to give others the encouragement of living a life dedicated to God. He wanted others to imitate (copy, reproduce) Christ just as he was doing.

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. 1 Corinthians 11:1

43. Read 1 Corinthians 11:1. Are you ready to say like Paul, *Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ?* Yes No (Circle one) **Explain your answer:**

Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. Philippians 3:17

44. What does Paul tell the Philippians in 3:17 to take note of?

Paul not only followed Christ in life, but followed Him in death. Although the New Testament ends with Paul's imprisonment in Rome, tradition and evidence point to his martyrdom by

decapitation (beheading) in the late sixties.⁹ In the first few centuries, men and women were regularly put to death for their faith in Jesus. There was intense persecution and people were taking note. Pagans as well as other Christians were watching martyrs as their blood was being spilt in the arena and in the streets of their cities. *The New Foxe's Book of Martyrs* by John Foxe includes some of these accounts as well as recent accounts from the 160,000 martyred in 2001.

Christian leaders were the first to be imprisoned or put to death. In the early church, bishops were different from the image of the finely dressed ambassadors that usually come to mind. They were leaders who were following the biblical Jesus by living a life of poverty and lovingly pasturing the sheep. They were true shepherds who died regularly for their sheep.

As the flock took note of their leaders, they followed suit. Perpetua and Felicitas were two young women in Northern Africa (Roman province) who were watching their leaders closely. They stood firm in their faith for Christ and were killed in the arena. Both Perpetua and Felicitas were married. Perpetua, of noble birth, was nursing a baby son and Felicitas, a slave, was 8 months pregnant. Even with their maternal feelings telling them to protect their children, they both knew that God was to be served first and foremost, even above family.

Perpetua was thrown into a dungeon (prison). She was given two chances to recant (take back) and sacrifice to idols. Her father came with her baby and pleaded with her to go ahead and sacrifice and deny Christ. She would not. Both Perpetua and Felicitas were placed in the arena with a wild bull that tossed Perpetua and gored Felicitas but did not kill them. The authorities then sent in gladiators who killed them with their swords March 7, 203 A.D. Before Perpetua died in the arena that day she encouraged the others *to stand fast in the faith and love one another*.

The church actually grew and flourished under this intense persecution. People took note that those under intense persecution were Christians. They took note that their lives were different. They took note that they serenely and with great courage met their death in triumph. They took note that these Christians lived what they professed to believe. Just taking note of your example may save a person from a mediocre (lukewarm) witness or from the actual fires of hell.

45. What did Perpetua encourage the other Christians to do?

46. Do you think Perpetua was a leader in God's Kingdom? Why or Why not?

47. Both the noble woman and slave woman died the same death in standing firm for Christ. Does your birth status, gender, wealth, natural intelligence, athletic ability, artistic talents or sparkling personality give you an edge in leadership in God's Kingdom? Explain your answer.

It was God's plan for Christ to suffer death for our salvation. He is our Leader. The servant is not greater than his master. The apostles also suffered and became shepherds themselves in order to bring the sheep to the Master. Their life was laid down in love for Him and their neighbor. Now they are in heaven enjoying God forever in joy and peace.

⁹ Unger, Merrill F., *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, Moody Press: Chicago, 1988, 977.

I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are my people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is our God.' Zechariah 13:9

48. Read Zechariah 13:9. How are you being refined (purified, improved)?

49. **Personal Application:** Be an example of Jesus today. What did you do and what happened?

- End Lesson 5 -

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS Lesson 5: CLI Christian Leadership Study:
Leading by Example

Name & Number: _____ Date: _____

Name of Institution: _____ Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Lesson 5: Leading by Example (Day One) *Good or Bad Example*

1. Why did the rafters stop obeying the rules when they saw the example of the leader?

2. Did the leader-guide display a good or bad example? _____

3. Why does what you do, rather than what you say, have a greater impact on people?

4. Read 2 Chronicles 21:11. What kind of an example did Jehoram, king of Judah, give God's people by building the high places? _____

5. After considering how your example affects others, list one thing about your behavior that you recognize will have to change? _____

6. How might we pray for you in regard to your answer in question 5?

7. Ask God to show you someone who has a bad habit or sinful pattern that needs your help. Connect with that person as God leads, share your own struggles and successes in Christ and ask if you might pray for him or her. However, remain cautious that you are not tempted to sin (Galatians 6:1).

Share what happened: _____

8. Read John 12:25. To serve Jesus, be where He is, and receive honor from God the Father, what must we do? _____

9. What was the example that Jesus set for us (v.22)? _____

10. Do you think following Jesus is easy or difficult (v.23)? Why? _____

11. What beneficial effect did Jesus' example of leadership into death gain for us (v.24)?

Lesson 5: Leading by Example (Day Two) The Light of your Example

12. Who is the *light of the world*? _____

13. How do you have the *light of life*? _____

14. For those who follow Jesus, what promise do you have about darkness? _____

15. Read 2 Corinthians 4:6. After considering the simple and complex nature of light, what meaning does this verse have for you personally? _____

16. Read Matthew 5:14-16. Who else does Jesus say is the light of the world? _____

17. Why do you think Jesus says that *you* are light of the world? _____

18. When your good deeds are recognized, who should receive the credit (honor)? Why?

19. How do you respond when you are complimented for a kindness or good deed?

20. Why do men love darkness instead of light (v.19)? _____

21. Who hates the light (v.20)? _____

22. Why won't evildoers come into the light (v.20)? _____

23. Jesus says that whoever lives by the _____ comes into the _____ so that it may be _____ plainly what he has _____ has been _____ through _____ (v.21)

24. What lessons can we learn from Nicodemus' example of leadership? _____

Lesson 5: Leading by Example (Day Three) Battling for the Good Example

25. How long had Jesus gone without food? _____

26. Was Jesus hungry? Yes No (Circle One) Have you ever been hungry? Yes No (Circle One)

27. How does your example hold up when you are hungry or tired? _____

28. Why did Jesus not give into His feelings of hunger and take the devil's suggestion?

29. Is there any kind of temptation that you are struggling with? Yes No Sometimes

30. If you answered yes or sometimes for #29: What steps are you taking to overcome this temptation? _____

31. In your opinion or personal experience, what is the most difficult aspect of resisting the devil? _____

32. How do you overcome or triumph when you are in a difficult situation?

33. Personal Application: Write from memory without looking at the Bible or notes:

Joshua 1:9 _____

Deuteronomy 31:6 _____

Romans 8:15 _____

Lesson 5: Leading by Example (Day Four) Setting the Example

34. Read 1 Peter 5:2-3. Peter commands the elders among the church to be _____ of God's _____ that is under your _____ serving as _____ not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to _____; not _____ over those entrusted to you, but being _____ to the _____.

35. Read 1 Peter 5:4. When the Chief Shepherd Jesus returns, what will faithful leaders and those good examples to the flock receive? _____

36. Read 1 Peter 5:5-7. Name some practical ways that you can be submissive (yield, agree, defer) to those who are older than you? _____

37. In this passage Peter was giving advice to first century slaves. However the principle is appropriate in Christian leadership today. When you are doing good, and then you are mistreated and suffer unjustly for it, how are you to respond? _____

38. Who suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in His steps? _____

39. Share a time in your Christian walk when you suffered for following in Jesus' steps? _____

40. Personal Application: Write from memory without looking at the Bible or notes:

1 Peter 2:21 _____

41. What is missing in your complete trust and dependence on God? _____

42. How can we pray for you? _____

Lesson 5: Leading by Example (Day Five) Follow my Example

43. Read 1 Corinthians 11:1. Are you ready to say like Paul, *Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ?* Yes No (Circle one) **Explain your answer:**

44. What does Paul tell the Philippians in 3:17 to take note of? _____

45. What did Perpetua encourage the other Christians to do? _____

46. Do you think Perpetua was a leader in God's Kingdom? Why or Why not?

47. Both the noble woman and slave woman died the same death in standing firm for Christ. Does your birth status, gender, wealth, natural intelligence, athletic ability, artistic talents or sparkling personality give you an edge in leadership in God's Kingdom? Explain your answer.

48. Read Zechariah 13:9. How are you being refined (purified, improved)?

49. **Personal Application:** Be an example of Jesus today. What did you do and what happened?

Next: Lesson 6: Be Filled with the Holy Spirit

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