

Lead Like Jesus – Habits

1.25.26

1 Timothy 4:7-8

Sunday AM

Good AM. I hope you've had a blessed week. Over the past few weeks we've been talking about how to use our influence to lead like Jesus. We've been discussing what it means to lead w/ our hearts, minds, and hands – or how we feel, how we think, and how we move.

As I was prepping for this message, I stumbled across a Far Side cartoon that fits well w/in our series.

Cartoon – Vikings rowing in circles – one guys says to the other – *I've got it too, Omar – a strange feeling like we've just been going in circles.*

In leading, if we're not paying attention and using our influence effectively – we're likely to find ourselves spinning in circles, putting people in the wrong seat on the boat, finding ourselves busy w/out purpose, and drifting due to a lack of clarity and commitment.

Enter Jesus. Jesus teaches us that leadership is more than a title – it's a towel. It's serving/shepherding people to a greater purpose that requires using our heart and head to move us into action w/ our hands.

Today, as we conclude our series, I want to discuss the necessity of developing the right habits to lead like Jesus. In particular, there are (5) habits we need to mature to become more effective in influencing others.

Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. ⁸ For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 1 Timothy 4:7-8

I **Solitude** – Time Alone to Listen and Reset

Solitude is the intentional practice of stepping away from noise, demands, and distractions of life to be fully present w/ God. It's not isolation for escape, but w/draw for alignment.

I think of Psalm 46 – *Be still, and know that I am God.*

It's making the decision to stop performing, reacting, and striving long enough to remember who's really in control to allow stillness to create space for our soul to breathe and for our heart to be recalibrated by God's presence rather than the pressure of people.

Jesus modeled this rhythm consistently as He often got away from the pressures of life/ministry to be w/ God. Mark 1:35 explains that Jesus often w/drew from the crowds and pressure to hear God.

The purpose of solitude is to protect us from being driven by popularity/urgency so we can be anchored to God in intimacy so we may have clarity of calling.

Solitude is the most radical of the disciplines because it attacks the root of our bondage to noise, activity, and people. Dallas Willard

W/out solitude, we can lose perspective of the bigger picture leading us to being reactive instead of proactive and driven by the will of others or ego.

Exercise – A Moment of Silence/Solitude

II **Prayer** – Ongoing Daily Dependence/Direction

Prayer is the continual posture of dependence that anchors us to God's will, power, and direction. It's not our last resort, but our first response acknowledging God as the true source of wisdom and strength.

Think Proverbs 3:5-6 – *Trust in the Lord w/ all your heart... and He will make your paths straight.*

Prayer doesn't fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work. Oswald Chambers

In prayer, we *surrender control, realign priorities*, and confess our need for God guidance.

I think of the Lord's Prayer that teaches us to have:

- Right **PRAISE** – *Our Abba in heaven hallowed*
- Right **PERSPECTIVE** – *Thy kingdom come*
- Right **PRIORITY** – *Thy will be done.*
- Right **PETITION** – *give us this day our bread*
- Right **PENITENCE** – *forgive us and we forgive*
- Right **POWER** – *lead us not into temptation*

Prayer is essential. W/out it, we drift toward anxiety, self-reliance, and pride. While w/ it, we gain peace, discernment, and courage to obey God even if costly.

Prayer shapes us long before it ever shapes the outcome or others, allowing our influence to flow not from striving or fear, but from trust in God's presence.

Exercise – take a moment to prayer.

III **Worship** – Aligning Under God

Worship is the intentional centering of one's heart and mind on God's worth that leads to a person's surrender and submission to His authority w/ gratitude, trust, and obedience. W/in leadership, it's how a leader realigns from self-driven striving to Spirit-empowered living so their influence flows from God's purposes, not from the approval of people.

Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Psalm 95:6-7

To lead like Jesus, worship must come before work, b/c worship rightly orders the heart under God's authority and will.

Jesus repeatedly w/drew to be w/ the Father, not to escape responsibility but to realign His identity and mission. In worship, we're reminded that we are servants before we're shepherds, sons before we're sent, and obedient before we're effective.

Worship re-centers us away from self-reliance, applause, and outcomes to anchor us to trustful dependence on God. When we bow in worship, we're not losing influence – we're placing it where it belongs under His sovereign rule and authority.

We are saved not merely to serve God, but to worship Him—and service flows from worship. A.W. Tozer

IV **Scripture** – Study and Application of Truth/Wisdom

Scripture is the primary authority that shapes a person's thinking, values, beliefs, and decisions. It's not merely inspirational reading, but God's revealed truth that defines reality and directs one's life.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105

See – God's Word is God-breathed and it's profitable for teaching us truth to build our lives on, truth to confront us when to turn away, truth to turn our hearts back to God, and truth to restore our intimacy w/ Him.

This is b/c God's Word shapes/drives our convictions – and each of us will base our lives and influence either on **conviction** or **compliance**. Meaning, we will either stand our ground for what is right, good, and necessary, or capitulate to the crowd, conform to the world, and ultimately compromise the truth.

The vigor of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts.
George Müller

Jesus Himself led from Scripture. In moments of temptation, conflict, and mission clarity, He appealed to God's Word. When tempted in the wilderness, Jesus answered repeatedly, "*It is written,*" showing us that Scripture forms convictions before testing ever comes.

Scripture must move beyond information to transformation. James 1:22 echoes this call – *don't merely listen to the word... do what it says.* When Scripture governs us, it corrects drift, exposes motives, and shapes our influence to reflect God's convictions.

We must allow God's Word to confront us, to disturb our security, to undermine our complacency, and to overthrow our patterns of thought and behavior. Stott

V **Supportive Community** – people to inspire/correct

To be in a supportive and healthy community is essential for one's personal development and growth as from the beginning, God declared – *It is not good for man to be alone* (Genesis 2:18).

IOW – we were created for community and to commune w/ others in community as there's no such thing as Lone Ranger Christianity.

The Bible knows nothing of solitary religion. Wesley

Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another... Hebrews 10:24-25

Thru one another, God shapes us thru shared life – thru encouragement, wisdom, and presence that protect us from burnout and blind spots to build us up and to knit us together. And this occurs in community.

Jesus modeled this pattern thru-out His ministry. Though He taught the crowds, He invested deeply in a small group and even more closely w/ a few trusted companions. He shared life w/ them and invited them into moments of vulnerability, including Gethsemane.

The Christian needs another Christian who speaks God's Word to him. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Simply put – community provides accountability and grace. It offers trusted relationships that can speak truth, celebrate growth, and challenge drift in each of our lives to spur us along in life, faith, and mission.

A seasoned sailor once explained the difference between rowing and navigating. He said, “*You can have the strongest crew in the world, the best oars, and unmatched effort—but w/out a compass and a true north, all that strength just makes you drift faster.*” He went on to say that most boats don’t fail b/c the crew stops rowing, but b/c they fail to check their heading. Over time, no one notices that the current has slowly turned the boat away from their destination.

This is why these habits are so imperative. ***Solitude*** quiets the noise so we can hear God reset our direction. ***Prayer*** keeps us dependent instead of self-reliant. ***Worship*** realigns our hearts under God’s authority. ***Scripture*** fixes our convictions so we don’t drift into compliance. ***Community*** helps us see blind spots before the current carries us off course.

When we practice these habits, we stop rowing in circles and start moving w/ purpose, clarity, and faithfulness toward God’s calling.

Remember – as it pertains to living life and using your influence, the goal isn’t to row harder—it’s to follow Jesus more closely – only then can we lead like Jesus.

May God give us the courage to slow down, the humility to realign, and the faithfulness to lead – not from noise or pressure but from a life anchored in Him.