

Character Development Plan

A. How is God trying to form Christ in me?

Romans 12:2 asserts, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God”. So, what does it mean to be conformed to Christ and how is God trying to form Christ in me?

As discussed in class, in order to be a spiritual leader good character is a requirement. We need to be a person of integrity. Why do we need to have integrity? First of all, our primary responsibility is to mirror the character of God. This means behaving like Jesus. Jesus is full of truth and grace (John 1:14). Even though he was whipped and beaten, Jesus was humble, loving and forgiving. He displayed his love for us by dying on the cross. It was through this unselfish act of love that our sins are forgiven and we are able to have direct access to God and experience eternal life. Just as Jesus died on the cross, God is teaching me to die to self. For instance, God is teaching me to die to self when it comes to material possessions. I am learning to store up my treasures in heaven and not store my treasures up on earth. Despite work and seminary, I have been sacrificing some of my personal time to help out and lead the men’s small group bible study at my church. Also, as part of my field education, I am looking at helping to minister to the men’s population that are experiencing homelessness, trauma, anxiety and depression. Not only have I been “dying to self” with my extra time but also with my extra money. I have been using my financial resources to help the church and its ministries, as well as helping to fund overseas missions programs.

Secondly, we must represent Jesus well to others. We must “be like salt” (Matt 5:13) so others will want to follow Jesus too. For example, at work I like to lead by example. If I ask my

employees to do something or behave in a certain manner, I must be willing to do it too. If they observe me having good behavior, they will mimic the good behavior. Otherwise, it will be like monkey see monkey do! They will say, what the heck, Kevin is not behaving well, why should we. In addition, if I wanted to be trusted, I must be trusting of my employees. If I want to be respected, I must be respectful of my employees.

Third, I must display appropriate words and actions. This means showing my employees and others respect and dignity. Since we are all created in the image of God, it is imperative that we show everyone dignity and respect. Lastly, God is working on being courageous to give people what they need to hear, not what they want to hear. This means that when I am proclaiming the gospel to people at church or outside of church that I communicate God's big idea and not my own ideas. In the past, I was afraid of what the world would think. But now, I trust that God will work all things out. I also feel more secure in my identity in Christ and am willing to take risks for the Kingdom of God.

B. What practices will I incorporate to develop my character?

The practices that I will incorporate to develop my character includes: (a) Be secure in my identity in Christ, (b) be honest-"be faithful with the little", (c) be authentically humble-dying to self (talked about previously above), (d) persevering, (e) love, and (f) purity. For this discussion, we will analyze and discuss items (a) and (b).

So first, I am seeking to be secure in my identity in Christ. This is important since as mentioned in class, insecure leaders are threatened about powerful leaders or leaders with great influence. On the contrary, out of being secure in our identity in Christ, we need to be empowering, behave in ways that build security, and rejoice with those who rejoice. In the past, I felt threatened at

work by those who were in authority or who had great influence. Now because I feel secure about my identity in Christ, I am more self-controlled, and not defensive. My value is settled at the cross, if someone does not like me, oh well, Jesus loves me and that is adequate for me!

Secondly, I have put into practice being more honest. 1 John 1 states that, “We need to walk in the light with others”. One thing that I have done to help with my honesty is to get myself an accountability partner. This is someone that I can trust and I have no secrets with this person. After learning from my accountability partner about being a good steward of what God gives us, I began to invest and manage my money wisely and not wasting what God has given me. God had told me that I needed to “be faithful with the little and he will put me in charge of many things” (Luke 16:10). “Being faithful with the little” means not only be faithful with our money by using our resources to help others, but also being faithful with our time with ministry tasks that we are given¹.

For instance, I was given the ministry task of serving as an assistant Chaplain at Bowery Mission in East Harlem, New York. Through being faithful with the ministry task of helping the homeless, and those with trauma and mental illness, I have seen a lot of good fruit come out of this experience. By ministering and helping the men’s population at the Bowery Mission through teaching and preaching God’s word and using the spiritual disciplines of prayer, worship, and reading and meditating on scripture, I saw men’s lives transformed. Through proclaiming and demonstrating the gospel, prayer and worship, I was able to see men’s lives changed dramatically in a short period of time. Men that were previously angry were now loving. Men that were unforgiving were now forgiving. And men that were prideful were now humble.

¹ Clinton, R. The Making of a Leader. Tyndale House Publishers, 2018.

C. What can I do for the future to safeguard that my character will be developed?

In the future, I will use the “Tools of the Kingdom of Light” mentioned in class. These tools include: (1) Access-Humility, (2) Start using tools like fasting to get breakthrough, (3) Community-Bring things into the light with others, and (4) Stand on the promises of God.