

Spiritual Well Being Reflection

In pertinence to who I am in terms of assessments, personal development, and how I had progressed spiritually and emotionally in the past three years, I can say with confidence that I had went through a lot of experiences spiritually, socially, and academically. This helped me to learn things I had never knew about myself before and helped to remind me of things I had forgotten. For an example, when I was rereading my spiritual autobiography over, I realized that some of the goals in which I had set for myself were met, while some were forgotten. I walk with my parents two days a week and with God twice a week as well, so I have met that goal. However, I had forgotten about my fasting goals to fast once biweekly for three months and then once every week for another three months. Therefore, I do think that I was overly ambitious with some of my spiritual goals.

Another example is my past goal of reading four theological books during winter break and then another six books during the summer break. I had managed to read two books in the winter and three books in the summer instead. I also managed to pray for world events which I had remembered to pray for which was my past goal. However, I had forgotten to draw pictures of nature which depicts God's majesty and creativity. Nonetheless, at least with this goal, I had managed to fulfil it partially than not at all. In terms of people pleasing, I am still trying to find a good balance between saying no and saying yes to certain requests from others. It is especially hard to say no when other individuals know that you are in a spiritual leadership position, as there is pressure to maintain a good image of being generous and caring rather than insensitive, selfish, and blunt. It is also harder to refuse to do a request from an individual whom you are close friends with. Nevertheless, I also know that if I do too much of people pleasing, it will eventually become fully integrated into my personality, and some people will exploit me for it.

Moreover, I also have not kept track of all the times I have said no to requests because I had forgotten about it after three years. However, on an optimistic note, I have worked on my forgiveness and eradicated my traces of bitterness against all of my past transgressors which I had mentioned in my case studies, spiritual autobiography, and spiritual covenant. I had a past problem of thinking that I had forgiven a transgressor when I realized I have only forgiven him out of duty and not out of my willfulness. In other words, I had forgiven that given person from a cognitive standpoint but not from my soul and heart.

Furthermore, I had learned that there is a process of true forgiveness that takes a longer time that one might think. It took me an additional three years to forgive my main transgressor in my life who was a high school bully. It felt good to despise him and blame him for all of my insecurities such as saying to myself that “I have no confidence because of him. It is his fault I struggle with social anxiety.” Although he was indeed exacerbating my issues, it was not his fault, in the end it was mine. It took me a lot of humility to admit that to myself and to the Lord. After forgiving him, I felt a heavy burden lift off my soul, and my fellow congregates had felt something was different about myself in a good way.

Additionally, also on a positive note, I had noticed that my prayer has been improving. In my autobiography and spiritual assessment paper, I had mentioned that I needed to work on praying more consistently as well as the overall flow of my prayer. I am proud to say that praying feels a lot more natural to myself, not as a theatrical performance meant to show off in the public setting of a church, but as simply a yearning to get more intimate with the Heavenly Father. I had also mentioned my false self in my spiritual assessment paper. I had now broken through my false self and no longer have an identity crisis, as it is a lot firmer in the Lord than in juxtaposition to how it was three years ago. I have learned to pray the same prayer that King

David had offered to the Lord which was Psalm 139:23-24. David prays, “Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”¹ By praying this prayer every now and then, it allows me to check myself spiritually to see if anything is wrong just like an individual going to the doctor’s office to get a check up so to speak.

My spiritual gifting consists of discernment as well as prophecy. Discernment is my spiritual gift because I am naturally good at observation and making judgement calls whether spiritually or socially in certain situations. I can differentiate the signs of an individual when he or she is truly communicating what he or she feels. I can also discern whether a person is truly filled with the Holy Spirit or if that person is not filled with it and admits it, or if that person is a false prophet who is deluded by Satan. In regards to the second and last spiritual gift which is prophecy, I have developed this gift in the past year and a half. This is due to my constant prayers and my spiritual endurance during my trials of faith, although from the previous semester, my spirituality had dipped down a bit to which it has now risen again. For an example, if something is worrying me in my life, I can ask God, and then He will show me through dreams and visions of what is going to happen in the near future. I have tested this multiple times and made sure that I was not simply deluding myself. My conclusion is that it is real since I do not believe in consecutive coincidences happening in a row.

In my spiritual covenant paper, I had mentioned that I was blaming God for my troubles on an occasional basis. This has now stopped as I now know that the Lord is not to blame. The suffering that I had experienced as well as the suffering going on in the world is not His fault but rather the fault of mankind’s sin due to Satan tempting Adam and Eve. Although the Lord wishes to intervene and alleviate everyone’s suffering, he cannot because he has to honor free will. In

¹ Psalm 139:23-24, NIV.

other words, free will and sin are in one package and cannot be separated prior to the Day of Judgment. He also desires to allow trials of faith to occur to validate the authenticity of the faith of his people.

In relevance to my mentor's final assessment, she had admitted that she had not told me the details of the personality of the disabled individuals which was true. This is why I had asked her for the details concerning the personality of each of the mentally challenged so that I can better communicate and understand them. This includes their quirks, strengths, and weaknesses, their best friends, and people who do not get along together. However, on the pessimistic side of the matter, my mentor had said that I had initially struggled to simplify my sermons to an appropriate extent to the mentally disabled. The insights I have gathered from my field education experience in the Milal Church was to always do research on the youth or congregates first to get along with them to an even greater degree. This includes asking congregates who have been long time members about them as well as simply observing these individuals from afar before I get close with them.

In regards to insights I have garnered from the pda document, my mentor had commended my liturgy, communication, counseling, leadership development, preaching, stewardship, and leading skills in my field education experience. This leads me to think that I am more familiar with the responsibilities of a spiritual leader, bible studies, and the overall liturgy of the worship service whether it is for the mentally challenged or for young youths who are not mentally challenged.

Documents



ALLIANCE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Intern's Field Education: Basic Habits or Skills Assessment



Name of Intern: Joshua Kim

Date: 12/5/22

Mentors, this form assesses the professional affective dispositions, behaviors and ministry skills of ATS Interns. Note that students will review this evaluation. Please rate each item below on the basis of your personal interactions and observations of the Intern. Please use the following scale for each item:

1= To No Extent 2= To A Little Extent 3= To A Moderate Extent 4= To A Great Extent 5= Completely

4	1. Demeanor: The student demonstrated positive attitudes in interactions with staff and other people.
4	2. Appearance: Appropriate and professional.
4	3. Responsibility: The student undertook and completed assigned tasks.
3	4. Maturity: The student displayed maturity and poise in task completion and person to person interaction.
4	5. Cooperation: The student displayed a positive willingness to work with peers and those in authority.
4	6. Flexibility: The student displayed a willingness and ability to adapt to changes in events, conditions, activities, and tasks.
3	7. Initiative: The student displayed independence in starting and completing activities, products, and tasks.
4	8. Awareness of Individual Differences: The student displayed a recognition of and empathy for human differences in ethnicity, gender, physical ability, and intellectual ability.
4	9. Patience: The student displayed the ability to be patient in activities and/or in person to person interactions.
3	10. Tactfulness: The student displayed the ability to recognize and compensate for the feelings and self-esteem of others.
3	11. Enthusiasm: The student displayed energy and enthusiasm and responded appropriately to humor in person to person interactions.
4	12. Creativity: The student displayed the ability to synthesize theology and practice into new personalized adaptations and applications.
3	13. Professionalism: The student recognized, sought, and used the best research, theology and practice in his/her professional activities and presentations.
3	14. Reflective Practitioner: The student displayed the ability to reflect, evaluating his/her own experience.
4	15. Teachable: The student graciously received constructive feedback/criticism.
3	16. "With-it-ness": The student exhibited a level of awareness regarding the ministry environment.
4	17. Servanthood: The student gladly served others with humility.
4	18. Love: The student demonstrated in actions and words love for other people of all ages.
3	19. Confidence: The student displayed confidence without being arrogant.
3	20. Courage: The student displayed ability to take an appropriate risk.

Redeeming Sex Reflection and Application

In the book called “Redeeming Sex” by Debra Hirsch, the author discusses how the Church should address its cultural standpoint on the topic of sexuality more appropriately. This is because an increasing number of people are being lost as potential believers because the church rejects them as sexual misfits as well as forbidding believers to discuss and learn about sexuality within the church. Three major themes to teach my church stood out to me throughout the book. The first theme involves four of the eight fundamentals of sex mentioned in chapter four of the book. Debra Hirsch starts the chapter with the first fundamental of sex which is the concept of social sexuality and genital sexuality. The former involves all our social networks as “Each relationship we have provides different levels of intimacy with different levels of intensity.”² While the latter pertains to the physical, spiritual, and emotional vulnerability.³

The second theme is that our sexual lives need to be chaperoned.⁴ “Loving God and loving others is not expressed without our mediator guiding and correcting all our false, broken loves and motivations.”⁵ This interrelates to the concept that sexuality is fractured and deceptive.⁶ As the author states, “As it pertains to our sexuality, it seems some form of self-deception is part of the deal, which is why it is important to be aware of not only our own propensity to rationalize but sexuality’s power to blind us. The truth is we all entertain a legion of little delusions.”⁷ Thus, we need Christ to open our eyes and show us the right path to take in regards to our sexuality. The third theme is that “sexuality is embodied.”⁸ This signifies that “we must embrace our bodies as an essential part of who we are. We cannot disconnect

² Debra Hirsch, *Redeeming Sex: Naked Conversations about Sexuality and Spirituality* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 66.

³ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 77-78.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 73-75.

ourselves from what we do with them.”⁹ Debra Hirsch had mentioned how several prostitutes tried to differentiate what they do with their bodies from their character; however, it is all interconnected. This means that our actions ultimately determine our character in Christ.

The fourth and last fundamental of sex is the notion that “sexuality knows no age.”¹⁰ This signifies that even elderly individuals still struggle with their sexual identity and issues. It is not simply the young or middle-aged individuals who are discovering their sexuality. Therefore, the church must show greater concern regarding the issue of sexuality with its members and also with the outside world. In pertinence to all the previously mentioned fundamentals of sex, I will integrate them into Bible study sessions with my congregates.

For an example, in the beginning of the first bible study session, I will introduce the concept of social sexuality versus genital sexuality. For the second fundamental of sex which was that our sexuality needs to be chaperoned by Christ, I will mention in the Bible study of the narrative of the young man being warned against the advances of an adulterous woman in Proverbs 7.¹¹ This timeless lesson which can be considered both theological and practical applies now in the twenty first century even more so than in biblical antiquity in my personal opinion. Many young men and also women are succumbing to the devil’s sexual temptations in their lives. This is happening to believers and nonbelievers alike. Then I will incorporate the fundamentals that sexuality is fractured and deceptive by going over Genesis chapter three. I would explain the relevance of these two fundamentals of sex by saying that Satan in the form of a serpent had tricked both Adam and Eve into committing their first sin which brought upon the fall of humankind. Therefore, I can say to my congregates that Satan can still deceive us into believing

⁹ Ibid., 75.

¹⁰ Ibid., 85.

¹¹ Ibid., 83.

lies that our sexuality is not fractured and he can also deceive us by telling us lies that restrict our sexuality in Christ from fully expressing itself. One example is only having sex after marriage.

In relevance of a third fundamental of sex which was that sexuality is embodied, I can connect it with the story of Jesus and the adulterous woman from John 8:3-11 in a bible study in my church. In John 8:7, Jesus had stated to the people who wanted to stone the woman, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”¹² Although the woman was not evil, she had still sinned with the usage of her body and therefore was supposed to be stoned to death. However, Jesus had mercy on her and forgave her for her sin. Therefore, the lesson that sexuality is embodied can be practically and theologically interrelated to this biblical scenario of John 8:3-11. I can then discourage others of having sexual intercourse before marriage, and if some individuals have already done it, I can then discourage those people from doing it again until marriage in a private setting.

For the fourth fundamental of sex which was that “sexuality knows no age,” the story of Sarah being told that she can have her own child by the Lord and laughing in Genesis 18:13-15 can be interrelated with it in another bible study session with my English ministry group.¹³ Sarah had laughed and doubted the Lord because she was well advanced in years. In more direct terms, it can be stated that theologically her sexual identity in Christ was slowly being consumed by time and her age, until almost nothing was left. I can teach that we are sexual beings by nature because God had intended us to be that way despite the factors of age or time. Therefore, on a practical note, the sexual struggles and insecurity one experiences in their youth can still plausibly carry on into their elderly years. That is why the church should not dismiss the elderly of their issues with sexuality.

¹² John 8: 3-11, NIV.

¹³ Debra Hirsch, *Redeeming Sex: Naked Conversations about Sexuality and Spirituality* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 85.

In relevance to the second theme which stood out to me which was that we as believers in Christ should separate our gender from stereotypical gender roles. In other words, there might be a discrepancy between our gender in terms of its outward appearance to others and its inward nature to oneself.¹⁴ I can explain to my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ on a practical level that while someone might be biologically male with a heterosexual orientation, to someone else it might seem that person is homosexual. In more direct terms, that given person's outward appearance of being homosexual and inward nature of being heterosexual can sometimes confuse others.¹⁵ This is why, on a theological note, in order to not be perplexed, Christians needs to separate gender from its typical gender roles as previously mentioned just as Christ deviated from the typical masculine roles and behavior in his day.

Moreover, the sermon regarding this issue which I will preach to the English ministry of my home church will be titled, "Do you have a Christ like separation of Gender of its Gender Roles as well as Race with its Racial Roles?" This sermon will include the narratives of the Samaritan woman from John 4:5-30 as well as Jesus embracing the young children in Mark 10:13-16. Theologically, I will explain to the congregates that "Jesus not only modeled a new form of masculinity but seemed to go a step further by actively and publicly displaying behaviors and emotions that were seen as distinctly feminine."¹⁶ I can also give a real-life practical example of how in a family household, the man can be the cook while the woman can be the handyman such as in Debra Hirsch's case.¹⁷ Practically and theologically, this can encourage my congregates in the English ministry to perceive gender and gender roles in a different light. Since

¹⁴ Ibid., 90.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 98.

¹⁷ Ibid., 88.

our Presbyterian Church is very conservative, this can be eye opening to some of them especially from the older generations.

Furthermore, I can do an additional sermon titled, “A Godly Welcome to Banish Our Own Inner Pharisee.” This pertains to the disposition of our church to atheists who are sinners such as thieves, homosexuals, liars, etc. I can use the multiple examples of Jesus sitting with sinners such as in Matthew 9:10-17. I can also mention a specific verse such as Matthew 9:12-13 in which Jesus Christ states, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick...For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”¹⁸ I can assert the point that newcomers will be unsettled by how perfect of an image the church is projecting itself to be.¹⁹ As the author states, “Who really is going to risk introducing their personal mess into the perfectly ordered environments that make up so many of our churches?”²⁰

Therefore, I will assert that we have to change as the Church of Christ which is to allow varying attitudes and perspectives which do not infringe upon the basic beliefs of Christianity such as the Holy Trinity, Jesus as fully human and fully divine, Christ’s resurrection, the Fall of Man, Creationism, etc.²¹ A theological and practical reason for this is that rather than judging people, we should accept them just like Christ had accepted us as sinners and died on the cross for us. Practically, this will increase the overall Christians in the Church of Christ. I then can state for more impact in the author’s words that “If we had to be honest, there exists a Pharisee in each of us.”²² Overall, these are the practical and theological ways and reasons why not just my church, but all the Churches of the Christian faith should educate their members on how to

¹⁸ Matthew 9:12-13, NIV.

¹⁹ Debra Hirsch, *Redeeming Sex: Naked Conversations about Sexuality and Spirituality* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 183.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 191.

²² Ibid., 195.

broach the topic of sexuality for more openness for the diverse individuals who are potential believers in Christ.

Philosophy of Ministry

I believe that a philosophy of ministry is crucial to have as it provides a clear focus on what needs to be done, why it needs to be done, and how it can be accomplished through our efforts as believers combined with the power of the Holy Spirit. Dr. J. Robert Clinton had stated that a “Ministry philosophy refers to ideas, values, and principles that a leader uses as a guideline for decision making, for exercising influence, or for evaluating his ministry.”²³ This signifies that a philosophy of ministry is not only advantageous for the spiritual leader’s growth but also can be beneficial for the entire church as well as neighboring communities. Nevertheless, if a spiritual leader has an ambiguous ministry philosophy, “Either they do not learn the lesson or they fail to identify this lesson and integrate them into a system that can undergird future ministry decision making.”²⁴

It is also interesting to note that a philosophy of ministry starts off as simplistic and can be more adapted to a specific ministry circumstance or context.²⁵ However, as time goes on and the spiritual leader gains more experience and biblical insight, “the philosophy will include general, umbrella-like guidelines, as well as specific guidelines.”²⁶ This can interrelate to “the evolutionary pattern” of a philosophy of ministry in accordance to the Dr. J. Robert Clinton.²⁷ The author explains that there are three stages, the first stage is what he calls an “osmosis.” This is where “leaders learn implicit philosophy experientially.”²⁸ The second stage is self-

²³ Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership Development* (Colorado: NavPress, 2012), 104.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., 157.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 160-161.

²⁸ Ibid., 161.

explanatory by its name which is called “baby steps.” This entails that “leaders discover explicit philosophy through experience and reflection.”²⁹ The third and final stage is when leaders formulate their most optimal philosophy of ministry through time, effort, experience, and spiritual maturity.³⁰

Thus, spiritual leaders will gradually learn which of their skills to apply to a given situation and which biblical principle is applicable to a situation and which principles are not applicable. In more direct terms, the spiritual leader will become more flexible and make more decisive decisions using their intuition and judgment using a solid biblical foundation. Having such a strong biblical and theological foundation is important because even though “Lessons learned in life situations become underlying assumptions that guide leaders,” which become integrated into their philosophy of ministry, it is not sufficient in and of itself.³¹

Moreover, my theological foundation is servant leadership. This is because I want to model my philosophy of ministry by the actions and behavior of Jesus Christ himself. As Dr. J. Robert Clinton asserts concerning spiritual leaders, “They learn from Scripture. They are pressed by their situations to see new truth in the Scriptures and in the situations themselves.”³² Luke 22:26, Jesus states, ‘Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules should be like the one who serves.’³³ Therefore, one can discern that it is relatively easy for a leader to become conceited with his or her power and abuse his or her authority. Therefore, a consistent practice of humility in terms of servant leadership would minimize such a possibility by strengthening the individual’s spiritual faith and expelling any necessary pride which would hinder the work of the Church of Christ.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 157.

³² Ibid.

³³ Luke 22:26, NIV.

Statement of faith

I believe in the One True God who created the heavens, sea, and the earth as well as the universe. (Nehemiah 9:6, Genesis 1:1, Romans 1:20, 1 Timothy 2:5). I hold the conviction that the Lord reveals himself to all living things he created through the means of general revelation and reveals himself through special revelation to devout believers who believe in Jesus Christ and the inerrant biblical Scriptures. (Romans 1:19, Psalm 19: 1-4, John 1:14, 2 Timothy 3:16). I strongly believe that God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent as he is not bound by human constraints. (Matthew 1:23, Psalm 147:5, Genesis 18:14). The Lord is one Godhead with three persons who are distinct which are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 2:9). I believe that Christ was fully man and fully divine who was born out of the womb of the Virgin Mary. (Matthew 1:25, Philippians 2:6-8). Jesus Christ had died for the sins of all of mankind and rose again from the dead. (1 Peter 1:3, John 11:25-26, 1 Corinthians 6:14). The Lord had created Adam and Eve out of the earth and to dust they shall return because of their sins which caused the fall of man and tainted their descendants. (Genesis 3:16-19, 2 Corinthians 11:3). I hold the conviction that eternal salvation is not something to be earned through one's merits but through the Lord's grace and our faith in Him. (John 5:24, John 6:47, 1 John 5:4). Finally, I believe that the Lord will come back as a roaring lion instead of a sacrificial lamb to bring harsh judgment upon the wicked and save the righteous. (Ecclesiastes 12:14, Acts 17:31).

Five Core Values

The five core values that shape my vision are faith with works, magnanimity, prayer, meditation upon scripture, and simplicity. In pertinence to the first core ministry value which is being active in the world, James 2:14 states, 'What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says

he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?’³⁴ This signifies that our words as Christians should carry more weight than empty words. The only way to add meaning to our words of good will in Christ is to exemplify them. A good example of this contradiction between the words and actions of a believer in Christ is James 2:15-16. It states, “If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,’ “but do you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?”³⁵ This is very important to provide the physical needs of a potential believer first before a believer tells him or her about the gospel. Rather than imposing the Christian faith by only permitting them to get free food after listening to a sermon, we need to exemplify the love of Christ to nonbelievers who are suffering due to their impoverished lifestyle. Matthew 25:35 asserts, ‘For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink...’³⁶

And it is not only poverty, but serving our community as well. Whether the job entails painting classroom walls in a school, raking leaves, shoveling snow for our elderly neighbors, or evangelizing prison inmates, we must be the salt of the earth. As Matthew 5:13-16 states, “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and be trampled underfoot.”³⁷ In more direct terms, as believers in Christ, and especially as spiritual leaders, we must continue to be humble, caring, and loving to others, especially those who are nonbelievers to show the world our proactiveness regardless of whether they believe in the Christian faith or not.

³⁴ James 2:14, NIV.

³⁵ James 2:15-16, NIV.

³⁶ Matthew 25:35, NIV.

³⁷ Matthew 5:13-16, NIV.

My second core ministry value is being magnanimous because this is how Christ was in biblical antiquity and how he expects his believers to be. He had never once defended himself out of insecurity in the Bible when he was in confrontation with the Pharisees because he knew he was loved by the Father. We also as believers should not be defensive and should learn how to separate the messenger from the message. This signifies that some of the beneficial feedback we can receive is from individuals who we do not like or get along with. This is certainly not in the case of Christ with the Pharisees, but as we are not perfect like Jesus, this is certainly the case with us. This is because those individuals are very direct and do not try to cushion their words or lie to make us feel better. Instead of attacking our criticizer back, we must be generous with our love and patience regarding our attitude, behavior, and words to them, especially if some of us are pastors in a Christian church. Rather than hating the person, we should love them unconditionally, whether they hate us or love us back in return. Being magnanimous also entails being forgiving. We as Christians should also be forgiving just like how Christ was forgiving towards us. Matthew 6:14-15 states, “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others of their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”³⁸

When Christ was being crucified on the cross and was slowly dying, his transgressors had mocked him because they did not believe that He was the Son of God. They urged him to call down his angels to save him as proof of his divinity to them. Little did they know that He could have called legions of angels to rescue him from his pain and suffering, but he did not because he wanted to save humanity by taking all of their sins on himself as a sacrificial lamb. He wanted to forgive humanity from the sin of Adam and Eve and become the bridge between his Father and mankind. He wanted to forgive the world, and that included his enemies. In Luke 23:34, Jesus

³⁸ Matthew 6:14-15, NIV.

said, ‘Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.’³⁹ I know that in my ministry there will be rude individuals who are Christians who can possibly plot against me or insult me, however in that case, I need to show them my magnanimity instead of striving toward retaliation by forgiving them unconditionally. This entails forgiving my transgressor regardless of whether they apologized to me or not.

Another aspect of magnanimity is courage. As was mentioned previously, Christ had come down to earth as a sacrificial lamb. However, He will come like a lion on the day of judgment, unlike when he was a sacrificial lamb in which he had suffered for our sins on the cross. He had to perish like other criminals to cleanse all of our sins with his precious blood. It took Christ a lot of courage to give himself up to be crucified, knowing that the physical pain would be tortuous and that his death be made slow and cruel. It took Christ a lot of courage to not give up and not call upon his twelve legions of angels to come and rescue him during the six hours of his crucifixion. But he knew that if he did that, humanity would be forever damned into hell. It took Christ a lot of courage to perish, not just physically, but also spiritually as well. This is because once he had taken all the sins of humanity upon himself, the Father had turned away from Him. For the first time in his life, Jesus could not feel his Father’s presence and thus experienced a spiritual death. This is why he cried out in around the sixth hour of his crucifixion, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ in Matthew 27:46.⁴⁰ Therefore, we must be courageous and keep on fighting the good fight as the Apostle Paul mentioned in 2 Timothy 4:7. We must wear the armor of faith so that we can face the enemy. In my ministry context, as an aspiring pastor, and as a current children’s pastor, I desire to have the courage to confront

³⁹ Luke 23:34, NIV.

⁴⁰ Matthew 27:46, NIV.

individuals in uncomfortable circumstances so that I can be direct instead of indirect when dealing with hostility or misunderstandings.

My third core ministry value is prayer. One can consider these spiritual disciplines to be one of the most important ones. Jesus had stated a good way to pray is by saying, ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.’⁴¹ Prayer is important because it is the precious time of the day when we speak to the Lord and nurture our relationship with Him. It should be done as a daily routine. As Richard Foster asserts, “We must never wait until we feel like praying for others. Prayer is like any other work; we may not feel like working, but once we have been at it for a bit, we begin to feel like working.”⁴²

Additionally, it should not only be about our blessings and requests, but it focus more on receiving wisdom and spiritual empowerment from the Lord as well as blessings for other individuals. Rather than praying out of fear due to a precarious circumstance, we should pray out of faith and trust in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Meditation is pivotal for the Christian faith as well. This is because it is essentially “the ability to hear God’s voice and obey his word.”⁴³ It is also wise to keep prayers simple and not too intricate. We should not confuse complexity with quality when it comes to prayer.⁴⁴ A long and complex prayer may sound exemplary, however, that is not the most optimal way of doing it.⁴⁵ In Matthew 6:5, Jesus states, ‘And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received

⁴¹ Matthew 6:9-13, NIV.

⁴² Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (New York: HarperCollins, 2018), 45.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

their reward in full.’⁴⁶ This signifies that the Lord values prayer that is authentic and simplistic just like how children pray rather than prayer that is done to show off in front of an audience of listeners.

Moreover, we as the believers of Christ are the children of God. Thus, we must have a child like mindset in this regard concerning prayer. As a future associate pastor and senior pastor, I need to learn how to pray more effectively for others, as prayer would be the most frequently used spiritual discipline in the church. This is not to save my own reputation, as I know that God will take care of it if I am faithful, but to show other believers how to pray like Christ intended for us to pray.

My fourth ministry core value is meditation upon scripture. Richard Foster describes this as transforming “the inner personality. We cannot burn the eternal flame of the inner sanctuary and remain the same, for the Divine Fire will consume everything that is impure.”⁴⁷ This means that meditation if used correctly, can transform a person spiritually and cleanse his or her heart from their sin. It is intriguing to note that meditation has two parts of detachment and attachment. As Richard Foster asserts, “No, detachment is not enough; we must go on to attachment. The detachment from the confusion all around is in order to have a richer attachment to God. Christian meditation leads us to the inner wholeness necessary to give ourselves to God freely.”⁴⁸ One can say that “These two concepts of meditation are complete opposites. The one confines us to a totally human experience; the other catapults us into a divine-human encounter.”⁴⁹ In context of ministry, it is crucial to meditate upon Scripture because the number of pages read in a Bible do not mean anything if a believer is rushing to get his or her daily bible reading done and

⁴⁶ Matthew 6:5, NIV.

⁴⁷ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (New York: HarperCollins, 2018), 20.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 23.

over with. Meditation slows down the pace and allows the reader to slowly but steadily process the Word into his or her heart in order to strengthen their comprehension of it and apply it in their daily lives. "Meditation sends us into our ordinary world with greater perspective and balance."⁵⁰

My fifth and last core ministry value is simplicity. This is because a simplistic lifestyle where materialistic obsession is discouraged brings more spiritual potential into the believer's life than a luxurious lifestyle. Things such as electronic game systems, the latest iPhone, or a plasma television are unnecessary for a Christian lifestyle in which God should be the center of the life of a believer in Christ. If we have too many luxurious household items and devices, we can lose track of the Lord in our lives and forget the primary purpose of our lives which is to bring glory to the One True God. This is especially crucial for spiritual leaders such as pastors to adhere to, as many people will look to him or her as a guiding example of how Christ should be. Therefore, as one of these pastors, I aim to simplify my life even further and have more quality time to spend with God.

Non-Negotiables

My first non-negotiable is taking breaks whenever I feel overburdened with work. This is important because there needs to be a healthy balance of work and relaxation in order to be productive in the long run. For an example, if a minister is pushing himself without taking any days off for a month to several months, there will come a time where all of his pent-up stress and frustrations will explode onto someone. However, even before that, there can be emotional leakages where the spiritual leader can become impatient or easily irritated. Therefore, it is wise for one to know when to take a break and for one to know one's reasonable limits. Although it is possible for a spiritual leader to ask for motivation and energy from the Lord, there is no guarantee that the Lord will grant this wish each time, as sometimes the answer to a prayer is

⁵⁰ Ibid., 22.

“no.” If a spiritual leader knows how to take breaks, then it will surely help him or her in the future in terms of their ministry and mission to bring God glory.

My second non-negotiable of my philosophy of ministry is giving credit to where it is due and honoring others. A good spiritual leader knows when to give attention to a particularly helpful believer or follower when that particular individual goes up and beyond with his or her task which had benefited the church. For an example, if an adult believer had been a teaching assistant to a children’s pastor for free as a voluntary service, the senior pastor needs to address this individual. This is accomplished by asking him or her to stand up to receive ovation and a present from the church as an appropriate reward for his or her diligent work. If a pastor does not know how to do this or refuses to do this, next time that believer will not volunteer any more or work as hard as before. Thus, the quality of the overall ministry drops as an inevitable result. A successful ministry not only entails spiritual discernment and skills but also social skills as well. In finality, my third and final non-negotiable is servant leadership. This is because Christ had demonstrated servant leadership by cleaning the feet of his disciples, something a household servant would do. We as believers in Christ need to follow his example. The main obstacles to this are laziness and pride. The Church of Christ must be more engaged in the outside world not only in terms of evangelization but also by serving the community in order to exemplify servant leadership. We must not be too proud to deny requests to help clean restrooms or to clean the floors like a janitor, or to shovel manure in an agricultural context such as a farm or in a foreign nation. Thus, I believe servant leadership is a pivotal component to a good philosophy of ministry.

Why I am ready for ministry

Even though I only have level two leadership, I feel as though I am ready for ministry. The reasoning behind this mentality is because I have learned from my older peers in seminary that instead of waiting to perfect oneself in leadership, training, biblical studies, and spiritual disciplines, it is better for one to learn as he or she goes. In others words, practical experience is better than textbook knowledge when it comes to ministry.

Although I do wish that my leadership level was higher, I have to start from somewhere, and that somewhere for me is level two. Rather than feeling depressed over this, I feel very humbled and motivated to raise my leadership level, not for my own ego but for the good of the Church of Christ as well as for my own spirituality. Through my field education experiences, I have learned the basics of preaching to an audience with a child-like mindset, thus I have learned how to simplify my sermons better than I had before my field education experience, even though it still can use more work. I have also learned how to become more passionate, patient, and loving for the children of God whether they are mentally challenged or not, whether they are children or in their mid-thirties as was in the case in the Milal church. Additionally, I have learned how to truly forgive and have let go of decade long grudges. This reinforces my belief that I am ready for real ministry not just in my home church but in other churches which will push myself past my comfort zone.

Three Specific Areas in Ministry

One specific area in which I can lead is leading bible studies. This is because I had a fair share of experience in the Milal Church for the mentally disabled. I was told by my mentor that if I can preach to the mentally challenged and help them comprehend the biblical message, doing a bible study for others who are not mentally disabled will be considerably easier. Also, because I

am doing a two month long small group with my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, it has also enabled myself to learn when and how to listen, speak, guide, and encourage others in the group.

Another specific area in ministry in which I am adept in is preaching. Through my classes with Dr. Rob Reimer, I have learned how to do deductive as well as inductive sermons. I also have discovered my own strengths and weaknesses and improved upon both of them through repetition and my current experience of preaching parttime for the adult English ministry. Through feedback from my church congregates and friends, as well as through the senior pastor, I am getting accustomed to preaching and am not as intimidated about it as before.

The third area in ministry in which I can deliver upon is body worship for my children. Through constant practicing in my field education experience, I have learned how to dance for the Lord and am teaching my children how to do body worship and how not to be self-conscious about it. It is also intriguing to note that some Christians would argue against the concept of body worship because they perceive it as bringing attention to the dancers rather than God. However, I would make a rebuttal by saying that as long as believers are dancing to Christian music where God is the main focus of the song, it is not heretical to do body worship.

In terms of my three-year ministry plan, I have a visionary goal for each of the three years. They are financial funding for impoverished nations, hospitality to the needy, a free tutoring program to attract families to our church, a cultural banquet day in which all people are invited into the church to have fellowship regardless if they are a Christian or not, as well as a cultural fashion day. For both the cultural banquet day as well as the cultural fashion day, they will be held on Sundays once a month. Therefore, if newcomers want to get to know the church community more, they will feel an incentive to experience the worship service out of curiosity out of their own free will rather than being pressured to join. Another way for newcomers to get

to know the church members well is to join small groups. Even if they do not believe in Jesus Christ at first, a social networking group will be alluring to some of them. All three visionary goals use a servant institution model. Additionally, some of them will use a house church model due to the utilization of small groups or the rotational hospitality to the needy to make evangelization easier. It is also important to note that a Christ of culture model will be presented to the outside community as to avoid scaring them off with an overly conservative church mentality.

For the year one of the three-year visionary plan, church members can help the needy by donating a part of their disposable finances to an online crowdfunding platform. This will be used to help raise the standard of living in impoverished nations such as Guatemala, Africa, Ecuador, Turkey, etc. In terms of alleviating poverty among church members and strangers within the church's proximity, church congregates can rotationally invite these people into their homes with hospitality as demonstrated in biblical antiquity. We will also create our own church website with a link to our online crowd funding platform to help with missions to help us get noticed within the community.

For year two, we will aim to evangelize people who are of different ethnic races than us, because currently we are a Korean Presbyterian Church of Bergen County. Gradual evangelization can take place in our church by offering the secular community a free tutoring program, whether their family members are Christians or not during the winter and summer vacation. This visionary objective is not only to diversify the potential church members but also to help future generations in terms of their education and motivation to study and do well when they grow up when they will take care of their families with their earned income.

Moreover, in order to facilitate the process of the unification of divergent ethnicities, the church will do a culture banquet day. The participants to this church event will be invited to share their own ethnic foods with everyone although this is not a mandatory requirement. In terms of fellowship, everyone will have a chance to share their own personal narratives about growing up and immigrating, as well as their own ethnic background. Another event can be an ethnic fashion day in which various clothing from different cultures will be displayed to the audience. These church events will help facilitate the process of everyone slowly but steadily becoming accustomed to the multiethnic church context as well as to mingle the different generational church groups together such as the Korean American and Korean ministry groups.

In finality, for year three, an exclusive bible study for newcomers who desire to become members will be held not only for the membership but also for the general basics of the Christian faith. This involves learning about Church history, the major biblical events, spiritual disciplines, etc. The purpose of this is not to daunt the newcomers mentally but to help educate them to a rudimentary degree in terms of the Christian faith.

Bibliography

Clinton, Robert. *The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership*

Development. Colorado: NavPress, 2012.

Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. New York:

HarperCollins, 2018.

Hirsch, Debra. *Redeeming Sex: Naked Conversations about Sexuality and Spirituality*. Illinois:

InterVarsity Press, 2015.