



Next Level--Leaders...Leadership

Lesson 2: Lessons from the Word

The Big Idea:

“Failure to allow God to order our steps leads to busyness”

Proverbs 16:9

We can make our plans, but the LORD determines our steps.

Jonathan Lotson

Time is one of the most valuable things on earth. Time is something that we can never get back or extend. Time is one of the most precious gifts given to humanity by God and is controlled only by God. However, many can be found guilty of not valuing the gift of time. One of the most common phrases in the 21st-century is "I don't have time." For a brief moment, reflect on how many times you have told someone you were too busy to do something this year? If we were, to be honest, some of us are simply "too busy." Busyness is the opposite of mindfulness. Furthermore, busyness hinders people from getting to their next level.

Today's Leadership Lessons from the Word highlights the downside of busyness and the necessity of allowing God to direct our steps. Proverbs 16:9 says “the human mind plans the way, but the LORD directs the steps.” Busyness is a person's attempt to order their own steps, which is not the best utilization of time.

◆ *My Notes* ◆

PRAY! PRAY! PRAY!

A Question to Consider:

What is causing your busyness?



1. Busyness Challenges Leaders Idea of Success

Busyness is not the best use of a leader’s time. However, busyness on the surface can resemble success. How success is defined will determine how the human mind plans and how leaders act. Furthermore, a leader’s view of leadership and how they should function is strongly connected to their ideas surrounding success. Success means different things to different people, and whatever it might be should be explored. As leaders consider moving from busyness to mindfulness, a leader must first wrestle with the origin of their ideas surrounding success. As leaders consider the reason(s), they define success the way they do they can then make strategic plans for pruning or changing their view of success. Additionally, as busyness is examined, it can challenge leaders' ideas of success and possibly allow them to put busyness in perspective and truly enable the Lord to direct their steps.

Benjamin Franklin stated that people should “never confuse motion for action.” As leaders allow the human mind to plan their way they experience motion. However, leaders will not experience action until leaders enable the Lord to direct their steps. If a leader's idea of success does not result in action, it is merely motion, which is a sign of busyness, which should challenge a leader's idea of success. As a leader challenges their notions surrounding success, busyness can be highlighted and eradicated, and action can then surface for the glory of God and the advancement of the Kingdom.

2. Leading Out of Self

Busyness is a sign that a leader is leading out of self instead of mindfully leading and living out the Lord’s directed steps. Jeremiah 10:23 says “LORD, I know that people’s lives are not their own; it is not for them to direct their steps.” Leaders who direct their steps is a sign of busyness and an example of leading out of self. Busyness is the result of depending on one's self. Often when someone is leading out of busyness, they are taking matters into their own hands and doing what they see fit. Not only does busyness expose one not allowing the Lord to direct their steps, but it also highlights the lack of community, which is imperative for all organizations and organizational leaders to succeed. A community is essential to experiencing success because no one can reach success alone. However, leaders who lead out of self-diminishes the value of community and relies on busyness which hinders success that is led by the Lord. As the Lord directs the steps of an organization, it is imperative that the leader then take advantage of having a community and strategically follow the ordered steps of the Lord. As leaders allow the Lord to direct their steps and use the community that they have been placed over to assist, busyness should diminish, and mindfulness should flourish, which leads to success.

◆ My Notes ◆



3. Busyness Lacks True Direction

A lack of mindfulness can signify a lack of true direction and make leaders feel as if busyness is their last resort. However, busyness being the last resort is far from the truth, but most importantly highlights the need to address the lack of direction. Mindfulness in the context of leadership is concerned with the strategic implementation of the Lord's directed steps. However, a lack of direction can lead to busyness due to having little or no direction. Christian leaders must be spirit led and understand when and how the Lord is directing their steps. God is not a God of random and meaningless acts. Leaders must know that following the Lord's steps will assist in heading in a direction that will lead to success in ways that busyness could never achieve. Busyness will instead look like going in circles with little action and impact, signifying a lack of true direction.

4. Busyness: Never too Late to Change

Busyness is often something that is learned and developed over time to a point in which it becomes second nature. However, it is never too late to move from busyness to mindfulness. It merely requires leaders who engage in busyness to submit and truly allow the Lord to direct their paths. It is imperative to highlight that moving from busyness should not equate to laziness. Preferably, moving from busyness is the act of saying no (in word and deed) to the things that are not aligned to God's plan, so you can say "yes" to every step the Lord designs for you to take. God desires Christian leaders to impact the world and lead the way significantly. However, busyness instead of mindfulness will only delay the process.

Create Leader/Leadership Goals & Encourage Action:

The leader/leadership goals should include activities that encourage members to divorce busyness. This includes one's willingness to challenge their ideas about success, not lead out of self, follow God's direction, and be willing to change and cease from busyness. The goal is for leaders to truly allow the Lord to direct their steps, which is imperative to one's relationship with God and their responsibility to the people they lead.

As leaders consider moving from busyness they can consider the following activities:

- Consider the meaning behind what is currently being done
- Individual and corporate prayer, seeking God's direction
- Gain a thorough understanding via group brainstorming, of the difference between what a leader does and who a leader is. Doing so will assist leaders not to get tempted to revert to busyness in search of finding value or false success.

Christianity is a faith journey, like Christian leadership. Not seeing the next move in a leader's life or organization may be frustrating but it should never move a leader to devise their own plan instead of allowing the Lord to direct their steps. When leaders create their own ways, they often find themselves simply being busy instead of leading in the spirit of mindfulness. Remember, the human mind plans the way, but the LORD directs the steps, which leads to real success.

◆ My Notes ◆



A Thought to Ponder:

One of the ways Jesus maintained a posture of allowing God to order his steps is through relationship. Having a strong relationship with God strengthens one's faith to trust God even when they can't seem to trace God. Having a strong relationship with God ensures leaders that God is always present, and that God will order their steps even if they have to wait and put their plans to the side. Consider this statement by Kevin DeYoung which says:

"Busyness does not mean you are a faithful or fruitful Christian. It only means you are busy, just like everyone else. Also, like everyone else, your joy, your heart, and your soul are in danger."

What are you doing to move away from busyness?

What Difference Would It Make:

What benefits might you gain as a result of moving away from busyness?

In what way(s) have you not allowed the Lord to order your steps?

What practice(s) can you implement to create a culture in your organization that refrains from busyness?

What system(s) and structure can you establish to sustain a life away from busyness?

How can your core leader or community hold you accountable during this process of moving away from busyness?

Suggested Resources:

Crazy Busy: A (mercifully) Short Book about a (really) Big Problem

by Kevin DeYoung

The Mind of the Leader

by Rasmus Hougaard and Jacqueline Carter

◆ *My Notes* ◆