

“Leadership is the art and science of inspiring others to reach their full potential in the pursuit of a common vision”

Dr. James Bultman



Today Scripture Reference

### I Peter 1:15 NIV

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”



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## The TCL E-Leadership Resource Do Leaders Need to Be Holy?

By Pastor Chris Carr – Bethel Ministries – [www.bethelweb.org](http://www.bethelweb.org)

I have to admit from the get-go that writing this article was a little daunting, primarily for two reasons. First, I have a great respect for Ron and his leadership skills. Over the past six years he has had a huge influence on my personal development as a leader. Standing in for him is certainly an honor but it is also a difficult task. Secondly, what do I have to add to the discussion on leadership? A simple search at amazon.com shows almost 350,000 available resources on leadership. It would seem that perhaps everything there is to say about leadership has been said at some point.

And yet I do find something missing from most discussions on leadership today – the necessity of personal holiness. There are plenty of books and articles about rules or laws of leadership, keys to leading an effective team, how to be not simply good but great, and how to use your gifts to their maximum potential. But there appears to be few people discussing the vital issue of personal holiness in the life of a leader.

How important is personal holiness in the life of a leader? Before I answer that with my thoughts on the matter, answer it for yourself – how important do you view your own holiness to your success as a leader?

My answer to this question is that personal holiness is the *most important* issue to leadership success. I realize that this is a fairly bold statement, so let me take a moment to back it up. My belief in the importance of personal holiness comes from the foundational truth that as believers our ultimate goal in life is to bring glory to Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 10:31, Col. 1:18). Flowing from that, our goal as leaders should be to lead in such a way that our followers are influenced to pursue Christ’s glory as well. Our ability to glorify Christ is in *direct proportion* to how holy we are becoming (2 Cor. 3:18).

Robert Murray M’Cheyne, a Scottish pastor in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century once stated, “what my people need most is my personal holiness.” I couldn’t agree more. Without personal holiness, a Christian leader has no foundation with which to lead.

You might not consider personal holiness to be a vital issue if you aren’t a pastor or a ministry leader. I would challenge you to reconsider. If you are a business owner and your employees (or customers) know you are a believer, you will be unable to lead them effectively if you aren’t living out what you claim to believe. If your integrity or morality is in question (which they likely will be if you aren’t pursuing holiness) you cannot be an effective leader.

So, how do we pursue holiness? First and foremost, we begin by focusing on Christ. Second Corinthians 3:18 tells us that as we look at Christ the Holy Spirit transforms us into His image, with ever-increasing glory. Something about simply focusing on Christ makes us more like him (1 John 3:2).

Second, we must be faithful in our study of the Word. In John 17:17, Jesus prays “Sanctify them by truth, thy word is truth.” We become holy as we get into the Word and the Word in turn gets into us. Finally, we become more holy through prayer. As we pray and seek the Father’s face, He pours out the Spirit and draws us closer to him (Acts 4:31, Jude 20).

As God is holy, let’s continue to strive to be holy in all we do (1 Peter 1:15), setting an example for our people to follow.