Follow the Leader

For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father (John 10:17-18).

Do you remember playing the childhood game, “Follow the Leader”? One person was chosen to lead and all others had to follow the example set by that person. The leader exerted great influence on the behavior of the group.

Our world is full of many leaders: elected leaders, self-proclaimed leaders, natural leaders, and trained leaders. There are leaders in families, in organizations, in small government entities, and among nations. Some of the leaders’ influences are a good thing; others not so much! We do well to look at the leader and the source of his/her influence. That is the leader’s authority.

We learn much from the leadership demonstrated by Jesus. His authority carries impeccable credentials: Jesus receives His authority from the Father.

Scripture tells us that Jesus was teaching as one who had authority (Matthew 7:29). People were drawn to Him and listened to His words. Jesus had authority over nature as evidenced in His miraculous healing, stilling storms, and catching fish. Jesus had the authority to forgive sins, to heal our greatest human malady.

Jesus’ greatest authority given Him by the Father is one He spoke of as recorded in the Gospel, So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise (John 5:19). And again where we read, So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me (John 8:28). Of His own will, Jesus came to earth, lived the human experience with its joys and suffering, and then gave up His perfect life for the sake of sinful mankind. Jesus tells His disciples that this is the charge He received from His father. That is a leader worth following!

As a disciple of Jesus, He has called you to follow Him. Following has many facets for us. Perhaps He calls you to leadership in your family, an organization, your workplace or in government. We do well to seek the leadership of Jesus in each setting.

Perhaps God calls you to follow Him through the hills and valleys of your experiences. He leads us through times of great joy, accomplishment, and fulfillment. We can also depend on Jesus’ leadership through times of testing and suffering. When you travel through an hour or a day of ordinary joys, He understands those days because He has experienced them. When, however, your hours or days turn into times of pain and loss, Jesus has also been there. He will lead you through
that valley. **You can depend on His leadership because it has the authority of one who has walked that valley, too.**

Jesus’ great love for you led Him to lay down His life for you. Anything He calls you to do is possible since you know that you have eternal life with Him.

**We pray:** Our heavenly Father, thank You for the authority given to Your Son so that He would give Himself as a payment for our sin. Give us wisdom and courage to follow His leadership through all the circumstances of life. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Scripture references are from the ESV.