

Thrive: The Power of Habits

Scripture used: [Daniel 6:3 \(NIV\)](#), [Daniel 6:10 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon continued our series on how to “Thrive and Flourish.” Today, we looked at the power of our habits, because ultimately, we are what we repeatedly do. Both our positive habits and our negative habits have the potential to dramatically impact our lives. A central part of today’s message is the invitation to join in to our [40 days of Prayer and Fasting](#) (PF40), which will give us space to develop a habit (practice) of prayer, and to have space to reflect on positive and negative habits that are at work in our lives and to make intentional choices about how to thrive by choosing healthy, God-honoring habits.

KEY POINTS

1. Our message began by reflecting on the life of Daniel, an exile from Jerusalem in Babylon who thrived during his period of exile, and one habit that the Bible consistently emphasized that Daniel had is the habit of prayer ([Daniel 6:10](#)). Likewise, prayer was a significant part of Jesus’ life and ministry, [Luke 5:16](#) and [Luke 6:12-13](#) speak of Jesus’ regular practice of praying as He walked with God, made decisions in His ministry, and sought daily renewal from the challenges of life. We have the opportunity to consider our habits overall, but to especially consider our practice of prayer, and how to ensure that this essential habit is regularly built into our lives.
2. Pastor Hurmon shared the habits (regular practices) of three well known leaders with ties to the Bay Area. All three of these leaders are Jesus followers who have partnered with NBCC in ministry at one time or another: Pat Gelsing, CEO of Intel; the Honorable Shelyna Brown, Superior Court Judge of Santa Clara County; and Jeremy Lin, former NBA Basketball Player. The habits that these three leaders shared in widely different fields demonstrate the importance of being intentional about what we are practicing daily, and that the small decisions of each day truly matter in direction and foundation of our lives.
3. The invitation of our PF40 season is to create space to develop some new habits. These include meditative Scripture reading (see [Psalm 18:20](#)); fasting (intentionally creating space by withholding a regular behavior in order to connect more deeply in relationship with God); and different practices of prayer. We can expand our prayer to include celebration, confession, reflection. We can use different methods of prayer, including writing, using pre-written prayers, and singing and praying.
4. Finally, one of the most freeing practices we can cultivate is the practice of “connecting to God’s purpose, and not to worry.” That is, when we align our habits to walk more deeply with God, and we are walking within God’s purpose for our lives, we are able to let go of our worry and anxiety about how circumstances will turn out, and instead trust God that His goodness will be displayed through our lives. In many instances, we will see God’s intervention in our lives, as Daniel did when he was saved from the lion’s den, or as Martin Luther King Jr. did when he was saved from grievous injury when he was stabbed early in the Montgomery bus boycott. At other times, we might experience the brokenness of this world in illness or grief, but even in those moments, we can be assured of God’s love and redemptive work through our lives.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - What are the regular habits of your life? Which ones are healthy habits that you are glad you have? Which ones are less healthy, that you might wish you could break? Which of those habits relate to your relationship with God?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - In our message today, we looked at the life of Daniel, and looked at similarities between his life and the life of Jesus (consider the Scripture passages referenced). We also heard from three Bay Area leaders and Jesus followers about the habits that have been significant for them. Consider the habits of people that you would consider mentors, models, or heroes, whether from the Bible, your family, or your relational circles. How have you seen habits make a difference in their lives? What similar habits do you want to develop or cultivate?
- 3) **DO** - Whatever challenges we are faced with, our experience of our challenges will be different if we are walking closely with God. Join our PF40 season of Prayer and Fasting leading up to Easter to create space to draw closer to God. Pastor Hurmon is preparing daily email devotionals and weekly video devotionals to guide our journey. Sign up and access all the resources at [NBCC’s PF40 site](#).