



...For I'm trained in the secret of overcoming all things, whether in fullness or in hunger. And I find that the strength of Christ's explosive power infuses me to conquer every difficulty. —Paul. Philippians 4:12-13 [The Passion Translation].

THE SERVANT'S INITIATIVE TRAINING FOR LEADERS

What does becoming an initiated servant leader look like?

How do you become a leader? Is servanthood synonymous with Leadership? Does it fit a cultural modicum or is it more like a child stepping into His grandpa's boots? These are just a few of the questions we will ask as we accept the invitation of Jesus into an apprenticeship with Him.

Drawing from classic authors of Christian devotion is becoming a devotional practice in our journey with the Lord at Wild on the Path so, I want to share a story with you that I believe will not only cultivate a growing closeness in your walk with God but will also help you in your journey to become the types of leaders that God can use for His good and glory!

The story of a man called Brother Lawrence

Nicholas Herman (Brother Lawrence) was born in Eastern France in 1611. He grew up so poor that he joined the army as a young adult so he could eat. After getting injured, he worked the simple job of a footman to provide for himself. Usually the footmen performed a range of duties which included serving meals, opening and closing doors, carrying heavy items, or moving furniture for the housemaid to clean behind. The footmen might also double as valets, especially for visiting guests. But how could God use such a man as a leader?

Jesus met Nicholas in his mundane life of opening carriage doors and waiting on tables. He described having a vision that "set me completely loose from the world and kindled in me such a love for God..." From the book... (Practicing His Presence, pp. 41-42). (We'll talk more about the power of under rowers in later modules).

At age forty, Nicholas became a lay brother with the Discalced (Barefoot) Carmelites. He served in the monastery kitchen for the rest of his life until his last years when he repaired sandals.

So here is the question I want to challenge you with. How did this soldier, footman, and kitchen monk become known as Brother Lawrence? How did this poor, humble man inspire millions of Christians to a deeper devotion to Christ?

Brother Lawrence developed a simple way of continuously praying from his heart. He was in perpetual conversation with the Lord. He practiced communing with God in the loud and fast-paced kitchen as well as during times of private contemplation.

His story shows us how real, available, and accessible the sweet, inward presence of Jesus is during the busy, outward activity of daily life; How that it develops Spirit led, servant leadership, and how God gets the glory when He is our satisfaction.

This ordinary man's simple union with Jesus drew many people to him to seek his counsel and prayers. After his death, this lowly monk's letters of spiritual direction and conversation were turned into a book called Practicing the Presence of God.

Inspiration From Practicing the Presence of God

I will never become an initiated leader until I know the presence of the Holy Spirit, the Goodness of the Father towards me, and the very natural rhythms of Jesus. It is from this relationship that an initiated outflow of Him becomes the makings of a great leader. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done!"

Here are a few excerpts from Lawrence's book (Practicing His Presence). Allow them to wake you up to Jesus' presence within you...

“My set times of prayer are not different from other times of the day. Although I do retire to pray (because it is the direction of my superior) I do not need such retirement nor do I ask for it because my greatest business does not divert me from God...”

“The time of business does not differ with me from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great a tranquility as if I were upon my knees at the blessed sacrament.”

“If sometimes I have not thought of God for a good while, I do not become disquieted because of it. But, after having acknowledged my failure to God, I return to Him with even greater trust since I was so miserable in having forgotten Him.” (Lawrence saw lack of constant communication with Christ as a failure!)

[This is] the most excellent method I have found of going to God... doing common business without any view to pleasing [people], and as far as I am capable, doing it purely for the love of God.

If we are see and become great leaders then we must come from the place of enjoying our union with God first! Anything else is pseudo, self-reliant, consumeristic, and relies on unnatural human strength.

What you will find in the Servants Initiative Leadership Training

If you want to become the kind of leader Jesus has hardwired you to be then this may look different than the present culturally christian idioms gleaned from the business models we have seen in corporate America and applied to our church growth tactics. Quite frankly, Jesus turns this model on its head and we will talk about that more later.

Jesus’ way of loving, leading, and witnessing.

Jesus never pestered people with the gospel. He didn’t chase people down to “make” them believe. On the contrary, he respected their free choice and he whetted their appetite for learning how to live the good life in God’s kingdom. It’s an unseen spiritual world, but he knew from his daily experience that it was abundant and eternal living (John 10:10) and that it would develop the most unlikely people around him to lead in taking the Goon News into all of the world.

In our resources you will see how Rabboni our Master preached from the life he learned to live. For instance, he teaches us to “give to the one asks you” (Matthew 5:42) and we see him constantly being benevolent toward other people, even those considered repulsive and obnoxious. Not only is he generous, but also he’s very happy in his giving!

We see Jesus’ joyful generosity and ask how can it be? We know how it feels to give and give and become exhausted and resentful! If we carefully investigate Jesus’ teachings and personal lifestyle then we will discover that he also had boundaries and he took plenty of time for personal rest, prayer, friendship, and celebration. There’s a balanced inflow and outflow in his life. He’s always in tune with his loving Father, always acting in tandem with him, always empowered by Holy Spirit. This is the type of leadership that we want to see initiated in those who share in this journey because Jesus has proven in his own life the goodness of all of his teachings. He’s obeyed the commandments and practiced all of his advice and found this to be immensely profitable and enjoyable—even when he’s suffering!

Isn’t it interesting that after Jesus preached his Sermon on the Mount “the crowd burst into applause? They had never heard teaching like this. It was apparent that he was living everything he was saying— quite contrary to their religious teachers! This was the best teaching they had ever heard”

(Matthew 7:28-29, MSG).

The Message brings out what it means when the Scripture says Jesus spoke “with authority.” It doesn’t mean he talked loud or assumed a posture of superiority—it means he spoke with the calm confidence that comes when you have personal knowledge. Hence the wording, “He was living everything he was saying. Healthy leaders are not those who are telling people what to do or even trying to “model right behavior” as a lesson for them. Instead, when you become healthy leaders, you will be one who is relying on God’s grace to be a loving kind of person and letting God speak to people from your life. It’s a natural, organic way of being a witness, shining the light of Christ through your body and lifestyle so that people can know what is true and good.

Your day-by-day earthly life is being lived from the spiritual reality of being with the risen Christ in the Kingdom of the Heavens for the sake of the people around

your body at any given time. That's what Jesus' apostles and all the "great ones" for Christ down through the centuries have done.

Following and leading in the ways of Jesus.

Great teacher's, spiritual director's life coaches, worker's, grandparent's, or group leader's, and lay leader's who speak for Christ weather vocally or through service "do not try to manipulate others feelings or actions in any way." They learn to lay down the burden of trying to get people to do things. Why? Because It almost always offends the people you're dealing with and it exhausts you! Instead, simply do your best "to help willing hearers and willing apprentices understand and come to know the reality and goodness of life in the kingdom of God with Jesus."

Paul is the great example for us. He was not attractive to look at and he was not an exciting speaker like Apollos. He wasn't even seen as a legitimate apostle because he was not one of the Twelve. He wasn't even one of the hundreds of others who knew Jesus in the flesh and followed him. And yet he acted in the power of the Spirit of Jesus.

"He worked with Christ to bring people to God—with amazing success. He spoke plainly to them, without manipulative devices of any kind, relying on the Spirit of God to give his words the effect they should have" (based on 2 Corinthians 4:2 ~ In Paul's own words:

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God (1 Corinthians 2:1-5, NRSV).

His disciples became like him, "a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tables of human hearts. Such is the confidence we have through Christ toward God" (2 Corinthians 3:3-4).

"This 'confidence' makes pastors, leaders, and servants, hopeful and transparent"

Please prayerfully consider this journey on the wild path of Jesus with us. It will grow you into more Godly servant leaders and help you thrive in your service for Him as you take the Good News into all of the World.

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