

**Summer Series:** “Vital: Churches Changing Communities and the World”

**Sermon #3:** “Led to Follow”

**Scripture:** 2 Timothy 2:1-2

**Theme:** God in every place and during every time has assigned women and men to be servant leaders. These leaders are charged to be faithful to God and fruitful for God.

**Blurb:** How are you doing at leading your life well? Or, put differently, how is it with your soul? How is it with your ministry? These two key questions get at our walk with Jesus (faithfulness) and our work for Jesus (fruitfulness). To be vital, we need to be faithful to God *and* fruitful for God, together. Who is asking you “how is your soul?” How can you find one way this week be truly connected to an accountable, Christian community? Leadership in God’s kingdom has always been a daunting task accomplished by less than likely people. We have everything we need to be vital and fruitful in the world. What great thing will we accomplish next?

*Music Worship Leader: Angie Carter*

**Gathering Song:** “The Time Has Come” - Sanctify

**Welcome** - Pastor David

Welcome - Introductions, Welcome Center

New web site

Turn off cell phones but like us on Facebook first. Can from our website.

**Songs:** “They Will Know We Are Christians by Our Love” - Sanctify

“Oh Lord, You're Beautiful”

**Worship Prayer** - Angie

**Kid’s Invited to Kid’s Church** - Angie

**Honoring of Retirees**

Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AoknEUdggqs>

Jim Coby, Lynn Ruter, Sherry Robinson, Julianne Benson, Chuck Yetter

Prayer - Pastor

**Faith Sharing** Steve Betker, Jen Berglund, Red Rock Camp

**Offering:** “Just a Closer Walk with Thee” Max Thompson & Sanctify Band

**Sermon Video** - For the sermon series “Vital”

**PP#1:** “Vital: Churches Changing Communities and the World”

“Led to Follow”

“So, my child, draw your strength from the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Take the things you heard me say in front of many other witnesses and pass them on to faithful people who are also capable of teaching others.” -2 Timothy 2:1-2 (CEB)

“Vital: Churches Changing Communities and the World.” “Led to Follow.” 2 Timothy 2:1-2 “So, my child, draw your strength from the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Take the things you heard me say in front of many other witnesses and pass them on to faithful people who are also capable of teaching others.”

Leadership is a key factor in vitality. This summer we’re listening to Jesus to learn how He wants His followers—His church—to be vital. Vital is a Latin word meaning life, full of life. Jesus said that He came so that we might have life, and have it to the fullest (John 10:10). What does it look like for His followers, His Church, Forest Hills, you and me, to live out this fullness of life? What does living vitally mean?

**PP#2:** *Image of the book Vital: Churches Changing Communities and the World*

Well, the leaders of our church have been reading this book together, and this summer, we’re going to use this book to learn how Jesus wants His followers to be a vital church. The author identifies five biblical characteristics of vital churches. Perhaps you want to get the book and read it with us.

Today we’re on chapter 1 - vital leadership. The first of five key biblical elements of vital churches, it says, is leadership. Churches must be run by good leaders. That means the pastor, for sure, but also for the other leaders as well. We’ll come back to this directly after a bit.

**PP#3:** *Images of current books on leadership, such as Leadership and the New Science.*

My guess is that this sounds pretty spot on to most of us. You see, all fields are spending tons of focus on leadership nowadays. Leadership is hot! Everyone is talking about it. I’m sure at work you’ve heard lots about it. “Good leadership is the is key to success.” I’ve been reading a number of books on leadership the last couple of years. There is a lot of talk about the primacy of leadership. Effective leadership, many say, is the number one determining factor for success. Smart companies, therefore, invest heavily in the leadership development of their employees.

The Bible is the oldest book on leadership. It’s not a new issue! But the Bible is not being used to teach modern leadership because there is a fundamental difference between the leadership the Bible teaches, and the leadership the corporate world teaches. One of my books defined leadership as “The ability to get things done.” Another book said leadership is “getting others to do what they would not do on their own.” In our leadership-saturated culture, leadership rests in *my own* personal ability, to get things done, to influence people, to get others to do what *I* want them to do. *I* need to develop my power of influence. It seems leadership often termed in power language.

**PP#4:** *Images of great biblical leaders: Moses, David, Peter, Paul, etc.*

In the Bible, however, leadership is handled as a person’s surrender of power to God. Have you noticed that the Bible is full of stories about individuals, specific leaders? Name some of them! [*Pause for answers.*] Yeah, you know their names, or what they did. At first it sounds like the Bible may be a collection of powerful leaders that we are supposed to be like. But if you dig even just a little bit deeper, you quickly see that in each case, it is not the individual’s amazing ability, or special charisma, or unique training or talents, that is effective. No! In each case, we see normal people, each with weaknesses and faults, and yet, how through them, God did amazing things. Ordinary, average

people. But what they got right brought attention not to them, but to God. When we read the stories of Moses, Ruth, David, Mary, Peter, Paul, each time we hear the stories of how it is so obviously God that made it happen. Leadership books: you make it happen! Bible: God makes it happen!

**PP#5:** *An image for Paul discipling/mentoring Timothy, subtitled, “So, my child, draw your strength from the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”*

Now, of course, we still have a role to play. We have a role of faithfulness, of getting on board with God, of developing our abilities, and perhaps even surrendering our focus on ourselves. But all of these are secondary.

Paul is mentoring Timothy, a younger adult that Paul has taken under his wing. If you want a great read on biblical leadership, read 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy and Titus. In 2 Timothy 2:1, for example, Paul tells Timothy, “So, my child, draw your strength from the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” Paul is teaching biblical leadership. The main source you draw upon for what you are called to do, is not your own abilities and aptitudes. You draw your strength from the Jesus you are following. He in you—His grace given into you—is what you draw from. See? It’s not about how good you are. It is about how good Jesus is, Jesus who is living in you and giving you the grace you need to lead.

**PP#6:** Led to Follow - Biblical Leadership

1. Faithful - A close relationship with God

So, the first crucial component, biblically, of effective leadership, is faithfulness to Jesus. It’s your close relationship with God that makes you a great leader. Sometime, take a look at God’s calling of Moses in Exodus 3. We don’t have time for that today, but you see strikingly there Moses’ personal inability, but God’s promise to go with Him, to guide Him, to give Him words to say, to give him the power he needs, and to fill Him with His Spirit. Moses’ key to success? God goes with him. Faithfulness to God is a leader’s #1 quality.

You want to be a better leader in your family? Invest in your relationship with God! The best gift you can give your spouse, your children—hear this, church!—the best thing you can do for those you love most, is to radically love Jesus. For it is Jesus who will make you into the leader your loved ones need you to be. It starts with faithfulness. Personal faithfulness to God.

**PP#7:** Led to Follow - Biblical Leadership

1. Faithful - A close relationship with God

2. Fruitful - Pursuing what matters most to God

The other crucial component to biblical leadership is a focus on the right kind of results. Our culture ranks success in numbers, dollars, influence, power, “the bottom line.” At work, you are a successful leader if you innovate adaptive change, creatively solve problems, work synergistically, build a cohesive team, increase the positive energy in your department, all so that the company can be successful by increasing the company’s value and making payments to the stockholders.

God’s bottom line is very different. There may be areas of your life that you are a slave to the expected results. But as a godly leader, God’s bottom line for you is to further His Kingdom on earth by what He has asked you to do. That doesn’t come in numbers or dollars. Now, we should measure some numbers - how many people have come to put their hope in Jesus? How have we spent the resources we have? But as God’s leaders, we don’t take responsibility to make the numbers

the way they ought to be. That's God's responsibility. The fruitfulness that God wants is to live obediently to the plan God has for our lives today. Each day we start our day praying, "God, I give you this day. May I do what you want me to do." And we end each day asking, "How have I fulfilled God's expectations for me today?"

**PP#8:** *Image for measuring results in the corporate world, perhaps charts and graphs?*

We have been so immersed in the corporate business culture that it is hard for us to measure fruitfulness in any other way than measurable results. But God talks about His leaders planting seeds. God talks about His leaders investing in others around them. God talks about His leaders showing kindness and care to those who cannot repay it. Fruitfulness must only be measured by the discerning of the Holy Spirit God gives within you. It is only by asking those questions each morning and each evening that you begin to get an inner confirmation of your fruitfulness. Or, if you want one leading question for gauging your fruitfulness, try this: "Do others know Jesus better because of you today?"

**PP#9:** Led to Follow - Biblical Leadership

1. Faithful - A close relationship with God  
(Your walk with Jesus)
2. Fruitful - Pursuing what matters most to God  
(Your walk for Jesus)

Faithfulness is your walk *with* Jesus. Fruitfulness is your walk *for* Jesus. It's a walk, a way of life. It's not just what you believe. It's how you live.

And this is perhaps the most amazing part of biblical leadership. Others see how you live. It's accountability. Popular idea. But again, not new. All over the Bible it shows godly leaders in mutual accountability. We see it in the partnering to do work collaboratively. We see it, in the Bible, in all the mentoring from one to another. The Biblical word is watching: watching over one another in love.

**PP#10:** Led to Follow - Biblical Leadership

1. Faithful - A close relationship with God
2. Fruitful - Pursuing what matters most to God
3. Accountability - Watching over one another  
"Watch yourselves and the whole flock...." -Acts 20:28

I don't know, it sounds kind of creepy! *Watch* one another. *You're being watched!*

But the bible is a gritty, real book. It know people. It knows we need to be watched! Left to ourselves, we will fall and fail. We will make bad choices, selfish choices, and not be the people we want to be.

We know that. And the Bible knows that. That's why God never leaves us alone, never leaves us to ourselves. "Come together!" the Bible calls. "Don't stay apart! Be there for each other! Watch over one another in love." Acts 20:28 "Watch over yourselves and the whole flock!"

**PP#11:** Led to Follow - Biblical Leadership

1. Faithful - A close relationship with God
2. Fruitful - Pursuing what matters most to God

### 3. Accountability - Watching over one another

-Watch over yourself

1 Timothy 4:16a "Keep a close watch on how you live..."

-Watch over one another

Titus 3:8 "I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have come to believe in God might give careful attention to doing good. These things are good and useful for everyone."

Notice the dual role of accountability, of watchfulness: watching over yourself, and watching over one another. We need personal accountability. Who do you have in your life who loves you enough to tell you to your face, in a helpful way, that you need to change in some way? Who have you given that permission to? Do you seek it out? Do you have people that you easily can talk something through, and that person or persons will helpfully point out where you failed, or where you need to make improvements? Do you give them that permission? Do you give them that chance?

We need to be watched over! Without it you will not grow! If you don't have that in your life, sometime this week, seek out an accountability partner. Pick a mature Christian you trust, and ask them to watch over you. Give them that permission, and then, give them that time. Schedule it on a consistent basis. And then do it! There are all kinds of excuses not to. I've found that I need to put it in my calendar way ahead of time. I schedule lunches with my coach, and I have committed not to miss them. In the last six years, I can honestly say that I have never missed—well, some I did have to reschedule, and I did, so I never skipped a lunch with my coach.

Married couples need to have an accountability couple to talk to. Pick a couple who will promise to keep your marriage working as their priority. Avoid people that encourage you complain and give details, and then take your side, and put down your spouse. Seek people who commit to preserve your marriage.

Or get into a small group that will hold you accountable. If you are interested, come talk to me. We're starting new groups right now.

If you have someone in your life that is your accountability partner, schedule consistent times. Don't let too much time pass in between. This week, set up another get-together. "Keep a close watch on how you live."

Two: Watch over one another. Be willing to be someone's accountability partner. Be in a group that helps others. But when you do, you must over and over again swear to yourself, "It's not about me." "I will listen first." "I will talk less." "Does all that I say keep that person's best interest in mind?" Biblically, all truth must be told in love. Love is the primary filter.

### **PP#12: Led to Follow - Biblical Leadership**

Pastoral leadership

Acts 20:28 "Watch yourselves and the whole flock, in which the Holy Spirit has placed you as supervisors, to shepherd God's church, which He obtained with the death of his own Son."

Biblical leadership: faithful, fruitful, accountable. It is crucial, says the Bible, for churches to have this kind of leaders in order to be vital. As your pastor, I strive to live into this kind of leadership. I live by Acts 20:28 "Watch yourselves and the whole flock, in which the Holy Spirit has placed you as supervisors, to shepherd God's church, which He obtained with the death of his own Son."

Preachers need to be watched! The United Methodist system is based on accountability. The Conference of preachers holds me accountable. In fact, in two weeks, I have my one-on-one with the

District Superintendent. She will be asking me personal questions about my faithfulness and fruitfulness. She will ask me questions like, “Tell me about your personal devotional life.” In the book, a great line for pastors is, “the single most important thing I lead is not my church, but my life!” (page 30)

But in leading the church, we work together to do God’s ministry. Again from the book, “The pastor’s job is to work with the [church’s] leadership to set clear, specific goals and to lead as the congregations works to achieve them. The ownership of the goals [is] with the lay leadership, not the pastor.” (page 27)

My role, according to the book, is to 1) stay well/self leadership. 2) Preach the best messages I can. 3) Lead our staff and senior leadership. 4) Lead our church’s other servant leaders and help them to mentor and coach others. This is 75% of my time. The last quarter is for administrative work and pastoral care. That’s a summary of my job! I’m here to help you do ministry better!

The United Methodist Church breaks down the pastor’s job into four areas of ministry: 1) Word, meaning teaching and preaching faithfully, “To ensure faithful transmission of the Christian faith,” and “To lead people in discipleship and evangelistic outreach that others might come to know Christ and to follow Him.” 2) Sacrament, meaning Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, the transmission of the faith to the next generations, in biblical truth. 3) Order, meaning I’m the chief administrative officer. It’s my job to make sure the church is well organized. This means equipping, supporting, guiding and training the church people in their leadership. And 4) Service. Mine is a ministry of service out into the wider world, “To give diligent pastoral leadership in ordering the life of the congregation for discipleship in the world,” and “To pray and labor for the unity of the Christian Community.” That’s my job as your pastor. Word. Sacrament. Order. And service. Since you are to also watch over me and my ministry, I need your help to do this. Please come and be truthful to me, but in love!

### **PP#13: Led to Follow - Biblical Leadership**

Pastoral leadership

Church leadership

2 Timothy 2:1-2 “So, my child, draw your strength from the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Take the things you heard me say in front of many other witnesses and pass them on to faithful people who are also capable of teaching others.”

So, remember that the work of the church is not the job of the pastor. The pastor is not the person the church pays to do the ministry. The pastor is the person the church pays to help them do the ministry. Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:2, “Take the things you heard me say in front of many other witnesses and pass them on to faithful people who are also capable of teaching others.” You are leaders in this church. If you have taken the vows of membership, you have taken on the responsibility to be a church leader. This is your church. This is your work. Again from the book, “Effective church leaders will help each member and prospective member to develop lives that are ever more faithful and fruitful.” (page 29)

### **PP#14: Led to Follow - Biblical Leadership**

Pastoral leadership

Church leadership

Personal leadership

And, of course, for each of us this comes back to us applying biblical leadership in our own lives, in our own settings to which God has called us. Faithfulness. Fruitfulness. Accountability.

I want to close with a video of a small church that had to take a serious look at how it was being faithful, fruitful, and accountable. It's about a church that opened its doors to the local motorcycle community. And as you see this video, notice how the church's leadership, and the pastor, had to rethink how their church was being called by God, and how they used their leadership to pursue faithfulness and fruitfulness. Have a look.

**Video:** #4 from the CD - Biker Church (2:10)

**Closing Song:** "Make My Life a Prayer to You" - Sanctify

**Announcements & Benediction** - David

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR JULY 12, 2015

**Summer Series:** “Vital”

**Sermon #3:** “Led to Follow”

**Scriptures:** Exodus 3:1 - 4:17

## OPENING PRAYER

### INTRODUCTIONS:

Introduce yourself and share briefly about a person you think is a great leader, and why (either in your own personal life, or someone you have learned about).

**CONTEXT:** I will only mention in passing in my sermon how God called Moses to be a leader. A closer look at Exodus 3:1 - 4:17 really offers some excellent insights on biblical leadership. God’s chosen people are slaves in Egypt. God wants to rescue them. He chooses Moses as His leader. Yet Moses makes five excuses. Let’s see how God handles each excuse, and what this means for how we can each be God’s leader.

**READ:** Exodus 3:1-10

1. It is God who does the choosing. God chose Moses. From what you know about Moses’ life. What makes him a good candidate for leadership, and what makes him a poor candidate for leadership?
2. God says in verse 8 that He has come down to rescue His people. If you were Moses, why might you find verse 10 surprising?

*For each excuse that Moses makes, note a) What Moses’ excuse was, b) What God’s response was, and c) What this teaches about Biblical leadership:*

**First Excuse:** Read Exodus 3:11-12

3. a) Moses’ excuse, b) God’s response, and c) What this teaches about biblical leadership:

**Second Excuse:** Read Exodus 3:13-22

4. a) Moses’ excuse, b) God’s response, and c) What this teaches about biblical leadership:

**Third Excuse:** Read Exodus 4:1-9

5. a) Moses’ excuse, b) God’s response, and c) What this teaches about biblical leadership:

**Fourth Excuse:** Read Exodus 4:10-12

6. a) Moses’ excuse, b) God’s response, and c) What this teaches about biblical leadership:

**Fifth Excuse:** Read Exodus 4:13-17

7. a) Moses’ excuse, b) God’s response, and c) What this teaches about biblical leadership:

**8. Application:** What will you take away from this passage? How will you live it out?