

Are You Faking It While Hoping to Make It?

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The first lesson in leadership is to determine what comes first.

Ask any young adult what they want most from a leader:

- “We want leaders to be real with us.”
- “I’m OK with flaws—at least I know she is authentic.”
- “I don’t want to follow a statue. I want the real deal.”

Leaders fail when they try to be something they aren’t. Leaders don’t walk well in the shoes of another leader. “Fake it ’til you make it” has never been wise counsel.

When are you the most real? When does the real you show up?

It’s probably not a stretch to conclude that most of us believe we are the most real in our homes. On the surface, it doesn’t sound like a bad thing to think I can be myself at home. But, I have two problems with this thought:

1. If I am only real at home, who am I at work?
2. Why would I feel freer at home?

If I am going to have guarded behavior anywhere, wouldn’t it be at home? Why would I subject my family to something less than others see? I don’t want to be a “lesser me” or the “real me” only at home.

I want to be the same flawed, zit filled, molecular mess wherever I may go today.

Research on authentic leadership reminds us that our tendency is to be the most guarded when “something is at stake.” (Isn’t there a lot at stake at home?) When we believe we are auditioning for a job, “trying out” for a new position, or courting a new client ... we put our best foot forward with shined shoes! We dress better on “big” days. Perhaps we get to work early and do more preparation on certain days.

The thing some leaders miss is that there is always something at stake. Everything matters, always. Influence is highly dependent on consistency. When we are inconsistent, perhaps we’ve shown another side we hoped would never be seen.

I pray to not have another side. I want to be the same person here, there and everywhere. My anointing may change, but my character should only be changing as I become more like Him.

Jesus behaved the same way in the temple as He did alone with the tempter. He taught His disciples through His consistent lifestyle. When the disciples were worn out and crying for rest, Jesus reminded them that compassion does not have an off switch.

Jesus taught us that eternity is at stake. He taught with authenticity.

First, be real.

“When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, ‘This is a lonely place and the day is now over. Send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy themselves food.’ But Jesus said to them, ‘They do not need to depart. You give them something to eat’” (Matt. 14:15-16).

Dr. Steve Greene is the publisher executive vice president—Media Group, Charisma Media. Here’s a link to where you can sign up for Dr. Greene’s leadership e-newsletter.

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