

## Session 02 - Spiritual Development for Ministry

### Role of spirituality in ministry

- Ministry begins with a spiritual awakening (2 Corinthians 5:17-20):
  - Biblical examples:
    - Abram—from idolater to spiritual patriarch (Joshua 24:2-3).
    - Israel—from cheater to spiritual patriarch (Genesis 32:24-28).
    - Moses—from reject to spiritual leader (Exodus 2:10-15; 3:1-6).
    - Paul—from persecutor to spiritual leader (Acts 9:1-22).
  - Adventist examples:
    - William Miller—from Deist to Adventist
      - “I concluded the Bible was only the work of designing men; and I discarded it accordingly. I, however, believed in a Supreme Being as brought to view by the works of Nature and Providence.... With these views, I was associated with others in the defence of deistical sentiments, for about twelve years.... In 1813, I received a Captain’s commission in the U. S. service, and continued in the army until peace was declared. While there, many occurrences served to weaken my confidence in the correctness of Deistical principles. I was led frequently to compare this country to that of the children of Israel, before whom God drove out the inhabitants of their land. It seemed to me that the Supreme Being must have watched over the interests of this country in an especial manner, and delivered us from the hands of our enemies. I was particularly impressed with this view when I was in the battle of Plattsburg, when with 1500 regulars, and about 4,000 volunteers, we defeated the British, who were 15,000 strong; we being also successful at the same time in an engagement with the British fleet on the lake. At the commencement of the battle, we looked upon our own defeat as almost certain, and yet we were victorious. So surprising a result against such odds, did seem to me like the work of a mightier power than man.... [In time] I was constrained to admit that the Scriptures must be a revelation from God; they became my delight, and in Jesus I found a friend.” William Miller, *Wm. Miller’s Apology and Defence* (Boston: J. V. Himes, 1845), 3-5.
      - As a result of his conversion and consequent Bible study, he led the largest Advent revival in American history, which ultimately birthed the Seventh-day Adventist church.
    - Ellen White—from fear to love
      - “In my mind the justice of God eclipsed His mercy and love. I had been taught to believe in an eternally burning

hell, and the horrifying thought was ever before me that my sins were too great to be forgiven, and that I should be forever lost... I now confided all my sorrows and perplexities to my mother. She tenderly sympathized with and encouraged me, advising me to go for counsel to Elder Stockman, who then preached the advent doctrine in Portland. I had great confidence in him, for he was a devoted servant of Christ. Upon hearing my story, he placed his hand affectionately upon my head, saying with tears in his eyes: 'Ellen, you are only a child. Yours is a most singular experience for one of your tender age. Jesus must be preparing you for some special work... Go free, Ellen,' he said; "return to your home trusting in Jesus, for He will not withhold His love from any true seeker.' He then prayed earnestly for me, and it seemed that God would certainly regard the prayer of His saint, even if my humble petitions were unheard. I left his presence comforted and encouraged... My peace and happiness was in such marked contrast with my former gloom and anguish that it seemed to me as if I had been rescued from hell and transported to heaven." Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1 (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1948), 23-31.

- That early spiritual awakening became the drive behind her life and her prophetic ministry to the Seventh-day Adventist church lasted seventy years.
  - Your ministry must also begin with a religious awakening, if it has not come already.
    - Like Ellen White, you may be in the church but still don't know God.
    - It is also possible to be in the ministry and apparently leading a church well but still not have God behind it.
- The strength of a person's spiritual life has unique stakes in ministry:
  - Nurture: Your spiritual growth impacts your ability to grow others (Matthew 10:8).
  - Leadership: You can only lead in God's direction if God leads you (1 Kings 3:5-10).
  - Mentality: A strong bond with God creates the necessary peace and confidence (Galatians 1:10).
  - Salvation: Administering religion creates false spiritual security (1 Corinthians 9:27).
  - Forgiveness: To extend grace to others, you must first receive it (Matthew 18:32; 1 Peter 4:10; John 13:34-35).
- Spirituality is required for completeness in any way of life, so it should charge your life experience like good exercise or a great diet.

Experiencing spiritual growth

- The pieces of spiritual growth as defined by the Adventist church
  - The article of faith: “By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. He who subjugated the demonic spirits during His earthly ministry has broken their power and made certain their ultimate doom. Jesus' victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love. Now the Holy Spirit dwells within us and empowers us. Continually committed to Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, we are set free from the burden of our past deeds. No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the Church. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience.” (Adventist Fundamental Belief #11).
  - Biblical foundations of spiritual development:
    - All spiritual battles are won by Christ (Genesis 3:4-6; Revelation 12:1-12; Luke 10:17-19; Galatians 2:20).
    - The Holy Spirit is the agent to link us with Christ each moment (John 16:5-14; Romans 8:1-4; Galatians 5:22-25).
    - Spiritual development means formation into Christ’s character (Hebrews 12:1-3; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; John 13:13-15, 34-35).
  - Areas of growth to consider:
    - Praying (Matthew 6:5-15; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Ephesians 6:12-18): Conversing with God.
    - Praising (Psalm 92:1-5; Ephesians 5:19-20): Recounting God’s goodness.
    - Studying (2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17): Seeking God’s will.
    - Meditating (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 77:11-12): Exploring God’s will.
    - Witnessing (Matthew 5:13-16; Acts 1:4-9): Working with God.
    - Fellowshiping (Acts 2:1, 41-47; Hebrews 10:25): Strengthening God’s church.
- Forming a spiritual development plan
  - The purpose of a spiritual development plan is to consistently place yourself where God can mold you.
  - Three areas to develop:
    - Communicating with God (praying, praising)
      - Public
      - Private
    - Thinking about God (studying, meditating)
      - Public
      - Private

- Sharing about God (fellowshipping, witnessing)
  - Public
  - Private
- Choose one of these three areas to strengthen in your own spiritual life and write a specific growth plan:
  - Be goal specific.
  - Be action specific.
  - Be time specific.

### Leading spiritual growth

- Pastoral spirituality is expected to be contagious, by virtue of the role.
  - True contagion requires intentionality.
  - The premise must be that, in spiritual development, God develops all for ministry (1 Peter 2:9).
- Four frames for leading others through spiritual growth:
  - Universalized spiritual development frames:
    - Frame 1: The classic spiritual disciplines: from Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (San Francisco: Harper, 1998).
      - Meditation
      - Prayer
      - Fasting
      - Study
      - Simplicity
      - Solitude
      - Submission
      - Service
      - Confession
      - Worship
      - Guidance
      - Celebration
      - (Jesus exemplifies each of these except confession.)
    - Frame 2: Seven realities of experiencing God: from Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King, *Experiencing God* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 31-40.
      - Seeing God's work—God is always at work around you.
      - Accepting God's friendship—God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal.
      - Choosing to serve God—God invites you to become involved with Him in His work.
      - Hearing God speak—God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the church to reveal Himself, His purposes, and His ways.

- Acting for God in faith—God’s invitation for you to work with Him always leads you to a crisis of belief that requires faith and action.
- Adjusting your life for God—You must make major adjustments in your life to join God in what He is doing.
- Obeying God—You come to know God by experience as you obey Him and He accomplishes His work through you.
- (Moses exemplifies each of these realities in Exodus 2-4.)
- Individualized spiritual development frames:
  - Frame 3: Discovering your SHAPE: from Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 234-248.
    - S = Spiritual gifts
    - H = Heart
    - A = Abilities
    - P = Personality
    - E = Experience
  - Frame 4: Seven heart-shaping areas: from Reggie McNeal, *A Work of Heart* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000).
    - Culture/enviroment
    - Call
    - Community
    - Communion
    - Conflict
    - Commonplace
    - The concept is to teach people to view their own lives through these portholes to see the cumulative effect of God’s work in their lives so they can cooperate with it.

## Conclusions

- The one goal of planning your personal spiritual growth is placing yourself near God so he can grow you.
- The one goal of leading spiritual growth is taking people to God so he can grow them.