



Unselfish Thinking and Bottom-Line Thinking

Lesson 1: The Satisfaction of Unselfish Thinking 1

The Big Idea:

"For as he thinking in his heart, so is he." ~ Proverbs 23:7a

"He who sows sparingly will reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." ~ 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

In his book, *Thinking for a Change*, John C. Maxwell says, "If you are willing to change your thinking, you can change your feelings. If you change your feelings, you can change your actions. And changing your actions - based on good thinking - can change your life."

Achieving your potential as a leader comes from making progress, and making progress is often just one good idea away. Thinking is about creating a never-ending army of ideas capable of achieving almost anything. A famous playwright once said, "An invasion of armies can be resisted, but not an invasion of ideas."

In this series of lessons, we are going to consider two of the thinking skills taught by John C. Maxwell in his book, *Thinking for a Change*.

Experience the Satisfaction of _____ Thinking.

Enjoy the Return of _____ Thinking.

A Question to Consider:

Do you know WHY you are doing what you are doing in your life and ministry?



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Experience the Satisfaction of Unselfish Thinking

Few things in life bring greater satisfaction than helping others succeed. When you spend your day unselfishly serving others, at night you can rest well with no regrets. There is surely no more noble occupation than helping others find success. Unselfish thinking is the key to adding value to others. Let's look at some of its benefits:

1. Unselfish thinking brings personal _____.
2. Unselfish thinking adds _____ to others.
3. Unselfish thinking increases the _____ of one's life.
4. Unselfish thinking make you part of something _____ than yourself.
5. Unselfish thinking is the foundation for creating a _____.

Biblical Case Study: The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

There are many examples in Scripture of unselfish thinking. Abraham was unselfish when he gave Lot the first choice of land. Jonathan models unselfish thinking in his friendship with David. Joseph shows the ultimate unselfish thinking as he extends grace and forgiveness to his brothers who had terrible mistreated him. In the Good Samaritan story, Jesus teaches unselfish thinking. What are some lessons we learn from the people in the Good Samaritan story?

1. The victim: There are _____ people who need help.
2. The robbers: There are _____ people who hurt others.
3. The priest and Levite: There are those who _____ the needs of others.
4. The Samaritan: There are those who unselfishly _____ others.
 - The Samaritan intentionally walked _____ the wounded man.
 - The Samaritan showed _____ toward the wounded man.
 - The Samaritan took time to get personally _____.
 - The Samaritan gave generously of his time and _____.
 - The Samaritan committed to long-term _____.
 - The Samaritan was willing to be _____.



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Four Attitudes Displayed:

Only the Samaritan is unselfish in his thinking. Note that unselfish thinking produces unselfish deeds.

1. Robbers: What is yours is mine, and I am going to _____ it.
2. Priest: What is mine is mine, and I am going to _____ it.
3. Levite: What is yours is yours, and I am going to _____ it.
4. Samaritan: What is mine is yours, and I am going to _____ it.

The Samaritan's response to the wounded man was a beautiful demonstration of the power of unselfish thinking to guide our actions. Even though the Samaritan had no previous relationship with the victim, he cared about him anyway. He invested in the wounded man even though he would not gain anything materially from his actions. He would instead lose time and money. Why would the priest and Levite have been so selfish in their thinking? Think about these possible reasons:

1. They were in a _____.
2. They were too _____.
3. They suffered from _____.
4. They feared that involvement would be too _____.
5. They did not want added _____.
6. They were _____.
7. They were too _____ to serve others.



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A Thought to Ponder:

*Do you think the wounded man would have helped
the Samaritan had the situation been reversed?*

What Difference Would It Make:

*Do you ever find yourself using some of the
excuses listed on page 3 as reasons for thinking selfishly?*

*What difference would it make
if you were intentional about
thinking more unselfishly (like the Samaritan)?*



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Unselfish Thinking and Bottom-Line Thinking

Lesson 2: The Satisfaction of Unselfish Thinking 2

The Big Idea:

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Achieving your potential as a leader comes from making progress, and making progress is often just one good idea away. Thinking is about creating a never-ending army of ideas capable of achieving almost anything. A famous playwright once said, "An invasion of armies can be resisted, but not an invasion of ideas."

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A Question to Consider:

Do you agree with the following statement?

"When God blesses you, He has more than you in mind!"



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How to Cultivate the Ability to Think Unselfishly:

1. Put others _____.
2. Look for situations where people have _____.
3. Give without a desire for _____.
4. Help others achieve their _____.
5. _____ in people intentionally.
6. Continually check your _____.

Biblical Case Study: The Apostle Paul (Ephesians 4:1-16)

John Maxwell has stated that a leader is at his best when he is developing other leaders. A leader who invests in other leaders must be both secure and unselfish in his thinking.

Paul, like Jesus who was his example, faithfully and generously poured his life into emerging leaders. Just as Jesus selected twelve and mentored them on a daily basis, Paul intentionally served and added value to leaders and potential leaders. Paul was strongly committed to explosive growth. He understood that when he invested time and resources into developing leaders, the result would be the multiplied growth of the Church.



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Paul Demonstrated Unselfish Thinking:

1. He looked for people he could _____.
2. He equipped _____ to do ministry.
3. He found and mentored emerging _____.
4. He empowered them to _____.
5. he gave them places to _____.
6. He was _____ - he developed leaders to plant churches.

A good leader can gather a group of followers and achieve some worthy goals. But it takes a great leader to develop and lead other leaders. Because Paul unselfishly poured himself into other leaders, the Church spread rapidly and Paul's influence continues to this present hour. What a legacy! Unselfish thinking is crucial in the lives of those who desire to make a lasting difference.



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A Thought to Ponder:

*Paul invested in the life and ministry of Timothy and other leaders.
Are you faithfully mentoring other leaders?*

What Difference Would It Make:

*Review the six ways Paul demonstrated unselfish thinking.
What difference would it make
if you were to apply these principles with those you are mentoring?*



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Unselfish Thinking and Bottom-Line Thinking

Lesson 3: Enjoy the Return of Bottom-Line Thinking

The Big Idea:

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A Question to Consider:

What is your bottom-line life purpose?



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Enjoy the Return of Bottom-Line Thinking

Most people see bottom-line thinking as related only to the financial world. They see it as financial profit or loss. If you are accustomed to thinking of the bottom line as it relates to financial matters, then you may be missing some things crucial to you and your ministry. Bottom-line thinking is really about results or outcome. Bottom-line thinking asks, 'Are we accomplishing our mission?'

Bottom-Line Thinking Can Help You:

1. Provide clarity as you measure _____.
2. Assess the value of all you _____.
3. Make better _____.
4. Keep your team focused on the _____.
5. Increase your odds of long-term _____.

How to Become a Bottom-Line Thinker:

1. Decide what you want to _____.
2. Create a strategic plan to achieve the bottom-line _____.
3. Align all your _____ with the bottom line.
4. Align the _____ with the bottom line.
5. Make bottom-line thinking a _____.
6. Monitor the bottom line _____.



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Biblical Case Study: The 40-Year Journey (Numbers 33:1-56)

The 33rd chapter of Numbers provides a review of the Israelites' exodus journey from Egypt to Jordan. It was quite a trip with lots of manna and far too much grumbling and complaining. Scholars tell us that the journey should have taken two weeks for completion. It lasted 40 years! Is it possible that the lack of bottom-line thinking was a key part of the problem? When we ignore the bottom line, drifting aimlessly through life is often the result. Look at what the Israelites did:

1. They were never fully _____ to the bottom-line goal.
2. They failed to establish daily _____ aligned with the bottom line.
3. They lacked _____.
4. They made _____ for their failures.
5. They blamed _____ for their lack of progress.
6. They were willing to settle for _____ than God's best.
7. They were unwilling to pay the _____ for success.



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A Thought to Ponder:

How are you making progress toward reaching your bottom-line life purpose?

What Difference Would It Make:

Do you have a strategy for accomplishing your bottom-line life mission?

What are the key elements of steps required to achieve it?

What difference would it make if you worked intentionally toward achieving that goal?