Michael Blue

Our opportunity to help clients live with purpose and meaning starts with a clear vision of "the good life"—what it really is, how we get there, and how our handling of money shapes the path we're on.

The right map for life

Zoe life in the Bible: fulfillment, freedom, purpose, meaning–life fully connected to the divine life of God

Demonstrated perfectly in the life of Christ

Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 5-7, about what following Jesus looks like. He focuses on *zoe* life at the end of it.

Matthew 7:13-14

"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."

Wide way	Narrow way
Easy to enter	Hard to enter
Ends in destruction	Ends in *zoe* life
Many walk it	Few walk it
Looks like the lives of majority of people	Requires purposeful entrance with eyes open to the cost

Entering the narrow way

Believing goes beyond mental alignment to a reorientation of our lives around that belief.

Enter by following Christ and leaving everything else behind.

Luke 14:26-27, 33

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple... So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple."

The way of the narrow gate is the way of the Cross–cannot be entered casually

Jesus doesn't diminish this call–John 6:67

The only way to *zoe* life

We must choose either this way or the wide way.

Kingdom Advisors is the leading advocate for the Christian financial industry.

We offer a step-by-step process to confidently deliver advice that aligns with Christian values.

Study Groups connect like-minded peers for encouragement, best practices, and accountability.

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The way of the Pharisees

"Look out for the way of these religious people."

Believe they're on the path toward God but they're really on the wide way

Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"

Believed they were justified before Jesus by what they had done

The way of Jesus

Doing the will of his Father with the heart of the Father

Not to earn his favor but because we are becoming more like his Son as we follow him on the narrow way

Being formed into the likeness of Jesus

Our hearts and desires are inseparable.

Our heart longings drive how we live and choices we make.

Our desires are continually being shaped, unintentionally and intentionally.

Three major inputs forming us:

- The people we surround ourselves with–community/culture
- The "truth" we consume/stories we believe about life
- The things we do–daily habits/practices

Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Renewing our minds: intentionally engaging with the work of God's Spirit by feeding the right formational inputs into our hearts

Learn from Jesus' example–the order and rhythms of his life–and adopt his lifestyle

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Meeting clients on their formation journey

We have unique insight into their deepest desires and longings through their money habits.

The formational power of the storehouse of our treasure: become more like the Father by moving the location of our storehouse.

> Matthew 6:21
> "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

> Matthew 6:19-20
> "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal."

Are we trying to find a middle way by presenting a message that sounds like the narrow way but is really not different from the world's view of money and its power to shape our hearts?

1 Corinthians 3:18-19a
Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is folly with God.

> Are we using single Bible verses to support financial advice that doesn't align with the narrow way?

> *Will we bold enough and loving enough to help our clients discern whether they're walking on the wide way or the narrow way?*

> What vision of "the good life" are you inviting your clients into?
>
> Are you inviting them to **become** something or to **do** something?
>
> Are you asking what their money is doing to them?
>
> Who are they becoming?

Guiding clients onto the narrow way

Start with myself—reading and studying God's Word

Pray—for the heart of the Father, for my clients

Consider the habits and practices forming my clients

Invite people on a journey with me. Walk with them, don't tell them what to do.

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Discussion Questions

1. What stood out to you from Michael's presentation?
2. Michael listed three things that form us: people we surround ourselves with, truth/stories we consume, and habits/practices we engage with.

   Would you agree?

   Where have you witnessed this in your own life?

   In clients' lives?
3. Are we inviting clients to do something or to become something?

   What's the difference?

Personal Reflection

1. What order and rhythms of Jesus are embedded in my life?
2. Are there rhythms I need to begin?

   What are they?

   How will I start?
3. Where is my storehouse for my treasures?

Examine the call to follow Jesus:

In ***Free to Follow: Discover the Riches of a Surrendered Life***, Michael Blue exhorts us to take seriously the call of Jesus. He specifically looks at what the Bible says about following Jesus when it comes to money and possessions, challenging us to rethink the way we view and use money. Available for purchase on Amazon.

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