

The logo consists of the letters 'VP3' in a white, serif font, set against a dark blue circular background that is partially cut off by the top and right edges of the slide.A photograph showing four people sitting around a table in a bright, modern setting, possibly a cafe or meeting room. They appear to be in a discussion or meeting. The image is partially obscured by the VP3 logo on the left.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: WHAT MATTERS MOST?

NOVEMBER 18, 2020

Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you;
consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.
Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Hebrews 13:7-8

- 1. The greatest leadership development need in North America is a discipleship need. Jesus continues to speak “*but not so with you*” around our tables.**

- 2. Leadership flows out of being. We lead and serve out of who we are.**

- 3. Developing leaders is a ministry of paying attention and coming alongside. A mentoring attention is required.**

4. **We must help people see their development from a lifetime perspective. Flourishing leaders are lifelong learners.**

5. **Pay attention to seasons of disorientation in a leader's life; they are heightened times of learning and growth.**

6. **Leadership identification/selection is important. *Who and how are you noticing?***

7. **Cultivating a leadership development culture: *moving from an enlisting priority to an investing priority...***

8. **The leadership journey must be a shared journey. *Who are you running toward during this time?***

EXCERPT #1

I think of those who are in positions of Christian leadership. The pressure to model for others what maturity looks like can lead to breakdown or pride. You realize that others think of you as better than you know yourself to be. It's hard to maintain an image. But the pressure to encourage people by displaying what God can do in a life surrendered to Him makes you hide a few struggles.

Some of you are rightly grateful for the maturity that years of commitment have yielded. But you know the line between gratitude and pride is thin. Some of you are tired, close to burnout, weary of the loneliness that comes from battling with temptations you feel free to share with no one.

My message to you is, THERE'S LOVE! The Church needs leaders who can involve themselves in other people's lives with the joy of integrity and transparency, confident that their love is unfeigned, willing to be deeply known for the sake of helping others. The awful distance from people that the aura of leadership creates can be bridged. The struggles that sometimes tear at your soul can be dealt with. Vulnerability, humility, intimacy, power—qualities of character that the pressures of leadership can often weaken—can be developed. The model of a loving servant that our Lord both illustrated and taught can be followed. But more is required than keeping your head above the water of expectations and responsibilities. A long hard look at your life, preferably with a trusted friend, may be necessary to slow down the hectic pace of a life committed to ministry and to identify those internal issues buried beneath the demands of leadership. The joys of influence are available to people who change from the inside out.

The message of Christianity is that a relationship with Christ is available that can reach into every part of your life and can move you toward becoming the person He saved you to be.

Larry Crabb, *Inside Out* (Navpress, 1988), p. 25.

EXCERPT #2

The education of a leader is a complex thing. Certainly, talent matters. But even the most naturally gifted still have a lot to learn, and one of the most important things a leader needs to learn is what he or she stands for: what he is made of, what she believes in, what lines he will not cross. Crucible events and relationships have the potential to reveal what a leader stands for. Sometimes the revelation is immediate and obvious, but it can just as easily take years to figure out. The key is being able to notice, to be open to learning....

We need to find ways to leverage the critical formative and transformative experiences that men and women have in their own lives that can reveal to them who they are and where they stand.

Robert Thomas, *Crucibles of Leadership* (Harvard Business Press, 2008), p. xii.

EXCERPT #3

Leaders influence followers far more by the context out of which they live—body language, personal values, social relationships, dress, consumer choices, chosen companions—than the text they articulate. Leadership is not primarily a skill, although it employs skills. Leadership is a way of living that suffuses everything we do and are. Leadership is a way of being in the family and marriage, a way of being among friends, a way of going to work, a way of climbing mountains; most basically, a way of following Jesus. And so in a culture in which there is an enormous attention to leadership, it is essential that we take a long hard look at what is previous and foundational to leadership, namely, “followership” —following Jesus (Mark 1:17).

Followership gets us moving obediently in a way of life that is visible and audible in Jesus, a way of speaking, thinking, imagining, and praying that is congruent with immediate realities of “kingdom” living.

For those of us who are in positions of leadership—as parents, teachers, pastors, employers, physicians, lawyers, homemakers, students, farmers, writers—our following skills take priority over our leadership skills. Leadership that is not well grounded in followership—following Jesus—is dangerous to both the church and the world.

Eugene Peterson, “Follow the Leader,” *Fuller Focus*, Fall 2001, p. 31

FOR FURTHER READING

Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership: Seeking God in the Crucible of Ministry*. IVP, 2008.

Todd Bolsinger, *Tempered Resilience: How Leaders Are Formed in the Crucible of Change*. IVP, 2020.

Leighton Ford, *A Life of Listening: Discovering God’s Voice and Discovering Our Own*. IVP, 2019.

Randy Reese and Robert Loane, *Deep Mentoring: Guiding Others on Their Leadership Journey*. IVP, 2012.