Straight Thinking

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FOLLOWING THE LEADER

Sunday. Do you want to be a leader? There's some prestige associated with being in the spotlight. What satisfaction in making decisions and having others go along with them! And then, wouldn't it be gratifying to have people come to you for advice before making their decisions? Leadership ability is extremely important in the eyes of the world, but learning to follow is the first art in becoming an effective leader. (Read Luke **22**:25.)

Monday. Most people are not natural leaders. It takes a special combination of opportunities, abilities, and personality to produce an outstanding leader. Although we can develop our talents to a significant extent, we may end up playing a supportive role. And there's nothing wrong with that. Both the world and the church need good followers, but the secret to being a good follower is choosing a good leader. (Read 1 Peter **2**:21-25.)

Tuesday. Someone that wants to lead for the sake of giving orders is never a good leader. When you're looking for a leader, consider whether the person has first been a good follower, someone that's willing to forfeit personal desires in order to help someone else, someone that's primarily concerned with the best interests of the followers. (Read Matthe **20**: 20-28.)

Wednesday. Think for yourself whether you're leading or following. Followers aren't people that let others do their thinking for them. In fact, to make any contribution at all, followers must do their own thinking and determine for themselves what should be done and how best to do it. After all, if the program fails, the followers will suffer along with the rest of the group. (Read 3 John 11.)

Thursday. Don't try to be the "big show" if you don't have what it takes. We won't help ourselves by hogging the ball from a "crack shot"; we'll just make our whole team lose. Remember, the more responsibility we take, the more criticism we'll get if we fail. (Read James **3**:1; Philippians **2**:3-11.)

Friday. Be satisfied to follow. We are no less important to the cause than the leader is. The "second fiddler" makes the melody more beautiful by playing an accompaniment to it. A good coach and a good team are both needed to win a tournament. The great apostle Paul by himself could never have evangelized the Gentile world as much as he did. (Read Colossians **4**:7-14.)

Saturday. We all both lead and follow. Those less able will probably look to us for guidance, and we in turn look to others. In one part of the whole process, we may need to follow; in another part we may need to take the lead. But the important thing for all of us to remember is that we must look to Jesus, because we must follow him if we are going to lead. (Read Matthew **8**:19-23.)

Virgil Warren, Straight, January 14, 1968, p13 cjristir.org