WILLOW CREEK LEADERSHIP SUMMIT;DAY TWO NOTES

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Category: Observations

I wonder if I'm the only person who found starting the morning with the song "it's a gift to be simple" accompanied by an amazingly complex a/v presentation was a little ironic.

Tough Callings

It is easy to believe that if we do all the stuff that the books say then everything will succeed. But God calls some of us to difficult situations and they will never see great success. Most of us are addicted to the narcotic of growth and success.

Wes Stafford

Speaking inlace of Steven Sundhar who did not get a visa. The real heroes of the faith are often in the poor areas of the world and unrecognised.

Maggie Gobran

Founder of Stephen's children in Egypt.

Told stories about work in the slums of Cairo.

We don't choose where we are born, but we can choose to be nobody or a hero. To be a hero do what God wants.

True love is to give until it hurts. She gave up her job teaching the best students in the country to go and work with the poorest of the poor.

The hardest calling is to have a pure heart and to get to know the almighty. She spends serious amounts of time in silent meditation.

> *Silent your body to your weds, silent your Tongue to listen to your thoughts, silent your thoughts to listen to your heart, silent your heart to listen to your spirit, silent you spirit to listen to his Spirit.*

- This was an amazingly powerful talk, all the more so because it didn't have the dramatic presentation style of some of the others.

Jeremaiah

Bill Hybels gave a talk about Jeremaiah's call. Jeremaiah was torn between the desire to be faithful to God and successful in peoples' eyes. He was bewildered that things didn't go well even though he was clearly following God. The people never listened to him and never changed - and the people were taken into captivity.

Jeremaiah wrote out his thoughts in Lamentations. He recognised God's renewed mercies even though things went badly.

Bill then compared his calling to Jeremaiah's - his was far easier. Our world needs people called to long term, hard callings.

How is God calling us to do hard things for him?

Michelle Rhee
In charge of schools in Washington DC. A movie based on her experiences is called Waiting for Superman.

School system was awful. She started by sacking people and closing bad schools.

Was a teacher in inner city Baltimore, believes that being a teacher is the hardest job in the world. Was very effective at getting kids up to standard in maths and English. Built a strong work ethic, engaged the parents and had high expectations.

Moved over into education policy, looking at how to help inner city schools and how to recruit teachers for those schools. Discovered that bureaucracy was a huge problem for appointing good teachers.

Was appointed to deal with the huge problems in schools in DC. The mayor appointed her knowing it was a huge risk.

The school system was broken academically and organisationally.

Core problem to address was to make sure teachers and principals were excellent. This led to closing 23 (15%) of schools, cut central admin by half and sacked two thirds of principals. Aimed at creating a culture that focussed on needs of children. Appointed new teachers: aiming for really good teachers, who performed well in the classroom.

Faced massive criticism, but has the capacity not to take it personally.

Henry Cloud

Talking to leaders, the conversation always turns to "this guy". Every leader has one.

Leaders are stewards of a vision in order to change something. Are you going to allow "this guy" to derail the vision?

What does a person do when the truth comes to them?

Feedback is not easy to receive - but we don't always give good feedback either.

Assume for this session that we give good feedback. Even so not everyone reacts the same to feedback. We need to give feedback differently for different people.

Three Categories of People.

Wise.

When the light comes, they adjust themselves to match reality.
When you confront them, they thank you.
When leading wise people, talk to them and coach them.
The challenge is to make sure they are a match for what you need.

Fools
Are often the most gifted and productive
When the light comes to them, they adjust the light. The fool tries to change the truth; minimising or shooting the messenger, externalising the problem.
Don't like feedback and may get angry.
Don't own problems so they keep repeating.
Talking won't help, so stop talking.
Set limits. Ask how they need you to give feedback, but also set the consequences if they don't change.
Leadership challenge is to limit your exposure, give a choice and then follow through.

Evil
Want to inflict pain
Reject them after a second warning

Leadership is about people not plans.

John Dickson

There is a dilemma in speaking on humility in public.

Humility: the noble choice to forbid your status and to use your influence for the good of others. To hold power for the good of others.

Humility makes the great greater.

1. Humility is common sense.
None of us is an expert in everything. Expertise in one area counts for very little in another. True experts know this - they always realise how much there is to know in their own and other fields.

Competency extrapolation doesn't work.

2. Humility is Beautiful
We are attracted to humility over arrogance.
In Greece and Rome humility was not valued and seen as wrong. Pershing honour was good.
It is the Gospel which has changed the perspective so that we value humility in the West. It is the crucifixion that changed this perspective. It forces us to redefine greatness. Cf Phil 2
Greatness and humility become one at the cross. Our society is cruciform.

3. Humility is Generative

Humble people learn more.
Scientific enquiry is an exercise in humility. Testing our ideas and opening them to the inspection of others.
The humble place (whether we choose it or not) where we learn most. Criticism is a learning experience.

4. Humility is Persuasive
The character of the persuader is the most significant part of persuasion.
Humility makes us persuasive.
The most persuasive person is the one with your interests at heart

5. Humility is Inspiring.
This is true in all areas.
If we are humble we will make sure others get the credit and this inspires them. When great leaders are approachable, we aspire to be like them.

Four tools of leadership: ability, authority, character, persuasion. But some leaders have no official authority. Character and persuasion are what allow people to make a real difference.

At the centre of history is the cross and a life shaped by the cross is in touch with reality.

Patrick Lencioni

The prayer of the ENFP "Lord help me focus on - oh look a bird"
People need reminding not instructing.

The power of vulnerability.
There are rewards for vulnerability but it may involve pain. Avoidance of pain is a huge value in our society, so vulnerability is not easy.

Why is it hard to be vulnerable.

1. The fear of rejection.
Rejection is something we are called to as Christians.
We have to 'enter the danger' -we have to face up to difficult questions and situations.
We have to speak the kind truth. We avoid speaking the truth because of fear of rejection.

2. The Fear of Being Embarrassed
When we serve others we have to face embarrassment. When you are seeking to help others you don't manage your own image. We have to ask dumb questions.
When we acknowledge our humanity it is attractive.

3. The Fear of Seeming Inferior
We need to become comfortable in a lower position.
Do the dirty work

Service is powerful -Jesus washing the disciples' fit.
Honour your client's work. Be genuinely interested in the people you work with.

We don't come out of the womb wanting to be vulnerable, but we are called to follow our humble master.

Irwin McManus

We need a different relationship with the future.
Reading from Ecc. 1 (meaningless...).

Struggles to agree with Solomon.
There are new things under the sun. Taking the idea that there is nothing new is killing the church. God continues to do new things. The incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection were all new.

Isaiah tells that God is doing new things.

God is the God of the new. If you live your life outside of God, you are condemned to repetition, but in God all things become new.

We don't need to make history, we need to create the future. We are part of the creative order when we are connected to the creator.

Evil men work to make the future the want, but good men, all too often, sit by and wait for God.

We have been entrusted with the mission of God, to shape the future.

We need to become the cultivators of human talent.
None of us are born ordinary, but sadly too many of us die that way. The church needs to become the place where people achieve their value. We need to be the place where parents bring their children because they know that it is there that their kids will achieve their potential.

There is no conflict between human talent and the glory of God.

The church used to have the best poets. Whoever tells the best story shapes the culture. Star Wars is better than the story we are telling. We need to tell our story honestly and allow people to find themselves in it.