

# welcome to Church.



there's more for you here



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## WHAT WE WANT FOR YOU

*"On hearing this, Jesus said, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'" - Matthew 9:12-13*

*"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe." - Ephesians 1:17-19*

## WHO CAN FOLLOW JESUS?

In Matthew 9:9-13, Jesus invited a tax collector named Matthew to follow him and then he ate dinner with him and his friends. The religious leaders asked why Jesus was spending time with these sinners and Jesus responded: "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jesus had a way of attracting the worst of the worst...the sick, the hurting, the broken, the oppressed, the addicted. They all wanted to be around Jesus. What's crazy is that he invited them to follow him.

## FOLLOWING IS A RELATIONSHIP

Those who followed him got to know his teachings and the way he lived. They were in a growing, maturing relationship with Jesus and with each other. Then, before they appeared to be ready, Jesus sent his followers out to offer healing, hope, and salvation to those who didn't believe.

As the body of Christ, the church is called to represent this pattern of relationship that Jesus modeled with other people. So at Ridge Church, our desire is to create opportunities for people to:





## Encounter Jesus

*“When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, ‘What do you want?’ They said, ‘Rabbi’ (which means ‘Teacher’), ‘where are you staying?’ ‘Come,’ he replied, ‘and you will see.’ So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (that is, the Christ).”*

- John 1:37-39, 41

## Find Belonging

*“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”*

- 1 Corinthians 12:27

*“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

- Hebrews 10:24-25

## Impact Lives

*“This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”*

- John 15:8, 11

*“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”*

- 1 Peter 4:10



# 1. Encounter Jesus

We consider reaching people who don't know Jesus one of our greatest responsibilities. So we treat our weekend worship experiences like the entrance into our home. When a guest comes to the door of your home, you open the door, smile, invite them in and then cater to their needs. You don't make the assumption that they know where to sit down or where the bathroom is. We try to take the guesswork out of being a guest.

## Worship

*"Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some."*

*- I Corinthians 9:19, 22*

The Apostle Paul understood that the best way to introduce people to Jesus was to find **common ground**.

You create that simply by being aware of and then eliminating the **distractions** that might become a stumbling block or an excuse not to follow Jesus.



## Characteristics of a worship experience at Ridge Church:

### Attractive

Attractive doesn't have to mean diluted. Jesus was attractive, so we should be as well. That just means that we work hard to make every guest feel right at home.

*"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'"*  
- Psalm 122:1

### Excellent

God gave his best for us, so we desire to give our best to him. We work hard to create an excellent and inviting experience from the parking lot to the seats.

*"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'"*  
- Psalm 122:1

### Practical

When it comes to Bible teaching, hearing and learning aren't enough. Clearly understanding how to apply it makes all the difference. Value is in the application.

*"So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up."*  
- Ephesians 4:11-12

### Invitational

Everybody's relationship with Jesus begins with an invitation to follow him. At some point during every message series, sometimes every week, we invite people to begin following Jesus or to take a step in their relationship with him.

*"'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"*  
- Romans 10:13-14



## 2. Find Belonging

One of the primary responsibilities of any church is to help people find a place to belong, because to grow spiritually, you have to be connected relationally. God created us to live in community with others, and it is only then that we can experience the full life He intends for us.

Ridge Church is a church *of* Small Groups, not a church *with* Small Groups.

### Small Groups provide these three things:

*(The ABC's of Small Groups)*

#### A Place For Accountability

*"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."  
- Proverbs 27:17*

We believe every person is created with God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Small Groups are a place you can grow with others to become more like Jesus and reach the potential God has put inside you.

#### A Place For Belonging

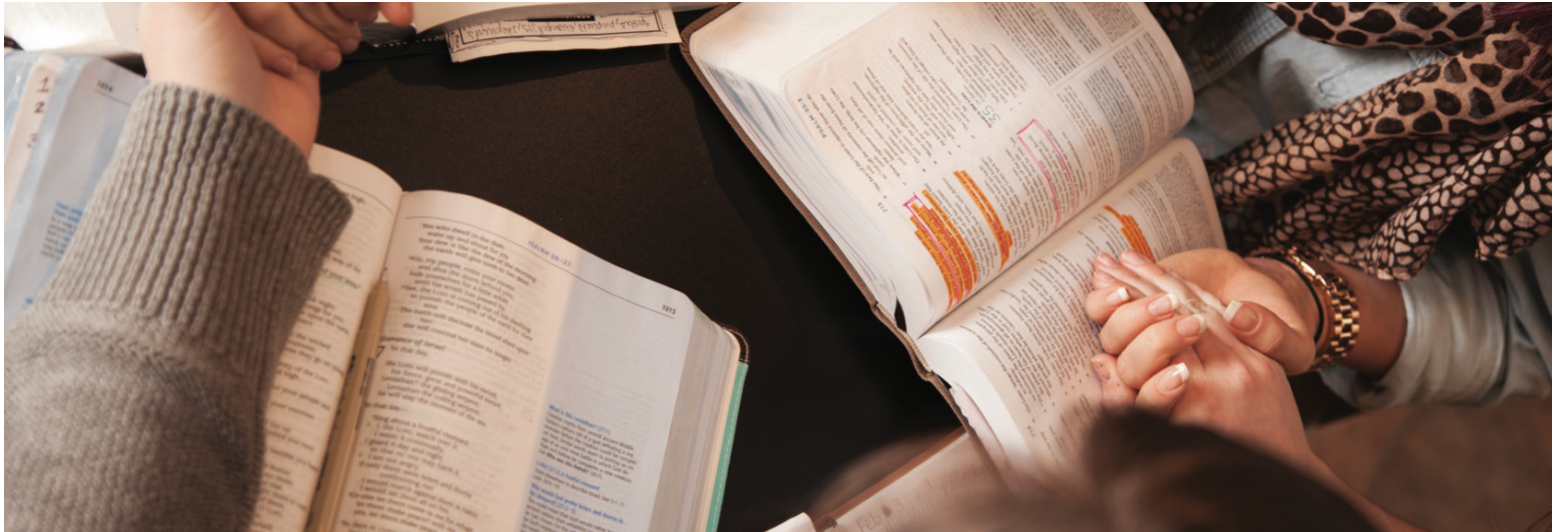
*"Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people."  
- Acts 2:46-47*

We were not made to do life alone. God created us for community, and Small Groups provide a place for you to connect with others, share life, and grow in faith together.

#### A Place For Care

*"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters."  
- 1 John 3:16*

When we do life together, our problems become smaller as God uses others to bring support and encouragement to our lives. Small Groups become a place where others don't just know your name but care about what is happening in your life and want to support you in your spiritual journey.



### 3 things to know about Ridge Small Groups:

#### 1. Our Groups Are “Free Market.”

Our primary goal for small groups is for people to connect outside of the Sunday morning experience. We feel the best way to accomplish that goal is through free market groups. These groups bring people together around common interests, and they minimize the restrictions on leaders. Anything goes as long as the leaders and their groups are practicing the “ABC’s.” We offer groups for:

*Men   //   Women   //   Married Couples   //   Students*

#### 2. There Are Three Semesters Every Year.

Small Groups meet each week in homes, businesses, restaurants, or other locations throughout the area. The groups change and begin again three times a year, so you have the opportunity to try out different ones.

- *Winter/Spring Semester: 13 weeks (January-May)*
- *Summer Semester: 6 weeks (June-July)*
- *Fall Semester: 13 weeks (September-December)*





### 3. Everyone Can Join A Group.

Our hope is for every person at Ridge to be connected in meaningful community through a Small Group. With several groups to choose from, we are confident there is a group that is a great fit for you. You can search groups on our website by the type of group you're interested in. Just go to our website at [ridgechurch.com/groups](https://ridgechurch.com/groups) and find groups that interest you and then contact the leaders to learn more.





## 3. Impact Lives

### GoTeam

Everyone who serves at Ridge Church is a part of the Go Team. The Go Team exists to create an incredible **DAY ONE** experience because every Sunday is **DAY ONE** for somebody.

Serving is a natural response of people who have really had an authentic encounter with Jesus and who have settled in and found a place to belong. All of us were created by God to make a difference in the life of another person. God has a place for you where your unique abilities and passions can touch the lives of others. We believe that your life will never make sense until you find, develop, and fulfill that purpose.

Don't be satisfied with keeping Jesus to yourself or your personal church experience. Make a way to impact lives by providing for others what others have provided for you.

*"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."*

- Ephesians 2:10

*"However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace."*

- Acts 20:24

*"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."*

- 1 Corinthians 12:4-5, 27

# Appendix

**Additional Information You Might Find Helpful**





# Statement of Faith

## The Bible

We believe that the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God for all people and that human authors were moved by the Spirit of God, through the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, to write the very words of Scripture. Therefore, we believe the Bible is truth without any error and is relevant to our daily lives.

## God

We believe in one living and true God who reveals himself to us in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe that God the Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and human history. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise.

## Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is God the Son, the second member of the Trinity. He became flesh to reveal God to humanity and was put to death on a cross and was raised from the dead to provide the only way to salvation and a right relationship with God.

## The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, the third member of the Trinity. He enables the Christian to understand truth and convicts men of sin. He cultivates Christian character and provides comfort. He empowers the Christian and the church in worship, evangelism, and service by baptizing them into the body of Christ and filling them with spiritual gifts.

## Humanity

We believe that all people were created in the image of God to have fellowship with him, but became alienated in that relationship through sinful disobedience. As a result, people are incapable of regaining a right relationship with God through their own efforts.



## **Salvation**

We believe that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and that his blood, shed on the cross, provides the sole basis for the forgiveness of sin. Salvation is a gift from God, not a result of our good works or of any human efforts. God freely offers salvation to those who place their faith in the death and resurrection of Christ as sufficient payment for their sin.

## **The Christian Life**

We believe that all Christians should respond to the free gift of salvation with a life lived for Christ and not for themselves. By obedience to the Word of God and daily walking in step with his Spirit, every believer should continue to grow and mature and be conformed to the image of Christ.

## **The Church**

We believe that the church is the body of Christ, a community of baptized believers unified through faith in Christ. It is committed to the teachings of Christ and obeying all of His commands. The church works together in love and unity, intent on the ultimate purpose of glorifying God by loving him and by making him known to a lost world.



# Core Values

## Our Values

As a local church, they're a lot of things we could do that determine who we are and how we are understood. But there are a few things that we will not compromise on and will continue to keep in front of us.

## We Will...

### **Prioritize Love**

We will live love before speaking truth.

### **Grow Faith**

We will never be satisfied with where we are.

### **Emphasize Our For**

We will fight for unity around what matters most.

### **Leverage Influence**

We will invest in the people around us.

### **Walk Together**

We will connect relationally to grow spiritually.

### **Serve Passionately**

We will provide for others what others have provided for us.

### **Elevate Generosity**

We will give a portion because Jesus gave his all.



# Church Government

*"For God is not a God of disorder; but of peace...But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way." - 1 Corinthians 14:33, 40*

## **Our church government is made up of three groups of elders:**

Believers who invest their hearts, time, families, and finances in the building of a local church deserve to have confidence in church leadership. People are looking for leaders who conduct themselves with integrity and respect when making decisions that affect their lives.

### **1. Guided By Our Pastors**

The Pastoral staff team is led by Pastor Trip. This team oversees the day-to-day ministry and operations of the church. These staff pastors serve the congregation and are responsible for the development of the spiritual life of the church. The Pastoral Leadership Team serve as Staff Elders.

### **2. Protected By Trustees**

Our Trustees are members of the congregation appointed by the Lead Pastor to oversee the finances and direct the provision of the facilities needed by the church. They provide counsel to the Lead Pastor regarding the major financial commitments of the church. The Trustees serve as Non-staff Elders.

### **3. Strengthened By Overseers**

The Overseers are three pastors of respected congregations and ministries who love Ridge Church and are willing to provide spiritual protection to the church. They may be called upon to help in accountability matters relating to the Lead Pastor if requested to do so by the Pastors or Trustees. The Overseers serve as Apostolic Elders.



# Church Finances

*“Now about the collection for the Lord’s people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.” - 1 Corinthians 16:1-4*

At Ridge Church, we encourage the Biblical standard of giving, which is: **priority, percentage, progressive giving**. Priority means we give first instead of giving from our leftovers. Percentage means that we don’t just give randomly, but instead we pre-decide that we’re going to give a specific percentage of our income. And progressive means that as income increases, our percentage of giving should increase as well.

Many people love to give to God but need to have confidence in the methods and purposes used by organizations to which they give. Therefore, there are a great number of people willing to give if they are able to see honesty, integrity, and genuine spiritual values reflected in the lifestyles of their church leaders.

The giving of tithes and offerings is worship to Jesus Christ and is an expression of the relationship between the individual giver and the Lord. That is why we don’t have people fill out pledge cards or make faith promises. Funds are not “income only;” they are worship and must not be considered as a business transaction but as an expression of gratitude toward God.

## Budget Guidelines

Our budgeting guidelines are laid out in our by-laws. In order to be good stewards of what God has blessed us with, we believe in creating margin in order to prepare for the future and protect against the unexpected. The budget is set each year based on **90% of the previous year’s giving**.

- **10% Missions/Outreach**
- **30% Operations/Programming**
- **25% Facilities**
- **35% Salaries**



# What is Faith?

Faith is trusting that God is who He says He is and that He will do all He has promised to do.

*“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”  
- Hebrews 11:1-6*

## WHY DOES FAITH REALLY MATTER?

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” - John 3:16*

### Faith = Relationship

Even the demons believed that Jesus was the Son of God. But the Apostle John was speaking of belief that leads to faith. And authentic faith is what makes all the difference.

Faith is the centerpiece of all of our relationship with other people and with our heavenly Father. And as that faith grows, the relationship grows and matures as well.

Belief in God leads to faith in God which leads to living for God.

### Faith = Humility

Bible knowledge alone will make you proud. Obedience alone will make you judgmental. Faith will make you humble.

*“We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing.” - 2 Thessalonians 1:3*



## HOW DOES FAITH GROW?

### Five Faith Catalysts

There are five primary catalysts God uses to grow our faith. These five things are not listed anywhere in the Bible. Instead, this list was developed by observing how God works in the lives of believers and even unbelievers. Every time we hear someone recount his or her faith journey, at least one of these five dynamics is a part of the story.

**1. Practical Teaching**

**2. Providential Relationships 3. Private Disciplines**

**4. Personal Ministry**

**5. Pivotal Circumstances**

### 1. PRACTICAL TEACHING

Practical teaching shows us where we are and where we need to be.

*“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” - Matthew 7:24-27*

It's one thing to know a lot about the Bible and another thing to actually live out what it teaches. That's why the Christian life isn't just about knowledge. It's when our acts of faith intersect with God's faithfulness that our faith grows. From Jesus' parable of the wise and foolish builders, we discover that hearing and learning are not enough. The value is in the application, because, in the end, it's obedience that makes all the difference.

We need to **HEAR** God's Word.

*“Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.”  
- Romans 10:17*



We need to **HEAR** God's Word.

*"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ." - Romans 10:17*

We need to **APPLY** God's Word.

*"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."  
- James 1:22*

## 2. PROVIDENTIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Providential relationships allow us to hear God through others.

*"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." - Hebrews 10:24-25*

God never intended for us to go through life alone. If you are like most people, you can't tell your life story without referencing people who played significant roles along the way. The same is true of your faith story.

### Be Careful

The Bible makes it clear that certain relationships are pivotal in our spiritual development, while others can lead us in the wrong direction.

*"Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm."  
- Proverbs 13:20*

*"Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts good character.'"  
- 1 Corinthians 15:33*

### Choose Wisely

We don't live in a vacuum. We're surrounded by wisdom and foolishness from all sides. So we need to intentionally create opportunities to surround ourselves with other believers.





### 3. PRIVATE DISCIPLINES

Private disciplines align our heart with God's heart.

Discipline is an activity or exercise that develops or improves a skill, so the notion of a discipline being essential to an authentic, heart-felt relationship may seem strange. But every healthy relationship is held together partly by disciplined actions and routines (just imagine a relationship without any personal boundaries).

Our relationship with God shares a similar dynamic. Abandoning these practices leaves God at the periphery of our lives. Regularly practicing these disciplines, however, draws us into a closer, more intimate, more dependent relationship with our heavenly Father.

#### Things We Must Practice:

##### 1. Bible Study

*"Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it."*

- Joshua 1:8

##### **I need to READ God's Word.**

*"...they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."*

- Acts 17:11

##### **I need to MEMORIZE God's Word.**

*"Keep my commands and you will live; guard my teachings as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart."*

- Proverbs 7:2-3

##### **I need to MEDITATE ON God's Word.**

*"But whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers."*

- Psalm 1:2-3

##### **I need to APPLY God's Word.**

*"Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."*

- John 13:17



## 2. Prayer

Jesus always exemplified a personal relationship with God through prayer that gave him great strength. Every person who has ever been effective in service for God has developed this habit. In order to develop a healthy spiritual relationship with God, we must spend time with him daily through prayer.

### The “A3-P3” Prayer (The Lord’s Prayer)

*“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,”*

**Adore** God’s greatness.

*“your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”*

**Abandon** your will for His will.

*“Give us...”*

**Acknowledge** your dependance on Him.

*“today our daily bread.”*

**Provision.**

*“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”*

**Pardon**

*“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”*

*- Matthew 6:9-13*

**Protection**

## 3. Giving

*“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”*

*- Matthew 6:19-23*



Being generous with our **time** and with our **possessions** is a difficult yet necessary part of growing our faith. It's a matter of the heart. And like the eyes direct which way we walk, so the heart determines the direction of our lives. We should be serving and giving to God's mission in this world. Giving up these things requires and grows our faith.

- Give God a **SLICE** of your time.
- Give God a **PERCENTAGE** of your money.

#### 4. Personal Ministry

Personal ministry positions us to experience God's power.

*"Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children."*

*- Matthew 14:19-21*

Personal ministry enables us to experience God's power in our weakness. We may feel ill-equipped and unprepared, but these opportunities are incredibly rich experiences through which God grows our faith. At first, you may perform an act of personal ministry or service in order to benefit someone else. In hindsight, though, most people feel like they are the ones that have benefited the most.

#### Giving through our giftedness

##### 1. Willingness

"For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable to what one has, not according to what one doesn't have." - 2 Corinthians 8:12

##### 2. Sacrificial

"They gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service."

- 2 Corinthians 8:3-4

##### 3. Expectant

"They gave themselves first of all to the Lord." - 2 Corinthians 8:5



## 5. Pivotal Circumstances

Pivotal circumstances force us to look in God's direction.

*"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." - James 1:2-4*

This is the one faith catalyst over which we have no control. All of the other catalysts inform how we will respond in the midst of unexpected circumstances. Life is full of surprises - some good, some not so good. But each unexpected event that comes our way is actually a divine opportunity. Often times, what shapes our response to these pivotal circumstances is the support that we have around us during these experiences.

**Nothing challenges our faith like a difficult, painful experience.**

*"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: It is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."*  
- C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*

Some people lean **INTO** God.

Other people lean **AWAY FROM** God.

**The difference is often the people around us.**



## Developing Your Leadership

*"It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom."*

*- Daniel 6:1-3*

Leadership is influence. Nothing more. Nothing less. It is about influencing others in a worthwhile cause. It is not dependent on titles or positions. It is dependent on people discovering their gifts and passions and then using them to make a difference in the lives of others.



# Qualities Of A Leader:

## 1. We Love God.

*"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." - Matthew 6:33*

**Grow in intimacy.** Consistently spend time with your heavenly Father. **Develop your character.** Allow God to shape you from the inside out. **Maintain accountability.** Give someone full access into your heart.

## 2. We Serve People.

*"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." - Mark 10:45*

**Be humble.** Look for ways to serve others.

**Be compassionate.** Care about the needs of others.

**Be authentic.** Be who you say you are.

## 3. We Always Improve.

*"People were overwhelmed with amazement. 'He has done everything well,' they said. 'He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.'" - Mark 7:37*

**Keep moving.** Never stop growing and looking ahead.

**Pursue excellence.** Do everything well.

**Reject passivity.** Do more than is expected.

## 4. We Stay Positive.

*"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" - Philippians 4:4*

**Be enjoyable.** Put on a smile.

**Trust first.** Don't jump to conclusions or make assumptions.

**Be encouraging.** What gets praised gets repeated.



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