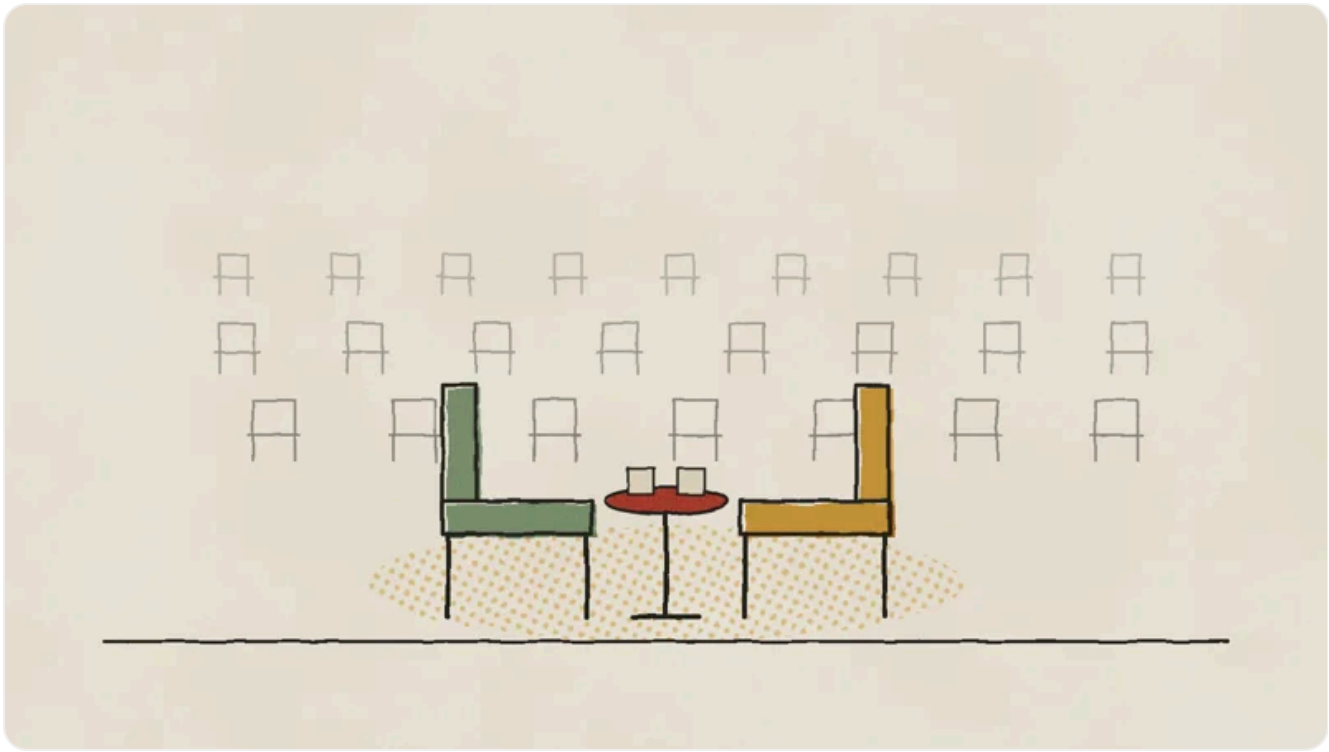
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The Most Important Person in the Room.



By Tommy Lee



This is one of the most important articles I have written, because it's something I really believe in. On the front page of my website, under "How I Try to Lead," there is one line: "No matter who they are, people should walk away from a conversation with you feeling like the most important person in the room." If we can build this into the DNA of Resource Global in all our cities, I would call that a significant achievement. Why? Because Jesus modeled it every day of His ministry.

That means everyone, not just the people who can help us. It means the person at the front desk, the janitor, the project coordinator who works for you, the intern, and your boss.

I saw this on full display with a wonderful leader named Alec Hill. I once worked with InterVarsity, where Alec was president. We were on a university campus, and he had to meet with a roomful of student leaders. He was so much older and more senior than they were, and he had earned the right to talk. BUT that's not what he did. He took the time to let each student talk, and he made each one feel so important. That memory never left me.

Now think about the opposite. You are talking to someone, and their eyes keep scanning the room over your shoulder, looking for someone more important. Trust me. I've had that happen to me a few times. You feel like you are not significant.

Why do we do it? Usually we want something from the important person, like their approval or a door they can open for us. The janitor can't give us any of that, so we don't even notice them. We are NOT mean to them. They are just not a priority for us.

I see this even in my travels with Resource Global. The American in the room. The wealthy person in the room. The older people in the room. We treat certain people differently because of their status. Treating everyone the same takes effort.

The God who sees

In Genesis 16, Hagar is a slave. She has been mistreated, she is pregnant, and she runs away into the wilderness. Nobody is looking for her. God finds her there, and she gives Him a name: "You are a God of seeing" (Genesis 16:13). Wow, that is good. You are a God of SEEING.

Before we ever see anyone else, God sees us. You can't make someone else the most important person in the room while you are still trying to be the most important person in the room. When you know God already accepts you, you don't need anything from the people in the room. You can just focus on them.

What Jesus did

In Mark 5, Jesus is on His way to heal the daughter of Jairus, an important man in town, and it is urgent. In the crowd, a woman who has been bleeding for twelve years touches His robe. She is trying to get in and out without anyone noticing. Jesus stops and keeps looking until she comes forward. Then He calls her "Daughter" (Mark 5:34). He let a woman nobody noticed interrupt the plans of the most important man in town.

Would you stop for someone who can do nothing for you?

What you can do this week

- **Learn their name and use it.** For me, I write their name in a draft email, along with a short description of them and something we talked about, so I can remember.
- **Remember what they told you.** If someone mentions, “My daughter has a birthday party this weekend,” go to them on Monday morning and ask, “How was the birthday party?”
- **Ask the quiet person first.** In a meeting, ask the intern or the newest person on the team what they think before the senior people talk.
- **Listen. Listen. Listen.** And when you think you are done listening, keep listening.

Jesus showed us what it means to make people feel special. I’ve never forgotten how He did it, and I try to imitate Him in this every day.

Tommy

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tommy Lee is the founder and president of Resource Global, a network that teaches, mentors, and connects emerging Christian marketplace leaders in cities around the world. He writes about faith, leadership, work, and AI at tommyplee.ai.

Read more issues at tommyplee.ai