

DAY 3

Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did.

1 John 2:6 NLT

Jesus is historically one of the most famous leaders in the world. He was a popular leader 2,000 years ago, and He remains the best leader we can follow still today. Why? Well, when we study His leadership now, we see that Jesus used His authority in a loving way. Whenever He encountered people He had authority over, Jesus always treated them with love, kindness, and grace. His leadership teaches us that true authority isn't about being the most powerful person in the room or bossing people around. It's about love, and Jesus is the perfect example of that.

Today, ask God what areas of your life you can use your authority to show love. Where can you follow Jesus' example this week?

DAY 4

And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father. Colossians 3:17 NLT

You have a ton of followers! Okay, maybe your Instagram or TikTok doesn't exactly say that, but there are people who know you, pay attention to you, and follow you (whether or not they do so officially online). This verse tells us that our words and actions should represent Jesus, which can be a little intimidating. But representing Jesus may not be as difficult as it sounds. When you spend time with someone often, you start to like the same things or use the same phrases they do. The same is true with Jesus. When you spend time with Him and think about Him, you're more likely to represent Him well.

Sometime today, listen to one song that talks about what Jesus is like. Try to memorize the words. As you do, pray for His help in becoming more like Him.

DAY 5

Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children.

Ephesians 5:1 NLT

Have you ever copied someone else's clothing style? Or maybe you've been influenced by the way someone talks? Or wanted to try the type of hobbies they have? If you have, then it's probably for a reason. So often we imitate things about other people because we want to be like them in some way. As God's children, we have an opportunity to imitate God. God gave us a living, breathing example to follow when God gave us Jesus! When we love and lead like Jesus, we're imitating an authority figure who is worth it.

Today, make a list of things you know about Jesus and the way He lived. Then, pick just one of those things to try and imitate in your own life this week.

DAY 6

Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and follow the example of their faith. Hebrews 13:7 NLT

Written by Kendra, age 17 from Hartford, South Dakota, USA

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you were in charge but didn't know how to be a good leader? I remember the day that I got my first ever leadership position. I was selected to be the drum major of the marching band! I was so happy, but I quickly realized I didn't know how to positively lead my classmates. Around this time, I was reading my Bible and realized that one example of a leader we can follow is Jesus. In fact, Jesus really is the best leader we'll ever follow! He shows us how to be kind, patient, and honest. He shows us how to serve the people we lead. He even built a team of followers, who were called the disciples, to help Him accomplish His mission. When we lead others like Jesus did, we will better be able to love and serve the people around us. Once I realized this, I made it my goal to love the people I was leading the way Jesus did. I also made it a goal to look for other leaders in my life who led the way Jesus did so I could follow their example, too! Once I started doing this, other members of the marching band noticed. They were much more willing to listen to me and ask questions!

Today, think of one thing you're in charge of. What's one way you can follow Jesus' example when you're in charge this week?

DAY 3

Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing. 1 Peter 3:8-9 NLT

Do you ever win arguments that happen in your head? We all do! When someone does something that hurts us, we all want to get them back or pay them back, even if we don't say it out loud. And honestly? Payback feels great. So why does Peter say to do the opposite in this letter? Well, Peter had a life-changing experience that made him see everything differently. Not only did Peter know Jesus personally, but Peter hurt Jesus, personally. Peter sold Jesus out; he totally betrayed Him. But in return, Jesus didn't get payback. Instead, He made Peter breakfast and forgave him. Jesus showed Peter a way to live that was totally opposite from what he expected.

Today, take a moment to write down the things people in your family or friend group do that hurt you or get on your nerves. What would it look like for you to show extra kindness when that happens? What would it look like to tell them it hurt you in a way that doesn't hurt them in return?

DAY 4

But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. Psalm 13:5 NIV

Have you ever wondered, "Will this last forever?" Maybe it was waiting on the bell for lunch, or the lead role in the school play to be named, or that person you like to finally ask you out. When you're waiting on something important, it's really hard to trust that everything will be okay. The writer of this verse, David, begins by asking, "How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?" (Psalm 13:1). David is still on the run because he's being hunted by King Saul. His circumstances probably left him wondering if the worst would happen. Would he be in danger forever? But, instead of staying stuck in his worry, David reminds himself of something he knows is true: He can trust God's unfailing love, regardless of his circumstances. There's nothing wrong with having questions about life or wondering when God will answer our prayers. But even in our times of question, we can trust God, knowing that God loves us.

Today, take some time to write down what you know to be true about God—like how much God loves us.

DAY 5

Without wise leadership, a nation falls; there is safety in having many advisers. Proverbs 11:14 NLT

This proverb presents a simple truth: There's value in listening to other people. The wise people in your life who want what's best for you? The authority figures you can trust? Those are the people's voices we want to turn the volume up on in our lives. Why? Because their authority and guidance make our lives better. It helps us. Without the wisdom of others, we can talk ourselves into some not-so-great choices. But with their help, we can walk toward good things for our lives.

Unfortunately, no matter the reason, some of our authority figures are not-so-great. That's why having several good authority figures in your life that you can go to for guidance and wisdom is so important!

So today, think about the wise people or good authority figures you have in your life. How can you turn up the volume on their voices this week?

DAY 6

Dear brothers and sisters, honor those who are your leaders in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and give you spiritual guidance.

1 Thessalonians 5:12 NLT

Written by Sydney, age 18 from Quakertown, Pennsylvania, USA

We all have people in our life who lead us or are in charge of us in some way. Those leaders might be teachers, coaches, parents, aunts, uncles, a youth pastor, or other authority figures. The good news is that these people can help guide you to grow in your relationship with Jesus. One of these people for me was my sixth-grade leader at church. I looked up to her a lot. That was the year that I really started to make my faith my own. It was obvious that my leader loved God and showed God's love to us in so many ways. During sixth grade, she challenged me to start reading my Bible every day. I took her challenge on, and, through reading the Bible every day, my faith and relationship with Jesus changed forever. I am now forever encouraged to spend time with Jesus each day!

Think of one leader in your life who you really look up to. What's one thing about them that you really admire? Spend one minute thanking God for putting them in your life and for their good example of authority.

DAY 3

I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So, I sacrifice my life for the sheep.

John 10:14-15 NLT

One of the hardest things about dealing with people in authority is that it requires a lot of trust. The good news is that when it comes to God's authority, we can feel comfortable to trust it completely. God knows who you are and what you need. And more than that, God loves you and has plans to fill your future with hope. Just like a shepherd's job is to feed, protect, and guide their sheep, God uses authority to do the same for us. When you struggle with trusting God, remember what God's promised to do: protect, provide, and guide you in the best way.

Take a moment to jot down three ways God helps take care of you. Then, thank God for what you've written.

DAY 4

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 NLT

God has a lot of authority and can do anything in the world with it! But ultimately, God used it to give one pretty amazing thing to us: Jesus. God sent Jesus to live, walk, and lead among us. To die for our sins and take the punishment for us. To rise from the dead and make a way for us to be close to God forever. God, who has the authority do absolutely anything, ultimately gave us the biggest gift. What an example of what it means to lead with love!

Who in your life might be encouraged by this truth? Write down their names and then make an effort to share more about God's love with them this week.

DAY 5

Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God.

1 Peter 5:2 NLT

What regular responsibilities do you have? The things we end up having to do regularly aren't always the most fun. In fact, they often end up feeling like chores. But what if there was a different way to see our responsibilities? A way that made them feel more important? This week, try seeing them as the things that you have been given authority over. They are things that you have been trusted to do.

Think about one of your regular responsibilities. What if you changed your perspective and thought about that thing as a responsibility God has given you as a leader? You might find yourself stepping up to handle your responsibilities with a new attitude!

DAY 6

Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples. John 13:35 NLT

Written by Bella, age 16 from Sugar Hill, Georgia, USA

One late Friday night, my school and I had just finished our second showing of the play, Fiddler on the Roof. I was all packed up, tired, and ready to go home. Suddenly, I realized I did not have my water bottle, which was my grandad's water bottle. After ten minutes of looking for it with some parents, I began to cry (at school in front of the whole cast). Just as I was going to give up, three of my friends came rushing into my dressing room asking where I had seen it last. We decided it must be in the trash. I was prepared to have to go home without it, but my friends, teachers, and directors were not. Not even twenty minutes after I asked someone to look for it with me, there were ten people outside diving into the school's dumpster to look for a little glass bottle. This is one of my favorite stories because it was one of the moments in my life that helped me understand more of the way Jesus loves me, too. It reminded me that we can show others more of who Jesus is by loving the people around us. The way my friends and teachers showed me they loved me by literally jumping into a dumpster helped me experience this kind of love! Maybe for you, showing love to others won't mean jumping into a dumpster to find a missing water bottle! It can look like a lot of different things.

What's one way you can show someone else you love them today?