

- ↪ The last time we were together we looked at this issue of leadership, It is always “follow me,” today’s mindset of “don’t follow me follow Jesus” is foreign to the New Testament. Our personal leadership responsibility is that people should be able to follow us to Jesus or they should be able to follow us to live a disciple’s life. We harp on the responsibilities of leadership, as does the New Testament, that they should be above reproach, godly, and Spirit led. We harp on the leadership, but what about the followership? Leadership without followership is moot. Leaders have big a responsibility don’t they?, of course, but what about the followers? “Don’t follow me, follow Jesus” is abdication. To not follow God’s appointed leaders is insubordination.
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1. Insubordination was a massive problem in the Corinthian church.

- ✓ They flaunted the fact that they were “of Paul, Apollos, or Cephas,” but when one of these leaders tried to correct or direct them they would say, “Who does he think he is?” 1st Corinthians 4:18-21, insubordination was an ongoing problem in this church, 2nd Corinthians 10:2-3; 13:2-3, 9. They didn’t have a leadership problem, they had a followership problem. Paul mostly had commendations for the churches he wrote to because they were willing to follow his leadership. The only two churches with huge problems across their entire fellowships were also the churches that didn’t want to follow Paul’s leadership, i.e., the churches of Corinth and Galatia. They represent the New Testament’s answer to the question of “what happens to a church that does not follow it’s God ordained leadership?”

2. Has God actually given authority to certain positions in the church; authority that we are to follow?

- ✓ Paul seems to think so. Paul had apostolic authority and he expected the Corinthians to follow his leadership. But there aren’t any apostles today; do we still have to follow leadership? Listen to what Paul says to Timothy who was not an apostle but only a pastor of a local congregation, 2nd Timothy 4:1-2. He says a similar thing to Titus who also was not an apostle, Titus 2:15.

3. We live in a day where the positions of pastor, deacon or elder are much maligned.

- ✓ Fairly understandable since we have had so much misbehaving of church leadership and mishandling of responsibilities. So, if we have had a bad experience with a church leader, are we now exempt from following any other church leader from here after? Definitely not, Hebrews 13:17; 1st Thessalonians 5:12-13. Why do we give them titles like shepherd, elder or deacon and then not follow them? Are they, therefore, above reproach and everything they say is like hearing the voice of God? NO! 1st Timothy 5:19, what’s true for an elder is also true for a follower, but if an elder is accused by 2 or 3 witnesses, entertain it!

Church leaders have no authority in and of themselves. But if they have been sent by the owner of the house, we would do well to listen to them.
