

- ✓ **Learn**
- ✓ **Live**
- ✓ **Lead**

Leaders in the Making

Live What You Say You Believe

Week 7

Key Idea:
To truly be a strong Christian leader who is a positive influence on others, you must choose to do the right thing!

Leaders **learn** about and believe in the idea(s) they want others to follow. But, leadership requires more than just believing in your passion. Authentic, positive leadership also requires integrity. Simply put, integrity means you “**live what you say you believe.**” You don’t just *say* the right thing, you *do* the right thing! Leaders who possess integrity both influence others and lead them well. To positively influence others so that they want to follow you, you must live a life of integrity!

Good News

Throughout history, leaders have risen to power because they are influencers who bring hope and help to people. Generally, these leaders are strong and selfless individuals who influence their followers through the leadership style of Jesus. This type of leadership is “*servant leadership.*” Servant leaders know they must first earn the right to lead by personally making wise life-choices. Servant leaders also put a high priority on meeting the needs of their followers as they genuinely live out the motto “talk is cheap, but actions speak!”

Bad News

Beware! Some influential leaders do great harm to their followers and others. These leaders are self-promoting and selfish, and exist all around us in business, politics, sports and religion. Even leaders in your school may have self-centered reasons for wanting people to follow them. Their goal isn’t to “serve others,” but, rather to have others serve them. They ultimately seek to get their own personal goals and agendas met.

Philippians 2:3-4 says “*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves. Not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.*”

No leader is perfect. But, you should ask yourself these questions: “Have I *earned the right* to lead because of the way I live? Do people follow me because I’m a positive influence in their lives?”

Talk About It:

1. **Read** Hebrews 13:7 on the back. Whether leaders are Christians or not, they attract more followers if they *live what they say they believe.* **Give** examples of leaders at your school who have a positive influence on others because of the way they live.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership begins with a selfless leader who brings integrity and loyalty to his or her followers. This leadership style is quite different from the leadership approach that controls followers through *demands* and *commands.* Don’t claim the title of “leader” just because you hold the position. You must first live a lifestyle of personal sacrifice and service toward people you lead. You must offer your followers hope for a bright future as you serve them. This will result in your team members wanting to rally behind your ideas and objectives and do their best to meet the common goal.

2. **Read** Mark 10:42-45. Ask yourself, “Does the way I live demonstrate a life that serves others?” **Give** specific examples of how you can apply *servant leadership* in:
 - a) team sports,
 - b) a team project for class, and
 - c) your family life.
3. **Read** Exodus 23:2. Negative peer pressure is everywhere. Earning the right to lead often requires taking a brave and strong stance against what your “friends” want you to do! In **what** areas do you feel pressured to do the wrong thing?
4. Doing the right thing may *cost* you something. **Read** 1 Peter 3:14, 17. From your own life experience, **share** if you have lost a friend, popularity, a good test grade or something else because of “living the right way and doing the right thing.”
5. Often students have a spiritual experience at a Christian camp or a great Christian concert. They make an emotional commitment to follow the ways of Christ at school, at home, and in their social lives. But, in a few weeks, their commitment to *live what they say they believe* is gone. They find they are serving themselves instead of serving God and others. **When** has this happened to you? **Read** Galatians 1:10 and **discuss** how the verse explains *why* this happens.
6. All students, especially those wanting to live out their faith, can feel hopeless if they keep making sinful lifestyle choices that are destructive to themselves and others (such as underage drinking, drugs, sex before marriage, cheating, etc.). The good news is that God’s love for you is *never* based on your performance.
 - a. **Discuss** why struggling to overcome the “same old sin,” brings a sense of hopelessness that can lead to depression, low self-esteem and even suicide.
 - b. **Discuss** ways you could lead friends to know that God is able to give them a hope and a future no matter how many times they’ve failed.

Read It:

Hebrews 13:7 Remember your leaders, who spoke the Word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

Mark 10:42-45 Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be 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.”

Exodus 23:2a (NirV) Do not follow the crowd when they do what is wrong.

1 Peter 3:14, 17 (ISV) ¹⁷ But even if you should suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Never be afraid of their threats, and never get upset. ¹⁷After all, if it is the will of God, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Galatians 1:10 (NIV) Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

Next Week:
 “Meet” the queen who bravely **lived out** what she believed, even if it meant losing her crown and her life.

Key Takeaway:
Don't follow the crowd into sin.
Live what you say you believe!