

CLI Leadership Bible Study: Lesson 8A: Part One

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

Lesson 8A: Active Leadership Mission (Week One) *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 7. God's name is synonymous (identical) with Himself. Therefore, as God is holy, powerful, and loving, so is His name. As God is the source of our salvation, so is His name (Romans 10:13). My prayer is that you are filled with the wonder of God and His great name each and every day of your life.

"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.¹⁹ He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets.²⁰ A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory.²¹ In his name the nations will put their hope."

Matthew 12:18-21 (Underlining by author for emphasis)

Jesus is the Servant whom God chose to proclaim justice to the nations. Proclaiming justice means telling us 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 holy and righteous and spend eternity with a loving God. We place our hope in Christ's name just as we place our hope in Him.

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 so that He might bring the verdict of innocence in His blood.

Advancing Christ's Light in Prisons

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 (set apart, make holy) process.

Thus, our service, our leadership, is a way of life. We are conscious of our position in God's Kingdom day by day. In Lesson 8A: Part One and Lesson 8B: Part Two, you will have opportunities to concentrate on your service to God and write about your experiences.

Each day for the next week write a short note or description of: (1. How Jesus led you (2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response and (3. What you learned (joys and difficulties). 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.

Read 2 Timothy 2:24-26:

And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.²⁵ Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,²⁶ and 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.

Read Matthew 25:40:

"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers 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 saying things, 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.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS Lesson 8A: Part One
CLI Christian Leadership Study: Active Leadership Mission

Name & Number: _____ Date: _____

Name of Institution: _____ Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

**Pray and ask Jesus for opportunities to serve Him each day by helping others.
Write about one of the ways that you served Jesus each day.**

1. Day 1: (1. How Jesus led you: _____

(2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response:

(3. What you learned (joys and difficulties): _____

2. Day 2: (1. How Jesus led you: _____

(2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response:

(3. What you learned (joys and difficulties): _____

3. Day 3: (1. How Jesus led you: _____)

(2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response:

(3. What you learned (joys and difficulties): _____

4. Day 4: (1. How Jesus led you: _____)

(2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response:

(3. What you learned (joys and difficulties): _____

5. Day 5: (1. How Jesus led you: _____)

(2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response:

(3. What you learned (joys and difficulties): _____

6. Day 6: (1. How Jesus led you: _____

(2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response:

(3. What you learned (joys and difficulties): _____

7. Day 7: (1. How Jesus led you: _____

(2. What happened as a result of your action or what was the person's response:

(3. What you learned (joys and difficulties): _____

8. What was one response that you received this week as you acknowledged Christ as the reason for your good deeds? _____

Lesson 8 (Part One): Active Leadership Mission (Week Two) Every Thought Captive

Read Matthew 15:18-19 and Luke 6:45-47:

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

*The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.*⁴⁶ *"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"*⁴⁷ *I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice.* Luke 6:45-47

Thoughts and attitudes are critical in 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 good things, we will press forward to help others and please God.

Read 2 Corinthians 10:5 and Philippians 4:8:

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, 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

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. In addition to making the decision to have pure thoughts, pray for help from the Holy Spirit. Read the Bible. Make index cards with Bible verses that you can carry in a pocket,

book, or bag. When you are struggling, pull out those cards and read the Scripture verses. Filling your mind with God’s meaningful promises or verses will be helpful.

For the next seven days, offer your thoughts to Jesus. Each time you have a wrong desire or idea, make a decision to “think about good things.” Pray, “I think this for you, Jesus.” Write in the daily log below how you were able to discipline your mind each day and take every thought obedient to Christ. Share joys and struggles of taming your mind.

9. Day 1: (1. I disciplined my mind by: _____

(2. Joy or struggle in controlling my thoughts: _____

10. Day 2: (1. I disciplined my mind by: _____

(2. Joy or struggle in controlling my thoughts: _____

11. Day 3: (1. I disciplined my mind by: _____

(2. Joy or struggle in controlling my thoughts: _____

12. Day 4: (1. I disciplined my mind by: _____

(2. Joy or struggle in controlling my thoughts: _____

13. Day 5: (1. I disciplined my mind by: _____

(2. Joy or struggle in controlling my thoughts: _____

14. Day 6: (1. I disciplined my mind by: _____

(2. Joy or struggle in controlling my thoughts: _____

15. Day 7: (1. I disciplined my mind by: _____

(2. Joy or struggle in controlling my thoughts: _____

16. How did your thinking change this week? _____

The following is an excerpt from a scientific article about habits:

“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 and give over all your thoughts to Him.

Next: Lesson 8B - Part Two: Active Leadership Mission

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¹ Layton, Julia, “Is it true you that if you can do anything for three weeks it will become a habit,” *How Stuff Works* website:

[HTTP://SCIENCE.HOWSTUFFWORKS.COM/LIFE/FORM-A-HABIT.HTM](http://SCIENCE.HOWSTUFFWORKS.COM/LIFE/FORM-A-HABIT.HTM)