

## **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

All household servants with their respective wives are to undergo formation by going through the Household Leaders' Training (HLT).

### Content of HLT

- A. Orientation
  - 1. Being a servant
  - 2. The household: purpose, dynamics and leadership
  - 3. Being leaders of households
  - 4. Building a relationship with your members
  
- B. Character of a servant
  - 5. Zeal for righteousness
  - 6. Good example
  - 7. Singlemindedness for God
  - 8. Brotherly love
  
- C. Building up the brethren
  - 9. Evangelistic headship
  - 10. The ministry of encouragement
  - 11. Correction--a pastoral tool
  - 12. The power to intercede
  
- D. Growing as a servant
  - 13. Prayer
  - 14. Faith in God
  - 15. Humble leadership
  - 16. Evaluation

### Conduct of HLT

The HLT is given by the different chapters.

The orientation, consisting of the first four talks, is given in one session, prior to the household servants assuming their positions.

The rest of HLT (next 12 talks) are normally given in 12 separate monthly sessions. Thus, the whole HLT will be completed in one year. The Chapter Servant may opt to combine certain sessions, if circumstances necessitate this.

To conserve resources, especially since the household servants of a particular chapter would be on different tracks during the year, it is recommended that the HLT be conducted by area, perhaps with the different chapters taking turns in conducting the HLT.

Another thing that the chapter can consider is to fix the particular sessions on particular months of the year, for example, Talk 5 in January, Talk 6 in February, Talk 16 in December. In such a case, newly appointed household servants, after the orientation session, will enter this track at anytime during the year, starting not with Talk 5 but whatever session is being conducted at that time, and go through the whole track up to the next year. For example, a household servant-couple appointed in June will be given the orientation session (first 4 talks) prior to assuming their position, then continue with HLT by attending the July session (Talk 11), and end the track with the June session of the following year (Talk 10).

### Content of each session

Each HLT session would normally consist of the following:

1. Worship (about 30 minutes)
2. Talk (about 45 minutes)
3. Open forum (about one hour)

The worship is to be led by a Chapter Servant or a Unit Servant. The talk is given by a Chapter Servant or a Unit Servant. The open forum is handled by a Chapter Servant.

### Attendance

Attendance at HLT is a must.

Absences may be permitted for acceptable reasons. Those who are absent at sessions must secure and listen to a tape of the talk, and also of the open forum if this was taped.

However, it is emphasized that the HLT session is important not only for the teaching given. Other very important elements of training and formation in HLT are:

1. Worshipping the Lord as a body of leaders.
2. Gaining wisdom from inputs during the open forum.
3. Affording the Chapter Servant, the opportunity to be with and address the community's household servants, building them up as a team and keeping them on track with the CFC-FFL vision.

Continued absence at HLT sessions, whether for acceptable reasons or not, can be grounds for removal as household servants.

Finishing the HLT is a prerequisite to appointment as unit servants. There may be exceptions to this, as decided by the Chapter Servant. In such a case, the household servants now assigned as unit servants will still have to continue and finish the HLT.

Household servants who have completed the HLT are no longer required to attend the monthly sessions, unless they desire to do so as a refresher or are directed to attend by the Chapter Servant.

MFC PFO 07 October 2019.

# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST**

## **HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

### **TALK No. 1 : BEING A SERVANT**

#### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. In order to be better Christian servants, we need to understand the nature of Christian service.
  - a) We need to ask ourselves:
    - \* Why do we serve?
    - \* Who are we as servants?
    - \* How do we serve?
  - b) In order to answer these, we need a vision of reality that can clearly point out to us the whole approach to service that we are to take. We need to see the reality in the world around us not in the way that the world sees it, but in the way God sees it.
2. There are two basic realities that we need to see.
  - a) There are two kingdoms opposed to one another, the kingdom of darkness under Satan and the kingdom of light under our Lord.
    - \* Satan has real spiritual power (Eph 6:12). He has forces under his control which are opposed to God and His followers.
    - \* Our enemy is not principally social problems, human weakness, lack of education, etc., but a whole kingdom. Our battle is a spiritual one.
    - \* Thus, anything we do that involves taking someone from the dominion of Satan into the kingdom of light will involve us in this battle for the hearts and minds of men. Any Christian service is automatically spiritual warfare.
  - b) Man is in sin and bondage and needs to be redeemed.
    - \* The fundamental problem of the world is not social ills (this is just the manifestation of the problem) but sin.
    - \* Man needs to be reconciled with God, and only Jesus is able to do this.
    - \* We are the instruments that God uses to bring other men back to Him.

- c) The above two realities should form our vision for our Christian service.
3. Christian service is not simply what you do, but who or what you are as you do it.
    - a) The emphasis is on being a servant rather than on doing service.
    - b) Lk 10:38-42. The story of Martha and Mary.
- B. There are three important New Testament passages that we will examine in order to clarify our understanding of what it means to be a servant.
1. Lk 17:7-10. The duty of a servant.
    - a) We have lost touch with the real meaning of the word "servant" as understood in Jesus' time.
      - \* During those times, a servant (or slave) was someone who was another person's property and had no rights whatsoever.
      - \* Thus, Jesus' story must have been amusing to his listeners. They could not comprehend a situation where the servant is served by his master.
    - b) We are the Lord's servants. We have been bought at the price of his blood. We no longer own ourselves. We are to be men and women who serve the Lord without regard for ourselves.
  2. Phil 2:5-8. The identity of a servant.
    - a) Christian service is not just another avenue for self-fulfillment.
      - \* We have no basis for insisting that God give us work to do that suits our personality, interests or personal gains.
    - b) The Christian doesn't seek to serve himself. Rather, he humbles himself and puts himself at the disposal of everyone else.
      - \* Jesus' example.
  3. Heb 5:8. The obedience of a servant.
    - a) A requirement of the lordship of Jesus and our own servanthood is obedience to his authority.
      - \* Obedience cannot be halfway or half-hearted. Either Jesus is Lord of all areas of our life, or our ascription of master and Lord to him is meaningless.

### C. Obstacles to obedience.

1. Natural disinclination to being a "servant".
  - a) We think of "servants" as lowly, doing menial work, unable to become better on their own.
  - b) Solution: Correct concept of being the Lord's servant.
2. Natural disinclination to think of other people first instead of ourselves.
  - a) We often think first of what is good for us, what will fulfill us.
  - b) Solution: A fundamental reorientation of our lives.
    - \* Realize that a servant of the Lord never goes into a situation for himself, but always looking out for how he can serve others.
3. Human rebelliousness.
  - a) Our fallen nature is inclined to say "I will not serve".
  - b) Solution: Repent, and resolve to obey.
4. Lack of trust (in the Lord, our heads, our brothers and sisters).
  - a) If I obey, will they take care of me? Can I rely on them?
  - b) Solution: Have faith!
    - \* Realize that God calls us to serve Him and will care for us as a loving Father.
    - \* Realize that God puts other people in headship position over us and He works through them.
    - \* Realize that God has called us into MFC to experience brotherhood and sisterhood in the Lord.

### D. Growing into maturity as Christian servants.

1. The Lord does not just want us to be enthusiastic and willing servants, but he wants us to be mature Christian servants. He wants people he can truly count on.
2. Some signs of maturity:
  - a) Christian wisdom and teachings are being applied to your lives.
  - b) Relationships (both with the Lord and with one another) are strong and full.

- c) Faithfulness characterizes your lives.
  - \* Daily personal prayer.
  - \* Attendance at meetings.
  - \* Fidelity to service assigned.
- d) You are men and women of your word. You can make commitments and stick to them.
- e) You are working on the various obstacles and shortcomings in your lives as Christians.
  - \* Every new day should be taken as an opportunity to become more Christlike.
- f) You are servants who can serve without having to be acknowledged, appreciated or rewarded.
  - \* Though God and MFC do appreciate your efforts, our motivation is not reward or recognition.
  - \* We simply serve out of our love for God and neighbor.

#### E. Conclusion.

1. The cost of servanthood. 2 Cor 11:23-28.
  - a) Perhaps none of us would ever have to go through Paul's experiences. But being God's servant will involve some hardship and suffering.
  - b) All the difficulties involved with being a servant will produce joy for us. There is a purpose for the difficulty.
2. Our lives are like a grain of wheat. Jn 12:24-26.
  - a) To be fruitful we must fall into the ground and die.
    - \* We die to our self-interest.
    - \* We put the Lord first.
  - b) Our dying to ourselves is life-giving to others.
3. We are all privileged to be the Lord's servants.

**MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST**  
**HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

**TALK No. 2 : THE HOUSEHOLD: PURPOSE, DYNAMICS AND LEADERSHIP**

Speaker's Outline

Note: The following is a brief outline of what the content of your talk should be. For further material with which to flesh out your talk, please refer to the Household Servant's Manual.

- A. The Household.
  - 1. Definition
  - 2. Purpose
  - 3. Composition
  
- B. The Household Servant.
  - 1. His role
  - 2. His basic attitudes to his work
  - 3. Some areas to refer to the Unit Servants
  - 4. Practical steps
  
- C. The Household Members.
  - 1. Attitudes they should have
  - 2. Attendance
  
- D. The Household Meeting.
  - 1. Frequency
  - 2. Venue
  - 3. Ingredients
  - 4. Duration
  
- E. Topics for Discussion
  
- F. Other Group Activities

NOTE: The Household Servant's Manual is to be given out to the new household servants.  
Also given out is the "Orientation of new households to MFC ".

# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

## **TALK No. 3: BEING SERVANTS OF HOUSEHOLDS**

### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. You are all called to do God's work in MFC.
  - a) This is very important work. You are leaders of cell groups which make up the basic support structure for MFC members.
  - b) You need to respond humbly and fully.
2. You are all new to this kind of pastoral leadership. God is doing something new.
  - a) Do not feel unworthy, for God Himself who calls you will also empower you.
  - b) You are all learning and growing in your ability to serve in this new way.
    - \* Look to growing in confidence and capability each new day.
3. You yourselves are all under pastoral care, not only for your personal lives but also for your service.
  - a) We servant-leaders in MFC are not serving in isolation from one another, but rather as a network of pastoral leaders serving together.
    - \* Encourage one another.
    - \* Learn from one another.
    - \* Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit.
  - b) Just be open to those over you regarding any aspect of your service.

#### B. How should you relate to your Unit Servant?

1. Understand your relationship with him.
  - a) He's committed to you and members of your group. You can call on him anytime for support, advice or prayers. He is for you.
  - b) His desire is to see you develop and grow in your service and in your life and to see your members grow in the Lord.
  - c) Don't hold back from telling him your problems in leading the group.



- \* Don't think that you've always got to give a good report. We are looking for a realistic assessment to see God's will regarding your group.
- \* Don't protect your men from him.

2. What to talk to your Unit Servant about?

a) The Household.

- \* Are the men relating to one another well? The women?
- \* Are they free to share with one another?
- \* Do they worship freely together?
- \* Do they ever do anything together outside of the household meeting?
- \* How is their general attitude towards MFC?

b) Individual members.

- \* How are they growing in Christ?
- \* Daily prayer?
- \* Relationship with spouse? With children?
- \* Relationship with authority? Yours and overall MFC?
- \* Problems, if any.

c) Developing a pastoral vision for the household.

- \* Have some goals in mind for the whole household and discuss them with your Unit Servant. What do they need?
- \* Have some goals for the individual men in your household. What does each one need? Do not be ruled by what each man wants.
- \* In both, pray and seek God's will.

d) Your time and service.

- \* Do you have enough time for yourself, family, job and service?
- \* What are the extra demands of your household that pulls you down?
- \* How are you experiencing your service? Are you growing in confidence? Do you need more help?

# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST** **HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

## **TALK No. 4 : BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR MEMBERS**

### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. Your role as household servant is to reach out to your members and help move them on in their relationship with the Lord and as brethren in MFC.
  - a) It involves continuing evangelization.
  - b) It is based on a personal caring relationship.
2. Being household leaders involves the exercise of what we call "evangelistic headship".

#### B. Elements of evangelistic headship. 1 Thes 2:7-12.

1. Gentleness (v.7).
  - a) Do not come down too hard on your member's shortcomings.
    - \* Do not be abrasive or inflexible.
  - b) Be like a "nursing mother".
    - \* Be loving and gentle.
    - \* But be firm if there is a need. Even a mother corrects.
2. Personal concern (v.8).
  - a) It is not just a functional relationship.
    - \* You need to be friends.
    - \* Take an interest in their interests.
      - Ask about their children, anniversary, work, personal problems, etc.
      - Keep a journal so you can keep track.
    - \* Behind it all is setting your heart on them to love them.

- b) We are all part of one body. We share a common life.
    - \* State your commitment to them and communicate your desire to serve them.
    - \* Make clear the relationship is one of brotherhood and service to them.
3. Diligence and perseverance (v.9).
- a) Always be reaching out to them. It is a battle to change people and it will not just happen easily.
    - \* Exercise pastoral patience.
  - b) Be open and available. Let them have access to you.
    - \* But teach them to be reasonable in seeking you out (e.g., not in the middle of the night, except if there is a real emergency).
  - c) Meet outside regular meetings.
    - \* When the opportunity presents itself (or make your own opportunities), visit them at home or at work.
    - \* Have recreation together.
4. Integrity (v.10).
- a) You must be a person who is beyond reproach.
  - b) It is not just a question of not sinning, but of not doing anything that can subject you to criticism.
    - \* E.g., Borrowing money from your members.  
Lording it over them.  
Being critical of MFC.
5. Encouragement (v.11-12).
- a) Just like a father to his children.
    - \* Provide encouragement, comfort, support.
  - b) Help them to know themselves.
    - \* Say helpful things about difficulties.
    - \* Give them insights on why they do the things that they do.
    - \* Observe and notice them (how they pray, how they behave at meetings, how they handle their daily life, etc.) and give inputs from time to time.

- c) Keep in touch with their concerns (family, health, school, occupation, etc.).
  - \* Communicate to them that you are aware of these.
  - \* Let them know that you are not just concerned about what you want them to do but also about their concerns.
- d) Be able to laugh and cry with them. Identify with their joys and sorrows. Empathize.
  - \* When someone first opens up, be able to hold them up with your support.
  - \* They should not experience their life changing just independently, but rather, you carry them in your heart, and this is sometimes expressed to them.

An important and interesting note: Notice that the above involves the whole range of caring that happens within a family. The household servants in certain ways act out the roles of mother, brother and father to their members.

C. The effect of evangelistic headship. What is the desired response from the members?

1. Love.

- a) This is the call to every Christian. We are all to love one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.
- b) But the caring relationship should reinforce and strengthen the members' love for their leaders.

2. Confidence.

- a) This frees them to give themselves over to your headship.
  - \* They can let go of their self-protectiveness. They can put down their defenses.
  - \* It frees them to give of their whole selves.
- b) This opens them to receive advice and wisdom from you.
  - \* They become readier to hear God's word coming from you.
  - \* It does not become necessary to question all you say.
- c) As you experience them putting more confidence in you, you become freer to give them more than you yourself have learned.

### 3. Respect.

- a) It is not enough to be loved. You need to be respected, if you are to be effective in helping them to change.
- b) How do you earn respect?
  - \* Show them you respect them.
    - Don't put them down.
    - Listen carefully.
  - \* Be straightforward and honest.
    - Don't beat around the bush.
    - Let them know what your mind really is.
    - Give them a fair and honest evaluation.
  - \* Be able to be firm when something needs to change.
    - Be willing to take a stand, even though sometimes you can make concessions.
    - You don't just give out love, advice, etc., but you also need to correct and admonish when necessary.
  - \* Don't be a know-it-all.
    - You don't know everything and you can't solve all problems. Be willing to say "I don't know".
    - Don't bluff. It will boomerang and you end up with even less credibility.

If the above desired response from members happens, then the result is that they become more open to the word of God through you. They become more open to the work of the Holy Spirit. 1 Thes 2:13.

### D. Conclusion.

1. You have the privilege to guide new MFC members in their new life in the Lord.
  - a) Take this responsibility seriously.
  - b) Put your faith in Jesus.
2. People grow in confidence as they see you grow in holiness and in Christian character.
  - a) 1 Tim 4:12-16. You need to grow yourself.
    - \* Be an example and a model to others.
  - b) They must know that you can take them as far as God has taken you.
    - \* Be able to say: "Imitate me as I imitate Christ" (1 Cor 11:1).

## **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

### **TALK No. 5: ZEAL FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

#### Expanded Outline

##### A. Introduction.

1. We must be men and women who passionately want to promote God's kingdom on earth. Thus, our hearts should be troubled whenever we find anything that is not right with God.
2. Our "goodness" could be measured by the extent to which we feel a pure and growing hatred for evil.

##### B. Four kinds of "good" people.

1. Those who do no evil, yet do not devote themselves faithfully to doing good.
  - a) They lack other, more positive virtues.
  - b) Just like baptized infants.
2. Those who refrain from evil and also devote themselves to frequent good deeds, yet, while they do not neglect to do what good they can, they see no need to do more than that.
  - a) Just so much prayer, service, almsgiving, etc., are enough for them. They do not burn with a desire for a more complete holiness.
  - b) They remain quietly content with this spiritual level, and abandon higher things to others.
3. Those who detest and avoid wrongdoing, fervently commit themselves to whatever good they can do, and desire greater personal holiness, yet lack equal concern for the holiness of others.
  - a) They eagerly desire the spiritual and internal virtues --fondness for prayer, intimate knowledge of God, experience of divine love.
  - b) However they are not inflamed with fervent zeal against the vices of others or the dangers of their sins. They want everyone to be good and live in grace, but feel no wound of sorrow when they see the opposite.
  - c) They remain intent upon God and themselves. They might put off caring for other people in order to preserve their own peace.

4. Those who avoid wrongdoing, practice virtue, are afire with zeal for personal righteousness, and have zeal for winning souls.
  - a) They obtain no comfort from progress toward their own salvation unless they are also leading others to God.
  - b) Jesus' example: Although he always had complete joy in himself, he was not content only to possess glory, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, in order to lead many others into glory with him. Phil 2:7.
  - c) As household servants, we should be this 4th kind of "good" Christian. These make the best persons for leadership in MFC, given our evangelistic mission.

C. Zeal for righteousness stems from the very basis of our Christianity, namely, love of God and of neighbor.

1. A person who loves God not only desires to enjoy his goodness and be close to him, but loves to see his will accomplished, his worship carried out and his honor exalted. He wants all people to know, love, serve and honor God more than anything else.
2. A person who loves his neighbor desires not only health and prosperity for him, but even more, eternal salvation.
3. Love of God and neighbor should cause us to mourn if God is dishonored or disobeyed, and if others are not in right relationship with Him.
4. Although all Christians should love their neighbor, this love for others is especially necessary for those who are leaders.
  - a) Their position demands that they act on God's behalf. Thus, their hearts should be as much moved by love of righteousness and hatred of evil as is God's heart.
  - b) Ps 45:8. "You love justice and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you..."

D. Areas of concern (exercise of zeal) in our own lives and in the lives of our household members.

1. Growth in love for God and for neighbor. Selflessness.
2. Active participation in the life of the Church. Frequent reception of the sacraments.
3. Faithfulness to the covenant of MFC.
  - a) All MFC members have freely and willingly made their commitment to the Lord and to the body. They should live up to it.

b) Deut 23:22-24.

4. Areas not essential for salvation but desirable for making spiritual progress.

a) Faithfulness to and punctuality in meetings.

- \* Household servants show the way. If you have no enthusiasm, neither will your members.

b) Exercise of spiritual gifts.

- \* Charismatic dimension. MFC's brand of spirituality.

c) Financial support for MFC.

- \* It is part of our covenant and is also part of being a good mature Christian.

- \* The money is used for evangelization, thus for winning souls.

d) Submission to headship.

- \* Authority is a gift from God which is given to us as a means/help to move us on in our spiritual lives.

e) Avoidance of a critical spirit or attitude.

E. Two specific applications: Correction and Encouragement.

### Correction

1. At the heart of scriptural appreciation for correction is a hatred of sin, and a realization of human fallibility.

a) Ps 141:5.

b) Thus zeal + love of neighbor = correction.

2. Deal with the wrongdoing of members.

a) Be simple and straightforward. Lk 17:3.

b) How?

- \* Do not condone any wrongdoing nor concede that any wrongdoing is acceptable.

- \* Do not allow any wrongdoing to remain un-repentant or uncorrected.



- \* Do not remain silent and pretend to know nothing when you ought to speak out.
  - \* Be in touch with your Unit Servant.
- c) Be authoritative.
- \* Your authority comes from God and is to be exercised in the community where we have committed ourselves to.
  - \* Look to correction as a pastoral tool for growth.
3. Your accountability as household servant to correct.
- a) You are God's representatives. You have been given responsibility over God's people. Your members look up to you and obey you because you have the Lord's place.
- \* Do not allow vices and bad practices to grow.
  - \* Do what you can to overcome wrongdoing.
- b) If you neglect your duty, you will be accountable to God.
- \* You would be guilty of neglect for not doing what your duty called for. Wisdom 6:4-5.
  - \* You would bear the guilt for the faults of your subordinates, in that you could and should have corrected them but didn't. Ezek 33:8.
- c) This is not to scare you, but to show the seriousness of your work.
- \* Note: Some will prefer not to be household servants in order to evade accountability. However, such persons need to realize that if they have a gift of leadership from God, they will still be accountable for not using it.

### Encouragement

1. You also have a duty to encourage.
- a) Not just correction (look at wrongs) but encouragement (look at what's right).
  - b) Not just criticism, but praise.
2. At the start of Jesus' ministry, God encouraged him.
- a) Mt 3:17.
- \* Again at transfiguration. Mt 17:5.

- b) God is the source of all encouragement. Rom 15:5.
  - \* We follow His ways.
- 3. "Encourage" is a compound of two words": "en" = to put in or into, and "courage" = confidence, strength.
  - a) Thus literally, to encourage means to put courage into someone.
    - \* An encouraging person builds up and strengthens people by his presence and words.
    - \* He supports, not weakens.
  - b) How to encourage:
    - \* Comfort.
    - \* Support (situation where one cannot cope). Through words, advice, prayers or just presence.
    - \* Urge on/exhort. Motivate. Not so much comfort, but challenge.
    - \* Praise. E.g., honoring.
- 4. There is plenty of bad news around. And how quickly people respond to discouraging news.
  - a) God looks for eternal optimists, who can share that spirit with others.
    - \* God's news is good news, not bad. We are to bring the good news of liberty, joy, release, hope, comfort, etc.
  - b) We cannot encourage enough.
    - \* Many people have low self-esteem. They need to be affirmed.
    - \* Our encouragement helps people to discover themselves, to appreciate who they are.
  - c) Thus, our basic attitude as household servants needs to be one of encouragement.
    - \* Not always correcting, but kindness, encouragement, rejoicing over what the Lord has already done.

- \* Love them so they move on.

5. A fruit of encouragement is growth in perseverance. Perseverance is a Christian quality especially needed to overcome problems, obstacles and trials. We ourselves need to persevere in the ministry of encouragement.

F. Conclusion.

1. There are four types of good people.

- a) (Quickly describe these).

- b) Household servants should strive to be the 4th type.

- \* Because this is ideal for headship.

- \* This is an assurance that all household members will be helped to move on.

3. God uses our zeal for righteousness to help other people.

- a) Through evangelization, bringing God's life to others.

- b) Through caring for members of MFC.

# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

## **TALK No. 6 : GOOD EXAMPLE**

### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. We should be models for our household members.
  - a) We should be living witnesses to the new life in Christ.
  - b) The words we teach should be reflected in our actions.
2. Our own models:
  - a) Jesus made his life and words an example. Jn 13:15.
  - b) Paul also pointed to the witness of his life. 1 Cor 11:1.
  - c) Both recognized that actions speak louder than words.
  - d) They're no longer physically present. Now we're the ones on the firing line.

#### B. Four aspects of being a good example.

1. Conformity of oneself to the observance of everything that makes up life in MFC.
  - a) The covenant of MFC.
  - b) Our Christian culture in MFC.
    - \* faithfulness to meetings
    - \* punctuality
    - \* affection for brethren
    - \* speech
    - \* financial support
  - c) If we don't live out our covenant and culture, we can't expect our members to do so.
2. Humility. Be humble in conduct.
  - a) Do not think too highly of yourself. Do not assume the airs of an official.
    - \* Rather, assume the posture of a servant.

- \* You have been given a position. But it's the position of a valet, not a manager.
- b) See to it that your household members have ready access to you.
- \* Be available to them when you are needed.  
Note: But teach them also to be reasonable as to time.
  - \* Be pleasant in speech; listen patiently.
  - \* Be more loved than feared.
- c) Don't be a know-it-all.
- \* Note: It is not expected of you to know everything.
- d) Foster total dependence on God. Realize that without God we are nothing.
3. Maturity.
- a) In personal conduct.
- \* Don't act lightly. Be serious. Don't behave like a trifler. E.g., making silly jokes or antics.
  - \* While you want to be more loved than feared, there should also be a certain amount of "fear" or reverence for you.
  - \* Be authoritative when necessary. Know that your leaders in MFC are backing you up.
  - \* Don't play favorites. Do nothing to cause a member to feel that you scorn him or that you arbitrarily prefer others. All should be able to trust you and confide in you as their best friend.
- b) In attitude toward your work.
- \* Be serious regarding your being a household servant. It's important to your members, because the household you lead is where they draw support for their Christian life.
  - \* Look on your work as an opportunity to move people on.
  - \* Don't cancel any meeting. If you're unavailable, refer to your Unit Servant, who will assign or ask another person to handle your household.
  - \* Prepare for your meetings.

c) In judgment. Grow in wisdom.

- \* The value of wisdom in Scripture. Prov 3:13-15. An ideal of life.
- \* Wisdom is practical understanding that comes from God, about living or doing something. It is not an academic or theoretical understanding. It is a useful knowledge of the inner workings of something.
  - Hebrew "chokmah" -- skill of a craftsman.
  - Wisdom concerned mainly with the skill of successful living, e.g., Christian personal relationships, finance, speech, relationship to God.
- \* But not just wisdom about living, but household servants need pastoral wisdom, a practical understanding of how to build up the body of Christ, how to care for the lives of Christians.
- \* How to acquire wisdom?
  - Basically be rightly related to God. Prov 9:10.
  - Like Solomon, ask for it. Pray for it. Jas 1:5-6.
  - Learn from the Scriptures.
  - Learn from MFC (teachings & seniors). Prov 13:14-20.

4. Integrity.

a) Integrity is the refusal to justify, rationalize or excuse any motivation, thought or behavior which is inconsistent with the commands and principles of God's Word.

- \* Note: We are not talking of sinlessness (we all still fall into sin), but refusal to justify, etc. In other words, we can make mistakes; but how do we handle these?
- \* E.g., David. Ps 78:70-72. The Lord chose David to shepherd his people, "according to the integrity of his heart"
  - He didn't kill King Saul, because Saul was chosen by God.
  - He didn't excuse his sin with Bathsheba when his sin was exposed by Nathan.

b) God is more concerned about integrity than perfection.

- \* Justifying improper motivations is worse than the wrong motivations themselves. Rationalizing unchristian thoughts is worse than the original thoughts. Excusing bad behavior is worse than the behavior itself.
- \* Have you ever promised to do something, you didn't do it, and then tried to excuse yourself? Rather than just admit your shortcoming?

- \* Integrity is something that is in the very fiber of a man's being. It is of the very nature and foundation of God's kingdom.
- \* A person can have skill, education, even God's anointing, but still without basic integrity.

c) Integrity is manifested in the 3Ms:

- \* **Morals.**
  - Prov 11:3. We do not need to pray about, say, watching x-rated films, bribery, tax evasion, etc. These should be clearly wrong.
  - We should not just keep a minimum standard of good conduct. Some people's attitude seems to be: how much can I get away with?
- \* **Marriage.**
  - A leader proves himself in the care of his wife and children. 1 Tim 3:5.
  - Do all things in your own family that you tell other men to do in theirs. Or at least you are sincerely trying.
  - Give the same quality of care to your wife and children that you give to others. At times we care for our household members but neglect our family. Never forget that MFC is family-oriented.
- \* **Ministry.**
  - Do not compromise on truth, on God's word, etc.
  - Say no to certain needs if our priorities require us elsewhere.
  - Be open to brethren for scrutiny and correction (esp. to your Unit Servant).
  - Avoid competition with other household servants, unit servants or seniors.
  - Make decisions based on standards of God's word and direction of the Holy Spirit, not what will please others or how much difficulty you will encounter.

C. The value of being a good example.

1. Good "masters" generally form good disciples.

- a) People who see a better way of life exemplified by their household leaders often become better Christians and better integrated into the life of MFC.

b) It's a new way of life for our people. Thus the territory is unfamiliar.

\* You're the one to show them how--as Christians and as MFC.

2. Verbal instruction alone is inadequate. It must be accompanied by active good example.

a) Many teachings are and will be given in MFC. But it is the household servant who sees to it that such teachings are integrated into one's life and fully lived out.

b) Conversely, a household servant showing bad example will nullify whatever value might have been received in a teaching.

#### D. Conclusion.

1. The household servants ought to commit themselves with special determination to forming their members according to the life of Christ. Lead them to imitate the Lord in every aspect of their lives.

2. Be a visible model of Christ's way of life. Gal 2:20.



## **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

### **TALK No. 7 : SINGLEMINDEDNESS FOR GOD**

#### Expanded Outline

#### A. Two men on the road to Emmaus. Lk 24:13ff.

1. They seem to have given up. They were disappointed because of wrong expectations (v.21).
2. On the positive side, they went back to the disciples after breaking bread with Jesus.

#### B. Some lessons.

1. We need to examine our reasons for following Jesus.
  - a) The wrong reason can easily lead us to change course. Jn 6:26-27, 66-69.
  - b) John the Baptist condemns superficial and opportunistic "repentance". Mt 3:7-10.
  - c) Looking on Christianity as a problem-solver. Results of such an outlook:
    - \* Disappointment if the problem is not resolved.
    - \* Turning away from Jesus once the problem is resolved because there is no longer any need for him.
    - \* Inability to accept Jesus' hard teachings.
2. We need to open up our hearts and let the word of God burn in our hearts. This way, our motivation becomes pure.
  - a) The proper attitude: Phil 3:8.
    - \* Everything else is garbage compared to Christ.
  - b) We can only be single-minded for God if our vision is clear, if we know the place of Jesus in our life, if we have a right relationship with him, and if we know where we are going.

#### C. How can we be single-minded for God?

1. "Burn your boats".

a) Anecdote about a beleaguered army having to make a decision on whether to flee out to the sea in their boats or to stand and face the advancing enemy. The commander had their boats burned, thus eliminating the choice.

b) Practical application:

- \* Many of us come into a new life in the Lord, but we keep our boats in reserve, so that if necessary we can return to the world.
- \* We need to forego all other options. In our new life, there should be no turning back.

2. Learn to persevere and be patient.

a) Prepare for the long haul. Moving on in the Christian life is the task of a lifetime.

b) Some Scripture passages.

- \* Heb 6:11-12. Sometimes one starts off very zealous in the Christian life, then grows lazy and takes things for granted. But we are to show the "same zeal till the end".
- \* 2 Thes 3:13. Sometimes doing good can be tiring. But we just need to continue doing what is right.
- \* Phil 3:16. Whatever spiritual state or level we are in, we are to go on. We can never be fully mature. There's always more that the Lord wants for us.
- \* Gal 6:9. Some come into a life in the Lord, then get tired and finally turn back to their old ways. We need to persevere, knowing what awaits us.
- \* 1 Cor 15:58. Sometimes the problem is that we do not see the fruit of righteous living. Righteous living might even seem like such a burden. But the fruit is there. God is pleased. We will reap the harvest.

3. "Take up your cross and follow me".

a) Jesus did not promise that if we followed him there would be no more problems.

b) In fact, the Christian life is a life of embracing and loving the cross of Christ.

D. How can we grow in singlemindedness for God?

1. Set a goal in personal virtue.

a) Growing in singlemindedness for God is connected with righteous living. Thus we need to acquire desirable virtues.

- \* Without personal virtues, we cannot be singleminded for God. There will always be some distractions that are too attractive.
- b) Ask the Lord to show what virtue you can grow most in. Some examples:
- \* Steadfastness. Tobit 4:5-6.
  - \* Humility. Phil 2:3-4.
  - \* Obedience. Jesus' example.
  - \* Courage.
  - \* Kindness. The example of Mother Teresa.
- Mother Teresa: "Love begins at home, it is not how much we do but how much love we put in the action that we do. To God Almighty, how much we do does not matter, but how much love we put in that action. How much we do to him in the person we are serving. And let us all meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love. Let us keep that joy of loving Jesus in our hearts and share that joy with all that we come in touch with"
  - The most villainous person she has met is described by her as "Jesus in a very distressing disguise"
2. Seek to suffer a little every day for God.
- a) There are many opportunities that present themselves:
- \* Denying ourselves too much of the pleasures of life.
  - \* Forbearing in relationship difficulties.
  - \* Giving things up like more sleep in favor of more prayer.
- b) These help us to focus less on ourselves and more on God.
3. Detach yourself from your desires and plans.
- a) God has the best plan for our lives.
- \* Jer 29:11.
- b) We need to let go of our preconceived notions of what is best for us. We need to approach the Lord without any preset agenda.
4. Seek consolation only from God.
- a) This is not only the proper attitude, but a practical and realistic one. Every one else can fail us, but God never will.
- \* In the midst of difficulty, especially from those closest to us, God is our

consolation.

b) It is only God Who can truly comfort us.

\* Mt 11:28-30.

5. Pray for God's will to be done in your life.

a) We should not only be resigned to God's will, but actively and eagerly pray that His will come to pass in our life.

\* But be careful. God delights in such prayers, and will grant them.

b) Have faith that our Father knows best.

\* Even when we cannot see beyond the difficulty of the moment.

E. Conclusion.

1. God calls us to personal holiness. God calls us to serve Him with utmost dedication and commitment.

2. We can move on in these areas as we more and more focus on the Lord and our life and mission in Him. Let us be singleminded for God.

# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

## **TALK No. 8 : BROTHERLY LOVE**

### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. Our task is to take care of God's people, those entrusted to our household.
  - a) 1 Pet 5:2a.
  - b) Our example is Jesus himself. Jn 10:11.
2. We can see how important is this service that we do.
  - a) It is not just an assignment, a task, or a function.
  - b) Love is its very essence. As brethren in the Lord, one very important quality of our work is brotherly love.

#### B. How do we express brotherly love?

1. Attitude of service love.
  - a) Mk 10:45.
    - \* In MFC, the leader is the servant.
    - \* We give of ourselves willingly so that those in our care will experience the life and salvation of Jesus.
  - b) It was Jesus himself who called us to serve. He is the Chief Shepherd.
    - \* Thus the right way to serve is to serve according to his example.
2. Attitude of humility.
  - a) Mk 10:35-44.
    - \* There is a marked difference between service in the world and service in the kingdom.
      - Rather than lord it over, we serve.
      - Rather than glory in our importance, we serve in humility.
      - Rather than be first, we serve ourselves last.

b) Ambition and self-focus are obstacles to Christian service.

- \* Like James and John, we may be good disciples and be sincere in following Jesus, but we could still get sidetracked in our motivations for serving.

C. Concrete qualities of brotherly love.

As expressed by Jesus:

1. Concern for the practical needs of others.

a) Illustrated in the wedding at Cana (Jn 2:1-11) and in the feeding of the multitudes (Mt 15:32-38).

b) We cannot just have a spiritual approach.

- \* Jas 2:14-17.

- \* 1 Jn 3:17-18.

2. Availability to our people.

a) Jesus invited the children to come to him despite the disciples' concern for his rest (Mk 10:13-16).

- \* Jesus was also available to the sinners, to the sick, to the relatives of his disciples.

b) We are to be big brothers (older sisters) to our people.

3. Expression of affection.

a) Jesus expressed the human emotion of affection.

- \* He wept when he visited Lazarus' tomb (Jn 11:35-36).

- \* In the case of the rich young man who asked about everlasting life, Jesus looked on him with love as he gave his answer (Mk 10:21).

b) We too need to love those in our care.

- \* Laugh and cry with them.

- \* Care for them not just as a duty but as beloved family members.

As expressed by other Scripture passages:

4. Patience and forbearance.

a) Rom 15:1.

- \* Our work is continuing evangelization. We need to take people where they are and draw them deeper into a new life in the Lord.
- \* We need to realize that different people may have different paces in spiritual growth.

b) But this does not mean pampering or coddling sinfulness or non-performance.

- \* We are also called upon to strengthen others and to correct them if necessary.

5. Encouragement.

a) Is 35:3-4a.

- \* Often, a word of encouragement from one's leader is enough to make a critical difference.
- \* We need to be able to convince our people that they can move forward in the Christian life and overcome their problems, if only they would persevere.

b) For leaders, not to do this would be spiritual negligence. Ezek 34:4-5,10.

- \* We would not only disappoint the Lord, but could also incur His wrath.

6. Going the extra mile.

a) We need to serve beyond the normal call of duty.

- \* It is easy to go the first mile, but you need God's grace to go the extra mile.
- \* 2 Sam 23:14-17. Example of the initiative and sacrifice of King David's men.

b) We will experience God's grace as we volunteer to do more to serve the people placed under us.

- \* And the satisfaction of having served thus will be beyond measure.

D. Conclusion.

1. We are all brothers and sisters in MFC. And you are all called upon as household servants to serve the rest.
2. In this service we need the quality of brotherly love.

- a) Our model is Jesus himself. Even now, he continues to love and serve us all, his brothers and sisters.
- b) The brotherly love required of us is not from the spring of our own hearts but from God's. Let us tap into His own heart--the true wellspring of endless love.



# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

## **TALK No. 9 : EVANGELISTIC HEADSHIP**

### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. All of you are servant-leaders over households, and you carry the authority of the MFC Servant General. However, your headship over people presumes a posture of service and ought to be evangelistic, not authoritarian or legalistic.
2. Often, new MFC members are not immediately eager about being under headship. This is a new situation for most. Most are used to answering to no one but themselves.
3. Thus you need to establish a good, personal relationship first.

#### B. Three situations for evangelistic headship.

1. New members (after the CLS).
  - a) They are often new to understanding what God is all about.
  - b) They do not as yet fully appreciate the vision and mission and culture of MFC.
2. Those with questions, reservations and doubts.
  - a) Some do not experience full conversion during the CLS. For many, it will be a continuing process.
    - \* It will be natural, and even healthy, to have questions. You should encourage them to openly ask about anything.
    - \* Reservations and doubts can be normal too. Thus you need to draw them in and continue the process of evangelization.
  - b) It does not mean that such people are in a bad situation. They are just not used to their new life in the Lord.
3. Those who have been with MFC but have had past bad experiences.
  - a) This is more difficult than the other two. It is not just a question of drawing one into the new life, but first of overcoming what are obstacles caused by past experiences in MFC.

- b) You need to be able to take them where they are at and help them make a healthy transition.

C. Elements of evangelistic headship.

1. Emphasis on qualities like grace (vs law), patience, giving others the benefit of the doubt.
  - a) Your members are going to forget things sometimes, or do things wrong. Do not be hard on them.
  - b) Your understanding and patience will win them over.
2. Develop a relationship of trust and openness.
  - a) Take the position of a servant for them.
    - \* They need to know that you are for them. Express this openly and often.
    - \* Show that your role is not to run their lives, but to guide them as an older brother/sister.
    - \* Be available to them when needed.
  - b) It may take a while. Patiently work at it.
3. Set lower standards and fewer standards.
  - a) Do not intimidate or force them.
  - b) Be basically concerned with standards of righteousness and good order. Focus on the necessary things.
4. Be a good listener.
  - a) Get to know your brothers/sisters first.
    - \* Make sure you know what they are like, what they need to hear.
    - \* Do not just jump in right away and start telling them what to do.
  - b) Listen to them.
    - \* Let them know that you are going to listen to them.
    - \* Don't jump to conclusions and always assume that you know what is going on.
    - \* Don't always have a canned answer.
    - \* Let them know you really understand what they are saying. Be honest with them.

- \* Acknowledge their good points.
  - \* You have been given two ears and only one mouth. Be more open to listening and not just talking.
- c) Remember what they tell you.
- \* Keep notes of their sharings, happenings in their life.
  - \* This takes effort. You have to decide to do it.
5. Offer more input in the form of brotherly/sisterly advice and wisdom rather than more of direction and correction.
- a) Do not correct too often (e.g, TV, lateness, drinking).
- b) Do not be anxious, defensive and pushy.
- \* Hear and try to understand what they are about.
  - \* Be confident that things can be resolved.
- c) You want your members to grow in confidence in your ability to help them. Thus do not react as if their problem is too heavy.
6. With all the above, think about the particular situations of your members and try to piece together a better understanding of where they are at.
- a) Ask yourself some questions:
- \* What troubles them?
  - \* What are their strengths and weaknesses?
  - \* What are they like?
- b) You should get to know them well enough such that you can get insights into their life which they themselves do not have.

#### D. Conclusion.

1. What you are doing is breaking someone of his/her wildness, rebelliousness and independence.
  - a) By a combination of patience, love and firmness.
  - b) Aggressiveness on your part is required.
2. Through your efforts, MFC members will more and more enter into their new life in the Lord and develop greater faithfulness to their life in MFC.

# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

## **TALK No. 10 : THE MINISTRY OF ENCOURAGEMENT**

### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. A common complaint of people is that they receive more criticism than praise.
  - a) In our secular environment, it is often that we hear lots of negative humor and comments.
  - b) As we grow in the Christian life, we will discover the importance of giving praise and encouragement to others.
2. Often also, we take people near to us for granted.
  - a) We might be generous in encouraging the mailman or grocery clerk, but fail to encourage those close to us (spouse, children, MFC household members).
  - b) This needs to change. God himself was most encouraging with His own Son. Mt 3:17.

#### B. An Encouragement Self-Test.

1. Following is a survey to test your encouragement quotient ("The Secret of Encouragement" by Paul Anderson, New Covenant, March 1983). If you can answer "yes" to at least 12 of the following 14 questions, you do not need to listen to this talk; just keep up the good work.
  - a) Do my words of encouragement easily outweigh my words of correction or criticism?
  - b) Am I generally uplifting to be around?
  - c) Would my family consider me a basically encouraging person?
  - d) Do words of praise for others come easily to me?
  - e) Have I been careful to ask forgiveness of others when I have spoken in a negative or discouraging way?
  - f) Have I been diligent to encourage those who are under me--children, students, employees, wife, brothers, sisters, fellow MFC members?

- g) Have I been diligent to encourage those God has placed over me--teachers, employers, elders, pastors, church leaders, civil servants, governments leaders?
- h) Do I pass along only the good news and swallow the gossip?
- i) Does my conversation with friends generally build others up?
- j) Do I think more about looking for opportunities to give praise than my need to receive it?
- k) Do I have a genuine desire to grow as a person who encourages others?
- l) Am I able to bring encouragement to those who have hurt me? Can I bless those who have hurt me? Can I bless those who have persecuted me as Scripture admonishes?
- m) Have I looked for creative ways of affirming my children so that they grow up loving themselves?
- n) Have I recognized how encouraging God is to his whole creation? To me?

(Those who passed--"yes" to 12 out of 14--may now leave)

2. Here's another survey from the book "Encouraging One Another" by Gene Getz.

- a) Are you able to get excited about the good things that happen to others? Are you able to tell them that you're glad? Can you enter into their joy? If you can, you are an encourager.
- b) Are you living a committed Christian life? To what extent are you able to encourage others "to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts"? If you can, you are reflecting your own commitment to Christ. You are an encourager.
- c) Are you able to accept other people for who they are? Do you see the best in people? Do you freely associate with people who are different from you? If you can, you are relatively free from prejudice and you are an encourager.

C. Encouragement is God's gift

- 1. God's plan is to continue the work of His Son through the Holy Spirit. Thus, when Jesus left his disciples, he promised to send them this Holy Spirit--identified in the Bible as "counselor", "comforter", "helper".
  - a) Greek word used: parakletos. Literally, paraclete. Frequently translated "to encourage". Therefore, it is appropriate to identify the Holy Spirit's action and presence as that of encouragement.
  - b) William Barclay, a Greek Bible scholar, points out that in ordinary secular Greek, the

most characteristic usage of parakletos (encourager) is in connection with help given in a legal trial. A paraclete then helps us when we are in trouble; when we are in a situation with which we cannot cope.

2. Literally the word "encourage" is a compound of two words: "en" meaning to "put in or into" and "courage" meaning strength and confidence.
3. How does God encourage us?
  - a) To bring comfort.
    - \* God is often pictured, especially in the Old Testament, as coming to the side of the needy and encouraging them. Ps 23:4; Is 40:1-2a; Is 66:13
  - b) To stand by us.
    - \* While the disciples discouraged the woman who brought the alabaster jar of ointment, Jesus gave her the kind of praise that made her gift a memorial.
    - \* Jesus came to the aid of the woman taken in adultery and forgave her.
    - \* Jesus came to the side of many who were sick, dismissing the discouraging words of crowds and even of his own disciples.
    - \* When the disciples were mourning his death, Jesus came to them and strengthened them.
  - c) To defend us like a defense lawyer. Mk 13:11.
  - d) To urge us on and exhort us.
    - \* In classical Greek, the word was often used to refer to exhorting troops about to go to battle. The word has a rallying call to it. It not only emphasizes, it motivates. It not only gives comfort, it gives courage. It sends hesitant soldiers into war.
    - \* 1 Thes 5:11-14; Heb 3:13; Heb 10:24.
  - e) To open doors for us.
    - \* Barnabas was a disciple of Jesus who secured the admission of the convert Saul into the fellowship of the Jews when other disciples were suspicious of the former persecutor. Often, God gives us an opening or entry for some work that is important to us.
  - f) To provide a way back to Him. Sirach 17:19.

D. How does it apply to us?

1. Encouragement is an action of the Holy Spirit. He often uses people to impart encouragement to His beloved. We must be open to being His channels.

- a) There is very little encouragement taking place between and among us. People are growing disillusioned, discontent and discouraged. God wants us to rise up to this hour of need.
  - b) For us in leadership positions, it ceases to be a mere option. It becomes a duty. To encourage our members is a duty in the Lord.
2. How do we encourage one another in MFC?
- a) Consistent attendance is an encouragement to all.
    - \* Heb 10:25.
  - b) Turn to Scriptures.
    - \* Without the message of Scripture we would not have much with which to encourage one another.
  - c) Pray for one another.
    - \* It is very encouraging to know that brothers and sisters are praying for you. In fact, that we are part of a worldwide network of prayer.
  - d) Say a positive and encouraging word to one another.
    - \* Especially during times of problems and discouragement, but also on ordinary times.
  - e) Encourage each other to be faithful to our Christian duties and to our MFC covenant.
  - f) Avoid empty words of flattery and false assurances.
  - g) Listen to one another.
    - \* Listening is healing.

#### E. Conclusion.

1. We do not have to look very far or worry too much about our task as household leaders. Much can be accomplished by taking on the ministry of encouragement.
2. There is much in our new life to be encouraged and joyful about. Let us continue to point these out to ourselves and to the people we lead.

## **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

### **TALK No. 11 : CORRECTION--A PASTORAL TOOL**

#### Expanded Outline

##### A. Introduction.

1. In 2 Tim 3:16, Paul mentions Scripture as a tool that is useful for reproof, correction and training in holiness.
  - a) It is evident that correction is considered important in pastoral care.
  - b) It ranks along with training in holiness.
2. The experience in most cultures, however, is resistance of people to correction.
  - a) At the bottom of it is fear.
  - b) Some reasons why we are afraid of correction:
    - \* Experience of being laughed at because of our mistakes (sometimes being embarrassed in front of other people).
    - \* Society's expectation: We are evaluated in terms of what we know and have achieved. We try to demonstrate our knowledge and skills. It is painful to have our failures or shortcomings pointed out.
    - \* Correction is associated with rejection.
    - \* Secular society's expectation of self-reliance and independence leads to hesitation in accepting somebody's opinion or judgment over us especially in case of weaknesses and failures being pointed out.
3. What do we do?
  - a) We hide our faults. We cover up.
  - b) We argue when corrected.

##### B. How should we regard correction?

1. First, understand that the correction we will talk about here is in the context of Christian personal relationships.



- a) In MFC we have a committed relationship.
  - b) Correction is not a sign of lifelessness and legalism in a Christian group. Rather it appears whenever Christians see one another as brothers and sisters.
2. Scripture says we are foolish to reject correction. Prov 12:1,15.
    - a) At the heart of scriptural appreciation of correction is a hatred of sin, and a realization of human fallibility Ps 141:5.
    - b) The psalmist is aware that we often don't see all the things in our lives which need to change. Ps 19:12-13.
  3. With God's help, we must overcome our dislike for correction.
  4. Don't expect to be always corrected nicely.
  5. Response to correction for something we have done wrong requires repentance, asking forgiveness and change. But correction for something done poorly requires only a resolve to do it better next time.
- C. Practical aspects of correction.
1. How to correct.
    - a) Correction should be simple and straightforward.
    - b) When giving correction, expect your brother to repent (or resolve to do better).
    - c) Give correction in a way that will help a person to change.
  2. In case of disagreements.
    - a) When a person fails to accept correction, the two parties concerned should ask a mature Christian to mediate.
    - b) In case there is still no apparent remedy or resolution, one of the parties may have to practice forbearance.
    - c) But if it involves something seriously wrong, the rule in Matthew 18:15-17 should be applied.
  3. Correction works differently in a variety of pastoral situations.
    - a) Where we don't have a pastoral responsibility for a person (i.e., not a member of our household; or in case of a Unit Servant, not a member of his unit), we still have a

responsibility of love and care for our brethren in MFC.

- \* Correction here is offered in a spirit of helpfulness.
  - \* In serious cases, talk to his Household Servant or Unit Servant.
- b) Where we have pastoral responsibility for someone, correction becomes one of many pastoral tools to help a person grow in relationship with the Lord and other people.
  - c) The pastoral nature of a relationship may allow the leader to probe more deeply into the lives of people in his charge.
    - \* This is true of training relationships, such as parents with children, or a pastoral leader with a man who has placed himself under personal headship in order to be formed in character and service (this is not normally the case in MFC).
  - d) If the person we are correcting is in authority over us, we should give our correction respectfully, leaving the final judgment about any change up to the other person.

#### D. Strategy for learning correction.

1. Look to our own behavior and attitudes.
2. Overcome fears about giving correction.
3. Learn to handle anger.
4. Be willing to learn.
5. Focus on the goals of pastoral care.

#### E. Conclusion.

1. Correction is a very important pastoral tool.
  - a) For the spiritual life and direction of every Christian.
  - b) For the life of our community, for the sake of our mission in MFC.
2. Correction is something done out of love for the other person. We need to take it seriously as one very important aspect of loving our neighbor.

## **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST** **HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

### **TALK No. 12 : THE POWER TO INTERCEDE**

#### Expanded Outline

##### A. Introduction.

1. God always wants the best for us and He wants us to come to Him to ask for these things.
  - a) Mt 6:32b-33.
  - b) Jesus tells us to come to him in times of difficulty and he will refresh us. Mt 11:28-30.
    - \* It is a clear invitation. He does not say, "Evaluate your needs and then if you think it is reasonable, come to me and we can talk".
  - c) The reason we can come and approach God with confidence is due to our special loving relationship with our Father in heaven as His children through our baptism.
2. When we pray, say: "Your will be done". It is most important that God's will takes place in our life, family, and in the lives of the people we care for.

##### B. Intercession.

1. Intercession is prayer for God's will to happen.
  - a) It is to see God's viewpoint in various situations, then go before the Lord with boldness and confidence to ask that He acts.
  - b) An intercessor is one who seeks the mind of Christ. He does not pray just for the "obvious thing" or the "good thing", but God's mind on the situation.
  - c) The prayer that God wants to answer is the prayer for His will to happen.
2. Intercession is part of God's plan.
  - a) 1 Tim 2:1-4. Through Paul, God is saying that intercession is a means for His plan/will to happen.
  - b) As leaders, God expects us to intercede.
    - \* Ezek 22:29-31. This is a situation where leaders and priests were involved in extortion, robbery, oppression. The Lord looks down and looks for at least one

man who would intercede; then He would be predisposed to withhold His wrath. But God found no one; no one intervened to prevent God's wrath from happening.

3. An intercessor mediates between God and man.

a) He brings man's needs to God for action. He represents man to God.

- \* Ex 17:8-13. Moses interceding for God's people during a battle with Amalek. As long as Moses kept his hands raised up interceding, Israel had the better of the fight, but when he lets down his hands to rest, Amalek had the better of the fight. Moses mediated between God and the Israelites.
- \* We intercede not only for general things like world peace, peace in our country, economic recovery, etc., but for very specific situations.

b) He pleads for God's mercy and benevolence for man.

- \* Moses prayed for God's mercy for the Israelites who worshipped the golden calf.
- \* Jesus prays, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing".
- \* Let us intercede for our people: "Lord, forgive them for they do not honor their commitment to you; their prayer life is not regular; they are not forgiving one another; they are not gracious in their speech, etc."

c) He is a conduit of God's love, grace, and will. He represents God to man. He works with God.

- \* Moses cooperated with the Lord. He did his part. He took responsibility to put the people on the right path.
- \* Jesus spoke the mind of God and taught his disciples.
- \* Go to your people and speak God's word to them. Do your part in correcting and in strengthening them.

4. We are to intercede with faith and confidence.

a) Gen 18:20ff. Things were happening in Sodom that invited the ire of God. Abraham bargained and haggled with God. God finally destroyed Sodom but not before Abraham did his part of interceding for his people.

b) We have a basis for confidence. 1 Jn 5:14. Jn 14:14.

c) The lessons we can learn from these:

- \* We should intercede seriously and with confidence. God entertains that kind of haggling.

- \* We can have confidence that God pours out His blessings so that we may be able to do our mission; we know that we need God's power and provision and we know that we ought to be interceding.
- \* God will act on our prayers. He has no limitation of power and we ought to expect results when we intercede.

#### C. How to become more effective intercessors.

1. Have great love for the people you intercede for. Be ready to offer practical assistance to meet the needs for which you intercede.
2. Have great faith that God could do things like what He did to Sarah, that he could part the waters of the Red Sea, that He can and will do the same things for us in whatever difficult situations we find ourselves in.
3. Strive to be holy. Jas 5:16b-18.
4. Look for opportunities to intercede and use the power we have to intercede.
  - a) E.g., Boring homily of the priest. Instead of complaining, intercede for the priest so that his homily may come alive and touch the lives of the hearers.
  - b) Do the same for insensitive boss/leaders, crimes, unfaithfulness of members, etc.
5. Make a habit of regular intercession.
  - a) Make this a regular part of your daily life and service.
  - b) Pray for your people, for more pastoral and material resources, for more intercessors.

#### D. Conclusion.

1. Col 1:9-12. Paul intercedes for the people in his charge unceasingly. Let us pray for the people under our care in the same way.
2. As household leaders, we would see much more fruit in our service if we use with discernment this powerful tool of intercession that God has given us.

# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

## **TALK No. 13 : PRAYER**

### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. Prayer is crucial to the life of a Christian.
  - a) It is our direct communication link to God.
  - b) It is a key to being victorious against temptation.
  - c) It lies at the root of all personal godliness.
2. Prayer also puts us into proper posture before God.
  - a) The essential nature of sin is independence. But we need to live in total dependence on God, a dependence marked by prayer.
    - \* The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever; but we cannot begin to enjoy God until we spend time with Him.
  - b) Prayer keeps us trusting God for everything.
  - c) Prayer opens the way for the Holy Spirit to transform us into the image of Jesus.

#### B. Characteristics of effective prayer.

1. Humility.
  - a) We cannot approach God's throne until we have confessed all known sin.
    - \* Thus an examination of conscience and the attendant repentance are important.
  - b) Prayer is a humble response to God's initiative, where in His great love for us He gave us His Son and sent His Spirit into our hearts.
    - \* We need to submit our lives to God's will and bow to His sovereignty.
  - c) Prayer is not insisting on our own way, but we must believe that God's way is perfect and that in everything He works for our good.
    - \* God is far more willing to bless us than we can imagine. But we can frustrate His will for us by rebelling.

d) We are to delight in the Father's love, just like little children.

\* Lk 18:15-17.

## 2. Honesty.

a) We do not have to pretend before God.

\* God knows all about us anyway.

\* And God wants us to share every part of our lives with Him. That includes our fears and failings, our moods and emotions, our thoughts and anxieties.

b) We have Biblical models of honest prayer.

\* The psalmist. Ps 13:1ff.

\* Jesus at Gethsemane.

\* Paul spoke of his weaknesses many times.

c) As we are honest with God, He will work gently in our lives to mold us more and more into Jesus' likeness.

## 3. Compassion.

a) Compassion means "suffering with" someone, trying to enter into their pains and problems.

\* We need to be moved with compassion as we see the enormous needs of sinful, suffering people.

\* Such compassion, especially in our inability to give practical help, naturally leads to prayer and intercession.

b) Compassionate prayer is positive prayer.

\* We do not need to pray about all problems in detail. We end up being conscious mainly of the problems.

\* Rather, we focus our mind on the Lord, thinking of those aspects of His nature, or particular promises He has given, which are relevant to the problems.

\* Negative thoughts, filled as they often are with fear, unbelief, anxiety, anger or bitterness, may hinder God's working in our lives.

c) Compassionate prayer will also have breadth in its dimension.

- \* We do not pray only for our circle of friends, our MFC activities or evangelistic programs.
- \* We need to be concerned as well about social injustice and needs--unemployment, poverty, discrimination, the homeless and oppressed, the sick, the lonely, etc.

4. Expectancy.

a) When we ask for something in prayer, we should start looking for the answer and expect God to work.

\* Eph 3:20.

\* Mk 11:24.

b) Biblical models of expectant faith.

\* Mary. When promised the gift of a son, she began to praise God that it was now true, saying "God who is mighty has done great things for me". Lk 1:30-49.

\* \* Jesus. About to raise up Lazarus from the dead, he prayed "Father, I thank you for having heard me". Jn 11:41.

c) To help us pray with expectant faith, we need to know and claim the promises of God in the scriptures.

\* Through these promises, we know the will of God, at least in general terms.

\* 1 Jn 5:14.

5. Persistency.

a) We can become careless and lazy in our prayer.

\* We may neglect it altogether.

\* We may give lip-service to it by mouthing off a few familiar phrases, but our heart and mind may wander in many directions.

b) Though God may answer even our casual prayers, normally He waits until our whole being is concentrated on Him.

\* Jesus rebuked the Pharisees. Mk 7:6.



- \* Jesus taught about persistence. Lk 18:1-5.
- \* In God's wisdom, He sometimes delays in answering our prayers to see how much we really want something for His praise and glory alone.

#### 6. Forgiveness.

a) We must first know God's forgiveness by confessing every known sin, repenting and asking for His cleansing.

- \* We must distinguish between the Spirit's conviction and the devil's nagging.
- \* We must ask the Spirit to search our hearts, and not allow the devil to rob us of God's peace.

b) Then we must forgive one another.

- \* Mk 11:25.
- \* An unforgiving spirit can easily spoil our relationship with God and with one another.
- \* If we hold on to sin in our hearts, God will not listen to us.
- \* It is only when we forgive others that God can forgive us. And it is only when God forgives us that we can pray at all.

#### C. Conclusion.

1. Prayer is crucial to our personal life as a Christian. It is indispensable to our growing in holiness.
2. Prayer is crucial to the life and mission of MFC. We are all part of God's army, needing to receive our instructions from our Commander-in-Chief each day.

# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

## **TALK No. 14 : FAITH IN GOD**

### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. We are to be men and women of faith.
2. Two meanings of faith:
  - a) Belief in the existence of God.
    - \* Even demons share this type of faith. Jas 2:19.
  - b) Trust that God is true in His dealings with mankind.
    - \* This is what is important in our Christian life and in our service.

#### B. The faithfulness of God.

1. God reveals Himself as faithful.
  - a) Ex 34:6-7.
  - b) 2 Tim 2:11-13.
2. God proves Himself faithful in His actions.
  - a) Through centuries God was faithful to His people.
    - \* Adam's disobedience and His merciful response.
    - \* Saving Noah from destruction and making a covenant with him.
    - \* Calling Abraham and establishing him as the father of nations.
    - \* Training and protecting Jacob.
    - \* Providing for the Israelites in Egypt through Joseph.
    - \* Faithfulness in spite of grievous sins in the wilderness.
    - \* Driving out the enemies of Israel.
    - \* The period of the Judges.
    - \* The period of the Kings.
  - b) Then God gave the messiah, despite the knowledge that he would be rejected and put to death by those he came to save.

- c) Then came 2,000 years of Christian history, during which time the Church often went astray. But God continued to call it back.
- 3. The history of the human race is a constant spurning of God's grace. We have been a most faithless race.
  - a) Yet still God works, and is faithful to His people.
    - \* Rom 3:3-4a.
  - b) God has proven Himself faithful over the course of thousands of years, and amidst intense provocation.
- 4. Our faith is founded on the faithfulness of God.

### C. Responding in faith.

- 1. Examples of a response of faith.
  - a) Abraham. Gen 22:1-17.
    - \* He trusted in God's faithfulness, and God made him the father of many nations.
  - b) Noah.
    - \* He trusted in God's faithfulness, and God saved him.
  - c) Gideon. Judges 7:7.
    - \* He began with 32,000 soldiers and ended with 300, facing an enemy force of 135,000 (Jud 8:10). This seemed like foolishness for a military commander.
    - \* But he trusted in God's faithfulness, and God gave him victory.
  - d) Mary. Lk 1:38.
    - \* Becoming pregnant with no husband would destroy her reputation, perhaps even cost her life.
    - \* But she trusted in God's faithfulness, and God provided a husband for her, and made her mother of the Messiah.
  - e) Jesus. Lk 22:42-44.
    - \* He was frightened at the prospect of the cross, and sought to avoid it if he could.

- \* But he trusted in the Father's faithfulness and despised the shame of the cross, and God highly exalted him.

2. A personal application.

- a) All of us have given up something, some of us a great deal, to serve the Lord and to be here right now.

- \* What guarantee do we have that it will all be worth it?

- \* What do we have to counter the arguments of friends and family who so reasonably show us the seeming folly of our direction in life?

- \* We have no guarantee but the faithfulness of God.

- b) We are attempting to build the worldwide family of MFC, to do something significant for the cause of Christ.

- \* What guarantee do we have that MFC will survive another 10 years, that this ark we are building is going to be of any use, that this is a worthy work to engage in at the expense of family, of career, of personal preferences?

- \* We have no guarantee but the faithfulness of God.

- c) Let us then be men and women of faith, seeing that God has proven Himself faithful.

- \* Let us not look at our lives with human eyes, or allow events to distract or discourage us.

- \* Let us be like Abraham with the knife at Isaac's throat, like Noah building his ark, like Mary abandoning all her cares to God.

- \* Let us fully trust that he who began a good work in us will indeed bring it to completion on the day of Christ Jesus. Phil 1:6.

3. Growing in faith.

- a) Ask for faith.

- b) Live your life based on the truth of God's faithfulness.

- c) Act in faith.

D. Conclusion.

1. It is so liberating to know that we can rely on a faithful God. He called us, so He will empower us.

2. We need to have faith in God, in His mission for MFC, and in the call to us to leadership.
3. With our faith and God's faithfulness, MFC can become a very strong and effective instrument of God's action in the world.

# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

## **TALK No. 15 : HUMBLE LEADERSHIP**

### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. The report of the Jordan Management Consultants (Annex A).
  - a) What looks good on the outside might not necessarily turn out so. And vice versa.
  - b) Many of us would probably not have thought of ourselves as becoming leaders over God's people.
2. God is able to use anyone.
  - a) God looks at the heart, not on what appears outside.
    - \* A heart that sees the greatness of God.
    - \* A heart that sees the needs of mankind.
  - b) God looks for humility.
    - \* We are not perfect; let us admit it. In fact, we are sinful and are in dire need of God's mercy.
    - \* Example of Peter and Judas. We need to admit our mistakes, face Jesus again, and accept his forgiveness.
3. Various ways we can learn about leadership.
  - a) Look at Jesus's example.
  - b) Study Paul's instructions to leaders.
  - c) Look at how not to do leadership.
    - \* This is what we will study. Mt 23:1-12.
    - \* V.3: Note that we are still to follow the correct instructions of designated leaders, even if they are bad examples.

#### B. Pharisaic leadership.

1. Jesus pointed to leaders who said the right things but did the wrong things.
  - a) V.4: They tell people what to do but do not provide the necessary help, guidance and

- resources with which the people can move on.
- b) V.5: They want to look good.
    - \* Or some may try to be like someone else, trying to imitate another leader's style.
2. V.8,10: All of us are learners, disciples.
- a) God wants to take active leadership over His people.
    - \* All have a direct pipeline to God.
    - \* The Holy Spirit is given to everyone, to teach and guide them.
  - b) But of course, there are teachers and leaders in MFC.
    - \* Purpose of leadership: not for the leaders to do all the services themselves, but for them to equip God's people.
    - \* Leaders/teachers are to get people in contact with the Father (v.9).
  - c) The one Source is God, not any leader or teacher.
    - \* The leader, being in touch with the Source, should help others get in touch with the Source.
  - d) Two extremes: too little or too much responsibility.
    - \* If too little, leadership resource is wasted.
    - \* If too much, leaders could burn out, because they take on too much of the burden which belongs to God.
3. V.11-12: We are called to humble leadership.
- a) In God's Kingdom, the leader is the servant. This too is how it is in MFC.
  - b) There is to be no jockeying for position, looking to be the best, etc.

### C. Distorting God's gifts and call.

There is a tendency in fallen human nature to bend the gifts and call of God to conform to the personal needs and ends of leaders. We need to beware of the following:

1. Pride. Having too exalted an opinion of ourselves.
  - a) This leads to arrogance, defensiveness, lack of sensitivity in relating to others.

- b) Like Paul, we ought to become fools for Christ (1 Cor 4:10).
2. Insecurity. Having a desire for recognition and approval.
    - a) This leads to defensiveness, pleasing man more than God.
    - b) We ought to be concerned only with pleasing God. And our recognition and consolation will come from Him.
  3. Possessiveness. Possessing the work, identifying ourselves and our worth too much with our work.
    - a) This leads to over control, exalting ourselves, being emotionally dependent on success or failure.
    - b) It is OK to experience failure.
      - \* Jesus failed with one of the 12 he handpicked (an 8% failure rate!).
      - \* Paul experienced failure.
      - \* People rejected Jesus. But this is the mystery of free will.
  4. Competitiveness. Competing with other leaders or other groups (in and out of MFC).
    - a) This leads to putting others down, being blind to different charisms, lack of cooperation.
    - b) Rather, we need to focus on what could best serve people and the building of the Kingdom.
      - \* We do not have to do everything. It might be better for another group to do it.
  5. Overreliance on our own efforts, abilities, plans.
    - a) We presume we know God's mind and plunge ahead without consulting Him.
      - \* Such presumption can be linked to idolatry. 1 Sam 15:23 (Note: Refer to v.1-23).
    - b) To be a son of God is to be led by the Spirit. Rom 8:5-9,14.
    - c) We may have a tendency to rely more on our group, our leaders, our movement, our way of doing things, etc., rather than on the Lord himself.
      - \* Our faith should not lie in our size, our success, our human wisdom.
      - \* Our faith is not in the movement, but in the Mover of the movement.



#### D. Humility in leadership.

1. We need to have a greater simplicity of goal.
  - a) We simply point to Jesus, helping people to find him and to follow him.
    - \* God's design is that the merest of children can understand and come to Jesus.
  - b) It is Jesus who saves, who comforts, who fills with the Spirit.
  - c) Our global evangelization is aimed at making Jesus known.
2. We need to have a greater simplicity of means.
  - a) Like faith, hope and love.
    - \* Faith, not an organization, is what overcomes the world. 1 Jn 5:4.
  - b) We need to focus on what is primary, and not get bogged down in secondary things. Gal 5:5-6.
    - \* 1 Cor 13:13.
3. We need to have a greater modesty regarding the importance of our group (household, unit, chapter, etc.), or of the movement itself (MFC), or of ourselves (our talents, etc.).
  - a) What is important is that people follow Jesus, not necessarily that they join our group.
    - \* Of course, we realize that joining us can be part of God's call to people.
    - \* We readily accede and even rejoice when our members decide that God is calling them to another ministry.
  - b) Jesus must increase, we and our group must decrease.

#### E. The joy of humble leadership.

1. A law of God's kingdom: He raises up the humble, but He cuts down the proud.
2. We can learn the ways and means of leadership, but most important and basic is to simply know Christ crucified.
3. There is great joy in humble leadership, living Jesus' way of leadership. There will be misery in pride.

## ANNEX A

To : Jesus, Son of Joseph  
Woodcrafters Carpentry Shop  
Nazareth, 25922  
From : Jordan Management Consultants

Dear Sir:

Thank you for submitting the resumes of the twelve men you have picked for management positions in your new organization. All of them have taken our battery of tests and we have not only run the results through our computer, but also arranged personal interviews for each of them with our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant.

The profiles of all tests are included and you will want to study each of them carefully.

As part of our service and for your guidance, we make some general comments, much as an auditor will include some general statements. This is given as a result of staff consultation and comes without any additional fee.

It is the staff opinion that most of your nominees are lacking background, education and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the team concept.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper. Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership. The two brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale. We feel that it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus definitely have radical leanings, and they both registered a high score on the manic depressive scale.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious and responsible. We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right-hand man. All of the other profiles are self-explanatory.

We wish you every success in your new venture.

Sincerely,

Jordan Management Consultants

# **MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST HOUSEHOLD LEADERS' TRAINING**

## **TALK No. 16 : EVALUATION**

### Expanded Outline

#### A. Introduction.

1. Our goal in serving in MFC is to be the best for the Lord and for the people He has entrusted to us.
2. A process that will enable us to serve better is evaluation.
  - a) Experience is a great teacher, and regular evaluation helps us to learn from our experiences.
  - b) Evaluation enables us to avoid repeating mistakes.
  - c) Evaluation helps us to learn how to maintain successful elements of our service.
3. Our attitude should be that we want our service evaluated openly and honestly.
  - a) We should not be afraid to be shown that we have committed a mistake.
  - b) We should desire to constantly learn and improve on our work for the Lord.

#### B. The context of Christian evaluation.

1. Competitiveness and hostility in society make evaluation a fearful thing.
  - a) We are unconsciously trained to examine ourselves in comparison with others.
    - \* Grades in school can cause difficulties due to emotional and psychological pressure.
    - \* In the business world, fierce competition affects salary and position.
    - \* Social competitiveness.
  - b) Being looked on as OK is always at the expense of someone else.
2. For Christians, what comes first is our relationship as brothers and sisters.
  - a) How successful we are in our performance is not what determines love for and commitment to one another.

- b) Poor functioning, failure to achieve, low performance levels, will not be reasons for rejection.
- 3. Our perspective: members of the body have different gifts and functions. 1 Cor 12. Rom 12:3-8.
  - a) All these gifts must work interdependently in order to achieve the common good of the body.
  - b) We do not compete with one another, but rather we work together as a team.
    - \* We try to help everyone else to achieve maximum effectiveness using their gifts.
  - c) We also need to affirm our brethren's gifts and achievements.
    - \* This helps people become more secure in their service.

C. Evaluation occurs in MFC in three ways.

1. Feedback.

- a) MFC members should be encouraged to have a sense of responsibility for how things go in our life and mission.
  - \* We are all in this together. Responsibility does not lie only with the leaders.
  - \* The Lord speaks to every member and can use anyone to point things out.
- b) Anyone can give feedback to the person responsible for a particular task or area of service.
  - \* Subordinates can give feedback to those over them.
- c) It is best to give negative feedback only to the person who has responsibility for the service.
  - \* Expressing negative criticisms to just anyone can become grumbling, complaining, gossip or slander.

2. Evaluation sessions.

- a) The whole MFC community should often engage in evaluation at different levels.
  - \* Households can evaluate how their meetings are going and how relationships are developing.

- \* The chapter can regularly evaluate how its evangelization is going.
  - \* The music ministry can evaluate how effectively they are contributing to communal worship.
- b) Especially for major community events, there should be a time for evaluating the events, so that lessons may be learned, and improvements for the future discovered.
3. Evaluation by heads.
- a) Those with responsibility for different areas of service ought to conduct regular evaluation of the service and of the individuals who are performing it.
- b) It is very helpful for a person to know from those who oversee his service how well he is doing.
- \* This can result in freedom to serve more effectively and in a sense of security in working for the Lord.
- D. How to give evaluation.
1. Follow a right order to evaluation.
- a) First, set the context. Begin with an overall view of the situation or impression.
- b) Then, concentrate on the positive before the negative.
- \* Commend people for what they have done well.
  - \* Exchange ideas for improving what is basically a good situation.
  - \* Avoid the tendency, coming from a worldly understanding of evaluation, to pick out faults.
- c) Having noted the positive contributions, discuss areas that can be improved and offer negative criticism.
- \* Do not be afraid to give critical evaluation.
  - \* Give critical evaluation as specifically as possible.
  - \* Say it in a way that is helpful and can be accepted readily by the person concerned.
2. Be careful to give evaluation in a way that does not question the heart or commitment of the individual or group.
- a) Rather, we should recognize the stability of a person's commitment, while addressing what he has done wrong.
- b) The one being evaluated, in turn, should not question our love for and commitment to him/her.

- \* They should avoid being apologetic and trying to rationalize.
  - \* They should acknowledge mistakes right away.
3. We must be open and straightforward.
    - a) There should be no hinting, negative humor or manipulation.
    - b) We are responsible to inform people who are not doing well in order to allow them to change and improve.
      - \* We should not ignore a problem, or fear candor and honesty.
    - c) Real love seeks what is best for others, correcting them if necessary. Heb 12:5-9.

#### E. How to receive evaluation.

1. We should be grateful to have brothers and sisters who care enough for us to give us evaluation.
  - a) Positive evaluation is important for our encouragement. Critical evaluation is important for improvement in our service.
  - b) We should not question their love for and commitment to us.
2. We should be humble, knowing that we do not know everything. Prov 12:15.
3. We need to value constructive criticism.
  - a) The wise man appreciates being shown his errors. Prov 9:8-9.
    - \* We should want to get things exposed and look at criticism as an occasion to change, regardless of how it is said or by whom.
    - \* We should set aside any defensiveness.
  - b) This frees us in our service, with the knowledge that we can count on others to point things out to us.

#### F. Conclusion.

1. We are sinful and worldly, and we will continue to commit mistakes as we serve the Lord.
2. But God wants to use us in spite of ourselves, as long as we are open and willing to learn from Him.
3. Christian evaluation is an important tool for our growth in loving and serving the Lord.