

“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
References
Matthew 10: 5, 11-14*

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions:

"Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave. As you enter the home, give it your greeting. If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town.

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The TCL E-Leadership Resource
When Should Leaders Leave – Matthew 10: 5, 11-14

One of the most difficult decisions in a leader's life is the day he or she begins to feel the need to change jobs or attend a different church. Anyone who has experienced this kind of change can testify to how hard it is personally, and how hard it is on the family. Generally, the days leading up to such a thought have already delivered a level of stress. Add to that the thought of separation from friends and co-workers and you can find yourself in a deep pit of depression and loneliness.

There is no doubt that the Bible instructs us to persevere. The word "persevere" implies that one will experience many forms of stress. Living the Christian life is not easy, and God calls us to be strong and enduring. However, our exhortation would be incomplete without a picture of what God really wants for us. Does God want us to have a life of stress and trouble? No, He does not. The book of Ecclesiastes is most likely Solomon's public debate with himself about the meaning and purpose of life. He concludes with God's purpose for us, which is to fear God and obey His commands. This is the whole duty of man. In addition, he repeats three times in this book how joy and contentment work together, and how that is expressed in our lives. One of these verses is: *Ecclesiastes 5:18 TNIV*

This is what I have observed to be good: that it is appropriate for people to eat, to drink and to find satisfaction in their toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given them-for this is their lot.

The word toilsome implies the need for perseverance while satisfaction represents joy. Using the ecclesiastical duty of man is a great foundation for help in determining the next step in deciding whether to "move on". Our featured text from Matthew above gives us some clues for how and when a leader should consider leaving. *(Please keep in mind that this article is for advanced Christian Leaders who, by God's grace, have confidence of a kingdom purpose for their lives).* From my study of scripture and experience, I believe we can see some steps in this process from Jesus himself as He instructed his disciples. Steps to consider are these:

"1. Be sure you had the authority to do and say what you say and do. - Jesus begins this chapter by giving his disciples the power and authority to preach and heal. He told them to take no money for it was those they ministered to that were responsible to care for them. Here one must be sure that in the midst of stress, your authority to do what God has called you to do has been granted. If it has not, stop and start over.

2. Make sure your work, message and/or ministry conformed to Scripture and has a history of bearing fruit. Don't be so impressed with yourself that you think your work and/or message is good in and of itself. Look at the fruit of your work and/or message. Make sure it is good fruit.

3. You should leave when you are sure no one is listening anymore. Jesus did not expect his disciples to stay and preach to a brick wall. If no-one listens, Christ tells us it is time to leave. Fulfill your kingdom purpose elsewhere.

4. When you go, go quietly and professionally. Our exits must reflect the "innocents" of Christ, namely like a "dove". If you leave your church, make sure you don't cause disruption. If you leave your work, comply with any commitments or promises you made when you arrived.

Friends, moving on is very hard. When must one go? I cannot tell you. However a short wise summary might include:

- Seek out God's word and purpose for your life.
- Persevere as long as you can.
- Leave when you know it is a must.

Hoping you find satisfaction in all of your toil and never having to leave,

Ron Porter

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