

The Center for Medical Missions'

e-Pistle

October 2008

Welcome to this month's e-Pistle. We hope you will find it interesting and helpful.

We are excited to announce we have placed a compilation of Dr. David Stevens' management articles, Management of the Christian Mission Hospital in a Cross-Cultural Setting on the web. You can click the following link to go there.

http://www.cmda.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Center_for_Medical_Missions&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=18277. In the future, you will find it by going to the Center for Medical Missions section on CMDA's website, www.cmda.org.

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We hope you enjoy. Please write if there is something we can do to support your ministry.

Susan

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Leadership (pt 3) Section VII: Useful Skills

By David Stevens, MD

Willing – Good leaders are willing to:

- Be Scrutinized – As a leader you will be put under the microscope with a resultant loss of privacy and anonymity. Your actions, words and writing will be evaluated to figure out what you “really were trying to say or do.” A high level of scrutiny goes with leadership.
- Pay the Price – Providing great leadership is hard work. You need to lead from the front, not just by saying what the standard is, but going above and beyond it in your words and actions. I make a point of helping to clean-up after a CMDA party function, do my own dishes at lunch, contribute more than my share and working longer hours than most of my

staff. (I've got a couple of work-a-holics that I'm more than happy to give the "hardest worker prize" too!) When I was a missionary doctor, I made a statement when I picked up the extra call or covered a ward that was short staffed.

- Take a Punch – Leaders need to have a healthy self-confidence. Leaders will be criticized, misunderstood and even ridiculed. Churchill was. He said, *You have enemies? Good. That means you've stood up for something, sometime in your life.*

Hardly a day goes by that I do not get criticism from someone. (It is impossible to please all doctors, all the time!) I make a habit of listening to criticism and honestly asking myself if it is merited or constructive. If so, I learn and change from it. Sometimes though, the criticism needs to flow off my back like water off a duck's back while still showing grace and love to those who criticize me. My standard is to respond personally to each criticism that comes from a legitimate source. That sometimes opens to an opportunity for incredible ministry because there may be another problem someone is dealing with and I just happened to be the target of opportunity when someone blew their stack.

I remember a neurosurgeon who called upset because he had been approached for a gift to our capital campaign. The criticism was directed at me but I was out of the office speaking so Gene Rudd, my Senior Vice President, called him. With grace and sensitivity he responded and before the phone call was over he was praying with the doctor who was devastated from losing a patient on the table the night before and from a child that was no longer following the Lord. His anger expressed towards us was in reality a call for help.

If you are not afraid to face the music, you someday may lead the band.

- To Fail – Fear of failure chokes leadership and incapacitates decision-making. No one bats a thousand. You will make some bad decisions, say something you should not have or have to fire someone you hired. When you fail, learn from it, apologize if you need to, pick yourself up, dust yourself off and get back in the race. Just don't make a habit of it!

Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm.

- To Stick it Out - Great leaders are ordinary people with extraordinary determination. Look at Abraham Lincoln who failed in business, romance and politics (many times) before becoming arguably the best president we have ever had.

Dr. Ernie Steury was my friend and mentor and an extraordinary leader. I remember him sharing about the determination and effort required to be the only doctor for hundreds of thousands of people for his first ten years as a pioneer missionary. He got tired, discouraged and burnt out but his call to serve superseded all of these. In a real sense sticking it out is not because of our determination but because of God's calling and the reality of His faithfulness. If we stand firm on that foundation, we cannot be moved.

- To Seek God's Will – The greatest pitfall for a great leader is their own pride and abilities. Great leaders become footnotes in history if they do not realize their own inadequacy and seek God's guidance. As someone said,

It is always wise to look ahead, but difficult to look further than you can see.

As you plan and make decisions, pray Psalm 25:4, *Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths...* To be a good guide you must first follow the greatest leader.

Maintain Balance – One of the toughest tasks of leaders is to balance the multitude of the demands placed on you from many different groups: your colleagues, employees, the community, your family, friends, supervisors, the government, your mission, the local church and the list goes on. For want of a better word, it takes wisdom or what the world calls “political sense” to balance often conflicting demands for your time, energy and presence. You need to set your priorities first. To hit the target of balance you first have to determine what balance looks like.

Then you need to learn how to graciously say, “No” because the more successful you are, the more people will want a “piece” of you. They will flatter your ego by telling you how indispensable you are and how large their need is that only you can fill. Much of our over-commitment comes from not taking the time to envision a life of equilibrium and then setting boundaries to protect it.

The keystone of maintaining balance is to keep the most important things the most important things. First, you must prioritize your relationship with God. You will not survive long in ministry without it and there is no standing still. You are either growing in Christ or moving further away from Him. Entropy naturally occurs unless you are proactive to fight against it. Secondly, you need to do only what you can do - have great relationships with your spouse and children if you have them. Thirdly comes your responsibility to serve God with your talents, efforts and abilities in what He has called you to do.

One of the challenges I face is keeping the proper balance between developing and maintaining relationships and getting things done. I tend to err towards the latter. Some have the other problem. They spend so much time nurturing their relationships that they don't give their work the attention it needs. Finding homeostasis so that your life is healthy in all its aspects is key to effective leadership.

Power Plays – Exceptional leaders know how to use their power rightly and effectively. There are four types of power:

- Positional Power – The authority you have over people because of your position. Taken to the extreme, exercising positional power ends up in dictatorship.
- Expert Power – The expertise and ability you have that others do not have to do a job. If you are the only surgeon, you have expert power in the surgical arena. Your expert power causes people to look to you for answers because of the knowledge and experience you have.

- Personal Attraction – Affective power. Some individuals have power because of their charisma. People do what they say because they like them and do not want to displease them.
- Effort Power – You put forth a greater effort than others and are thus more dedicated to accomplishing the mission of the group you lead.

There is a time to use each of these types of power. The last three are the best to use but the first may be needed and you cannot step back when it is time for it to be applied. Just like children who have good parents know, those you lead need to realize that there are certain lines that they cross at their peril. Cross those lines and they will experience predictable unpleasant consequences. Knowing that not only engenders respect but also causes people to stay in the boundaries. You do not have to exercise your positional power often if those you lead know where the fences are and that you will enforce them.

A good many years ago I had a staff member who wrote an anonymous letter to another employee threatening him. Ridiculously, he accused him of surreptitiously supporting a denominational theological point of view in a chapel message that he did not agree with. He had crossed the boundary. I do not accept anonymously written letters threatening bodily harm. When I found out about it, I fired him on the spot.

A good leader knows how and when to use each of the four types of leadership power and does so effectively.

Spiritual Leadership – No matter how many of the above characteristics you manifest you will not get far in good Christian organizations unless you manifest spiritual leadership as well. We've touched on a few of the traits of spiritual leadership but let's summarize them here.

To be cont'd.

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Cura Animarum

By Rev. Stan Key

Hi, my name is Stan. And I'm a recovering Pharisee.

As a certified, card-carrying member of Pharisees Anonymous, let me tell you about myself. Raised in a devout home, I have always known what "real Christians" look like. They go to church a lot. Not just on Sunday morning, "real Christians" attend Sunday evening service and Wednesday night prayer meeting. They tithe. They read their Bibles every day and pray for missionaries. They don't drive luxury cars, wear Armani suits, or attend R-rated movies. Politically, they vote conservative and send their kids to Christian schools. They don't smoke or drink or chew, or run around with those who do.

With a background like this, I naturally assumed that it was my God-given duty to judge those around me as to how well they conformed to the standard. Frankly, I liked to do this. The truth is that I derived my self-worth by comparing myself to others and realizing how much “further along” I was than they were.

I worked hard to achieve such a high level of godliness. I had a hard time understanding why others didn’t rush to me for wisdom and counsel. I wanted so much to tell them how to handle their “issues.”

As I compared my life with those sinners around me, I found myself often praying, “God, I thank you that I am not like other men.” It was those words that began to bring me back to reality as I remembered a parable Jesus told, warning people like me about the danger of self-righteousness (Luke 18:9-14). I began to see that sins of the spirit are even more deadly than sins of the flesh.

That is when I repented of my hypocritical pride and joined Pharisees Anonymous. I continue to struggle with the old patterns and the healing process is still at work. But I have experienced grace...amazing grace!...and I never want to be a Pharisee again.

Any other Pharisees out there? A membership drive is underway for anyone wanting to join Pharisees Anonymous. It’s not too late.

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Announcements

Global Missions Health Conference – November 13 – 15, 2008, Louisville, KY

As a ministry of Southeast Christian Church, the Global Missions Health Conference (GMHC) shares the church’s vision to connect people to Jesus and one another. Stemming from the Missions Ministry at Southeast, which seeks to make these connections throughout the world, the GMHC extends that reach even further.

Each year the GMHC connects healthcare professionals and students with one another and with mission workers, agencies, non-profit organization leaders and ministers. Further, through main sessions and breakouts the conference provides information, training and equipping for medical personnel interested in ways to use their skills to connect people to the Great Physician, Jesus. The GMHC is the largest gathering of its kind. Networking among like-minded believers fosters action and unity regarding the call to evangelize every people. Christian healthcare professionals encourage one another in their faith and work—and the intersection thereof.

In addition, the conference is designed to encourage all believers with special worship and prayer times intended to strengthen connections to God. The result, we pray, is worldwide impact.

Registration closes November 9, 2008. www.medicalmissions.com/conference

USAID Development Partnership Conference: A Call to Action, November 7, 2008, Washington, DC

This one-day event will provide a unique opportunity to learn about: the basic structure of USAID and how the Agency grant-making processes operate, innovative approaches to development and ways that your organization can successfully partner with USAID, perspectives from experts at USAID about individual areas of focus and programs including micro-enterprise, food assistance, agriculture, education, disaster response, democracy and governance and global health issues like malaria and HIV/AIDS, and capacity building resources for your organization. For more information, see: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_partnerships/fbc/index.html.

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Book Review

“Preach and Heal” by Charles Fielding, MD

“Preach and Heal” is a must read missions book written by Charles Fielding, MD. Dr. Fielding has extensive experience in medical missions in closed or creative access countries. You know Dr. Fielding as Barrabas, MD who shared a series of articles in past issues of the e-Pistle.

Dr. Fielding has written “Preach and Heal” to combat the unfortunate tension that exists sometimes between spiritual and social ministry. It is clear that Jesus did not neglect one for the other as He modeled love and compassion and demanded repentance from sin. This book brings together into one thought and mindset what we often try to divide into two separate arenas – physical and spiritual ministry.

While Dr. Fielding is a medical doctor, and the focus of this book is upon health care strategies, he does not limit his writing to health care. Much of what he writes can be applied to all ‘social’ ministries. Beginning with showing how we often become trapped into thinking in separate boxes of spiritual and physical ministry, Fielding clearly shows how this can hinder the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ. He develops a strategic approach for entering a community and defines the endpoint of entering as earning the right to be heard, not just establishing a physical presence. Using Luke 10 as a biblical basis for proposing models of health strategies Fielding then develops numerous potential health related initiatives. Fielding also develops his own ranking system of these initiatives, rating [ease of] entering a community, making disciples and empowering the church. He also rates the initiatives as to how he feels they are appropriate for urban/rural/developed/undeveloped areas of the world.

It is clear Fielding has great passion to see a great harvest of souls for the Kingdom and is passionate about ministry within the unreached areas and peoples of the world. Whether you agree with everything written in “Preach and Heal,” there is no doubt you will be stimulated to think deeply and challenged to follow the example of Jesus to preach and heal.

“Preach and Heal” is available on the CMDA website. Visit www.shopcmda.org or click on this link to order your copy now.

http://www.cmda.org/source/Orders/index.cfm?section=CMDA_Online_Bookstore&task=3&CATEGORY=BOOK&PRODUCT_TYPE=SALES&SKU=BK6337&DESCRIPTION=&FindSpec=preach&CFTOKEN=97998056&continue=1&SEARCH_TYPE=FIN&StartRow=1&PageNum=1

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Ministry Opportunity

Christian Medical Fellowship UK is looking for a new head of student ministries to start by early February 2009. This is a fantastic opportunity for the right person. The advert, job description and application forms are available on the CMF website at

<http://www.cmf.org.uk/fellowship/doctors/vacancies/?id=172>.

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