

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, December 13, 2016

Always Take the High Road

Even when it may not be the easiest thing to do

Genesis 37-50; Proverbs 3:5-6, 22:1; Colossians 3:23-24; Titus 2:7-8

Definition: When it's crunch time – a critical moment or period when decisive action is needed – do you struggle with taking the “High Road?” Each day we face choices on how we handle situations with family members, co-workers and friends. It may involve giving advice, responding when wronged or offering corrective actions. Taking the high road means “doing the right thing even if it's not easy or popular.” It goes both ways in how we respond when something happens to us and how we initiate when we see something that needs to be fixed. When in doubt, do what is right (biblical based), not what is easiest (earthly based).

Segment Questions:

- When confronted with making a decision (big or small) do you make sure you're taking the high road or just what is easiest? Why is it hard to do the right thing?
- Joseph is a great example of someone who always took the high road. We have all faced situations in which we had to choose how we would respond. Give an example of when you chose the high road; and when you chose the low road.
- Think of Prov 3:5-6, How often in your daily decisions do you (**Trust** in the Lord with all your heart...**Seek** His will in all you do...He will **Show** you which path to take)? If you put this into practice how would it change your daily thought process when making decisions? Would you be slow to speak? Think and react with compassion? Give example
- Think of a time when you were wronged or overlooked, how did you react? Were you going to get back at them, prove them wrong, show them who's right? Or did you take the high road?

Action Questions:

- If you were more consistent in making decisions based on working for the Lord versus working for yourself, how would that impact your life and the decisions you made today?
- In what ways will making daily decisions based on doing the right thing (biblical), not the easy thing (earthly) impact your work, team and family?
- How will doing a “good work” today, which was filled with integrity and character impact the person to whom you directed your good work? How would you, your family and your future be affected by this “good work”?
- When you take the high road, you can have a positive impact on “Your world” (work, coaching, teaching, family). Knowing that, what can you do differently in your words...your actions...your responses? How would you feel? What kind of an effect would it have on your family?

As one who has spent much of my life on the basketball court, I am constantly bombarded with opportunities that test how I'm going to respond. It could be a player who isn't performing, a ref that misses a key call or an opposing coach who seems to have lost his mind.

The need for taking the high road – doing the right thing – also comes in every day decisions like correcting an employee, responding to a child and giving advice to a friend or coworker. When you feel you've been wronged or overlooked do you want to lash out at your boss or company? How about when your co-worker or teammate is getting all the glory and publicity....do you get mad or try to get even? Do you make a scene to convince everybody that you deserve the same attention? Welcome to everyday life as a worker, boss, parent, coach, employee, friend, spouse and... of course a follower of Jesus.

We have all faced those situations where we were the recipient of consequences from the bad actions of others. How many times have we had a conversation in our head about what we're going to say in a situation or drafted an email that seeks to bring it all out into the open – to fix it and make it right. But then when a cooler head prevails we realize that will only take the conversation deeper into the muck.

Doing what is right is not always easy but it's always worth it. The high road is often lonely, but being obedient to God's word brings blessings in the long run. Each time you are adding a building block to a solid base of strong ethics, integrity and character. It is a stable foundation that sets the right example for your spouse, children, friends and coworkers.

God's word is filled with examples of people who have been blessed by their choice to following God's direction and giving Him the praise. Think of Joseph who was sold into slavery by his brothers. When they later found him alive and in power in Egypt, they fully expected to receive his wrath. Yet he chose to forgive and bless them. This is the same Joseph who refused the seductive advances and false claims of his boss's wife. He was accused of rape and thrown in prison. Even there he responded in a godly way which in time helped him be elevated to a leadership position in the kingdom. **Genesis 37-50**

King Solomon gives us some great advice in the book of **Proverbs**. Early in the book he says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take (3:5-6)." And near the end, "Choose a good reputation over great riches; being held in high esteem is better than silver or gold (22:1)."

This good advice continues in the New Testament. "Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ." **Colossians 3:23-24**

"And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching. Teach the truth so that your teaching can't be criticized. Then those who oppose us will be ashamed and have nothing bad to say about us." **Titus 2:7-8**

One of my favorite authors is Max Lucado and in the book "A Gentle Thunder" he offers this:

You don't have to be like the world to have an impact on the world.

You don't have to be like the crowd to change the crowd.

You don't have to lower yourself down to their level to lift them up to your level.

(Prayer) Father, remind us that a divine inheritance will be our reward for faithfulness to you. Help us to make faithfulness a priority for beginning our day.