



LEADERSHIP

A Teaching Newsletter of Pastor Gregg Johnson and The Mission Church Ministry Staff

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Without a strong foundation, a building will fall. It doesn't matter how beautiful its appearance or spectacular its design, if the structure doesn't stand upon a secure base, it will collapse under the pressure of its own height. The Tower of Pisa, located just outside of Rome, Italy is an internationally renowned example of this truth. First constructed in 1,117 AD it began leaning when it was only 35 ft high. Today it stands 179 ft tall and continues to threaten collapse. The reason? –A faulty foundation. It was built upon insecure, unequally settled ground that is unable to support the towering weight above it.

Consider now the Sears Tower in Chicago Illinois. Having 110 stories, it rises ¼ mile in the air—1,454 ft. high. It is constructed of 76,000 tons of steel and enough concrete to build an 8 lane highway 5 miles long. This mammoth structure is 8 times the size of the Leaning Tower of Pisa and stands secure; it refuses to lean even an inch. The reason? –It has a firm foundation. Beneath the Sears Tower is 114 solid rock footings that sink deep into the underlying bedrock—just one of those footings is sunk as deep as the Statue of Liberty is high. It is this foundation that holds this superstructure firmly in place. No wind, no storm, no tremor has ever succeeded in toppling it or the 1,600 people who work safely within its walls.

A leader's character is like the foundation of a building. If it is not strong, deep and firmly fixed in place, the man's life and all he has built will eventually fall. It does not matter how anointed he is, how attractive his ministry or powerful his gifts, without character, all threatens to collapse. "Charisma can take a man to the top, but only character will keep him there." It is character that keeps a man honest, ethical and pure. It is character that binds us to our godly responsibilities. It is character that holds us up when the heavy temptations of leadership threaten to pull us down.

What is "Character?" The word comes from an ancient Greek verb

meaning "to engrave" and its related noun meaning "mark" or "distinctive quality." Essentially, character is what we are. It is that inner core of our soul that determines our actions, reactions and inactions. Plutarch, the Roman biographer said, "*character is simply habit long continued.*" Baron Thomas wrote, "*The measure of a man's character is what he would do if he knew he never would be found out.*" Rushworth Kidder stated, "*The test of character... lies in how you behave when public approval and overt reward are*

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stripped away. When you can get away with anything—because nothing's at stake except your own conscience—what do you do?" Character consists of two basic elements. It begins with a firmly fixed internalized sense of right and wrong—a value system arising from a conviction of ethical absolutes. Secondly, it requires courage: the commitment to do what is right, proper and ethical regardless of personal cost, risk or discomfort.

Before God takes us higher (by elevating our position or increasing our anointing), He needs to deepen our foundation. Too many have been promoted before their character was enlarged to support that promotion. As a result, they became top heavy like the Tower of Pisa and started to lean. Unseen habits eventually eroded the spiritually that initiated their increase. Impure motives, like a sleeping giant, were awakened by the selfish opportunities afforded in promotion. Intermittent ethical compromises that seemed like insignificant cracks in the foundation of a small building, became gaping breaches of immorality in the place of enlargement. Sadly, the heights to which they ascended came crashing down because their foundation—their character was unable to support the pressures of that height. Only when we allow God to expand our character, will we be able to support greater levels of spiritual promotion and higher heights of tangible anointing.

The following is a study in

Character. More specifically the six elements that define what character is. As the Sears Tower has numerous concrete footings supporting is colossal height, these will serve as the pillars supporting our character—and the heights to which God wants to bring our lives.

Pillar #1: TRUSTWORTHINESS:

It means "worthy of trust, dependable, reliable" and "a firm belief or confidence in the honesty, integrity, reliability, justice, etc., of another person." The first test of a person's character is "how trustworthy are they?" This can be further defined by the following attributes:

Trustworthy people are honest. Eph. 4: 25 says, "*Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another."* Thomas Huxley wrote, "*The foundation of morality is to have done, once and for all, with lying.*" While initially one may define honesty as "refraining from lies and deception," it is much more because one can lead others into a false belief without actually speaking a lie. Honesty is a "good-faith" intent to convey the truth as best we know it and to avoid communicating in a way likely to mislead or deceive. It requires a motive of truthfulness—a sincerity that avoids the very intent of misrepresenting the facts. The key here is intention—does one intend to lead others into truth or use half-truths, out of context statements, and even silence to create beliefs or leave impressions that are untrue or misleading? The honest person is committed to accurately and appropriately representing the truth.

Trustworthy people have integrity. Titus 2:7-8 says, "*in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.*" The word integrity comes from the word "integer" and means "one" or "wholeness." The one with integrity is not double minded nor are there any ethical divisions in his or

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The 6 Pillars of Character; con't

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her life; there is no difference in the way she acts from one situation to the next. As they are in church, they are at work; as they are in public, they are in private. Their values are consistent regardless of where they are, who they are with or how much it cost. Brigadier General Malham Wakin, Professor of Ethics emeritus at the U.S. Air Force Academy writes, "Moral integrity is the condition of being whole, undivided in values and conduct. A person with integrity steadfastly adheres to a moral code of conduct about what is right and what is wrong. Personal integrity is about living up to one's own personal values."

Many people today are guided by a "non-principle" that says "don't do what is morally right, do what is right for yourself." There seems to be little regard or even agreement with moral absolutes. In fact a Gallup Poll reported that 70% of Americans say there are no moral absolutes that apply in all situations. 72% say there is no such thing as "truth." As a result, morality is relevant; many people remain moral only if morality serves their interests—if gets in the way, they will rationalize immorality. "If being honest helps me advance my career, I'll be honest—if not, I'll lie. If being married makes me happy, I'll stay with my wife. If not, I'll divorce her and get a new girl. If reporting my income means I get a refund, I'll report it. If not, I won't. —etc. Conversely, integrity is "oneness." It means that lying is always wrong, cheating is always bad and immorality is never an option.

Trustworthy people are reliable. They keep their word and make a serious effort to fulfill their obligations. Robert Service wrote, "A promise made is a debt unpaid." Psalm 15:4 says, "Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who swears to his own hurt and does not change." Reliability means one does not try to find "loop-holes" out of contracts, make excuses or justify escaping commitments. Reliable people do what they agreed, promised or otherwise indicated they would do.

Reliability involves avoiding unwise or unclear commitments because reliable people take their word serious. They are not caught up in the emotion of the moment and hastily consent. They

think through and carefully consider if what they are agreeing to will be difficult, undesirable or even impossible. And then, once they have agreed, they will be as consistent as the sunrise.

Reliability avoids lateness and worse, unexcused absence. They consider "keeping time" as important as "keeping a promise." When reliable people agree to arrive at a certain hour and they are serious about fulfilling their word. What is more they demonstrate respect for both themselves and others by valuing the importance of each person's time.

Trustworthy people are loyal. 2 Kings 20:3 says, "Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what was good in Your sight." Loyalty is sense of responsibility to promote and protect the interests of certain people or affiliations. Loyal people can be counted on to serve the needs of the organization over the needs and preferences of themselves. Disloyalty is the opposite. It means one will serve the interests of that which he is a member of only until it interferes with his own personal interests. At that point, loyalty to the person or affiliation dies at that hand of loyalty to self.

Pillar #2: RESPECT:

Respect is the display of regard for the worth of another individual. It focuses on the moral obligation to honor the special uniqueness and dignity of others while prohibiting violence, humiliation, manipulation and exploitation. 1 Peter 2:17 reminds us to "Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king." Similarly, Romans 12:10 says, "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving

preference to one another."

Respecting others comes easy when it involves people we admire and look up to—or those who are in some position to improve our estate. But what about those we don't admire, or worse—those we hold in contempt? Abigail van Buren (Dear Abby) suggests, "The best index to a person's character is (a) how he treats people who can't do him any good, and (b) how he treats people who can't fight

back." Character requires that while we have no ethical duty to hold all people in high esteem or admiration, we are morally obligated to treat everyone with respect regardless of who they are and what they have done—even if they

engage in conversation or repeat opinions that lower another person's status—even if the gossip is true. Again, we want to show people respect, not necessarily because they are noble people, but because we are.

"People of good character, whatever their religion, know that talking unnecessarily about another's supposed character flaws is itself a major character flaw. So they don't." —Rabbi Joseph Telushkin. James 4:11 simply

says, "Do not speak evil of one another, brethren."

Pillar #3: RESPONSIBILITY:

"The hand of the diligent will rule, but the lazy man will be put to forced labor." Proverbs 12:24

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed." 2 Timothy 2:15

Responsibility is an action concept. It is taking ownership of the duties and demands assigned, assumed or imposed to us and morally obligating ourselves to the consequences of whether or not we have fulfilled those demands.

The person of character is responsible. He or she accepts the burden of "doing what they can," not because they are being paid or because they will suffer if they don't, but simply because it is their moral obligation to so. The essence of responsibility is a continuous awareness that "it is up to me to make a difference and if I don't act, part of the blame must fall to me." Hence, responsible people take initiative; they are self starters and hard workers. They are not dependant on someone else's motivation, they are motivated by their own sense of ethical obligation. "The question for each man to settle is not what he would do if he had the means, time, influence and educational advantages, but what he will do with the things he has." —Hamilton Wright Mabee

What is more, the person of character takes responsibility for their actions or inactions. They are accountable. An accountable person is not a self perceived victim who shifts blame to something in their past or someone else's irresponsibility. (Similarly, she doesn't take credit for the work of others.) They accept the consequences of their behavior and face them with integrity. When David was discovered to have committed adultery and murdered, he did not try to blame Bathsheba for tempting him; he simply said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." 2 Samuel 12:13

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don't deserve our respect. The reason for giving such people respect is not because they are necessarily noble human beings, but because we are. People of character demonstrate respect toward everyone regardless of social ranking, financial status or material means.

Respect is manifested in our character through the notions of civility, autonomy, tolerance and gratitude. Civility is treating others with consideration rather than with intimidation, coercion or manipulating them to get one's own way. It is to consider another's perspective, rights and needs as important as and equal to one's own. Autonomy is recognizing that every person has the right to make their own decisions and pursue their own course through life. The respectful person does not try to control others or make decisions for them. He gives others the information they need, fully informs them and allows them the choice to decide for themselves. Tolerance is accepting people with their individual differences and beliefs without prejudice or discriminations. While an ethical person may disapprove of certain behaviors, they can accept people on the basis of their personal worth and dignity as a creation of God. We must avoid the concern that Jonathan Swift raised when he said, "We have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another." Demonstrating gratitude means we appreciate and value what others do for us while understanding the effort or cost that was involved in what they did. Respectful people express their gratitude; they know how to say, "thanks."

One final aspect of respect is the ethical commitment to avoid gossip. Gossip is a sure sign of disrespect toward others. What is worse, it is a sure indication that the one gossiping has a great lack of character. Sadly the Jewish Talmud says that virtually everyone speaks unfairly of others at least once a day. To be respectful, however, means that we will refuse to

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For leaders this is especially significant because it means not only being responsible for ourselves, but for our subordinates. Those who work “under” or “for” us are actually carrying out the duties that we are assigned with but have delegated to them. For example, if a worker in my church fails to perform his tasks appropriately, I cannot stand aloof and say, “It’s not my fault he didn’t do his job.” That is irresponsible. It is the leader’s duty to make sure that those who have been delegated tasks are actually doing their job. If they falter, we must instruct them; if they fail, we must assume the blame along with them. We must remember that delegating duties to others does not release us from our responsibility. It is always the authority who must answer for condition of his organization. That is why when a football team has a failing record, it is usually the coach who is fired—not the assistant coach. Conversely, when the organization enjoys victories, the leader should always give credit to those under him who helped him succeed.

The essence of responsibility is manifested in diligence, perseverance and self-restraint. Diligence is the moral obligation to do one’s best and strive for excellence. It means looking for ways to improve one’s performance rather than “cutting corners” and taking the easy way out. Perseverance is the commitment to finish what one began even in the face of opposition, resistance and discouragement. It is overcoming adverse circumstances rather than making excuses. Self-restraint is an essential part of responsibility for it involves denying immediate gratification so that one’s duty can be performed. Irresponsible people usually give into the lust of the moment (laziness, procrastination, discouragement) and fail to do what they are morally obligated to do.

Pillar #4: FAIRNESS

Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. Colossians 4:1

In a world where there are so many conflicting priorities, disagreements, and needs, it is important for a leader to be fair—to be equal in regard to the rights of all interests, giving each one their due. “To be fair” is to deal in an equitable, impartial and just manner with regard to such concerns as setting priorities, distributing resources and resolving conflicts. Every leader will

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All for One and One for All

Rich Langford

The familiar cry of Alexandre Dumas’ Three Musketeers, “All for one and one for all!” is a great title for an essay on unity. Perhaps someone reading this will want to use it for that purpose, but for the moment it is the title of an article concerning sin. Jas 2:10 *For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*

This passage on stumbling has caused many Christian moralists to stumble over their doctrine. Is James telling us that lying is just as bad as murder or that lustful thoughts are just as serious an offence as rape? The words of Jesus Himself seem to add fuel to this notion when He says, Matthew 5:21 *“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire. 27 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

These passages seem pretty clear on the point that “a sin is a sin no matter what shape it is in,” however, when we read the passages in the Old Testament outlining the Mosaic law it is clear from the punishments dictated for various crimes that God does consider certain offences to be more serious than others. How do we reconcile these apparently contradictory positions?

The answer is that there is a difference between sin and transgression. There is really only one sin, the failure to love God. Sin is a condition of the heart or, more specifically,

a condition of the soul. John makes this case throughout his first epistle – either you love God or you do not. 1 John 4:20 *If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.*

Remember Jesus’ answer to the Pharisees when they asked Him which was the greatest commandment. Matthew 22:37 *Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul,*

Jesus points out on several occasions that God is more concerned with our hearts than He is with our activities.

and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

The passage from 1 John narrows this down even further by reminding us that our love for our neighbor is a result of our love for God. In effect he is saying that you cannot keep the second great commandment unless you are keeping the first and, conversely, if you are not keeping the second then you are not keeping the first. This reality joins both great commandments into one.

The Bible goes to great lengths to show us the nature of sin. It is an attitude of the heart. Romans 8:5-8 is one of many passages that describe this.

For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the

mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Jesus points out on several occasions that God is more concerned with our hearts than He is with our activities. He demonstrates this several times when He purposely breaks the traditional rabbinical laws of the Sabbath and laws telling people how to purify themselves before they eat so that they will not be unclean. He went to great lengths to demonstrate that the Law was not provided to govern actions as much as it was to guide hearts.

We even find this message in the Old Testament. Hosea 6:6 *“For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.”*

If two people of equal wealth each give an equal amount to the poor is it possible that one did something wrong and the other something right? Consider this passage: Matthew 7:15 *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.”*

This passage shows us that sin is a matter of the soul (the tree) and that transgressions or offences (the fruit) are the actions that come from the soul that is poisoned by sin.

Rich Langford serves as a Deacon overseeing Christian Education Ministries in The Mission Church

QUOTEABLE LEADERS

“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved.” — *Helen Keller*

“Character is much easier kept than recovered.” — *Thomas Paine*

“No change of circumstances can repair a defect of character.” — *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

“You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him.” — *Goethe*

“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.” — *Unknown*

“The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and will to carry on.” — *Walter Lippmann*

“Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder.” — *George Washington*

“With all the power that a president has, the most important thing to bear in mind is this: You must not give power to a man unless, above everything else, he has character. Character is the most important qualification the president of the United States can have.” — *Richard Nixon*

“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.” — *Abraham Lincoln*

“You can only govern men by serving them.” — *Victor Cousin*

“It is better to be hated for what you are than to be loved for what you are not.” — *Andre Gide*

TO THE TIMOTHY: Sermon Preparation ;Part 1

Pastor Nik Adwalpalker

This month Pastor Nik begins a two part series on preaching sermons that are anointed and precise. Part 1 will discuss the disciplines associated with developing our sermon ideas, while part 2 will focus on turning our ideas into powerful messages.

Your words have the power to change lives. The anointing of the Holy Spirit flowing through you has the ability to break the yokes of bondage and oppression that hold the lives of people in sin. The message you bring to the pulpit has the ability to be one that goes down in history as the word that stirred a revival in the hearts of men. Unto you the mighty Apostle Paul begs the question concerning the importance of your mission, "And who is equal to such a task?" (2 Cor. 2:16) You are the mouthpiece of God, the spokesman for his purposes. You are the preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ!

The message we preach must be inspired of God, and to that end there can be no failure. However, while we must preach with unction (level of anointing dependent upon our hunger and God's grace), we must also strive to preach messages that are exegetically and homiletically sound.

Exegesis is the process whereby a passage is studied, dissected and broken down so that we can find the main idea of the text. This is done when we examine the broader context of the passage (i.e. how it fits in the chapter, book, and entire bible) to find out what the meaning of the text is. The general rule for the exegete is to let scripture interpret scripture. Homiletics is the science of the preacher that involves effectively communicating a relevant message to the listener in a way that they can understand. Homiletics assumes that the passage has been correctly interpreted and understood by the preacher before they can present it to the congregation. No one wants to listen to a preacher who knows much about his sermon theologically, but little about how to communicate it purposefully. It is within the realm of blending unction and anointing with exegesis and homiletics where the preacher must strive to be effective.

Recently, I finished an excellent book by Haddon Robinson, entitled, "Biblical Preaching." This book is a wonderful resource

for beginners and seasoned preachers of the word. The content of the word deals with the elements that lead to an effective sermon. Today I want to share some insights about how you may become a more solid preacher mixing your passion with precision.

1) Pray before you pre-

The anointing of the Holy Spirit flowing through you has the ability to break the yokes of bondage and oppression that hold the lives of people in sin.

pare. Prayer is a vital but often an overlooked part of the sermon preparation process. In times of stress and business we may find ourselves simply throwing together a message without truly waiting for a word from the Lord. *Habakkuk 2:2-3* assures that God wants to give us the message that we are to deliver to the people of God. "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger wait for it; it will certainly come and not prove false."

A large part of the waiting process is spent in prayer. Moses spent 40 days and 40 nights on Mt. Sinai while receiving the instructions for the tabernacle and its furnishings, the place where the glory of God would dwell (*ref. Ex. 24:18*). If we want the glory of God to reside in the present tabernacle, our hearts and our church, then we must be people of prayer! While I'm not saying that we've got to spend over a month in prayer before receiving the word of the Lord I am saying we need to seek the Lord before our message is ready to be prepared. Why? It's in these times of prayer that the Lord speaks a message to the heart of the preacher, hot off the coals of the altar in heaven, a fresh word to first strengthen the preaching man of God (*see Isaiah 6*). What I'm saying is that before the Lord gives the message to the people, He burns it in the heart of the preacher. The only way he can do this is if we are diligently seeking Him and waiting for the revelation in prayer.

2) Choose the passage you

want to preach. There is so much to preach on that it often seems overwhelming. Often I struggle with not what to preach but what *not* to preach. This important step in sermon preparation is the first one in transforming the sermon in our head into a reality. When Jesus announced his ministry in Galilee he chose carefully the passage he wanted to preach to communicate his proclamation that he was the chosen

Messiah (*see Luke 4:18-19*). When Peter stumbled downstairs into the streets of Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, his text was clear and dynamic (*See Acts 2*). In quoting *Joel 2:28-32*, Peter without question proclaimed that the promised Spirit had certainly come and filled the

believers with power from on high. Please note that although Peter had spent days in the upper room in the

presence of God, he had a specific, God given text of scripture that was the inspiration behind the experience.

3) Keep the main thing

the main thing. God speaks many things to us on the mountain of prayer, however, that doesn't mean that we will reveal every part of that experience to our hearers. After prayer and studying the passage we feel the Lord wants us to share, we need to focus on the main idea that the scripture is declaring to us. Determining the main idea of the passage is the most crucial step in successful sermon preparation. When we have our central theme, our thesis, then we can begin to construct our sermon.

Why is finding the main idea so important? The reason is because an effective sermon says one thing and one thing only. Everything in the body of our sermon builds upon and supports the main idea.

If I am preaching a mes-

If we want the glory of God to reside in the present tabernacle, our hearts and our church, then we must be people of prayer!

sage on the Armor of God from *Ephesians 6*, I would be foolish to also devote half of my message to the story of the Prodigal Son in *Luke 15*. While this may sound oversimplified, there are times when preachers without a main idea or thesis, lose track of what they are talking about. Nothing is more frustrating than listening to someone that doesn't make sense because they are saying too little about too much. If I were to poll a member or even visitor from your congregation after one of your sermons, and ask them, "What did your pastor speak on today and what was his central theme?" Would they be able to clearly repeat back to me what you spent hours of studying trying to communicate on that Sunday?

All your points should clearly build off of the thesis you are

putting forth. The points should be clearly stated and articulated in a manner that even the heathen can grasp. When the congregant leaves the service they should be able to say to themselves, "Pastor's message was easy to follow this morning and it made a lot of sense."

4) Determine the purpose and measurable results of your sermon. Now that you've got the main idea of your message you need to determine the sermon's purpose. Robinson states, "The purpose states what one expects to happen in the hearer as a result of preaching the sermon." A purpose is like a target that you are aiming to hit. When you have purpose for preaching your sermon to a particular group that you are targeting to reach then your sermon is destined to succeed.

Robinson asserts that there are 3 main ways in which the purpose of our sermon becomes clearly defined from our main idea. They are by explanation, validation, or by application of the main idea.

The purpose of your sermon may be explanation. When discussing foundations of faith, (basic doctrines), spiritual disciplines (e.g. prayer, fasting) etc. your purpose will be to *explain* key principles and concepts to your listeners. In this type of sermon, the idea is stated in the introduction and the points explain in more detail and fuller revelation what the text is saying. Explanation answers the basic question, "What does this mean?" by clearly uncovering the truths outlined in the bible concerning your subject.

Your sermon's purpose may also be to prove a certain concept or principle. In this sermon you introduce your main idea as something to be *proved* and your points in the message become the reasons or evidence for the idea. An example would be to prove that "The Bible is the Inspired Word of God." Your points or proofs might be something like, 1) The Bible is the inspired word of God because there is an absence of contradictions throughout, 2) The Bible is the inspired word of God because Old Testament Prophecy is fulfilled in the New Testament 3) The Bible is the inspired word of God because of its personal impact upon the lives of countless millions. Sermons set forth to prove or validate a claim from the scriptures deal with the questions, "Is this true? Why should I believe this?" If preached powerfully these sermons stand help answer some of the unbelievers most intense questions about Christianity.

Your sermon's purpose

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may be to see that a spiritual truth or principle is applied to the daily lives of your church. The sermon dealing with *application* answers the basic questions, "So what? What difference does it make?" This past week I sat through a sermon that had plenty of explanation and lots of proofs as to why I should act on the word, but severely lacked in meaningful application. Without application the listener cannot apply the sermon to their personal lives. To apply a sermon about faith to the hearer's heart and we would explain that, "Without faith it is impossible to please God because (application follows) anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." The sermons purpose then is to build the faith of the hearer so that they will apply the principles of trusting in the Lord and seeking his face so that they may gain the reward of the blessed life for now and all eternity.

Finally in dealing with purpose we must have some sort of measurable results. What do we hope to achieve in our listener as a result of the sermon? For example a sermon on Matthew 22:34-40 would be measured as the people committed to love the Lord in their homes at their job and to show that love to others in the community. A sermon on the Prayer of Jabez (1 Chr. 4:9-10) should stir the believer to among other things, pray for God's blessing, the enlargement of one's ministry and authority, etc.

One of the ways to measure the results of our preaching is during the altar call. The altar call is the most significant time in the entire service, the time when the believer responds to God's truth. Many times we are unprepared for the altar call having spent much time preparing for our message and little time thinking about the results we want to see at the altar. I'm not saying that we can measure the results of an altar call in terms of numbers or salvations but we can ask the Lord to show us what He wants to happen there. It is good to write down some of the key points that you want to emphasize in the altar time so that the intended purpose of the message will be achieved. Most of the time the Lord will do even greater things at the altar just to remind us that our preaching is not done in our own wisdom and strength, but "in the power and demonstration of the Spirit's power!" 1 Cor. 2:4

Next month will we discuss the principles associated with moving our sermons from mere



Nikil Adwaleparker oversees the Youth Ministries in the Mission Church.

(Continued from page 3)

eventually be faced with dilemmas that he is expected to solve. This can be challenging because disagreeing interests tend to maintain that theirs is the only fair position. In these times the leader must demonstrate special character by observing the following:

Fair people are concerned with right process. In settling disputes, how one proceeds to judgment is critical, because someone is bound to be disappointed with the results. First, they do not jump to conclusions; they seek to hear all sides of the story before rushing to judgment. Second, fair people do not wait for the truth to come to them (ignorance is bliss); they seek out relevant information before making decisions. Third, they attempt to seek a just resolution according to the biblical patterns set forth in Matt. 18:15-17.

Fair people are impartial. They are committed to ridding their hearts of all prejudice or acting out of favoritism. 1 Timothy 5:21 says, "I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and ... that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality." Priorities, resources, and conflicts between people cannot be decided on the basis of "who" or "what" is more preferable to arbitrator. The only deciding factors can be truth, equity and justice. Where a "conflict of interest" does arise, the fair person excuses herself from the decision making process.

Fair people correct their mistakes. Fairness requires that an individual or organization "rights its wrongs" promptly and voluntarily—especially when those who have been wronged are still ignorant or unable to defend themselves. They do not wait to be found out, but act immediately to provide fair and adequate restitution to those treated unfairly.

Pillar #5: CARING

"People won't care how much you know until they know how much you care."—unknown
 "Men are only great as they are kind."
 —Elbert Hubbard

Caring is at the heart of Christian leadership. It is impossible to be a true Christ-like leader and not be genuinely concerned with the welfare of others. This is true because the spiritual leader's character is ultimately about his responsibility toward other people.

Leaders who have great visions and yet lack a caring attitude toward individuals tend to treat others

as instruments of their will, tools for a task or even as means to promote themselves. As a result, they feel little obligation to be honest, fair or respectful to people except when doing so serves their own interests. Those in authority who lack compassion can often become leaders of questionable motives who lack integrity.

Caring people have a compassionate soul. Jesus' main motivator was compassion. Matthew 14:14 says, "And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick." No

Leaders who have great visions and yet lack a caring attitude toward individuals tend to treat others as instruments of their will, tools for a task or even as means to promote themselves

matter how busy He was or what task was at hand, he was moved to action by the needs and hurts of others. To the caring individual, a person in need is never an interruption. They are always ready to set aside their own agenda's and interests for those who need attention. "What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal." — Albert Pike

Caring people have a servant's heart. When Jesus wanted to define leadership, he wrapped a towel around His waist and washed His disciple's feet. In the world, leadership is often about promoting one's self—it can about holding others down and exercising power or control over them. But in Christ leadership is being a servant.

The time has come for leaders in the body of Christ to be more discerning regarding their character.

A servant is mostly concerned with the needs of those he serves, not his own. Hence leaders must see themselves, not as being power brokers wielding authority over "little people," but as servants to those who are in need of their skills. "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." Jesus Christ in Mark 9:35.

Caring people have a giving spirit. Those who truly care, see things from another's perspective. They are not consumed by their own need and therefore unable to give toward the needs of others. They are altruist; they are sensitive and aware of how others suffer and

take responsibility for reducing that suffering. This, however should not be confused with "strategic charity." Gifts to advance one's personal interests aren't gifts at all. They are investments, tax write-offs or even "photo-ops."

Pillar #6: CITIZENSHIP

... the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. Eph. 4:16

The concept of citizenship includes not only civic virtues and responsibilities to secular government, but also the duties each person has to the communities and organizations he or she is a part of. This especially includes one's member-

ship in a church, denomination or institution of Faith. Leaders must promote good citizenship among those who are members in their organizations—especially if they want the secular world to respect the integrity of their organizations.

The good citizen knows the "laws" and obeys them. She is conscientious about what has been defined as right and wrong behavior within the society and tries her best to walk uprightly. What is more, she will report crimes and behavior that threatens the health of the society to the respective authorities.

She volunteers and fulfills her duties as a member. That is, she does more than "her fair share" to make the society work now and for future generations. Citizenship means that one gives more to the community than he takes. Rather than becoming a

drain on the time and resources of the church, business or community, he gives of his time, volunteers his abilities and serves whenever called upon.

Conclusion

Proverbs 10:9 says, "He who walks with integrity walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will become known." Our day has seen too many charismatic leaders ascend to "greatness" before their character was ready to support that "greatness." As a result, many of these have fallen and brought reproach upon the cause of Christ around the world—or they remain in positions of influence and continue to

(Continued on page 7)

Spiritual Warfare in Intercession

Roseann Brigante

"His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realm, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph.3:10

Upon our conversion to life in Christ, we entered a spiritual battle. In Ephesians 6:11-18, Paul admonishes us to put on the full armor of God to stand against the forces of hell. He speaks of rulers, powers, and principalities in heavenly places. These represent a hierarchy in Satan's army. Just as there are varying degrees of spiritual authority in the angelic realm (angels, archangels, etc.) and in the body of Christ, so there are levels of authority in the kingdom of darkness.

As we intercede, we will

inevitably face enemy opposition and interference. We must not ignore dealing with these demonic forces, but neither should we make them our primary focus. Seeking God, exalting God, worshipping God should always precede spiritual warfare which will then be directed and led by the unction of the Holy Spirit. Some think all they have to do is shout the devil out. Praying with raised voices and shouts is not necessarily spiritual warfare, neither is it what drives the enemy out. It is the

The level of authority we walk in is directly related to our obedience and submission to the will of God for our lives.

spiritual authority in the shouts and praises in the name of Jesus that causes the enemy to flee. The Word says we have been given authority over all the powers of darkness (Luke 10:18). Understanding and walking in that authority is the key to warring in victory. The level of authority we walk in is directly related to our obedience and submission to the will of God for our lives. As we willingly let God break us and transform us, He also empowers us with a greater anointing of His Holy Spirit to do His will. This includes tearing down strongholds and taking ground for the Kingdom of God. Above all we must be in right relationship with God, filled with the Holy Spirit and armed with the weapons of our warfare (the full armor of God) before we take on the forces of Satan.

As any army general knows, you never go to war without knowing your enemy and establishing a battle plan. Satan has his strategies and knows us all too well. Let's expound on Ephesians 6 and learn a little more about the enemy's army and his strategies.

Principalities for example, are the governmental spirits in the system of hell and are the counterpart of Archangels in heaven. They rule over "Powers" as well as the more numer-

ous subcategories of demons. They influence countries, regions within countries, states, cities or even churches. Principalities are not cast out, for the Bible says they dwell in "heavenly places". They are displaced in the spirit realm as the church moves in anointing, unity and the authority of Christ in corporate prayer. An individual cannot remove a principality.

Then there are powers (Matt. 24:29). Working with principalities, but in subjection to them, a power is a major demonic spirit whose primary purpose is to blanket a given area with its particular evil (e.g., fear, anger, witchcraft, etc.). Trying to pray for people with a stronghold of fear who live where a "power of fear" has dominion will often find you right back to where you started. Here we must begin by binding the power over the area and then covering the people in prayers of protection, appropriating the blood of Jesus to ease the battle. To truly wage war against these powers, as with principalities, the church must become unified in corporate intercessory prayer. Beginning with repen-

Seeking God, exalting God, worshipping God should always precede spiritual warfare which will then be directed and led by the unction of the Holy Spirit.

tance for the sins these powers have enticed us with, we must plead our case before God in heaven, beseeching Him to send His angels to do battle in the heavenlies on our behalf.

Rulers are yet another level of authority in Satan's court and are a type of principality—a spiritual entity that is on a national scale. They govern other principalities as well as powers under them and their scope can be worldwide. Daniel's prayers were hindered when the "Prince of Persia" delayed Gabriel's coming for 21 days and Michael was sent to help him. This Prince of Persia is an example of a ruler over nations.

The most common type of demonic presence is demons. Demons are the fallen angels—those who "left their first estate" (Jude 6). They vary in degrees of wickedness (Matt. 12:45) and refer to any number of unclean spirits. They are the ground troops of hell. They are the most abundant of evil spirits and have a legal right to occupy or inhabit that which exists in defiant rebellion to God's will—including mankind. The responsibility to cast

out demons belongs to all believers (Mark 16:17).

Satan's strategy is to harass, tempt, and seduce people to sin in order to gain a foothold. Once a foothold is secured, he can move in to set up particular powers and principalities in regions to accomplish his particular purpose which ultimately is to thwart the plan of God for that region. If a spirit of rebellion would suit his purpose, then he will continually tempt the people in this area. As more and more people are seduced into this sin and the church does nothing to combat it, the enemy establishes legal ground in that community.

It is important to understand our enemy in order to wage war effectively and to eliminate unnecessary "casualties" or "beating the wind". Too often we try to go after powers and principalities as if they were demons—foolishly underestimating the power we are dealing with. We must be wise in our warfare, taking all our instruction from the Holy Spirit. And remembering the strength there is in unity. The power of the prayer of agreement has been established by God Himself. Ecc. 4:12 tells us that a tri-fold chord is not easily broken and Jesus tells us that where two or more are gathered in His name there He is in the midst of them.

The body of Christ must unify in order for us to see the answers to our prayers for revival in our churches and communities.

Laying down denominational lines and walking in the fruits of the Spirit is weaponry the enemy cannot withstand. Use love, peace, joy, self-control, patience, meekness, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness as offensive weapons. When the enemy wants to steal your peace, see it as a weapon against him and don't give in to it. This is warfare in the truest sense for each Individual believer. Standing your ground against his lies and tricks increases the fruits in your life, causes him to flee (James 4:7) and increases God's authority on your life. We will go far in advancing God's Kingdom against the devices of the Enemy and into divine purposes, if we can just get hold of this truth. Let us as one voice join to ask God to accomplish this in our lives and in our churches.

Roseann Brigante is the Director of Altar Ministry and Intercession Team in the Mission Church.

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**Registration Deadline
June 20, 2001**

Family Focus: An Honorable Marriage; part 1

Tom Readyoff

A month ago, in May, we celebrated Mother's Day. A day set aside in America to honor and remember our own mothers as well as the mothers of our children. And while many may consider this day to be "secular", Motherhood was created by God! So, through the examination of motherhood in the Bible we may uncover some of God's principles for mothers, their husbands and children. Let us see what God reveals to us through the example of three mothers in His Word.

Let's start with Eve, the first mother and wife of Adam. We read in Genesis 2:18 where God, wanting Adam and many other men to be married, said that it was not good for man to be alone and that He would, therefore, create a *helper* for him that was *comparable* to him. Comparable means to be equal or alike. That is, similar. And, being a helper does not imply subservience. In Genesis 1:27 it says that God created male and female in His own image. Adam and Eve were, therefore, created spiritually equal. It also follows that Adam could not accomplish everything God had intended for him without a helper. Eve, therefore, complements, or makes perfect, Adam as a man. A similar concept can be seen in a baseball team. Without a pitcher, the team cannot play. Without a catcher, the pitcher would throw to the backstop. They need each other. In fact, every player compliments the others because an entire team must be at full strength to be successful.

It is also important to note that God created Eve to be a *help-mate*, not a *playmate*. The world would have us believe that women are created to be playmates. Advertising, magazine covers, stories on television all ignore God's purpose for a woman. Teen-agers are very vulnerable to the ways of the world. They cannot read Exodus 20:14 where God says not to commit adultery, and think that this commandment does not apply to them because they are not married. In Galatians 5:19 we read that the first two works of the flesh are adultery and fornication, that is, having an improper sexual relationship with either someone who is married or someone who is not married. At the same time, Jesus taught that honoring a holy God goes beyond just avoiding physical actions. In talking about the

Sixth Commandment in Matthew 5:21-22, Jesus said you must examine your heart as well as your actions. Murder, for example, begins in the heart when you become angry with someone without cause. So sexual sins may also begin in the heart or

Adam could not accomplish everything God had intended for him without a helper. Eve, therefore, complements, or makes perfect, Adam as a man.

mind. Reading improper magazines or surfing the Internet for sexual images is just as much a sin as is the actual acts of adultery or fornication in that our hearts are not honoring God's purposes for creating Adam and Eve.

How do we combat these temptations before they become impure actions? Galatians 5 goes on to say that Jesus has crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. And, if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. In other words, we must ask the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, to live in us so that we may use the power that only comes for Him, to show the fruit of self-control in our thoughts and actions.

So God took a rib from Adam and created Eve with it. And then He brought Eve to Adam, just like a father walks his daughter down the aisle and brings her to the man she is to marry. God's bringing Eve to Adam was the first marriage ceremony. Jesus refers to this in Mark 10 starting in verse 6 saying that God intended marriage to be one man, one woman, one lifetime, as with Adam and Eve.

Then Eve became pregnant and her first son, Cain, was born. Adam's response to this is quite revealing for all of us. In Genesis 4:1 he says: *"I have acquired a man from the Lord"*. He acknowledges that children are in fact, God's gift to parents. We are then responsible to bring them up to know God and to walk in His ways. *"Train up a child in the way he should*

Acting on such wisdom will give husbands the necessary tools to honor their wives and they will "live in peace" in their marriages.

go and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6). This is a big responsibility, but God expects parents to treat his gift of a child with reverence and seriousness of purpose and love, disciplining them as God disciplines us because He loves us. *"Reproofs of instruction are the way of life."* (Proverbs 6:21c).

And so, with Eve, we learn

a number of things. We learn about God's purpose in creating women. We learn what marriage is and God's purpose for marriage. And we learn that children are God's gifts to parents.

A second woman I wish to look at in the bible is Mary, the mother of Jesus. The first, most obvious thing about her is her willingness to obey God. God sent the angel Gabriel to her to tell her that she would become pregnant by the Holy Spirit and have a son who would be called the Son of the Highest and Mary was to name Him Jesus. God knew Mary. Gabriel said: *"You have found favor with God."* (Luke 1:30) Found favor! Oh, that our lives would be such that we would find favor with God! Why did Mary find favor with God? Because He knew her heart toward Him. This is evident in her willingness to submit to God's will. She said: "Yes" even though she was not married yet. This acquiescence, despite the risk of losing her reputation, shows her heart toward God and why God chose her. Are we willing to say, "Yes God, here I am" even though we may risk our reputation in front of others? When we asked Jesus to be Lord of our lives, were we as willing as Mary to let Him direct our paths? If not, let us rededicate ourselves to the Lord Jesus in our prayer time with Him! (As parents, we should also pray that our children would always honor God and find favor with Him.)

And how did Joseph, Mary's husband react? God knew his heart too! Matthew 1:19 says that he was a *just* man, not wanting to shame her pregnancy in front of others. He too, then heard from God and submitted to God's direction by marrying her. Husbands can learn much from this. In 1 Peter 3:7, Paul says that husbands should honor, respect and treat their wives as heirs of the Kingdom.

In Romans 12:10, Paul describes how two believers should act toward one another: *"Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another."* If that is how husbands show honor to believers, how much more should they honor their wives! They should honor her above self, showing kindness, love, unselfishness and displaying the fruit of the Spirit. Husbands are sometimes rather dense when it comes to honoring. They would do well, therefore, to seek

wisdom from above in this matter when they pray for their wives. James 3:16-18 describes such wisdom this way: "For the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace those who make peace." Acting on such wisdom will give husbands the necessary tools to honor their wives and they will "live in peace" in their marriages.

How do husbands treat their wives with respect? One way is not to make arbitrary decisions. Husbands should seek out and consider their wife's opinions. After all, they are depending on their wives to be helpmates in all matters, as God desires. A husband should also not take offense at their wife's minor failures. Husbands have them too! **Part 2 will be continued in the July Newsletter.**

Tom Readyoff is a Deacon overseeing adult ministries in the Mission Church

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6 Pillars; con't

(Continued from page 5)

spread the poison of their failed character to those serving under them.

The time has come for leaders in the body of Christ to be more discerning regarding their character. Let us seek God to enlarge our foundation before the building gets too high. When trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship are established as the pillars of our lives, then we will become candidates for greater anointing and authority while being empowered to support the challenges and pressures that



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LEADERSHIP TEACHING NEWSLETTER

A Teaching Newsletter of Pastor Gregg Johnson and The Mission Church Ministry Staff

A GREAT RESOURCE FOR LEADERS

Leadership Teaching Newsletter is a great new resource for pastors, missionaries and all who are engaged in Christian Leadership. This monthly publication is developed by Pastor Gregg Johnson and staff of The Mission Church and is provided free to all leaders of ministries who strive toward greater effectiveness in the ministry they serve. Leadership endeavors to fulfill the following values:

- TO EQUIP by providing teachings, insights and information to Christian leaders in foreign lands who are unable to access mainstream media.
- TO ENCOURAGE the body of Christ around the world by inspiring the church's leaders to persevere through challenges, adversity and even persecution.
- TO EXHORT men and women in leadership to demonstrate the example of Christ through godly devotion, love of the brethren and commitment to the family.

If you are a leader in Christian ministry and would like to be added to our mailing list, Please contact the Mission Church.

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The Glory of His Presence—Priority #1

Derrick Hoffman

Why is it that some churches seem to be so full of God's presence and others seem to be so empty? The answer is simple. It's not the sign in front of the building; It's not how many people attend on Sunday morning; It's not even how great the worship team is. "God goes where He is wanted!" Just like salvation being available to everyone who will receive it by faith – God's presence is available to all that will make his presence their first priority.

I was recently challenged with a very sobering question with which I want to challenge you. We sing, we pray, we ask for his glory to fill the tabernacle...no here's the question: We feel a tingle or a set of holy ghost "Goosebumps" and we say He is here...But do we have what it takes to keep his presence – his glory in our midst? We're told in God's word that he knows our hearts before we even speak. God in his glory doesn't go where people are playing church! His presence and his glory are enjoyed by those who make their #1 priority. It's all about him. Not about us. The central issue concerning praise and worship is the presence and the glory of God. Remember as stated in Psalm 100:4, praise and

worship are simply the gateway or entry to his presence. "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise."

Ok, here's where the rubber meets the road. The question we must ask is this: are there other considerations that take precedence over God being #1 in our lives? To the Pharisees, it was human tradition (Matt.15:3-9); to the ambitious, the problem could be reputation; to the selfish, it could be greed; to the insecure, the approval of men. Did you know The Holy Spirit wants to persuade us to get rid of wrong motives, wasted pursuits – chasing the wind if you will. To make Him our #1 priority we have to humbly and radically seek his presence with no other competition.

Let's take on the mindset of Moses: "If your presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?" (Exodus 33:15) This is the prayer of a heart that means business! As we read this, take some time and meditate on this scripture. Next take this prayer and make it yours. First apply it personally; then apply it to your ministry; now apply it as a

prayer for the body of believers you are grafted into. Your church if you will. I don't know about you, but I don't want to go anywhere without his presence without his anointing. "Don't send us up from here" Moses didn't want to go up or forward from that place without God's presence. Our prayer should be the same. "Lord I don't want to be out of your will". I don't want to go any place without your hand on my every move. "How will anyone know that you are pleased with us?" When God is pleased with us, people will know. He opens doors, moves mountains, and suspends natural laws in the face of all when He is pleased with us.

"What else will distinguish me and all your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?" How are we different? Are we different? When we make his presence and his glory our #1 priority, we will be different and all will see it! Remember we can beg God to come all we want, but until you prepare a place where his glory can dwell, he may visit but he cannot stay. Believe it! The King of Glory is at the gate. He wants to take his seat in the sanctuary of

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