

Leaders Deepen Their Faith

Leaders in the Kingdom of God need to be learners. We should all constantly be learning from Christ – becoming more like him—and listening to the people he has put in our life.

- *If you had to teach the people in this room something you're passionate about, what would it be?*
- *Have you ever had a "know-it-all" try to teach you something? How did their attitude change your desire to learn?*
- *Why would it be important for leaders to have a mature faith?*
- *What problems could arise for a leader to be an immature believer?*

Leaders are Learners

Being a leader in the Kingdom of God revolves a lot around learning. Kingdom leaders help others learn, but they first have to be learners themselves. You can't hope to take someone to a place in their faith where you have never been.

So, how do Kingdom leaders learn? These aren't the only ways to grow, but they're a great place to start.

2 Timothy 3:10–17

10 You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, 11 my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. 12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13 while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- **Mentors and Teachers.** The first thing Paul does is remind his audience of what he has taught them, both through his words and the example of his life. Eventually, that's what all Kingdom leaders should aspire to: following good examples and being a good example to others.
 - **Life Experience.** Paul specifically tells his readers that suffering will come their way. He encourages them to hold fast to the way they know they're supposed to live. The circumstances of your life are not accidents; they are great places to learn how to live with Christ.
 - **God's Word.** The passage ends with a strong endorsement for the power of the Bible to teach, encourage, and direct us. God's given us the Bible as his letter to us, and he uses it to transform us from the inside out.
- *Why is learning such an important part of being a follower of Christ?*
 - *What does it look like to teach others about God while continually learning from him yourself?*
 - *How does remembering to be a learner keep us from becoming annoying "know-it-alls"?*

Being a leader is not just about your actions

Luke 11:39-40

39 And the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. 40 You fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside also?"

- Jesus is challenging the Pharisees (leaders) who have simply done religious actions.

Matthew 12:33-35

33 "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. 34 You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. 36 I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, 37 for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

- Leaders lead from the inside out. You can only fake it for so long.
- Eventually problems or circumstances will cause you to react in a way that you can't fake it. When this happens everyone will see what is true on the inside.

Build a foundation for right choices

Joshua 1:8

8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

The right choices are easier to make when you are filling your heart with God's word. If the Bible is your guide then you can test your choices through the guidance of scripture.

By reading the Bible you will gain knowledge (information) and wisdom (knowing how to read with information) which will make you a stronger leader. The guidance from God's word is objectively the best way to handle all of life's situations and choices. Whether you are in school, at a job, with your family, etc. doing things according to God's word will bring you success in these areas.

Fuel for you inner world

Too many students graduate from high school and also graduate from their faith. This often has many contributing factors, but the one constant is those students did not learn how to grow on their own.

Many students experience great spiritual growth through their time in youth group. However, if that growth is only because of their involvement in the youth ministry, then they are at great risk to become spiritually stagnant or worse when they can no longer attend youth group.

Philippians 2:12-13

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Build good H.A.B.I.T.S. - Spiritual Disciplines

Hang out with God - Praying regularly

- This one is obvious but crucial to building your relationship with God. Have a time each day you devote to prayer. Make a habit praying throughout the day.

Accountable with another believer

- Have a fellow believer, of the same gender, who can challenge you to grow and is willing to call you out when needed.

Bible memorization

- There are many ways to do this, however you do it, you will build an arsenal of scripture to deal with everyday problems and solutions.

Involved in the church body

- We cannot truly live according to God's word and neglect the local church body. Leaders must have regular fellowship with other believers in worship, teaching, and prayer. It is a support network for encouragement and teaching.

Tithe

- Tithing is a crucial part of discipleship. No matter how much you make, tithing on your income creates a heart that is dependent on God's provision and not your own.

Study Scripture - Quiet time

- Filling your mind and heart with knowledge and understanding of God's is the only way to acquire wisdom. There are many ways to do this, but regular reading of God's word is key.

What spiritual disciplines do you need to work on?

What is one thing you can start improving on this week?

How will you do that, what are some actions step you can start now?