

# The Declarations of a Leader

September 2011 – It is a moment that is pasted for perpetuity in the scrapbook of my heart.

In June of this year, forty-seven of us cleared our calendars, packed our bags, stamped our passports, and headed to Israel. It was nothing less than a ten-day “journey of a lifetime”.

Day four would take its place as THE highlight among too many to count.

The morning started out as each of us, under the hush of dawn, made our way from our kibbutz-like hotel to the shores of the Sea of Galilee. As the sun steadily climbed the eastern sky, casting its brilliant reflection across the sea, seventeen people, one by one, gave witness to the life-changing power of their relationship with Jesus Christ. And one by one, I had the unsurpassable privilege of lowering them into the waters of baptism as each announced their allegiance to the One Who walked on the same waters 2000 years prior.

It was a priceless moment as each person made a public declaration: “I will follow Jesus Christ all the days of my life.”

When I look through the lens of leadership about the declarations that were made on that remarkable morning in Israel, I find myself wondering about the declarations of a leader. What are (or should be) the declarations of a leader? What should be the witness of the person who sincerely desires to lead like Christ?

In pursuit of these questions, I offer a handful of declarations for your consideration.

***Leading with character is not about doing right to avoid consequences. Leaders worth following do the right thing because it is the right thing. Virtue is not a means to an end. It is the end.***

–Andy Stanley

- I will seek to discover God’s plans and purposes and lead in that direction—only. This will not be about me or my dreams.
- I am here to serve, not to be served. I will constantly ask God where I can make a contribution to His Kingdom work and then roll up my sleeves and get busy.
- I will daily confess that I am totally dependent on God’s grace and wisdom.
- I will live and lead within a community of counsel and accountability. I will not go it alone. I will grant full access for godly people to speak into my life and leadership.
- I will show up daily yielded to God’s will, inviting Him to shape my heart and mind to be like His.

- I will suit up daily knowing that there is an enemy who seeks to destroy.
- I will endeavor to see obstacles as opportunities to walk by faith, not by sight.
- I will seek to create space for myself and for those I lead to hear the whispers of God's voice of direction.
- I will seek to live a life worthy of imitation.
- I will embrace my leadership role as a stewardship, avoiding the entitlements that often attend positions of leadership.
- I will endeavor to make God's presence in my life the distinguishing mark of my leadership.
- I will celebrate that God's strength is made perfect in my weakness.
- I will make my singular goal the words of my Master, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

So what do you think? What declarations would you add or take away?

My personal encouragement to you would be to calendar some solitude time to draft out your own list of declarations. They will serve you well, especially during seasons of uncertainty.

And oh yes, one more thought. Be sure to front-load each declaration with the words "By the grace of God..."

***Lord, it is only by Your grace that we can rise to the roles and the responsibilities and the challenges and the calling of leadership. To this end, and for this purpose, we grant You uncompromising freedom to work IN us, so that You may work THROUGH us.***