



# LEADERSHIP MATTERS

Reading assignment should be completed on your own time, prior to your group meeting.



LEAD LIKE JESUS



## PRE-WORK

Read *Leadership Matters*, and answer the following questions with brutal honesty. If you're part of a group study, be prepared to discuss at least one of your answers with the group.

### LEADERSHIP MATTERS

Leadership. When you hear this word, what comes to mind?

Is it power, position, success, financial security, fame?

What names and faces do you picture as you hear the word leader?

Or maybe this term is so foreign and void of context in your life that if you were absolutely honest, not much comes to mind at all.

Do you ever look at yourself in the mirror and think, "I AM A LEADER; I AM AN INFLUENCER"? Most of us would probably say no.

You see, the original notion of leadership has been hijacked and reshaped into an exclusive, human-defined image of success that can only be achieved by a lucky few. In reality, leadership is nothing more and nothing less than simple influence – and influence is not reserved for the chosen few. It's part of each of our life stories, whether we realize it or not. So the real question is not whether you are a leader, but whether you choose to embrace or ignore your influence opportunities.

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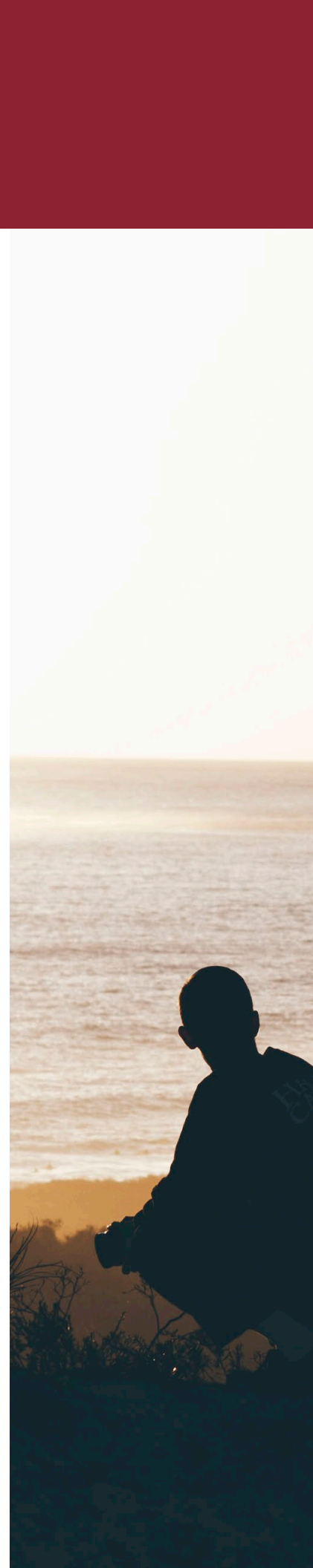
"PEOPLE SELDOM IMPROVE WHEN  
THEY HAVE NO OTHER MODEL  
THAN THEMSELVES TO COPY."

-OLIVER GOLDSMITH

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The quality and breadth of our influence has more to do with the condition of our hearts than with understanding and practicing certain leadership habits.

Faulty leadership born from a selfish leader's heart can be tied to every major failure, whether it's corruption, violence, poverty, or the breakdown of families and other relationships. Genocide, terror, and hunger can be traced to individuals whose hearts are filled with hatred, greed or desire for power. While many are willing to recognize and treat the symptoms, not much is being done to fight the root cause.



**61% OF THOSE WHO WORK FOR BAD BOSSES ARE LOOKING FOR ANOTHER JOB, WHILE 91% OF THOSE WHO HAVE A GOOD BOSS ENJOY GOING TO WORK EVERY DAY.” (BARNA GROUP)**

If asked to name the greatest leader who ever walked on the face of this earth, who would you name? It's probably hard to name just one. After all, there are many great men and women who have done much good.

But have you ever considered Jesus as the greatest leader role model?

We believe Jesus was and continues to be the greatest leader role model who ever lived. We can glean incredible insight from Him to help us influence those around us.

Why Jesus?

Because no other leader has compelled people to join a cause as big as Jesus did, a plan to redeem and restore this broken world. Jesus set the standard for building teams. In just three years, He assembled a flawed group of men who would ultimately change the world. He invested in them, empowered them, and He connected with them so deeply that they eventually laid down their lives for His purpose.

And Jesus, knowing His time was short, implemented a brilliant strategy that would allow His work and His vision to continue on through His followers. No other leader has ever set forth a worldwide movement in such little time that has carried on throughout the ages.

What other leader with such immense power remained blameless when tempted with selfishness, greed, or gratification? Where other men and women have fallen, Jesus maintained His integrity. When do you see those with power literally get on their hands and knees in order to serve their followers? How many leaders have you watched flip their kingdom upside down in order to become the lowest in order to help those who should be helping them?

Jesus provided a new, radical kind of leadership model.

Traditional leadership focuses on tactics, methods and habits. However, we believe Jesus modeled that real transformation starts on the inside. Unless our hearts are changed, no amount of tactical change will do much good—at least not for the long-term benefit of the people we seek to influence.

Not convinced? Consider this: how can someone whose heart is full of pride, fear, resentment, and disregard for others become a great leader simply by changing few leadership habits and implementing new leadership techniques? Have you ever seen a selfish individual deal gracefully with others? They may gain power, position and even prestige, but they will never be a force for good.

Transformation takes time; it's not a one-time event. And we can't achieve this kind of change on our own. We need the life-transforming power of Jesus to help us, which will ultimately increase our influence.

You don't have to have a title. You don't need a position. You don't need anyone's approval, economic status or popularity to lead and influence. The thing that's essential for good leadership is a transformed heart and a willingness to put off self.

Whether you acknowledge it or not, you are a leader. You are an influencer. The question is: will you use it? And if so, how?

**Q: Do you think of yourself as a leader? Why or why not?**

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**Q: What do you think about this definition of leadership: "Leadership is nothing more and nothing less than simple influence." How different is this definition from your current ideas about what it means to be a leader?**

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**Q: Have you ever considered Jesus as a leadership role model? Why or why not?**

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**Q: Some may deem Jesus' leadership model as soft and impractical. What would you say to that?**

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**Q: What do you think about this statement? Unless we are changed on the inside, no amount of tactical change will do much good, at least not for the long-term benefit of the people we seek to influence.**

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**"GOOD LEADERS MUST FIRST  
BECOME GOOD SERVANTS."  
-ROBERT GREENLEAF**