

¹ Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest: An Updated Edition in Today's Language* (Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour Publishing, 1992), Devotion for January 7th.

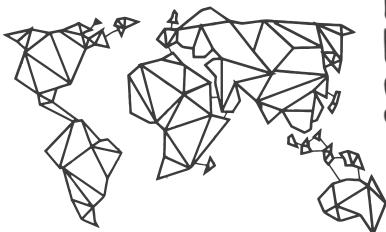
² J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute, 2007), 77.

³ Southcrest, "Missions," <http://www.southcrest.org/#/for-the-world> (Accessed February 7, 2013).

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GREAT COMMISSION LEADERSHIP

HOMEWORK PACKET TWO



YOUR FIRST LEADERSHIP PRIORITY

The bearing of fruit is always shown in Scripture to be the visible result of an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ...¹

Oswald Chambers

Spiritual leadership requires Spirit-filled people. Other qualities are important; to be Spirit-filled is indispensable.²

J. Oswald Sanders

MEMORY VERSE

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

2 Corinthians 3:18 [ESV]

EFFECTIVE LEADERS PRIORITIZE THEIR TIME WITH JESUS

Jesus taught that apart from Him we can do nothing and that we must abide in Him if we're to accomplish His will for us (Jn. 15:5). Mary of Bethany understood this. Read Lk. 10:38-42. Mary and Martha were friends with Jesus. Martha was distracted by all that needed to be done. She demonstrated an "anything but Jesus" perspective. Mary was committed to the one thing that was needed. She had a "nothing but Jesus" mentality. Read more about Mary's extravagant love for Jesus in Jn. 12:1-8. It is easy to be more of a "Martha" than a "Mary" in ministry. Leaders are people of initiative and action and it can be hard for those types of people to spend quality time with Jesus. We can easily let ministry, or anything else for that matter, distract us from the one thing that is needed—Jesus, and time spent with Him. However busy you might become in ministry, however many things there are on the "to do" list, He is the one thing that is needed.

THE GREATEST MINISTRY ACTIVITY YOU CAN DO IS TO CONNECT WITH JESUS

Nineteenth century missionary Henry Martyn said, "The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of missions. The nearer we get to Christ, the more missionary we become."³ Remember Jesus' example in Mk. 1:35.

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- How can you follow Jesus' challenge to His disciples as they served (Mk. 6:30-31)?

- What else compares with that (Phil. 3:7-9)?

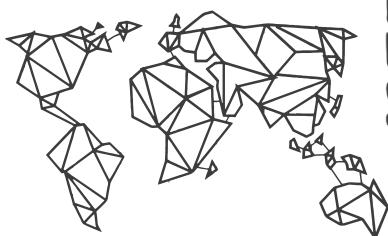
- As you serve God, He will be your inheritance and reward, just like He was for the Levites, his servants in the Old Testament (Dt. 10:9). How can you keep that perspective as you lead?

- How can you let Him build rather than working in vain (Ps. 127:1); what does Jesus mean by, "only one thing is needed (Lk. 10:42)"?

LEADERSHIP IS A BLESSING, BE THANKFUL YOU'RE CALLED

God does not need you! It is imperative that you understand that and serve from a perspective of gratitude.

- What can you learn from John the Baptist's attitude about serving Jesus in Mt. 3:11, Mk. 1:7, Lk. 3:16, Jn. 1:27, Acts 13:25 (note: he felt thankful to serve in any capacity, not entitled to ministry recognition)?



⁴ Andrew Murray, *Humility and Absolute Surrender* (Provo, UT: Renaissance Classics, 2012), 143-144.

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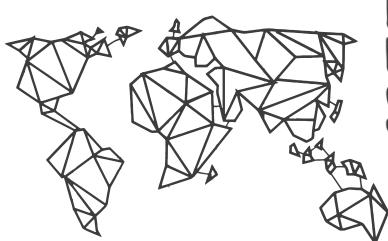
- **What can you learn from Peter and the apostles' attitudes about serving Jesus in Acts 5:41?**

- **What can you learn from Paul's attitude about serving Jesus in Eph. 3:7-8 and what attitude should you have about being Christ's co-laborer (1 Cor. 3:9)?**

MINISTRY SHOULD NEVER REPLACE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

Many leaders get so busy with ministry that they neglect fellowship with God. Murray writes, "Is it not true that our work often comes between us and Jesus? What folly! ... Sad thought, that the bearing of fruit should separate the branch from the vine."⁴ Similarly, in *My Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers writes this, about 1 Cor. 3:9:

Beware of any work for God which enables you to evade concentration on Him. A great many Christian workers worship their work. The one concern of a worker should be concentration on God, and this will mean that all other margins of life, mental, moral and spiritual, are free with the freedom of a child, a worshiping child, not a wayward child. A worker without this solemn, dominant note of concentration on God is apt to get his work on his neck; there is no margin of body, mind or spirit free, consequently he becomes spent out and crushed. There is no freedom, no delight in life; nerves, mind and heart are so crushingly burdened that God's blessing cannot rest. But the other side is just as true—when once the concentration is on God, all the margins of life are free and under the dominance of God alone. There is no responsibility on you for the work; the only responsibility you have is to keep in living constant touch with God, and to see that you allow nothing to hinder your cooperation with Him. The freedom after sanctification is the freedom of a child, the things that used to keep life pinned down are gone. But, be careful to remember that you are freed for one thing only - to be absolutely devoted to your co-Worker. We have no right to judge where we should be put, or



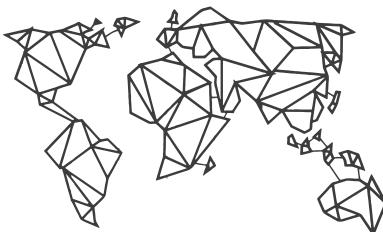
⁵ Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest: An Updated Edition in Today's Language* (Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour Publishing, 1992).

⁶ J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute, 2007), 80.

⁷ C.H. Spurgeon, *An All Around Ministry: Addresses to Ministers and Students* (BookAndSuchNW, 2009), Ch. 5, Kindle.

⁸ Andrew Murray, *With Christ in the School of Prayer* (Valley Forge, Pa: Trinity Press, 2012), 42-43.

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to have preconceived notions as to what God is fitting us for. God engineers everything; wherever He puts us, our one great aim, is to pour out a whole-hearted devotion to Him in that particular work.⁵

Remember Col. 3:23.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO MAKE GOD YOUR TOP PRIORITY IN MINISTRY

Serve in the power of His Holy Spirit. Never do ministry in your own strength! Every believer is indwelt with the Spirit at salvation (Jn. 7:37-39, 1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19, 12:13, Eph. 1:13, etc.). Now that He is in our lives, we must choose moment by moment whether we will allow Him to fill, empower and direct us according to His continuing command to believers in Eph. 5:18. Since He has commanded us to be filled with the Spirit we know that's His will and we know He will give us everything we ask according to His will (1 Jn. 5:14-15). Simply ask Him, throughout each day, to fill and control you afresh with His Spirit to empower you for His work. He will!

Sanders defines the Spirit filled life saying, "To be filled with the Spirit means simply that the Christian voluntarily surrenders life and will to the Spirit. Through faith, the believer's personality is permeated, mastered, and controlled by the Spirit."⁶ Spurgeon warns, "Nothing can be done if the Holy Spirit be withdrawn; indeed nothing truly good will be attempted."⁷ Andrew Murray agrees, writing, "For every need of the spiritual life, this is the one thing needful, the Holy Spirit ... If we but yield ourselves entirely to the disposal of the Spirit and let Him have His way with us, He will manifest the life of Christ within us."⁸ Walking in the Spirit, with Christ on the throne each day, is the key to a godly life and ministry.

The Holy Spirit's role in life and ministry is critical. There have been many different opinions on His filling ministry but the following steps are ones that most all believers can agree on. These Biblical steps will help you live and lead in His strength, being filled with His Spirit by faith:

- » Present yourself to God, surrendering to Him (Romans 12:1-2).
- » Own up to any sin God makes you aware of, confessing it to Him (1 John 1:9).
- » Want to live a Christ-like, Spirit-filled and empowered life (Matthew 5:6).
- » Experience His filling and power, claiming it by faith alone through

⁹ Jack Graham, *Unseen: Angels, Satan, Heaven, Hell, and Winning the Battle for Eternity* (Bloomington, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 2013), 131.

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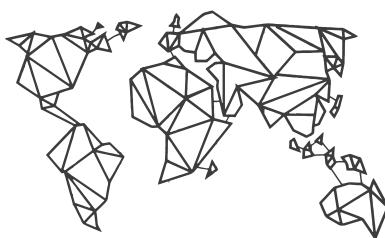
- » prayer (James 1:6-7, 1 John 5:14-15).
- » Rely on Him, taking steps of faith that require Him to come through (2 Cor. 5:7).
- **Are you living a lifestyle of allowing Christ to live His life through you by the Power of the Holy Spirit, through faith? Why or why not?**

- **How does God's command to Zerubbabel, in Zech. 4:6, apply in your life?**

Serve according to the truth of His Word. It has been said that "you only respect God as much as you respect His Word." Godly leaders serve with an authority that only comes from time spent in the Word. God's Word must be the foundation for all you do and you must be committed to His Word, unwilling to tweak it, mold it or stray from it (2 Tim. 3:16). So many leaders today seem far too willing to compromise on the truth of God's Word in order to appease people. Don't ever fall for this sin. Learn to study God's Word in deeper ways.

The Inductive Bible Study method is a great way to do that. It involves observation (asking who, what, where, when, why and how questions, considering the context, etc.), interpretation (determining the meaning by looking at observations, context, and cross-references), and application (doing what the Word says, James 1:22). Jack Graham suggests you read it through, think it clear (study it well), write it down (journal it), pray it in (pray Scripture for yourself and others), live it out (apply it) and give it away (share God's Word with others).⁹ God's Word must be the basis for your life and ministry and it is God's mechanism for changing every person you minister to (Heb. 4:12). It is vitally important that you use God's Word in ministry, boldly allowing Him to change lives with it. Godly leaders will lead powerfully with God's Word. The following principles will help guide you as you seek to lead based on the truth of God's Word.

- » Read God's Word (Mt. 4:4).



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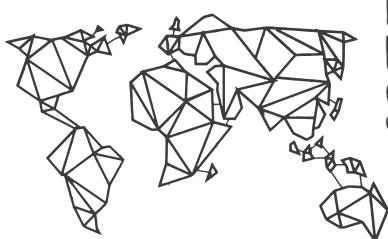
- » Study God's Word (Ps. 119:130).
 - » Memorize God's Word (Ps. 119:11).
 - » Meditate on God's Word (Ps. 1:2-3).
 - » Apply God's Word (James 1:22).
- **How do you need to grow in knowing and applying God's Word?**

Serve from a foundation of fervent prayer. It's been said that "prayer is not a part of ministry, it is the foundation for it." A godly leader leads out of an active prayer life! Don't sin against God by failing to pray for those you lead (1 Sam. 12:23)! Commit to personal and corporate prayer. Remember these guidelines as you grow in the area of prayer:

- » Follow Jesus' example (Lk. 5:16, 6:12).
 - » Follow Jesus' format (Mt. 6:5-13). Remember the ACTS acronym: **A**doration, **C**onfession, **T**hanksgiving, **S**upplication.
 - » Pray directed by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 6:18).
 - » Be faithful in prayer (Rom. 12:12).
 - » Earnestly seek Him in prayer continually (1 Thes. 5:17).
 - » Pray and fast as well (Is. 58). Challenge: Pick a day next week to fast.
- **How do you need to grow in prayer?**

Serve in a context of committed fellowship. No leader can accomplish anything significant alone. As you fellowship with other believers, the Body of Christ, you're fellowshipping with Him as well. Be committed to fellowship (Heb. 10:24-25) & submitted to godly authority (Heb. 13:17).

- **How do you need to be more committed to genuine fellowship with the Body of Christ?**



Notes:

AS YOU SERVE GOD, HE WILL SUSTAIN YOU AND KEEP YOU FROM BURNOUT

Just like God refreshed a ministry weary Elijah with heavenly bread and water, empowering him for continued work (1 Kings 19:1-8), so too, He will refresh you with Himself, living bread and water, empowering you for ministry as you spend intimate time with Him (Jn. 6:35, 7:37-39). Remember Jer. 30:21, Ps. 119:10 and Is. 40:31.

- **How do you normally react when you feel “burnt out” and how will that change based on what we just read?**

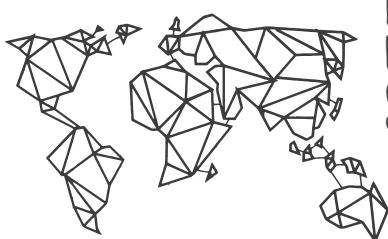
YOUR FIRST MINISTRY PRIORITY IS YOUR FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS

Don't ever try to lead in your own strength, talent or abilities. You must lead out of a close walk with God. You can't give others what you don't have yourself. If you want to lead for God, you must first be close to Him. Until you love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength (Mk.12:30) you won't be able to love others as yourself (Mk. 12:31), leading them as God has called you to.

- **How will loving God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength affect your ministry?**

DAILY QUIET TIMES

Leaders must be committed to spending quality time with God each and every day, fellowshipping with Him in His Word, prayer, praise and thankfulness. If your personal quiet times are lacking, your ministry will struggle. Plan these times, schedule them so you won't be distracted, protect them and be diligent to spend quality time with God each and every day. It is great to start your day off with God (Mk. 1:35) and to continue meditating on His Word (Ps. 1)



¹⁰ Andrew Murray, *Humility and Absolute Surrender* (Provo, UT: Renaissance Classics, 2012), 151.

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and communicating with Him (1 Thes. 5:17) throughout the day. Murray laments:

Oh! How many Christians look on it as a burden and a tax, a duty and a difficulty, too often to be alone with God! That is the great hindrance to our Christian life everywhere. We need more quiet fellowship with God. I tell you, in the name of the Heavenly Vine that you cannot be healthy branches - branches into which the heavenly sap can flow - unless you take plenty of time for communion with God. If you are not willing to sacrifice time to get alone with Him, and to give Him time every day to work in you, and to keep the link of connection between you and Himself, He cannot give you that blessing of His unbroken fellowship.¹⁰

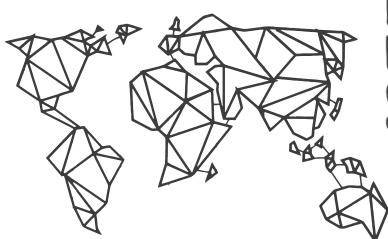
Your daily time with God is not only the fuel that will drive your life and ministry; it is the example that those you lead need to see. Make your daily time with God your first priority in life.

- **Do you have a scheduled daily quiet time now? If so, how can you make it better? If not, schedule one now and start spending time with God each morning.**

LEADING WITH THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Leaders must lead with a positive attitude. No one wants to follow a grump! Fortunately, you have the solution to this leadership fundamental. As you walk intimately with Jesus, filled with His Spirit by faith, you'll be overflowing with the fruit of the Spirit (Jn. 7:37-39 and Gal. 5:22-23). As you walk by faith, He will live His life through you (Gal. 2:20) and that is a life anyone would want to follow. The growth of this fruit comes from your intimacy with Him (Jn. 15:1-17).

- **Evaluate the fruit of the Spirit in your life right now. How can you better lead with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control?**



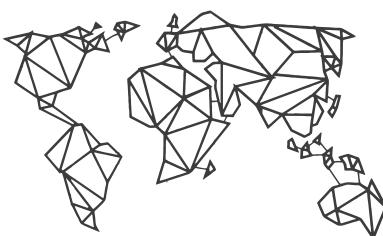
¹¹ Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).

¹² Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991).

¹³ St. Augustine, *The Confessions of Saint Augustine* (New York, NY: Image Books, 1960), 43.

¹⁴ The Westminster General Assembly 1647, *Westminster Shorter Catechism with Proof Texts (ESV): An aid for study of the Holy Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Good News Publishers, 2010), 10.

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CLOSING EXAMPLE

Moses left 2 million Israelites who he was leading to spend 40 days alone with God (Ex. 19:3). God dictates the next 13 chapters of Exodus to Him. Upon returning he finds them worshiping a golden calf and they were so out of control even their enemies were laughing at them. Moses punishes them and then does what seems to be the opposite of what any rational leader would do: he leaves them again, returning to seek God for another 40 days (Ex. 32:31, 34:28-30)! Moses knew his first leadership priority was His fellowship with God and he relied on God's power to lead. No godly leader will do differently.

- **Be honest! Put yourself in Moses' shoes. After seeing what happened your first forty days away with God, would you be willing to leave for another forty?**

- **Are you more inclined to fix ministry problems on your own or do you realize your complete dependence on God in ministry? Why?**

Learn to cultivate the spiritual disciplines in your personal life (read *Conformed to His Image*¹¹ and *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*¹² for more on that). Augustine summarized this lesson's notes well saying, "...You have made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You."¹³ The Westminster Catechism adds, "...Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever."¹⁴ Most leaders will tell you leading can and will be lonely (you'll often feel you're standing and fighting alone). You must cling to Jesus and be satisfied by Him alone if you're ever going to experience joy and fruitfulness in ministry.

Phil Vischer, creator of *VeggieTales*, summarizes this lesson well, saying, "The impact that God has planned for us does not occur when we are pursuing impact. It occurs when we are pursuing God."¹⁵ If you aren't connecting with Christ you'll be trying to do His work in your own strength. That doesn't work. You'll also be setting a terrible example for those you lead. Learn to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and



¹⁵ The Christian Post, "VeggieTales Creator: Bankruptcy Humbled Me, Killed My Idol," <http://www.christianpost.com/news/veggietales-creator-bankruptcy-humbled-me-killed-my-idol-50119/> (Accessed February 8, 2014).

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strength (Mk. 12:30) in ministry. His joy is your strength (Neh. 8:10). In closing, spend some quality time with Him, meditating on Ps. 23:1-6, 27:8, 46:10, 63:1-8 and 84:10.

Remember, your weaknesses, inabilities, failures and past present no challenge to God's will for your life. Your willingness does. Be willing to be and do what God made you for. You don't have what it takes but God's Spirit in you does so be the leader He made you to be and turn this world upside down for Him!

ACT NOW

ESTABLISH A DAILY QUIET TIME

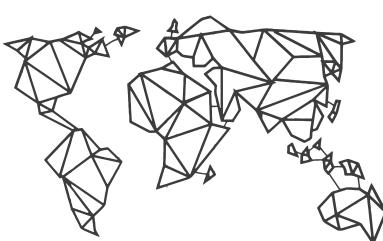
- What has been your experience with having a daily quiet time?

- Schedule a daily time with God (preferably in the morning):

- If you don't already have a journal, buy one today and begin writing in it as you read, study, meditate on, memorize, and apply God's Word. Also, keep a list of prayer needs and answers in your journal.

- Make a prayer list so you'll be able to remember those God has entrusted to you to pray for (2 Tim.1:3). Remember, a prayer list is just a tool to help you not forget! Seek God relationally and fervently in prayer as you use this tool. As you pray, remember the ACTS acronym:

- › **Adoration:** Begin your prayer time praising God and telling Him all He means to you:



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- › **Thanksgiving:** List what you thank God for:

- › **Supplication:** Write out prayer requests and needs:
 - Personal needs.

 - Friends, family and people you're serving with.

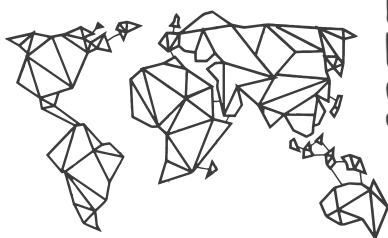
 - Your "top 10" list of friends you're trusting God to save.

 - Close with any other prayer needs or issues.

- **Finally, list any distractions you will need to eliminate to make your daily quiet times all they need to be. How will you eliminate them?**

PERSONAL GROWTH

- Write out this lesson's memory verse (also, write it out several more times this week):



¹⁶ G. T. Doran, *There's a S.M.A.R.T. Way to Write Management's Goals and Objectives* (Management Review, Volume 70, Issue 11, 1981), 35-36.

Notes:

- List a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant & within a Time-frame) goal¹⁶ for this lesson and action plans for achieving it.

SMART Goal:

Action plan:

Action plan:

Action plan:

- How are you staying close to Jesus, walking by faith and in integrity, trusting Him and the power of His Spirit in life and ministry rather than yourself, and how can you more?

- Jesus insisted that serving Him and serving others was the highest attribute of leadership (Mt. 20:25-28). How are you growing as a servant leader?

- How will this lesson help you better accomplish the Great Commission and multiply Christ-like multipliers?

- List any last thoughts and then put everything you learned in this lesson in God's hands, trusting Him to build these things into your life.

