



FOLLOW JESUS - One Step Ahead

The goal of this discussion is to demonstrate not only that Jesus was a leader and that if we are to follow him, we too must lead, but more importantly to discuss HOW Jesus led and follow him in leading the same way.

CONNECT

The goal of the first question is to discover a little more about each other and our relationships outside the Connect Group. This will help build relationships within the group as we get to know each other, and may also surface opportunities to help engage each others' friends with the gospel.

- Tell us about one group of friends you like hanging out with. Why do you enjoy being with them?
- Whose leadership do you admire? Why?
- How would you define leadership?

THOUGHT

Over the past weeks as we've talked about following Jesus in Lordship, Evangelism, and Discipleship, some group members may be feeling challenged and reluctant to fully follow Jesus in these areas, or may simply not be acting on what they have learned. You might make the point that life begins with having enough humility to admit our shortcomings and leadership begins with being able to lead ourselves. To get ourselves to do what we know we should do.

The Bible teaches us how to be disciples (followers of Jesus) who will also help others to follow Him. We are to pass on to others everything that we have heard and believed about Jesus. Though we may feel inadequate or unprepared, we can be used by God to lead others right now, just as we are. The bible teaches that we are simply called to stay focused on Jesus, serve others, and stay one chapter ahead of those we are serving. In this lesson, we will look at three key elements in leading others and helping them to become leaders.

WORD

¹³"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

John 13:13–15 (NIV)

1. Follow Jesus

⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross! ⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,"

Philippians 2:8–9 (NIV)

"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus."

ACTS 4:13 (NIV)

The goal here is to demonstrate that Jesus led by following God the Father and our authority to lead comes from following Jesus. When you know that you have done everything that you were supposed to do exactly as it was supposed to be done, it gives you a sense of courage and peace as well as a sense of moral authority. Leadership can be summed up as following Jesus and helping others follow him.

Jesus' authority came from his obedience. In fact, Jesus said that everything he did was in obedience to God the Father's instructions (John 5:19). If we are to truly follow Jesus, we too must lead out of obedience to God. The religious leaders saw the courage of the disciples and how their lives were different because they had encountered and been with Jesus. These unschooled, ordinary men became bold and courageous because they followed Jesus. As a result, they turned the world upside down. How have you encountered Jesus? In what ways are you following Jesus in obedience? How can you help others know and follow Jesus?

2. Be A Mentor To Others

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."
2 TIMOTHY 2:2 (NIV)

Timothy was mentored by Paul, and Paul encouraged Timothy to pass on what he had learned to others. Timothy didn't know everything-he was simply one chapter ahead. In the same way, we can mentor others as we are mentored. Who mentors you? How have they helped you lead others?

3. Serve Others

⁴²Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

MARK 10:42-45 (NIV)

Examples of Servant leadership are all around us. From Nelson Mandela to the business axiom that 'the customer is always right' to Jesus. These all demonstrate the power of serving.

Jesus contrasted Gentile leadership with how He wanted His disciples to lead-through service and by example. Jesus exemplified this by laying His life down for us. How is the Bible's definition of leadership different from the world's? What does it mean to lead by serving? In what ways are you serving?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

- What do you need to do this week to be a better follower of Jesus? What can you do to lead others to Jesus?
- Do you have a mentor? If not, who do you know who could mentor you, and what steps could you take this week to get that started?
- Are you mentoring anyone? Who do you know that you are at least one step ahead of? What can you do this week to start mentoring them?
- Who are you serving? How can you increase/improve your serving?

PRAYER

- Thank God for His grace in your life and for the mentors He has blessed you with. Ask God to help you mentor others.
- Pray that you will lead others to Jesus by example. Pray that you will have the humility to serve others, just as Jesus did.
- Pray for those you know who aren't following God yet. Pray that you will help them know God and walk with Him. Believe God for their salvation.

NOTES
