

Law Enforcement: The Divine Mission

Leaders Guide

Overview:

Many within the law enforcement field have a difficult time understanding who God is and what a relationship with him means in a profession filled with human depravity, violence and evil. This stems from a number of reasons ... people they've arrested dropping his name while handcuffed in the back seat, mentally and spiritually ill people claiming to be him or doing bizarre things in obedience to hearing voices claiming to be his, pacifist theology that disowns any kind of violence and thus identifies their work as evil, or honest questions stemming from their work such as, "How can a loving God allow a 16 month old to be sexually violated to the point that they require hospitalization?" This study will help officers start to better understand who God truly is, the divine nature of their work, the empowerment He offers to provide to do the job successfully and the importance of being a part of a team of believers in the field.

Lesson 1

The Hour We Find Ourselves In:

Several end time passages are finding significance in our day... especially 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and following which speak of a time when "rebellion" and the "man of lawlessness" will increase ... lawlessness and law enforcement will be on a direct collision course! We see that lawless spirit at work all around us... Ferguson, Baltimore, Dallas... even in the halls of government where officers are vilified, maligned and spoken of as evil. Further down in that passage it states there'll be a refusal to love the truth and that they will believe lies instead. Beheading is a relatively new phenomenon that was unheard of 20 years ago ... ISIS has killed thousands of Christians all over the world for their belief in God. Law enforcement serves as the frontline defenders tasked with confronting Islamic extremism... There's been a massive increase in ethnic tensions resulting in riots, property damage and violence. Once again, law enforcement officers serve as that thin blue line that maintains order in our communities! **Ask attendees their thoughts on these passages.**

What IS Freedom?

Ask those in your study to provide a working definition of freedom... It's something we celebrate as a nation... Land of the free and home of the brave. It's something we send our men and women off to war to defend. Ask them if they can give you a working definition of freedom. Most likely they'll have a difficult time and may come up with something to the effect, "It's the ability to do what I want." Then ask them what anarchy is? Is freedom anarchy? Absolutely not! If they can't provide a definition, ask them where they would recommend you go to find out? American Legion? Veteran's groups? Where? The answer should be ... THE BIBLE or THE CHURCH!

Freedom is a Christian concept!! Freedom is the ability to do what's right regarding my responsibilities to my fellow man! Self-control or self-governance is at the heart of true liberty... Galatians 5: 13 – 15 state that Christ set us free to serve one other... a nation full of givers is far different than a nation full of takers. The preamble to the Constitution lists the responsibilities associated with individual freedoms. The Edmund Burke quote sums up the importance of self-control.... James 4: 1 – 3 state that the source of all societal conflict is those who are self-centered... those who lie, steal, rob, rape and murder to satisfy their selfish nature. **THAT IS THE COMMON ELEMENT TO EVERY**

CALL A COP GETS...SELF CENTERED PEOPLE EXPLOITING OTHERS! God designed America to function as a nation of citizens that exercise self-control and do what's right in their responsibilities to their fellow man. Lawless men and women destroy community... Law enforcement officers are called to restore order by confronting them and if need be taking away their liberty (jail)!

An Aspect of God's Nature Often Overlooked

Tell your group to pretend that you know nothing about God... that you're a foreign law enforcement officer perhaps... who would they say God is? How would they describe him to you? Listen to their responses? The interesting thing will be that the truth found in Exodus 15:3 ... The Lord is a warrior... is almost never mentioned. That aspect of His nature is very crucial to a proper understanding of who he is, his thoughts toward selfishness (sin) and their calling as law enforcement officers... those tasked with confronting sin as it affects the community!!

Looking at the verse selections mentioned, drive home the fact that God is the ultimate law enforcement officer (He's coming back to enforce his law for those who didn't take advantage of his willingness to pay the penalty for their sin)... that the values in the profession are ultimately found in who he is and His dealing with sin! Ask officers (especially those on patrol) what one of their greatest frustrations are... is it not that people always have excuses for their sin ... that they refuse to take responsibility for it? Don't they want to help those who own up to their wrongs... no excuses... just, "I'm guilty officer." God feels the same thing regarding them... he doesn't want excuses... he detests them (Psalm 36: 1-2)... he simply wants officers to take ownership of their selfishness... to take him up on his invitation to pay for their sins and teach them how to be truly other oriented so that they can represent him faithfully.

I use the martial arts metaphor ... that if an officer came to a martial arts master and said, "I don't know if you are going to be able to teach me anything."... his first lesson most likely will be humility as he gets his butt handed to him... That he most likely won't ever grow as a martial artist unless he first in humility admits his weakness so the master can help make it a strength. God does the same! He opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Authority is Ordained by God and We're All Under it.

Because love involves choice, and because people are free to reject God's ways... that is why we have civil authority (Parental, Ecclesiastical and Vocational as well for that matter). We all must submit to authority. Legitimate authority MUST reward those who do good and punish those who do wrong. To rebel against legitimate authority is to rebel AGAINST GOD ... It's important to not take it personal... their beef is with God! They bring punishment on themselves!! The force continuum is of God all the way up to taking life with the sword.

The Sword

There's much confusion among believers in the profession as to the sword or its modern equivalent... the gun. Is deadly force ever justified? The individual responsibility to turn the other cheek is NOT the same when wearing a badge doing a the job!! "Thou shall not kill..." the Hebrew word is murder as in premeditated murder. Being "Christlike" can include reflecting Jesus nature as displayed in Revelation 19. There is a war going on and it has been initiated by evil in hate... the true warrior fights because

of love and the fact that it always protects. The greatest faith in all of Israel was of a military man (Centurion).... the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit en mass on the gentiles was in the home of a Centurion. John replying to the soldiers in Luke 3: 14 never rebuked them for being soldiers. Scripture admonishes us to meet our brothe'rs needs if we have the means... to preserve his life... why would we not protect him from evil people set on destroying him if we had the means to do so (**Proverbs 24: 11 – 12**)? God clearly ordained the role of civil authority and never challenged its mandate to protect and serve! In fact the faith chapter (Hebrews 11) lists military exploits done in faith... **verse 32 – 34!!**

I Looked for a Man Among Them...

Ancient times found people living in community in walled cities. The walls were for protection keeping the enemies of the culture outside. There was a special calling on a select group..."a man among them" ... warriors who were tasked with walking the walls in vigilance, being ever watchful and confronting the enemies of the culture...those working to break down those walls and overcome the city. Many times that was because God removed his hand of protection because of their sin. But there was always hope if God could finds a man or woman to stand in the gap... to pray and stand in the gap if the wall was breached and fight as well as build it up. If no one responded to that call the city was destroyed.

Finally

God desires that we all be self-governing and look after each other's needs that we may live in harmony with one another. We're all born with a self-centered nature that looks after our interests first (Think of when you're involved in a group photo ... who do you look at first to see if the photo is good?)....God ordained an authority structure that addresses those who trample on the rights of others... The first line of defense is the family ... an institution that trains that out of an individual. If an individual fails to develop self-control then God ordained the work of the law enforcement officer to address those who rebel... It's a reflection of his nature. In order for a cop to effectively enforce the law he/she must first come to the reality that they are law breakers and need God's work of redemption in their own lives. Having done that God can use them to deal with others. **ONE MAN OR WOMAN** dealing with the truth can save a city or a county!!!

Lesson 2

Hardship Develops Warriors

God has not changed nor has the type of people he uses. The way he dealt with God fearing individuals in the past is the way he will deal with them in our day! The common suffering that every U.S. Marine encountered in boot camp and on the battle field is the very thing that forges the bonds between warriors as well as develops their character. For the Navy S.E.A.L.S. and other branches of the service it is no different. In like manner, God uses suffering to forge our character, develop our character and teach us skills for warfare... spiritually and physically! Many times we fail to appreciate this process and think that God doesn't care about us or that we're being punished.... and in so doing, miss the blessings that he intends for our lives.

The Lies of the Enemy

We also have an enemy who works to exploit our lack of understanding regarding the ways of God. His primary tool is get us to focus on the things that are out of our control until it affects the things that are in our control... thus diminishing our influence and increasing our frustration. This cycle repeats itself until discouragement/ hopelessness sets in, marriages are destroyed and mental health deteriorates... increasing the chance of suicide. Conversely, God designed for us to be faithful with the little things... those things within our control, and in so doing we'll be considered for greater opportunities. The trials and tribulations along the way are greatly used to teach us how to do things right once we get in positions of leadership IF we allow God to use them for our good (**Romans 8:28**), we take good notes and we resolve to never do to another human being what has been done to us.

Bad Leaders Teach you Things that Good Leaders Will Not

If you think about it, ANY organization exists to provide a service of some kind whether it be with a product, fulfilling a need ... whatever. Many agencies have the words "Serve and Protect" on their vehicles and the question becomes, "Can an agency reach its fullest potential for service to the community without having servant leaders serving the line officers that will be serving the public?" The answer is "NO!" THAT is the number one frustration in law enforcement ... bad leadership... leaders that are in it for themselves and not for the team.

Reviewing **Isaiah 3: 1 – 10**, you will find that one of the judgments against a culture that turns its back on God is the removal of leaders at all levels. Conversely, **2 Chronicles 1: 7 – 12** gives us insight into God's heart for leadership. Solomon's request for wisdom to lead so touched God that he gave him riches and fame as well!!

Bad leadership presents several opportunities for subordinates... opportunities that, when viewed through the right lens, can be game changers that bring life and blessing to others! First of all, bad leaders will teach you things that good leaders won't... what not to do, how to press into the things of God, how to gain the respect of others by being a good example through your suffering (**1 Peter 2: 15, Prov. 19:11**). In doing the right thing, you can expect that from future subordinates. Bad leadership also creates a vacuum for servant leaders to fill... presenting opportunities for believers to paint a contrast to the culture and win them over by their examples.

If you think about it, David was anointed King of Israel and for over a decade was hunted down by those appointed over him. Saul lied repeatedly to him, threw spears at him on several occasions and sought to take his life. Why? As author Gene Edwards stated, "He didn't want King Saul the second." Through his leadership trials David grew closer to God, learned patience, submission, and how to be a great servant leader. Those lessons served him well in commanding the respect of all who were influenced by his leadership. God will do the same with us!