

# LEADERSHIP

## The Foundational Faith

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What are commands on leadership of the believers in the Noble New Testament? Is leadership control? Or, is leadership responsibility? Let us discover most of them in this study. What did the Great God say about leading the believers? What are the most important points?

We all have different gifts which Christ has made to serve us and that is because Christ is the head of the believers therefore it is not the right of anyone whoever they may be to claim to lead or be responsible for the body of believers. Because the Great God Himself is the only leader and no one else who leads us by the Holy Spirit given from Him. But God chooses from the group of believers some to be leaders or teachers or elders. And this group is called teachers or pastors. And God chooses some of the others to serve others and these are called administrators or servants.

***“This saying is trustworthy: ‘If someone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a good work.”*** (1 Timothy 3:1)

## CHARACTERISTIC OF LEADERS

The followers of Christ thought about leadership and when they asked Christ about the characteristics of a great leader, Christ answered. ***“Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, and kneeling down she asked him for a favor. He said to her, ‘What do you want?’ She replied, ‘Permit these two sons of mine to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.’ Jesus answered, ‘You do not know what you are asking! Are you able to drink the cup I am about to drink?’ They said to him, ‘We are able.’ He told them, ‘You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right and at my left is not mine to give. Rather, it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.’ Now when the other ten heard this, they were angry with the two brothers. But Jesus called them and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions use their authority over them. It must not be this way among you! Instead whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*** (Matthew 20:20-28)

God has given some believers the gift of leadership but it is not applicable to call them leaders because the leader is a servant. ***“But you are not to be called “Rabbi,” for you have one Teacher and you are all brothers. And call no one your “father” on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. Nor are you to be called “teacher,” for you have one teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”*** (Matthew 23:8-12)

Likewise also in the Gospel of Luke, it is written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, “*Now an argument started among the disciples as to which of them might be the greatest. But when Jesus discerned their innermost thoughts, he took a child, had him stand by his side, and said to them, ‘Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me, for the one who is least among you all is the one who is great.’*” (Luke 9:46-48)

And also, “*A dispute also started among them over which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. So Jesus said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in authority over them are called “benefactors.” Not so with you; instead the one who is greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is seated at the table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is seated at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.’*” (Luke 22:24-27)

The Apostle Paul wrote (from the inspiration of God) that those who lead they are guards and shepherds of the believers. “*Watch out for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after I am gone fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Even from among your own group men will arise, teaching perversions of the truth to draw the disciples away after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that night and day for three years I did not stop warning each one of you with tears. And now I entrust you to God and to the message of his grace. This message is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have desired no one's silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that these hands of mine provided for my needs and the needs of those who were with me. By all these things, I have shown you that by working in this way we must help the weak, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus that he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'*” (Acts 20:28-35)

And, “*For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but to think with sober discernment, as God has distributed to each of you a measure of faith. For just as in one body we have many members, and not all the members serve the same function, so we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually we are members who belong to one another. And we have different gifts according to the grace given to us. If the gift is prophecy, that individual must use it in proportion to his faith. If it is service, he must serve; if it is teaching, he must teach; if it is exhortation, he must exhort; if it is contributing, he must do so with sincerity; if it is leadership, he must do so with diligence; if it is showing mercy, he must do so with cheerfulness.*” (Romans 12:3-8)

Paul confronted the believers in the city of Corinth because of their astonishing problem and this rebuke was applied to all the believers because all the believers are responsible and not the leader only. Let us look at the leader in the book of Corinthians.

1. Leaders are servants in the field of God and in His building. “*So, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but instead as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready. In fact, you are still*

*not ready, for you are still influenced by the flesh. For since there is still jealousy and dissension among you, are you not influenced by the flesh and behaving like unregenerate people? For whenever someone says, "I am with Paul," or "I am with Apollos," are you not merely human? What is Apollos, really? Or what is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, and each of us in the ministry the Lord gave us. I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused it to grow. So neither the one who plants counts for anything, nor the one who waters, but God who causes the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters work as one, but each will receive his reward according to his work. We are coworkers belonging to God. You are God's field, God's building." (1 Corinthians 3:1-9)*

2. Christ is the true foundation for building, so let us build our foundation on Him.  
*"According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master-builder I laid a foundation, but someone else builds on it. And each one must be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than what is being laid, which is Jesus Christ."* (1 Corinthians 3:10-11)
3. Let the leader be a faithful servant. "*One should think about us this way — as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Now what is sought in stewards is that one be found faithful.*" (1 Corinthians 4:1-2)
4. In chapters 11 through 14 it says that every believer is important and we all share in the service for the Lord. "*For in fact the body is not a single member, but many. If the foot says, 'Since I am not a hand, I am not part of the body,' it does not lose its membership in the body because of that. And if the ear says, 'Since I am not an eye, I am not part of the body,' it does not lose its membership in the body because of that. If the whole body were an eye, what part would do the hearing? If the whole were an ear, what part would exercise the sense of smell? But as a matter of fact, God has placed each of the members in the body just as he decided. If they were all the same member, where would the body be? So now there are many members, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I do not need you,' nor in turn can the head say to the foot, 'I do not need you.' On the contrary, those members that seem to be weaker are essential, and those members we consider less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our unpresentable members are clothed with dignity, but our presentable members do not need this. Instead, God has blended together the body, giving greater honor to the lesser member, so that there may be no division in the body, but the members may have mutual concern for one another. If one member suffers, everyone suffers with it. If a member is honored, all rejoice with it. Now you are Christ's body, and each of you is a member of it."* (1 Corinthians 12:14-27)

God chose the leader and prepared him to lead and do the commands of the Lord and all of us do our responsibility according to the will of God. "*It was he who gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, that is, to build up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God — a mature person, attaining to the measure of Christ's full stature. So we are no longer to be children, tossed back and forth by waves and*

*carried about by every wind of teaching by the trickery of people who craftily carry out their deceitful schemes. But practicing the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head. From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body grows in love.”* (Ephesians 4:11-16)

Christ is a servant, even unto death. “*Instead of being motivated by selfish ambition or vanity, each of you should, in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself. Each of you should be concerned not only about your own interests, but about the interests of others as well. You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, who though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking on the form of a slave, by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross! As a result God exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow — in heaven and on earth and under the earth — and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.*” (Philippians 2:3-11)

The leader of the believers, they are the servants. “*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation, for all things in heaven and on earth were created by him — all things, whether visible or invisible, whether thrones or dominions, whether principalities or powers — all things were created through him and for him. He himself is before all things and all things are held together in him. He is the head of the body, the church, as well as the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead, so that he himself may become first in all things. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in the Son and through him to reconcile all things to himself by making peace through the blood of his cross — through him, whether things on earth or things in heaven.*” (Colossians 1:15-20)

And, “*Deacons likewise must be dignified, not two-faced, not given to excessive drinking, not greedy for gain, holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And these also must be tested first and then let them serve as deacons if they are found blameless. Likewise also their wives must be dignified, not slanderous, temperate, faithful in every respect. Deacons must be husbands of one wife and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.*” (1 Timothy 3:8-13)

And about the ‘elders’, “*Elders who provide effective leadership must be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching. For the scripture says, ‘Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,’ and, “The worker deserves his pay.” Do not accept an accusation against an elder unless it can be confirmed by two or three witnesses. Those guilty of sin must be rebuked before all, as a warning to the rest.*” (1 Timothy 5:17-19)

And also, “*An elder must be blameless, the husband of one wife, with faithful children who cannot be charged with dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be blameless as one entrusted with God’s work, not arrogant, not prone to anger, not a drunkard, not violent, not greedy for gain. Instead he must be hospitable, devoted to what is good, sensible, upright,*

*devout, and self-controlled. He must hold firmly to the faithful message as it has been taught, so that he will be able to give exhortation in such healthy teaching and correct those who speak against it.”* (Titus 1:6-9)

And as a responsibility of the elders is to pray for the sick, “*Is anyone among you ill? He should summon the elders of the church, and they should pray for him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick and the Lord will raise him up — and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.*” (James 5:14-15)

And, “*So as your fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings and as one who shares in the glory that will be revealed, I urge the elders among you: Give a shepherd's care to God's flock among you, exercising oversight not merely as a duty but willingly under God's direction, not for shameful profit but eagerly. And do not lord it over those entrusted to you, but be examples to the flock. Then when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that never fades away.*” (1 Peter 5:1-4)

And Peter continues with his talk on humility, danger and suffering in leadership. “*In the same way, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. And God will exalt you in due time, if you humble yourselves under his mighty hand by casting all your cares on him because he cares for you. Be sober and alert. Your enemy the devil, like a roaring lion, is on the prowl looking for someone to devour. Resist him, strong in your faith, because you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are enduring the same kinds of suffering. And, after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory in Christ will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him belongs the power forever. Amen.*” (1 Peter 5:5-11)

## MORE THAN ONE LEADER BUT ONE HEAD

It is not mentioned in the Noble New Testament that it is on the believers to have one leader only, but a number of leaders and different gifts. The desire of people is to have one leader, and this is not bad. But they think that this leader must be from the people. And this is the mistake which they fall into. For this reason God arranged for us the Holy Spirit to lead us and be a guide for us. The head is Christ who we listen and follow His voice, and we are always and ever under His leadership.

## EXAMPLES OF APPOINTING LEADERS

As examples, but not as commands:

Jesus chose the twelve apostles. “*Now it was during this time that Jesus went out to the mountain to pray, and he spent all night in prayer to God. When morning came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles*” (Luke 6:12-13)

And Jesus chose the specific group to serve Him. “*After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him two by two into every town and place where he himself was about to go.*” (Luke 10:1)

The believers chose leaders for them from among them, it is not mentioned how they chose them. “*The proposal pleased the entire group, so they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a Gentile convert to Judaism from Antioch.*” (Acts 6:5)

Christ appeared to the apostle Paul and chose him, and said about him, “*this is my chosen instrument to carry my name*” (Acts 9:15)

The Lord spoke to the leaders so they sent the chosen ones, “*Now there were these prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius the Cyrenian, Manaen (a close friend of Herod the tetrarch from childhood) and Saul. While they were serving the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, after they had fasted and prayed and placed their hands on them, they sent them off.*” (Acts 13:1-3)

The apostles chose leaders for the churches. “*When they had appointed elders for them in the various churches, with prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the protection of the Lord in whom they had believed.*” (Acts 14:23)

## THE BELIEVERS ARE ALSO RESPONSIBLE

God encourages the leaders to be like shepherds see (Acts 20:28) and (1 Peter 5:1-3) with focus on teaching (1 Timothy 5:17). But the believers are also responsible. Notice the following:

“*But I myself am fully convinced about you, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another.*” (Romans 15:14)

“*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and exhorting one another with all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, all with grace in your hearts to God.*” (Colossians 3:16)

“*Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, just as you are in fact doing.*” (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

## SUMMARY

The Noble New Testament commands the leader with a number of commands. And in summary God commands you, Leader, in this:

- Be pure.
- Be upright.

- Be holy.
- Control yourself.
- Do not be proud.
- Do not control those who are under your responsibility.
- Serve while you are leading.
- The important among you is like the least and the leader is like a servant.
- Watch out for yourself and for all the believers who are under your responsibility.
- Be careful how you build on the foundation and the foundation is Christ.
- Be a faithful servant.
- Do not walk according to your self-centered ambitions.
- Be concerned with others as you are concerned with yourself.
- Be like Christ who humbled Himself in front of death.
- Be dignified
- Hold the truth of faith sincerely.
- Do not have two faces.
- Do not be intensely strong toward earthly gain.
- Be a faithful husband of one wife.
- Be a good manager of your children (and of those around you).
- Rebuke the guilty unrepentant of sin in front of the group.
- Be hospitable to people.
- Be faithful to good.
- Be sensible.
- Be an example to the believers.
- Do not be quick to anger.
- Do not be harsh.
- Do not be greedy for money.

And,

- Oh wife of the leader, be dignified, balanced in the home, and faithful in everything.
- Oh children of the leader, be upright from accusations of sin or disobedient.

Commands for all:

- Do not call the leader ‘father’ or ‘teacher’.
- Test a leader first to confirm their innocence.
- Honor effective leaders with extra honor, especially those who work hard preaching and teaching.
- Do not listen to accusation against a leader unless it is by two or three people.
- Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and warning one another.
- Encourage one another and build each other up.

Important points:

- God gave gifts and abilities to people so he made some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some pastors and teachers. And they serve by their gifts to prepare the believers for God’s service.
- The examples in the book are that more than one leader leads and not one leader.
- All the believers work together and they do not rely on the leader.

- The examples in the book are that the leader is not a volunteer to lead but chosen.
- Christ is the head of the believers.
- Let the believers be servants to build the body of Christ.

## HOW CAN WE APPLY THIS?

How can we obey these hard commands? It is impossible! In actuality it is impossible but Christ carried the responsibility for us and we share with him by faith in our death and our resurrection with Him. Christ does not sin and always obeys the commands of God. And the dead do not fall to temptation. We have been crucified with Christ and it is not us who live, but He is the one who lives in us by faith. We have no excuse to sin because Christ carried sin from us. "***We know that our old man was crucified with him so that the body of sin would no longer dominate us, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For someone who has died has been freed from sin.***" (Romans 6:6-7)

***"Keep thinking about things above, not things on the earth, for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God."*** (Colossians 3:2-3)

Our leader is Christ and He says about us, "***My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.***" (John 10:27) In life of the world there are many voices and exciting ideas. But, the believers listen and obey the voice of Christ.

## CONCLUSION

The leaders of the believers are servants of the believers. Every believer is responsible for each other. And we do our service according to the commands of the head of the believers, and He is Christ, from His voice.

Every believer is a part of the body of Christ and every one helps the other. There is not one person who is responsible and controls the believers but all of us are responsible according to their position.

The gifts that the leader has he uses them for the improvement of the believers and not to control them.

Every member of us does their work and all of us share in the service which we present for Christ. We do not trust in another as if they were responsible for us, but all of us are responsible together.

Control and leadership are distant from one another. The head He is our Lord Christ and the Holy Spirit leads us each moment.

The end of selfishness is division from each other or human control on the others. But the faith in Christ, the faith in our death and resurrection with Him, makes us united in the group for the service of all.

Lastly let us end with the words of Christ from (Mark 10:42-45) “*Jesus called them and said to them, ‘You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions use their authority over them. But it is not this way among you. Instead whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’*”

Amen.