



# Leaders Covenant

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in His Father's glory with His angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

-Matthew 16:24-27



## INTRODUCTION

I praise God who called me to serve Jesus Christ as a leader among his people. With all my heart I want to follow my Lord and leader, Jesus, in the way he lived, led and developed people. I affirm that I want to grow in Christlikeness as a leader and help others in my sphere of influence do the same. By his grace I commit myself to be and lead more like Christ.

(Note: A "leader" in this Covenant could be a pastor, apostle, elder, bishop, deacon, evangelist, teacher, missionary, para-church worker, prophet, market-place leader, small group leader, educator, house church leader or anyone who wants to lead like Jesus. This includes men and women, young and old, vocational ministry workers and 'laity'.)

### 1. I AM ACCOUNTABLE TO JESUS.

I am responsible to Christ my Lord. He will evaluate and reward me. I have been called to a life of service, joy and sacrifice for my Lord, his kingdom and his people. I admire leaders around the world who make significant sacrifices, even giving their lives for the sake of my Lord. I take comfort that God rewards those who serve and sacrifice for him and his people. I grieve that some leaders act as though Jesus has nothing to say about their ministry, the way they treat people or the way they lead. They also do things to be noticed publicly and in so doing, have their temporal reward. Yet I know that my Father, who sees in secret, honors and rewards those who do the right thing even if no one sees it. I humbly ask for courage, boldness and faith to be pleasing to my Lord in the way I lead.

(Matt. 6:1-6; Matt. 16:24-27; Luke 18:28-30; John 5:22-23; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 4:11-18; 2 Cor. 5:9-10; 2 Cor. 10:12-18; 2 Tim. 4:1-8)

### 2. I WILL LIVE LIKE JESUS.

Christ-like character is required for leadership, and maintained by walking in Jesus' ways. I want to avoid being like the Pharisees of Jesus' day, who gave significant attention to external indicators of their leadership roles but whose hearts and character were far away from the Father. I acknowledge that in our day, sexual temptations are all around, yet our Lord calls us to live a life of purity and godliness in thought and action. I grieve that sometimes leaders do not act with integrity or speak truthfully with those they seek to serve. I am saddened that leaders sometimes act out of envy or jealousy toward other leaders or ministries and slander them or work to cause and maintain divisions. I desire to be more like Jesus from the inside out and to reflect his character in heart and life.

(Matt. 23:23-28; John 15:1-5; Phil. 1:15-17; Phil. 3:17-19; 1 Thess. 2:1-12; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 2:11-15; 2 Peter 3:11-14; 1 John 2:6)

### 3. I WILL SERVE JESUS.

Jesus came preaching the kingdom of God – the rule and reign of God in the hearts and lives of his people. By contrast, human nature presses leaders toward building their own "kingdoms" or "empires". I am saddened that some leaders seek glory and accolades from people and in so doing replace a focus on Jesus with a focus on themselves. I affirm that my mission is to build Jesus' rule and reign in the hearts of his people. I also acknowledge that in serving Jesus, I am called to serve and nourish my family in a godly manner. I want to serve Jesus with all my heart.

(Matt. 5:1-12; Acts 28:30-31; 2 Cor. 4:1-2; Phil. 2:19-23; 1 Tim. 3:1-5; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 3 John 9-11)

### 4. I WILL LEAD LIKE JESUS.

When our Lord came to earth, he modeled and taught what he wanted leaders in his kingdom to be and do. He taught that we must operate in humility and meekness, take up our cross daily, and treat people with grace and gentleness. He did not force his authority on anyone. Jesus used his positional authority to guide, bless and benefit those he led. He calls us to lead in the same way. Many leaders use their positional authority to "lord it over" people and instead use the world's way of power leadership practices and values. I am saddened that some leaders, even while speaking accurate doctrine, do not live as Christ-like leaders. Their actions distort Christ's teaching on leadership, confusing those they are called to serve. I humbly ask for a heart to lead like Jesus.

(Matt. 18:1-4; Matt. 23:1-12; Mark 10:42-45; 2 Cor. 11:12-21; 2 Tim. 3:1-13; Heb. 1:1-2; 1 Peter 5:1-5)

### 5. I WILL DEVELOP LEADERS.

One of Jesus's top priorities was to develop leaders. He did not mass-produce leaders but intentionally focused on a small number of them. I affirm that developing leaders as Jesus did calls me to build close, personal relationships with promising men and women, and to invest time in mentoring them. I affirm that the heart cry from many younger leaders around the world is for a spiritual mentor. I also acknowledge my calling to equip saints for ministry and to release them to serve as the Holy Spirit directs. I am aware that many leaders ignore this priority. I ask for grace and insight to intentionally equip saints and strengthen the hearts and lives of younger leaders.

(Matt. 4:18-22; Matt. 28:16-20; Luke 6:12-16; John 17:6-19; Acts 11:22-26; Acts 15:39-16:5; Eph. 4:11-16; Phil. 2:19-30; 2 Timothy)

## 6. I WILL SEEK HIS FACE.

Our Lord esteems and honors those who walk in humility and dependence on him and who seek his face in fellowship and communion. Jesus gave us a pattern of regularly spending time alone with the Father to seek his heart and commune with him in prayer. He did this even in the midst of many demands, pressures and even harsh circumstances. Following Jesus' model, I want to seek him regularly in personal communion and prayer. I know this will please him and enable me to more align myself with him, his ways and his will. I also want to live within my human limits by taking regular times of rest (Sabbath) to restore my soul. I know this will mean withdrawing from the pressures of my world for periods of time. My heart is to serve him in faithfulness all my days until he takes me home or returns in his glory. By his grace I want to seek his face.

(Isa. 66:1-2; Matt. 14:23; Matt. 26:36-39; Mark 1:35-39; Luke 4:42-43; Luke 5:16; Phil. 4:5-7; 1 Peter 5:6-8)

## 7. I WILL SEEK SPIRITUAL FRUIT.

I am chosen to bear fruit. Jesus taught and modeled that spiritual fruit comes from "abiding in him". I acknowledge that I cannot manipulate spiritual results or spiritual changes in the lives of people by means of my human wisdom or self-generated pressures. My role is to faithfully give myself to people through my gifts and calling and leave the results to God. My heart is to follow Jesus in his ways, walk in the Spirit and abide in him so that he works through me to bear much fruit for his glory.

(Matt. 7:15-20; Matt. 16:21-23; John 15:1-11; 1 Cor. 3:5-9; 2 Cor.1:12; 1 Tim. 4:6-16; 1 John 2:3-6)

## 8. I WILL COLLABORATE.

God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are One, with each Person fulfilling unique roles, yet acting in perfect harmony. Their collaborative leadership operates in the context of mutual submission yet each with appropriate authority for their roles and functions. I want to follow collaborative leadership modeled by the Trinity as the standard for leaders. I ask for grace to grow in serving and collaborating harmoniously with my fellow leaders.

(Matt. 28:16-20; John 5:22-23; John 16:13-15; John 17:21; Acts 13:1-3; Rm. 8:14-17)

## 9. I WILL FAITHFULLY STEWARD MONEY.

Jesus and the Apostles regularly had others steward money entrusted to them. They taught and modeled stewardship and operated above reproach in the sight of God and people. I grieve that some leaders take financial advantage of people or fail to seek financial accountability of other godly leaders for funds given to the ministry. I acknowledge that the love of money corrupts and distorts a leader's ability to serve Jesus' kingdom and causes many leaders to fail the test of godliness. I also acknowledge that leaders need to support their families and can rightly expect support from those they serve. I humbly ask for grace to walk above reproach before God and people with the finances entrusted to me.

(Matt. 6:25-34; Luke 16:14-15; Acts 4:32-5:11; Acts 6:1-7; Acts 20:25-35; 1 Cor. 9:1-18; 2 Cor. 8:16-22; 1 Tim. 6:9-11; 1 Peter 5:2-3; Jude 11-12)

## 10. I WILL USE WINESKINS TO SERVE.

Systems and organization ("wineskins") are aspects of stewardship for churches and ministries. I am stunned that in Jesus' day the Pharisees and Scribes opposed Jesus by using their wineskins of traditions, organization, laws, credentials and theology against him. I am saddened that many leaders are similarly tempted and often succumb to drawing people's allegiance to themselves, their organization, methods, materials or theological systems rather than to Christ. I observe that sometimes leaders want to be the ones in charge and so they create hierarchies, positions and titles to enforce their control and dominance. It is easy to "lord it over" or abuse people by imposing plans, vision or organizational mandates on people. I long to purify myself and to serve my King in holiness and gentleness and draw those I serve into a closer walk with him.

(Matt. 23:13-33; John 11:47-48, 53; Acts 20:18-35; Phil. 2:19-21; James 4:13-16; 1 Peter 5:2-3; 3 John 9-11)

## CONCLUSION

I am standing on the shoulders of leaders who have gone before me. They were not perfect, and neither am I. They led based on what they had been taught, and the Lord, by his grace and kindness, advanced his kingdom through them.

I confess my own failings as a leader before my Lord Jesus.

I humbly commit myself in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to be more like Jesus and develop others who will also do the same. May God, by his grace and mercy, help me to be faithful to this Covenant. Amen.

Joining with leaders around the world, I make this my personal covenant.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Witness \_\_\_\_\_

*You may find it helpful to spend devotional time going through the Scriptural references.*

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