

February 19:

The first week of leading my small group, I honestly did not have the leader's guide book because I had some technical issues with its online purchase. After reading the first chapter of the "Spiritual Journey" book, I had asked the question which was "How often do you compare your weakness to someone else's strength?" One of the replies from Logan was that it was not frequent but occasional when he is experiencing many failures in his life in a consecutive fashion. I then encouraged him that God loves us no matter what our strengths or weaknesses are. Just to be sure, I had then reinforced the distinction concerning peoples' gifting. I had explained in my own words that "although natural abilities can be used in many ways, spiritual gifts are expressly used to carry out God's purposes."¹ I had then shared my life experience of how I used my spiritual gifting of prophetic insight to comfort a couple of people in the past. I had then given them my feedback in my own words that in order for our further development as believers, we need to work on "what to believe and value, how we view ourselves, and build relationships with one another." (Lecture 4, Walborn). We then prayed for one another.

March 2 Meeting:

After reading chapter two of "The Five Levels of Leadership" book by John Maxwell, I had asked my mentees some of the discussion questions at the end of chapter two called "What It Is and Why It Is Important." The first one was "How does the fear of rejection play a role in your life?"² One of my mentees whose name was June said that he sometimes feels like he rejects people out of fear that they might reject him first. I gave feedback on how I had tried my best to stop caring if people would reject myself and had started caring more of whether Christ would reject me at the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven. I also mentioned how fear can sometimes lead to self-fulfilling prophecies which further reinforces them.³ Sam had said that it causes a barrier between him and another person. I had then asked the second question which was, "In what way does your feeling of worth affect your relationships?"⁴ Debbie and Rebecca had said that it causes fear to fill their hearts so that the Lord cannot come inside them and fill them with the Holy Spirit and with confidence in their own identities in Christ. So already I could see issues of

¹ Kevin Brennfleck and Kay M. Brennfleck, *Live Your Calling: A Practical Guide to Finding and Fulfilling Your Mission in Life* (California: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 84.

² Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?* (Tennessee: Carpenter's Son Publishing, 2020), 65.

³ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

distrust, fear, and them having an identity crisis. I had then shared my life experience of how I gave up much of my fear and insecurities to the Lord in prayer and meditation sessions and advised them to do it as well. Furthermore, I had adhered to the leader's guide book and asked a *Mirror moment* question to them which was "Are you worthy of love and are others capable of loving you? I gave a few moments for them to pray about their answer. After some time, the others had admitted their answers. Sam, Logan, and June were avoidant while Debbie and Rebecca were anxious. I then reminded them that we should increase our own awareness of our anxiety through our discernment of its signs. Some samples are impatience, fear, and "feeling like everything is urgent." (Lecture 5, Walborn). After this, we had done a closing prayer.

March 5 meeting:

After having a bazaar sale for the benefit of the needy in our local community as we had made all the prices of second-hand clothes and items incredibly cheap such as twenty-five cents to a dollar, we had made time for a small group meeting. In reference to chapter three called "Belonging," the vast majority of people had said that out of Edward Hall's four spaces, they had trouble with social belonging, because they had trouble taking that first step of talking to their neighbors who were non-believers. All of them had said in most cases they do not have trouble asking for help and are not shamed to ask for it when they really need it. I also mentioned how to build credibility with others such as meeting expectations and even going beyond that by thinking ahead and doing tasks ahead and being on time as was discussed in class.

Mirror Moment: I had shared a number of my experiences in life when I had felt close to them as they were all my friends whom I had grown up with in a personal belonging relationship. I also shared that we all regard the relationships with our family members to be our intimate belonging relationships spiritually and emotionally in which they know everything about us.

March 12 meeting:

We had continued our bazaar sale for the needy in our local community of Rochelle Park. We had then later donated the money to a relatively nearby missionary organization called "Hanna mission" in New York. In regards to chapter four of "Spiritual Journey," when I had asked my mentees, "What is one area of brokenness in which you are struggling with?" June and Logan who are brothers said that the divorce of their mother and father still hurts them after eight years. Rebecca said that her father was still recovering from his surgery from cancer, and she had admitted that she trusted more in the doctors than in God, but has repented and is trying hard to

trust God more. Debbie had shared that she cared too much of what others had thought of her, but she is now starting to lessen her people pleasing.

In terms of encouragement and feedback, I had shared with them the verse of Proverbs 3: 5-6 with them to encourage their spiritual endeavors. I had also shared a quote from the *Spiritual Journey* book which had stated that “Broken people know they need help and are welcome in the kingdom.”⁵ As was discussed in class, the church cannot shy away from matters of sexuality, as the end result would be fellow brothers and sisters in Christ being discouraged to share their issues and thoughts concerning sexuality. (Lecture 7, Walborn). In regards to shame, I had explained to them that “God placed boundaries around sexuality not because it is so bad, but because it is so good.” (Lecture 7, Walborn). After this, we had lay hands on each one of us at a time and prayed fervently.

Additionally, I noticed as time progressed, I was getting accustomed to leading my mentees and that my mentees were more willing to change than in the beginning.

Mirror Moment: This week’s Discipline and Practice of Releasing Forgiveness has been challenging for me because I still have nightmares of one particular transgressor from my high school days. But I am asking the Lord in earnest to empower me to forgive that person entirely. One can say that my anger plays as a defense mechanism because I was bullied so often in high school which plays into my brokenness. But as the Dr. Wanda Walborn states, “Broken people know they need help and are welcome into the kingdom.”⁶ The fact that I was harassed for all four years of high school is one thing no one has known outside of my family.

March 19:

This week the bazaar sale for our church had ended. Instead, my group and I agreed to hold a coffee day in the church in which all people were invited as we had created signs outside to encourage people to come and join us. Only two people had joined. One was a sojourner or a former Christian and the other was an atheist who lived down a couple of blocks. We had gotten to know Mario and Brittney as they had told us their life stories and their beliefs about the possible existence of God. Even though only two people had joined us for coffee day, I had encouraged my group members during the hardships of trying to achieve this goal of reaching

⁵ Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?* (Tennessee: Carpenter’s Son Publishing, 2020), 86.

⁶ Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?* (Tennessee: Carpenter’s Son Publishing, 2020), 86.

out to the community outside the church because I knew that communication was key. (Walborn, Lecture 9). For the small group we had read chapter five called, “God’s Desire For Me.”

I had asked them one of the questions which was “Where is a safe place for you to be honest about what is going on in your lives?” All of them had answered that our group was one of the few places where they could trust each other to keep confidentiality concerning their personal matters which I was glad to hear. I had then asked them the second discussion question which was “In what ways has God spoken to you outside of the Bible?” I had listened intently to their responses. Rebecca and Logan had said that they would hear encouragement from other church members and other Christians who were strangers about things they had never told them. June had said that he would feel a wash of emotion such as gratitude or joy which was the response of the Lord when he asked for a peace of mind. Debbie had said she would see words in her mind that the Lord would send her.

In terms of feedback, I had told everyone that those were definite ways that the Lord can speak to us. I had also said that the ways of communicating with God are different for some of us because we have different spiritual gifts and skills. I have also stated to them in rough terms that “One of the biggest obstacles to intimacy is lies.”⁷ I had mentioned I had discovered this through my life experiences. In relevance to the mirror moment, we all had made our own list of our own lies and wrote a truth statement next to each one. We then searched biblical verses to reinforce the truth statements. After this, we began to pray for each other in earnest in groups of two and then one last time as the entire group.

March 26:

This week we had continued with the coffee day and had gotten five new people including the same two people who had attended before. We strategically held this coffee day before the worship service, so if the newcomers wished to come and talk more, they will feel inclined to attend service, even if they do not believe in God completely. That is exactly what had happened. Out of the five, three people had chosen to come and attend the Sunday service. In terms of chapter six called, “My Identity in Christ,” I had asked everyone “What is your best strategy to overcome fear?” Logan, Sam, and June had answered that their old habit was just to brush it off and delude themselves to thinking that the fear was nonexistent. Now, after being in

⁷ Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?* (Tennessee: Carpenter’s Son Publishing, 2020), 111.

a small group, they know how to pray and bring their fears and insecurities to the Lord through prayer and meditation.

For feedback, I had responded that their decision was wise and that there is no need to be tough in front of the all-knowing God and I also told them the biblical verses of Ephesians 6:10-12 as well as 1 Corinthians 16:13 to help them chase out their fears. Rebecca and Debbie had said they write down their fears in a prayer journal and pray audibly to the Lord to give them courage to overcome them. I had given them feedback that “If fear is caused by a belief, then it can be overcome by changing one’s thinking” in my own phrasing of words.⁸ I had also stated that fear demands sight, control, and comprehension and reinforced this with my own life experiences. (Walborn, lecture video lesson 10). I also explained to them that by facing ourselves in the wilderness, it helps us to become humbler and have a new perspective to our spiritual and emotional issues, which allows us to reach out to the Lord for help as was discussed in class. (Walborn, lecture 10).

In the book called “Spiritual Mentoring,” Anderson states that the “attractive life was also where discernment, love, and encouragement were provided in a creatively hospitable atmosphere of acceptance and trust.”⁹ In terms of the mirror moment, we had also discussed and reflected upon the parenting styles of each other’s parents such as whether we were allowed to be bold or daring or not, and the childhood fears which resulted from that. Faith overcomes fear through the power of the Holy Spirit and through spiritual disciplines. We had then closed in prayer for each other’s problems in our lives. This week’s discipline of spiritual warfare and journaling has been beneficial to me to face my own fears as it acts as a stress reliever to express all of my spiritual hardships and challenges.

April 2

In terms of our visionary goal of evangelization by establishing a coffee day for anyone willing to step into the church for free drinks and food, it has been a relative success. Seven more people joined, while two had left, the other remaining five chose to attend service to see what our church was all about. We are slowly but surely increasing our numbers. For this small group meeting, I had introduced the topic of hearing the Lord’s voice versus hearing our own inner and

⁸ Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?* (Tennessee: Carpenter’s Son Publishing, 2020), 132.

⁹ Keith R. Anderson and Randy D. Reese, *Spiritual Mentoring: A Guide for Seeking and Giving Direction* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 69.

outer noise in chapter seven.¹⁰ I had explained to them that the latter is the audible noise we hear in the background while the former is what hinders us in our spiritual journey.¹¹ I had asked them “For what reason did you give up praying for breakthrough in your life?” Sam had answered that prior to this small group, he had given up praying seriously; however, in recent weeks, he had been motivated to get closer to the Lord. The reason why he had given up prayer in the past was self-doubt and his busy schedule. However, he learned how to make time for the Lord. Rebecca had said that at first, she also felt ashamed to pray to the Lord because she felt dirty in His presence.

As feedback, I had said that we are all sinful and dirty, but the Lord loves us and will cleanse us through his holiness and grace. Debbie had said that she felt like she was not good enough to actually progress spiritually before, but now she feels more valuable to others and to the Lord. Logan and June who are brothers have also stated that at first, they lacked the motivation to pray earnestly to the Lord and were too invested in secular matters such as education and finding a good job. However, like Sam, they had found motivation to become more intimate with the Heavenly Father. We had then closed in prayer. Mirror moment: For myself, outer noise is a distraction when I am trying to mediate upon the Word, which is why I go to the library or to the church for a quiet environment so I can hear the Lord’s voice better.

April 9

For this week in terms of the coffee day, about the same number of newcomers had come to the church today, while many are fine with being in church and attending church service, it is still too soon to ask them to spread the word about our church. This is because they still have not settled in after only being there for a couple of weeks. Nevertheless, I am content with going the slow but steady route rather than fast and unsteady route. This week’s topic was chapter eight which is called “Who I Am When No One Else Sees.” When I had asked my mentees about their thoughts and feelings about absolute surrender to the Lord, they all have said the same thing in different phrasing of their words. The overall answer was that it was not only necessary for a believer in Christ to surrender to the Lord; it is a privilege to do so. This answer shows to me that they are getting closer to the Lord. They started to find genuine joy and fulfillment when they felt the Lord’s presence for the first time in a long time. This had indicated to me that I have

¹⁰ Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?* (Tennessee: Carpenter’s Son Publishing, 2020), 159.

¹¹ Ibid.

grown as a mentor and learned how to encourage others better as encouragement was one of my social skills in which I had lacked.

We had then discussed what it meant to surrender to God in more detail, such as relinquishing luxurious household items, being born again, being more like Christ, etc. I have sensed from the Holy Spirit that I need to trust in God more and not rely on my own rationalization of the problems in my life so much. I am working towards this goal. In terms of my mirror moment, people perceive me as a nice person who is compassionate, patient, and slow to anger. However, the discrepancy of how I appear to others versus how I am when I am in my home remains apparent. This experience of my mentorship has been a valuable and fruitful experience for me as a relatively new children's pastor and spiritual leader. I have seen how my leadership level went from people respecting my title to people seeing me as their pastor.

Bibliography

Anderson, Keith R., and Randy D. Reese. *Spiritual Mentoring: A Guide for Seeking and Giving*

Direction. Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1999.

Brennfleck, Kevin and Kay M. Brennfleck. *Live Your Calling: A Practical Guide to Finding and*

Fulfilling Your Mission in Life. California: Jossey-Bass, 2005.

Walborn, Wanda. *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?* Tennessee: Carpenter's

Son Publishing, 2020.