

# [Leadership is a Choice]

What's your default mode at home, when you have no homework, no chores, and the house to yourself?

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Answer:

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What about when you arrive at youth group? What's your default routine?

## WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT

Whenever a new tech product comes out—let's say a smartphone—it's delivered to you in default mode. From there, you have almost endless options for customization: new cases, personalized settings, additional apps, etc. However, if you ever need to sell it again, or if something goes wrong and it needs to be reset, it's going to go right back to where it started: default mode.

We need to realize that we have default modes too, and unfortunately, our default mode is almost always serving ourselves, not others.

Leadership, at its core, requires service and sacrifice. Maybe you've been told "you're a leader," or maybe you have an official position or title, but that isn't leadership. Leadership is the choice you make to serve others and sacrifice what you want, regardless of whether you have the position or not. If we're honest with ourselves, that's not just going to happen, it isn't our default setting. If we are going to lead, we have to make a choice to do so over and over again.

In this passage, Joshua knows he is near the end of his life, so he gathers the tribes of Israel together to remind them of what God has done and ask them to renew their commitment to the Lord. As you read, notice how important Joshua thinks this choice is. Israel has been following him and God for a while, they've seen him do mighty things, and they're finally entering the Promised Land, but Joshua isn't just going to assume they'll choose to serve the Lord. He makes sure to lead the way by choosing to serve God himself.

**Read Joshua 24:14-18** and answer the following questions:

**Answer:**

Joshua seems to lay out a few options on who the Israelites can choose to serve. Who does he list?

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Why do you think Joshua doesn't include a "no-choice" option?

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How can we connect Joshua's example of choosing to serve God with our job of choosing to lead?

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What would it look like for you to choose to serve and sacrifice in your leadership?

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**A SECOND LOOK**

Danny's youth group had been having a great week on their mission trip to the Navajo reservation in Arizona. It was late in the summer, and their job was to finish applying stucco to the four walls of a man's house in the community. As the week began to close, it became obvious that, despite the group's hard work, there was still a good chance they wouldn't complete the project. On Thursday, the team woke up knowing it would take a special day and a great effort to finish strong.

Thursday was also Danny's turn to lead a work group. As an eleventh-grader in the youth group, everybody looked up to Danny. He was always the one people asked to play his music in the van, he was on the high school surfing team, and he knew how to get the whole room laughing. If you asked someone who the leader of the youth group was, students and adults alike would have said his name in a heart-beat.

That morning, though, Danny didn't like his team's chances of finishing the project. It would take a crazy effort and everything going right, so Danny chose to try and make sure everyone had a good time instead. He cracked jokes when his team asked him for instruction, took long breaks, suggested the team start cleaning tools and packing up early, and constantly asked his team, "What do you guys want to do?"

As the team cleaned tools, Danny's team was the only one who hadn't finished their portion of the project, and the team drove away looking back at a house with three completed walls, and one patchy one.

**Answer:**

Put yourself in Danny's shoes. What do you think he was thinking when he made the choice not to lead?

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In every sense, Danny was a leader but he chose not to lead. Where are you a leader?

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Is there a time where you can remember skipping on a chance to lead?

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Where are you most tempted to sit back and choose not to lead?

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**APPLY IT**

What can you do this week to make the choice to lead?

Be specific:  
What are you going to do?

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When are you going to do it?

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Is there someone who can keep you accountable?

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**PARTING THOUGHT**

*"Leadership is a choice, not a rank."* – Simon Sinek

