

Attention Millennials: Your Degree is No Longer Enough

I remember sitting there in his office. It didn't make sense.

There I was, applying for a job as an anatomy professor in a doctoral program. But there was one major problem.

I was the least qualified applicant on paper. I had a master's degree (I needed a doctorate), and I never took anatomy.

He didn't understand why I was applying for the job. The meeting started with his arms folded and a skeptical look on his face. He wanted to know why I was there.

But I had something different, and I knew it would make me stand out.

The Truth About Your Degree

In a 2014 study done by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, it was found that 27% of college graduates work in a field related to their major.

The average cost of attending a private four-year college is \$34,740 per year. For public universities, the cost is \$9,970 for in-state and \$25,620 for out-of-state students.

That's a lot of money to spend to not work in your field.

The Truth About Your Calling

We were all created with a purpose. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Our lives are a collection of experiences – from birth to where you are now and beyond. If you attended university and left with a degree, you have that degree for a reason.

There was something about your experiences that lead you there. And often, your degree is an indication of your calling.

That doesn't mean that if you studied education, you have to be a teacher.

But there are experiences you had while pursuing that degree that can lead to your calling.

The Truth About Where Many People End Up

When I was doing my Master's degree, I had a specific purpose. I wanted to go on for a Ph.D. and then become a university professor.

But things changed when I realized that I hated research. I didn't want to subject myself to the amount of research needed to get there. All I wanted to do was teach. And I knew that I'd be committing myself to a life of research. What did I do? I gave up on my dream of becoming a university professor. I concluded that it wasn't for me.

This is where so many of us end up – we give up on our dreams. We look at our current circumstances and what it would take to get us to where we want to go. We realize it's much easier and more comfortable to settle.

Or we apply for that job and don't get it because we aren't "qualified" on paper. If I had applied for a university professor's job after my Master's, I wouldn't have gotten it, regardless of my ability.

So, we settle for what we can get. In my case, it was teaching at a high school. In your case, it may be where you are now.

But the reality is – that can change. Especially today! There are practical things you can do to show your expertise. And you can do it in a way that makes you stand out in a pool of applicants.

And if you're a millennial growing up in today's society, you are already familiar with what it takes.

You see it every day, but you may not have caught on to how it all comes together. In the rest of this article, it'll become clear.

The Beauty of The Internet

When I was in high school in the 90s, things were quite different than they are today.

If I wanted to research a specific topic, I'd go to the library. There were computers there that could tell me where to find the right books.

Then I'd go to those books, borrow them, or make copies of specific pages. Finding information was quite the task.

Today, things are different. All the information you will ever need might be in the palm of your hand right now as your reading this.

The technological advancements in recent decades have made access to information easy.

Unfortunately, we take this for granted. I want you to say this next line out loud:

THIS ENDS NOW!

Step 1: Sharpen Your Skills

Anything you need to learn is available online, often for free.

Do you want to learn to play the piano? Go to YouTube and search for it. You'll find tons of lessons.

Are you struggling to put together a business plan? Google can be your friend.

Can't figure out how to do something on the job? There's a blog for that. Much of the knowledge we need to sharpen our skills are available within minutes of searching.

Step 2: Show Your Growing Expertise

Many of us are already doing step 1. We know that the internet is an excellent resource for finding information. We use this information regularly.

But we haven't transitioned to being a source of that information. It's easier to show your growing expertise than ever before.

Start creating YouTube videos related to the job you want to have in the future.

Create a blog and put content out there. You may not have all the answers, but you have a lot of them.

So create your platform online where you can serve others in the field you

want to serve.

You don't have to wait for the job to start doing the work. Start doing it today.

The resume is dead. Replace it with a living, breathing online platform that provides value.

If you need help getting started with this, check out my [free training here](#).

Step 3: Use Social Media to Your Advantage

Yes, I know – you love watching those awesome inspirational pics on Instagram. Those YouTube videos are hilarious. TikTok is entertaining. But the reality is that most of us use these platforms in a way that wastes time.

Here's a great thing. These platforms are second nature to you. Here's the even greater thing. The older generation struggles to understand these platforms.

Be the young one that demonstrates how to use these platforms well.

Update your social profiles to reflect the person you are becoming. Do you want to work in the non-profit sector?

Update your profile bios to "Passionate about providing value to the non-profit sector". It doesn't have to be precisely that, but you get the point. Then, share content related to where you're going on your profile in a fun and engaging way.

Get to the point where people see you as an interesting person who is passionate about a specific topic.

And leverage your social media profiles to grow your blog or another platform.

Step 4: Leverage Your Platform to Land Your Dream Job

Now you don't only have a degree. You have a platform. You have demonstrated your growing expertise.

When someone Googles your name, they find a wealth of resources related to your passion.

Apply for the job and highlight what you've built. You will be the only applicant who has gone above and beyond in this way.

You will be different, and your prospective employer will love this.

Qualified applicants are often turned down because they lack the experience.

I say don't wait for the experience. Instead, create the experience.

How the Story Ended

As I sat there in his office, I asked my prepared question:

"Can I show you something I've been working on?"

"Sure," was his response.

We went to his computer, and I pulled up my blog. It was a biology blog I had been working on over the previous year.

On the blog, I posted all kinds of interactive videos I created. The videos covered advanced topics like human physiology and neurobiology.

The YouTube channel had amassed over 30,000 subscribers at that point. Over 13,000 people were using my blog every month.

With an amazed look, he turned, pointed at me and then back at the screen.

“You did this?” he asked?

“Yes, I did,” I responded.

That’s when everything changed. He promised that I would get an interview and took me to meet everyone on the committee.

He introduced me as someone interviewing for the job that made an amazing website. I felt like he was a proud parent bragging about his son.

To make a long story short, I became Professor Leslie Samuel.

You can stand out too if you follow the steps I covered in this article.

Remember, your degree is not enough.

Disparities in Artificial Intelligence (AI) Present a Need for More Diversity in Tech Fields

“Why diversity in Artificial Intelligence (AI) is non-negotiable.”

“‘Disastrous’ lack of diversity in AI industry perpetuates bias.” “A lack of diversity in tech is damaging AI.” “Artificial Intelligence is on the brink of a diversity disaster.” These are headlines from articles discussing one of the technology sector’s hottest topics – **diversity in AI**. Why is this a hot topic and why should you care? Because AI affects your everyday life and a lack of diversity in its development can have detrimental effects on people of color.

For instance, if you’re darker-skinned and have ever had problems getting the automatic soap dispenser in a public restroom to dispense soap for you, you’ll want to [check out this video](#) uploaded to Twitter in 2017 by

Chukwuemeka Afigbo, then Facebook’s head of platform partnerships in the Middle

East and Africa. As the video and the article reveal, the soap dispenser’s problem is optic, not AI in nature. But the fact remains that the dispensers were manufactured without the developers understanding a unique set of potential problems for a particular group of people in the general public. Basically, because of lack of testing on people of color the technology has a tendency to periodically malfunction. This is directly related to our topic and shows that the lack of diversity in technology in general, which includes AI, is problematic for people of color.

I first need to say that AI is an extremely complex subject and the length of this article will only allow us to scratch the surface of this particular AI topic. If you are interested in learning more, I encourage you to read the articles that I link to as a starting point for your research.



Artificial Intelligence in the Material World

Are you aware that you most likely already use AI in your everyday life? Do you say “Hey Siri...” or ask Alexa for information? You’re using AI. When you scroll through your Facebook feed or view the “Movies you may like” feed on Netflix, AI is powering the algorithms that determine what shows up in your feed and on that list of movies. AI isn’t coming; it’s here!



What Exactly is Artificial Intelligence Anyway?

In her article [“What Is Artificial Intelligence? Examples and News in 2019,”](#) business reporter Anne Sraders provides a definition I like: Artificial intelligence is the use of computer science programming to imitate human thought and action by analyzing data and surroundings, solving or anticipating problems and learning or self-teaching to adapt to a variety of tasks. An important thread to pull from that definition is that the computer is *programmed to learn* from data sets it is *given*.

So why the concern about diversity in AI? Under the covers, AI allows for bias to be introduced in two ways: creator bias and data bias. A lack of diversity on teams that develop AI products and services makes it easier for these biases to go undetected. Consider these examples.

AI and Amazon, Microsoft, and IBM

[Amazon, Microsoft and IBM](#) have had problems with their facial recognition technologies correctly identifying women and darker-skinned people. Amazon has been heavily marketing its technology to law enforcement agencies as a way to quickly identify suspects, but its technology is reported to have the most problems making correct identifications. When the issues with the software were first identified in 2018, all three companies released “more accurate technology,” implying that they reworked their software’s code – they presumably addressed *creator bias*. That said, Amazon’s rates of misidentification in the follow-up 2019 study are still very high which is causing concern. Can you see how law enforcement using a facial recognition software package that has problems identifying people of color or people’s gender could be problematic?

AI and Human Resources

Human resource departments have started to use AI to help them fill job

openings – feed a stack of electronic resumes into a program that will identify the best candidate for your job. In his article [“Why Adding Diversity in Artificial Intelligence is Nonnegotiable,”](#) Danny Guillory explains how *data bias* works. He states that in a generic job search for an engineer (this search will produce a result set of mostly Caucasian males), when profiles are selected (hired) from that search, AI will ‘learn’ this and then continue to select that same type of profile in future searches. It is not trained to, and will not ever on its own, think outside the box, which, in this case, would be something like selecting a woman’s or a Latino’s profile. “In this mode,” says Guillory, “groups of people can be systematically eliminated. If certain groups are not included in the data sets that AI is taking into consideration, in the long run, problems or challenges that are outside of the data set may not be able to be solved for at all.”

Lack of Diversity in AI and Tech Fields

Sarah Myers West, Meredith Whittaker and Kate Crawford, researchers at New York University’s AI Now Institute, released an extensive [report](#) on AI earlier this year where they stated, “The use of AI systems for the classification, detection, and prediction of race and gender is in urgent need of re-evaluation.” and “The commercial deployment of these tools is cause for deep concern.”



Dr. Timnit Gebru, Co-Founder of Black in AI

The lack of diverse employees at tech companies has been widely reported, and this is a major part of the problem. In an [interview with AI Business](#), Payal Jain – chair of Women in Data – says, “There [are] three things that are really important when we start thinking about AI and machine learning. It’s not so much about data—it’s all about people. Firstly, we’ve got to be aware of our own biases. Secondly, we need diverse teams to work with the technology. With 78% of people working in AI being male, there are biases that they naturally will not spot. Finally, we’ve got to make sure we’re giving the machines non-biased datasets.”

Timnit Gebru, co-founder of Black in AI, says of the need for diversity in AI in an [interview for MIT’s Technology Review](#), “When problems don’t affect us, we don’t think they’re that important, and we might not even know what the problems are because we’re not interacting with the people who are

experiencing them.”

Black in AI and the Importance of STEM Programs

This is why women and people of color in technology are working to address the issue. Organizations like [Women in Data](#), [Black in AI](#) and [Women in Machine Learning](#) have been formed because the organizers are working to develop ways to address bias in AI, connect under-represented people in that tech sector and educate about the problem. Gebru says she and a friend started Black in AI in 2017 after she attended a Neural Information Processing Systems (NIPS) conference in 2016. (NIPS is considered one of the world’s largest AI conferences). There were about 8500 attendees. “I counted six black people,” she said. “I was literally panicking. That’s the only way I can describe how I felt... Because six black people out of 8,500—that’s a ridiculous number, right? That is almost zero percent.”

It is these kinds of realities and disparities that make it extremely important for us to continue to encourage young people of color and women into STEM careers. This will help to increase the diversity pool as more ethnically diverse developers are added to the field to help prevent creator and data bias. STEM fields have and continue to be difficult for women to complete degrees in, but the industry has learned a lot about what is needed to help them succeed. Organizations like [GirlsWhoCode](#) allow teen girls to learn to code in an environment where they are surrounded by other women. Networking groups like the [National Society of Black Engineers](#) provide spaces where encouragement and mentorship can be found. This [Harvard Business Review](#) article lists six things successful women in STEM careers do; a topic we may cover in a future Message magazine article.

The fact of the matter is, AI is not going anywhere. It will continue to make its way more intimately and permanently into our daily lives. We need to be sure it does that as bias-free as possible.

How Church Trained Me For Corporate America

It was probably the most pivotal moment in my entire career. Like road to Damascus pivotal.

I don’t know when exactly, but at some point I came to believe that the things I learned in church were of little value in “the real world.” Soon, I found myself compartmentalizing my skills. Worse yet, I no longer believed in the usefulness of skills I had acquired from different areas of my life. I resigned that some of my skills were for church and others were for business. You know, I had some skills for the day of rest and the remaining skills were for the work day.

Lessons from Essence

Then I got my first break! Excited about this new chapter in my life I left my small hometown of Berrien Springs, Michigan and moved to New York City. Everything about my experience working as a young professional was new and exciting. There was so much I didn't know. And at times I felt like I was drinking from a fire hydrant. My background was so different from everyone else's. I didn't go to a fancy college or know anything about Greek life. And it was these stark differences that made me wonder if I could get from where I was to where many of my colleagues were. Fortunately, I met someone that changed my perspective forever.

His name was at the top of the organizational chart and mine was at the bottom, misspelled. Our worlds couldn't have been more different. But the more I heard him speak the greater similarity I found within our purpose. Listening to him partially because someone told me there would be free lunch, I learned that he created the strategy for how to generate hundreds of millions of dollars in digital revenue across Time Inc's brands. Extremely gracious with his time and wisdom, he met with about a dozen young black professionals. In that meeting he shared insights on how to ascend professionally.

An Unlikely Training Ground

I was awestruck by his unlikely story. He spoke of always having the right type of experience in order to take on bigger and bigger roles for jobs. And even shared how most of these jobs never existed until his skillset presented the need for the position. This kind of professional mobility he credited to his ability to differentiate the signal from the noise. Even though he ascended to professional heights that most people would never know, he maintained a level of accessibility and ease that made him very approachable. Still wanting more clarity on the key to his success, someone asked what he thought contributed the *most* to his success. He said, "I think the fact that I was given the opportunity to do scripture reading at church at a young age gave me a lot of confidence." I was dumbfounded! "The secret to his success was *church*?" I don't know if it's because I have never seen "Must have 25 years experience in a church setting" as a job requirement, but it truly never occurred to me that the things I learned at church could be useful to me at work. But the more I thought about it the more I realized that growing up in church gave me a considerable amount of skills and abilities that could prove very useful to me professionally.

In that moment, I hadn't gotten any bigger nor had the city gotten any smaller. But suddenly I was able to see the world around me and my place in it with a new found confidence. Once this clicked for me, my career took off.

Church Translates to Corporate

Once I made that shift in my mind I realized that my church trained me for my corporate job. The power struggles I saw between those content with traditional methods versus those who wanted change were no different than conflicts that arose at church board meeting. Knowing how to come to an understanding with people who came to wildly different conclusions based on the same email was no different than small group Bible Study. Pitching a new

sponsorship opportunity to a client was no different from doing the offertory. Connecting with strangers at a client meeting was no different than greeting people at the doors of the church. Finding creative solutions to problems without spending any money was no different than almost anything I have done for church. Can I get a witness?

My challenge to anyone reading this today is to go back through all the years you attended church from a young child until today. Look and truly reconsider if you are using all of your skills to their maximum benefit. Whether you're in a comfortable spot in your career or are looking to reimagine what's next for you, I'm confident this mental shift will take you to the next level professionally and personally. Maybe write it down. Share it with us in the comments. Let us know what useful skills you learned from being involved at church that you can use professionally.

The Multitude, The Master, & The Method

Principles and Best-Practices for Launching a Community-Based Ministry

“And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick.”

Matthew 14:14 (NKJV)

No one taught the way Jesus taught. Jesus had a holistic ministry that met the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of people. He didn't just preach. He identified, in a very intimate way, with our tribulations and struggles. He ministered to the very core and heart of our being. He helped us, without leaving us helpless. He corrected, without being overly critical. He restrained us, without leaving us bound. He rebuked us, without leaving us despondent. He rendered our own vain attempts at redemption useless, without stripping us of our ultimate value and worth to Him. Jesus exemplified a balanced ministry, reinforced by both word and deed.

The Biblical Platform for Community-Based Ministry

Matthew 14:14 paints a picture of Jesus caring for the needs of people. Furthermore, this verse provides the foundation on which we can build effective, life-changing ministries in whatever capacity we happen to serve. Notice carefully the three actions Jesus executed as He “went out.” The text begins with “He saw a great multitude...” As we engage in ministry for the Master, what do we see? Jesus saw people and not problems. He saw a chance for exhortation and not exploitation. He saw an opportunity to meet the needs of others. Again, when we engage in ministry, what do we see? Jesus saw a multitude of people who were hurting, helpless, and in need of a touch of healing and a word of hope. But He not only saw the multitude. Christ was also “moved with compassion” by what He saw. As believers, are we moved by the needs of the multitude? When we hear of tragedy and injustice in our

community and in our world does it move us to want to do something about it? Does our heart go out to the hurting and the hopeless?

Experiencing a heart for the hurting and a genuine love for people is essential to effective ministry for the Master. And the multitude has a way of sensing authentic, genuine ministry when it happens. They may not be able to define it or articulate it, but they know it when it is experienced. They saw it in the life and ministry of Jesus. The question today is, "Do they see it in you?" Jesus didn't just minister on a cerebral level, He engaged His whole being in ministry. He ministered on a "heart" level as well. He felt our pain. He was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" and was "moved with compassion." True ministry for the Master involves wholehearted, passionate service, with nothing held back. This is the method Jesus has laid out by His own example. Effective ministry for the Master involves seeing the multitude and being moved with compassion towards them.

Compassion is a Touch

But not only does effective, life-changing ministry involve the ability to see and feel the needs of the multitude, it also involves the sense of touch. It involves the ability to reach out, to touch, to heal in His name. Real ministry rallies all of the senses to action. We must see them, feel them, and touch them. The text says that "He healed their sick." The Greek term "healed" is *therapeuō* from which we get the transliterated English equivalent "therapy." Jesus is the Great Physician and a Balm in Gilead and He knows how to minister to our every need. He has a therapeutic touch, a healing hand. What do people experience when they come in contact with us? Do they go away feeling better or bitter? Battered or believing? Assaulted or accepted? Victorious or vandalized? Consecrated or manipulated? Effective ministry manifests itself in transformed lives. It produces an eager multitude yearning for more of the life-giving power which flows from the hands of the Master.

I am convinced that many believers and churches want to experience the transforming power of the gospel. They want to share it in practical, holistic ways that uplift the lives of others. Too often, however, while our motivations are pure, we fail to achieve the desired results. One of the best ways to raise the level of impact you, your church, or related ministry can potentially have in your community or targeted service area is through the formal launch of a 501c3 tax-exempt organization. And yes, I'm sure you've heard all of the horror stories and reasons to avoid going this route, but establishing a community-based non-profit to effect change can exponentially increase the potential impact we can have. Here are a few practical steps and mistakes to avoid as you get started.

3 Mistakes to Avoid When Launching a Nonprofit

1) Don't expect a nonprofit to be up and running in a few weeks.

Recruiting your initial board of directors, filing the necessary paperwork, including the 1023 application for nonprofit determination status may take up to four months or longer. Registration requirements differ from state to state. Pay close attention and follow all applicable laws. Fulfilling your

legal and fiduciary responsibilities is just the first step. Starting a nonprofit is not much different than starting a for-profit business. It takes time to grow. Launching a start-up non-profit, much like its for-profit counterpart, works more like a crock pot than a microwave so be patient.

2) Don't expect something for nothing.

No man or woman is an island when it comes to a nonprofit launch. Eventually, you will need help. And expect to pay for that help. There are wonderful people out there who are more than willing to assist you. If you are fortunate enough to be surrounded by such a cloud of witnesses, accept them...welcome them...learn from them. But more often than not, more help is needed to launch a non-profit organization than you may find within a small circle of friends and associates. Seek professional help and avoid placing yourself or others in potential legal jeopardy.

Do not expect to launch a non-profit without start-up costs. And don't expect everyone to give you everything just because you are a "nonprofit" or have a great cause. Be intentional about joining professional associations that provide resources, tools, and support for nonprofits such as your state chapter of the National Association of Nonprofits, along with online support systems like Grant Station or BoardSource. A formal connection with such organizations is usually membership-based, which means it may cost you a modest fee to join. Some of the services needed, such as accounting, legal, and fund-raising assistance, may be available and at your disposal. But don't lean too heavily on a friend-of-a-friend who may not have the expertise to provide the necessary help.

3) Don't expect to rely on grants for everything.

Grants do not pay for start-up expenses. How much does a new organization need? Well, that depends upon such things as the location, mission, and goals of your non-profit. While there are exceptions, grants rarely pay for "brick and mortar" projects such as construction or acquisition of buildings or property. Conventional wisdom suggests that funders look for existing projects or programs to support, not ones that are "waiting for the money to come in."

Ethical and experienced grant-writers DO NOT contract based upon the percentage of a grant that may be potentially awarded. They don't get paid "after the money comes in." It is a standard industry practice to avoid arrangements based upon a percentage of the grant award. It is considered unethical and unfair both to the grant-writer, the funder, and the potential beneficiaries who receive your services and benefit from the funding.

If you're in the process of launching a nonprofit, don't expect to find grants that will immediately fund or underwrite salaried positions. Grants for small and new agencies rarely include enough funding to support full-time staffing. It takes time to grow to that level. Nonprofit work is about seeking to serve, not to be served. There's nothing wrong with anticipating or even working towards an opportunity to be compensated for your work, you'll just want to be realistic about how soon those expectations may be realized. An agency may grow to the point where it requires full-time staff support, but don't expect that initially. Needed resources will come with time, the trust of the community, a record of accomplishment, and a clear

mission that your community, constituents, and board all support. Finally, Non-profits, like their for-profit counterpart, utilize similar strategies to achieve long-term sustainability. For those just starting out or others desirous of taking ministry to a new level – remember, be ready to stay with it for the long-haul, prepare to make personal sacrifices to achieve success, and be sure to develop a plan to acquire the necessary resources to get started. But most importantly, remember that starting a non-profit is about caring for people. So see your non-profit as an opportunity to practice the compassion of Christ and truly transform communities and people.

Why Your Teen Should Start a Business

"Start a youth out on his way; even when he grows old he will not depart from it."

Proverbs 22:6 (CSB)

Recently my family and I visited downtown Tampa to explore this new city we live in. It is so easy while living in a city to not enjoy the sights and sounds it has to offer. We decided to try one of the new crazes while there and so we rented scooters to ride. The way it works is you use an app to unlock the scooter, ride it and then return it to the place you picked it up. We rented a couple scooters and my teenagers proceeded to test them out. After a couple minutes of figuring out what to do they were off and riding. They made it look so effortless. It brought my wife and I such joy to see our three teenagers riding and having a good time. It made us want to do it too! So I got on! But then, I quickly got off.

Balance was a challenge for me. And honestly, my coordination was not much better either. The entire time I was everything *but* the picture of grace. I will not tell you how my wife did. But let's just say we had similar experiences. Now, I only rode for about two minutes and the whole time I was sweating, panicking and worrying about falling off.

That brief ride was enough for me. I was too afraid to do it and decided it best I just watch my kids have a good time.

That simple family outing underscored something for me.

The best time to take risks, to step out and try new things is when you are young.

Do not get me wrong. You can launch out and pursue your dreams at any age. I help people do that every day. I believe you can start at anytime. But it is clear that there are advantages to starting new things in your youth. With that in mind, I believe it is beneficial for every teen to consider starting their own business. Traditionally, becoming an entrepreneur is looked at as an adult endeavor. With all the responsibility involved, and with what we perceive as a steep learning curve, we think it's not kids business. But the risks and challenges are the very reasons why I believe parents need to encourage their children to start sooner rather than later in

life.

Here are some benefits to your teen starting a business now:

1. It gives them valuable work experience.

Most job reports say that unemployment is at a low. Those numbers can be deceiving because there are many who are taking jobs below their level of education and training. Some of the jobs many adults are taking were traditionally held by teenagers in the past. This has reduced the number of jobs a teen can get.

But even the jobs that are available do not always provide the best work environments. If your teen is unable to find a job, starting his or her own business can give them the valuable work experience they need.

Many of us understand the frustration of finishing school and finding that every job is asking for "work experience."

What is ironic is that you need to have been hired in order to get hired.

We all have to be able to show that someone trusted us with employment in order to secure many of the jobs we want right out of college. Employers want to see that you have work experience. And that's where teens having their own business can be a huge asset.

They can work for themselves and develop an impressive resume showing the roles and responsibilities they held in starting and running their own business.

2. It gives them multiple streams of income.

In our world today, most of us are one paycheck away from financial ruin. Any talk about starting a business seems very risky. But it is even more risky to have all your income coming from one source, no matter how stable the company may be.

It would be a great strategy for every adult reading this to develop multiple streams of income – money coming in from more than just your full time job. What better way to learn that lesson than to start a business at a young age? You learn how to generate a self-created source of revenue, and learn the skills on how to grow it.

Starting a business does not mean your teen cannot go into another field or profession. What it does ensure is that they have an income while in their post high school education. Along with having a way to gain an income outside of their main job, if they choose to go that route.

Transitions happen. Jobs go away. Companies close their doors. Having an additional source of income is a great safety net for life.

3. It helps them relate to failure.

Failure is something we are taught to run away from. Really no one wants to fail. But everyone will encounter it and it is better to learn how to handle it.

In anything you start there is a possibility of things not going the way you planned. They may not happen as quickly as you want them to. Others may let you down. You may make a mistake or things may change. How we respond in

these circumstances is what is super important.

Starting a business as a teen gives your child a safe place to fail.

They don't have to worry about bills and a family depending on them. But they can learn that failure is a great teacher.

Starting a business will teach your teen that even when things do not go as planned they can adjust their approach. Your teen will also learn not to let things that fail make them believe that they are a failure. They will learn to separate failure from their personhood. Failing is something we all do. But it's not who we are. They will say:

"Yes, I failed, but i'm not a failure."

Having a business is a great way to make mistakes in a safe environment so they can learn from them.

4. It encourages your child to go further.

During our family's exploration of Tampa, I realized that learning to ride a scooter would take me a much longer time than my kids. We will be back and my wife and I will eventually get it. But yesterday we adjusted our role. Instead of being the doers, we became their cheerleaders-in-chief. Our job was to make sure our kids had as much fun and gained as much joy from the experience as possible.

The same is true for life and business. Things may be difficult for you. It does not mean you will not get it. In fact I am cheering you on as you do. While you do, it is a great idea to cheer your kids on. Make sure they start earlier than you have. Be their biggest encouragement and support as they try out their business ideas. Maybe they will teach you a thing or two in the process.

My Father's Business

BASED ON ELLEN G. White's The Desire of Ages, in the chapter "The Passover Visit"

In the school of the rabbis they found Jesus. Rejoiced as they were, they could not forget their grief and anxiety. When He was with them again, the mother said, in words that implied reproof, "Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing."

"How is it that ye sought Me?" answered Jesus. "Wist ye not that I must be

about My Father's business?" And as they seemed not to understand His words, He pointed upward. On His face was a light at which they wondered. Divinity was flashing through humanity. On finding Him in the temple, they had listened to what was passing between Him and the rabbis, and they were astonished at His questions and answers. His words started a train of thought that would never be forgotten.

And His question to them had a lesson. "Wist ye not," He said, "that I must be about My Father's business?" Jesus was engaged in the work that He had come into the world to do; but Joseph and Mary had neglected theirs. God had shown them high honor in committing to them His Son. Holy angels had directed the course of Joseph in order to preserve the life of Jesus. But for an entire day they had lost sight of Him whom they should not have forgotten for a moment. And when their anxiety was relieved, they had not censured themselves, but had cast the blame upon Him.

It was natural for the parents of Jesus to look upon Him as their own child. He was daily with them, His life in many respects was like that of other children, and it was difficult for them to realize that He was the Son of God. They were in danger of failing to appreciate the blessing granted them in the presence of the world's Redeemer. The grief of their separation from Him, and the gentle reproof which His words conveyed, were designed to impress them with the sacredness of their trust.



In the answer to His mother, Jesus showed for the first time that He understood His relation to God. Before His birth the angel had said to Mary, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever." Luke 1:32, 33. These words Mary had

pondered in her heart; yet while she believed that her child was to be Israel's Messiah, she did not comprehend His mission. Now she did not understand His words; but she knew that He had disclaimed kinship to Joseph, and had declared His Sonship to God.

Jesus did not ignore His relation to His earthly parents. From Jerusalem He returned home with them, and aided them in their life of toil. He hid in His own heart the mystery of His mission, waiting submissively for the appointed time for Him to enter upon His work. For eighteen years after He had recognized that He was the Son of God, He acknowledged the tie that bound Him to the home at Nazareth, and performed the duties of a son, a brother, a friend, and a citizen.

As His mission had opened to Jesus in the temple, He shrank from contact with the multitude. He wished to return from Jerusalem in quietness, with those who knew the secret of His life. By the paschal service, God was seeking to call His people away from their worldly cares, and to remind them of His wonderful work in their deliverance from Egypt. In this work He desired them to see a promise of deliverance from sin. As the blood of the slain lamb sheltered the homes of Israel, so the blood of Christ was to save their souls; but they could be saved through Christ only as by faith they should make His life their own. There was virtue in the symbolic service only as it directed the worshipers to Christ as their personal Saviour. God desired that they should be led to prayerful study and meditation in regard to Christ's mission. But as the multitudes left Jerusalem, the excitement of travel and social intercourse too often absorbed their attention, and the service they had witnessed was forgotten. The Saviour was not attracted to their company.

As Joseph and Mary should return from Jerusalem alone with Jesus, He hoped to direct their minds to the prophecies of the suffering Saviour. Upon Calvary He sought to lighten His mother's grief. He was thinking of her now. Mary was to witness His last agony, and Jesus desired her to understand His mission, that she might be strengthened to endure, when the sword should pierce through her soul. As Jesus had been separated from her, and she had sought Him sorrowing three days, so when He should be offered up for the sins of the world, He would again be lost to her for three days. And as He should come forth from the tomb, her sorrow would again be turned to joy. But how much better she could have borne the anguish of His death if she had understood the Scriptures to which He was now trying to turn her thoughts!



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ELLEN G. WHITE (1827-1915), one of the most published authors in the world, named one of the "100 Most Significant Americans of All Time" by the

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*You can read *The Desire of Ages* in its entirety online at www.whiteestate.org/onlineboks.

Leadership And Sheep: Five Signs Of Christlike Effectiveness

Message Magazine's Online Devotional for Thursday, February 23, 2017

Audio Link: <https://www.spreaker.com/.../r.../thoughts-in-worship-02-23-2017>

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice" (John 10:4).

Dictator or Leader

Are you a dictator who drives your agenda or a leader? Leaders lead by capable example. Dictators nudge, push, drive, and force others to comply. People follow great leaders willingly. Some people go along with dictators through mindless compulsion.

John 10:1-10 is chock full of relationship, spiritual, and business advice. And you will discover it if you have sanctified vision. Today, I would like to focus on one leadership principle. Can you guess what it might be?

Leadership! I suppose I have violated the rule of not using a word to define a word here but bear with me.

Jesus described His careful leadership style in our theme text. His sheep know His voice; therefore, He when calls them, opens a way before them, and then leads the way, they follow! Can you imagine how much more successful businesses would become if managers and C-level executives would follow Jesus' example? When Jesus calls His sheep, they listen, not because He's barking out orders, but because He has been a faithful and effective communicator. He has nurtured appropriate relationships with His followers, which engendered trust. People will follow those they trust.

Leadership From Behind

Jesus also demonstrated that effective leaders could earn people's attentiveness. In this verse, Jesus calls to His sheep and puts them out to a particular space for a moment while the flock assembles and then He marches forward with the entire flock willingly following. The sheep not only trusted Him, but they knew what to expect. He did not move erratically or on a whim. When He was about to move, He prepared them in such a way they knew what to expect. And, when He called, they listened. When He moved, they followed. Dictators are the polar opposite of great leaders. And on top of that, they drive from behind. They are paranoid about people loafing or dropping out of line. Controlling their people is more important than building productive relationships. They are more concerned with speaking than actually being heard.

I'm sure there's a lesson in there for us somewhere. If you are a parent, teacher, church leader, or businessperson, take a page out of Jesus' book.

Effective leadership can only be achieved when we choose the humble path that is more concerned about people than we are the process. Invest in people, be clear regarding what you expect from them, and lead from the front, and you will discover an incredible level of cooperation from most of those you lead. I do realize some rebellious people simply cannot be led, but that's for another devotional thought. For today, submit to Jesus' leadership style and become as effective as He is.