

BUILT BY DESIGN THE ART OF COACHING

“Step #2- Reflect”

(Start Sermon with Bob Logan’s “Success in One Sentence” video...)

Good Morning and welcome to the Vineyard Church of Conroe as we continue our Series “Built by Design”. Referring to the fact that God wants to “develop” us in this life in a certain way, and as a certain people.

Because I think God has a “thing for us to do.” After all we are His “handiwork”.

For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
Ephesians 2:10

It is here we find our completeness it is here we finally find success. And what is success?

**Success is FINDING OUT WHAT GOD WANTS YOU TO DO
AND DOING IT**

But it’s hard to discover what God wants you to do and it’s even harder to do it.

Most of us are still looking for what that “thing” is which we have been built for. We have waited on God, we have served God, we have dabbled in this and participated in that, but to no avail.

But we’ve seen that quite often in the lives of successful people there is another who comes along and propels them onward toward their goals. Even their unspoken goals. **Someone who helps define God’s designed plan for your life.**

WE CALL THESE PEOPLE COACHES, for lack of a better word.

To look at this process of coaching, we looked at the relationship between Barnabas and the Apostle Paul. Barnabas was a natural encourager and coach. What does Barnabas do?

The role of a coach is simply to help a person find out what it looks like for him or her to succeed and then help that person figure out ways to do it, by asking questions.

The secret is in listening to God. If we can hear his voice and tap into the unique person he has created us to be, we will naturally advance his kingdom.

A coach helps us answer three questions: “Where am I?” “Where do I want to go?” and “How will I get there?” For what a good coach is doing is trying to help us to hear the voice of the one who is inside of us, God Himself. They are not there to “tell you what to do” but for you to discover what is already there. The treasure in the field.

Only as people discover for themselves what God wants them to do and do it will they begin realizing their full potential.

What is the process of coaching?

The coaching process consists of five basic phases. Coaching relationships need to move through each phase and accomplish the necessary outcomes in order to be optimally effective.

A Coach helps us DEFINE OUR DESIGN as we...

RELATE, REFLECT, REFOCUS, RESOURCE, & REVIEW

In this series, we are going to look at how God uses this process to coach us and then how we can partner with him to coach others.

Last week we looked at the 1st Step Relate, which dealt with qualities like trust, connection, support and understanding. This week we will look at the 2nd step, Reflect.

The reflection process helps us figure out where we are.

The power of reflecting: Where are you?

You can't take any steps toward a goal unless you first know where you are starting from.. Some point of reference is needed. Another way of saying that is, we need to gain perspective.

In life and ministry, gaining perspective is crucial. Without perspective, it's easy to get discouraged or sidetracked. **Gaining perspective is the central task of the**

reflect stage.

**In the Reflect Stage WE GAIN A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING
OF WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE WANT TO GO**

We need a good, accurate picture of where we are, where we've been, and where we want to go.

Reflecting well is crucial; it helps us identify our *priorities* and understand the reality of our situation. For so much of life, we don't really have a clear map, so getting a strong sense of perspective is especially important.

The best way to help others get a clear picture of where they are and where they want to go is by *drawing out their desires and then following their lead*. People need to have the freedom and autonomy to set their own agenda. The questions "Where am I?" and "What am I dealing with here?" must be answered by the individuals themselves, not their coaches.

Basically, the reflect stage involves *becoming aware of what's going on*, sorting out the various issues, deciding which ones are the most important, and committing to address them. *It forms the initial launching point for the work and planning that is to come*. Through listening and asking questions, coaches and those they coach can discover and explore key issues, develop a better understanding of the situation, and recognize the areas most in need of change.

Luke 15:11-20 The Voice

¹¹ Once there was this man who had two sons.¹² One day the younger son came to his father and said, "Father, eventually I'm going to inherit my share of your estate. Rather than waiting until you die, I want you to give me my share now." And so the father liquidated assets and divided them. ¹³ A few days passed and this younger son gathered all his wealth and set off on a journey to a distant land. Once there he wasted everything he owned on wild living. ¹⁴ He was broke, a terrible famine struck that land, and he felt desperately hungry and in need.¹⁵ He got a job with one of the locals, who sent him into the fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ The young man felt so miserably hungry that he wished he could eat the slop the pigs were eating. Nobody gave him anything..

¹⁷**So he had this moment of self-reflection:** “What am I doing here? Back home, my father’s hired servants have plenty of food. Why am I here starving to death?”
¹⁸ I’ll get up and return to my father, and I’ll say, ‘Father, I have done wrong—wrong against God and against you. ¹⁹ I have forfeited any right to be treated like your son, but I’m wondering if you’d treat me as one of your hired servants?’”²⁰ So he got up and returned to his father

When the prodigal son finally sat down and “Reflected” on his circumstances, he started asking questions and immediately gained perspective! What am I doing? Why am I here?

In coaching, there are five key coaching questions to help gain perspective. God always seems to answer our questions with a question. Doesn’t that annoy you sometimes? Why does He do that? Well, God asks us as questions because He is trying to get us to reflect on our circumstances:

I. What can we CELEBRATE? - Luke 15:17b

Celebrate? In the midst of our problem? Why would we do that? **Our natural inclination is to look at what’s wrong before we look at what’s right.** Starting out on a positive note helps people avoid the almost universal tendency to focus on problems. *Celebrating the good gives us much needed encouragement and strength to face the obstacles ahead. And there will always be obstacles.*

“What good things are happening?” “What are you excited about?”

What could the prodigal son celebrate?

- ***I am still alive***
- ***I have a loving father***
- ***I know where my father lives***
- ***My father has resources***

“What am I doing here? Back home, my father’s hired servants have plenty of food”.
Luke 15:17b The Voice

In the Reflect Stage we define THE THINGS FOR WHICH WE CAN BE THANKFUL

2-4 So here I am in the place of worship, eyes open, drinking in your strength and glory. In your generous love I am really living at last! My lips brim praises like fountains. I bless you every time I take a breath; My arms wave like banners of praise to you. 5-8 I eat my fill of prime rib and gravy; I smack my lips. It's time to shout praises! If I'm sleepless at midnight, I spend the hours in grateful reflection. Because you've always stood up for me, I'm free to run and play. I hold on to you for dear life, and you hold me steady as a post. Psalm 63:4-8 The Message (MSG)

A coach brings an objective perspective leaders sometimes lack. Coaches can help leaders reach a greater understanding through identifying key issues contributing to the situation, problem, or challenge the leader is facing.

II. What's really important?

Life has a way of boiling things down to the bare essentials sometimes. George Barna tells us 90% of new church attenders come because their life is in crisis! The plumbing starts leaking, a family crisis arises, conflict breaks out at church - situations arise that drag us off our course and pull us in different direction.

That's usually when we find out what's really important. **We gain perspective by having a look at the dissonance between what's important and what's thrown at us on a day-to-day basis.**

Be sure to distinguish between issues that are truly important and those that are merely urgent. Urgent issues are those that require immediate attention. Beware of the tyranny of the urgent. Important issues contribute to your mission, values, and priority goals.

When we look at the prodigal son we see two things that are important.

What was really important to the prodigal son?

- **He was in desperate need of food and shelter**
- **He knows of a better life**

"Why am I here starving to death?" Luke 15:11c The Voice

He's first and most important issue is he's hungry, but his urgency pushes him toward are more important, underlying issue in his life. He is made for more.

In the Reflect Stage we define **WHAT MATTERS MOST TO US IN LIFE**

Asking people about *what's really important to them helps sort out issues and priorities and values and moves them toward a sense of God's calling on their lives*. We were designed to connect our work with our values, for we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works. He's forming his character in us so we can accomplish the work he has set forth for us.

What connects you with God's call? What do you value most? What has the Holy Spirit been tapping you on the shoulder about? Answers to questions like these provide an important key for the future direction of the coaching relationship.

"But there is another urgency before me now. I feel compelled to go to Jerusalem. I'm completely in the dark about what will happen when I get there. I do know that it won't be any picnic, for the Holy Spirit has let me know repeatedly and clearly that there are hard times and imprisonment ahead. But that matters little. What matters most to me is to finish what God started: the job the Master Jesus gave me of letting everyone I meet know all about this incredibly extravagant generosity of God. Acts 20:22–24 MSG

III. **What OBSTACLES are you facing? - Luke 15:18-19**

Sometimes obstacles are legitimate: you can't commit to as many ministry opportunities as you'd like because you're in a season of taking care of elderly parents.

Certain work-arounds may be found, but the basic difficulty remains. ***Other times the obstacles are not so legitimate - they're simply barriers we've constructed in our own minds.*** Either way, any perceived obstacles need to be acknowledged, for they help clarify the realities of the present situation.

What obstacles were the prodigal son facing?

- **He was without resources**
- **Shame and guilt**
- **He doesn't know if his father will receive him back**

"Father, I have done wrong—wrong against God and against you. ¹⁹ I have forfeited any right to be treated like your son, but I'm wondering if you'd treat me as one of your hired servants."

This questions can be asked in two different ways. The first is the way we've

already addressed: *What obstacles are you facing?* The second takes a more internal approach: *What frustrates you?* Both of these are really ways of asking the same question but take into account that some people are externally motivated and some are internally motivated.

In the Reflect Stage we define WHAT IS KEEPING US FROM MOVING FORWARD

Looking at obstacles can help accomplish one of the primary goals of the reflect stage: ***gaining a clear picture of the realities of the current situation, both positive and negative.***

Most people have some level of frustration about what God has called them to do. They feel they don't have the time to do it because of all the other things that sidetrack them and demand their attention.

For this reason, take up all the armor that God supplies. Then you will be able to take a stand during these evil days. Once you have overcome all obstacles, you will be able to stand your ground.
Eph 6:13 GOD'S WORD

Reflecting is about shifting our focus onto what's really important, then making adjustments to our life accordingly.

Also, a coach helps one identify other people who need to embrace your priorities, people who need to give you support. People like a Dad? A spouse? A Pastor? Your Boss?

Fill in the valleys, level off the hills, smooth out the ruts, clear out the rocks. Then GOD's bright glory will shine and everyone will see it. Yes. Just as GOD has said."
Isaiah 40:3-5 The Mess

IV. Where do you want to go?

Once we've decided what's really important and then explored the obstacles, a reaffirmation of our direction is in order. At this point we need to loop back and **focus on where we want to go.**

Where did the prodigal son want to go?

- **Back home to his father**

Why am I here starving to death? ¹⁸ I'll get up and return to my father...

Luke 15:17b-18 The Voice

What's next? **Given our priorities and our obstacles, what issues need to be addressed? Where do we need to focus?** Although we don't need to get into the planning stage yet, we do need to shift our gaze back to the horizon and clarify our general sense of direction again.

In the Reflect Stage we define OUR DIRECTION AND FOCUS

I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. ¹³ No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.
Philippians 3:12b-14 NLT

V. How committed are you?

How committed are you? Another way of asking this question is, "What are you willing to endure to see your vision become a reality?" that's the true test of our devotion.

In the Reflect Stage we define WHAT WE ARE WILLING TO SACRIFICE OR ENDURE

Sometimes people go through the external motions of the coaching process hoping that it will somehow change the way they feel. Yet if they haven't honestly assessed their level of willingness to change, the cost has not been counted.

²⁷ And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?"
Luke 14:27-28

Change always costs - there's no way around that. The question is whether the proposed change is worth what it will cost us. For change to be successful, we need to estimate the cost and want it badly enough to pay that price.

The tough part is commitment over the long haul. A lack of resolve often lies at the core of our failed attempts. And why do we lack resolve? Because we have not looked the difficulties in the face and decided, "Yes, this goal is worth the challenges I will endure in getting there."

There isn't enough time in life to do all the good things we want to do. We need a sense of conviction that God is calling us to a particular goal.

How committed was the prodigal son?

- **He was willing to humble himself**
- **He got up and went home to his father**

²⁰ So he got up and returned to his father. Luke 15:20 *The Voice*

Dissatisfaction with the way things are is probably the single most powerful motivator for commitment to change. Only when we look around us and are genuinely dissatisfied with what we see will we commit ourselves fully to the change process.

Obtaining a commitment to address issues is probably the most overlooked task of the reflect stage of coaching. It's far too easy to assume commitment when there is none.

Close: Today as you reflect upon your life, the question of WHERE ARE YOU and WHERE ARE YOU GOING? is probably ringing in your mind. Perhaps this morning it is the first time you have realized you haven't spent anytime with God to even reflect with Him. The Holy Spirit is yelling in your ear but you're not listening!

Perhaps you can't even think of anything in your life right now that you could or can CELEBRATE? God wants to bring you to a place of thankfulness even as he reminds you of His great love, he wants to remind you of the fact that you are no mistake.

Maybe the tyranny of the urgent, life's immediate CHALLENGES have kept you in the dark as far as making a plan for your life. God wants to come bring peace and clarity this morning.

Maybe you are hung up on the OBSTACLES that prohibit you from moving forward...God wants to break every chain that binds you this morning.

Perhaps the question this morning which is reverberating in your life is, HOW COMMITTED ARE YOU? For today is the the day commitment. To commit if not recommit to the Lord and His plan for your life.