



## Introduction

This week, Pastor J.D. taught us about what good leadership in the church looks like from 1 Corinthians. He gave us four characteristics that make a good leader:

1. A Christian leader is a servant of Christ (v. 1a).
2. A Christian leader is a steward of the mysteries of God (v. 1b).
3. A Christian leader is only a surrogate (v. 6).
4. A Christian leader is a spectacle of suffering (v. 9).

In small group, we will discuss how we can apply these to ourselves and our church as a whole.

## Before Your Small Group Meeting

Listen to the weekend message from Sept. 16/19.

Read 1 Corinthians 4.

## Getting Started

### First Five Minutes

Choose one of the following prompts or questions to open your discussion this week:

In 1 Corinthians 4:16, Paul says, “Be imitators of me.”

- Who are some people close to you who have influenced you the most? Who do you want to be like?
- When was the last time you told someone, “Be like me”?

### Prayer

Open with a prayer asking God to send his Spirit as you begin to discuss his preached Word.

## Group Discussion

Read 1 Corinthians 4 aloud as a group.

In 1 Corinthians 4:1, Paul says, “A person should think of us in this way: as servants of Christ and managers of the mysteries of God.”

1. Pastor J.D. said that “any leadership position must be seen first and foremost as an act of service to Christ, where you are just his instrument in someone else’s life.” What are ways that God has put you in a leadership position? And what does it mean to be a servant of Christ in that position?

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The second point from the sermon emphasized that a Christian leader is a steward. Observe Paul’s words as he starts the chapter:

Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

<sup>2</sup>In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

2. What is the leader a steward of? And what is required of this steward? What is the best way to judge a leader?

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Last weekend we learned that a Christian leader is only a surrogate. In the sermon, Pastor J.D. distinguished between bad and good authority in the church, saying:

- “There’s bad authority. That’s where leaders use their power, privilege, or position to direct attention to usurp God’s position and direct attention to themselves.
- Then there is good authority, where leaders use their power, privilege, or position to submit to God’s will and direct people to him.”

3. If you are a member of the church, God has called you to both imitate the life of your church leaders while assessing if they are using their authority for good or ill. How can you encourage and promote good authority in the church? How can you serve both the body and its leaders by protecting the church from bad authority?

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Paul uses sarcasm to rebuke the Corinthians in verses 8–13:

You are already full! You are already rich! You have begun to reign as kings without us—and I wish you did reign, so that we could also reign with you! <sup>9</sup>For I think God has displayed us, the apostles, in last place, like men condemned to die: We have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to people. <sup>10</sup>We are fools for Christ, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! <sup>11</sup>Up to the present hour we are both hungry and thirsty; we are poorly clothed, roughly treated, homeless; <sup>12</sup>we labor, working with our own hands. When we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; <sup>13</sup>when we are slandered, we respond graciously. Even now, we are like the scum of the earth, like everyone’s garbage.

4. Pastor J.D's last point emphasized how we should expect Christian leaders to endure suffering, because they follow a **crucified** Messiah. As church members, why are we not attracted to leaders who suffer? As leaders, how can we follow Christ in faithfully enduring suffering?

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## **Prayer**

Pastor J.D. closed the sermon by addressing those who have been hurt in the past by spiritual authority. As you break up to pray this week, please remember to pray for those in our church who have endured abuse. Pray that God would heal them and show them how much more glorious Christ is in comparison to the bad spiritual authority they have witnessed.

Break up into smaller groups to allow more time for prayer. As you share your prayer requests with one another, please take some time to pray for the leaders that you know—specifically your small group leaders and pastors.