

LIFE on the RUN

Say YES to
THE BEST

READ John 3:19-21.

Daily Prayer

Father, I want to be a whole person whose public life reflects my inner life. I want to be a person of integrity with less and less hypocrisy. This week as I hold my values to Your light, I choose to trust Your Holy Spirit to display the things I treasure that aren't treasured by You. I surrender as I ask You to change the unspoken values that lead to the unhealthy commitments that have driven, cluttered and conflicted my life. Give me wisdom to make room in my life for the things that matter to You. I thank you now for all the meaningful things You will show me today.

RACE TO NOWHERE at Jacob's Well this Tuesday, January 18

Day 1

READ Psalm 139:1-6. God is completely aware of us. He knows who we are and what we do: inside and out. This week we're going to ask God to examine our values, commitments and behaviors. Bringing what's in our hearts into the light can be exciting, challenging and healing. **LOOK** at the list of *unspoken* values from last week's message outline. **CHOOSE** one *unspoken* value you suspect is one you may value. **IMAGINE** holding it in your hand and lifting it into God's light. **ASK** yourself the following questions and write the answers in your journal/notebook:

How has this value expressed itself through my commitments and relationships? Is my calendar jam-packed because of it?

What is this value driving me to do? Be? See? Feel?

What does this commitment keep me from doing? Being? Seeing? Feeling?

If I change this value, what could possibly grow and blossom in my life?

Day 2

There's a woman who puts on her make-up first thing in the morning. She won't even go out to her mailbox unless she "has her face on." Similarly, our natural, human reaction to the blemished and vulnerable *unspoken* values is to hide them, to "put on your public face." **LOOK** again at the list of *unspoken* values. This time don't choose one, rather try to imagine what each of these *unspoken* values might look like as a driving force in our lives.

What kinds of choices would we make if we had a need to be in control? What would occupy our thoughts and our time if we valued being seen in a certain way by others? If possible, write an example for each of the *unspoken* values listed. *Would a desire to keep everyone happy sacrifice the value of truth and integrity? Would a need to win or be right eclipse one's value of justice and mercy?*

READ Psalm 90:8. **QUESTION** your heart as you read through your examples of these *unspoken* values in action. *Could this be hiding in my heart?*

Have I allowed this unspoken value to crowd out righteous things?

PRAY about what God has revealed to you.

Day 3

READ Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. Each of us has only 24 hours each day in which to live – *working, eating, sleeping, playing*. Most of us find ourselves stressed out, over-committed, and feeling out of control. With our lives filled with HAVE TOs and SHOULDs, there's actually no room for what we *say* matters most. Some of us are living life on "auto-pilot" hoping things will slow down *someday*.

Do you have a 2011 calendar? I love getting a new planner or calendar. I like to imagine filling the pages or the squares on the calendar with fun things, good things, meaningful things. **THINK** about last year.

What filled up all that empty time? Were there really important, valuable things that kept getting crossed off and carried over to the next week or the next month? LOOK at the unspoken values that you have identified at work in your life. How were they reflected in your commitments? In your time? Do you want 2011 to be different? If so, how?

Day 4

THINK about our new 2011 calendars with all those clean empty squares, waiting to be filled up with our lives.

What would it look like if those squares, our lives, were filled with things our Rabbi values most? What would you imagine this next year to be filled with? What things would warrant attention that possibly have been overlooked? What might need to be dialed back? In our Life on the Run, what are we running after? Is it in sync with our spoken values? Does it line up with WORSHIP, BELONG, GROW, SERVE, SHARE (The Five Commitments)? Do your daily choices reflect these values?

READ Psalm 86:11. **PRAY** for an undivided heart - a heart that's in harmony with God and is reflected in the commitments we make.

Day 5

Honestly, if you're like most of us, those little squares on your 2011 calendar are already jam-packed and overflowing with commitments to lesser, *unspoken* values-plenty of good, but unnecessary things we've committed to and are responsible for.

How do we squeeze in the things our Rabbi values?

Can't we pray on the run? Doesn't texting count as quality parenting?

The problem is we can't squeeze in the best after we've filled in the rest.

READ Matthew 6:33. What are we to seek first? Our rabbi calls us to a different way of life. He calls us to take a permanent marker and write it the best – **first**.

Every square is a frame for one episode of my life. Nobody knows how many squares he or she will get, but each of us must choose how we will fill them.

Lewis Smedes

What choices will you make?

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