

Leading in Love and Truth: A Plea for More Christian Leading and Following

March 10, 2024 | Acts 20:13-38 | Pastor Mike Foster

· Who are “elders”? (v. 17, Acts 14:23, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Peter 5:1-4)

Elders are called and qualified to lead and protect God's church by teaching and modeling the word of God and the way of Christ.

➤ Elders are “overseers”

➤ Elders are “shepherds”

➤ Elders are “servants”

· Why does the church need leaders?

➤ The church is precious to God (v. 28)

➤ The church needs godly examples (vv. 18-19)

➤ The church is vulnerable to false teaching (vv. 29-31)

· What should we strive for as leaders and look for in leaders?

➤ Leaders who teach the whole word of God and specialize in the gospel (vv. 20-21, 24, 27)

➤ Leaders who provide a good and godly example – who live, look, sound, and smell like Jesus (vv. 18-19, 33-35)

➤ Leaders who have great affection for one another and the church (vv. 36-38)

· How can we bless our leaders?

➤ Pray for them (v. 36)

➤ Trust them (v. 28, Heb 13:17)

➤ Follow them (v. 28, Heb 13:7)

➤ Most of all, follow Jesus!

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you most from the message?
2. Who is a spiritual leader that has been a blessing to you? What do you appreciate about them and the way God used them in your life?
3. Read through Acts 20:17-38 slowly together. What do you observe about Paul's heart in this passage?
4. Read Acts 20:28-31. How would you summarize Paul's concern in these verses?
5. Read and discuss the article linked above about the dangers of false teaching – what do you find to be especially dangerous in this article?
6. Describe a time when you were exposed to false teaching. Were you drawn into it? In what ways were you protected from it?
7. In a world where so many Christian leaders have fallen, how and why should we trust our spiritual leaders? How can we trust and yet still protect ourselves and others from spiritual abuse and manipulation?
8. What should we do when we have a concern about one of our pastors or spiritual leaders? (Consider 1 Timothy 5:19-20)
9. In your own words, based on what we have learned from Acts 20, what are some qualities we should look for in leaders?
10. How can we guard our hearts from being influenced by leaders in our world who are not qualified to have any influence in our lives?

FOR FURTHER ACTION/REFLECTION

Read Matthew 20:24-28, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Hebrews 13:7, 17, 1 Peter 5:1-4

Read about Paul's leadership – <https://bit.ly/paulsleadership>

Read “The Distinctives of Christian Maturity and Leadership”

- <https://bit.ly/distinctivesofchristianleadership>

Read about the leadership crisis happening in churches

- <https://bit.ly/churchleadershipcrisis>

Read about the dangers of false teaching – <https://bit.ly/falsedoctrinedanger>

Listen to “Lead Like Jesus” – <https://bit.ly/leadlikejesussong>

Listen to “Lead On Good Shepherd” – <https://bit.ly/leadongoodshepherd>

Read *Spiritual Leadership* by J Oswald Sanders

Read *Leading with Love* by Alex Strauch

