

In Jesus Steps

Disciples for Life

Unit 2: Christian Leadership

How to positively influence the attitudes and actions of others for Jesus Christ.

Lesson 10

Active Leadership Mission (Part One)

Week One (Note: there are two mission weeks in Lesson 10)

Doing for the Least of These

I hope that you enjoyed studying and thinking about the triune God and His marvelous and perfect name in Lesson 8. God's name is synonymous with Himself. Just as God is holy, powerful, and loving, so is His name. Just as God is the source of our salvation, so is His name (Romans 10:13). Our prayer is for you to be filled with the wonder of God and His great name each and every day of your life.

Our next lessons, 9 and 10, are mission actions; each with two weeks of mission assignments. They are not typical of our past study lessons but are designed to bless you and those around you. We hope you are reading your Bible, in addition to your *Christian Leadership Bible Study*, so that you will be in the Word during the next four weeks of active leadership ministry.

Being on mission with God is grounded in Christ. He makes it possible for us to be filled with the wonder of God. He is the chosen one in whom God delights. Jesus leads us in righteousness and in His name the nations will put their hope.

"Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. ¹⁹He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. ²⁰A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he has brought justice through to victory. ²¹In his name the nations will put their hope." Matthew 12:18–21

Jesus is the Servant whom God chose to proclaim justice to the nations. What does it mean for Jesus to proclaim justice to the nations? It means telling people the way things ought to be according to God's character. We either live by God's standards or suffer the consequences of judgment.

Not only does Jesus make justice known, but His death and resurrection guarantees that one day everything will be in line with God and His holy standard. By placing our faith in Him, we will be judged righteous and spend eternity with a loving God. We place our hope in Christ's name just as we place our hope in Him.

We can trust Jesus. No matter how weak or frail we are, Jesus will be there for us. Think of tall, slender stalks growing wild in a marsh or other wet area. Look closely among the strong shoots and picture a few that are hurt or damaged. These reeds are just like injured or broken people. God cares for them and does not want them to be crushed in their frailties. Jesus, the Servant,

helps the weak and repairs broken lives. He will work with them and woo (encourage) them to bring the verdict of innocence found in His blood.

We need to serve others by looking at our leadership model, Jesus. The New Testament is filled with stories of Him reaching out to the poor and weak. He ministered to their bodily or physical needs but never missed an opportunity to share their true, spiritual need of knowing, and following God.

Poor and weak does not necessarily mean a person without money and physical strength. A person *is* poor who does not know the truth of Christ. A person may be physically strong but weak in character or weak through emotional distress. We need to widen our understanding of bruised reeds and smoldering wicks referenced in Matthew 12:20.

As we serve others, we are serving Jesus (Matthew 25:40). When we are serving Jesus, we are serving God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. When we are serving God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, we are serving Jesus. This is oneness in service.

Jesus prayed that we would continually be one with God (John 17:11, 20–21). He desires that all believers become unified and consecrated to God’s service and purpose. Leadership in Christian service is helping others become one with God while opening our own lives to God’s sanctification process.

Our service, our leadership, is a way of life. We are conscious of our position in God’s kingdom day by day. In Lessons 9 and 10, you will have opportunities to concentrate on your service to God and write about your experiences.

Keep in mind that you are a leader in God’s army and are serving King Jesus. It is always a temptation to serve ourselves and attempt to keep our own comfort level high. Below are Scripture verses to encourage you in your service this week.

And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. ²⁵Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

2 Timothy 2:24–26

Jesus is God’s Servant whom He had chosen. You are Jesus’ servant whom He has chosen. You are a servant leader following Jesus for God’s glory in helping others find the truth and escape from the trap of the devil.

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’” Matthew 25:40

Pray and ask Jesus for opportunities to serve Him by helping others. After helping someone, look for ways to give Jesus the credit for your good work. For example, when someone thanks you for a particular action, you might respond like this: “Ordinarily, I wouldn’t be this helpful (or name

the deed you have done) but Jesus enables me to care for others.” Use your own way of speaking but give God the glory.

Whatever you do over the week pray silently, “I do this for you, Jesus.” Keep the daily log below to write at least one of your daily actions for Jesus, what happened as a result of your action or what was the person’s response and what you learned. If space allows comment on both the joys and difficulties in serving the King through helping others.

If your current position does not give you much contact with other people, consider writing, calling, or praying for someone. Be prayerful and creative. The Holy Spirit will help you.

Mission

Pray and ask Jesus for opportunities to serve Him each day by helping others. Seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance. Write about one of the ways you served Jesus each day. Disciples, please share and discuss your daily mission at your weekly team meeting.

Day 1

1. How did Jesus lead you?
2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person’s response?
3. What did you learn today, including joys and difficulties?

Day 2

1. How did Jesus lead you?
2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person’s response?
3. What did you learn today, including joys and difficulties?

Day 3

1. How did Jesus lead you?

2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response?
3. What did you learn today, including joys and difficulties?

Day 4

1. How did Jesus lead you?
2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response?
3. What did you learn today, including joys and difficulties?

Day 5

1. How did Jesus lead you?
2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response?
3. What did you learn today, including joys and difficulties?

Day 6

1. How did Jesus lead you?
2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response?
3. What did you learn today, including joys and difficulties?

Day 7

1. How did Jesus lead you?
2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response?
3. What did you learn today, including joys and difficulties?

End of Week Review

1. What was the most positive experience of your mission assignments?
2. What was the most difficult aspect of serving Christ in this way?
3. Why or why not will you make being on mission with Christ a daily activity in your life?
4. Name was one response you received this week when you acknowledged Christ as the reason for your good deeds?

—End of Week One—

Week Two

Every Thought Captive

“Anyone who's ever tried to start an exercise routine, quit smoking, or change a sleep pattern knows how powerful a habit can be. Habits seem to be more than behaviors—they seem to be part of who we are.

“And in a way, habits are just that—part of us. Habits are essentially patterns of behavior that become ‘worn in’ to our brains. Someone who wakes up every morning, pours a cup of coffee and lights a cigarette, in that order, every morning, has that pattern built in to his or her brain, in the form of well-used synaptic pathways.

“Everything we do (and think, for that matter) is governed by impulses firing across synapses, or spaces between certain cells that guide communication in the brain. When any behavior or pattern is repeated enough, the synaptic pathways associated with that pattern get used to being accessed. As a result, it becomes easier for impulses to travel along those pathways, and the behavior seems ‘natural.’ In other words, to the brain, wake—coffee—cigarette, in that order, is practically instinctive. One action triggers the next.”¹

The author goes on to say that changing a habit is unique to an individual. It could take 5 days or 9 months. But we know that with God all things are possible. So now that you have begun new habits of helping others and disciplining your mind daily, do not stop.

Vince Lombardi Jr. (1913–1970), head coach of the Green Bay Packers and considered one of the best and most successful of all coaches said it best. “Once you learn to quit, it becomes a habit.” Keep going. Keep serving the Lord. Be a winner on God’s team and in His circle.

Seek God’s help and make your good actions and thoughts habits! Make them habits in the sense that this is the pattern and practice of your life. This is who you are! Each day ask Jesus for opportunities to serve as you take all your thoughts captive to Him.

Thoughts and attitudes are critical to serving the Lord. It is in our mind that we decide to do or *not* to do what Jesus commands. When our hearts are filled with Christ, we will press forward to help others and please God. Below are Scripture verses to encourage you in your thoughts and attitudes this week.

But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them.
¹⁹*For out of the heart come evil thoughts-- murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.* Matthew 15:18–19

¹ Julia Layton, “Is it true you that if you can do anything for three weeks it will become a habit?” *How Stuff Works* <<http://science.howstuffworks.com/life/form-a-habit.htm>> (Accessed 4/10/2013).

A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.
⁴⁶*“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”* ⁴⁷*As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like.”*
Luke 6:45–47

Thoughts are difficult to manage. Nevertheless, just like we learn to control our bodies at a young age, we can also learn to control our minds. We need to make the decision to have pure thoughts and pray for the Holy Spirit to enable us.

In regard to managing thoughts and attitudes, we need to read the Bible. It is helpful to write or mark Bible verses for easy reference when we are having dark thoughts. You might have them organized in some way on your phone, tablet, or computer. You could also make index cards with Bible verses to carry in a pocket, book, or bag. When you are struggling, pull out those Scripture verses and read them. Filling your mind with God’s meaningful promises or verses will be helpful. Below are Scripture verses to encourage you in managing your thoughts.

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:5

Finally, brothers and sisters, 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. Philippians 4:8

For the next seven days, offer your thoughts to Jesus. Each time you have a wrong desire or idea, decide to “think about good things.” Offer them to Jesus by praying something like, “I ‘think’ this good thought for you, Jesus.”

Mission

Pray and ask Jesus for a pure mind and heart. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you each day in disciplining your mind. Write about one of the ways that you disciplined or took your thoughts captive to Christ. Also share any joys or struggles you faced in controlling your thoughts. Disciples will share and discuss their daily mission, and the end of week review at their weekly team meeting.

Day 1

1. I disciplined my mind today by:

2. This was the joy or struggle I had today in controlling my thoughts:

Day 2

1. I disciplined my mind today by:

2. This was the joy or struggle I had today in controlling my thoughts:

Day 3

1. I disciplined my mind today by:

2. This was the joy or struggle I had today in controlling my thoughts:

Day 4

1. I disciplined my mind today by:

2. This was the joy or struggle I had today in controlling my thoughts:

Day 5

1. I disciplined my mind today by:

2. This was the joy or struggle I had today in controlling my thoughts:

Day 6

1. I disciplined my mind today by:

2. This was the joy or struggle I had today in controlling my thoughts:

Day 7

1. I disciplined my mind today by:

2. This was the joy or struggle I had today in controlling my thoughts:

End of Week Review

1. What was the most positive experience of your mission assignments?

2. What was the most difficult aspect of disciplining your mind?

3. Why or why not, will you make disciplining your mind a daily activity in your life?

4. How did your thinking change this week?

—End of Week Two and Lesson 10—

Next—Unit 2: Christian Leadership, Lesson 11: Active Leadership Mission (Part Two)

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