

Lecture #3

The Commitment Jesus Had to His People

Church Leadership is a People Business

Having a great understanding of the nature and work of God is critical, but leading people as Jesus led requires loving them and sacrificing yourself for them. When your people truly know that you genuinely care about them, then they will follow you. The Lord knew this, so clearly we should seek to love as Christ loved.

On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well” (Lk 17:11-19).¹

It was the love that He revealed towards those who were never loved that created the deepest devotion towards Christ. Jesus would find Himself in the house of Simon the Leper (Mt 26:6), and for this He would be criticized as one who ate with sinners. “And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them” (Lk 15:2). Yet, it was the love He demonstrated to those who were shunned by all society that drew the tax collectors and sinners to Himself so He could lead them (Lk 15:1).

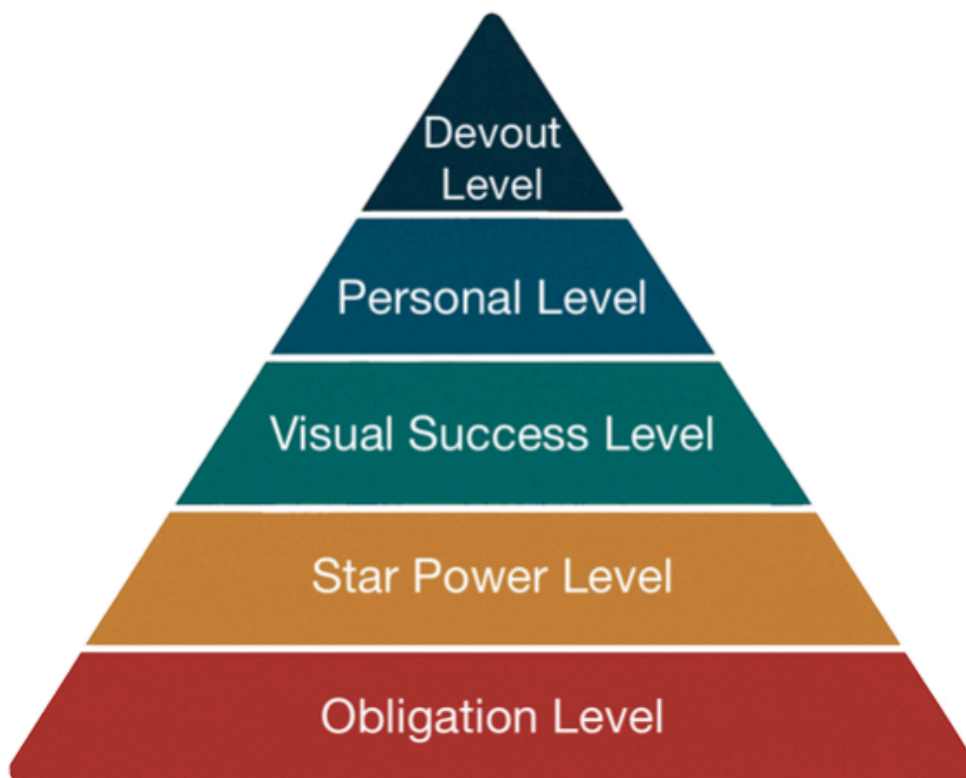
Effective leadership is mirroring the Lord. As a leader we must first draw close to the Lord ourselves, understanding our unworthiness, and only then can we love people as Christ loved them and thus build the relationship to lead them.

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the *English Standard Version*

If I do not have a genuine love for the people, then I have nothing to offer them, and they will not place their confidence in me.

As the Lord ministered He moved in their lives and led them through the various levels of commitment. The more He was involved in their lives the higher they moved up the commitment pyramid and the more influence He had to lead them. The same is true in our ministries. The more involved we are in the lives of those we lead, the more influence and commitment they will have to follow and serve the Lord.

The levels of leading that Jesus experienced with His followers. ²



² *The 5 Levels of Leadership* | Maxwell Leadership, August 31, 2016, <https://www.maxwellleadership.com/blog/the-5-levels-of-leadership/>.

Obligation Level

People followed because they felt they needed to. The Pharisees had little or no regard for Jesus and would only address Him as Rabbi. Even the disciples originally acknowledged the Lord simply as a teacher until He revealed Himself to them (Jn 1:43-49). People will accept us because of our position as the Pastor, Elder, Deacon or Ministry Leader. However, this is a title more than anything, and any changes will only be accepted because they feel obligated. It will be impossible to lead within a church if this is the level of influence we remain at. It is critical for any leader to move beyond this level to continue their ability to influence, and have affect in the spiritual lives of their people.

The Star Power Level

People followed merely to see the supernatural events that Jesus was achieving. The crowds followed Jesus because He did miracles and they always wanted to see more (Jn 3:2; Jn 6:2). So too, many people will come to church to hear good preaching, or to experience fellowship, or to experience some aspect of church that they enjoy. They come because of the star power that is demonstrated, but they will only stay as long as that continues. You keep them with what you win them with. Just as it is true that a crowd draws a crowd, the followers of Jesus quickly came and just as quickly fell away as soon as the miracles ceased, or when they were condemned by the Pharisees. People come to church for a few months and then disappear looking for something more appealing to them. But there is little to no commitment to the Word of God, the church or the vision. The star power level creates followers who have no staying power.

The Visual Success Level

The Jews followed the Lord for what He did spiritually that was successful. This only lasts as long as there is apparent success (Jn 6:61,66). A church grows when the environment is joyful, and everything looks successful. Yet, when Satan attacks, and the world condemns the teaching of God's Word, they leave. We can have an impact for a limited time with these people, trying to move them on to maturity, teaching them deeper truths than the superficial ideas that they have only known.

The Personal Effect Level

The Jews followed Jesus for what He did for them personally in their life. He created a sense of commitment because He was involved during times when they needed help, and they will follow because they feel gratitude and respect, just as when we visit the sick, do a funeral for a family, pray with them during a time of crisis, providing some tangible help that they appreciate. Jesus touched the leper, befriended a tax collector, ministered to a Samaritan woman; He was there for them during critical times in their lives. This level of commitment allows us to lead as they follow. We make suggestions and they trust even if they don't fully understand. You eat the soup and have won their loyalty. If we can get to this point, we can lead and make bold steps forward, and they will follow.

This is a wonderful level to arrive at since it allows us to have great influence in the lives of people and move them closer to the Lord. However, with this comes a great danger that if the leaders fail in their private lives, or if they fail spiritually, it affects all those who they had influence over. Peter was an example of this when he turned and treated the gentiles with disrespect in Galatians 2. Because Peter drew away from the Gentiles, it caused the other

disciples to follow his example, even Barnabas. To this Paul rebuked him publicly, which was necessary. The higher we rise in influence, the greater the tragedy of the failure of the leader.

The Devoted Level

They follow because they seek to learn everything we know and be what we are. They want to achieve the same lasting effects in their lives as they see in your life. Absolute loyalty because they see God in you, and want to be with you, to gain everything they can from you. This describes the women who stayed at the foot of the cross, when even the disciples fled. (Jn 19:25; Mk 15:40) This is where you mentor and duplicate yourself in another person's life. It is here that we are able to have the most impact as a leader for another generation.

BIG 10

10 People Building Skills Jesus Revealed

1. We must spend time being with people so we can listen and demonstrate our concern for them. Matthew 4:18–22
 - a. Purposely make time to be with people, sharing their important events.
 - b. Learn to have a patient attitude, not to confront them on every issue, even the most minute. (new cop mentality).
 - c. Have a willingness to help and offer support.
 - d. Always have a consistency in mood and behaviour, to create trust.

2. We participate in their lives. Luke 5:12–16

- a. Ask thoughtful questions and listen attentively.
- b. Show genuine interest in their lives and concerns.
- c. Offer help or support without expecting anything in return.
- d. Remember and follow up on important details they share.
- e. Through praying often for them.

3. We appreciate the effort with which they do that which goes unseen. John 4:7–26

- a. Tell their wives how much you appreciate them.
- b. Look at the process they used and time they spent in preparation.

4. Care about their hurts and rejoice with them in their victories. Matthew 14:14–21

It is important that we care about people more than on Sunday. There needs to be genuine care for people that extends beyond the superficial greetings that are often shared on Sundays.

5. We encourage them to be dependent on the Lord. John 5:19

It is a benefit to share with people how you see Christ in their life. When we are able to encourage another believer by sharing that we see a change in their life in their spiritual maturity, it will spur them on to continue on that path. And so we need to encourage one another that though the walk may be tough, there is spiritual fruit that is evident.

6. We give them opportunities to succeed. Mark 9:30–34

Christians grow as we see the Lord work in our lives. As we trust by faith and we see the blessings of that faith we are encouraged to step out and trust the Lord even more. Leaders can encourage others to succeed by allowing them to stretch their trust and see the goodness of God.

7. We correct with love so they see you want the best for them. Matthew 23:1–3, 27–28

An effective spiritual leader wants those that they are mentoring to do a great service for the Lord. A leader trains and corrects those that they lead with grace and in love because it is their desire to see them serve the Lord and minister effectively. This means sharing what we have learned in our ministry experience so that they can be effective to the best of their capacity.

8. Always be transparent and honest, treating people the same way. John 11:33–36

Never show favouritism or the appearance of favoritism. Though we often spend more time training certain individuals over others, as the Lord did with his inner three, it is important that we deal with and treat each other with the same level of respect.

9. Respect for boundaries and confidentiality. John 2:24–25)

The Lord set boundaries in His own life, and so it is important that we are aware of our surroundings and the appearance of misunderstandings to protect ourselves from accusations. It also means maintaining confidentiality in respect to personal areas that are discussed. If we lose the respect of individuals because we shared things that should be

confidential, then it is difficult to ever regain the ability to lead those individuals again.

10. Let them know that you are praying for them, and actually pray when you're able too.

John 17:6–19

One of the most effective ways that we have to gain the respect of others and lead people closer to the Lord is to spend time with them in prayer. It is not sufficient just simply to say that we will pray with them, but the connection and fellowship we have with others is based on the time that we spend before the Lord on behalf of another believer. When we are able to pray with another person, we develop a trust in them because they know that we care about their situations and their struggles and that we are willing to join with them and bring those issues before the Lord.

What we must do in our own lives so that we are capable of moving people to follow us as leaders.

1. Make a commitment to learn deeper truths of God's Word
2. Make a commitment to spend more time with the Lord
3. Verbalize your appreciation for the effort of the work
4. Verbalize your appreciation to their spouse
5. Verbalize how the Lord spoke to you because of their labour
6. Verbalize your desire to get to know them better
7. Pray both with them and for them. Setting them an example of prayer

Bibliography

“10 Character Traits of Jesus To Emulate.” Accessed August 21, 2025.

<https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/10-character-traits-of-jesus-to-emulate/>.

Maxwell, John C. *The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize Your Potential*. First trade edition. New York Boston Nashville: Center Street, 2013.

———. *Winning with People: Discover the People Principles That Work for You Every Time*. Nashville, Tenn: Thomas Nelson, 2004.

The 5 Levels of Leadership | Maxwell Leadership. August 31, 2016.

<https://www.maxwellleadership.com/blog/the-5-levels-of-leadership/>.

TheKnowledgeAcademy. “The 5 Levels of Leadership: Explained.” Accessed August 21, 2025.

<https://www.theknowledgeacademy.com/blog/levels-of-leadership/>.