

Lead Like Jesus – Head

1/11/26

Philippians 2:5; 4:8-9

Sunday AM

I'm sure you've heard the classic leadership poem about *somebody*, *anybody*, *everybody*, and *nobody*?

Everybody was sure *Somebody* would do it. *Anybody* could've done it, but *Nobody* did it. *Somebody* got mad b/c it was *Everybody's* job. Yet *Everybody* thought *Anybody* could do it, while *Nobody* realized that *Everybody* wouldn't do it. It ended up that *Everybody* blamed *Somebody* when *Nobody* did what *Anybody* could've done.

I've always found this not only humorous but true especially inside our volunteer-based church.

Have you ever noticed how in church there's one phrase that can ruin your afternoon? It's when someone asks, "Can you help 'real' quick?" *Real quick* at church is code for – *we're about to assign you a spiritual gift you didn't know you had*. I've seen people show up to stack chairs and leave as the chairman of a committee. You're thinking, "I'm just here to carry a box." Next thing you know, you're holding a clipboard b/c you made eye contact w/ the wrong person and now they want to know what the plan is. And you're like, "Plan? I don't even know where y'all keep the tape!" This is when you learn that leadership isn't a title – it's what happens when people start looking at you for direction.

Last week we began a series entitled – *Lead Like Jesus* to discuss how we're all called to use our influence to serve others toward God's will and plan. So, whether you're a parent, boss, colleague, sibling, friend, or perfect stranger on social media – God wants you to use your influence to exalt Him only in/thru your life.

In particular, we talked about the heart of leadership – and our calling to *guard our hearts b/c everything we do flows from it*. Proverbs 4:23

Still, while leadership begins w/ the heart, there's a 2nd layer to leadership involving one's mindset. Thus, leading isn't just *what you feel*; it's also *how you think*.

Ken Blanchard calls it leading w/ your **HEAD**. The apostle Paul wrote about this mindset in Philippians.

In your relationships w/ one another, have the same mindset as Jesus. Who, being in nature God, didn't consider equality w/ God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness, and being found in appearance as a man, humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross. Philippians 2:5-7

WTM – I want to talk about leading w/ your **H.E.A.D.** – not as (4) clever points, but (4) mindset shifts we can use to leverage our influence for God's will/best.

H – **HOLD** the Mind of Christ

have the same mindset as Jesus.

Notice that Philippians 2:5 doesn't say – *Have the same résumé of Jesus, but have the mindset of Jesus.*

A person's mindset involves their *attitude*, *ambitions*, *appetites*, and *aim*. These are the (4) control knobs of your thinking – what you **want**, how you **see things**, what you **crave**, and where you're **headed**. If you can name these, you can usually diagnose why you think and lead the way you do or how others do.

This is where leadership begins – not w/ a title, but w/ a mentality – b/c leadership isn't about personality, power, or telling people what to do, it's about using your influence to put others first to serve them toward a greater purpose – instead of serving yourself.

Leading w/ your head means choosing to think like Jesus before you act for Jesus.

Such leadership requires true humility – not thinking too highly of yourself but rightly of yourself – which frees you to steward your gifts w/out self-promotion, surrender your rights w/out resentment, and leverage your influence not for personal advancement, but for the good and growth of others and the glory of God.

Truth – *when you hold the mind of Christ, you stop using people to build your life – and you start using your life to build people.*

The question is – how do we develop the mind of Christ? We have to ¹ continually renew our minds w/ Scripture, we have to ² focus on things above, and we have to ³ put into practice what we know is true.

Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be w/ you. Philippians 4:8-9

E – **EMPTY** Yourself of Your Rights

Who, being in nature God, didn't consider equality w/ God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, He made Himself nothing...

Jesus voluntarily laid aside the advantages/privileges that were rightfully His as God to choose a path of a service for our sake. Jesus made others a higher priority than Himself.

The Son of Man didn't come to be served, but to serve and give His life a ransom for many. Mk 10:45

Jesus “emptying Himself” doesn't mean He stopped being God, but rather, that He laid aside and limited His divine powers for a short time by incarcerating His deity in human flesh to experience the limitations of humanity. This is known as the **kenosis** of Christ.

IOW – Jesus didn't stop being God – He chose not to insist on being treated as God. He willingly set aside His comfort, recognition, and self-protection, to enter fully into the human condition where He refused to use His power for self-serving ends by submitting Himself entirely to the Father's will. This emptying wasn't a loss of identity, but a deliberate act of love – choosing obedience over advantage so redemption could occur.

SEE – Jesus didn't cling to what He could legitimately claim; He surrendered privilege to serve and save.

So, to have His mindset means giving up the right to always win, always be noticed, always be comfortable, always get the credit, or always get your way – so that others can be helped and God can be honored.

SEE – *Jesus didn't use people to build His platform; He used His position to bear people's burden.*

For us, the decision to serve instead of being served is a daily, volitional, even minute-by-minute, choice we have to make that goes against our human nature. Still, there are a few things we can do to help us.

1. We can intentionally take the lower place by deliberately choosing roles, tasks, or moments that don't bring recognition or advantage to us by asking *what needs to be done that no one is lining up to do?* Then do it w/out announcing it.
2. Pause long enough to notice the needs of others – seeing these interruptions as Divine invitations and opportunities orchestrated by God.
3. We can consciously surrender our right to be first b/c serving others always begins w/ yielding something we think we're entitled to keep.

Bottomline – we learn to serve by choosing the lower place, noticing the needs around us, and surrendering our rights – just as Jesus did.

A – **ASSUME** the Role of a Servant

He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant...

This is what Jesus modeled for us. A servant's posture always chooses to elevate others over self for the good of others. Jesus embraced a role of obedience and ministry, instead of privilege and entitlement.

Similarly, a servant mindset also chooses to live under authority to accomplish another's purpose. The idea is – *not my will, but Your will be done.*

A servant chooses to give themselves away fully to stewarding their lives for a greater purpose. In the case of Jesus, He laid down His life to give life showing us that servanthood is measured by love expressed in costly obedience, not comfortable convenience.

So, what can we do to take the posture of a servant?

Taking the posture of a servant isn't about doing more – it's about thinking differently. A servant measures effectiveness in life not by personal preference, but by faithful obedience. Over time, it becomes who you are, not just what you do – living under God's authority, leveraging your influence for His purposes, and giving yourself away where God has already assigned you.

D – **DESCEND** into the Needs of Others

To descend into the needs of others means choosing to enter into another person's reality to meet them at the point of their need. It's a mindset that requires you to move towards people w/ a heart and willingness to get your hands dirty. Serving up-close and personal and not from a distance.

This is the beauty of the incarnation. God came near to seek and to save us. God willingly got His hands dirty (and pierced) to meet us at the point of our need. He didn't just offer advice, He gave himself fully to us.

But Jesus didn't stop there. He chose obedience over convenience by *humbling Himself and becoming obedient unto death* – teaching us that descending into the needs of others often requires obedience that costs time, comfort, reputation, or preference.

SEE – to descend into the needs of others means stepping down so others aren't left alone, moving toward their pain instead of around it, and leveraging influence not to rise above them, but to lift them up.

Think about parenting for a moment. A parent doesn't lead a child from a distance. They don't shout instructions from another room and expect growth. They descend. They get down on the floor. They kneel to the child's level. They enter their world – scraped knees, bedtime fears, spilled milk, repeated questions.

Parenting requires we surrender sleep, schedules, convenience, and control – not b/c because we're weak, but b/c we love. And no parent ever says, "I'll help you when it's efficient when it benefits me." No. They show up and engage b/c that's what love does.

In the same way, Jesus didn't save us from a distance. He didn't shout advice from heaven. He came down. He ¹ entered our weakness, ² bore our burdens, and ³ met us at the point of our need. This is what it means to descend into the needs of others.

And this is why descending into others' needs isn't weakness – it's love w/ courage. It's love shaped by a Christlike ambition, a humble attitude, disciplined appetites, and a holy aim.

Let me close w/ a thought. There are (2) kinds of leaders. One kind walks into a room asking, *"What do I need from these people?"* The other walks in asking, *"What do these people need from me so we can honor God and move toward what's right?"*

One kind uses power to protect ego. The other uses influence to serve purpose.

So, the real issue isn't whether we understand these truths – the issue is whether we will live them. B/c every day, leadership shows up disguised as a choice: Will I protect my comfort, or will I take responsibility? Will I stay at a distance, or will I step toward the need God has placed in front of me? This choice reveals whose mindset is shaping our leadership—and who our leadership is really for.

So, whether you're leading a company, a classroom, a crew, or a kitchen table... ¹ Hold the mind of Christ. ² Empty your rights. ³ Assume the role of a servant, and ⁴ descend into the needs of others.