

July 30, 2023

Supply Lines: Soul Sharpeners (Matt 16-17)

Seek out more spiritual support in your life.

Greetings, Connect Card...

- 30 Women signed up for Retreat, 25 men for event (hoping for 40), 25 at Kids Min event, 13 Young Adults – we are growing!!
- New Series – Supply Lines
 - o Book for sale, \$20, aimed at pastors but principles apply

Open – Research and Need (7min)

- *Loneliness study
 - o In May 2023, Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy released a report on loneliness, calling it an epidemic in America affecting almost 50% of adults (before Covid!). But only 20% see it as a major problem.
 - Physical health risks:
 - 29% increased risk of premature death.
 - 32% increased risk of stroke.
 - Worse than smoking 15 cigarettes a day!
 - Estimated costs of \$6.7B from Medicare and \$154B from employers.
- *Jesus had support.
 - o Matt 4:18-19 – One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!”
 - o Why? Hello...He is JESUS!
 - But He still needed support (as a human), and a model for us.
 - Sent the disciples two by two (Luke 10:1).
 - Almost never see a disciple alone in New Testament.
- *Story of book
 - o I wrote my book to address this need. Started as a research project in church planting. I was surprised how often planters (dynamic leaders!) mentioned their need for more relational support. Report to denomination in 2017, then my dissertation in 2019. Then preached on it in 2020, then felt called to write a book because there is not anything saying this.
 - Pastors – 41% (two in five) have considered quitting in the last year (Barna, Mar 15, 2023). 70% do not have a single person they consider a close friend.
 - o It is not enough to just pray more and try harder (both good – but not enough without support).

“To transform religious and irreligious people into Fully Devoted Followers of Christ.”

- Relational Support is one of THE X Factors for health and leadership.
 - o RESULTS – church planters, pastors, business leaders – stronger grit, overcome problems, bigger dreams.
 - o Seminars for churches, denomination – across the country.
 - o Can do for your work, too...
- Simple (30 sec) concept...
 - o Layers to it (four circles of support, backup systems, and HOW) – we will cover all of these.
 - o Simple concept...but people struggle to put into practice...

Prayer

Peter – Rocked (13min)

- Called in Matt 4, leadership in Matt 10

- *Matt 16:13-17:8 (p.814)

^{16:13} When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

¹⁴ “Well,” they replied, “some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.”

¹⁵ Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?”

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

¹⁷ Jesus replied, “You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. ¹⁸ Now I say to **you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.** ¹⁹ And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.”

²⁰ Then he sternly warned the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

²¹ From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead.

²² But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. “Heaven forbid, Lord,” he said. “This will never happen to you!”

²³ Jesus turned to Peter and said, “**Get away from me, Satan!** You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.”

²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. ²⁵ If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. ²⁶ And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man will come with his angels in the glory of his Father and will judge all people according to their deeds. ²⁸ And I tell you the truth, some standing here right now will not die before they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom.”

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^{17:1} Six days later **Jesus took Peter** and the two brothers, James and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. ²As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was transformed so that his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light. ³Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared and began talking with Jesus.

⁴**Peter exclaimed**, "Lord, it's wonderful for us to be here! If you want, I'll make three shelters as memorials—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

⁵But even as he spoke, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy. Listen to him." ⁶The disciples were terrified and fell face down on the ground.

⁷Then Jesus came over and touched them. **"Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid."**

⁸And when they looked up, Moses and Elijah were gone, and they saw only Jesus.

- *Soul Sharpeners help you fail forward as you follow Jesus.
 - HIGH – God revealed Jesus to you. Jesus declared you are the rock!
 - LOW – Jesus called you Satan! You had a human perspective on suffering.
 - HIGH – Jesus invited you onto the mountain, you witnessed the Transfiguration!
 - LOW – tried to make the special experience last forever.
 - RESOLVE – Christ's voice...don't be afraid...get up. Down the mountain together.
 - You are going to fail! Don't be afraid.
 - Jesus will never give up on you.
 - Keep moving forward with your Savior.
 - Soul Sharpeners help you practice sharing your failures with honesty.
 - Failure is the tuition you pay for success. Craig Groeschel, Leadership Podcast, July 6, 2023.
 - They remind you that Jesus has not given up on you.
 - No fear of condemnation – changes everything!

- *Quote
 - Only those who have been brave enough to ride their own monsters of anger and greed, jealousy and narcissism, fear and violence all the way down to the bottom will find a truer energy with which to lead. Only those who have faced their own dark side can be trusted to lead others toward the Light. This is where true spiritual leadership begins.
 - Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 44.

- *Matt 26:33-35, 69-75

^{26:33} Peter declared, "Even if everyone else deserts you, I will never desert you."

³⁴ Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, Peter—this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me."

³⁵ "No!" Peter insisted. "Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you!" And all the other disciples vowed the same.

...

⁶⁹ Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came over and said to him, "You were one of those with Jesus the Galilean."

⁷⁰ But Peter denied it in front of everyone. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said.

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⁷¹ Later, out by the gate, another servant girl noticed him and said to those standing around, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

⁷² Again Peter denied it, this time with an oath. “I don’t even know the man,” he said.

⁷³ A little later some of the other bystanders came over to Peter and said, “You must be one of them; we can tell by your Galilean accent.”

⁷⁴ Peter swore, “A curse on me if I’m lying—I don’t know the man!” And immediately the rooster crowed.

⁷⁵ Suddenly, Jesus’ words flashed through Peter’s mind: “Before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me.” And he went away, weeping bitterly.

- *Soul Sharpeners help you model forgiveness and appropriate vulnerability.
 - *How did we find out about this story?*
 - Peter told it. He is the LEADER of the early church, yet he was unafraid to show his weaknesses.
 - The more you lead, the more important it is to share your failures and mistakes.
 - Your vulnerability builds bridges.
 - Don’t overshare – share your scars not your wounds.
 - Christian leaders – I have been forgiven, and I will forgive.
 - This changes everything.

Soul Sharpeners (10min)

- *Quote and focus
 - *If God were the sole object of our desire, we should not be disturbed so easily by opposition to our opinions.
 - Thomas a Kempis, Imitation of Christ, I.14
 - Many great mentors in my life – Frank, Mark, and many others – all brought God into the conversation.
 - Problem comes – How is your soul? Where is God in this?
- *Soul Sharpeners primarily care about your soul.
 - This is important.
- Cup Up object lesson (cup, Rubbermaid, pitcher)
 - When we are immature – we take and take from others. Some of this is needed, but we eventually need to learn to serve.
 - In serving, we start to pouring out – but then the cup is empty.
 - **Soul Sharpeners help us depend on others but not empty others – get filled by GOD.**
 - Pour in, pour out. I did this for years.
 - What I am learning now—through my conversations with my Spiritual Director Cathy Squires—is to live permanently cup up.
 - John 10:10 – life overflowing. Serve others out of the overflow.

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- My latest conversation (in tears) – she said as an Enneagram 1, always feel inadequate and there must be more. God doesn't want me "so that." He just wants me.
- **Steps:
 - Groups, Teams, Events – first steps
 - Venture into vulnerability.
 - Life Groups starting
 - Men's and Women's Events (and Missio) – sign up!
 - Habits and Mentoring
 - Regular meeting focused on Jesus and habits (not coffee counseling). Gentle accountability.
 - Spiritual Director or Guide
 - You can't drive without gas. The greater the drive, the more need to refuel.
 - Some people want to jump right here – better not to skip steps. You need community and reliance on Jesus. I DO meet with people here (a lot). Your pastor can't replace a Group, Team, or habits.

Punch – Battle Tactics (5min)

- People hear this and almost always tell me, "I get it, but I will be fine." I tell them this analogy...
- Supply Lines is a concept from trees (sharing roots), plumbing, and the military. Moving troops forward, you must set up supply lines. The enemy often attacks supply lines – what we did in the Revolutionary War. Napoleon lost more troops to starvation than battle.
- It has happened in history – the soldiers who have no ammo and food cannot fight. No matter how much training you have or how much heart you have, without strong Supply Lines, you will surrender.
- This is how our enemy is taking out pastors and godly leaders in our world.
- Will YOU make a commitment and get connected? Who is your Soul Sharpener?

Prayer

Bumper Out

Benediction – Heb 10:24-25 NIV

Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

LGs, Men's/Women's

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