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# 1st Place Essay: True Christian Leadership

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### True Christian Leadership

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.” (Matthew 5:14) This is one of many ways that Jesus describes the bold contrast between Christians and the rest of the world. It is a difference that should be as clear as night and day, but is this the case with Christians in the world nowadays? In his book “Unchristian,” author David Kinnaman writes that most non-believers use words such as hypocritical, sheltered, and judgmental to describe Christians. The very things that Christ warned us not to become are the exact same things we are viewed as today! I believe one of the biggest reasons for the skepticism of Christianity today is an ignorance of our own faith. Believers aren’t getting into the Word, and it shows in society. Many Christians can’t answer basic questions when asked about their faith, and even if they can, many aren’t living out those beliefs. This ignorance of our faith has led to a religion of mixed up morals and hypocrites, and has largely contributed to the scorn towards Christianity. How can we reverse this stereotype and get back to inspiring hope in a culture of full of cynicism? What does it mean to truly be a Christian leader?

Leadership comes in many forms and traits. A very general definition of a leader would be someone who guides a group of people towards a common goal. What then would be the goal of a Christian leader? In my opinion, I believe the goals of a Christian leader would be to bring glory to God with their existence, evangelize/advance the Kingdom, and encourage others to grow in their relationship with Christ. There are certain base characteristics that I believe all Christian leaders must possess if they wish to be stewards of the Gospel, inspire hope among the nations, and ultimately accomplish their goals. Submission to God must be the starting point for

us. We must allow God to lead us and shape our lives to fit His desires if we wish to leave an impact on this world. This requires one to be daily seeking and engaging with God in prayer and in His Word. If it is through the power of the Holy Spirit and the truth of the Bible that lives are changed, then I cannot stress enough the necessity of having a strong theological foundation in order to be an effective Christian leader and accomplish those goals established earlier. It is our actions and choices in life that will define how others see us, and ultimately decide what kind of impact that we leave on the world. These actions and choices are largely shaped by what we believe in and value. By allowing the Bible to shape them, a spiritual maturity will begin to flourish within the heart of a leader. They will begin to see the world as God sees it, and they will begin to see EVERY person living on this world today as a beautiful and valuable creation of God. They will understand the implications of sin and how it separates us from God, but this will create a longing to help others be reconciled. A leader must strive to be an example for others by trying to obediently follow God's commands and exhorting others to do so, but also must be careful not to fall into judgment. Instead, they learn to love others unconditionally as Christ would have, serving the people and working patiently with them to help them see the need of God in their life. To be a Christian leader requires a lifetime of servant hood, but in a fallen world full of hedonism and sin, it is this genuine love of Christ shining through them that will be a beacon to others. That is how a Christian should lead.

There are certainly many other characteristics that I believe make up a Christian leader, but due to the lack of space, I wanted to stick to what I felt was the most important to get across. The cynics of the world are begging for a leader who simply does what they say they are going to. By rooting oneself in God's Word and engaging society with a life of love, we can change the world. It's certainly won't be easy, it will require a lifetime of boldness, perseverance,

obedience, and integrity, but I feel that accomplishing those goals will have made the journey completely worth it in the end.

*748 words*