

Managing Your World



impactdisciples.com

Copyright ©2019 by Ken Adams

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means - electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other - except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without prior permission of the publisher.

Designed and edited by Grace Asnip.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and all who dwell therein."
(Psalm 24:1)

The psalmist makes it clear that the Lord owns everything we have. No one truly owns anything: we are simply the managers of what God has entrusted to us. Our time, our bodies, our relationships, and our material resources all belong to God, and how we manage them matters. As disciples, we need to learn how to honor God with all that He has entrusted to us. *Managing Your World* is a course designed to help you learn how to become a better manager.

It does not take long to discover that unless we learn how to manage what we have been given, we will mismanage what we have. Most people find that mismanaging their God-given resources is an easy thing to do. The hard part is learning how to manage them correctly. *Managing Your World* is an easy to use resource that will help you move from mismanagement to God honoring management. Once you begin to manage life's resources in a way that honors God, you will experience the peace and freedom that comes along with it.

Managing Your World is designed to help you discover the biblical truths in managing your priorities, your physical body, your finances, and your relationships in such a way that God is honored. When those things are managed well, you will increase your ability to positively impact the world around you.

In order to help you get the most from *Managing Your World*, let me suggest the following. First, give your best to each lesson. Don't rush through the lesson. Take your time, look up each passage, and reflect on what God is saying to you. Second, make a commitment to the daily scripture reading. Using the acrostic A.C.T.S., you will find that God's Word speaks directly to you. Third, commit yourself to the weekly memory verse. Hiding God's Word in your heart is a great way to grow as a disciple and become a better manager. Finally, if you are going through this course with a group, attend all the meetings you possibly can. You may not be able to make all of them, but the more meetings you can participate in, the better your experience will be.

Being and Building Disciples,

Ken Adams



Managing Your World: *Week One*

Goal: Understand what it means to manage your world

I once heard someone say, “Life has gauges like the gauges on the dashboard of a car that tell you how well you are managing your life.” I believe that.

My experience over nearly six decades of living is that the quality of your life is affected by how well you are managing the most valuable resources in your life. In fact, I believe managing those valuable resources can be compared to watching the gauges on the dashboard of a car. If life does have gauges like a car, we should always be monitoring those gauges. We would all need gauges for...

Managing Our Priorities

Managing Our Finances

Managing Our Physical Bodies

Managing Our Relationships

These gauges help us evaluate our progress in managing these specific areas of our lives. If you are managing your life by these gauges, your life will be easier than it would be if you were allowing all of these gauges to run on “low.” When these gauges are low or empty, life runs out of gas or overheats and we struggle with our lives. You simply cannot overestimate the importance of being a good manager of the resources God has entrusted to you.

Over the next few weeks, you will be looking a little closer at the gauges of your life. In this course, you will get an overview of what these gauges look like and what they reveal about your life. My hope is that as a result of this study, you will take a next step to work on the gauges in your life reading “low.” I want this course to be your beginning point in learning what it means to grow as a manager. People do not become poor managers of their lives overnight, and they don’t become good managers of their lives overnight. It takes knowledge, time, and discipline to become a good manager of the resources God

Memory Verse

Matthew 25:21

Weekly Bible Reading

Read the passage and write out an insight on at least one of the following:

- A:** Attitude to change
- C:** Command to obey
- T:** Truth to believe
- S:** Sin to confess

Monday

Matthew 25:14-30

has given you. Let's take a quick look at the valuable resources God has placed in your care.

Weekly Bible Reading

The Priority Gauge

Tuesday

Proverbs 21:5

One of the most valuable resources you have in your life is your time. Certainly life is made up of the seconds, minutes, hours, days, and years that need to be used wisely for God. Your time is a gift from God, and your job is to manage it in a way that honors Him. What does Paul say about our time in Ephesians 5:15-16?

Wednesday

Malachi 3:6-12

The truth is, you cannot manage time; you can only manage how you use it. That is why we call this the "priority" gauge. Everyone must learn how to manage their priorities in a way that honors and pleases God. We must be wise in how we manage our priorities because the days in which we live are evil.

As you think about your life, how are you doing at managing your priorities? Are you living with direction and purpose, or are you drifting? Are you living your life by priority or by pressure? Do you feel like you are being productive, or just active and busy about the wrong things? In this study, you will learn the keys to managing your time based on the right priorities.

The Financial Gauge

A second valuable resource that God has entrusted into your care is your money and your physical possessions. The stuff you have actually belongs to God, and He is simply loaning it to you for a short time. It will belong to someone else soon after you leave this world. What does Psalm 24:1 tell us?

Thursday

I Corinthians

10:31-33

How you manage your finances is a major part of God's plan for you as a disciple. God's desire is that you manage your money and possessions in a way that honors Him and in a way that helps others. Every disciple must be taught how to manage his or her financial resources well. There are three things you can do with your money: you can spend it, save it, or give it. Every believer needs to know how to use their money and possessions in a way that gives God glory.

When you think about your current financial situation, where is your money gauge? Do you find yourself with too much money and not enough money? Are you in a debt hole so big, you can't seem to climb out? Is God being honored by the way you give to Him? In the next few weeks, we will begin to look at some key principles for how to manage your financial world.

Friday

I Corinthians

13:4-8

The Physical Gauge

A third valuable resource God has entrusted into your care is your physical body. Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and how you manage it is important. Some people neglect their bodies and

Prayer
Requests

dishonor God by not taking care of them. On the other hand, some people obsess over their bodies and they dishonor God by worshipping their bodies. The key to managing your physical body correctly is to view your body as a tool for God to use. Keeping that tool in the best shape possible helps you find the balance in managing your physical gauge. What does Paul tell us in 1 Corinthians 6:20?

Your health is a valuable resource given by God to be used for God. Make it a priority to manage your body well. Don't take your health for granted and ignore the proper management of your physical body.

If you evaluated your current physical gauge, what would it look like? Are you eating correctly? Are you physically active and getting enough exercise? Do you feel rested and energized, or do you feel stressed and exhausted? In a few weeks, we will take a closer look at how to be a better manager of the body with which God has blessed you.

The Relational Gauge

The relationships in your life are another one of the valuable resources God has given you. When you manage your relationships well, your life is full and rich. When you mismanage your relationships, you create more difficulties for yourself. You must learn how to manage life's relationships in a way that honors God. You cannot control other people you are in relationship with, but you can control yourself and your part of the relationship. What does Paul say in Romans 12:18?

The Bible gives us every relational principle we need. We must use it to learn and grow in how we

manage our marriages, our families, and our friendships. The people and relationships in your life impact the quality of your life, so it is essential that you grow in managing your relationships.

If someone asked you how you were doing relationally, how would you answer them? Would you be able to say you are living in harmony, or are you living in broken relationship with one or more people? Are the significant relationships in your life being maximized or neglected? Is God being glorified in your relationships? *Managing Your World* will be a great place to get started building relationships in your life that honor God.

Life's Gauges

Having gauges for your life is always a good thing. You might not like what your life's gauges tell you, but those gauges would certainly help you. Watching your gauges could keep you from having serious trouble. Your gauges would serve as warning signs to keep you from having more difficult problems in your life. Trust me: if you can head off problems in your time, finances, body, and relationships, you save yourself a lot of headaches.

Over decades of being in ministry, I have discovered that many people ignore or neglect the gauges in their lives. They never learn what it means to become better managers of their God-given resources. It is so important for you to understand that how you manage your resources will affect the quality of your life and its impact on others. The better you become at managing your world, the less frustration you will experience, and the more God will be honored. You will not regret learning to be a better manager.

What is a Good Gauge?

A few years ago, my wife and I owned a car with a broken gas gauge. You can guess how much excitement that broken gas gauge created for us. When you don't have a gauge, you live your life without confidence. You are always trying to figure out how you are doing; you are always in doubt about where you are.

Life Gauges are important. You need to regularly examine your life in all areas to evaluate yourself. You need to know if you are living full or nearing empty. Having gauges gives you a signal about what you need to do next.

This course is a strategy to help you keep your gauges full. It is designed to be a resource for you and to show you what steps you might need to take. If over the next several weeks you realize your priority gauge, financial gauge, physical gauge, or relational gauge is nearing empty, you need to take a next step. Let me repeat: if any of your life gauges are nearing empty, you need to take a next step.

As you study and examine each gauge, you will discover some next steps that you might want to consider. There are lots of options when it comes to next steps. For now, the important thing is checking your gauges. Take a few minutes and discuss the following questions.

Managing Your Priorities: *Week Two*

Goal: Learning how to correctly use your time

Memory Verse

James 4:14

How does the priority gauge in your life look these days? Are you living your your proactively or reactively? There is a very big difference between a life managed by priorities and a life managed by pressure. Which way would you rather manage? If your life had a "priority gauge," would it be full, half-full, or empty?

Weekly Bible Reading

Read the passage and write out an insight on at least one of the following:

- A:** Attitude to change
- C:** Command to obey
- T:** Truth to believe
- S:** Sin to confess



Monday

Ecclesiastes
3:1-15

Priority management might sound similar to time management. They are very similar concepts, but you cannot actually manage time. You can, however, manage your priorities. Everyone has the exact same amount of time. We all have 168 hours in a week. You can't make more time, and you can't get rid of time. God determines how much time you have, and you determine how you will use that time. Thus, we use the term "priority management."

I once heard about a new Christian who was given a calendar and a Bible by the person that led him to faith in Christ. When the person that led him to Christ gave the calendar and Bible to this new believer, he said, "The calendar is to tell how much time you have, and the Bible is to tell you what to do with it." That is a very wise statement. God only gives you so much time, what you do with it is up to you.

As we begin to think about managing your priorities, let's take a short inventory of how you are managing your time. Answer the following with yes or no.

Are you consistently spending time alone with God?

Yes No

Is public worship a regular part of your week?

Yes No

Do you regularly participate in a small group?

Yes No

Do you make time to consistently serve in a ministry?

Yes No

Do you exercise regularly?

Yes No

Are you spending time with your family?

Yes No

Do you spend intentional time with lost people?

Yes No

Is there margin in your life for rest?

Yes No

Do you work too many hours?

Yes No

The way you answered that set of questions will reveal a lot about how well you are managing your priorities in life. If you are not satisfied with the answers you gave, it is time to make some changes. Let me suggest you start with the following.

Weekly Bible Reading

Tuesday

Psalm 90:12-17

Wednesday

Ephesians

5:15-17

Live A Decisive Life

The only thing worse than no decision is indecision. It is a huge mistake to live a life without direction and purpose. Living a life without direction and purpose is like driving down a road without a destination. Rarely does anyone get in a car and start driving without a destination. When you drive a car, you typically have a destination in mind. When you live your life, it helps to have direction and purpose.

In Ephesians 5:15 Paul gives a great reminder to the believers in Ephesus. What does Paul tell them in the first part of verse fifteen?

Thursday

James 4:13-17

Paul tells the Ephesian believers to be “very careful then how you walk.” When you are walking carefully, you are paying attention to where you are going. You are being decisive. On the other hand, when you are being “careless” about how you walk, you are not paying much attention to where or how you are walking.

A great example of someone who lived a decisive life is Jesus. What did Jesus pray at the very end of His life according to John 17:4?

Friday

Proverbs 27:1

Jesus could say He “finished the work” because He knew the target of His work. Jesus knew where He was headed before He got to the end of His time here on earth. Jesus truly lived with the end in mind.

Jesus was not wandering aimlessly through life: He was focused and decisive. Jesus had a destination. Jesus knew that He was on this earth to make redemption possible for all mankind, and to start a movement of multiplying disciples. At the end of His life, Jesus had gotten to His destination. He accomplished His purpose and did what His Father sent Him here to do.

When you come to the end of your life, what will you be able to say about your life? Will you be able to say you finished the work God gave you to do? If you do not know why you are alive, you will end up living a life without direction. When your life has no direction, it does not matter how you manage it. In a life with no direction, it does not matter where you end up. That is not being “very careful” with how you

along, or “wing it”, you are usually living from a reactive posture rather than a proactive posture.

Live A Disciplined Life

Living a disciplined life means living with the knowledge of when to say “yes” and when to say “no.” Jesus is a great example of someone who lived a disciplined life. In Mark 1:35, we see that Jesus was determined to spend time with His Father in prayer. In Mark 1:36-39, people are looking for Jesus, and He made a decision about His time based on His priorities. What did Jesus say in Mark 1:38 that demonstrates a disciplined life?

Jesus clearly said “no” to one town in order to say “yes” to another town.

Paul says in Ephesians 5:16, “Make the most of every opportunity.” The opposite of making the most every opportunity is missing opportunities. We miss opportunities when we are not disciplined in the way we manage our priorities.

If I value my time spent with God, but choose to stay up late to watch a ball game and miss my quiet time as a result in the morning, I did not make a disciplined choice. If I work late and miss spending time with my family as a result of that choice, I have missed an opportunity to connect with them because I did not make a disciplined choice. The same goes for small group. If I don’t carve out an hour each week for a small group time, then I miss out on the community God desires for me and that I desire to experience. I miss out on God’s desires for me and my truest desires when I live a lifestyle of undisciplined choices.

You will hear people talk about managing priorities in life by using the terms urgent, non-urgent, important, and unimportant. Ultimately, you will want to manage your life by the things that are both urgent and important. These are the things to which you must learn to say, “yes.” The things in life that you recognize

as non-urgent and unimportant are things that require your learning to say, “no.”

Discipline is necessary to live a determined life. Once you have decided where you personally want your time to go, you have to learn to determine which things are distracting you from accomplishing your purpose. Jesus knew His purpose, and He determined where He wanted His time to go. Jesus practiced discipline to keep His life focused and in order to execute His plan.

Focus and Execution

I believe two of the most important keys in being a better priority manager are focus and execution. Focus means *knowing* what to do, and execution means *doing* what you know you should do. Focus is the ability to recognize that spending time with God is important. Execution is the ability to make spending time with God happen. Ultimately, managing your priorities will come down to allowing God to set your focus, and your ability to accomplish the things He places in focus for you.

I would encourage you to set aside some time to work on an annual life plan. In other words, take some time to determine goals that you want to accomplish by the end of your life. Identify priorities for your that God prioritizes. Once you have determined where you want to focus for this coming year, take some time to evaluate and plan your life on a monthly basis. Look at your priorities every month and schedule the things you want to accomplish into your monthly calendar. Let your monthly calendar help you execute your priorities daily. Daily executions of successful life will be the result of what you do day after day.

Better focus and execution will help you accomplish the priorities in your life. Socrates once said, “The unexamined life is not worth living.” Take time to examine where your time is going. You can’t get more time, but you can tell your time where you want it to go.

Questions for Discussion

Notes

Which best describes the way you manage your priorities?

_____ *Making every minute count*

_____ *Too much to do and not enough time to do it*

_____ *Learning to live by purpose*

_____ Read Ephesians 5:15-16. According to this verse, why is priority management so important?

_____ What does it mean to live with the end in mind? How did Jesus demonstrate living with the end in mind?

_____ Read Mark 1:35-39. In what way is Jesus living by priorities rather than pressure? How did being alone with the Father affect His priority management?

_____ If you don't tell your time where you want it to go, someone else will. Who or what is determining where your time goes in your life?

_____ Is living a proactive life better than living a reactionary life?

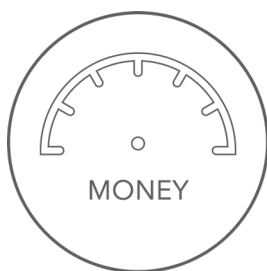
_____ Do you live a disciplined or undisciplined lifestyle?
_____ Can you share personal examples of either lifestyle?

_____ Read John 17:4. How is this statement an example of priority management? Can this same statement be true of your life?

Managing Your Finances: *Week Three*

Goal: Learning how to correctly use your money

If you could have a financial gauge on the dashboard of your life, what would it be telling you right now? Would this gauge be telling you you are in trouble? Would it be a warning you that you need to manage your finances differently? Would this gauge indicate that you are managing your money or that your money is managing you? Draw where your financial gauge is indicating right now.



Scripture has a lot to say regarding finances. Both the Old Testament and New Testament are filled with a great deal of information about how we are to manage our financial and physical resources. Without question, what we do with our money is a big deal to God. In a nutshell, we either manage our money in a way that honors God or in a way doesn't honor God. When we choose not to honor God with our money, we experience financial bondage. How we manage our money is a big deal to God and should also be a big deal to us. Jesus made a powerful statement about the role of money or treasure in our lives. What did Jesus say in Luke 12:34?

You cannot separate your relationship with God and your relationship with money. What you do with your money reveals a great deal about your relationship with God. Your bank account does not lie. A wrong relationship with money complicates a right relationship with

Memory Verse

Luke 12:34

Weekly Bible Reading

Read the passage and write out an insight on at least one of the following:

- A:** Attitude to change
- C:** Command to obey
- T:** Truth to believe
- S:** Sin to confess

Monday

Genesis 14:17-24

God.

Weekly Bible Reading

As you begin to think about managing your finances, let's take a short inventory of how you are managing your treasure. Answer the following with yes or no.

Are you budgeting and spending correctly?

Yes No

Tuesday

Exodus 35:20-29

Do you have debt you cannot repay?

Yes No

Do you feel like you have more month than money?

Yes No

Are you tithing and giving the way God expects?

Yes No

Do you have savings and reserves?

Yes No

Wednesday

I Chronicles
22:6-19

Are you stressed about money?

Yes No

Do you feel content with what you have?

Yes No

The way you answered that set of questions will reveal a lot about how well you are managing your finances. If you are not satisfied with the answers you gave, it is time to make some changes.

Recognize Who Owns It

Your money is God's first. Christians make a huge mistake with money management when they fail to recognize this. Once you recognize that your money and wealth belong to God, what you do with it becomes very important. Psalm 24:1 is very clear. To whom does every-

thing belong according to the psalmist?

One way to quickly recognize that God owns everything is by understanding how little control you actually have over your stuff. The bottom line is this: if you don't control it, you don't own it. Seeing how fast your stuff can disappear is all the evidence you need that you're not really in control. Everything you have is a gift from God. He entrusted you with it by placing it in your hands. Your job is to use it and manage it the way He wants.

Everything you have is on loan to you by God. He is the owner and you are simply the manager. He gives you as much as He wants and He can take if He wants to. As long as you have it in your hands, your job is to manage it for God's glory. Until you recognize who your stuff belongs to, you will never understand how to manage it correctly. If you think it belongs to you, you will manage it the way you want to, and that leads to trouble.

When you recognize that everything in your hands ultimately belongs to God, it will change the way you manage. The home I live in ultimately belongs to the bank. The bank has loaned my home to me while I pay for it. I have to manage my payments wisely. God has entrusted me with many things, and I want to manage them well. Your money belongs to God, and He is allowing you to manage it for a short while.

Thursday

I Chronicles
29:14-22

Friday

Proverbs 22:1-29

Realize Why He Gave it to You

People often mismanage their money because they do not know the purpose of money. Money basically has three main purposes:

1. You can spend money.
2. You can save money.
3. You can give money.

Prayer
Requests

When you lose sight of these three purposes, it's easy to use your money the wrong way and for the wrong reasons. Proverbs 3:9 gives us very clear instructions for what to do with the money we have been given. What does this verse say?

Honoring the Lord with your money does not just mean in your giving; it also means in your spending and in your saving. Money management is not only a matter of giving. God wants us to honor Him in every way that we use our money.

God wants to be honored in your spending. Spending is the place where many people have the biggest problem in managing their money. The bottom line is this: don't spend what you don't have. If you spend what you don't have, you will end up in debt and probably won't be saving or giving the way you ought to save and give. What does Proverbs 21:20 say about spending correctly?

One reason we have a spending problem is because we have a contentment problem. Write out 1 Timothy 6:6-8.

Bill Earle said, "If your outgo exceeds your income, then your upkeep will your downfall." Don't let your spending become the downfall to your money management.

God wants to be honored in your saving. It is amazing how many people save very little of the money with which they are entrusted. I could give you all kinds of shocking statistics on how small of an amount of money most adults have saved when they reach retirement. But my point is that saving money is a part of what it means to be a good steward of what

we've been given. What does proverbs 21:20 say?

What does Proverbs 21:5 say?

A good practice to live by is to save a little bit of every dollar you make. Save some money for emergencies that come up from time to time, and save some for long-term expenses and retirement needs.

God wants to be honored in your giving. Many people wish they could give more money to God than they do, but their money is so mismanaged, they don't know how they can. When your spending is out of control, usually your giving is also out of control. Most people fail to understand that biblical giving is accompanied by the divine influence of God in one's finances.

Notice the way the Prophet Malachi describes it. Write out Malachi 3:10.

You will honor God when you give the way His Word instructs us to give. How does Paul tell us to give in 2 Corinthians 9:7?

Remember Why He Gave it to You

One final principle for proper money management is to remember why God has entrusted you with money at

all. It doesn't matter if you have dollars, euros, pesos, or shekels: the purpose for money is the same. Money is a tool. Money is a tool to help others, to provide for your needs, and to build God's kingdom. Never let money become something it is not meant to be. Never let it become your idol. Proverbs 30:7-9 is a great reminder of what forgetting the purpose of money can do to you. Write out that passage.

Having too much money can make you think you don't need God, and having too little money can make you do things you regret. The key is to use whatever amount of money you have been given to honor God, nothing more and nothing less.

Information & Application

I have known so many people that have come to faith in Christ with their lives totally mismanaged: their priorities, finances, physical bodies, and their relationships are all mismanaged. They desperately need help in managing their world.

In order to move from a mismanaged world to a well-managed world, we all need two things: the right information and the right application. We need a source of truth regarding our finances, and we need accountability and encouragement in making changes based on what we learn to be true. There is no greater source of truth for money management than the Word of God. There is no greater source of encouragement and accountability than a small group in your local church. God's Word and God's people can help you grow as a better life manager.

This course is only a starting point for learning how to better manage your financial world. One lesson

will not fix your financial problems. That will take time. Let *Managing Your World* be a next step in managing your finances. A resource such as *Financial Peace University* by Dave Ramsey is a perfect example of a next step after this course in becoming a better money manager. There is no shortage of money management resources based on biblical truth to choose from. If you really want to grow in your money management, keep learning and keep growing. The right information and the right application will help you learn to manage your money in a way that honors God.

Questions for Discussion

Notes

Which best describes the way you manage your money?

Making Ends Meet
Too Much Month and Not Enough Money
Honoring God with My Stuff

Read Matthew 6:24. Why is managing your money correctly so important?

Read Proverbs 23:4-5. How is the world's view of money and God's view of money different?

Read Philippians 4:11-13. How does contentment and managing money go hand-in-hand?

What should be our attitude toward giving according to Paul in 2 Corinthians 9:7?

What do you think of this concept: give 10%, save 10%, and live on 80% of your income? Have you heard of this strategy before?

How would you grade your money management using an A to F letter grade?

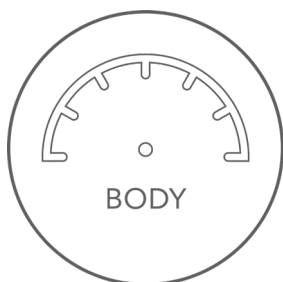
Read Luke 12:34. What does the way you manage your money say about your heart?

Do you need more information to support you in managing your money?

Managing Your Body: *Week Four*

Goal: Learning how to correctly manage your physical body

If you had a gauge on the dashboard of your life, what would it be telling you about your physical body right now? Would this gauge be indicating you are healthy or unhealthy? Would this gauge be showing you that you are honoring God with your body or neglecting the body God has entrusted to you? Would the gauge reveal a life with the proper amount of diet, rest, and exercise, or a life totally out of balance and out of control physically? Would your "Physical Gauge" say empty, full, or somewhere in between?



I am amazed at the different reactions I get whenever I talk or preach about managing your body in a way that honors God. Some people crack jokes and make fun of the idea. Some people get mad and try to make the case it is not a spiritual issue. Others go overboard and make the body more than it ought to be. In a sense, they worship the body.

Regardless of which approach you have when it comes to the idea of body management, it does not change the fact that your body is a gift from God, and His Spirit dwells in you if you are a believer. In other words, like it or not, your body matters to God. If your body matters to God, it ought to matter to you. I believe Christians ought to be the healthiest people on the planet. If our bodies belong to God, then how we manage them ought to be different than how the rest of the world manages its health.

As you begin to think about managing your physical body, let's take a short inventory of how you are manag-

Memory Verse

Philippians 1:20

Weekly Bible Reading

Read the passage and write out an insight on at least one of the following:

- A:** Attitude to change
- C:** Command to obey
- T:** Truth to believe
- S:** Sin to confess

Monday

Leviticus
11:41-47

Weekly Bible Reading

Tuesday

Daniel 1:8-21

ing your doing. Answer the following with yes or no.

Have you been eating clean, healthy food?

Yes No

Are you physically active on a regular basis?

Yes No

Are you getting 7-9 hours of sleep each night?

Yes No

Do you stay stressed and worn out?

Yes No

Are you overweight?

Yes No

Wednesday

Deuteronomy

7:12-15

Do you harm your body with excessive drug or alcohol use?

Yes No

Hopefully by now you are still reading and working through the lesson. I also hope you still love me and remember not to "shoot the messenger." God really wants you to be a good manager of your physical body and to give Him the best you have for as long as He has you here on this earth. Let's take some time to talk about becoming better body managers.

Have the Right Attitude

I find it very interesting that when it comes to the subject of stewardship or management some Christians like to pick and choose what matters to them. In other words, some people are big on managing

their money but are in pitiful shape physically. Some people are living in great relationships but won't be around long enough to enjoy them. Some people are great time managers but are not making any time for maintaining their physical temple. Your time, money, relationships, and body all matter to God and ought to matter to you.

Becoming a better body manager begins with having the right attitude. Regardless of what condition your body is in, you must have the right thought process toward improving the way you manage your body. Until you have the right priorities around your body, you will not change how you manage it. What does 3 John 2 say about the importance of your health?

John wouldn't have prayed for Gaius' health to "go as his soul goes" if his health was irrelevant to Christ's mission. What is your attitude about managing your body? Do you care about your physical condition? Do you want to make changes and get healthier? Do you realize your mission for God is limited if you are physically unhealthy?

When I was a kid, I would occasionally take some of father's tools outside to play with them or use them for a project. If, by chance, I made the mistake of leaving one of my father's tools outside overnight or maybe even a few days, the result was not good. My father would quickly give me a new perspective on how I should manage his tools. A little pain taught me the importance of taking care of what belonged to my father.

Don't let it take a little physical pain to make you realize how important managing your body is to God. Have the right mindset toward the tool God has given you. Your body is a tool that He created, and your job is to take care of His tools.

Thursday

Exodus 15:22-26

Friday

I Timothy 4:6-10

Have the Right Approach

Prayer Requests

Having the right approach deals with the actual steps you take to manage your body well. The right approach means having discipline in your diet. Making it a priority to exercise regularly. Building plenty of sleep and rest into your schedule. All of those types of topics can be covered in other courses as long as you are willing to work on them. An unwillingness to improve and change the bad physical practices in your life is not the approach that will honor God.

Think of having the right approach like this. If you pray for God to give you good health and then smoke a pack of cigarettes, that is the wrong approach. If you ask God to heal you of heart disease and order a large curly fries or onion rings, that is not the right approach. If you battle high blood pressure and choose to sit on the couch and watch television rather than go for a walk, that is not the right approach. If you feel tired all the time and stay up late every night, that is not the approach you should take. Understand this important truth. Your approach is usually determined by your attitude! If you don't have a good attitude about your physical condition it is highly likely that you won't have a good approach to your body management. Get your attitude right and the approach becomes easier. What is Paul's approach to the physical body in 1 Corinthians 9:27?

All of Paul's teachings show us that he clearly understood that our bodies are temporary, but we need to honor God with every day we live in them. Record what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:31.

In this passage, Paul is talking about food offered to idols, but the application remains the same for us in how we treat our bodies. Don't put anything in your body that dishonors the God who created it. Remem-

ber: your body is not your own, it belongs to God. How does 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 emphasize this truth?

If your body belongs to God, then you should approach the way you manage it from His perspective and not your own.

Have the Right Awareness

Having the right awareness is about understanding the reasons why managing your body is important in the first place. The Bible does not speak about the body from a worldly perspective: it speaks about it from God's perspective. The biblical writers never talked about the body from a perspective of vanity. The body does not matter to God so that you will look good on the beach. Taking care of your body is not motivated by looking good on Instagram or at your class reunion. The body matters because it is the vessel you have been given to accomplish God's purposes on this planet. Paul puts the physical body in the right perspective in his letter to Timothy. What does Paul say in 1 Timothy 4:8?

Paul is acknowledging that the body has value, but only for the purpose of honoring God. If having an unhealthy body prevents you from being able to have maximum influence for Christ, then God is not honored by that. When time with your family is cut short because you failed to take care of yourself, God is not glorified by that. If your physical condition hurts your witness for Christ rather than helps it, God is not exalted in that.

Have the awareness to know that you are in this world to make a difference for God. Manage your body the best you can so that you can have the greatest eternal impact possible.

Life to Your Years & Years to Your Life

Being healthy “may not add years to your life, but it will add life to your years.” That’s a true statement either way you look at it, and I think you would want both. I think you would want *more* years if being healthy could help you live longer. I also think you want the years you have to be the *best* they can be. Having more years in life and more life in your years can be the direct result of managing your body in a way that honors God. What does Paul say in Romans 12:1 about the body?

Paul probably isn’t thinking about exercise or diet when he says to “present your body as a living sacrifice,” but wouldn’t managing your body be included in being a living sacrifice to God? Isn’t being a living sacrifice ultimately living in such a way that you die to yourself and live unto God? I think the problem for many Christians is that they keep crawling off the altar. The “living sacrifice” just doesn’t want to be sacrificed.

Let me suggest that you let this lesson be a starting point to a lifestyle of better body management. In fact, take a next step and continue to grow by joining a Christian healthy living program online such as *First Place for Health*, or read a book such as *The Daniel Plan* by Rick Warren. There are lots of good resources for growing as a better manager of your physical body.

Managing Your Relationships: *Week Five*

Goal: Understand how to manage your relationships

Memory Verse

Matthew 22:37-39

Weekly Bible Reading

Read the passage and write out an insight on at least one of the following:

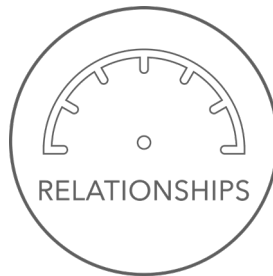
- A:** Attitude to change
- C:** Command to obey
- T:** Truth to believe
- S:** Sin to confess

Monday

Genesis 3:8-24

Imagine having a dashboard on your life with gauges that told you how well you were managing your life. Wouldn't it be cool to have relational gauges that told you the current status of your relationships? If you had a marriage gauge, child gauge, parent gauge, and/or friend gauge, you could always know which relationships need the most time and attention.

If you had a relational gauge in your life, what would it be indicating right now? Would it show that your significant relationships are thriving? Would it show that you are working on your key relationships or neglecting them? Would the gauges indicate you are honoring God in your relational world or dishonoring Him? I truly hope your relational gauges are reading more full than empty. I hope the "check relationship" light is not flashing. Take just a minute and draw on the following gauge where you think you are relationally: full, empty, or somewhere in between.



Relationships are always a work in progress. You never engage in a relationship and put it on cruise control. All relationships take constant work. Relationships are never static: they are constantly changing and needing attention. Relationships are living connections between people that always need nurture and work.

Relationships matter. God never intended for you to do life alone, and therefore He created relationships. The very first human relationship between Adam and Eve was created because it was not good for man to

be alone. Relationships are God's way of caring for us. It is God's way of meeting one of our most important needs. He created us with a need for relationships so that we would always know that relationships came from Him and He is the one who ultimately meets our needs. As you begin to think about the relationships God has given you, let's evaluate how well you are managing them. Answer the following with a yes or no.

Weekly Bible Reading

Tuesday

Genesis 4:1-16

Are you investing time in your significant relationships?

Yes No

Do you communicate openly and honestly with those closest to you?

Yes No

Is there constant conflict in your inner circle?

Yes No

Do you have relational peace in life?

Yes No

Is there un-forgiveness in your relational world?

Yes No

God's will is for you to live in relational harmony. God's desire is for your relationships to be meaningful and fruitful. When your relationships are thriving, God receives glory. On the other hand, our spiritual enemy is trying his best to ruin your relationships. Satan wants to create relational chaos in your life and destroy what God has declared good. The good news is that God has given you the power to have relational success. The hard news is that you still have to work at maintaining healthy relationships in your life. Relational success is not automatic. Relationships have to be managed, and that is what we are talking about in this final lesson in *Managing Your World*.

Christ's love will transform all of your relationships. Jesus said in John 13:35, "By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Wednesday

Ephesians 4:1-3

If you want to know how to manage relationships, it is simple: learn to love like Jesus loved. God wants a whole world full of people that are loving like Jesus loved. Let's take a closer look at why He wants that, and learn how to manage our relationships.

Thursday

2 Corinthians
6:14-18

Love by Seeking

If we love like Jesus loved, we will always seek to be in right relationships. It is impossible to love someone and not care if you are in right relationship with them. When you love someone, you seek to be right with them. You seek to be in unity with them. You seek to be in harmony with them.

Jesus is the perfect example of how love seeks. Jesus initiated a relationship with us when we were still far from Him. Jesus took the first step. He did not wait for us to find Him. He found us. Jesus sought to reconcile us to God. What does Luke 19:10 say about Jesus?

Friday

Proverbs 17:17

Jesus came to seek the lost because He loves the lost. Love always seeks. Jesus not only initiated a right relationship with man by seeking man out: Jesus did everything in His power to make it right by dying for mankind. What did God do according to Romans 5:8?

Even when we deserved something worse, Christ died to reconcile us to God. Jesus demonstrates love not just words but through His actions. A person may reject God's love and offer of forgiveness, but it doesn't change the fact that Jesus did everything with- in His power to make things right between God and

fallen mankind.

When we seek to manage our relationships, we do everything in our power to make things right. This takes initiative on our part. What did Paul say about the way we should relate to people in Romans 12:18?

Prayer
Requests

Whenever you have two people who both want to be right with God, nothing can keep them from being right with each other.

Love by Submitting

One of the hardest things in life to do is to submit to someone. In fact, a lack of submission might be the greatest barrier to relational success. However, when you have two people willing to submit to one another, nearly every relationship is workable. When we choose to love like Jesus, we choose to submit to one another. To submit simply means to yield your will and way to someone else. How did Jesus demonstrate submission in 1 John 3:16?

When we read that verse, we like the first part. We love the fact that Jesus laid down His life for us. The second part is the hard part for us. We don't necessarily want to lay down our lives for the brothers.

The reason most people have a hard time submitting is because our "self" gets in the way. Just like Adam and Eve, we have a "self" problem. We want what we want more than we want what God wants. We disobey and end up in a broken relationships because we want our will and way more than God's will and way. A lack of submission is always a recipe for relational conflict.

The greatest act of dying to "self" was Calvary. Jesus' death on the cross was Jesus putting His Father's will

and way ahead of His own will and way. Jesus yielded His life for our relationship. That's love at its greatest. Write below how Paul describes submission in Ephesians 5:21.

When two people submit to one another out of respect and honor for Christ, those people have what it takes to work through any relational problem.

"In a marriage, the two become one. The problem is trying to figure out which one." This is where submission comes in. When two people are seeking each other and submitting to each other, the enemy will have very hard time keeping them apart.

Is there a relational impasse in your life right now? Is there a relationship where you need to submit and yield to the good of the relationship? Submission is not weakness. Submission is willingness to die to self in order to make a relationship work.

Love by Serving

If you love like Jesus loved, you will serve like Jesus served. When you seek and submit, you will be willing to serve. You won't serve if you haven't sought and submitted. Jesus served because He had submitted to God, and He seeks us because He loves us. When you translate that principle into your own life, you have the power to work through the relational chaos in your world.

How does Mark 10:45 describe Jesus?

Jesus came to serve us and to meet our needs. It is very hard to serve someone and be mad at someone at the same time. Serving others is a major step for managing all of your relationships in life. As hard as

it may be, think about how different your relationships might be if you approached them to serve rather than to be served.

One of the best analogies in scripture of how we relate to Jesus is that of a shepherd and his sheep. Everyone would agree that a shepherd serves his sheep. He serves them by leading them, caring for them, and at times disciplining them.

John 10:11 gives the key to good shepherd. What does that verse say?

How different would your relationships in life be different if you laid down your life for others? Your relationships would be radically different if you began to approach them as people to serve rather than people to receive from.

Remember: Jesus didn't serve us because we deserved or earned His service. He did not serve us based on our merit: Jesus served us unconditionally. Imagine a world where people served each other the way Jesus served. That would be Heaven on earth.

If you seek to serve your spouse, your parents, your children, your friends, your co-workers, your fellow church members, and your neighbors, you will be surprised at how different those relationships can be

The Goal

Every relationship in your life should have the same goal: to bring God glory in how you relate. Every significant relationship in your life is either becoming better and moving forward, or becoming worse and moving backward.

Think of it like a continuum with the very best relationship in your life on one end and the worst relationship

in your life on the other. All of the relationships in your life can be placed somewhere in between and the goal is to help each of them move in a positive direction. How do we keep all of our relationships moving in the right direction? Simple: we seek them, we submit to them, and we serve them. We do all of that by loving them the way Jesus loved them.

As you evaluate the relationships in your life, you might realize you need more work and growth in managing them. It is highly possible that you might need some level of professional counseling and help in working through issues that are paralyzing your relational world. It might be that you need to take a special class on marriage or parenting. You may simply need to read some good books or listen to solid teaching on relationships. The main thing is to keep growing. Keep working on being a better manager of your relationships.

Questions for Discussion

Notes

Which best describes the way your relational world today?

Perfect Harmony

Ups and Downs

Serious Hiccups

What are some of the major relational attacks people face today?

Read Genesis 2:18-25. What relational insights can you glean from the story of Adam and Eve?

Read John 13:35. How does loving like Jesus loved look in your relationships?

What does it mean to "love by seeking"? How did Jesus demonstrate that concept?

Is submission difficult? How do we submit to one another?

What is the role of service in your relationships? How do we become more servant-hearted?

What is the difference in loving someone "because of" and loving them "no matter what"?

Which relationships on your "continuum" are stalled?

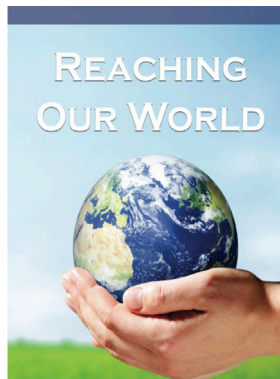
Is there a "next step" you need to take in your relational management? What step might be right for you?

You Might Also Like

Did you love *Managing Your World*? Make sure you've read its sister book, *Reaching Our World*. You can purchase this resource on our website at impactdisciples.com.

"If we are going to be successful in reaching our world for Jesus, we need to know how to do what Jesus did. We need to have a clear understanding of how we reach our Jerusalem, our Judea and Samaria, and our ends of the earth. In the same way the first disciples followed Jesus' pattern to reach their world, we should follow His pattern to reach our world.

Reaching Our World is a curriculum designed to help you understand how to obey what Christ said in Acts 1:8. As you work through these four weekly lessons, remember that the truths discovered in these lessons will serve as a guide for how to reach the world for Christ. The biblical principles you will learn in this course will work as a foundation for understanding God's intended direction for your life."



Reaching Our World

impactdisciples.com/reaching-our-world/

