



MONTH 2

BELIEFS AND VALUES: HOW WILL YOU JOURNEY?

2 Timothy 1:5 (NRSV)

I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you.

Luke 6:45 (NLT)

"A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart."

OBSERVE

Who is someone in your life who demonstrated a sincere faith? Did that person's sincere faith influence your own faith?

On your journey, there is one constant: **you**. All of us have to take ourselves with us as we go on our life journey. For better or worse, we must bring ourselves along.

Daniel Goleman defines **authenticity**:

"To be authentic is to be the same person to others as you are to yourself."¹

Dr. Brené Brown defines **authenticity**:

"Authenticity is a collection of choices that we have to make every day. It's the choice to show up and be real. The choice to be honest. The choice to let our true selves be seen."²

How do you define authenticity?

With what level of authenticity do you live your life?

What parts of yourself are easy to share with others?

Where is there inconsistency in who you are with yourself, versus how you are with others?

¹ Daniel Goleman, "The Focused Leader," *Harvard Business Review*, December 2013, <https://hbr.org/2013/12/the-focused-leader>.

² Brené Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection* (Center City, MN: Hazelden, 2010), 49.

IDENTIFY

As we lead ourselves and live authentically, it's important to remember that everyone has a set of **beliefs** and **values** that shape character, behavior, attitudes and choices in life. Although **beliefs** and **values** are interrelated, there is a distinctive difference between them.

Beliefs are based on core convictions that we believe to be true, regardless of whether we have actual proof or evidence. Beliefs are very difficult to change and come from what we see, hear, think and experience. They create the foundation of our lives. Some examples include:

- God created the world and everything in it.
- It is immoral to steal and lie.
- Life is often not black and white. It is full of gray.
- Anything is possible, if I try hard enough.
- It is never right to kill someone, even in a justifiable war.
- My past will always affect my future.
- Everything will always work out in the end.

What five or six beliefs have you identified in your own life? Take time to write down some of your beliefs and give a description of how your beliefs affect your life, ministry and leadership. Share them together. Ask questions for clarification.

My Beliefs . . .	
1)	4)
2)	5)
3)	6)

Values come from our beliefs and are connected to certain concepts, which we deem important, like "faith, loyalty, equality, trustworthiness, honesty, etc." Values are the basis for our principles, ideals and standards of behavior.

Here are some of possible core values to consider:

- **Faith and prayer:** trusting God for the growth and development of my life and ministry, relying on God’s power and direction to realize it
- **Leadership:** embracing God’s call on my life by positively influencing a group of God’s people to achieve God’s purposes for God’s glory
- **Priority of People:** a commitment to honor people, see their importance as God sees them, believe in them, and encourage them
- **Accountability:** Responsibility for my actions that influence the lives of my colleagues, congregants and loved ones
- **Balance:** maintaining a healthy life and work balance for myself and encouraging it for others
- **Mentoring:** having people in my life who influence, challenge, and teach me; being open to influencing, coaching, and mentoring others

What five or six core values have you identified in your own life? Take time to write down your own core values and give a description of what they mean in your life. Share them together. Ask questions for clarification.

My Life Values . . .	
1)	4)
2)	5)
3)	6)

APPLY

- Our **beliefs** are core convictions in our lives, things that we hold to be true, regardless of evidence.
- Our **values** come from our beliefs and are connected to important concepts, principles and ideals.
- **Beliefs** and **values** work together to shape our attitudes, perceptions, personality, character and behavior.

Where are places that your character, attitude, and behavior as a leader support your articulated beliefs and values? Where are the places of disconnect?

1 John 2:3-6 (NRSV)

"Now by this we may be sure that we know him, if we obey his commandments. Whoever says, 'I have come to know him,' but does not obey his commandments, is a liar, and in such a person the truth does not exist; but whoever obeys his word, truly in this person the love of God has reached perfection. By this we may be sure that we are in him: whoever says, 'I abide in him,' ought to walk just as he walked."

Credibility in leadership comes when what we say and what we do match up. When we are **authentic** and worthy of belief, we act with integrity and honesty.

Are you experiencing a credibility gap?

Take some time to evaluate if your behavior is following your beliefs and values, just as maturity follows intimacy.

How can you take a step closer in intimacy with God so you can reflect your beliefs and values in your life and leadership?

NEXT STEP

From this conversation, what do you need to do to ensure that your beliefs and values are validated behaviors in your life?

REFLECT

Proverbs 4:23 (NLT)

"Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life."

Marianne Williamson

"Enlightenment is the key to everything, and it is the key to intimacy, because it is the goal of true authenticity."

Parker Palmer

"Before you tell your life what you intend to do with it, listen for what it intends to do with you. Before you tell your life what truths and values you have decided to live up to, let your life tell you what truths you embody, what values you represent."