



STUDENT LEADERSHIP MEETING

Sunday, January 30th

WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE:

- 1. Personal Ministry Assessment**
- 2. Devotional Thought On Evangelism**
- 3. Quiet Time Assignment On Influencing Others**
- 4. A List of At Least Ten People I'm Going to Tell About Mexicali**

1. PERSONAL MINISTRY ASSESSMENT

Although I sent the following material in an email to all the student leaders, I wanted to duplicate the material here incase you didn't have a chance to get to it.

If you did have the "chance" to do it, but didn't, make sure you find that "chance" again real soon.

Is my heart in the right condition to do ministry? What have my motives been for being involved?

Have I been effective in my ministry? What are some results I can point to? What have been some successes? Am I making a difference or am I wasting my time?

What are some things I can do to be more effective in my service to meet needs in others?

Am I SHAPed for this ministry? So I need to try another one?

Have I been consistent in my ministry or am I flaky? What's been the cause of my flakiness?

Am I ministering where I feel like God is calling me to serve?

What are some MINISTRY SPECIFIC things I should be consistently praying for?

2. DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT ON EVANGELISM

He is the Holy Spirit who leads into all truth. The world at large cannot receive him because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. John 14:17

I believe this passage holds radical implications for evangelism--for sharing God's love, the Good News, with the lost.

Correct analysis of a problem is essential for the solution of that problem. If you don't know what the problem is, then how are you going to fix it? By accident? Life is too short to solve problems by accident.

People are lost . . . most people are lost. Jesus saves save those who accept the free gift. We call this acceptance faith or belief. It is correct not to call this a work, although works—a changed life—should result. But the question is why don't more people believe? It's a great deal . . . it's the best deal. And people are always happy with a deal.

The problem with the lost is not just that they're lost. Their problem is compounded by their indifference, by the fact that they're doing nothing to be found.

Now this is, of course, unnatural, but nevertheless, still true.

If we are lost in the physical world, we certainly wish and try to be found. There was a story on the news recently of an 80-year old man who entered a forest/swamp area for a 15-minute hike to find some wood. He got turned around and disoriented and lost. He was in the swamp for 7 days. No water, no food, no warm clothes. He had the only thing he needed: hope (and a tiny knife, but I'm not sure how that really helped). He held on to the hope that he'd make it home, and that gave him the strength to persevere.

The spiritually lost are in a far, far worse position; and because of this, our strategy (our help), must be tailored to the situation.

What do I mean? If someone is simply lost, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SHOW THEM HOW TO "BE FOUND." But for the spiritually lost, for those who don't know they're lost, for those who are not looking for God (nor would even recognize him), they must first be convinced that they are, in fact, lost.

To assume the unsaved know they are lost and all they need is "the answer" is a fatal mistake.

Imagine again the lost elderly man in the swamp/forest. Imagine it's day 7 and a search party finds Bob (the name I'll use for the lost man). They are overflowing with joy—the lost man has been found! He looks terrible: wet, dirty, he's mosquito-bitten, cut up and bruised ... all around nasty. But he's alive. As the search party shouts and screams with joy, they offer Bob some water and food. He accepts a little but then says he doesn't need any more. Ready to take Bob home, the jubilant searchers turn to leave...and Bob refuses to go with them. He's lived with the hunger and thirst for

so long he doesn't think he needs their food. They try to bring him home, but he doesn't think he's lost. He refuses their help, because he doesn't know he is lost.

Now this is, of course, ridiculous in one sense, and relevant in another. In the "physical" world a person lost in the forest, like Bob, would come home at first opportunity. In a "spiritual" sense, this phenomenon happens every day.

Believers cannot simply say, "Here is the way." Think again of where we left crazy Bob and the search party. What do you think would happen next?

You know what would happen: the search party would try to convince Bob of his need, "Come home because you'll be more comfortable. You'll sleep in a bed. You'll eat more than roots for lunch. You can drink moss-free water. Your blankets will be soft, not made out of bark. You can have a fork AND a knife! You can even change your underwear if you should so choose."

Focus your mind's eye on the search party. Imagine what it would take for them to be effective.

- a) They would have to not be lost
- b) They would have to be ready to convince Bob he was lost

Now the first is, of course, obvious: the blind can't lead the blind (in most circumstances, but that's another devotional thought)

Not only would they verbally work hard to convince lost Bob, but they would also have to look the part. If they spoke about the wonders of being found, but did not reflect these, their argument would, more than likely, be ignored.

"Bob, you're lost. Come home and you can have clean clothes and healthy food."

But what if the search party wore clothes that looked like Bob's and their bodies were just as emaciated?

What if they said, "Bob, you're lost and you're a total idiot?" Insulting Bob wouldn't bring him home

What about our evangelism? What about when we Christians are the "search party?"

Our message to the lost: "Come to Jesus."

Response: I don't need him.

Our evangelism continues: "Experience his love, his peace, his wonderful community called the church. This community will love and support you."

Enter into this dialog the perceptions of the lost. You know they're watching and noticing and making judgments as to the quality of our life.

And what do they see in the life of the evangelist? Struggles for acceptance, unsettled and worrisome, achievers by their own power, gossips and the tearing down of others.

How can the lost be convinced of a better life when they don't see a better life in you?

I've wandered around quite a bit. Let's focus on evangelism and what this Scripture has to say about it: "The world at large cannot receive him because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him."

Effective evangelism begins with the knowledge of truth. Jesus died for our sins; accept the free gift. Evangelism continues with this question: Can you convince the lost that they are lost? Can you teach the lost to look for God and to recognize him? What will it take for you to be more convincing, to be a better teacher?

Answering this question will lead to better evangelism. Answering this question should be the subject of your prayer for the next few days.

I end these thoughts with two steps in the direction of an answer:

1. "Holier-than-thou" lifestyles that come from self-righteousness doesn't do anything but create guilt and even further indifference in non-believers. "An offended brother is more unyielding than a fortified city" Proverbs 18:19. Insulting the lost will not convince them of their reality.
2. Consider deeply your own joys and benefits of being a Christian. This will produce a wellspring of hope that you can share with the lost (and other Christians too!).

Your life is better than the life of the lost. To share this without arrogance opens the gate for the gospel.

Are we up for this impossible task? Thanks to God, his Spirit is working. Thanks that our efforts are alongside his and that the kingdom's work is powered by the Holy Spirit!

3. QUIET TIME ASSIGNMENT ON INFLUENCING OTHERS

There's no question that Christians should be people of influence, we should be people who make a difference in the world around us for the kingdom of God. This is even more true for leaders! This quiet time holds some reflections from the Scriptures centering on what it means to be a person of influence.

1. Read the following passage from the gospel of John a few times (it's two pages).
2. Next, read through the "principles of influence" on the right hand column. Answer the following questions in your quiet time journal:

Is there anything missing from this list? What are some principles from this Scripture that should be added?

What are some principles that "hit home" for you—why are they so meaningful? Which ones do you think you do well? Which ones do you think you need to work on? Are there any principles listed here that are new for you, things you've never heard before?

Pick two or three of the principles and think about how they should apply to your life. Journal on what it would look like in your life if you expressed those principles.

Looking at the big picture of this entire text, why do you think Jesus succeeded at influencing others?

Do you feel like you live a life of influence? How would you rate it on a scale of one to ten?

John 4:1-42

1 Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, "Jesus is baptizing and making more disciples than John" 2 (though Jesus himself didn't baptize them--his disciples did). 3 So he left Judea to return to Galilee.

4 He had to go through Samaria on the way. 5 Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. 7 Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink." 8 He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

9 The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?" 10 Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who I am, you would ask me, and I would give you living water."

11 "But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket," she said, "and this is a very deep well. Where would you get this living water? 12 And besides, are you greater than our ancestor Jacob who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his cattle enjoyed?"

13 Jesus replied, "People soon become thirsty again after drinking this water. 14 But the water I give them takes away thirst altogether. It becomes a perpetual spring within them, giving them eternal life."

15 "Please, sir," the woman said, "give me some of that water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to haul water." 16 "Go and get your husband," Jesus told her. 17 "I don't have a husband," the woman replied.

Jesus said, "You're right! You don't have a husband-- 18 for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now."

19 "Sir," the woman said, "you must be a prophet. 20 So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?"

Principles of Influence

Ignore the socially acceptable thing to do when it's contrary to God way for your life.

Don't be afraid to make the first move when the timing is right, seek to be non-offensive and inviting.

Plan on an environment where the other person can feel comfortable enough to open up.

Racial, social, gender, and religious boundaries shouldn't hinder our desire and ability to influence others.

Offer the truth, don't "force" some one to accept it.

Always seek to start where the other person is "at."

Keep the discussion focused and on topic without being narrow-minded.

Reveal relevant truth that's custom tailored to the other person without "watering" down the truth.

Don't be judgmental, and yet don't condone sinful actions.

Convince others that you are a true person of God.

Be ready to communicate the same truth in different ways.

Refuse to give up when the other person fails to understand.

Principles of Influence (these should be added)

John 4:1-42 (continued)

21 Jesus replied, "Believe me, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father here or in Jerusalem.

22 You Samaritans know so little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. 23 But the time is coming and is already here when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for anyone who will worship him that way. 24 For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."

25 The woman said, "I know the Messiah will come--the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

26 Then Jesus told her, "I am the Messiah!"

27 Just then his disciples arrived. They were astonished to find him talking to a woman, but none of them asked him why he was doing it or what they had been discussing. 28 The woman left her water jar beside the well and went back to the village and told everyone, 29 "Come and meet a man who told me everything I ever did! Can this be the Messiah?" 30 So the people came streaming from the village to see him.

31 Meanwhile, the disciples were urging Jesus to eat. 32 "No," he said, "I have food you don't know about."

33 "Who brought it to him?" the disciples asked each other.

34 Then Jesus explained: "My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work. 35 Do you think the work of harvesting will not begin until the summer ends four months from now? Look around you! Vast fields are ripening all around us and are ready now for the harvest. 36 The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike! 37 You know the saying, 'One person plants and someone else harvests.' And it's true. 38 I sent you to harvest where you didn't plant; others had already done the work, and you will gather the harvest."

39 Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, "He told me everything I ever did!" 40 When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay at their village. So he stayed for two days, 41 long enough for many of them to hear his message and believe. 42 Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe because we have heard him ourselves, not just because of what you told us. He is indeed the Savior of the world."

Principles of Influence

Don't be afraid to describe authentic worship

Realize that you are revealing that which everyone is looking for—the truth, however many will still not recognize what it is they seek.

People notice passion, conviction always yields action.

Different "students" require different lessons.

Realize that your efforts won't always yield results.

Realize that you won't always see the results.

Allow obedience to God's word to feed you, don't be nourished by your past successes for this will lead to pride.

Be sure to do your influencing "long enough," not too long or too short.

Build on the work of others. Don't deny it (and take all the credit) and don't rely on it (as if the past work is enough, and you should contribute nothing).

Allow God to work through you.

Understand the final goal of influence: for the other person to say, "Christ is indeed the Savior of the world."

Influencing many begins with influencing one.

Principles of Influence (these should be added)

