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DO YOU HAVE ROLE MODELS OTHER THAN RIZAL, AND WHAT CHARACTERISTICS DO THEY HAVE IN COMMON?

Yes, I do. Abraham Lincoln, Rizal and Lord Jesus are my role models because their actions, their teachings created a legacy that inspired others and myself to dream more, learn more and become more.

When you hear the word legacy you probably think of what you will leave behind or how you will be remembered when you are gone.

Lest I be misunderstood, I would like to state in the beginning that I am not equating Jesus with Lincoln & Rizal because Jesus is both fully human and fully divine, the Son of God. I am including Jesus in my talk as a role model which guided me in my journey of life, like Rizal and Lincoln.

Though leadership may be hard to define, the one characteristic common to all leaders is the ability to make things happen. – Ted W. Engstrom. Quoted in Anderson, Mac. Leadership Quotes. Simple Truths, 2011. P. 23

It was a blend of faith in God, honesty, integrity, humility, passion for knowledge – that knowledge is power - and persistence that marked Abraham Lincoln and Jose Rizal as role model for the young people to follow. The way they lived gave an inspiration to many, including myself to turn adversity into some accomplishments in life.

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You emulate the leader you admire. For this reason, it is important that a leader emulates the right hero because the hero you admire influences your decisions.

A. FAITH IN GOD DEVELOPED BY READING THE BIBLE

When Abraham Lincoln was growing up, the Bible was often the only book people on the frontier owned. When Abe and his sister, Sarah, learned to read, they took turns reading the Bible out loud on Sundays. Abe, also would walk miles to borrow a book. He borrowed books about Benjamin Franklin and George Washington. Washington became his hero. McGovern, Ann. If You Grew Up with Abraham Lincoln. Scholastic Inc. New York.

George Washington, by the way rose regularly and spent the time from five until six in the morning on his knees before a chair on which lay an open Bible. He retired every evening at nine o'clock to the same study, to the same chair, to the same open Bible.

Lincoln memorized Psalms from the King James Version of the Bible. Benoit, Peter. Abraham Lincoln. Children's Press. New York 2012, p. 14.

When Lincoln was nominated to run for the U.S. Senate, in his acceptance speech, he used what he had learned from the bible, when he said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Mark 3:25. He believed the nation could not last if it was divided against slavery. He said, "I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free." P. 55. Freedman, Russell. Lincoln A Photobiography. Clarion Books, New York .

Both Lincoln and Jose Rizal did have faith in God. Rizal strongly believed that God guides the destiny of all nations and men. He also believed that someday all men would have to answer for their deeds on earth to a just and strict God. P. 28

As a Christian humanist, Rizal believed that man was created by God in his own image and was "endowed with reason and will of his own. P. 29. Lizardo, Fidela S. Nationalist Ideas of Rizal, quoted in Remembering Rizal - A Compilation of Literary Works about Dr. Jose P. Rizal by different Authors. B.S. Lizardo Enterprise Publishing, 2004, Caloocan City.

Rizal also expressed his belief in the supreme importance of religion in the education of man. In his poem, "Intimate Alliance Between Religion & Education,' he said that education without God is not true education. P. 46. Rizal's Ideas/Thoughts/Views on Government and Education. Castillo, Mario L.

Rizal believed in God. He never denied the existence of God or the role of a Supreme Being in his life. In fact, Rizal had a healthy, fresh and perceptive idea of divinity. The leader who believes in a Supreme Being, a personal God, has a greater capacity to endure, to hope, to persevere and even to be happy. P. 55. Almonte, Napoleon. Rizal is My President. Impress Quality Printing Phils. Inc., 2009.

Jose Rizal and Abraham Lincoln - by reading the Bible - know that Jesus by sacrificing his life at the Cross of Calvary has freed us from the slavery of sin. Rizal consecrated his God-given talents and unselfishly sacrificed his life, for the redemption and welfare of his people. When Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863, wherein he proclaimed that all slaves in the Confederate states were now free, he became known as the Great Emancipator.

Having laid the basis that both Rizal and Lincoln believe in God, then I will include Jesus as one of my role models, worth emulating.

B. JESUS, RIZAL AND LINCOLN WERE HONEST AND LIVED A LIFE OF INTEGRITY.

They lived a life of excellence and integrity that will affect generations to come.

To me a man of integrity is someone who can be absolutely relied upon. When he says a thing is so, it is so; when he says he will do a thing, he will do it.

When you say what you mean, mean what you say and keep your word, you foster trust. A man of integrity is trustworthy.

Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing. - Abraham Lincoln.

Reputation is what others think about you; character is what God knows about you. – Adrian Rogers. Quoted in Ziglar, Zig. Inspiration 365 Days a Year. Simple Truths, Illinois 2008.

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Rizal is a man of integrity. He volunteered as a physician to the Army in Cuba after his exile in Dapitan. On Sept. 2, 1896, he boarded the Castilla for Barcelona Spain, then transferred to the steamer Isla de Panay. Among his fellow passenger was Don Pedro Roxas. He advised Rizal to stay behind in Singapore and take advantage of the protection of the British law. Rizal did not heed his advice. Several Filipino residents of Singapore, headed by Don Manuel Camus, boarded the steamer, urging him to stay in Singapore to save his life. He also ignored their appeal because he had given his word of honor to Governor General Blanco and did not like to break it. P. 247-248. Zaide, Gregorio and Zaide, Sonia. Jose Rizal Life Works, and Writings of a Genius, Writer, Scientist, and National Hero. All Nations Publishing Company, Quezon City, 1999.

A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold. – Prov: 11:1

Rizal and Lincoln both rejected bribes.

Rizal was offered P100,000, a professioral chair at a university and an estate of his own in exchange for renouncing his two novels, *Noli Me* ***Tangere*** and *El Filibusterismo*. Rizal rejected this bribes.

Leaders must understand that bribes – like blood – leave a permanent stain in one's hand. By accepting bribes, leaders give up their integrity. Taking a bribe is tantamount to gouging out your eyes and cutting off your ears and tongue; you become blind and deaf and mute, unable to see, hear or speak of the venality of the briber.

A bribed leader is morally castrated leader. P. 33. Almonte, Napoleon, G. Rizal is My President. OCCI Publications, Manila, Philippines 2009.

Rizal earned his money honestly. Rizal could have amassed wealth through backdoor deals. With his stature and influence, he could have easily promoted his personal interests. After all, his family, peers and benefactors willingly lent him money for his advocacies.

But money had no power over Rizal. He did not allow it to corrupt him. Knowing the value of work, Rizal chose to earn his keep honestly. In Europe, he worked as

an ophthalmologist. When he was exiled in Dapitan, he farmed, fished and engaged in trading.

However, there was time in the life of Rizal when with practically no money and living in isolation and poor health, Rizal finished writing *Noli* and *Fili* and saw their publication. Although his enemies tried to bribe him with attractive concessions, he kept true to his purpose. He chose to return to the Philippines, although he knew this decision could lead to certain death, to clear his name as well as absolve those who were suffering in his name. P. 46. Almonte, Napoleon G. Impress Quality Printing Phils. Inc. 2009.

Leaders must always conduct themselves with integrity, especially where money is concerned. By being incorruptible, they will earn the public's trust and carry out their duties with a clear conscience. P. 63. Almonte, Napoleon G.

Lincoln is known as Honest Abe. One time, he decided to run for the Illinois state legislature but he lost. Defeated as a politician, he decided to try his luck as a frontier merchant. With a fellow named William Berry as his partner, Lincoln operated a general store that sold everything from axes to beeswax. But the two men showed little aptitude for business, and their store finally "winked out," as Lincoln put it. Then Berry died, leaving Lincoln saddled with a $1,100 debt – a gigantic amount for someone who had never earned more than a few dollars a month. Lincoln called it "the National Debt; but he vowed to repay every cent. He spent the next fifteen years do so. P. 20 – 22. Freedman, Russell. Lincoln a Photobiography. Clarion Books, New York, 1987.

Lincoln moral honesty was like unto one of the prophets of old. When his friends urged him not to make his famous "house divided against itself," he said: "Friends, the time has come when these sentiments should be uttered, and if it is decreed that I should go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked with the truth." P.108. Gross, Anthony. The Wit and Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln. Barnes & Noble Books, New York 1992.

If you were asked, which would you rather have, a bouquet of flowers or a packet of seeds? Probably most of us would choose the bouquet. But if you are a leader, you realize the limitations of cut flowers, no matter how beautiful they are, and are more apt to spend your time gathering, sorting, and planting seeds.

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Abraham Lincoln could have been showered with bouquets if he had acquiesced to the demands of the slaveowners; but he chose to plant the seeds of freedom for everyone and in so doing became a leader for all time. And so was Rizal – he prized the seed rather than the bouquet. He said, "There are no tyrants where there are no slaves." He sacrificed his life for the redemption of his people.

Jesus also could have ruled the earth. But his kingdom was not of this world. That is why he prized the seed more than the bouquet." P. 71, 74. Jones, Laurie Beth. Jesus CEO: using ancient wisdom for visionary leadership. Hyperion, New York 1995.

C. RIZAL, LINCOLN AND THE LORD JESUS BELIEVED IN THE POWER OF EDUCATION.

In Dapitan, Rizal tried to put into practice his educational ideas and his belief that education was the only salvation of the Filipino people. All his efforts were for the enlightenment, the education of our country – education and enlightenment. P. 102. Eronico, Gregorio C. Sr. The Modern Teacher, June 1981.

To Rizal, there is no substitute for education. To him proper education is the key to freedom from poverty and ignorance..

We learn from Rizal that a leader must educate himself to become better at leadership. After a leader has held the torch of knowledge, he should pass it on to others. Leader, educate yourself and then educate others. P. 44. Almonte, Napoleon. Rizal is My President. OCCI Publication, Manila, 2009.

The Indiana years were the years of Lincoln' s growth to adolescence and manhood. In Indiana he acquired an elementary knowledge of reading, writing and ciphering. This was all that schools ever taught him; his entire contact with formal education lasted for less than a year. Yet there was in him a passion for knowledge that was never to cease throughout his life. There are many accounts of his attempts to learn, of his borrowing books to read, of his efforts to work out problems on the back of a wooden shovel which he then shaved clean so he could use it again. P. 11-12. Stern, Philip Van Doren. The Life and Writings of Abraham Lincoln. Modern Library, New York 1999.

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Lincoln told his friend, Senator Henderson of Missouri, "The only schooling I ever had, Henderson," he remarked, "was in a log school-house when reading-books and grammars were unknown. All our reading was done from Scriptures, and we stood up in a long line and read in turn from the Bible." P. 114. Gross, Anthony. The Wit and Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln. Barnes & Noble Books, New York 1992.

One sentence sums up the focus of Jesus' time on earth: "And he went everywhere teaching, healing and preaching. Since teaching is educating the mind and preaching is educating the heart, two-thirds of Jesus' work was education.

If you look at the instances when he healed people, nine times out of ten he spoke to them about an attitude change or a new way of behaving that was to go along with their physical state of being. "Go, and sin no more," I feel safe in saying education was Jesus' number-one priority. P. 210. Jones, Laurie Beth. Jesus CEO: Using Ancient Wisdom for Visionary Leadership. Hyperion, New York 1995.

## D. RIZAL AND LINCOLN AND JESUS WERE ALL HUMBLE.

Jesus said, "He who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. " Matthew 23:12.

Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life.- Prov: 22:4.

Jesus set an example for his staff (disciples). There is a popular saying that children learn by what they see, not what they hear. Leaders set the example by what they do. When Jesus took his garment off and used it as a towel to wash the staffer's feet, they were shocked and protested that they should be washing his feet. He said, "I am doing this to set an example for you." Nothing he said could have had as much power as watching him do this most humble deed. P. 227. Jones, Laurie Beth. Jesus CEO Using Ancient Wisdom for Visionary Leadership. Hyperion Publisher, New York.

Jesus Himself is our example of servanthood. He gave His very life for us. – Albert Lee. Humility is the result of knowing God and knowing yourself. August 2014 Our Daily Bread. RBC Ministries, Michigan.

Jesus is our example and model. He focused on the joy that was set before Him. His attention was not on the agonies of the Cross, but on the crown; not on the suffering but the reward.

Abraham Lincoln was humble. He said, "I am not ashamed to confess that twenty-five years ago I was a hired laborer, mauling rails, at work on flatboat – just what might happened to any poor man's son. I want every man to have a chance – and I believe a black man is entitled to it – in which he can better his condition. – From speech at New Haven, March 6, 1860.

Helping others. Abraham Lincoln spent most of his political career promoting equality. He believed that the ideals of the United States were set out in the Declaration of Independence, which stated "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed…with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Slavery went against these rights. Abraham used his political power to help ban slavery. He was also concerned with equality for women. He was one of the first prominent leaders to suggest that women be allowed to vote.
Diemer, Lauren and Cuthbert, Megan. History Makers – Abraham Lincoln. Media Enhanced Books. New York, 2014.

E. RIZAL, LINCOLN AND JESUS ALL SUFFERED REJECTION BUT THEY PERSEVERED.

And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. Roman 5:2-5 (NIV).

Michael Burlingame, an author of the book Abraham Lincoln: A Life, when interviewed said, " One of the things I emphasize in my book is that Lincoln has traditionally been regarded as an inspiration because he rose above poverty to become famous. Although that's true what I find particularly meaningful is that he not only overcame economic poverty but also emotional poverty,

To come from a background where he really suffered from emotional malnutrition (his baby brother dies, his mother dies when he's nine, his father'is unsympathetic and beats him, his older sister dies, his sweetheart dies, he has a terrible marriage,

two of his children die, he suffers career failures, and has a difficult midlife crisis), and yet he overcomes all that to become not only famous but profoundly psychologically whole and mature, balanced, and a model of moral clarity with unimpeachable integrity. I think that there's hope for all of us. Interview of Michael Burlingame, author of Abraham Lincoln: A Life. Dec. 2008; 2 volumes, 2014 pages – appeared at the web site: http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln.html.

Here is another one about Lincoln. Lincoln was told by his Department heads and political advisers that unless he renounce his Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves, he would loss the re-election to his Democrate opponents because he was expected to end the civil war but by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation the war will continue and he will also lose the war. But Lincoln stick to his desire to free the slaves. Michael Beschloss on Abraham Lincoln/ Collaborative Agency Group. You Tube.

What about Rizal, what rejection did he experience?

Rizal did not have great means at his disposal to carry out his campaign, but that did not discourage him; he contented himself with what he had. He suffered the rigors of the cold winter of Europe, he suffered hunger, privation, and misery; but when he raised his eyes to heaven and saw his ideal, his hope was reborn. He complained of his countrymen, he complained of some of those who had promised him help and did not help him, until at times, profoundly disillusioned, he wanted to renounce his campaign forever, giving up everything. But such moments were evanescent, he soon felt comforted and resumed the task of bearing the cross of his suffering. Palma, Rafael. The Pride of the Malay Race, Prentice-Hall, New York, 1949, p. 262-262.

Jesus experienced rejection among the Pharisees, scribes, teachers of the law, chief priests and the elders. They openly attacked and tried to undermine Jesus. The Pharisees and other religious leaders used their powers of excommunication to punish those who supported Jesus. The leaders' opposition to Jesus, and their desire to see him dead, was common knowledge. But Jesus focused on the central issue. He came to sacrifice his life to free us from the bondage of sin. Jesus taught his disciples and us to choose God's will, to love each other, and to serve others.

So what can we learn from these three role models? All of them stuck to their mission. Jesus, Rizal and Lincoln knew their respective missions, and they did not deviate from it. Jesus had no ambivalence about who he was or what he was supposed to do. So were Lincoln and Rizal. Belief in oneself is a crucial quality of leadership, because " a house divided against itself cannot stand." A leader who fluctuates back and forth sends a very wavery signal. Jesus saw himself not only as a teacher and healer but to redeem us from the bondage of sin. Redemption means recovery of something or someone upon payment of a ransom. All people were being held in slavery by sin, until Jesus paid the price to free us – giving his life as a perfect sacrifice. So was Rizal. He gave up his life to redeem us from the tyranny of despotism and arrogance of the Spanish friars and government; he emphasized that proper education is the key to freedom from poverty and ignorance. So was Lincoln, who lost his life from a bullet shot by an assassin because he hated him for using his presidential power to help ban slavery and to preserve the Union.

The three of them had set the standard of an effective and successful leadership. The only way to emulate Rizal's leadership is to know Rizal; the only way to emulate Lincoln's leadership is to read books about Lincoln; the only way to emulate Jesus' leadership is to know him by reading the Bible.

If leaders strive to be like them, how can we go wrong? But the first step to become like Rizal, Lincoln and Jesus so that we can shine like a Prism Through K.O.R. Leadership is to read about them. It is left up to us the living to remember them, to treasure their noble gifts by living by their example – blend of faith in God, honesty, integrity, humility, passion for knowledge and persistence.

Thank you and God bless all of us.