

Not Persuaded

Jesus' brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, where your followers can see your miracles! You can't become famous if you hide like this! If you can do such wonderful things, show yourself to the world!"

John 7:3-4

The pressure was on. Michelle was really being pushed to launch the new product in the spring and get a jump on the competition. Everything was ready—almost, but not quite. It was the “not quite” that caused Michelle to hold back and reexamine the data. By the time the product was ready to be launched in the fall, the product had required critical changes. In the end, Michelle's ability to stand firm against outside pressures ensured the viability of the product and preserved the integrity of the company.

Jesus faced similar pressures in John 7. His brothers were pushing him to go to the Feast of Tabernacles early and show off his miracle-performing abilities. Like many Jews, these brothers were looking for someone to “wow” the crowds and eventually lead the people in a rebellion against the Romans. The Feast would have been an ideal platform for launching Jesus' political career.

But Jesus could not be persuaded to become a crowd (or brother) pleaser. Jesus knew that his mission on earth was not to win fans, but to redeem people from their sin. Keeping his ultimate purpose in mind, Jesus chose to go to the festival, but in secret. In his wisdom, Jesus could not be persuaded to veer from his purpose, not even for one day of earthly glory. His choice to enter the festival quietly, instead of with a fanfare, led to a day of heated debates with his enemies and intense discussions with the crowd but no flashy miracles. By the end of the day, “many among the crowds at the Temple

believed in him" (v. 31).

Regardless of the agenda others have, a leader needs to stand firm and keep her goal in focus. Leaders with integrity know that they cannot allow themselves to be persuaded to cave in to people-pleasing or glory-grabbing decisions. Pursuing integrity may not always be the popular or easy path, but it usually proves to be the wiser path.