

“Life-On-Life Evangelism”

STORY OF MY LIFE Sermon Series | Week Four | Newbreak Church

March 28th, 2021

This week is about modeling the way of Jesus. We live in a world where “social influencers”, pro athletes, actors, and musicians have a big impact on how people think, dress, eat, and spend money. In a similar way, we have a great opportunity to model the way of Jesus to others. This message answers the question: How do I live my life as an example for others?

For more insights relating to this week’s sermon, see <https://newbreak.church/blog/>. We post a new blog every Sunday which coincides with the sermon passage or theme from that day.

Start Here

- Who was one of your role models growing up? What qualities or characteristics do you want to imitate?
- Do you ever think of Jesus as a role model in your life? Why or why not?

Going Deeper Into the Message

Read: 1 Timothy 4:12–16

How do I live my life as an example for others?

Point 1 – By my actions

¹² Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set **an example** for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. ... ¹⁵ Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may **see your progress**. ¹⁶ **Watch your life and doctrine** closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, **you will save both yourself and your hearers.** (1 Timothy 4:12,15-16, NIV)

As a Christian, having good doctrine is important (verse 16) but Paul makes a point that the way we live our life is essential as well. Paul highlights five different ways that

Timothy was to be an example to others (speech, conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity). We can “preach” or say what we want, but even when our words cease our life is preaching all week long. How we carry ourselves as followers of Jesus is as important as what we say about Jesus. Francis of Assisi said, “It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching.”

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Reflect on a time when someone’s life was a compelling demonstration of the gospel. Describe them and their influence on you. How did their life inspire you?
- Do you feel confident in how your life portrays the gospel to others? Why, or why not?

Point 2 – With my time

After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, **where he spent some time with them...** (John 3:22, NIV)

Giving our time is a form of giving our love. And of course, Jesus was the supreme model of this (see “Additional Insight” for more). How we steward our time ends up being one of the key ways we lead by example, whether we know it or not!

—ADDITIONAL INSIGHT—

**This insight is an excerpt from the Newbreak blog post associated with this week.*

I love that the allotted time of each day is one of the grand equalizers of us all. Whether you are a CEO of a multi-billion dollar company or a stay-at-home parent or anything else, we all have 24 hours in a day. Think about it: time is the one commodity so precious that you can’t purchase more no matter how much money you have. It’s both precious and invaluable. And often we use similar language for *time* as we do our bank accounts. We *spend* time.

But what if we saw our time not as something we spend, but something we invest?

When you spend money, for example, it is gone and exchanged for some item. However, when we invest money, we intentionally and willingly give it for the sake of what it will become as the investment matures. Investing in stocks is a good example of this, because if you buy a share in a healthy and growing company, you are counting on the stock going up in price over time. It is about looking beyond the short-term. Is it possible to see our time, too, as an investment?

Investing our time is better than simply spending it. But do most people even consider the difference? Probably not. But like most things, where we are thoughtful and intentional, we are more likely to see alignment toward God's direction for our lives. And Jesus modeled this, which the Gospel of John shows us in subtle, yet profound, ways.

*After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where **he spent some time with them**...* (John 3:22, NIV)

John chooses a really interesting verb to convey the idea of "spending time," using the Greek verb *diatribō*. As one Greek lexicon describes it, *diatribō* is "to remain or stay in a place, with the implication of some type of activity." In other ordinary uses of the verb in ancient Greek, it referred to two things rubbing against each other. In essence, when Jesus spent time with people, he would "rub off" on them!

Jesus invested his time and his very self into his followers. And in return, they became more like him.

Christians became known as "Christians" (which literally means "little Christs") because followers of Christ gradually became like him over time and through their intentional time with Jesus! The very title "Christian" assumes that Christ has multiplied the presence of his Spirit through all who call him Lord.

We referenced John 3:22, and earlier in that same chapter is Jesus's famous encounter with Nicodemus, the well-known teacher of Israel. Nicodemus was curious about Jesus, but he didn't want to put his social status in jeopardy since he was one of the key religious leaders. So what did he do? Nicodemus met Jesus by night ([John 3:2](#)). Listening in to their conversation, it is clear Nicodemus does not truly understand who he is speaking to and even what the message of the kingdom means. Yet, there is such grace in the subtext of the passage. Jesus met Nicodemus exactly where he was, welcoming his questions and doubts. The old maxim is true: "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." And Jesus cared about Nicodemus and he invested in Nicodemus with the gift of time and understanding.

Jesus had a knack for taking routine moments and turning them into investments into people's lives.

Jesus said to them, "Come have breakfast [with me]." (John 21:12)

Admittedly, the passage is not profound, but the context is. Jesus says this to his disciples *after his resurrection!* What did Jesus do during in his forty days before ascending to the throne of heaven? He showed himself to be the resurrected Lord, yes. He taught about the kingdom, indeed. But he also enjoyed the routine moments with his disciples, like breakfast! So, one way of being like Jesus is to not discount the routine moments.

Time is passing by every second, and we should not worry ourselves too much, obsessing over being productive with every millisecond, that would be exhausting! Instead, we should be challenged to be intentional, take inventory, and ensure the time we have is invested in what really matters.

We don't have control over everything in life, but we do have accountability for our time. And so when we invest our time into people, we are bringing value to what has lasting significance. After all, the best of discipleship comes in the context of life-on-life, and along the way relationships.

So, take a breathe and rest in the fact that we can be like Jesus by being engaged in the moment and investing in those in front of us.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- How does Jesus's example of time stewardship inspire and challenge you to be more intentional with your time?
- What are some practical ways to use your time to share God's love with others?

Read: Matthew 9:10–12

Point 3 – Through my authenticity

While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. (Matthew 9:10-12, NIV)

The fact that Jesus had a meal with Matthew and his friends said a great deal about Jesus's heart for them. While the Pharisees saw the "tax collectors" and "sinners" as a group of people to be avoided, Jesus saw the meal as an opportunity to express the heart of God; namely that God was for them and not against them. How did He do that? By breaking bread with them. By sharing His life with them. By creating the space for them to be their real and authentic selves.

God wants us to impact the lives of others in a similar way. Being authentic means that we share our real selves with others. Sharing a meal with a friend, getting coffee with a co-worker at break, coaching your youth baseball team, and barbecuing with your neighbors are all great ways to model authentic relationships. Being authentic and intentional with our interactions may seem ordinary at first but your willingness to do life with another opens the doors for deeper relationships. The key is to just be yourself and invite God into each interaction, each relationship, and each meal together.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- What are some of the challenges of being authentic with others?
- In what ways am I currently living an authentic life with my coworkers, neighbors, friends, etc.?
- How can I create the space for others to be their authentic selves?

—ACTIVITY—

With your group or on your own, come up with a list of characters in the Bible who modeled authenticity in their relationship with others or with God.

Why did you choose them? What made them genuine and authentic? How does that translate to today's world?

Point 4 – Through my compassion

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:36, NIV)

The etymology of the word “compassion” literally means “to suffer with.” Compassion is to enter into someone’s pain or mess so that they are not alone. Jesus was the master and model of compassion. Jesus took a particular interest in people, asking questions, making them feel seen, and not letting them be alone in their suffering. And often, He provided a means of relief as a foretaste of the salvation He was offering. His compassion led him to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and even raise the dead.

One way that we can model Jesus is by showing compassion to those around us and taking a genuine interest in the suffering and personal challenges of others. Empathy and compassion are where we earn the right to be heard in people’s lives.

How can we practice compassion like Jesus?

- **Ask questions.** We like to talk about ourselves, but practicing an interest in others shows that you care and want to know more about them. This requires that you talk less and listen more.
- **Acknowledge them.** It is amazing how feeling acknowledged can be just what we need. When we acknowledge what others are going through we give them permission to express their true thoughts and feelings without fear.
- **Act on their behalf.** When possible, provide solutions. When Jesus was moved with compassion, he would act on the people’s behalf. We may not always have the answer or the means to relieve someone’s needs, but *if we can and when we can*, it is a great way to show compassion.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- How can you or your group show compassion as a Life Group? Are there any ministry opportunities for your group?
- Is there anyone in your life that is overlooked? Who needs *my compassion* today?

Point 5 – Through my consistency

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. (Galatians 6:9, NIV)

In this verse, Paul encouraged the Galatian church to not grow tired of doing good because in the right time they would reap a harvest if they didn't give up. Paul knew that there would come a time when they would get tired, discouraged, and feel like they weren't making a difference in the lives of others. **He knew that they would need to be reminded that God's work is not done at our speed. God's harvest would come when the timing was right.** The question isn't if God is working. The question is whether or not the Church is willing to be steadfast and committed.

In Acts 18:11, we find out that Paul himself stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God. We often think Paul went into a city for a week and then had a revival! But often it took more time and more effort than that. The point is that even Paul's ministry to others took time and care. And it was done relationally, by being a member of the city.

Building relationships with anyone takes time and consistency. In the same way, modeling Jesus for others takes time and consistency. Being a faithful representation of Jesus day in and day out is one of the most powerful ways to share the gospel. The way that we act, how we spend our time, our willingness to be authentic, and the care that we show others all point to Jesus. However, if we lack consistency or if we give up too quickly, we may miss out on something amazing that God wants to do through us. Consistency in our faith and our witness plays a huge role in living out our God Story every day.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- In Galatians 6:9, Paul encourages the Galatian believers to not grow weary in doing good. Why do you think we grow weary as Christians?
- Is there anyone you have been sharing Jesus with but you can't see any fruit yet? How does Scripture speak to how we feel?
- Do you have any long-term friends that you have been consistently sharing the gospel with your words and your life? Has it been difficult to remain consistent? Why or why not?

—SUMMARY—

Sharing our God story comes most naturally through life-on-life relationships. We all have influence with those who are around us every week. How can we use that influence to share our God story in a positive way? As we discussed, it comes through our example.

So we are challenged to live as an example...

- 1) By my actions
- 2) With my time
- 3) Through my authenticity
- 4) Through my compassion
- 5) Through my consistency

—FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—

1. How are you going to think differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?
2. What is one thing you are going to change in your life in light of the sermon?
3. BONUS: For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids?