

Patterns

Dr. Bob Abramson

We all have patterns that are part of our lives. For example, we brush our hair the same every morning. We put our shoes or sandals on one particular foot first. We may always seek to sit in the same spot in church. There are also patterns to our ways of thinking. There are patterns to our actions. We communicate in patterns. As our lives progress, we become demonstrations, testimonies of all the patterns of living we have acquired along the way. None of this is accidental. It is part of God's design, giving us free will. He is a God of patterns!

SEASONS: SUCCESS OR FAILURE

Every season of your life holds within it the seeds of success, significance and satisfaction. Many of us either fail to see these seeds grow into something good, or only partially realize the potential for success, significance and satisfaction that awaits us. Our potential to succeed in a particular season of life is determined by something. That something is either **revealed** or **restrained** by how we demonstrate the patterns we have established for our lives. Here is how it works...

We experience life. Each season of our lives has its ups and downs, its ins and outs... and its expected and unexpected turns. All of this affects us. All of it contributes to the kinds of life-patterns we learn to live with. Another way to express this is to say, all of this influences who we are, how we see things, how we do things, and perhaps most important, what our expectations are. Our journeys through the times and seasons of life are shaped by all of these. Life builds on patterns.

Think carefully about what you just read. You will see that the opportunities that God has placed within each particular season of your life depend, largely, on how you demonstrate your life-patterns. Interactions with others and the decisions you make for yourself, all influenced by your established life-patterns. They are some of the primary tools that shape your successes or your failures. Your life-patterns can be stepping-stones or stumbling blocks to your destiny.

HE IS THE GOD OF PATTERNS.

In both Old and New Testament times, God revealed Himself as a God of order. His design for the universe and all that is in it, including humankind, is based on divinely designed order. The Bible is full of accounts of God creating and setting things in order. God's expectation is that when He commands things to be done according to His set patterns, His people will obey. Both testaments also provide numerous examples of godly patterns of thinking and behavior. Below are three such clear examples.

(Exodus 25:8-9 NKJV) "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. {9} "According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it."

(Luke 11:1-4 NKJV) "Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." {2} So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. {3} Give us day by day our daily bread. {4} And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.""

PARAPHRASE

(Luke 11:2) "...When you pray, say:"

When you pray, speak to God following this pattern.

(Philippians 4:8 NKJV) "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy; meditate on these things."

PARAPHRASE

(Philippians 4:8b) "meditate on these things."

Set your mind on the pattern of these things I have listed.

God's ways are predictable. They are patterns or models for us to follow through the various seasons of our lives. Though the seasons vary, His Word and His ways remain the same. His intention is to provide us with habit-forming truths. Our lives are to

be characterized by the consistent, habitual exercise of these truths. God knows that your habitual thinking and behavior will largely determine the quality of your present experiences... and contribute greatly the shape of things to come in your journey through life (the path to your destiny). These habit-forming truths become patterns. The patterns form the roadmap for navigating the issues of life.

POINT 1

What is inside of you is essentially the deciding factor concerning whether you will reach your potential and capture your destiny.

POINT 2

Your habitual thinking and behavior will largely determine the quality of your present experiences... and contribute greatly the shape of things to come.

*(Philippians 3:17 Amplified Bible Paraphrase) “Dear brothers and sisters, **pattern your life after mine**, and learn from those who follow our example.”*

*(Philippians 3:17 NKJV) “Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, **as you have us for a pattern**.”*

The patterns, the habits or routines of your life may be good. They may be bad. In either case, they have the ability, and yes, the power to determine your destiny. Ask yourself, where did the patterns of your life come from? Here are two opposing examples from the Bible of patterns. The first is a negative pattern, and the second is positive.

A NEGATIVE PATTERN

(Bad Thinking, leading to Destruction)

*(Philippians 3:18-19 NKJV) “For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: {19} whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame; **who set their mind on earthly things**.”*

A POSITIVE PATTERN

(A Good Attitude, leading to Good Success)

(Philippians 4:1 NKJV) “Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.”

BIBLICAL INSTRUCTION CONCERNING POSITIVE PATTERNS

(Philippians 4:8-9 NKJV) “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy; meditate on these things. {9} The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”

PARAPHRASE

(Philippians 4:8b and 9b NKJV)

...think carefully and seriously about these patterns of good things that the Lord approves of... these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

Gods has provided the Scriptures so we can judge our thinking and model our behaviors. This thinking and behavior can become stepping-stones to patterns of success, significance and satisfaction. Think about your life today.

- You may be happy with the way things are. However good it has been, God desires that it becomes even better.
- You may be desperately in need of change in some areas of life, because of your existing patterns of thinking and behavior. They have resulted in hurtful stumbling-blocks to any happiness, success or satisfaction. (Be aware that we easily look for scapegoats, someone or something else to blame.)

In either case, good or bad, much of the way things are is due to the quality of your repetitive, habitual thinking and behavior. The issue is to judge yourself. Then modify or do away with the negatives, and add something to, or increase the positives.

POINT 3

God has patterned potential into your life. It is potential for success, significance and satisfaction. Embrace it!

THE NATURE OF LIFE'S PATTERNS

Life's patterns will only be found in one of two categories.

1. Patterns of Thinking and Behavior that are **NOT** pleasing to God

This category consists of all sinful, harmful and hurtful thinking and behavior.

2. Patterns of Thinking and Behavior that **ARE** pleasing to God

This category consists of all righteous, unselfish thinking and behavior.

In both cases, your thinking and behavior (the patterns of your daily existence) will dig deeply into you. In a very real sense, these patterns (either positive or negative) are addictive - in both cases! So what should you aim for?

(2 Corinthians 5:9 NKJV) "Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him."

PARAPHRASE

We do our best to establish our thinking and make our behaviors (the patterns of our lives) completely dependant on only those things that are well pleasing to Him. Our hunger to please God will become an addiction that we cannot and will not do without.

Our List of Divinely Inspired Addictions

(From Philippians 4:8 (Previous page))

- *whatever things are true*
- *whatever things are noble*
- *whatever things are just*
- *whatever things are pure*
- *whatever things are lovely*
- *whatever things are of good report*
- *any virtue*
- *anything praiseworthy*

The patterns of your life may please you, **but they might not please God**. Some things need to be put on the altar of loving obedience to the Lord. If you examine your life, you will surely see some of these things.

There may be patterns in your life that please God, **but do not please you**. (You are only doing these things out of a sense of religious obligation or fear of God.)



The question becomes, how can you surrender yourself to God and let go of these patterns? Here is the answer.

(Luke 9:23 NKJV) "Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.""

THE TWO GREAT, GODLY ADDICTIONS

(2 Timothy 1:13 NKJV) "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus."

The original Greek word Paul used in this verse for "hold fast" is *echo*. When we substitute *echo* for "hold fast" we get the following paraphrase.

Let your life become a sounding board, an echo of the following two addictions: (1) Faith in God and (2) God's kind of love (agape).

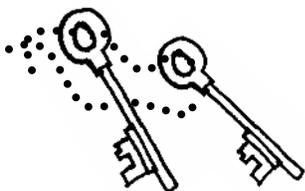
This paraphrase leads us to the following conclusions. Our words, our thinking and our actions are to echo the following two addictions in our lives.

1. AN ADDICTION TO OUR FAITH IN GOD

We are to be so consumed with the joys and opportunities our faith brings that we cannot do without it. We must have it. We have become addicted to our faith in God!

2. AN ADDICTION TO GOD'S KIND OF LOVE

We are also to be so consumed with the reality of the great gift of God's kind of love (agape), that we cannot help ourselves. We must display it, and give it habitually to others. We have become addicted!



These two godly addictions, faith in God and God's kind of love, are some of the most powerful keys to victory and good success. They will open many desirable doors in God's kingdom.

The Greek word, which is used in the New Testament for “*patterns*,” has its roots in the word “*tupos*.” It occurs six times in the New Testament from three different writers (Luke in Acts; Paul in his letters to the Philippians, Timothy and Titus; and the writer to the Hebrews, whoever he might have been.

Steven: (*Acts 7:44 NKJV*) “Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the *pattern* that he had seen,” [“*tupos*”]

Paul: (*Philippians 3:17 NKJV*) “Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a *pattern*.” [“*tupos*”]

Paul: (*1 Timothy 1:16 NKJV*) “However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a *pattern* to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.” [“*hupotuposis*”]

Paul: (*2 Timothy 1:13 NKJV*) “Hold fast the *pattern* of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.” [“*hupotuposis*”]

Paul: (*Titus 2:7 NKJV*) “in all things showing yourself to be a *pattern* of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility,” [“*tupos*”]

The writer to the Hebrews: (*Hebrews 8:5 NKJV*) “who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See that you make all things according to the *pattern* shown you on the mountain.” [“*tupos*”]

Strong’s Concordance: “*tupos*”

5179. *tupos*, too'-pos; from G5180; a die (as struck), i.e. (by impl.) a stamp or scar; by anal. a shape, i.e. a statue, (fig.) style or resemblance; spec. a sampler (“type”), i.e. a model (for imitation) or instance (for warning):--en- (ex-) ample, fashion, figure, form, manner, ***pattern***, print.

We can extract the following meanings for “*tupos*” and its derivative, “*hupotuposis*.”

- A die, as in one that stamps images into coins
- A style of design, or resemblance to something
- A model to be imitated
- A pattern (for success)



How do you embrace and implement a set of biblical patterns (ways of living) that will set you on a path to success, significance and satisfaction?

The answer to this question consists of **five manageable steps**.

1. Identify the patterns of your life that are **NOT** pleasing to God. (As before, identify what displeases God that you are addicted to.)
2. Identify the patterns of your life that **ARE** pleasing to God.
3. Take the displeasing, sinful, harmful and hurtful patterns (negative patterns) and isolate them.
4. Now replace them, just one at a time. Substitute a new biblical, godly pattern for one that needs to be gone from your life. Make this new pattern a habit and positive addiction. (Start with a pattern that is easy to work with.)
5. When the new pattern is firmly entrenched, then go to your list of isolated negative patterns and select another one. Do the same with this one, as you did with the first.

As you are assured that each of your negative patterns is replaced with godly, positive ones, find another. Do the same. As time goes by, you will find you have experienced the process of sanctification.

- You will gain a clear path to your destiny. Godly habits, thinking and behavior will replace those things that were out of control and displeased God.
- You will be the champion God has called you to be.
- You will be addicted to God and His Word, His ways, and His patterns.

The result is that you will have an addiction to a sure expectation of success, and an eternally significant, joyful life. You will truly rejoice in this biblical truth:

(2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV) "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

All it takes to realize your potential in Christ is your willingness, a desire to please the Lord, a little discipline... and an ear tuned to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

It is time to make a commitment to God, and to yourself. Will you take hold of what you have read and in doing so, take hold of your life. God sees you as what you are. You are a winner and a champion. Live your life like what you are!

(Isaiah 43:18-19 NKJV) “Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old. {19} Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness And rivers in the desert.”

(1 Corinthians 11:1 Amplified Bible Paraphrase) “Pattern yourself after me [follow my example], as I imitate and follow Jesus Christ (the Messiah).”

POINT 4

God sees you as what you are. You are a winner and a champion. Live your life like what you are!

RECAP

POINT 1

What is inside of you is essentially the deciding factor concerning whether you will reach your potential and capture your destiny.

POINT 2

Your habitual thinking and behavior will largely determine the quality of your present experiences... and contribute greatly the shape of things to come.

POINT 3

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POINT 4

God sees you as what you are. You are a winner and a champion. Live your life like what you are!

God bless you as you take hold of God's best!

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