

## **The Sermon - In 10 Sentences Or Less**

### *Surprise the World! (Week 2) - Do, Repeat, Become:*



1) Chp. 2 is all about habits: we do, we repeat, we become.

2) You find this dynamic all over the Bible: for example, check out Proverbs 4.18-19, in which we are told that the more we walk the path of righteousness, the clearer and clearer things become, like dawn turning into full day.

3) Or consider Colossians 2.6-7, in which we are told that it's not enough to have received Christ, but we must walk day by day in Him (like a pair of shoes) or be built up in Him (like a construction project piece by piece).

4) So who we are today is entirely the product of all our repeated thoughts and actions in the past; in one sense, you never really encounter a person in the present, you interact with all the habits, conscious and unconscious, that they bring with them in the moment.

5) Three proven ways to establish new habits - a) the 1% or two minute rule (start a new habit at 1% effort or for just two minutes a day), b) the Goldilocks rule (the new habit should find the sweet spot between being too hard and too easy), and c) the stacking rule (attach or tie the new habit to an old, existing one).

6) There are an innumerable amount of opinions on why the American church has been in decline for decades, and in free fall more recently, but the previous discussion gives us one direct reason: it's a habit problem.

7) Given that it ranked dead last in a recent survey of American pastors asked about their highest ministry priorities, perhaps one forgone habit is prayer, which might speak to our lack of spiritual dependence?

8) Or consider that the American church since the 1970s has focused on the "ABCs" of church (attendance, buildings, cash) instead of prioritizing personal and corporate discipleship as its chief pursuit?

9) Ruth Haley-Barton speaks to the link between our deepest desires and the repeated behavior (or habits) we choose: "How bad do I want it? Am I willing to rearrange my life for what my heart most desires?"

## Quotes to Remember

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." (Aristotle)

"Your beliefs become your thoughts, your thoughts become your words, your words become your actions, your actions become your habits, your habits become your values, and your values become your destiny." (Mahatma Gandhi)

## A Prayer for the Week

From Bishop Telmor Sartison (The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada):

*Almighty God, we praise and thank you for making us children of God, not through our own power and piety but through the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ.*

*We turn daily to you, and in that turning we find peace, courage and purpose. Make each of us, and your whole church, a witness to the great good news of Christ's resurrection.*

*God of the risen Jesus, hear our prayer, amen.*