

LIFE GUIDES

John 14:25-27

INTRO: As we ended a couple weeks ago our discussion on destiny, I mentioned patterns of our lives. Now I am trying in my own mind to clarify the difference between habit and pattern. The word habit comes from a Latin word which means, “condition or appearance”. The dictionary also speaks of it as “an addiction”. Now pattern on the other hand has as one emphasis, “a regular or discernible order in which a series of things occur”. Maybe habits or the condition of my life develops patterns. Jesus needed the Father’s words, the Father’s acts, the Father’s life, which created patterns in His life. Prayer was one of the habits of Jesus that resulted in the pattern (a regular discernible order) of His life always revealing the Father’s heart. What ever habits I establish in my life will began to define what I am sourced by. We could call them survival mechanisms, that establish an order or form. Maybe confusion is the result of opposing habits in the same life. The disciples lives would indicate that. Our text above is the solution to a major problem of our society. Instead of developing what I call “dances” where we become so automatic in our actions and reactions; we need Him to come in and replace our destructive habits and our resulting patterns with His pattern.

LIFE GUIDE PATTERNS

A. **SELF SOURCED:** Judas: In John 12:4-6 we read the discrepancy between the words of Judas and the heart of Judas. It also tells us there was a pattern that had developed in his life of self. How could he benefit? How would he be taken care of? His words seemed noble but it was clear that he had developed a habit that would become a pattern of his life. That habit created another dynamic, which was deception. John 13:26-29 shows us how he had become adept at deception. In John 18:2-5 we really get a picture of a pattern. Everything but the money and the betrayal kiss is described here. The real pain in this thing is how he ended up. His pattern of life actually destroyed his life. Money is thrown back, regret is expressed, but it is too late, it seems. This was not some one time event, this was a developed order of Judas’ life. There is some light shown on the situation. In Acts 1:16-20 are some pretty distressing words. Actually it is a description of what could have been, and what was already in place had Judas been sourced differently. What disturbs me is that Judas had “*obtained* a part of this ministry - even bishop “stuff”. Judas’ life became a complete pattern of taking care of himself at any cost. He was the champion of self-style. Satan has a gold mine in this thinking, but it always leads to devastation for self and others. Judas, as Manley puts it, just kept “shooting himself in the foot”. Scripture doesn’t give us a whole lot of Judas’ background, but it does become clear that ultimately he was not guided, but became his own guide, sourced by something and ultimately someone else, and that resulted in his guiding others into the same destruction. This self sourced “life guide” always takes more than itself down.

B. **FATHER SOURCED:** Jesus: John 14:20 Jesus gives the essence of His life. “I am in my Father”. This word “in” is a fixed position in the original language, a relationship of rest. Jesus was always flowing out of something that wasn’t about Himself. In John 14:23-24, we get a flavor of Jesus habits and pattern. A different life guide if you will. There’s this WE theme. “WE will come...make OUR home with him”. John 14:28 “My Father is greater than I”. Jesus life is not about what “He” is, His being number one, but is clearly about who is in control of His destiny. From Jesus beginning with “I must be about My Father’s business, to His wilderness temptation in Luke 4:4 where He says “every word of God” is what drives me, Jesus is always pointing away from His own desires to the desires of the Father. John 14:29 Jesus really lays out what guides Him. All through the book of John He is clear on not only the fact that everything in His life is in the Father’s purpose, but that His entire destiny, which is living what the cross represents, (others), is not obligation. NO, there is something in Him that says that the world will know that He love’s the Father, and whatever He is commanded to do is the guide of His life.

This drive results in “blood, sweat and tears” given for those around Him, and He is glad to do it. It is a foot washing life style that *wants* to wash feet, not has to. He wants to be connected to those He loves, that’s His pattern. Follow Him right on through the whole book, from Matthew to Revelation (and even in the Old Testament) and you will see the same thing. His habit of prayer in the mountains, His going in the garden to pray, His baptism, His temptation, His life, death, resurrection, ascension all form a pattern of life which is about pouring out Himself. The result is that He is *constantly relying on the Father to pour everything into Him*. What a pattern!!! Can you imagine a people like that? A family like that? A church like that? A whole body of Christ like that?

MIXED SOURCING: We might be right in saying that we are sourced by the Father, or by self; nothing in between. However, it seems to me there are indications of mixed sourcing in scripture. Peter is a great example. Actually, all of the disciples are struggling until the Holy Spirit is in full control. Survival-it’s pretty basic. From childhood on I develop these survival mechanisms. The disciples had them, the Pharisees had them. *What if those habits of life that are developed, those survival mechanisms, are so engraved in a life as patterns that they literally rob people of a full life of ministry for themselves, their families and their churches?* Back to Peter. Peter was a follower but even *his* thinking was badly tarnished. He seemed to grab for control or power as a means to cover his fear or uncertainty. He loved Jesus, he left his occupation, he even made the inner circle of close friends to Jesus. Yet, there were some old habits that had to be dealt with for him to be free to live a full life. God knows there are things in our lives that He must refine to bring us to a place of “one source”. Peter was sincere but unaware of his habits and resulting patterns. He was partly a system thinker, and partly a God thinker. He had world system mixed with kingdom system. At one time he was encouraged for having revelation that Jesus was “the Christ, the Son of the living God”, and at the same time was rebuked for not understanding that the cross *was* life. He would walk on water one minute, and sink the next. He would resist having his feet washed and then he would demand his whole body be washed. He would cut of a Jewish officers ear in a supposed defense of his Lord, then he would deny he ever knew Christ. Look at John 13:36-38. Peter tells Jesus he’s ready and absolutely devoted. Jesus tells Peter there are some things that will happen in time to focus him. It’s not just time that will change him, it’s a work that needs to be accomplished in Peter’s life. He isn’t ready for making big promises, there is some submission that needs to happen in him. If you think there wasn’t a major life long pattern change in Peter, I suggest you read I and II Peter. Yep, same man. Was Peter rather confusing to us? Yes, but is he any more confusing than our dual habits and patterns are to the watching world. Are we ready for the Helper to abide in us? The Spirit of Truth to get us single focused? See our texts again..John 14:25-27, 16:13-16. There is peace and the removal of fear in this pattern, being taught by Him. There are self guided and Holy Spirit guided choices to be made. Revelation for change only comes from the Holy Spirit Guide, not from my own self guided habits and patterns.

Application: What if I, my family, and my church were to bring all it’s habits and patterns to the cross?

- Questions 1: Who is sourcing my life? Me, Him, or a mixture?
2: What are the habits in my life that serve me well?
3: What are the habits that do not?
4: What areas must be submitted fully to Him, that are still a struggle for me?
5: Am I enjoying being “in the Father”?
6: What change would be most helpful in being able to enjoy and rejoice in Him more?

Reflection: Lord, let all my habits demonstrate that You are my source, and may You be the Pattern in me.