



United Church of God *an International Association*

eNews from Ministerial and Member Services

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Personal From the President...

Dear fellow servants of God,

288 elders and wives met for the annual meeting of the General Conference of Elders in Cincinnati, Ohio, from May 4-7. Many acclaimed it to have been one of the best conferences that they had attended in terms of positive energy, unity, relevance and encouragement.



Sabbath Services at the Annual Meeting of the GCE

The theme was "Iron that Sharpens Iron" based on Proverbs 27:17 and it was certainly fulfilled from sermons to seminars.

The meetings began with international sessions on Friday. Ministers serving congregations outside of the United States shared highlights of activities in their areas. On Sabbath morning there were tours of the home office and the new video recording studio under construction.

You can read quick summaries of the meetings at <https://www.ucg.org/members/news/annual-meeting-of-the-general-conference-of-elders-2018>.



Tim Pebworth and Ben Light give an interactive presentation,
"Engaging Our Youth to Build Effective Relationships"

I appreciated time spent with scores of ministers and their wives. We also had luncheons for various groups such as camp directors and senior pastors overseeing international areas.

I want to give a special thanks to all who helped to organize and produce the event. This required many volunteer hours from home office employees who staffed all the conference needs from assembling registration packets to stage setup to recording--everything to make the event the wonderful one it was.

In a few months, in August, we will set the theme for next year's meeting and start planning the program for May 2019.

Lead with Power!

In today's tumultuous environment, people crave leadership. One element of leadership truly empowers, moves people forward, and gets results. Over my years in the ministry, I have seen this value bring forth the best outcomes in the Church and I have seen its opposite bring ruin to people and their faith.

I speak here of the power of humility.

Many management experts point out that self-seeking arrogance corrodes organizations through bad leadership. People don't function well under leaders who say (either openly or through their actions) "me first" or those who wield their power abusively.

Conversely, people thrive in an environment of real encouragement from selfless leaders. You may have heard of Simon Sinek, a management expert who has published a number of books and holds the distinction of having one of the most popular TED Talk presentations of all time (How Great Leaders Inspire Action https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action). One of his books has a remarkable title: *Leaders Eat Last*.

The title reflects an unusual story. Sinek was researching why the U.S. Marine Corps has such a record of success. What did he find? Among other traits that lead to real teamwork and success, Sinek found a rock-steady tradition which the U.S. Marine Corps holds, which is that enlisted men and junior officers *always eat first*. There's a major reason for that.

Of course, on the battlefield, soldiers have to have necessary energy to perform vital tasks. But according to Sinek's research, this Marine tradition stems from one critical objective: the Marines want their teams to know that their senior officers *have their back*. Senior officers don't pull rank and grab the first (and best) meal available. The tradition underscores the Marines' commitment that leaders *will take care* of the Marines under their leadership. That's team-building!

What can we learn? As Sinek writes, "the true price of leadership is the willingness to place the needs of others above your own. Great leaders truly care about those they are privileged to lead and understand that the true cost of the leadership privilege comes at *the expense of self-interest*."

The Word of God, which authoritatively guides our lives, magnifies this. In a critical lesson to His soon-to-be apostles, Jesus Christ, the living Head of the Church today, taught this: "whoever desires to become great among you, *let him be your servant*. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave--just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, *but to serve*" (Matthew 20-26-28, emphasis added throughout). Later, while in Jerusalem just a few short days before He would suffer crucifixion, Jesus again declared, this time publicly to a large crowd: "he who is *greatest* among you *shall be your servant*" (Matthew 23:11).

From a leadership perspective, we have as our example the man Moses, who led well over a million Israelites during the Exodus. How does the Bible describe Moses? "Moses was *very humble*--more humble than any other person on earth" (Numbers 12:3, New Living Translation).

Moses, of course, was a man with whom God spoke directly. Moses knew his position in relationship to his Creator.

If we want to lead with real power, what should we be looking for? Here are four principles to consider:

First, what does God require of leaders? Interestingly and perhaps a little surprisingly, the Hebrew word translated "require" only appears a handful of times in the Bible. There are two applications that pertain directly to godly leadership. Moses instructed the Israelites: "what does the Lord your God *require* of you, but to *fear* the Lord your God, to *walk* in all His ways *and to love Him*, to *serve* the Lord your God with *allyour* heart and with *all* your soul, and to *keep* the commandments of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 10:12-13).

That's a high bar! But it sets a standard of behavior that God expects from those who would lead.

Second, consider the famous verse in Micah. Here the prophet states for us: "what does the Lord require of you but to do justly ["do what is right"--New Living Translation], to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). When leaders practice a double standard, it destroys trust. A double standard is repelling to those who might follow. Jesus directly warned against this (Matthew 23:3). Mercy is a leadership trait that emerges from the practice of humility. When one is in a leadership position, it is tragically easy to casually take an inventory of someone and then judge them. But James, the brother of Jesus, tells us, "Mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:13). To "walk humbly" means to live life with understanding.

Third, leaders are not respecters of people. James instructs us with regard to meeting together: "If you give special attention and a good seat to the rich person, but you say to the poor one, 'You can stand over there, or else sit on the floor'--well, doesn't this discrimination show that your judgments are guided by evil motives?" (James 2:3-4, NLT). As the Bible teaches in many places, humble leaders don't put themselves in the "chief seat."

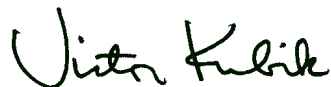
Fourth, power-filled leaders reject feelings of resentment. Have you ever felt passed over or unfairly denied a position? Let's consider the words of Paul, here magnified in the Phillips translation: "Live together in harmony, live together in love, as though you had only one mind and one spirit between you.

Never act from motives of rivalry or personal vanity, *but in humility think more of each other than you do of yourselves*. None of you should think only of his own affairs, but should learn to see things from other people's point of view" (Philippians 2:3, Phillips translation).

Of course, the Bible has much more to say about humility. The topic is worthy of much study, and much application! Even those in the world understand the value of humble leaders who put others first. When a leader encourages and demonstrates real concern, the people following him or her make that leader's vision come to life! Disappointed or uncomfortable with past experiences in leadership? There's something you can do about that. As Sinek notes: "Let us all be the leaders we wish we had."

Let us embrace God's direction and lead with the power of humility!

In Christ's service,



Victor Kubik

Speaker Needed for Agra India FOT

We are in need of a deacon or elder to assist at the Feast of Tabernacles in Agra, India. If you enjoy travel and would like to serve by giving sermons and/or Bible studies--we would love to have you join us in Agra (home of the world-famous Taj Mahal). Please contact David Schreiber at david.schreiber70@gmail.com if you would like to assist.

United Youth Camps Registration

Even though the deadline for camp registration has passed, several camps have room for additional campers and staff. Campers, don't miss out on your opportunity to enjoy and profit from camp this summer. Now is the time to register at uyc.ucg.org. Please note that Northwest Camp is already full.

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