

2. Choices, Consequences, and Creativity – Part 2

In our last topic, we saw how creativity affected the choices and consequences Daniel experienced in his life. Today, we are going to look at some key Biblical principles to help developing leaders learn how to develop their creativity. This will become increasingly important in the coming years. The world has tried to conform people to a worldly system ever since Adam sinned. Various cultures have used traditions and rules to get people to conform. Because people act out of fear, they have become conformed to the world. The addition of modern technology has provided new ways to get people to conform to the world, because they can see sin from all over the world.

First, if we are going to help those who become Christians restore their God-given creativity so they can bring glory to God, we must begin in the heart. Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?” Mark 7:21-23 says, “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.” These things will defile a person and destroy their God-given creativity.

In contrast, Proverbs 4:23 says, “Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.” Christians will see their creativity develop as they learn to focus on the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” In Part 1 of this topic, we saw, in Daniel 1:8a, “But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank.” The last six Psalms focus on giving praise to God for what He has done. True praise must come from the heart. The final verse, of those six Psalms, says, in Psalm 150:6, “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!” True praise is the result of a commitment in the heart to bring glory to God in all that we do.

Second, to help Christians restore their God-given creativity, we must focus on the mind. Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” The process of renewing our minds includes hearing, reading, studying, and memorizing the Word of God. However, the most important thing of all is learning to meditate on the Word of God. Joshua 1:8 says, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” As we meditate on the Word of God, we begin to view things in the world from the viewpoint of God, rather than the viewpoint of the world.

In Isaiah 55:8-9, we read, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.” Here, we see that the thoughts and ways of God are much higher than our thoughts and ways. As we learn to think His thoughts, and follow His ways, we will begin to become more creative, because we are learning the thoughts and ways of a Creator

who has infinite creativity.

Psalm 1:1-3 tells us the results as people learn to think and act according to the thoughts and ways of a God with infinite creativity. Those verses say, “Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.” In these verses, we see that the person who is meditating on the Word of God will think the thoughts of God, and become a fruitful person, because the ways of that person demonstrate the creativity of God. Remember that God did not make any two mountains look exactly alike. They are all different. In the same way, every Christian is different and can bring glory to God in different ways once his or her creativity is released.

Third, we can act with great creativity once our heart is focused on the glory of God and our thoughts are being transformed by the Word of God. This allows us to be able to view things from the viewpoint of God, rather than the viewpoint of man. In order for our actions to agree with our heart and our thoughts, it requires godly motivation. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 says, “For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.” Here, we see that to have actions that are in agreement with our heart and mind, we must be motivated by the love of Christ, rather than being controlled by the fear of people.

This happens as we learn to yield to the Lord so that we walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, instead of depending on our own strength. Romans 6:16 says, “Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?” Galatians 5:16 says, “I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” Galatians 5:18 adds, “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.” This makes it possible to act in the freedom that we have in Christ. Galatians 5:13 says, “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”

Some Christians see everything as black or white – right or wrong. (This can create great conflict in a church or other Christian organization.) Usually when this happens, the people involved each think their way is right and the other way is wrong. To develop our creativity, we need to begin to think in terms of choices and consequences. Instead of looking at just two ways of doing something, we need to ask ourselves what are six or eight possible ways we could do this. That now gives us six or eight choices and sometimes more.

Once we have all of the possible choices, then, we should list the consequences of each of those choices, because every choice has consequences. Sometimes, those consequences are good, and sometimes, those consequences are bad. Galatians 6:7-9 says, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let

us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” Some choices will bring a harvest of corruption. Other choices will bring a harvest that will have eternal results. We want to make wise choices that bring glory to God and produce eternal results.

Once we have the six or eight possible choices and the consequences of each of those choices listed, then, we have the knowledge to make wise choices. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve looked at the choices Satan presented, not at the consequences God had promised. Instead of looking at the choices, we can now look at the consequences and see the results of each of the six or eight choices. A couple of choices will be immediately eliminated because they do not bring glory to God. (Often two of the choices that will be eliminated are the two that the people saw as the black and white choices as they both have bad consequences and do not bring glory to God.)

A couple of other choices are neither right nor wrong but they do not bring glory to God. That may leave two or three choices that would each have consequences that will bring glory to God. Since the remaining choices all have consequences that bring glory to God, any of the two or three remaining choices would be good choices because any one of them will bring glory to God. As we pray, the Lord will lead us to select one of the choices as our plan of action. If we are talking about a personal decision, we will experience the peace of God, because we know that the decision will bring glory to God. If we are talking about a group decision in a church or other Christian organization, we will have a spirit of unity because we will know that God is going to get the glory from our choice of a plan of action. As 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

In addition to making wise decisions, both as individuals and as a group when we are talking about a church, the process of helping a developing leader learn to focus on choices and consequences will have at least one other benefit. Romans 15:7 says, “Wherefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God.” Developing leaders will learn how to accept one another, not judge one another, because the focus has moved from getting my way to seeking the glory of God. As an individual, the person can accept the fact that every other person will do things in a different way, because God has created each one a unique individual. As a church team, the focus will be on bringing glory to God, rather than getting our way.

It is a great privilege to help developing leaders develop their creativity, and appreciate the creativity of others, as they learn the process to make wise decisions that will bring glory to God. May the Lord richly bless you as you help developing leaders restore their God-given creativity that was largely lost through original sin.