

## Pastors are Tribal Leaders - 4 Things We Must Do

Today I want to apply Godin's perspective about leading a tribe, to Jesus. As we do, I invite you to allow the life of Jesus shape your own identity as a leader.

You may wonder why Godin's perspective is so valuable here. Although he doesn't sit in the academy or carry credentials of a theologian, he is a language artist who knows people and knows the times.

Here are four ways pastors can model Jesus. Each assertion is connected to a Godin quote and followed by some challenging questions.

1: Embrace change-making.

**"Management is about manipulating resources to get a known job done. Leadership, on the other hand, is about creating change that you believe in."**

2: Repent of 'organizational loves.'

**"When you fall in love with the system, you lose the ability to grow."**

3: Initiate something.

**"Initiative=Happiness"**

4: Commit before its successful.

**"If your organization requires success before commitment, it will never have either. A big part of leadership is the ability to stick with the dream for a long time. Long enough that the critics realize that your going to get there one way or another...so they follow."**

I have ordered these quotes intentionally. Reread them again to feel the progression.

Think about Jesus' context as a religious factory. Think about how Jesus daily ordered his steps around his Father's voice and mission. Seth's definition of management can easily speak to the problems of church in America.

- *How are we, spiritually speaking, tempted to manipulate resources to get a known job done rather than creating change that we believe in?*

Jesus created waves for people who didn't just create systems as tools but sustained systems in order to nourish their identity. What systems do you have as a leader and what is your relationship to them? Do they serve you or do you serve them? How conscious are you of your

system?

- *What aspects of your system, tempt you to “fall in love” with them? What personal growth as a leader is your current system holding back? What keeps you just “going through life” at the risk of “growing through life?”*

There is always status quo. What is it right now for you? I love the phrase “initiative = happiness.” It is certainly not a statement of truth, but an overstatement for insight’s sake. Before a leaders is defined by anything, he or she is defined by initiative. Hebrews tells us that Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before him. Now think of how that joy and the culminating event of the cross was preceded by literally thousands of moments of initiative that were bold, gutsy, and downright heretical. Start with mind-blowing act incarnation. Go to the norm-shredding engagement with the Samaritan woman. Take a boat ride for a near death experience and an indelible lesson in faith. I think pastors need a wake-up call to follow Jesus footsteps as radical initiators.

- *What initiative do you need to take in your leadership these days? What happiness are you forfeiting as long as you shrink back from taking it?*

The final Godin quote above rocks me to the core when I think of the church. We miss dreaming large, risking big and unleashing our imaginations because we want **success before commitment**. Maybe the best next step to fixing this dynamic in our organizations is to name it and identify it in our own lives.

- *What does the church you are leading express commitment toward? Albeit subtle, how does the problem of wanting success before commitment manifest itself in your life? What dream do you want to pursue that you have failed to give yourself permission to pursue because it is too bold for your current context?*

**Let’s follow Jesus with greater clarity, conviction and courage. Let’s keep moving away from church as program factory toward church as redemptive tribe.**

Read Parts 1 and 2 of this series [here](#) and [here](#); Read Part 4 [here](#).