

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST

UNIT SERVANTS' TRAINING

The Unit Servants' Training (ULT) is given to all Unit Servants , together with their respective wives, in MFC for their formation and training.

Content of ULT

- A. Our call
 - 1. The Unit Servant as pastoral leader.
 - 2. Shepherds after God's own heart
 - 3. Being a burden or a blessing

- B. Our means
 - 4. The prayer of power
 - 5. Call to discipleship
 - 6. Total surrender to God

- C. Our personal situation
 - 7. Fit for the fight
 - 8. Earthly and heavenly treasure
 - 9. On fire or burned out?

- D. Pastoral challenges
 - 10. Problems as gateway to mature leadership
 - 11. Unity among brethren
 - 12. Kingdom relationships.

Conduct of ULT

The ULT is given by the different chapters. A chapter setting, involving a smaller group, provides a more intimate setting for the Chapter Servant and his Unit Servants, and can more directly address the situation of a particular chapter. On the other hand, an area setting conserves resources, allows interaction among the unit servants of the different chapters, and exposes unit servants to a wider source of wisdom and experience.

When a Unit Servant is newly appointed together with his wife, and before they actually start their service as Unit Servant, they are guided through the Unit Servant's Manual by their Chapter Servant.

The ULT itself is normally given in 12 separate monthly sessions. Thus the whole ULT is completed over a period of one year.

It is recommended that the chapter schedule each of the 12 sessions on particular months of the calendar year. For example, Talk 1 in January, Talk 2 in February, Talk 12 in December. In

such a case, newly appointed Unit Servant will enter the track at anytime during the year, starting not necessarily with Talk 1 but with whatever session is being conducted at the time, and go through the whole track over a period of 12 months. For example, a Unit Servant-couple appointed in May will be guided through the Unit Servant's Manual by their Chapter Servant prior to assuming their position, then enter the ULT track by attending the June session (Talk 6), and end the track with the May session (Talk 5) on the following year.

Content of each session

Each ULT 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 senior Unit Servant. The talk is given by a Chapter Servant or a senior Unit Servant. The open forum is handled by a Chapter Servant or another Senior.

Attendance

Attendance in this training is a must.

Absences are permitted for acceptable reasons. Those who are absent for any session 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 ULT session is important not only for the teaching given. Other very important elements of formation and training in ULT are:

1. Worshipping the Lord as a body of servants.
2. Gaining wisdom from the inputs during the open forum.
3. Building unity through personal contact and interaction among unit servants of different chapters.
4. Growing in the one mission and vision of MFC, as well as its core values.

Continued absence at ULT sessions, whether for acceptable reasons or not, can be grounds for removal as Unit Servant.

Finishing the ULT is a prerequisite to appointment as Chapter Servant. There may be exceptions to this, as decided by the Chapter Servant. In such a case, the Unit Servant assigned as new Chapter Servant will still have to continue and finish the ULT.

Unit Servant who have completed the ULT 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.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 1 : THE UNIT SERVANT AS PASTORAL LEADER

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. As Unit Servant, you are charged with the pastoral care of the unit members.
 - a) In the family that is MFC, the Household Servants are the older brothers/sisters of the members, and you are the father/mother.
 - b) You also direct and support the work of your unit's Household Servants .
2. A better appreciation of what your work entails will enable you to be more effective pastoral leader.

B. Five elements of pastoral work.

1. Goal.

- a) Every project needs a goal, so that directions can be set.
- b) Phil 3:14-16.
 - * V.14: We do not limit our goals to this life. Rather, we fix our gaze on our eternal goal.
 - * V.15: Spiritual maturity is important. If we do not yet see or appreciate the need to focus on our eternal goal, we need to pray and ask for wisdom and discernment. God will show us the way.
 - * V.16: We should not relax or be complacent in pursuing our goal. We should not lower our standards. We should desire to grow even more than our present situation.

2. Attitudes.

- a) 2 Tim 2:15.
 - * Seek only God's approval. Do your work to please God and not the members.

- * Work hard to be an effective servant. Do not just take your responsibility casually.
- * Walk the straight and narrow path. Do not compromise God's ways and our MFC mission and culture.

b) Lk 17:10

- * Have a servant attitude.
- * Desire only to serve God and MFC, not looking to worldly recognition or acclaim.

3. Method.

a) Acts 1:8.

- * Rely on the power of the Holy Spirit.
- * You stand as witnesses to Christ, to the power of the Spirit, to the lifegiving support in MFC.

b) 1 Tim 4:7b-8.

- * Enter into and develop a life of piety-prayer, the Word of God, growth in holiness.
- * Consider your priorities. You are a Christian first and foremost, who incidentally may also be a doctor, lawyer, businessman, etc. If we invest ourselves in our secular work, all the more do we need to invest ourselves in the spiritual life.
- * It is difficult to give what you do not have. Your effectiveness as pastoral Servant depend on your continuing growth as Christians.

c) 1 Tim 4:12-16.

- * V.12: Be an example to your members. This is necessary to make your teaching and your leadership effective.
 - Love: care for others, no matter how they react. Don't be quick to take offense or be prone to bearing grudges.
 - Faith: fidelity to Christ, no matter what the cost.
 - Purity: have a standard of honor and honesty, of self-control and chastity, of discipline and consideration, that is far above the world's standards.

- * V.13: Some important elements of pastoral action in the unit are:
 - growing in appreciation of Scripture.
 - teaching members about the Christian life, in the context of our life together in MFC.
 - exhorting, encouraging, upbuilding members.
- * V.14: Have confidence that your elders discerned your service and thus the Lord will provide whatever you need to be effective. Boldly claim this and grow in your role.
- * V.15-16: Take your service seriously and invest yourself in it. There is always the danger of dissipating your energies on many things not central to our Christian life and mission.
 - Your growth in personal life and service should become evident to others. You thus become an encouragement for others to also move forward.
 - Our work has to do with salvation--sanctification and helping bring people to heaven.

4. Tools.

a) Eph 6:10-18.

- * Our work is part of spiritual warfare, between God and Satan. Thus, our weapons need to be spiritual ones.
- * We do not trust in our natural abilities or worldly wisdom and ways. We may make use of these, but we need to know that these will not win the war for us.

b) V.18: Prayer is a great weapon.

- * Note 3 things about prayer. It must be:
 - Constant. We do not pray only when in crisis. Rather, we find strength in daily and constant prayer.
 - Attentive. We concentrate every faculty upon God. No limp prayers.
 - Unselfish. Pray more for others, especially your unit members. Do not worry about yourself, because others in turn will be praying for you.

5. Venue.

a) Acts 4:32-35.

- * We do our pastoral work within a network of committed personal relationships.
- * We also work as a network of pastors, supporting one another.

b) Note that this first Christian community is also our model for our own community life in MFC today. Your service will help us achieve this reality.

C. Conclusion.

1. 2 Cor 4:17-18.

a) Do not be discouraged by the burden of service. It is nothing compared to the eternal reward that awaits you.

b) Do not lose perspective.

- * We are merely pilgrims passing through this world. A better place awaits us.
- * Look beyond human events and situations and see God's plan unfolding in our midst.

2. We are privileged to serve the Lord. Let us take this charge seriously and give our all, so the Lord can truly use us.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 2 : SHEPHERDS AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. Do we have the proper vision for our service?
 - a) We do not just flow with the tide. We need conviction, especially as we meet difficulties.
 - b) Some may ask:
 - * Why are we here? (Why not at PBA? Maybe some are)
 - * What are we servant for? Where are we going?
 - * Who appointed us servant?
 - c) There can be many questions. These are not bad per se.
 - * We do need to search and ask.
 - * We need to sharpen our vision.
2. Most of all, we should seek to know our identity:
 - * As Servant of God.
 - * As Servant-Leader in MFC.

B. Let us study Jeremiah (read Jer 1:4-9).

1. V.5. It was God's idea to call some people like Jeremiah to enlist them for His service.
 - a) In the same way, it is God's plan for you to serve Him and His purpose. You need to believe it too!
 - b) So, who appointed you as Servant? It was not the Chapter Servant. It was God!
 - * If it were not God, then we're wasting our time! Because we're doing God's work, and only God can appoint and empower anyone for service.
 - c) Look at the fruit of our work.
 - * If it were not God, MFC would not grow like this. MFC may even have

collapsed under the sheer weight of our numbers.

- * MFC has thousands of servants, most with no previous leadership background or experience!

- * It could only be God empowering those He called. 2. But some of us, like Jeremiah, have doubts and fears. V.6.

a) Sound familiar? "I'm too young"; "I'm inexperienced"; "I've no training".

b) Yet God assures us: v.7.

- * So, cast out your doubts and fears.

- * Remember what God says: v.9b. Ever experienced this?

3. Perhaps Jeremiah never even expressed fully his fears. There was more. But God read his heart and addressed his fears. (read v.8).

a) Afraid of people you are to serve? There is no need to be.

- * Rom 8:31.

b) Notice also: God did not promise much to relieve Jeremiah's fears. Just "I am with you". But this should be enough assurance.

- * Ps 118:6.

4. Thus, the first important thing to know: it is God who has called us.

C. Why? Called to what? What is God's purpose for calling us to serve?

1. Jer 3:15.

a) This was God's promise when He was restoring the chosen people.

b) Today, God is bringing about another major renewal of His Church. And this same promise holds true.

- * Realize that MFC is deeply involved in this renewal.

- * Then think about the need to shepherd those we evangelize. They need continuing care.

- * Now who are the shepherds God will appoint? You and I and others like us!

2. God's purpose is clear: He has chosen shepherds who will care for His people, according to His own heart, according to His own great love.
 - a) Shepherds after God's own heart are shepherds who take on His heart.
 - * We stand in God's place.
 - b) Such shepherds will be able to rule wisely and prudently.
 - * You can!
 - * But the only assurance that our members will be ruled wisely and prudently is when we the Servant take on the heart of God.

D. How do we take on the heart of God?

1. Pray. Be prayerful.
 - a) This is a basic commitment we have.
 - b) Communicate with God so you know the Master; so you can be trained.
2. Seek God's word and base your lives on it.
 - a) Bible: your blueprint for Christian living.
 - b) Lk 6:47-49. God's word is rock. It provides a solid foundation for our life and service.
3. Depend on God's power and provision rather than your own.
 - a) Know where spiritual power comes from.
 - * In fact, the greater our deeds, the greater should be our humility. We realize it does not happen through our own power.
 - b) Also, we are limited, but God is not.
 - * For our massive work, God's power is crucial.
4. Use your gifts and resources to serve God and His people.
 - a) These gifts are not just for yourselves. We are all merely stewards.
 - b) As you experience new life, do not slide into a nice, comfortable Christianity.

- * The Lord builds us up, puts our marriage and family in order, so that we can serve!
5. Reflect the character of a humble servant with your patience, good example and dedication to God.
 - a) We're leaders, but we're servants.
 - b) Be patient, as God was patient with us.
- E. Can we be such? Are we the kind of shepherds God promised He will send?
- F.
1. Maybe not; or not yet.
 - a) But don't worry; God knows that too.
 - b) And God is committed to empower us.
 - * To a prophet, God gives prophetic words and vision.
 - When Jeremiah complained that he did not know how to speak, the Lord extended His hand and touched Jeremiah's mouth saying: "See, I place my words in your mouth".
 - * Now, to a servant, God will give courage and servanthip gifts.
 2. Let's look at one such servant--Moses. Book of Exodus.
 - a) God calls Moses. Go to Pharaoh and lead His people out. A shock!
 - * Just like the call to be a MFC Servant-Leader, because we will renew the face of the earth!
 - b) Moses expressed his fears to the Lord, but God gave him every ability and assurance he needed to fulfill his job. Let's look at their exchange.
 - * Ex 3:11. Like our own lack of faith. "I'm still struggling..."
God: "I will be with you" (v.12).
 - * Ex 4:1. Like our own fear of speaking God's word. They might get back to us: "Who appointed you Servant-Leader? Why you?"
God: Signs--(1) staff changed into a serpent, (2) leprous hand, (3) river water turned into blood (v.2-9).
 - * Ex 4:10.
God: "I'll help you" (v.12).

- * Ex 4:13. He had run out of excuses, but just did not want to go. God got angry, but provided anyway (v.14-16).
3. God will provide! If He calls, He provides.
 4. Most of us are like Moses--often afraid, always asking God for assurance.
 - a) Yet, like Moses, we are still here following and serving God.
 - * This is pure grace at work!
 - b) One good trait of Moses: He kept coming back to God.
 - * Fear or insecurity is useful if this causes us to turn to God. If we go on our knees begging God for help, we will receive His power.
 - * And because Moses kept coming back to God, he received God's training. We can be trained if we go to Him, but not when we run away.
 - * You will encounter problems that you were trained to handle: couple about to separate; husband on drugs; severe financial problems; etc. But the Lord can teach you how to handle these.
 - c) The Lord is the key. And the purity of our heart.
 5. In fact, look forward to difficult pastoral situations.
 - a) These are ways to maturity and strength in serving the Lord.
 - b) God will provide.
 - * God will not test you beyond your strength.
 - * You can be shepherds after God's own heart.

G. God calls us. God needs us. What is our response to God's call?

1. God is not looking for people who will give their spare evenings to Him, or their occasional weekends, or their years of retirement. Rather, He seeks those who will give Him first place in their lives.
 - a) We need to give God our best.
- * We need to love and serve God with all our heart, mind and strength.

- b) This does not mean fulltime work necessarily. But it is an attitude, where God is the greatest priority.
2. We have been called by God to a great work.
- a) Let us no longer take pride in our being lawyers, doctors, engineers, accountants, etc., but let our "pride" come from being called apostles, preachers of the good news, shepherds over God's people.
 - * You are not a lawyer (or other) who incidentally is a MFC Servant-Leader. Rather, you are a Servant of God, a shepherd, who incidentally works as a lawyer.
 - b) And when our priorities are right, when our vision is clear, when our intentions are pure, then we can expect God to act in our lives.
3. There is an abundance of God's grace and power for all of us.
- a) The experience of Jeremiah is available to us.
 - * Moses, Elijah and other Biblical characters were quite ordinary persons, but in responding to God's call, were exalted by Him and empowered.
 - b) You are God's servant . His co-workers. His shepherds.
 - * After His own heart.
 - * Empowered by His Spirit.
4. Let us respond eagerly. Then will we see even more wondrous deeds of God in and through MFC.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 3: BEING A BURDEN OR A BLESSING

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. In the family of MFC, the Unit Servant is like the father (whereas the household servant is an older brother).
 - a) The Unit Servant is the pastor of the unit. Your task is to get your members to move on, to grow.
 - b) If so, you are a blessing to them.
- 2) However, you could also turn out to be an obstacle, a burden to MFC (to yourself, to your unit members, to your Chapter Servant).

B. Your personal attitude.

1. You ought to look upon the MFC covenant and your current service as gifts from God and your means to growing in the Lord.
2. Otherwise, you will be burdened and will experience a lack of enthusiasm for your life and service in MFC.
 - a) God cannot bring you to the point where He intends to bring you.
 - b) Your subordinates will perceive your situation and will be affected adversely.

C. Characteristics needed in your relationship with your members.

1. Be approachable.
 - a) Be available to serve your members.
 - * This means time as well as a positive attitude.
 - b) Encourage openness.
 - * Your members should be able to confidently bring out any concerns, difficulties or questions.

- * Do not demand blind obedience. We do not lord it over our subordinates.
 - * Rather, have the attitude of a Servant. How can you help people overcome their difficulties?
- c) We do not want members to suffer in silence.
- * Cultivate a climate where people can really open up.
 - * Have a system of communication that is not just from the top down, but also from the bottom up. Relationships should be highly interactive.
 - * Encourage unit members to speak to elders if they want to. Do not block their access or demand that they always deal through you.
2. Know how to listen.
- a) Do not just pound on their commitment in MFC, but explain why it is for their own good.
- * Hear their side. Know where they are at. Reconcile conflicting views.
 - * An obvious prerequisite: that you know why yourself!
- b) Be discerning.
- * For example, one's faithfulness to attending activities is an indication of where that person is at. If he attends, this indicates love for MFC, a desire for growth, closeness to the brethren, etc. So if one is not faithful, do not just ask why he is not attending, but ask about his relationship with the Lord, his outlook on community life, etc.
 - * Dig deeper. Do not just take the easy way.
3. Be able to adjust to situations and to varied personalities.
- a) Like Paul, be all things to all men. 1 Cor 9:19-22.
- * Your unit members will have different personalities, interests, levels of commitment, etc.
- b) But always speak the truth.
4. Have a concerned and caring attitude.
- a) Have a real love for people.

- * Do not just have a functional relationship with them.
 - b) Realize that your unit members have been given by God as your brethren and as your wards.
 - * Love and care for them accordingly.
 - * Have empathy for those who struggle and are in pain.
5. Know and be mindful of our objective in MFC: to move them on to holiness and service to the Lord, as they find their place in MFC.
- a) Do not just look for a technical fulfillment of their commitment. But help them to develop a real community spirit.
 - b) Our role: a cutter of precious stone. They start out very rough, and later become polished.
- D. Your relationship with your Chapter Servant (CS).
1. Realize the importance of your relationship.
 - a) You are an extension of the CS.
 - * You do not serve independently, but are part of a team, with the CS as overall leader.
 - b) Your connection to the CS for your service is your connection to Christ, the Chief Shepherd.
 - * The line of authority and governance is as follows: Christ---Servant General---Area Servant---Chapter Servant---Unit Servant.
 - * You need to be able to put on your seniors' mind, even as they put on the mind of Christ.
 2. If you disagree with anything, or there is any unclarity, take it up with your CS.
 - a) Bring everything to the surface.
 - * So, your CS can explain or clarify.
 - * Or in case the CS is wrong (we do make mistakes), he would appreciate your input.
 - b) In case you are not satisfied with your CS's response, you may bring the matter up to the Area Servant, or higher.

- * But always maintain a posture of humility, subordination, and only wanting what is good for the body.
- c) After clarifications, you should follow.
3. Do not alter, tone down, edit, etc., your CS's directions or any MFC teachings.
- a) Give it to your unit members straight. Let it be clear what the Lord wants of us in MFC.
- * As they find this difficult, this is where your encouragement, support and pastoral care will be needed.
- b) In the matter of correction as directed by the CS, give it as directed.
- * Trying to be a Mr. Nice Guy or not wanting to rock the boat may result in correction so indirect that it does not come across.
 - * Do not correct but then blame the CS for being forced to do it.
- c) Our teachings and culture in MFC are designed to be lifegiving for our members. It is not helpful for members if these are diluted.
4. If members disagree or are negative, inform your CS.
- a) Do not protect your CS from your members. He needs to know and be in touch with what is going on.
- b) Do not protect your members from your CS.
- * Your members are part of his flock. He cares for them.
 - * The CS needs to know where they are at for effective evaluation and consequent action.
- c) The CS and your unit members are not adversaries, but one body that needs to move forward together.
5. Eagerly seek input from the CS.
- E. A blessing or a burden?
1. You are a blessing if:
- * you understand your role as unit servant.

- * you continue to learn how to care for your members.
- * you submit to the Lord and to the seniors in MFC.
- * you serve with love and commitment.

2. Otherwise you can become a burden:

- * to your members (not being a good model or example).
- * to your CS/seniors (you are their extension).
- * to MFC (not helping move the body forward, perhaps even having a negative effect).
- * to yourself (no joy in your service).

3. You need to examine yourselves: are you a burden or a blessing?

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 4: THE PRAYER OF POWER

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. Prayer is the first and one major tool to Christian growth.
 - a) Prayer is spiritual communication with God. We praise, we thank, we ask, we intercede.
 - b) In fact, prayer is the key that unlocks God's grace and power.
 - * Jas 4:2c.
2. There is power in prayer, as evidenced by the growth of the early Church.
 - a) They were a praying Church. Acts 2:42,47.
 - b) The apostles lived out a ministry of prayer. Acts 6:4.
3. Knowing that there is power in prayer, we want to learn more about the "prayer of power".

B. How should we pray?

Acts 12:5b. The four aspects of prayer:

1. "to God". We need to come into God's presence and pray to Him, in His throne room. How does this happen?
 - a) Heb 10:19. "By the blood of Jesus".
 - * Recognize that we are sinners.
 - * Know that we are forgiven through Jesus' blood.
 - b) Eph 2:18. "in one Spirit".
 - * It is the work of the Holy Spirit to make God real to us.
 - c) Thus, we pray to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit.

2. "Fervently". Or "without ceasing" or "earnestly".
 - a) The same word is used as in Lk 22:44. "Intensely".
 - b) Jer 29:12-14a. With our whole heart and soul.
3. "the Church". This refers to the united prayer of God's people.
 - a) Mt 18:19-20.
 - * How much more powerful will be the prayer of thousands in MFC united in heart and mind!
 - b) God delights in our unity.
4. "on his behalf". Our prayer is for a definite person (or intention).
 - a) Though we can pray for general intentions, being more definite and focused in our prayer involves us more intimately in connecting with the mind of God.
 - b) God delights in answering definite prayer.

C. Obstacles to prayer.

1. Why does God not answer at times? Jas 4:2c-3.
 - a) "You do not ask". An obvious obstacle is neglect of prayer.
 - b) "you ask wrongly squander.... "
 - * We may have a selfish purpose. We may be interested only in our own gratification.
 - * What should our motive be? 1 Cor 10:31.
Our whole life must be for God. We must desire that God be glorified by answering our prayers.
2. Other obstacles:
 - a) Sin. Is 59:1-2.
 - b) Idols in the heart. Ezek 14:1-3.
 - * Idols are anything that we place ahead of God.
 - c) An unfolding spirit. Mk 11:24-25.

d) Stinginess in our giving. Prov 21:13.

e) Wrong treatment of our spouse. 1 Pet 3:7.

* Very appropriate for us involved in renewal of marriage and family life.

D. Effects of prayer.

1. It promotes our personal holiness. a) Jer 29:13a.

b) Eph 1:3. There is no spiritual blessing that cannot be ours. Our part is to claim these.

2. It brings God's power into our work. Is 40:31.

3. It can save others. 1 Jn 5:16a.

4. It brings blessing and power to our servants/workers. Eph 6:18-20.

a) Especially in our global evangelization and mission, such prayers are essential for courage and boldness.

b) We need to encourage our members to pray regularly for MFC servants.

5. It brings blessing to the Church. 1 Thes 3:9-13.

6. It brings blessing and victory to our mission work.. Mt 9:36-38.

E. Conclusion.

1. Whose prayers are answered? 1 Jn 3:22.

a) 1 Jn 3:22a. Those who keep His commandments.

b) 1 Jn 3:22b. Those who do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

* This goes beyond just keeping the commandments. These are the "extras" which we do in order to please God.

2. We have taken up many Scripture passages.

a) Prayer and Scripture study go together. Both are very important.

b) Recommend materials being sold at the Signs & Wonders

3. Prayer is at the very heart of our life in the Lord. It has to do with:

- * Our relationship with God.
- * Our personal holiness
- * Our mission in MFC

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 5: CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. Jesus' plan for the world = discipleship.
 - a) Jesus made disciples.
 - b) Jesus told them to make disciples. Mt 28:19.
2. Discipleship is a calling for all Christians.
 - a) This is especially so for us in MFC.
 - * We know the Lord better.
 - * We need to be disciples in order to perform our mission.
3. Understanding this better is important for you as Unit Servant.
 - a) You are pastors of your unit members; therefore, you are disciples.
 - b) You yourselves need to move on in growing as disciples.

B. Different aspects of the call.

1. Called by Jesus.
 - a) The initiative is with Jesus.
 - * Simon and Andrew, James and John, Levi, etc.
 - * The rich young ruler. Mk 10:17ff.
 - * For us as well. Jn 15:16a.
 - b) When we see ourselves as disciples personally chosen by Jesus, this should change our whole attitude toward him and motivate us for the work he has given us.
 - * Total and sacrificial dedication to the task, because of such a privilege.

- * Strong sense of responsibility for the work.
 - * A shame not to respond accordingly.
- c) Jesus calls us into a common discipleship. Jn 15:16-17.
- * Disciples are known as such by their love. Jn 13:34-35.
 - * Our mutual support in MFC is crucial.
2. Called to Jesus.
- a) The Jewish rabbi or Greek philosopher expected the disciple to commit to a specific teaching or cause, as espoused by him.
- * But the call of Jesus was personal; it was a call to himself.
- b) Discipleship = know him, love him, believe in him, be committed to him.
- * Crucial: a personal relationship. Thus prayer, Bible.
- c) An implication: our call and service ought not be dependent on mortal men.
3. Called to obey.
- a) In Christian churches today, many are called to belief, but not to obedience.
- * People go to Church, recite the creed, but do not obey.
 - To go and evangelize.
 - To love one's enemy.
 - To tithe.
 - * But there is no true faith without obedience!
 - * To say "No, Lord" is a contradiction in terms. Lk 6:46. If Jesus is Lord, we need to give 100% of our life.
- b) Jesus' call is to radical obedience.
This is hard, but:
- * He first laid down His life for us.
 - * He empowers us with His Spirit.

- * He gives us one another in love.
 - c) A warning: Mt 7:21(-23).
4. Called to serve.
- a) We are called to be with Jesus, but also are commissioned to go and preach the kingdom. Internal and external aspects of the one call.
 - * Disciples were told to heal, raise the dead, cast out demons. Be fishers of men.
 - * Call to lay down their life for others.
 - b) Two opposite temptations:
 - * Ambition.
 - Who is the greatest. Lk 22:24ff.
 - James and John with their mother. Mt 20:20ff.
 - The spirit of the world is to seek status instead of service. For us, the leader is the servant.
 - * Self-pity. Look to own needs.
 - A servant has no rights
 - We are not to seek privilege, position, respect.
 - c) The good news is not a gospel of prosperity.
 - * Rather, to lose one's life is to find it.
 - * To give is to receive. Lk 6:38.
 - * It was when the 72 went out that they returned filled with joy.
5. Called to a simple life.
- a) The first disciples were called to a life of humility and poverty.
 - * They were told to sell possessions and give alms. They took no gold or provisions for the journey. Mt 10:9-10. They left home, family, occupation.
 - * They trusted God for everything.

- b) The early Christian community had a life in common.
 - c) The relative affluence of Christians today can be a stumbling block to effective and radical discipleship.
 - * Lk 14:33.
 - d) What is needed:
 - * We can be trusted with material goods. Detachment.
 - * We learn to live on the NT principle of "enough".
 - e) Can we today live as the early Christians did?
 - * Though modern society is more complex, the principles of Christian love and fellowship remain the same.
 - * Simple lifestyles will release a tremendous amount of resources.
 - * Hopefully, in our chapters, no true brethren will ever be in need.
6. Called to suffer.
- a) Jesus' way = the cross. Phil 1:29.
 - * He spoke plainly of this:
 - Mt 16:21ff.
 - Mt 16:24-25.
 - * Jesus' life ended with rejection, pain, death.
 - b) Sufferings we may encounter:
 - * Physical persecution.
 - Martyrdoms through the ages.
 - Jesus warned us. Mt 10:17,21-22a.
 - * Mental and emotional pain.
 - We can hurt and disappoint one another.

- Our subordinates may be unappreciative.

- * Spiritual grief.

- Paul. Rom 9:2ff. Acts 20:31.

- We see the Church wounded and broken.
We see the effects of sin in people's lives.

c) But there is joy for us.

- * In the midst of suffering, God is working most profoundly in our lives.

- * We should pray not that suffering will not come, but that we may be worthy of it, and open to the blessings God offers through it.

7. Called irrespective of qualifications.

a) The first disciples: fishermen, tax collector, zealot, betrayer.

- * This set the pattern for the early Christian church.

- * 1 Cor 1:26-29.

b) The Biblical picture of a disciple or servant is not based on:

- * Academic qualifications.

- * "Natural" leadership.

c) What is needed:

s

- * Spiritual renewal

- * Humility.

- * Dependence on God.

C. Conclusion.

1. We are no longer our own. We have been bought at a price.

2. We also belong to one another.

a) MFC is not a club for self-improvement, etc.

- b) We are the body of Christ, God's building, family, army.
- 3. The cost of discipleship is great, but the aims, privileges and rewards are infinitely greater.
 - a) There is our satisfaction in serving God and neighbor.
 - b) There is our hope of glory. Jn 17:22-24. This is surely worth the sacrifice of every part of our lives.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 6: TOTAL SURRENDER TO GOD

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. As we look on the work of this decade, it is awesome--rapid and massive evangelization, holistic family renewal, discipling all the nations.
 - a) This wide macro view has to ultimately come to a micro focus, that is, our individual posture before the Lord.
 - b) The massive work of MFC is simply an agglomeration of the individual efforts of many men and women.
2. The effectivity of our work depends on our total surrender to God.
 - a) He needs to be in charge, and we need to be willing instruments, holding nothing back.
 - b) However, often we hold back.
 - * Though we acknowledge Jesus as Lord, he is not fully Lord of all aspects of our lives.
 - * Though we surrender our lives, we do so with some reservation.
 - * Though we look to Jesus for direction, we are still basically in control of our own lives.
 - c) An example of total surrender: 1 Kings 20:1-4.
3. Total surrender is the condition for obtaining God's full blessing and the fullness of the Spirit's power.
 - a) Are we willing to take the risk of letting go of our control?
 - b) Are we afraid of what total surrender will entail? Of what God will direct us to do?
 - c) Are we willing to surrender totally but fail when we try?

B. The principles of total surrender.

1. God expects it.

a) This is the very nature of God. God is the only source of existence and power.

- * The whole universe and all of creation are yielded to God.
- * We too are His creatures and He has total power over us.
- * Jesus has purchased us by his blood. We belong to him, as slaves without any rights.

b) God can only fully do His work in and through us if we are totally yielded to Him.

- * Like any implement or instrument (a pen, a car). We are there to be used for the user's purposes.
- * Otherwise, if we do not yield ourselves to being used according to God's purposes, then we are useless and should be discarded.
- * But of course, God does not discard us. Rather, He wants to be able to use us fully. But for this to happen, God expects total surrender.

2. God will work out and accomplish this surrender.

a) A spiritual principle is at work: when God desires a task to be done, He will provide the grace with which to do it.

- * We are not asked to surrender simply by our own strength or will power. Rather, God is willing to work it in us. Phil 2:13.

b) Look at the Old Testament men, like Abraham.

- * It was not just he, apart from God, who had such faith, obedience, devotion.
- * Rather, God chose him, raised him up, prepared him, and then used him.

c) We need only to be open and willing to fully become instruments in God's hands.

- * We need not fear being unable to surrender, because God will not expect from us what He will not bestow on us.

3. God accepts our surrender.
 - a) We may feel or even know that our surrender is imperfect. We may doubt and hesitate.
 - * This is OK. We just need to simply come to the Lord and offer our imperfect surrender. Like the man in Mk 9:23-24 (re lack of trust).
 - * Even though we do not feel the corresponding power, determination or assurance.
 - * We just come as we are. God will do the rest.
 - b) We should not be afraid, but simply yield.
 - * Like Jesus at his passion.
 - * And we should yield with the faith that God accepts our surrender.
4. God maintains our surrender.
 - a) Sometimes our zeal and dedication may be like a roller coaster, having highs and then lows. And at our lows, we may fear that we will remain that way.
 - b) But God, who asks for our surrender, is committed to maintain our surrender.
 - * This is one manifestation of His faithfulness.
 - * We just need to be faithful as well. Thus our daily commitment to prayer, reading Scripture, examination of conscience, repentance, community life, service, dedication of self to God.
 - c) We actually can look forward to growth in our surrender.
 - * We can look to greater intensity in our Christian life.
5. God blesses us when we surrender.
 - a) We often pray for blessings. And God does want to bless us, His beloved children.
 - * But a condition is total surrender.
 - * For a cup to be filled, it must not be full. And the less full or more empty it is, the greater the filling that can happen.

- b) A cup already filled (with the world) will have no room for God's blessings.
 - * Do we stubbornly hold on to worldly values? Then we'll have difficulty taking on Godly values.
 - * Is our time preoccupied with worldly things? Then we will have less time to pray, read the Bible, and serve God. Then we will not experience God's joy.
 - * This gives us an insight into the Beatitudes. Mt 5:3-6.
- c) Now we might say: I'm already experiencing blessings (money, promotion, etc.), so I do not need to surrender more.
 - * We may be experiencing what we believe to be good and desirable, but are not necessarily God's blessings.
 - * Such "blessings" may not even be blessings at all.
 - * An example: One unemployed--prayed--got a job--became busy--led away from God. This is not a blessing, but a tragedy!
 - * Surrender results in authentic, godly blessings.

C. Our posture.

1. Humility.

- a) Self-will, self-confidence, self-effort are all not of God.
 - * We can easily see this. What we do not see is that a lack of surrender means these are operative in our lives!
- b) We need to humble ourselves.
 - * Rom 7:18. Realize that there is no good in us, that there is no power.
 - * The only help for us is for another life to come in. This is new life in Jesus.
 - * We need to deny ourselves. Then Jesus can enter and possess us.

2. Total trust in God.

- a) Much Christian work is currently done in the flesh and in the power of the self.
 - * There is little waiting upon God and relying upon the power of His Spirit.

- * We need to acknowledge our own guilt as such.
- b) If we want to be in Christ, then we need to be like him.
 - * Jesus exhibited total surrender to the Father's will.
 - * We too should have total trust in Jesus.

D. Conclusion.

1. We are able to do much work now, but we will be even more effective and fruitful if we surrender ourselves totally to God. With total surrender, God can and will use us more.
2. We have been called to holiness, to perfection, to radical Christianity. Add to that the call to total surrender. In fact, surrender is needed for the others to happen.
3. The work of the Kingdom is so vast. Let us not worry about that. For it simply begins with each of us individually. It simply begins with total surrender.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 7: FIT FOR THE FIGHT

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. MFC is growing rapidly and massively.
2. We are not to become smugly satisfied, but must allow God to continue preparing us for an intensified work to come.
3. With the way God is using us, we can expect intensified attacks from the evil one.
 - a) We are in a war!
 - b) But attacks on us are all opportunities for God's grace to triumph.
4. To survive and to thrive, we need to move on to a higher plane in our commitment, zeal, service and sacrifice.

B. How do we move on as individuals?

1. We enter into intensive training. We are no longer at boot camp but are on an advanced course.

How? By living a Spirit-filled life. Gal 5:24-25.

2. Gal 5:24. We need to crucify our flesh.
 - a) Get rid of personal vices.
 - * Smoking, drinking, gambling, overeating, watching too much TV, reading too much secular literature.
 - * Some of these are unhealthy, others simply waste our time. All are undesirable.
 - b) Overcome causes for disunity in the body.
 - * Gal 5:19-21. Bickering, resentments, dissensions, factions.
 - * A divided kingdom cannot stand!

c) Let go of attachments.

* Our time. How do we spend it?

- Too much of worldly endeavors?
- Rather, we should spend our time to grow in the Lord. Pray longer, attend MFC meetings faithfully, serve with dedication and humility.

* Our talent. How do we use it?

- For ourselves or for others?
- Some are just building their own kingdoms (career, wealth, prestige). Lk 12:21.
- Rather, we should be fools for Christ. We should go all out for his interests.

* Our treasure.

- Money is one of the last areas to be turned over to God.
- But we need to understand stewardship. Whatever we have belongs to God.
- Do you support MFC regularly with your finances? Do you tithe or give even more?

3. Gal 5:25. We need to follow the Spirit.

a) Grow in holiness. We follow a holy Spirit.

b) Grow in charismatic gifts.

* Ours is a charismatic spirituality.

* We worship with loud praise and upraised hands.
We speak in tongues.
We stir up the gift of prophecy.

c) We follow God, the Holy Spirit, not man. Not our Chapter Servant (CS).

* We need to learn God's ways even more.

- Prayer, the Bible, Christian books.

* We learn to grow "on our own", i.e., in a direct personal relationship with God, the only Teacher. We are not dependent on our human Servant.

d) Gal 5:26.

- * There should be no self-conceit.
- * We need to work as a team.

C. How do we move on as a body, as MFC?

1. Be God's army. Be soldiers of Christ.

a) 2 Tim 2:3.

- * We are not just God's children or leaders, but we are His soldiers.
- * As soldiers, we must be ready to endure hardship. We are not called to a comfortable Christianity.

b) 2 Tim 2:4.

- * We do not get entangled in human affairs (secular work, family, politics, socials). We can be involved, but not entangled.

c) As God's army, we are to take territory.

- * More of our lives turned over to God.
- * More of our homes under Christ's dominion.
- * More people brought into the Kingdom.

2. What kind of army?

a) Lean and mean. Fit for the fight.

- * Like Gideon's 300. Judges 7:2-7.
- * A select group, i.e., all fit and raring to fight.

b) Some may be disqualified.

- * V.3. Those who are afraid.
 - Where will following the Lord lead to?
 - What will I lose? What do I have to give up?
 - Can I do it?

- * V.5. Those who are careless or undependable.
 - We need to be reliable, can be counted on.
 - We need dedication, readiness to fight. No casual Christianity.
 - We need to develop the same mind, take on the one MFC vision and direction.

3. The call to arms has been sounded.

a) Joel 4:9-10.

* Notice that this is the reverse of Is 2:4. b) All of us are called.

* Even the weak man, if willing and determined, can be fit for the fight.

D. Conclusion.

1. The current situation is ripe for major victories.

a) It is a time of grace. Let us not miss the opportunities.

b) Even so-called hard times for Christians can be good times. Opportunities abound for Kingdom-building.

2. We need to be fit. Live a Spirit-filled life. Give our all.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 8: EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY TREASURE

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. Mt 6:19-21.
2. Why is this topic important?
 - a) Because the area of finances is one of the last areas to be converted.
 - * Such conversion is necessary if one is to grow to maturity as a Christian.
 - b) Because MFC needs money for its mission, and our members are the ones to provide it.

B. The fundamental issue in finances is ownership.

1. Jesus redeemed us on the cross.
 - a) Thus we belong totally to him. God owns us!
 - b) God owns all of us--our very life, our aspirations, and certainly our bank accounts.
2. We are just stewards. Thus, we are to manage our finances according to God's directions.

C. An issue of conversion.

1. Let us look at the stages in a person's conversion. Eph 4:28.
 - a) 3 levels:(1) You can steal to get.
 - (2) You can work to get.
 - (3) You can work to get in order to give.
 - b) Applied to personal conversion, the stages are:
 - (1) Sinner.
 - (2) Righteous (internal).
 - (3) Sacrificial service, giving of self (external).

2. Most Christians are in level 2
 - a) But God wants us all in level 3.
 - b) In fact, God blesses us (level 2) in order to move us on. We must not stop at level 2.
3. We must have faith in what God can do for us. 2 Cor 9:8.
 - a) Enough for us.
 - b) Abundance for others.

D. How can we be converted more deeply?

1. Know the deceitfulness of riches.
 - a) It promises wellbeing, abundance, etc.
 - * But often this turns out not to be the case.
 - * In fact, for Christians, it is not the way to heaven. Mk 10:23-26.
 - b) Those who have money usually want more. But wanting more is folly. 1 Tim 6:7-10.
 - * V.7: You can't take it with you.
 - * V.8: Be content. Heb 13:5.
 - * V.9: How we feel about money can destroy us.
 - * V.10: A very clear warning.
2. But know the usefulness of money.
 - a) Lk 16:1-13. A puzzling parable on a dishonest steward.
 - * V.9: The world's goods or money will fail us.
But make use of it to make friends.
 - * V.8: The worldly are more enterprising than spiritual folks. The world knows that money is power. Money is made for taking, bargaining, manipulating. Money is "useful"!
 - b) What Jesus is telling us: Rather than shun money, take it and use it for the Kingdom.
3. Have the right approach to money.
 - a) John Wesley: "Make all you can, save all you can, give all you can".
 - b) Immediately we see the tension here. It seems you cannot do this. But we can.

E. The balanced approach.

1. Make all you can.

a) Money per se is not bad. The love for it is.

b) We can make as much money as we can as long as it is not through illegal or sinful ways.

- * But we should not be greedy, even if our means are legal, because this would be sinful.

- * We make money through hard work and wise investments.

c) Money and wealth can be blessings from God.

- * Our Father gives material blessings to His children.

- * But understand that making a lot of money should not be the same as amassing a lot of wealth. A big income does not have to mean "bigger barns".

- * Our money is not just for our use, but for that of the Master.

2. Save all you can.

a) It is prudent to save for the future, especially for our children.

- * But be careful in giving too much. This may not turn out to be a blessing.

b) We must not spend excessively. We must foster a simple lifestyle.

- * Different people would be called to different lifestyles, though all "simple". Simplicity is not uniformity.

- * We must develop a "wartime lifestyle".

- This is not primitive simplicity (we do not insist on walking if we can ride a vehicle).

- But it is wartime effectiveness (use of computers, fax, etc.).

3. Give all you can.

a) In MFC, this means tithing, resource sharing, and almsgiving.

b) Lk 12:33. Use our money for others. For mercy and mission.

- * This shows where our hope is. 1 Tim 6:18-19.

- * God is not glorified when we keep for ourselves what we ought to use to alleviate the misery of the unfed, the uneducated, the unevangelized.

- * Indeed, how little we give compared to how much we have.

c) Let us take a closer look at tithing. Mal 3:10.

- * "bring" - a command!
 - if we don't, we rob God!

- * "whole" - 10%, not less.

- even the poor should consider giving. Consider the widow's mite.

- * Why give?

- For what it will do for God's work on earth.
"Food" = life for people.

- For what it will do for God in heaven.
As an act of faith, it will please God.
As an act of gratitude, it will glorify and honor God.

- For what it will do for us.
The floodgates of blessings will be opened for us.

F. Conclusion.

1. We face lots of work in MFC. MFC can truly accomplish much for the Lord, as He continues to use us as His co-workers.

2. But our hearts need to be in the right place, especially as regarding money.

a) Lk 16:10-11. This is the test for us. This is the challenge.

- * How we handle money will determine the extent to which God can use us for His work.

b) The issue is not how much or how little we have, but how we use whatever we have.

- * Our use of money must be to bless others and to advance God's Kingdom.
3. We the leader must show the way.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 9: ON FIRE OR BURNED OUT?

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. With all the things we do for ourselves, for our family, and for the Lord, we could get tired. This is true for our members as well.
2. When we get tired, we need to distinguish the cause.
 - a) Physical tiredness can come from time to time. This is no cause for worry. The solutions are simple: take a rest; tone down activities; take a vacation.
 - b) However, if we become tired of spiritual work, this is cause for concern. How should we handle this?
3. We need to look at our focus, our motivation, and our consolation.

B. Our focus.

1. Our focus is on the Lord of the work, not on the work of the Lord.
 - a) The quantity and burden of our service can weigh us down.
 - * When this happens, think how tired Jesus was when he was carrying the cross and through his whole passion.
 - * This should give us a second wind. In fact, we may realize that we are actually not doing enough for the Lord.
 - b) We ought to love God with our whole strength.
2. We need to examine our other activities, apart from our life and service in MFC.
 - a) If we are out serving in MFC up to 3 nights a week, plus perhaps one or two weekends a month, this is acceptable.
 - * This is not all that much considering the many hours in a week/month which we have for other activities.

- * Often, what wears us down are our other non-MFC activities (e.g., work, socials, service with other groups).
- b) In such a case, we need to reorder our lives. We need to prioritize.
- * If we have accepted the life and mission of MFC as our calling, then this is our priority.
 - * We should consider cutting down on our other activities.
- c) We need to realize that nothing is of lasting value except for Jesus and the work of the kingdom. As such, we can consider allocating time to the various aspects of our lives in the light of the following perspectives:
- * Our secular work -- we do this so we can eat and provide for our family, and not necessarily to be rich. 1 Tim 6:7-10.
 - * Our social life -- this will adequately be provided for in MFC. We should evangelize our friends.
 - * Our family -- consider the larger family of God and how we can help meet its needs. Furthermore, our investment of ourselves in God's work through MFC is an investment in the wellbeing of our own families.
3. We need to realize what we are.
- a) We are not temporal creatures with a spiritual side or aspect. Rather, we are "spiritual beings" who just have to pass some time through in this world.
- b) The key to a proper focus is that reality that we are "just passing through".
- C. Our motivation. Mt 9:35-38.
1. Like Jesus, seeing the condition of the world, our hearts should be moved with pity.
- a) There is a real and critical need in the world.
- * People need a real direction in their lives. Only Jesus can provide this. And it is Jesus whom we proclaim through our work in MFC.
- b) Our work has to do with the very salvation of men!
2. The harvest is good and ready.
- a) God has prepared the hearts and minds of many. But we are needed to bring in this harvest.

- b) If not harvested, the opportunity could very well be lost. We should consider ourselves accountable, if we do not act and give of ourselves in the way God calls us to.
3. The laborers are scarce.
- a) There is much work to be done, but not enough to do it. Thus, those who are already working should consider giving more of themselves.
 - b) Not all who are willing to work are able or gifted to.
 - * But God has given us a great gift in MFC. We have the resources to fill the need.
 - * This gift is not just for us and for our own families, but for us to serve others.
4. All of the above point to the urgency of our work of evangelization and renewal.
5. Notice also that Jesus went to all the towns and villages, and he cured every sickness and disease.
- a) Jesus is our example of extensive work and total care.
 - b) We in MFC are called on to follow in his footsteps.
 - * And with our massive evangelization, this becomes possible.
6. Our work in MFC needs to come out of a conviction about the importance of what we do.
- a) We are giving of ourselves out of our love for God and our love of our neighbor.
 - b) We are helping renew the face of the earth.
- D. Our consolation. Mt 11:28-30.
1. Our life and service in MFC can be a burden, but in the Lord it becomes light, easy and joyful.
- a) It is the Lord's yoke we carry, but the Lord carries the yoke with us. We can rely on his strength.
 - b) In fact, it is in giving or doing more for God that our overall situation in life becomes better.

- * God cannot be outdone in generosity.
 - * Since we cannot change the weariness of worldly life, the less we have of the world and the more we have of God, we open ourselves up to greater personal joy and fulfillment.
- c) "Your souls will find rest". Being spiritual creatures, only Jesus can truly unburden us.
2. Our refreshment or consolation comes not through legalistic observance of commitment or service in MFC, but through a living relationship with Jesus.
- a) Thus we need to take practical steps, such as maintaining our daily prayer time, learning to depend on Jesus, allowing God to deepen our conversion, etc.

E. Conclusion.

1. There is much to do, we need to be men and women who are burning with zeal for the Kingdom. But without burning out.
2. Let us not lose sight of our focus. Let us have the right motivation. And let us rest in the Lord's consolation for us.
3. 2 Thes 3:13. Gal 6:9.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 10 : PROBLEMS AS GATEWAY TO MATURE LEADERSHIP

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction (3 truths about problems).

1. The Christian life is not an escape from problems. In fact, problems are part and parcel of the Christian life.
 - a) God does not intend to remove problems from our lives, but rather wants to help us to face and solve problems.
 - b) Christians cannot fulfill their destiny to reign with Christ until they learn to solve temporal problems. (1 Cor 6:1-5).
2. Problems are the necessary hurdles between vision and reality.
 - a) There are many scriptural examples of people with great spiritual vision who encountered great problems.
 - * Joseph, son of Jacob (cf. Gen 37ff).
 - b) Every successful ruler in the Bible is a problem solver.
 - * Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, the apostles.
 - c) Problems are often commensurate with the vision.
 - * So expect lots of big ones for us in MFC.
3. Successful handling of problems leads to maturity in servanthip.
 - a) Problems do not prevent servant from emerging. Rather, problems reveal who the real servants are.
 - * Some servants are often tempted to measure the size of their problems and thus explain their defeat.
 - b) God uses problems to measure servant for placement and use in His Kingdom.

B. Our proper attitude in handling problems.

1. Determine, with God's help, to solve your problems.
 - a) Abandoning the situation or just giving up is not an option.
 - b) Being in covenant together, we are committed to act in ways that make things better.
2. Face your problems with a redemptive attitude.
 - a) God did not abandon the world, with all its problems, because of His covenant nature.
 - * Jesus came, faced sin, and out of death brought victory.
 - * We were dead and lost, but were redeemed through Jesus' blood. At the root of our salvation is the redemptive nature of God.
 - b) We too must be redeemers. We must show the same grace that faces transgression, bears the hurt, and offers reconciliation.
 - * Solving relational problems is for us an endless endeavor. It is not only a one-time personal sacrifice, but a way of life.
 - * A redemptive attitude is one that causes us to face every situation positively, convinced that God's purpose is at work to bring glory out of it.
 - c) We should face problems with hope.
3. Bear in mind that God has a goal beyond the problem.
 - a) Jesus endured the cross for the joy that we set before Him.
 - b) Knowing that God has a goal beyond the problem helps us follow through with our motives and direction.
 - * Ask God to show you His goal.
4. Ask yourself some questions.
 - a) Whose problem, is it?
 - * Be sure you are not worrying over someone else's problem.
 - * Be sure you are appointed to oversee that problem before getting involved in it. Even Jesus did not try to handle all the problems presented to Him (Lk 12:14).

- b) With whom is my problem?
 - * Go straight to that person. Do not disturb the peace of those who need not be involved.
 - * Involve witnesses only after you have gone personally. Only after that fails would you consult your pastoral leader.
- 5. Don't put it off.
 - a) Problems tend to grow if ignored.
 - b) Mt 5:23-24. Eph 4:26.
- 6. If correction is required, do so in gentleness.
 - a) 2 Tim 2:24-25.
 - b) Otherwise, it may result in another problem.
 - * Prov 15:1.
- 7. Don't dump your feelings on those in your care.
 - a) Those under your care depend upon you for steady leadership that brings peace and security.
 - * They are not there to lead you through problems.
 - b) Your problems are to be brought to the household group which in turn provides you with your care.
- 8. Be willing to humble yourself, do what you must, and trust God for vindication.
 - a) Do not be contentious, which comes out of pride. Humility removes the self-preservation factor that brings contention.
 - b) Know that the final solution may come after you are gone from the situation.
 - * Allow God to work His purpose in His time.

C. Conclusion.

- 1. While God wants to bring us to maturity by teaching us to solve problems, He also gives us a way of life that is designed to prevent many problems.

- a) Mt 5:1-10 (Beatitudes). Jesus describes the kind of people to whom He will give the Kingdom.
- * These attributes make for problem prevention and also problem solving.
- b) We often spend much time trying to solve problems which Christian principles could have prevented.
2. But when problems do come, whether problems become your friends or enemies depends on you.
- a) On your relationship with Jesus as Lord.
 - b) On how you react to the situation and your attitude.
3. If you change the situation without being changed yourself, you will have failed. If in changing the situation you are changed to a more mature Servant of God, you will have solved the real problem.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 11 : UNITY AMONG BRETHREN

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. The MFC vision is global evangelization and renewal.
 - a) It will be demanding work, requiring mobilization of tremendous resources.
 - b) There is a need for unity.
 - * In vision, mission and culture.
 - * As brethren loving one another.
2. Jesus' final prayer was for unity. Jn 17:11,20-21.
 - a) The world will believe by witnessing the unity and love for one another of Christians.
 - b) It is unity for mission which still results in more believers in the world.
3. If we are not united, we cannot stand. Mk 3:25. Lk 11:17.

B. Elements of unity.

1. Understand the reality of our situation.
 - a) We are one family. We are brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - * We are united not just by the blood of parents, but by the blood of Christ shed on the cross.
 - b) We have one vision and one mission.
 - * Evangelistic and missionary community
 - Families empowered by the Holy Spirit
 - * Renewing the temporal order through work with the poor and the fight for justice and life
 - * Servant of the Church through the renewal of children

- c) We are one army.
 - * Our commander-in-chief is Jesus.
 - * Our mission is to win the world for Him.
- 2. Have loyalty to one another.
 - a) We have a special relationship. We need to stand up for one another.
 - b) If there are problems, we can handle them in an orderly and mutually respectful manner.
 - * There should be no backbiting or slander.
 - * We should not resort to boycott, signature campaigns, and the like.
 - * We should always defer and be subordinate to the Leadership.
 - c) Always remember that the enemy is not each other, but the devil!
- 3. Do not grumble. Jas 5:9.
 - a) Unlike the Israelites.
 - b) We should appreciate the good things that we have in MFC. We do not focus on the negatives.
 - * Certainly, none of us are perfect, and many, including servants, make mistakes.
 - * But the good far outweighs the bad.
 - c) Whenever there is difficulty, we should turn to mercy and not judgment.
 - * Not have a critical spirit.
 - d) If corrected or our preferences are not followed, we should not sulk or be onion-skinned.
- 4. We should avoid divisions in the body, in the form of:
 - a) Factionalism. 1 Cor 1:10-13.
 - * Our loyalty is first to the Lord, then to MFC, then to our Servant. Of course, it should not be one as against the others; we should be loyal to all three. But in case of conflict, this is our hierarchy of loyalty.

b) Rivalry. Phil 2:3-4.

- * We do not compete with each other (who has the bigger CLS, better music, etc.). We are all part of the same team.

c) Envy.

- * We are all in this together.
- * Rom 12:15.

d) Dissension. Lk 11:17.

- * It is important to be submitted to the leadership.
- * We must be ready to subordinate our preferences for the sake of unity and the overall good.
- * We can give inputs and suggestions, or even disagree, but all these should be done with respect and a submissive spirit.

Gal 5:19-21.

a) The above divisive elements are works of the flesh!

- * If so, we will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

b) Much less can we promote the Kingdom. Our mission would be doomed to failure.

5. Be a Servant.

a) As Christ's servant, we have no rights.

- * We have no right to insist on our own way, to the point of disunity and disharmony.

b) This is crucial especially for leaders.

- * We do not have turfs, nor build our own kingdoms.
- * We serve in whatever capacity, according to the discernment of our seniors.

C. Conclusion.

1. Phil 1:27.

- a) We need to stand united, for the internal strength of our community, and for the external power of our mission.
- b) We should foster this spirit with or without the direct pastoral oversight of our seniors.

* As we grow into one worldwide community, each member needs to take individual responsibility for his own life in MFC. As every member does this, then we will have strength in unity.

2. Let us reflect in MFC the intimate unity of the Trinity.

MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST
UNIT LEADERS' TRAINING

TALK No. 12: KINGDOM RELATIONSHIPS

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. Problems are an ordinary part of the Christian life.
 - a) Because we are a community together, with intense personal relationships, we can also expect relationship problems.
 - * Husband and wife.
 - * MFC Servant-Leader and subordinate.
 - * Among MFC members.
 - b) In fact, Satan will promote relationship difficulties as a way of fomenting disunity in the body.
 - * He aims to weaken us and affect adversely our life and mission.
2. The condition of our home front will affect our service and mission.
 - a) 1 Tim 3:5. The principle applies to our life together as MFC and to our external mission.
 - b) A disordered life together affects us in various ways:
 - * We will not be good witnesses.
 - * We will be preoccupied with problems and "putting out brushfires".
 - * We have to contend with a spiritual reality: a lack of good order in life manifests itself in a lack of spiritual power for service.
3. Problems are inevitable, but how we face them will determine whether they will affect us adversely, or in fact will make us stronger Christians.

B. How do we deal with relationship problems?

1. Know your enemy.
 - a) It is not the person we are having a difficulty with.

- * In the home or in MFC, this person is our brother or sister in Christ.
 - * We are on the same side. We want to accomplish the same things.
- b) Our enemy is Satan!
- * He is the one behind the evil in the world. He is the one fomenting disunity, mistrust, ill feelings.
 - * He is the one blinding a brother or a sister in seeing the truth of a situation and in having a heart that loves and desires reconciliation.
- c) Do not give Satan the satisfaction of seeing God's people disunited.
- * When relationship problems arise, pause and reflect. Look beyond the surface of the situation.
 - * Consider that an ongoing, unresolved problem saddens God and makes Satan happy.
2. Focus not on the other person, but on the Lord and on yourself.
- a) We can be too focused on the other person.
- * What wrong he said or did, how he conducted himself, etc.
 - * How about our part? How did we contribute to the difficulty, even if we were just reacting?
 - * Being focused just on the other person will give us the wrong Christian perspective.
- b) Rather, focus on God.
- * Think about what Jesus has done for us. He looked at our sick condition and instead of rejecting us, he loved us. Then he gave his very life for us.
 - * If only out of gratitude, we need to reciprocate his love, by loving our neighbor unconditionally. If we do not, then we are ingrates.
 - * We need to imitate Jesus. How did he face difficulty? With meekness, forgiveness, patient endurance, love for enemies, trust in God.

- c) Focus also on self.
 - * God wants to accomplish something in us through our difficulties, especially as we relate to others.
 - * These difficulties can be sources of tremendous grace, blessing and purification for us.
- d) But how about the other person?
 - * Of course, we discuss things, we advise, we correct.
 - * But we need to know that God is directly at work in his life. And in MFC, he belongs to a household where he has a pastoral leader over him. He gets a lot of input on the Christian's life!
 - * Our brother's situation is not our burden, but the Lord's and MFC's. This should be a comforting thought.

3. Realize the high ideal of Christian relationships, or Kingdom relationships.

- a) The husband-wife relationship is a reflection of the relationship between Christ and the Church! (Eph 5:22-29,32)
 - * Much more than just roles (headship and submission), it is a relationship of love, care, mutual self-giving, sacrifice.
- b) In MFC, we are all children of the Father! Thus, we are all brothers and sisters to each other!
 - * Jn 15:9-13.
 - * The model for our love is the Father's love for Jesus, and Jesus' love for us. This is the highest ideal, for this is God's own way of loving.
 - * Also, we were to love without limit. We are to lay down our very lives for others.
- c) The relationship between parents and children is a reflection of God's relationship to his people.
 - * As parents, we stand in God's place, and are to care for our children in the way that God wants them cared for.

d) In MFC, the relationship of a Servant-Leader to a member is that of a shepherd to the flock. 1 Pet 5:2-4.

- * MFC Servant-Leader look on those placed under them as "God's flock", just entrust to them to be cared for "as God would have you do".

- * MFC Servant-Leaders are accountable to the Chief Shepherd.

e) In light of all the above, from God's perspective our difficulties would seem petty. We often look like two kids fighting over a toy.

- * We need to keep our relationships in perspective, in the light of Kingdom values and ideals.

- * We need to move on to greater maturity in relationships.

4. Master unruly emotions.

a) We need to put our emotions and attitudes under Christ's headship.

- * What holds us back? Pride, resentment, unhealed hurts, fear, laziness, too busy, judging others? No excuse is acceptable.

- * We must not be misdirected. If we do not do what we know to be right, then we sin.

b) We will affect not only ourselves, but also MFC.

- * We are members of one body.

- * We need to think not only of our own personal situations, but how our posture will affect our corporate witness and our global mission.

c) We need unconditional surrender to the Lord.

C. Our proper posture.

1. Regarding self: repentance for our part in the problem. But also repentance for not loving enough!

2. Regarding the other person: forgiveness. Mt 18:21-35.

- * No human debt to us can compare to our debt to God. In light of God's forgiveness, we certainly can forgive and relate well with the much smaller offenses against us.

- * In fact, our forgiving others is necessary for us to receive God's forgiveness.

3. Regarding the Lord: gratitude for what he has done.

- * There is nothing we can do to repay the Lord.

- * But God expects us to do as much as we can.

4. The result of all the above: unconditional, unilateral love.

D. A final word.

1. No problem is too big or too difficult to resolve, if we call upon the power of Christ's cross and his resurrection.

a) But we need to decide to overcome. Jn 11:38-44.

- * We remove the stone so Jesus can act. We do our part.

- * Thus, we will experience not stench or death, but vibrant life.

- * Thus, we will be set free.

b) Jesus' assurance (v.40) to see the glory of God.

- * Likewise, we take on Jesus' assurance to us.

- * By believing and acting in faith, we will experience God's victory and power.

2. It is a tremendous blessing that God has given us our spouse, our children, our brethren in MFC.

- * Life will not always be smooth or problem-free.

- But by appreciating and starting to live out Kingdom relationships, we can move on with peace, joy and fulfillment.