

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Corinthians 10:1-10**.
- B. Lord willing, next week the Elders will appoint 4 additional men. One will be appointed as an Elder, the other 3 as Deacons.
- C. Leadership is important in the life of any organization, and especially the church.
- D. But with leadership there must be followship. Today's lesson is on the value of followship.
- E. Good spiritual leadership is to be followed (1Cor. 11:1).
Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

I. POOR FOLLOWSHIP.

- A. First, the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years.
Only 2 of the original generation to come out of Egypt actually entered the promised land (Heb. 3:7-11). The main problem for their lack of followship was unbelief (Heb. 3:16-19).
(Heb 3:7-11) Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, **8** DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS, **9** WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED *Me* BY TESTING *Me*, AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS. **10** 'THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID, 'THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART; AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS'; **11** AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.'"
(Heb 3:16-19) For who provoked *Him* when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt *led* by Moses? **17** And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? **18** And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? **19** And *so* we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.
Why did this happen? Because of the people's poor followship of Moses.
- B. Second, Achan took the golden wedge (Josh. 6:18-19).
He kept that which was under the ban. God was displeased that the people did not follow the commands of Joshua (Josh. 7:1) and in a battle against the city of Ai, the Israelites were defeated losing 36 men (Josh. 7:5).
(Josh 6:18-19) "But as for you, only keep yourselves from the things under the ban, lest you covet *them* and take some of the things under the ban, so you would make the camp of Israel accursed and bring trouble on it. **19** "But all the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD."
(Josh 7:1) But the sons of Israel acted unfaithfully in regard to the things under the ban, for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, took some of the things under the ban, therefore the anger of the LORD burned against the sons of Israel.
(Josh 7:5) And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six of their men, and pursued them from the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on the descent, so the hearts of the people melted and became as water.
Why did this happen? Because of the people's poor followship of Joshua.
- C. Third, Saul did not wipe out Amalek.
Saul was to completely destroy the Amalekites (1Sam. 15:2-3, 9) and when he didn't he lost the throne (1Sam 15:23).
(1Sam 15:2-3) "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I will punish Amalek *for* what he did to Israel, how he set himself against him on the way while he was coming up from Egypt. **3** 'Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'"
(1Sam 15:9) But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were not willing to destroy them utterly; but everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.
(1Sam 15:23) "For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from *being* king."
Why did this happen? Because of the Saul's poor followship of Samuel.

D. Fourth, the Israelites worshipped the golden calf.

It did not take long for the people to wander from the leadership of Moses and begin doing sinful things (Ex. 32:19-25).

And it came about, as soon as Moses came near the camp, that he saw the calf and *the* dancing; and Moses' anger burned, and he threw the tablets from his hands and shattered them at the foot of the mountain. **20** And he took the calf which they had made and burned *it* with fire, and ground it to powder, and scattered it over the surface of the water, and made the sons of Israel drink *it*. **21** Then Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you, that you have brought *such* great sin upon them?" **22** And Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord burn; you know the people yourself, that they are prone to evil. **23** "For they said to me, 'Make a god for us who will go before us; for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' **24** "And I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them tear it off.' So they gave *it* to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf." **25** Now when Moses saw that the people were out of control-- for Aaron had let them get out of control to be a derision among their enemies--

Why did this happen? Because of the people's poor followship of God through Moses.

E. Five, Korah rebelled against the leadership of Moses (Num. 16:1-3).

Not only him but Korah assembled an insurrection party with Kohath, Dathan, On, and 250 leaders of the congregation (men of renown). But Moses prevailed (Num. 16:19) in a show-down between him and the families of Korah, Kohath, and On.

(Num 16:1-3) Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took *action*, **2** and they rose up before Moses, together with some of the sons of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, chosen in the assembly, men of renown. **3** And they assembled together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You have gone far enough, for all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?"

(Num 16:19) Thus Korah assembled all the congregation against them at the doorway of the tent of meeting. And the glory of the LORD appeared to all the congregation.

Why did this happen? Because of the people's poor followship of Moses.

II. GOOD FOLLOWSHIP.

A. First, those who built the tower of Babel could not be stopped.

They were united and were all working together for a common purpose. "There was no end to what they could do" (Gen. 11:1-6).

Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. **2** And it came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. **3** And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn *them* thoroughly." And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. **4** And they said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *will reach* into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." **5** And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. **6** And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them.

Why did this happen? Because of the people's good followship in unity.

B. Second, Joshua destroyed the city of Jericho.

He took a small army and without firing a shot made the walls come down (Josh. 6:1-5, 20). The people were to march around the city once a day for 6 days and then 7 times on the seventh day without saying a word. Then on the last day, after the last time of marching, they shouted and the great walls of Jericho came down.

(Josh 6:1-5) Now Jericho was tightly shut because of the sons of Israel; no one went out and no one came in. **2** And the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king *and* the valiant warriors. **3** "And you shall march around the city, all the men of war circling the city once. You shall do so for six days. **4** "Also seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark; then on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. **5** "And it shall be that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people will go up every man straight ahead."

(Josh 6:20) So the people shouted, and *priests* blew the trumpets; and it came about, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, that the people shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat, so that the

people went up into the city, every man straight ahead, and they took the city.

Why did this happen? Because God blessed the people's good fellowship of Joshua.

C. Third, Gideon defeated the Midianites.

Gideon whittled down his army from 33,000 to 300; armed them with a water pitcher, a trumpet, and a torch and overcame an innumerable host of Midianites (Jud. 7:19-23).

So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and smashed the pitchers that were in their hands. **20** When the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers, they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing, and cried, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" **21** And each stood in his place around the camp; and all the army ran, crying out as they fled. **22** And when they blew 300 trumpets, the LORD set the sword of one against another even throughout the whole army; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the edge of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. **23** And the men of Israel were summoned from Naphtali and Asher and all Manasseh, and they pursued Midian.

Why did this happen? Because God blessed the people's fellowship of Gideon.

D. Fourth, the Ninevites averted calamity by repenting.

Jonah preached to the Assyrians and had everyone from the king to the lowliest servant in sackcloth and ashes (Jon. 3:4-10). While Jonah may not have been all that he should be, God was pleased with the fellowship of the preaching of Jonah and spared their lives.

Then Jonah began to go through the city one day's walk; and he cried out and said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown." **5** Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them. **6** When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered *himself* with sackcloth, and sat on the ashes. **7** And he issued a proclamation and it said, "In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water. **8** "But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands. **9** "Who knows, God may turn and relent, and withdraw His burning anger so that we shall not perish?" **10** When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do *it*.

Why did this happen? Because God blessed the people's fellowship of Jonah's preaching.

E. Fifth, Nehemiah rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem.

When Nehemiah started the people were discouraged and lazy. Under his leadership they had a mind to work (Neh. 4:6). What seemed to be an impossible task, fraught with opposition, was completed in just 52 days (Neh. 6:15).

(Neh 4:6) So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its *height*, for the people had a mind to work.

(Neh 6:15) So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of *the month* Elul, in fifty-two days.

Why did this happen? Because God blessed the people's fellowship of Nehemiah.

III. NEW TESTAMENT COMMANDS.

A. In the NT church the members of a local congregation are to follow their leaders.

B. Notice the following verses:

1. First Thessalonians 5:11-15.

Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing. **12** But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, **13** and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another. **14** And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men. **15** See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men.

2. Hebrews 13:17.

Obey your leaders, and submit *to them*; for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

3. First Timothy 5:17-19.

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. **18** For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE

IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages." **19** Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.

- C. When the seven men were chosen to help wait tables in Ac. 6, this pleased the whole congregation (Ac. 6:5), and the church continued to grow (Ac. 6:7).
(Ac 6:5) The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch.
(Ac. 6:7) The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.
- D. Conclusion: We as members are to be glad to be able to follow our leaders.
- E. Warning: **He who complains, volunteers.** Instead of griping about leaders and their leadership get busy helping them make things better. And if you are not going to volunteer, then don't complain!

CONCLUSION & INVITATION.

- A. Some examples of poor followship:
 - 1. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years.
 - 2. Achan did not follow Joshua's command.
 - 3. Saul did not follow the Lord's command.
 - 4. The Israelites worshipped the golden calf.
 - 5. Korah rebelled against the leadership of Moses.
- B. Some examples of good followship:
 - 1. Those who built the tower of Babel could not be stopped.
 - 2. Joshua destroyed the city of Jericho.
 - 3. Gideon defeated the Midianites.
 - 4. The Ninevites averted calamity by repenting.
 - 5. Nehemiah rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem.
- C. Jesus is to be followed as the pre-eminent One, the Son of God (Rev. 14:4; Lk. 9:23).
(Rev 14:4) ...These *are* the ones who **follow the Lamb** wherever He goes.
(Lk. 9:23) And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, **and follow Me.**
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.