

THE MOMENTUM OF FOLLOWING WELL

← Understanding, Exercising and Honoring Following →

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SUMMARY STATEMENT →

Everyone LEADS and everyone FOLLOWS. We must all learn to do both well. This seminar will:

- ❖ Provide a biblical foundation for the highly-misunderstood role of follower.
- ❖ Identify practical examples of the power of momentum that resides within each person.
- ❖ Share critical philosophical and practical questions every follower must ask.
- ❖ Inspire each of us to fulfill the duties of followership.

“Sometimes we lead and sometimes we follow. Both roles are honorable if they are performed with strength and accountability.” Ira Chaleff TAF page 72

LEARNING OBJECTIVES →

Learn how to:

- ❖ Identify and honor the biblical role of follower.
- ❖ Identify the fundamental duties of a follower.
- ❖ Function as strong, effective and healthy followers.
- ❖ Ask critical philosophical and practical questions every follower must address.

INTRODUCTION →

- ❖ Three Theories on Leaders and Followers
 - ◆ Some people are born leaders and others born followers
 - (1) Great man theory
 - (2) Crucible of challenge will allow leaders to emerge
 - (3) Followers are sheep, following the directives of those favored few who are destined to lead
 - ◆ Leaders develop and followers adjust
 - (1) Leaders grow with experience, education, skill development and confidence.
 - (2) Followers are passive and content to let others make decisions

- ◆ Leadership and followership are roles we fulfill
 - (1) Leaders are those who lead
 - (2) Followers those who follow
 - (3) We all do both
 - (4) Most of us lead and follow simultaneously – we follow our boss, our board, our pastor, etc. And we lead our staff and volunteers.

- ❖ Two Assumptions
 - ◆ Followership and Leadership are roles we all play – as a culture (Christian and non-Christian) we have focused on leading at the expense of following.
 - ◆ This seminar will focus primarily on Followership as it applies to the church and non-profit settings. (See ‘Styles’ below.)

“The usual ways of looking at leaders and followers are no longer useful.”

Ernest Stech TAF page 41

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

- ❖ Biblical Examples
 - ◆ Moses – Joshua
 - ◆ Elijah – Elisha
 - ◆ Barnabas – Paul
 - ◆ Paul – Timothy

- ❖ The Centurion submitted to authority above him and exercised authority over those under him - ***For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it.*** (Matthew 8:9)
 - ◆ The great sandwich – leaders above – followers below → we are the turkey in the middle.
 - ◆ If the centurion didn’t have a leadership structure above him, he would not have had the authority to lead the followers below him.

- ❖ Jesus said, **“Follow me.”**
 - ◆ **New Identity** – “Come, **follow me**,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” At once they (Peter and Andrew) left their nets and followed him. (Matthew 4:19-20)
 - ◆ **New Challenge** – And anyone who does not take his cross and **follow me** is not worthy of me. (Matthew 10:38)

- ◆ **New Priority** – Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and **follow me**. (Matthew 16:24)
- ◆ **New Commitment** – Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, **follow me**." (Matthew 19:21)
- ◆ **New Leadership Opportunities** – Peter answered him, "We have left everything to **follow you!** What then will there be for us?" Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, **you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel**. (Matthew 19:27-28)

DEFINITION, STYLES, ATTRIBUTES AND DUTIES

❖ Definition (Merriam-Webster)

- ◆ Someone who supports and is guided by another person or by a group, religion, etc.

“Followership . . . is the acceptance of influence from another person or persons without feeling coerced and toward what is perceived to be a common purpose.” **Stech TAF page 48-49**

- ◆ A person who likes and admires (someone or something) very much.

“Followership means partnering with leaders to achieve worthy ends.” **Chaleff TAF page 69**

- ◆ Someone who does what other people say to do.

❖ Styles – Leader/Follower Dynamic

- ◆ Introduction - There are different styles and levels of intensities of the leader/follower relationship

“Followers do not serve leaders. . .Rather, I posit, both leaders and followers serve a common purpose, each from their own roles.” **Chaleff TAF page 71**

- ◆ **Vow of Allegiance - Oath of Loyalty**
 - (a) Military, Public Office, Public Service
 - (b) Formal, hierarchical structure
 - (c) Command and control
 - (d) Follower failure → Firing Squad

- ◆ **Commitment of Responsibility – Professional Obligation**
 - (a) Workplace – Employer/Employee Relationship
 - (b) Consulting
 - (c) Contract Labor
 - (d) Duties of Effort, Loyalty and Task Fulfillment
 - (e) Follower failure → Firing

- ◆ **Voluntary Association – Pure Volunteer Status**
 - (a) Church and Non-Profit contexts
 - (b) Volunteers and Donors
 - (c) Loose Association
 - (d) Informal Relationship
 - (e) Follower failure → Nothing – You’re Stuck (Leader’s Firing)

❖ Attributes

- ◆ R. E. Chaleff (The Art of Followership, Jossey-Bass 2008)
 - (1) Self-Management
 - (2) Commitment
 - (3) Competence
 - (4) Courage

- ◆ Kelley (HBR, *In Praise of Followers*, 1988)
 - (1) Positive
 - (2) Active
 - (3) Independent
 - (4) Critical Thinkers (Evaluative)

- ◆ Bolin
 - (1) Secure – Personally strong and self-aware
 - (2) Sacrificial – Willing to subordinate their will to the leader’s will
 - (3) Loyal – Dependable and faithful to ‘follow’ instructions
 - (4) Tenacious – Willing to remain loyal in times of opposition and challenge
 - (5) Intentional – Engaged with both minds and hearts

- ❖ Duties (Legal and Ethical) (West’s Business Law, Fifth Edition, pages 634-637)
 - ◆ Performance – The follower’s reasonable effort to perform the task(s)
 - ◆ Notification – The follower’s responsibility to keep the leader informed about significant issues

- ◆ Loyalty – The follower’s commitment to act in the best interest of the leader/organization as opposed to his or her best interest, or the best interest of a third party.
- ◆ Obedience – The follower’s commitment to obey all legal and clear instructions.
- ◆ Accounting – The follower’s responsibility to keep records and show how the organization’s money and materials were used.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

❖ Introduction

- ◆ Contrary to popular belief, followers are not sheep. More and more, people (volunteers and donors) chose to follow intentionally and ask significant questions about whom they will follow. As ministry leaders we need to be able to answer these questions with authenticity and depth in order to lead in ways that are worthy of our followers’ time, money and commitment.

❖ Four Critical Follower Questions

- ◆ **First, am I comfortable with the integrity of the leader?**

“The cult of celebrity CEO gave way to a renewed appreciation of the leader as a steward of the collective treasure of his or her followers.” **Warren Bennis TAF**

(1) We cannot look into someone’s heart. But we can watch their behavior.

- Do they cut corners?
 - Easy way or the right way?
- Do they manipulate data?
 - Do they share only good facts? (Cherry pick information)
 - Do they hide negative numbers? (Bury numbers in mounds of data)
 - Do they only disclose partial information? (110% of bad news – Transparency)
- Do they misuse or abuse power? Jeroboam (I Kings 12)
- Do they seek wise counsel?
- Do they seek glory for themselves alone?
- Consistent – Do they treat those without power, money and status the same as those with them? (Waitress)

(2) Tim Kimmel's Six (Legacy of Love)

- Faith: living out an awareness of God's presence, plan and power.
- Integrity: congruency between saying and doing.
- Poise: a keen sense of the appropriate.
- Discipline: the ability to stay on task.
- Endurance: the ability to finish a task.
- Courage: ability to confront difficult issues.

(3) What Fruit of the Spirit do you see evidenced in their lives - what is missing?

- Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control

(4) If they are headed for an ethical cliff, cautious followers will not recklessly stampede with them. (Smashing Head Buffalo Jump)

◆ **Second, do they possess the competencies necessary to lead well in this context?**

(1) Despite persistent rumors to the contrary, great leaders are great managers.

(2) Leaders who are worthy of our followership do the right things (Leaders) and they do things right (Managers)!

(3) They don't do it all themselves, wise leaders find followers who can help and who contribute skill and strength to their movement. Often, better than the leader's skills and abilities.

(4) But they care well for:

- Time
 - Are they chronically late for meetings?
 - Do they miss deadlines?
 - Do they fritter away their days?
 - Or do they lead with appropriate rhythms of urgency and rest?
- Money
 - Do they generate the needed funds, pay their bills?
 - Do they spend wisely?
 - Do they provide margins for emergencies and ups and downs?
 - Do they maintain records well?

- People
 - Do they treat people with respect?
 - Do they provide adequate instruction?
 - Do they allow followers to utilize their strengths?
 - Do they provide constructive feedback?
 - Do they share praise with those who have contributed to his or her success?
- Other
 - Do they have a special skill or area of expertise that they have developed?
 - Do they share their gifts with others – training and supporting others?

◆ **Third, is the leader pursuing a worthy vision?**

The non-toxic leader articulates a vision that elicits the best in his or her followers, from integrity, altruism and compassion, to creativity and imagination.”

Jean Lipman-Blumen TAF page 188-189

- (1) Leaders, by definition, are going somewhere.
 - Where is it, they are going?
 - Do you want to go there too?
 - Is the vision big enough?
 - Is the vision significant enough?
 - Is the vision worthy of your time and energy?
- (2) Wise followers insist on knowing where the leader is heading.
 - Heads AND hearts should resonate with the leader AND the vision.
- (3) We are only given one life, therefore, every commitment we make means we are abandoning several other alternatives.
 - Opportunity Cost. What are we giving up?
 - Is this the highest and best investment of my life?
- (4) Followers make major sacrifices and invest their time, money, and energy in causes bigger than themselves. Therefore, cautious followers make sure the leader's vision is worthy of their sacrifices.

◆ **Fourth, am I following with my head and my heart?**

- (1) Emotional bonds put filters on our eyes that (Sunscreen Illustration)
 - Minimize the negative aspects of a leader
 - Allowing only the good traits to be seen clearly
- (2) Cautious followers allow their hearts to resonate with the dreams of the leader

(3) But they also evaluate with their heads.

- They look objectively at the issues
- They pull back the curtain to ensure that the leader is presenting more than smoke and mirrors.
- Colossians 3:1-2 – *Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, **set your hearts** on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. **Set your minds** on things above, not on earthly things.*
- **1 Peter 4:7-8** – *The end of all things is near. Therefore, be **clear minded** and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above all, **love each other deeply**, because love covers over a multitude of sins.*

CONCLUSION

- ❖ Jesus said “Follow me” – not, “Come join my leadership institute”!
- ❖ Everyone leads everyone follows – we must do both well.
- ❖ Effective leaders are wise followers
- ❖ Wise followers evaluate leaders based upon their:
 - (1) Character
 - (2) Competence
 - (3) Vision
- ❖ Astute followers engage both their heads and hearts!