

WEEKLY SERMON

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The privilege of leading ... and following

You may be familiar with the social media networking site for business people – LinkedIn.

It's a useful site for understanding the roles of people you connect with in more depth; as well as sharing tidbits about your own work life along the way.

LinkedIn is also a site of many contrasts too. For example, some posts perfectly encapsulate good leadership in the way people model the support they show their staff. Other posts on the site (often unwittingly) betray a complete lack of any understanding of what makes a good leader.

One contact of mine, who I won't name here for fear of embarrassing them, is an outstanding example of how to 'get it right'. From motivational away days and team meetings to taking time to develop a deep, empathic understanding of what makes each person in their organisation tick, they demonstrate excellent leadership skills.

What's more, they are clearly respected by their colleagues for doing so ... if the related comments on their LinkedIn posts are anything to go by!

Good leadership is a tricky thing to get right – I know from personal experience! In the past I have led teams myself in the worlds of newspapers and later in the public sector. It was exciting, and often exhilarating to do so. It could also be frustrating and, sometimes, really challenging.

But it was also a privilege. I never took my role for granted and tried to ensure my staff felt supported; were given the opportunity to shine and had the chance to display the best of their abilities. I'm still in touch with many of them, so I must've done something right!

Jesus wants us to shine too as we choose to follow Him. The difference is he already understands what makes us tick! He knows each of us intimately; what gives us joy and what gives us grief.

Despite that, Jesus is often perceived by some people as a distant person who feels unknowable. That may be because of what they have been told or learned in the past; but the exact opposite is true.

It's easy to forget that Jesus was *a real person* - God's son - who lived, breathed, loved, cried, laughed, got angry and knew joy and sadness just like you and me. There is a whole section of the Alpha Course * that demonstrates through real evidence that Jesus walked on the Earth.

Of course, Jesus also died on a cross 2000+ years ago for all our sins so we could have eternal life.

HEALTHY CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

Jesus wants us – YOU - to have a close and personal relationship with Him and it is through opening our hearts to Him we can know His peace.

This is not some 'Christian con' as someone once said on an Alpha Course I was involved in, but a totally genuine offer. After all, the Bible says: 'For God so loved the World he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.' (John 3, 16)

That means on any day, absolutely anyone can have the privilege of knowing and following Jesus ... maybe today is the day for that person to be you?

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** Find out more about Jesus and the Alpha Course [here](#) and find your nearest course [here](#).*