

The disciples WERE MEDIOCRE, TIMID, UNAMBITIOUS AND GENERALLY IMPERCEPTIVE MEN, LACKING BOTH NATURAL TALENTS AND EDUCATION. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP WHICH HAS SUCCEEDED THEM DOWN THROUGH THE AGES HAS OCCASIONALLY BEEN BETTER, OFTEN WORSE, AND GENERALLY ABOUT THE SAME. THE KINGDOM DID NOT DEPEND ON THEIR LEADERSHIP: IT DEPENDS ON THE FATHER IN HEAVEN. AND OUR FAITH IN THE KINGDOM IS NOT A FAITH IN THE MEN WHO REPRESENT THE FATHER, FREQUENTLY INEPTLY. OUR FAITH RESTS WITH THE FATHER. WE SHOULD WORK AND PRAY FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH, HOWEVER, WE SHOULD NOT MAKE THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP THE TOUCHSTONE OF OUR FAITH. THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS: THEY ENGAGE IN MARVELOUS AND EXCITING EVENTS. THEY WERE INVOLVED IN THE MOST IMPORTANT ACTIVITY SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE HUMAN RACE. THEY WERE INTIMATELY ASSOCIATED WITH JESUS ~~XXM~~ IN SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM. PRECISELY BECAUSE OF THIS INTIMATE ASSOCIATION, THEY WERE EXPECTED TO LEAVE EVERYTHING BEHIND TO FOLLOW JESUS. HE PROMISED THEM AN EXCITING, CHALLENGING LIFE - BUT NOT AN EASY ONE. IT IS NOT THE CHURCH WHICH IMPOSES HARDSHIPS AND SACRIFICES ON CHRISTIANS: IT IS THE GOSPEL ITSELF. EVERY CHRISTIAN IS EXPECTED TO SHARE IN THE EXCITEMENT AND THE PAIN OF LEAVING ALL TO FOLLOW JESUS. THERE IS ONE QUALITY WHICH IS ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED IN A DISCIPLE, WHETHER HE BE A LEADER OR A ~~MEMBER~~ MEMBER OF THE RANK AND FILE. AND THAT IS CONFIDENCE IN THE KINGDOM, CONFIDENCE IN JESUS, AND CONFIDENCE IN THE FATHER.

Get off TV  
Get on your face  
Get off my back  
Get on your knees  
Get off the soap-box  
Get on the stick  
Get off your high horse  
Get on a donkey  
Get off your power trip  
Get real  
Get a clue  
Get off payroll  
Get the message  
Crush the monster  
Feed the sheep

### Grace

It unfolds the opportunity to become uplifted, to grow, to endlessly expand our horizons.

In this way, we merge into the universe.

We become one with God. And our vision is that everything is God. Then the whole world from day one to the end of time becomes a spontaneous momentary flash of divine love.

**The Key to Unity** "Through the discipline of contemplative prayer, Christian leaders have to learn to listen again and again to the voice of love and to find there the wisdom and courage to address whatever issue presents itself to them. Dealing with burning issues without being rooted in a deep personal relationship with God easily leads to divisiveness."

Henri Nouwen, in *The Other Side*, September/October 1989

**WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS** A relatively new parishioner was aghast at the dreadful financial condition of his church. He visited with a wise friend and said, "We've tried grab bags, box socials, benefits, suppers -- everything we can think of. What else is there to try?" The friend said, "Maybe we ought to try obedience to the Word of God."