

Lead with Faith

Awkward Truths of Leadership

World Outreach Church
Sermon Discussion Guide
Sunday Sermon: **October 09, 2022**



We are all leaders in our spheres of influence—in our workplaces and in our recreational activities. The challenge is to use our influence in the context of our faith to the same extent. But the Church has increasingly left our faith on the shelf, and our voice has been left out of the public square, schools, and workplaces. We've got to find the courage to take our faith back into the public square and back into the values shaping our lives. It is going to take a new kind of courage to lead with our faith, and there are some awkward truths associated with this kind of influence. We are going to have to be willing to get up, move, make the effort, follow God, and lead with our faith.

I. INFLUENCE: GOOD OR BAD

Matthew 16:5–6 ⁵ *When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread.* ⁶ *“Be careful,” Jesus said to them. “Be on your guard against **the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.**”*

Mark 8:15 *“Be careful,” Jesus warned them. “Watch out for **the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod.**”*

2 Timothy 3:1–2, ⁵ *But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive ... — ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.*

A. Use Your Voice

Isaiah 40:3 *A voice of one calling: “In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.*

Matthew 3:1–8 ¹ *In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” ³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’” ⁴ John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶ Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.*

Luke 7:28 *I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John.*

1. When was a time a “small moment” had a major impact on your life, either for good or for bad? How does that change your perspective on your daily behaviors and attitudes?
2. When have you allowed legalism or materialism to creep into your life, causing you to miss an opportunity to share the truth or serve someone?

II. SACRIFICE, SERVICE & CELEBRATION

A. Jesus, Our Example

John 12:23–28 ²³ *Jesus replied, “**The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.**” ²⁴ I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵ The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ **Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.** ²⁷ “Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name!” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.”*

John 10:17 *The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again.*

John 19:10–12 ¹⁰ *“Do you refuse to speak to me?” Pilate said. “Don’t you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?” ¹¹ Jesus answered, “**You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.** Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.” ¹² From then on, **Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, “If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.”***

B. Jesus Chose Obedience — It Was Not Forced Upon Him

John 18:11 **Jesus commanded Peter**, “Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?”

Matthew 26:52–56 ⁵² “Put your sword back in its place,” Jesus said to him, “for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ **Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?** ⁵⁴ But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?” ⁵⁵ At that time Jesus said to the crowd, “Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶ But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

3. What characteristics do you associate with good leadership? How can you apply these principles to your own life in the context of leading with your faith?
4. When have you chosen to be obedient to the Holy Spirit’s prompting in your life, despite discomfort or inconvenience, and what was the outcome?

III. WORK, A FOUR-LETTER WORD

John 5:16–17 ¹⁶ So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted him. ¹⁷ Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.”

A. Confusion of Work Vs. Job

Proverbs 6:6–11 ⁶ Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! ⁷ It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, ⁸ yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. ⁹ How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? ¹⁰ A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— ¹¹ and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.

Proverbs 10:5 *He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.*

2 Timothy 4:5 *But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.*

1 Corinthians 15:30–32 ³⁰ And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? ³¹ I die every day—I mean that, brothers—just as surely as I glory over you in Christ Jesus our Lord. ³² If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”

Acts 19:8–10 ⁸ Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.

5. In what ways have you viewed ministry and serving the Lord as more of a hobby than an assignment?
6. Where in your life have you been too casual about leading with your faith? What are some practical ways you can be more intentional in speaking to and serving those in your day-to-day lives?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You have called me to your purposes, and I respond, “Here I am.” In all the places You have entrusted to me where I have influence and my opinion matters, grant me a new courage and a new boldness to lift up the name of Jesus. Holy Spirit, awaken me and help me recognize those places. Forgive me for when I have been silent. Open new doors of opportunity to me for new outcomes and new responses—I am listening. Help me live in such a way that when my days are spent and my strength is diminished, that You might be able to say to me, “Well done.” In Jesus’ name, amen.