

Influence 2022 Pt. 5

Pastor James Foley – Sunday, June 5, 2022

COMMUNION

- 1) The Wafer Symbolizes the **BODY** of Christ – Broken for Us
- 2) The Juice Symbolizes the **BLOOD** of Christ – Shed for Us All

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NIV)

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

MISSIONS UPDATE

VIDEO (Taran and Pastor Bazile)

NOTE 1 – Two weeks ago I invited Taran to share on the condition of Haiti. We then prayed for him prior to his departure to that nation and, as you can see, he has returned from his trip! Taran, would you come share a few post-visit updates as you like. Also, when you are finished we will pray for you once again (i.e., as he is heading back to Haiti in the days to come). **PRAYER**

NOTE 2 – At this time the children and workers are dismissed...

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for joining us! Whether you are here in person or joining via the livestream, you are most welcome! Please have a Bible at the ready and be prepared to take notes as you desire. We have much to cover in a short space of time.

SUMMATIONS

In recent weeks we have identified three levels of influential relationship that should be present in our lives....

1) Mentee Relationship – Relationships in which we allow other people to pour into and influence our lives. Connections in which we serve as students or proteges in relation to worthy mentor figures. In this context, we are the influenced.

2) Mentor Relationship – Relationships in which we are allowed to pour into and/or influence others. Connections in which we serve as the mentor to proteges, wherein we serve as figures of impact. In this context, we are the influencer.

3) Mutual Relationship – Peers for the journey characterized by interdependent connection. In this scenario, there is a mutual degree of influence.

Q. To what degree are these levels of relationship present in your life?

KEY – This morning I would like hone in on the MENTOR relationship in particular. Let us delve in...

THE CALL OF CHRIST PT. 1

Let us open with a familiar yet significant selection of Scripture...

Matthew 28:16–20 (NIV)

16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

NOTE 1 – These words were spoken by Christ in that interval of time between His Resurrection and Ascension. This text is often referred to as the Great Commission (i.e., “commission” referring to the standing order, command and/or charge of Christ). Herein, the Lord calls His people to the work of discipleship.

NOTE 2 – When we consider this text we often do so through a series of interrelated filters or lenses...

THE CALL OF CHRIST PT. 2

1) The Apostolic Filter

We view this text as the Great Commission of Christ to His band of immediate and intimate apostles...

Q. What were the apostles to do?

A. Go forth, make disciples and teach obedience unto Christ!

2) The Corporate Filter

We view this text as the universal charge of Christ for His people throughout both space and time...

Q. What is the Church of all ages and nations to do?

A. Go forth, make disciples and teach obedience unto Christ!

3) The Local Filter or Lens

We view this text as the command of Christ that particularly details the purpose of a local body...

Q. What is this local assembly to do? New Life?

A. Go forth, make disciples and teach obedience unto Christ!

Q1. Yet how often do we read this passage through a more PERSONAL filter or lens?

Q2. Do you understand that YOUR job is to go, make disciples and teach obedience unto Christ?

NOTE 1 – We must realize that the s. order of Christ was meant to impact how we live as individual Christians. We have all been called to actively engage in the process of making disciples (i.e., helping to influence others unto conformity to the image of Christ cf. Rom. 8:29).

NOTE 2 – The idea that discipleship is solely the work of ministers or elite leaders within the body is rubbish, and has done much to contribute to our corp. failure in fulfilling the Great Commission of the Lord. The work of discipleship is our work (i.e., individually) and He will judge us in kind.

NOTE 3 – Like it or not, you are called to be a disciple and a disciple-maker, wherein you are to invest in the formation of another. It is not enough for you to be unceasingly fed! At some point, God expects each of us to share in the work of “feeding” others. This is something we must, should and CAN do in Christ...

TRANSITIONS

When I look at this room I see a grouping of individuals with so much to offer in the work of mentorship...

FYI – It is true that we are all at different places in our walks with God (i.e., varying levels of relative maturity and expertise). However, we all have something to offer to those younger in the faith. Thus said, let us take some time to address the following question(s)...

Q. What, precisely, do you have to impart? What can you invest and pour into another?

WHAT PT. 1

Firstly, you can impart what you know to be true of the Word of God. In other words, you can invest into others what you have gleaned from the pages of Scripture (e.g., personal study, previously-heard sermons, beloved books, etc.).

NOTE 1 – Of course, this does not mean we should all seek to be “teachers” of the Word...

James 3:1

1 Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

NOTE 2 – However, we can all function as witnesses of the things we have read and experienced. Thus said, may our conversations be permeated with Scripture (i.e., the ways and workings of God)...

Deuteronomy 6:4–9

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

NOTE 3 – The apostle Paul was quick to draw the attention of his pupils to the Word of God...

2 Timothy 3:14b–17

14 . . . continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

WHAT PT. 2

Secondly, you have a wealth of personal testimonies and experiences to share...

Q1. Have you been through some things in life and living?

Q2. Have you seen the Lord intervene, show up and/or impact?

Q3. Has He saved, delivered, healed, restored and provided for you?

Q4. What good are such stories if no one knows what you have endured?

NOTE 1 – Paul drew the attention of his audience to personal stories and testimonies (2 Tim. 3:10–11, Emphasis Mine): “10 You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, 11 persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them.”

NOTE 2 – We can all function like the blind man healed by Jesus (cf. John 9:25): “He replied, ‘Whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!’”

WHAT PT. 3

Thirdly, you can invest in others through the mechanism of personal prayer...

NOTE 1 – Paul, the great mentor, was committed to pray for those within his sphere of influence...

2 Timothy 1:3 (Individual, Emphasis Mine)

3 I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day **I constantly remember you in my prayers.**

Romans 1:8b–10a (Church Community, Emphasis Mine)

8 . . . I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. 9 God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness **how constantly I remember you 10 in my prayers at all times . . .**

Ephesians 1:15–19a (Church Community, , Emphasis Mine)

15 For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, 16 I have not stopped giving thanks for you, **remembering you in my prayers.** 17 I **keep asking** that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

NOTE 2 – Christ, the greatest of all mentors, took the time to pray for those under His care...

John 17:9, 11b, 17, 20–24 (Universal)

9 “I pray for them [i.e., the disciples]. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. . . . 11 . . . Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. . . . 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.”

20 “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— 23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. 24 Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

Luke 22 (Particular)

31 “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

KEY – If you can do nothing else for others, you can pray (i.e., and that it is likely the greatest thing we can do)!

QUOTE – “What the Church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use—men of prayer, men mighty in prayer.” – E. M. Bounds

TRANSITIONS

You have both the responsibility and ability in Christ to invest the following into others:

- 1) Your Insight into the Word
- 2) Personal Stories or Experiences
- 3) The Power and Privilege of Prayer

Q1. Yet what keeps many people from participating in mentorship (i.e., disciple-making)?

Q2. What obstacles tend to hinder people from personally engaging in the Comm. of Christ?

KEY – Let us take some time to consider the following responses to this question...

HINDRANCES PT. 1

A1. Personal Disqualification

NOTE 1 – I posit that many live with, what I call, a Ministry of Disqualification. They genuinely believe that God could never use someone like them (i.e., that they have nothing to contribute and/or have no right to expect to be utilized by the Lord).

NOTE 2 – Far too many in the Church of Christ bench themselves while the Coach is calling them onto the field!

Q1. Who sold you on the idea that God could not use you?

Q2. Why, precisely, did you believe their words over His Word?

NOTE 3 – When I survey the whole of Scripture, I see the most unlikely of people used of God to affect change.

ILL – “Think God can’t use you? Think he only uses perfectly qualified people? Take a closer look. Moses was not a great speaker. Jonah ran from God. Jacob was a liar. Noah got drunk. Rahab was a prostitute. David had an affair. Jeremiah was depressed, a lot. Solomon was rich in wisdom but poor in lifestyle. John the Baptist was just plain poor. Timothy was too young. Abraham was too old. Lazarus was dead. Sarah was barren. Naomi was a widow. Gideon and Thomas both doubted; so did Sarah. Peter lacked self-control. James and John were self-righteous. Paul had a short fuse. Well, so did Peter and Moses. Actually, lots of people did. God’s army isn’t perfect. It never has been. It’s the march of the unqualified, so get in line.”

Q. Does this mean it is permissible to adopt sinful lifestyles?

A. Of course not! It does mean that God can use anyone; even us...

NOTE 4 – The people who frighten me as a leader are those who deem themselves competent. Consider...

2 Corinthians 12:7b–10

7 . . . in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

HINDRANCES PT. 2

A2. Time

NOTE 1 – Time is a precious commodity that no one seems to have enough of. You may be thinking to yourself as you listen to this message, “Pastor, I do not have time to pour into others. With all I have on my plate, I cannot take any more on!”

Q1. Have you ever genuinely sought the Lord concerning the investment of your time and priorities?

Q2. Have you ever considered that maybe there are some things on your plate that do not need to be?

NOTE 2 – Ultimately, God is the type of God who calls us to do things we can do in Christ, but we may have to make necessary adjustment(s) in kind. After all, Christianity is learning to live with a new center of gravity! Thus, some change is to be expected. Perhaps, for you, how you spend your time, needs to be adjusted to make time for what matters to Him! Consider the following...

Ephesians 5:15–17

15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.

Psalms 90:12

12 Teach us to number our days,
that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

NOTE 3 – I am not going to lie! Pouring into others will require the investment of time, effort and energy. However, let me note that this is often something that you can engage in “in the midst of” daily life and living. Allow me to put forth the following questions...

Q1. Do you ever have breakfast, lunch or dinner? INVITE SOMEONE ALONG

Q2. Do you ever have to run errands and take a drive? INVITE SOMEONE ALONG

Q3. Do you ever make time to run to Dunkin Don. for coffee? INVITE SOMEONE ALONG

Q4. Do you have hobbies and interests you can share w/ others? INVITE SOMEONE ALONG

Q4. Do you have particular skills and/or capacities to share w/ others? INVITE SOMEONE ALONG

Q5. Do you ever attend “Bible Study” or a church “small group”? INVITE SOMEONE ALONG

Q6. Do you have a home or the ability for hospitality? INVITE SOMEONE ALONG

KEY – Your greatest investments will likely never happen at the church. Rather, it will be in the midst of living!

HINDRANCES PT. 3

A3. Fear of Vulnerability

NOTE 1 – Many are hesitant to “let someone in” for fear the other person might see the “real” them. Many do not want others to see past their church-approved mask, for fear they might be rejected, judged or perceived differently. Can I be honest with you? People genuinely crave authenticity!

NOTE 2 – Consider that Christ invited His own into the “ugly” moments of life and living...

Matthew 26:36–38 (Gethsemane)

36 Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” 37 He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38 Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

NOTE 3 – Consider that Paul was open regarding his past, struggles, and beyond...

Philippians 3:4b–9 (Paul Noting He at One Time Trusted in ALL the Wrong Things)

4 . . . If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. 7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

Philippians 3:10–14 (Paul is Noting He Had Not ARRIVED, Emphasis Mine)

10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, **I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it.** But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 1:15 (Consider His SELF-DESCRIPTION, Emphasis Mine)

15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—**of whom I am the worst.**

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We have noted much re: mentorship and our role in fulfilling the Great Commission of Christ...

NOTE 1 – However, I would be remiss if I failed to touch upon the joy of investing in other people in the Lord. There is nothing like being used of God to serve, bless, and pour into the lives of others! This was a joy that the apostle Paul noted in his writings! Consider how Paul viewed his proteges, students and mentees...

Philippians 4:1 (Emphasis Mine)

1 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, **my joy and crown**, stand firm in the Lord in . . . dear friends!

1 Thessalonians 2:19–20 (Emphasis Mine)

19 For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? 20 Indeed, **you** are our **glory and joy**.

Q1. Who is your “joy” in the Lord?

Q2. Who is your “glory” in the Lord?

Q3. Who is your “crown” in the Lord?

Q. Who might be your in Christ the Lord?

NOTE 2 – There are candidates all around you! Open your eyes and let God speak to your heart and mind. It is the will of Christ for you to faithfully and effectively engage in the mission He has set before us. Get to work and watch what He can do both in and through you!

NOTE 3 – Lastly, there is a joy in experiencing the presence of Christ in mission...

Matthew 28:18–20

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

CONCLUSION

NOTE 1 – Those who wish to give online may do so at www.NewLifeBarre.org. Those who wish to give in person can utilize the offering boxes located throughout the church facility. Thank you for your faithfulness in supporting this local work of Christ.

NOTE 2 – Please check out the website for the calendar of upcoming events and more. (MM 6/11 & WM 6/14).

NOTE 3 – Feel free to join us downstairs for a time of coffee, refreshments and more! As we close...

2 Corinthians 13:14

14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.