

Read: 1 Peter 2:19-25

Follow the Leader

1 Peter 2:20b,21

But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

There is an old kid's game called "Follow the Leader." Have you played it? Everyone gets in line behind the leader. They must follow the leader wherever he goes. If the leader skips, they skip. If the leader crawls, they crawl. If the leader hops on one foot while flapping his arms and hooting like an owl... well, things get a little complicated. The whole point of the game is to follow the leader's example.

Can you think of someone you want to "follow" in your life? Maybe it's an older brother or sister who you really want to copy. Or it's someone you look up to like a sports hero or musician. We look at talented people and think, I want to be like them.

Peter gives us an awesome example to follow, Christ Jesus. Peter says, "When they hurled insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats." Even though Jesus lived a perfect, sin-free life, people called him names, hit him, and eventually crucified him. Jesus patiently endured all these things to save us. He is the greatest example of suffering evil for doing good.

Some people look to Jesus as just that, an example. They say he was a great teacher and an inspiring speaker. He was loving to people around him and gave to the poor. He was a great leader, and we should try to be just like him. But if we only look to Jesus to show us how to live, we are going to run into a problem. It's the answer to this question: Do you think you can follow Christ's example? Can you be perfectly loving all the time? We have to quickly admit that we can't. We might as well give up.

Peter has good news for us, he says, "[Jesus] himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness." Jesus carried all our sins. All those times we didn't live up to his perfect example have been forgiven. He didn't just show us how to live, he lived for us, perfectly!

So follow the leader! Christ suffered in our place and gave his perfection to us. Follow in his steps and live today in thanks to him. Follow as he leads the way to a home he made for us in heaven.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Can you think of a leader you want to follow? Who is it?
- Following Jesus as your leader makes you thankful for what? Give your “top two” list!

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- List a way Jesus is a good example for someone your age.
- Name one thing that makes it hard to follow Jesus’ example.

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Recount the last time you suffered for doing something good. Discuss why you would do it again if needed.
- It is important to have role models in your life. Who are the top role models for your faith? List as many as you can.

Closing Prayer:

Jesus, you are so much more to us than an example. Thank you for all you have done for us! Now lead us as we follow you. Amen.