



“ Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

— Matthew 28:18-20

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The *Merriam-Webster* definition of “lead” is of a transitive verb, which requires a direct object. A transitive verb without an object is incomplete. Lacking an object, it makes no sense.

Likewise, leadership requires an object.

The purpose, the reason, the *raison d’être* of Christian leadership is the people entrusted to our care.

In my first class at Wesley Theological Seminary, I heard Dr. Lovett Weems give one of the most helpful — and concise — definitions of leadership within the context of the Christian church:

“Leadership is helping God’s people take the next faithful step.”²⁶

Supported by the foundation of loving God with heart, soul, mind, and strength, Christian leaders are called to reach out in love to those around us, helping them to take their next step in the direction of God’s love.

Think about Jesus’s next words: “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*”

In this verse, Jesus is using the future indicative form of the verb *agapaó* — *agapēseis*: “you shall love.”

You shall love. You, right there. You, reading this. You!

The “Great Commandment” from Mark 12:28-31 that we have been using to guide our discussion, and its parallel verses in Matthew 22, have a corresponding text in the scripture reading that started today’s pages. This passage is often called the “Great Commission.”

It begins: “*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.*”

“Go,” Jesus tells us.

The Greek here is *poreuomai*, which means to go. But it does not mean to simply head out, to leave, and then to be done with the action.²⁷

Poreuomai means to travel, to journey, to conduct one’s life.

All that Jesus is asking us to do here — reaching out to people, bringing them into the community of faith, teaching them, healing, showing love in ways they can understand — all that is to be a part of our everyday, our working, our living. It is to be a part of our leading.

As we go... we are called to lead others in taking the next faithful step toward God’s love.

QUESTION:

How do we “lead” with our daily lives? What could this mean for you? Have you ever thought of yourself as a leader? How have you led in the past?

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