

LET GOD LEAD

INTRODUCTION

We are in a very exciting time of our lives, Che and I have been waiting for many years to finally go into ministry as a vocation and now I'm on the doorstep of becoming the lead pastor of our church. Make no mistake, I take this incredibly seriously and not without much fear and trepidation. I have some big shoes to fill and most importantly, I want to please Father God.

I am also human and as I plan and prepare, there are times when I feel a little overwhelmed. Thursday morning I was feeling this way and my prayer was this: "Lord, I'm feeling a bit lost". I felt the Lord's reply was this: "Let ME lead".

What peace, what confidence that brings. All of a sudden the weight of leading this church in the correct direction was undergirded by the Lord's supporting words – as long as I take time to listen to His leading, I will lead us in the right direction!

As much as this applies to me in leading the church, it also applies to each one of us personally, in our own lives. We need to LET GOD LEAD. **Zechariah 4:6** Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord of hosts.

The purpose of this message today is:

- To remind us to hand control of our lives back to God.
- To illustrate what happens when we try to lead.
- To illustrate the blessed life we can live when we allow God to lead.

MESSAGE

There are 5 main points I want to make today about letting God lead:

1. TO NEGLECT ASKING GOD TO LEAD WILL LEAD TO PROBLEMS

The Israelites were taking the Promised Land, God instructed them to destroy all the nations there, but the Gibeonites managed to deceive them.

Joshua 9:3-7 (NLT) But when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, 4 they resorted to deception to save themselves. They sent ambassadors to Joshua, loading their donkeys with weathered saddlebags and old, patched wineskins. 5 They put on worn-out, patched sandals and ragged clothes. And the bread they took with them was dry and moldy. 6 When they arrived at the camp of Israel at Gilgal, they told Joshua and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant land to ask you to make a peace treaty with us." 7 The Israelites replied to these Hivites, "How do we know you don't live nearby? For if you do, we cannot make a treaty with you."

The Israelites were suspicious, yet they still made a treaty with them. Why? Because they didn't let God lead!

Joshua 9:14 (NLT) So the Israelites examined their food, but they did not consult the Lord.

When the Israelite leaders discovered the Gibeonite deception, they could no longer destroy them because of their oath. Thus, their decision compromised their faithfulness to the instructions given to them by God.

- Neglecting to seek God's leading could result in us being disobedient to God.
- Neglecting to seek God's leading could result in compromise and sin in our lives.
- Neglecting to seek God's leading could result in seriously wrong decisions being made.

The question we need to ask ourselves, is: are we facing problems in our lives because of not letting God lead? Then we must not leave the situation as-is, but submit to God and let Him take control of our lives once again.

2. GOD WANTS TO LEAD HIS PEOPLE.

Throughout the bible we find examples of God leading His people:

- The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you.
- The Lord led the Israelites from captivity in Egypt, guiding them with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.
- He led Abraham's servant right to Rebekah when looking for a wife for Isaac.

In my own life I have found this to be true. (speak about our call into ministry, the waiting, the times I wanted to move and finally getting God's go-ahead in April last year.)

Our God is willing to go ahead of us if we let him. To be led by God, first of all we must be willing to follow, or let God take the lead in our lives.

- Are we following God? Have we made Him our leader? Have we said "God, I know you want to lead me – please take control of my life"?

God has great plans for us if we will only let Him lead us!

Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT) For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

3. WHO'S AT THE STEERING WHEEL?

There was a man who asked God for protection as he drove along the N3 to Durban. As he started a long journey he asked God to send His angels ahead of him to protect him. He felt God had heard his prayer and experienced the angels' protection. However, once he got on the highway, he decided to put his foot down on the petrol and go way above the speed limit. He came around a corner and drove into the back of a truck. Recovering in the hospital he shouted at God: "You promised to send your guardian angels ahead of me to protect me. Where was your angel when I lost control and crashed?" He heard the gentle voice of God: "Son, I did send my guardian angels, and they went ahead of you clearing the way for you. But, once you entered the highway, you were driving so fast that even angels could not keep pace with you. Before they could get ahead of you and clear the truck from your way you had already crashed into it."

- This man was in such a hurry that he moved out ahead of God.

There's a biblical example of this when Saul was going to go into battle with the Philistines. The Philistines had come against Israel with a massive army. Saul only had 2000 men and Samuel the prophet had told him to wait for him and after 7 days when Samuel hadn't arrived and Saul saw his men starting to scatter, he decided to perform the burnt offering himself. This did not please God and it would cost Saul dearly:

1 Samuel 13:13-14 (NLT) "How foolish!" Samuel exclaimed. "You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you. Had you kept it, the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom must end, for the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart. The Lord has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command."

- We must not get impatient with waiting for God (Samuel was God's representative").
- No matter how dire our situation, we must not be tempted to take things into our own hands.
- It could be that God has a great plan for our lives and by being impulsive and impatient, we lose out on God's blessings.

Unlike king Saul, David understood this principle. He sought God all the time. This was the secret of David's success. It was not in superior military maneuvers, it was because David waited for the Lord to go ahead of him and time after time God gave David victory.

Moses knew he needed God to lead: **Exodus 33:15** (NLT) Then Moses said, "If you don't personally go with us, don't make us leave this place."

But look at what God had said to Moses just before that: : **Exodus 33:14** (NLT) The Lord replied, "I will personally go with you, Moses, and I will give you rest—everything will be fine for you."

- When God goes before us, when He leads, we will have rest (peace), and everything will be fine for us!

God is gracious, if we have taken things into our own hands, we can turn our situations around today by asking God to forgive us and asking Him to take control once again, then God will go ahead of us like He did with Moses and David.

4. GOD'S WAY IS NOT NECESSARILY THE WAY THAT SEEMS BEST TO US.

Exodus 13:17 (NLT) When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along the main road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest route to the Promised Land. God said, "If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt."

- The main road would have been so much quicker, but God knew the people were not yet ready for battle.
- **Isaiah 55:9** (NLT) "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts
- God is omniscient, He knows everything. He knows what lays before us, He knows how we will respond in certain situations and He knows what is best for us.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NLT) "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take".

Let us ask ourselves today:

- Have we chosen the path that seems easiest to us?
- Have we taken what seems to be the most logical route?
- Have we been leaning on our own understanding or have we asked God what direction He wants us to take?

If not, it is possibly time for us to change our direction!

5. LETTING GOD LEAD MEANS WE ARE LIVING BY THE SPIRIT

Galatians 5:25 Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.

- Our faith should influence every aspect of our lives as we trust God to lead us.
- God's Spirit was given to enable us to live in a way that pleases Him and to bring us into His perfect will for us.

Let us ask God to lead us in every part of our life. He will show us which way to go, guiding us step by step.

- **Psalm 37:23** (NLT) The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this message today was:

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- To illustrate what happens when we try to lead.
- To illustrate the blessed life we can live when we allow God to lead.

God wants to lead us.

- We need to trust Him to lead us and not be impatient, running ahead of His plan for our lives and taking things into our own hands.
- God will not necessarily lead us in the way we expect
 - we must not try to understand our situations on our own. God thinks higher than we do, His ideas, visions, foresight and plans are not limited like ours. He knows what is good for us.
- We have the Holy Spirit and allowing Him to lead us, we are living in the Spirit.
- We need to trust Him to lead us, let go of what we think we know, and let God do what He knows.
- We must not try to understand our situations on our own – by doing so, we limit God.
- We must begin by seeking God's will for our lives.
 - God instructs us to seek Him first, (Matthew 6:33).
 - Seeking God first leads us to His will for our life.
 - Seeking God's will bring us to the correct destination.
- When we seek God, He'll make sure we are where we need to be, we will have rest and everything will be fine for us.