

Bridgeway Community Church  
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Next Gen Faith  
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## Next Gen Faith: LEADERSHIP

Question: When was the last time that as you led, you felt some of what I am feeling right now [vulnerable, nervous, uncomfortable]?

“If your leadership and influence is relaxing and fun and always comfortable, I think that you may be leaving some of your leadership potential on the table. It may be time to spice things up a little bit.”

“I want to clarify for you what leadership is. It’s having influence over people. Even if it’s just one single person...I need you guys to know that every single one of you is a leader because every single one of you has influence over a least one human being. I believe that every person has a call on their life to lead.”

“I want to talk about how you’re supposed to lead even when you are struggling and going through it.”

### **Getting Personal:**

On August 16th 2020 my grandfather very suddenly passed away from COVID. That was really hard. My grandfather and I were really close and there are times where I feel like I haven’t internalized that the last time I saw him...

His passing really hurt me. When that happened I thought: “I’m struggling, how am I supposed to lead?”

Two months later my oldest brother, who I was a caregiver for since he had severe autism, who was one of my absolute best friends, passed away. To say his passing was sudden is a monumental understatement. I was with him as he passed and he took his last breath in my arms. The trauma of that morning and the pain of knowing I no longer have my brother was the most painful thing I have ever experienced. This put me in a deficit.

I cried out many things to God. One of them was: “I’m struggling, how am I supposed to lead?”

Two weeks later I was riding around town on my dream motorcycle that I had recently purchased. My mind got distracted for maybe 3 seconds and I ended up plowing into the back corner of a cargo van and went flying...Somehow I walked away with no real injuries besides some full-body bruising.

But it left me in a physical deficit which put me in an emotional deficit. I thought to God: "I'm struggling, how am I supposed to lead?"

Over the next 9 months, I had some painful relational issues with people very close to me. I am not playing the blame game, I promise. But these are issues that were brought on by others outside of me and they were so painful.

This left me thinking: "God, how am I supposed to lead?"

Just a little over a month ago my dad and I went on a week-long 1700 mile motorcycle trip...Then a couple of days after we got back, my dad and I were on a casual backroad Saturday afternoon ride, I was going about 40 or 45 mph and I hit the biggest deer I've ever seen. It hit it head-on and instantly felt pain in my whole body. In my head there was no time to be afraid, just the thought, oh dang we out here crashing AGAIN...I was in a lot of pain, but I had no broken bones, never hit my head. Not one drop of blood.

"It left me in the greatest physical pain I've ever felt which led to further emotional pain. I cried out to God many times "I am struggling, how am I supposed to lead?"

### **Unifying Us in Our Experiences:**

And along this whole journey, I'm still a husband, I'm still an uncle, I'm still a son. I'm still a brother. I'm still a friend. I am still the Director of Student Ministries, I have a job. I kept crying out. GOD how am I supposed to lead. I know I'm a leader. HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO DO IT?! I know I am. BUT HOW?!

Question: Who else has felt this way?

I know I'm not alone. People have been going through it! You are not alone. I want us all to be open and allow us to be seen by one another.

"The world continues despite what we are experiencing and some of us are feeling like we are withering away thinking: "I'm struggling, how am I supposed to lead?"

“Because I have breath in my lungs, I know God has a purpose for my life. Part of that purpose is to lead people. If you are hearing my voice right now, you have breath in your lungs, life in your body, God has a calling on your life! You have a purpose...I get it, sometimes it’s hard. But moments of weakness are opportunities for God to show himself strong.”

## **CONVERSATION SHIFT**

Questions: How am I supposed to lead when my anxiety is bad? When I’m depressed? Or how am I supposed to lead when I just don’t know what direction God wants me to go?

“...some of the greatest leadership is not about what you are **DOING** to influence others. It’s about what you are **BEING** to influence others...it’s about being a conduit. The definition of conduit is ‘a channel for transporting water.’”

“The leadership that I’m talking is about using your unique influence to show people who Jesus is! I call this Conduit Leadership.”

**Conduit Leadership is taking your position or your moment of influence and using it to reflect Jesus to others.**

This is not leadership that requires you to be on stage, to lead companies, or to have authority over anybody. It doesn’t require a certain skill set or job title. It’s about using our influence to show people a glimpse of Jesus. This kind of leadership is about dialing in your own faith walk, it’s about being in the presence of the Lord, having the Holy Spirit in you so we may be a living, breathing reflection of who Jesus is.

“Conduit Leadership is about being, not doing. It’s about taking everything that God is doing in your life right now and channeling it out to other people. When we are Conduit Leaders we have the chance to positively change someone’s day, their life, or even bring them to Jesus changing their eternal future. It’s about being kind, loving, listening, and being present with people.”

“I think that we could change the world. Or at least, we could change our own world. The one that we operate in...on a daily basis.”

“Even though I’m hopefully personally coming out of this season of weakness and deficit, I realize that I still need to be a Conduit Leader.”

Question: How do we do it [become a Conduit Leader]?

## 1. TAP IN

We need to be tapped into the Spirit. Conduit Leadership always makes me think about John 7:37-39.

John 7:37-39 NIV

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." <sup>39</sup> By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

We need to get our drink on! We need to be tapped in. Tapped into the word, tap into the Holy Spirit through being in prayer. I love this visual of rivers of living water flowing through us. Water is so powerful and has force.

"Everything that we need to influence people is already in us."

"You can have that Holy Spirit confidence. Plus you don't have to DO something, you just have to BE something! The 30-hour revival...really taught me that I need to BE more IN Christ and not necessarily do more for Christ."

This last year and half of being in a deficit from hellish experiences have taught me that I need more Conduit Leadership, not more and more action-oriented culturally traditional leadership. Especially in my day-to-day regular life.

"A Conduit Leader is humble, they listen, and intentionally exist in the same space as others."

## 2. BE PRESENT

Luke 10:38-42 NIV

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" <sup>41</sup> "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, <sup>42</sup> but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

"When Martha was doing doing doing, being a good traditional regular leader and that kind of leadership is necessary. But it was Mary who sat with Jesus showing us how Conduit Leadership works. In that moment her power of presence was much greater than Martha's power of doing."

"What if we were all Conduit Leaders in every moment of our lives? Being present allows you to be there for people and to be a conduit of who Jesus is."

## 3. GO FIRST

Colossians 4:5-6

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. <sup>6</sup> Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

"You can't wait around and see what other people do or how they start. We can't miss out on the opportunities that God may have for us so we need to go first!"

Since I am the younger generation, I want to talk to those who self-identify as being the "older generation"....What we need from you is Conduit Leadership. We appreciate, respect, and are thankful for your decades of experience. But we also want to know how you handle challenges in your life now...set the example of vulnerability and went first with sharing about non-ancient things that have happened in your life and how you dealt with them.

The more real you are with us, the more real we can be with you, helping close any gaps and divides between our generations. If we can do that, then we can further the Kingdom of God through serving and being in a community with each other.

Ok, my generation, the “younger generation.” What I just requested that the older generation does with us, we need to do that with the “younger, younger generation” We need to be bold and vulnerable and go first in how we lead them and do life with them. We need to go first because truthful conversations redeem people.

Everybody needs to be more of a conduit Leader. Conduit Leadership is taking your position or moment of influence and using it to reflect Jesus.

“...you don’t have to be in darkness in order to be a conduit. But that is where you have the greatest opportunity to lean on and depend on God. But anybody can be a Conduit Leader at any time, out of their strength or weakness. Don’t be afraid to be vulnerable...show your weakness. Because It’s in our weakness that grace comes to be magnified.”

And here is how we do it.

1. **Tap In** (to the word, prayer, and the Holy Spirit)
2. **Be Present** (wherever you are, BE THERE)
3. **Go First** (in sharing, action, and vulnerability)