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God's Résumé Skip Moen, Ph.D.

*"But I in Your **kindness** do trust, my heart exults in Your rescue"*
Psalm 13:6 (Hebrew text translation by Robert Alter).

Kindness – What does your résumé say about you? My guess is that it contains a lot of the things that you have done. It's a summary of your accomplishments, but it doesn't say much at all about your character. In fact, some men with stellar résumés are morally corrupt and continually disobedient. The reason we believe a résumé shows the real quality of a person is that, in our Greek-based world, we think the value of a person is determined by their production, not by how well they carry the image of God. God's résumé is very different. It doesn't list any of His accomplishments (and there are quite a few). Instead, it lists only His character attributes. This word, *hesed*, is right at the top of the list.

Hesed is one of those Hebrew words that has a dozen meanings. Fortunately, all the meanings are related. *Hesed* is translated kindness, mercy, goodness, faithfulness, love and loving-kindness. The classic example of the use of *hesed* is found in Psalm 136 where it appears twenty-six times. The important thing about *hesed* is that it is the basis of all of God's actions. So, rather than list all the things that God has done, this word simply provides the reason for all those decisions. Anything that flows from *hesed* expresses the nature of God.

If you read the entire thirteenth psalm, you will discover that it begins with a deeply distressed lament about feelings of abandonment. The Psalmist cries out, "How long will you forget me?" As he works his way through these horrifying emotions, a change begins to emerge. Just telling God how terrible life seems to be allows the Psalmist to get a glimpse of God's true character, and as soon as God's character comes into view, God's résumé arrives. Suddenly the Psalmist understands that every action taken by God rests firmly on His *hesed*. What that means completely overshadows any distressed emotion because it proclaims that unwavering faithfulness of God no matter how we might feel at the moment. That's why the Psalmist can say that he trusts in God's *hesed*. When life is punctuated by perils, you and I can count on God's résumé.

Of course, all this discussion of life summaries (résumés) raises an interesting question for each of us. What about our résumés? Are they Greek or Hebrew? Do they focus attention on our accomplishments or on our character? Are we what we do or are we who we copy? You might want to reconsider what that paper says about you. And if you are in the position to hire someone, you might want to rethink what you really need to know about the candidate. If character attributes are the substance of God's résumé, shouldn't they be the substance of ours as well?



When Jesus Went to the Other Side Dennis D. Frey, Th.D.

"Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth" (Luke

NEW LOOK AND NEW FORMAT!

Beginning with the first edition of MJ in 2006, we have sought to find a graphically pleasing and durable publishing format. Because of the large amount of content, download speed has been a problem for many. The Fall 2008 edition is an attempt to find a solution. As might be expected, we think the new look and format is great, but what really matters is whether you, the reader, are pleased with it. If you are so inclined, let us know what you think: editor@mdivs.edu.



The Danger of Church Relevancy Barry Jenkins, J.D.

According to Webster's 1828 Dictionary, "relevancy" is defined as relieving; lending aid or support, pertinent; applicable. For something to be relevant there should be a connection between the two objects being referenced. One set of ethics is having an affect on the other. A question in the courtroom is considered relevant if it has something to do with the issue at trial. To the contrary, a question is irrelevant if it is not germane to the issue before the court. There are many today that believe that the church has to become relevant to the world to reach the world. This paper addresses the need of the church to be relevant in carrying out the Great Commission to reach the lost for Jesus Christ.

In many churches today, a worship style is adapted to make the unbeliever comfortable. Music is played that has the same rhythm, beat and sound of secular music. The idea is that we need to adapt the music to the present culture. We need to make the worship relevant to the visitor. If someone was to come to church and hear music from a different era, he might be "turned off" to God. The idea is to accommodate the sinner by making him comfortable in the worship experience. Worship becomes man centered. Have you heard someone speak of being lost in worship? Are they lost in worship or are they lost in the music? They are not the same. Worship is to be about God; it is not to be about man.

The Scriptures in 1 Chronicles 16:29, Psalm 29:2; 96:9 uniformly set a standard for worship. We are instructed to give glory to His name and worship in the beauty of holiness. "Holiness" means in part sacredness. We are to approach the act of worship remembering the sacredness of the God we are worshipping. This is not a time to "lose ourselves" into a type of mindless euphoria but instead to focus our spirit, soul and body on the Majesty of God. Our next breath is totally dependent on His good pleasure. The fact that our world does not spin out of control is due completely to His love toward us as a people. Worship is not about the unbeliever; it is about the believer and his God. Any effort to make worship relevant to the culture around us is to take the sacred and turn it into the profane or common.

Another area where some attempt to make the church relevant is in the preaching. Recently, I received a flyer inviting me to a set of church services that stated: "The real truth is too many churches are intolerant, judgmental, hypocritical, and money hungry. Oh, and did we mention they're totally boring too...NOW THAT SUCKS!" An upcoming series of sermons were entitled: "Jesus vs. Intolerance," "Jesus Judges the Judgmental," "Jesus Exposes the Hypocrite," and:

8:22).



It was the Gentile side, not the Jewish side!

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:11-13).

There they raised swine. The Jews hated swine, and despised those who kept them. Here demons possessed the souls of men. Here men cared more about profits than persons. It was a beautiful place, but the beauty of the seaside hill was eclipsed by spiritual darkness. The people resisted Him.

But one man, a man so full of darkness that he lived among the tombs, and so full of evil that a thousand demons called him home, this man came to Jesus and was made whole. He believed on His Name. He became a son of God.

I am very glad that Jesus went to the other side. It was on the other side that He found me. Though not filled with demons, I was filled with spiritual darkness, along with a legion of sins and weaknesses. I believed on His Name. He cast them out, filled me with light, and made me son of God.

It is on the other side that Jesus does His work. It was to the other that He went in order to find you...to make you a child of God.

This trip to the region of the Gadarenes was not the first time He had gone to the other side to rescue souls from darkness. Thirty years earlier while residing in the starry realms of Heaven, He had activated with the Father a plan to go to one of the darkest corners of the universe. It too was a beautiful place. It had at one time been the second brightest habitation in the heavens, second only to the throne of God.

But four thousand years earlier, two souls had opened their hearts to evil, and that evil had plunged the planet into spiritual darkness. A

Jesus Confronts Organized Religion." Recently in our area, a different "church" has begun conducting services in a bar. People are allowed to drink during the message and "worship" and then they receive communion. While the effort to reach the lost is to be commended, this approach of making the lost feel at ease and insulated from anything that might suggest that a change is needed, will do little more than increase numbers. One church offers first time visitors their choice of a \$10 gas card, 2 movie tickets or a gift card to a national coffee shop. Jesus' method was different; He never gave an altar call; He never asked anyone to make a decision for Him; He told people to deny themselves, pick up their cross and follow Him. In essence, Jesus said, "You have heard my Word, my teachings, now repent and turn from your sins and live out your new faith day by day." The message of the cross is a message of self denial and personal holiness. The effort to make the message of the cross into a relevant non-offensive request is to preach another "gospel." We must never forget that people are headed either to heaven or to hell. A relevant "soft" message that saves no one but makes sure that they are comfortable in their sins with their coffee and doughnuts is a tool of the devil and needs to be rebuked!

Recently, the center of the "seeker sensitive" movement (this is the approach that tries to get people saved before they realize what Jesus requires of them) at Willow Creek Church performed a survey about the spiritual quality of their attendees. Dr. Skip Moen has written an article addressing the results and at his web site www.atgodstable.com he states the following:

"Willow Creek has released the results of a multi-year study on the effectiveness of their programs and philosophy of ministry. The study's findings are in a new book titled Reveal: Where Are You?, co-authored by Cally Parkinson and Greg Hawkins, executive pastor of Willow Creek Community Church. Hybels himself called the findings "earth shaking," "ground breaking" and "mind blowing." And no wonder: it seems that the "experts" were wrong.

The report reveals that most of what they have been doing for these many years and what they have taught millions of others to do is not producing solid disciples of Jesus Christ. Numbers yes, but not disciples. "t gets worse." Hybels laments: "Some of the stuff that we have put millions of dollars into thinking it would really help our people grow and develop spiritually, when the data actually came back it wasn't helping people that much. Other things that we didn't put that much money into and didn't put much staff against is stuff our people are crying out for."

If you simply want a crowd, the "seeker sensitive" model produces results. If you want solid, sincere, mature followers of Christ, it's a bust. In a shocking confession, Hybels states: " We made a mistake. What we should have done when people crossed the line of faith and become Christians, we should have started telling people and teaching people that they have to take responsibility to become 'self feeders. We should have gotten people, taught people, how to read their bible between services, how to do the spiritual practices much more aggressively on their own."

Incredibly, the guru of church growth now tells us that people need to be reading their bibles and taking responsibility for their spiritual growth."

Efforts to make church relevant may increase your numbers; however, are you increasing the number of people receiving eternal life? Was relevancy an issue to Jesus? His mission was to save His people from their sins; His message was the Kingdom of God is within reach; He came to heal the broken hearted and to set the captives free. I see no interest in making the lost comfortable in their sin; to suggest to the contrary is to fall into the trap of relevancy. Let us take the message of the cross to a lost and dying world; let us

darkness so deep that the combined efforts of the Law and the Prophets had not been enough to bring back the light.

So Jesus went to the other side, and when He arrived it was said, *"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up"* (Matthew 4:17).

That light was so great that in only three and a half years, it pierced the heaviest cloud of blackness the universe had ever known. The Daystar had risen over the earth, and mankind would never be the same.

And though it is true that nearly two thousand years ago He ascended back into heaven, His Holy Spirit carries on the work of piercing the scaly opaqueness of sin. This other side has remained a place where alienated souls, if they believe on His Name, can reach up to the Light and become the children of God.

And yet, though shrouded in mystery, He has indeed ascended back into heaven, but with a promise to return...to return yet again to the other side.

As He promised, there is coming a day when for a brief moment He will return to this other side, to reunite the souls of His departed saints with their resurrected bodies, while catching up the living children of God in a rapture of unspeakable joy.

A joy unspeakable but full of glory! *"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory"* (1 Peter 1:8).

Immediately after the removal of the children of God from the earth, the darkness will again descend, and for seven unspeakably brutal years the universe will be a witness to the utter failure of Satan's leadership ability, and the desperately wicked hearts of humankind as they grope about in the darkness here on the other side. A darkness so utter that only seven years can be allotted to its rule or nothing worth saving could remain.

For a third time Jesus will again go over to the other side. And once again, the darkness will flee in the light of His glory and grace. This time, instead of coming to Bethlehem as a baby to remain but thirty-three and a half years, He will come as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lord to establish a Holy Monarchy over which He will rule for a millennium.

For a thousand years the people of the earth and the creation itself, which presently waiteth for its day of release, will experience the peace, balance, justice, happiness, and love that it has only known in glimpses, snatches and hopes under the many thousands of years of the rule of men, and which will totally vanish with terrifying swiftness during the agonizing seven years of the rule of the Devil.

Following the close of the Millennial Kingdom, there will be one final and mercifully brief opportunity for the universe to witness the ultimately incorrigible nature of Satan, as well as the desperate wickedness of the unregenerate heart of man.

After which the elements will melt with fervent heat, and a new heaven and a new earth will be created in righteousness, and Jesus will never again go to the other side, for the other side will have become His side, His Father's side, His Holy Spirit's side, *"And I*

worship our Holy God with the respect to which His sacredness demands.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Master's Journey

Determining the Exchange Rate: A Look at Personal Investment Satisfaction

Skip Moen, Ph.D.

When it comes to understanding the deepest desires and issues in my life, I often find that a look at ancient literature provides insights not available in the modern frenetic whirlwind of living. Making critical decisions that are propelled by pace alone often leads to enormous regrets, personal agony and relationship destruction. I would much rather sit still and get it right than jump on the speeding train headed for a collapsing bridge just because its moving faster. That takes discipline. There is a "herd mentality" that affects us when we see all those people piled on the train going by. And since I lack all the discipline that I need, I consult those who have had more time to think about it than I have, the ones who died centuries ago after lifetimes of patience.



Good advice is good no matter where it comes from. When I find a resonating chord, I try to stop long enough to enjoy the sound. And one of those deeply resonating chords was written by a very wise man, Solomon. In Proverbs 23:23 he said, "Buy the truth and do not sell it". Of course, this raises an immediate question. What in the world is Solomon suggesting? How do I buy the truth and why should I be careful not to sell it?

A little investigation (which fortunately for you I have already done) reveals something very important. The two actions in this wise saying (buy and sell) carry some very interesting implications. The first Hebrew verb is about acquiring, purchasing and possessing. How does one acquire, purchase or possess the truth? According to Solomon, this occurs in a life-long commitment to principled living, highest standards and ethical obedience. So far so good. All of us would love to have reputations built on that kind of foundation. But now comes the other verb – sell. This word is the basic action of exchange. It suggests bartering. I give something in order to get something else. In our world, the commodity of exchange is usually reduced to money. But money is nothing more than folded time and effort. I give time and effort in exchange for money. Then I exchange this folded time and effort to obtain something else produced by time and effort.

Now here's the pearl of wisdom from Solomon. Don't set an exchange rate for the truth! No amount of folded time and effort is worth the barter. When you acquire, purchase or possess the truth, bank it! Never let it go. If you do, you will end up the loser in the deal.

Once again we are all shaking our heads in agreement. Of course we wouldn't sell the truth for material gain (would we?). Solomon must have known that the possibility could occur or else the warning would have been unnecessary. But one more look at this ancient Hebrew word reveals just how subtle, and dangerous, the exchange rate might be.

There is a very old story in the book of Genesis about an exchange. Esau and Jacob were brothers. Esau, the first-born, had rights of

heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. 21:3)

Still, in the meanwhile, we also must make a journey to the other side of the lake. This too is shrouded in mystery. A mystery too repelling for us to long contemplate without sinking into despair save for one Truth. Him. He is over there. Over there on the other side of the lake.

THE HOME OVER THERE
DeWitt C. Huntington, circa 1873

O think of the home over there,
By the side of the river of light,
Where the saints, all immortal and fair,
Are robed in their garments of light.

Over there, over there,
O think of the home over there,
Over there, over there,
O think of the home over there.

O think of the friends over there,
Who before us the journey have trod,
Of the songs that they breathe on the air,
In their home in the palace of God.

Over there, over there,
O think of the friends over there,
Over there, over there,
O think of the friends over there.

My Savior is now over there,
There my kindred and friends are at rest,
Then away from my sorrow and care,
Let me fly to the land of the blest.

Over there, over there,
My Savior is now over there,
Over there, over there,
My Savior is now over there.

I'll soon be at home over there,
For the end of my journey I see;
Many dear to my heart, over there,
Are watching and waiting for me.

Over there, over there,
I'll soon be at home over there,
Over there, over there,
I'll soon be at home over there.

"Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth" (Luke 8:22).



inheritance. But one day Esau was famished from hunting and Jacob, who was a great chef, presented his brother with an exchange. Esau wanted food. Jacob wanted something else. So he proposed a barter. "You give me your right of inheritance and I'll give you this food". And here's the point of this little story. Esau exchanged the intangible birthright for the tangible sustenance. He sold the truth and regretted it the rest of his life.

This ancient wisdom makes me wary when it comes to my own investing strategy. It demonstrates how easily I am tempted to give away what is intangible but vital for what appears as tangible but appealing. Once I barter the truth of my convictions or the values of my position, I won't get them back. I will have the tangible goods but they will be of little comfort where my reputation is concerned. If my investment strategy does not recognize the intangible assets absolutely necessary for me to have peace and joy, no amount of folded time and effort will be enough to give me solace.

How does this affect my investing decisions? Would you put your folded time and effort into the hands of an Esau? Or a company with Esau's values? Are you looking for maximum profits regardless of the consequences or the commodity? Are you willing to exchange what is most near and dear to who you are in order to get what you want? Today's investing advisors often focus entirely on the tangible. How much, how often, how safe. But there is a deeper side to investing – a side that affects how you sleep and how well the meals digest and how high you can lift your head. Buy the truth and do not sell it. That's very good advice. And it was free.



Talent Management – the key
to leadership effectiveness
John B. Samuel

*One ship drives east and another drives west
With the selfsame winds that blow;
'Tis the set of the sails, and not the gales
Which tells us the way to go.*

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Talent Management is the systematic nurture and development of the natural strengths innately embedded in each employee in an organisation. It is the "set of the sails" that are inherent and intrinsic to each individual that define what can be leveraged in the person to make an effective contribution to an organisation or any endeavor.

Corporate organisations worldwide are realizing the importance of 'tapping' into the natural talents of their key executives and employees. Ever since the ground breaking research by McKinsey consultants Ed Michaels, Helen Handfield-Jones, and Beth Axelrod in their book the "War for Talent", the word "talent" is no longer limited to describing a good tennis player or an accomplished musician. It has become a cherished word in the corporate world to define exceptional performance.

And talent management is a discipline that celebrates what each employee is innately endowed with and leveraging that to achieve



CAUTION: CARGO MAY SHIFT!

Yes! Ms. Smith, You Can Be A Pastor!

Mercedes Iletto Pascual, D.B.S.



The selection of a woman senior pastor on June 17, 2007, to lead the First Baptist Church of Decatur, Georgia may not be a surprise to the 2,700 members of the congregation who believe that she was called by the Holy Spirit to lead the church. What is remarkable is the fact that the

Rev. Julie Pennington-Russell has successfully defied gender bias in the Christian church.

The issue of gender is an obstacle for women desiring to serve as pastors in the Christian church – a controversial and divisive issue that confronts the church. While the Creation narrative in Genesis teaches us that both man and woman were created in the image and likeness of God, the same passage in Scripture is being used by proponents of men-only pastors to prevent women from fulfilling their calling. The order of creation, man first before woman, became the focal point of the idea that men are superior to women and, therefore, had the divine right to make women subordinate to men. The Bible, however, clearly states that male and female have equal standing before God and between each other. They are both *Imago Dei*. The man and the woman as part of the whole represent unity in the same way that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are united in the Trinity. If all men and women are created in the image of God, and all women ministers are women, is it not logically correct that all women ministers are created in the image of God?

God's ordinance for the man and the woman to "multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it" could not be accomplished by the man alone without the woman because maleness alone does not indicate completeness. The man and the woman are equal in nature, in life, and in commission, although they have different functions in the promotion and propagation of the race. There is diversity in their unity but "they" – the man and the woman – share in power and authority over the earth. The woman receives the same blessings of God as the man. If all men and women share God's commission, is it unreasonable for woman to serve as pastors?

The woman Eve was created as a "help meet" for Adam. The Hebrew word for "help meet" that the King James Version uses is *ezer*. It means "help, succour, and one who helps. It does not indicate a subordinate position nor does it imply inferiority. It was used in the Old Testament to describe the Gadite chief who provided military help to David (1 Chron. 12:8-9), the Levite who aided Nehemiah in repairing the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 3:19), and to God as our helper (Exodus 18:4, Deuteronomy 33:26). A "help meet" is somebody who comes to the aid of another. God, therefore created the woman as an equal and "suitable" help to the man. The word suitable in the Hebrew language is *knegdwo*. Aida Besancon Spencer in "Beyond the Curse – Woman Called to Ministry"[1] explained *knegdwo* as made up of three thought units. The first is the prefix letter k, followed by the preposition neged, then the suffix wo. The prefix k indicates comparison, similarity or proportion, while the suffix wo points towards the word "him." The Hebrew word neged is a basic word that describes the importance of the woman "helper" to the man. Genesis 2:18 in the Hebrew language would read: "I will make for him a helper

organizational objectives..

Talent – what is it?

Talent is best defined as a natural endowment that represents an inherent, innate and intrinsic capacity for effective and energized action.

The Scripture refers to it as "*dōma*" in Ephesians 4:8. This Greek word represents the idea of a "gift" bestowed on a person. It describes the "givenness" specific to an individual.

Hence, whether it is a natural capability to influence another or organize an event or create an original piece of painting, it represents a talent that the individual neither sought or acquired. And in the expression of which, the individual experiences joy and a sense of fulfillment.

A skill on the other hand represents the variety of "can-do" capabilities that an individual seeks to acquire during his or her lifetime. A skill may include the development of a natural talent – or can be a mere acquisition of a can-do capability to discharge a social or vocational function. Be it linguistic, managerial or vocational skill, the acquisition aids and enables the person but does not necessarily induce energy, intense focus or deep fulfillment in its expression (unlike what one experiences when engaging his or her natural talent)

How to manage and deploy talent:

Effective talent management requires a fundamental mindset that engaging the natural gifting of the individual is the key to sustain peak performance. And ensuring that the employee is deployed primarily in the area of their natural gifting must be the overriding focus of any CEO or divisional head – more than merely utilizing the employee to achieve immediate organizational objectives. The latter will accomplish what is necessary – the former will catapult the organisation to levels of exceptional performance and excellence.

The repertoire of talents that are resident in an individual often is never detailed or described in the employee's resume or CV – even though this is the most critical data that any CEO must have on file about each executive. Hence efforts to establish where the individual has made a sustained contribution to the organisation will merit study. Methods such as 360 degrees, peer assessments, performance appraisals, etc will provide some indication of where the person has demonstrated considerable effectiveness on a sustained basis over a period of several years – though those insights may not always be definitive or conclusive.

According to David T. Yerry, "effective leadership requires understanding those we lead". Which begs the question, *how often and how much time is invested in understanding the executive?* When organisational agenda's become an all-consuming objective, taking time to understand and appreciate what "motivates the person" often becomes a casualty.

Practically, a dependable means of identifying what motivates the individual is to solicit inputs from the employee about his specific areas of work interest, what he or she was most focused and absorbed in doing, the range of activities that he or she naturally gravitates to and in finding common ground in it within their current scope of work. And slowly steering the person over a period of time to doing more of it – stretching them to deliver more in the areas where their proven strengths and talents have become evident.

as if in front of him.” The phrase “as if in front of him” does not suggest a submissive relationship or a lower hierarchy. If the woman, Eve, was created by God in an inferior position to Adam, the writer of the Book of Genesis would have used a different word instead, such as *'achar*,[2] which is a feminine adjective that means “behind” or “at the back of” used by the same author in describing Moses’ position (“to the backside of the desert”) when he led Jethro’s flock in Exodus 3:1.

The fact that a woman can be a helper as if in front of a man was demonstrated in the Book of Judges by God’s calling upon Deborah to lead the nation of Israel. Deborah, who was also a prophetess; accompanied Barak, the lead soldier of the Israelites, to victory against Sisera, the leader of the Canaanites. Barak was afraid to face the enemy and insisted that Deborah accompany him. He knew that Deborah’s presence would guarantee victory over the enemy. The nation of Israel had peace for forty years under Deborah’s ministry. (Judges 4 and 5).

To draw inferences of subjection and authority by the man over the woman because of the erroneous use of the word “helper” will disregard God’s purpose in creating the man and the woman. The word “help meet” adequately identifies the woman as a “rescuer” to the man who was helpless when bereft of the woman in the Garden of Eden. Eve was made from the same material as Adam — from one being God made two distinct persons. The derivation of Eve from Adam does not connote subordination of the woman to the man. Rather, woman, who was created in the “same nature as man, of the same flesh and blood, and of the same constitution in all respects . . . had equal powers, faculties, and rights.”[3]

The curse on the woman as a result of the fall as recorded in Genesis 3:1 has been the source of much antagonism against women as the seducer, the weaker sex, a transgressor of the law, and thereby subordinate to man. An in-depth study of the text will prove that no curse language was pronounced by God. God’s word to Eve “in pain you shall bring forth children,” used the simple future tense form of the verb shall which expresses future inevitability or predestination. God described what will happen to Eve – the consequences of her sin – the pain that she brought upon herself. In the second part of God’s warning to Eve, “Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you.” the word “desire” is *teshuga* in Hebrew.[4] If we use the English translation of “desire,” it implies that the woman would be longing to return to the peaceful state where she and Adam had or the joy of equality and mutuality that they had before the Fall. Her desire will be for her husband to perpetuate the intimacy that had characterized their relationship that was lost in paradise when sin came in. But “instead of supporting her desire ... he will rule over her.”[5]

Whatever pronouncements God’s Word had on Eve as the aftermath of the Fall did not affect the essential equality of man and woman. In Genesis 9:6, God restated this equality (after the Fall) when He said: “For in the image of God He made man.” The effect of the Fall was reversed by Jesus Christ at the Cross. As the Apostle Paul has written in 1 Cor. 15:22, “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.” Further, Galatians 3:28 enlightens us that “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Two biblical passages in the New Testament are used to justify discrimination against women in ministry: 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-13, where the Apostle Paul pronounced “silence” on women in the churches of Corinth and Ephesus. Prior to these pronouncements of “silence,” Paul told the members of the church in Corinth that “the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for

Many hard-driving CEO’s may find this perspective and approach “idealistic”, “impractical” and out of sync with the bottom line goals or other corporate objectives that drive them and the organisation. People exist (or are employed) to accomplish organisational objectives, they would reason. “Shape up or ship out” is the mantra they would live by. “Its my way or the highway” is another corporate slogan that will characterize this approach.

And while this approach may work in the short term, it is disastrous in the long run. Simply because organisations which are built to last have always – every time round – excelled, succeeded and become vibrant only because the system and structure fostered engaging the individual, in leveraging the strengths of the executive and making the individual (and not the structure) the final lever to consummate organisational accomplishment.

How to develop and nurture talent:

“People are our greatest asset” is a cliché that has long been around – which over the years has become a convenient expression for management but a statement of mere rhetorical value to the employee. On the other hand, whenever and wherever this statement becomes a guiding light and finds meaningful expression in an organisation, human capital becomes the focus of engagement – which will translate to day to day work becoming exciting, rewarding, stimulating and enjoyable.

In other words, “people are our greatest asset” becomes practical and doable when we put people before strategy, systems or structure.

Developing talent *must be the magna carte of any progressive organisation*. And it specifically means scoping, stretching and supporting the individual to realize and optimize their full potential – to enable them to grow and develop in the areas of their natural strengths and gifting.

Scoping: You can *only* nurture talent when the scope of work assigned to the individual is in some measure in alignment with their natural gifting and talent. The current trend to deploy people more based on what they have acquired as technical or management skills (through the degrees and diploma’s) without due consideration to what truly motivates them, will lead to mediocre performance at best and burn out at worst. Regular and consistent *review of what energizes the individual most*, where he or she is making a critical contribution to the department or team will help re-align the individual’s strengths to meet organisational needs. Practically, it may mean moving an individual from a back-office function to handle more of customer interface or allowing the executive to take on more of a specialist role rather than a managerial role – these are a few of the different options that CEO’s must constantly exercise to intentionally develop and nurture talent.

Stretching: Once the scope of work is in sync with the employee’s natural gifting, incrementally lifting the bar to stretch the individual to deliver tangible results will ensure not only a win-win situation, it will empower the individual to ‘push the envelope’ and energize them into action. Paradoxically, pushing the individual to deliver much in the area of his or her natural gifting, will result in engaging the employee – not demoralizing him or her. The employee will demonstrate passion, initiative and an heightened level of intensity when the work they do requires them to give expression to their natural strengths and gifting.

the profit of all" and "one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He will." He encouraged them to "earnestly desire the best gifts" in 1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 31; acknowledged the diversity of all members of the church in terms of functions based on the enablement of the Spirit, using the metaphor of the parts of the physical body to illustrate the unity in the body of Christ as recorded in 1 Cor. 12:26. Paul did not teach gender distinction — the church was to participate in its ministry on the basis of spiritual gifts.

In 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-13, however, Paul did a volte-face, • a sudden and complete change in his position on the status of women in the church. In Corinthians 14:34-35, Paul forbade women to speak in church, to be submissive, and to ask their husbands at home if they want to ask something. The order of silence in 1 Timothy 2:11-13 prohibits women from teaching or taking control over men because "Adam was first formed, then Eve." These two passages seemed to contradict everything that Paul had taught and practiced in the church up to that point of prohibition for women to speak. He gave a gag order to women whom he earlier praised in his letter to the Romans. He gave credit to Phoebe, the deaconess, servant of the church in Cencrea; to Priscilla, a fellow worker, who risked her life for him; to Junia, a fellow apostle; and to Tryphena and Tryphosa who have served the Lord. (Romans 16:1-12). How could he prohibit women from speaking when he is allowing them to serve with him?

A search of various textual exegeses of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 shows a wide range of interpretations, from the fanciful to the sublime — from non-Pauline authorship of the passages to Paul's seemingly sarcastic rebuke of false teachers and false doctrines in the church. The bulk of textual, contextual, and historical evidence, however, suggests that these two New Testament passages signify that Paul was dealing with problems specific to the church at Corinth. Simon J. Kistemaker[6] explained that the women at Corinth were not told to be silent with regards to praying, prophesying, and singing psalms and hymns. Instead, they were forbidden to speak when the prophecies of their husbands are discussed (referring 1 Cor. 14: 28-30); and they were asked to honor their husbands in reference to the creation order under the law. Paul further stated that if they wish to learn something to ask their husbands at home. The emphasis of the verb to learn means that Paul was not excluding women from learning spiritual truths. As for the phrase "it is shameful for women to speak in church," Kistemaker further explained that in the New Testament church, a wife who questions her husband about spiritual matters during the worship service dishonors him in the presence of the rest of the congregation. Kistemaker's exegesis makes sense especially when one considers the fact that men and women are seated separately in the early Christian church. Lyman Coleman described this separated seating in his book, Antiquities of the Christian Church [7]: "The rules of the primitive churches required the separation of the sexes in the church, and this was generally observed. The men occupied the left of the altar on the south side of the church, and the women on the right, on the north. They were separated from one another by a veil or lattice." A woman asking questions from her husband would have to speak loud so she could be heard from the other side of the church, thus creating unnecessary disruption in the church.

Paul's injunctions concerning the role of women in the church do not deal with the exercise of their spiritual gifts or with the question of office in the church because he pays tribute to Priscilla who with her husband, Aquila, taught Apollos and pastored the church in Ephesus (Acts 18:26), of Euodea and Syntyche who labored with Paul in the advancement of the gospel (Phil. 4:2-3), of Mary who worked hard among the Romans (Romans 16:6), of Nympha who had a church in her house (Col. 4:15), and of Philip's four daughters who prophesied

Supporting: This underscores the taking of consistent efforts by the supervisor or the CEO to ensure that the training, coaching and the educational support provided to the individual is more to hone and develop their natural talent rather than merely acquire soft skills. While soft skills will be both useful and relevant, supporting the individual to develop in the area of their strengths will drive home the powerful message that talent matters. Support will also include giving the employee a carte blanche to pick and chose professional training courses and engagements (within budgetary limits) that will specifically enable them to acquire proficiency and expertise to build on what they are good at. Practically this would mean an individual with a creative flair being sent to a Edward de Bono's training and another with a flair for communicating being sent to a premium communication specialist for coaching and training (or to the Toastmaster's club, for cost effective training!). The return on investment (ROI) on training is always exponential, when the training seeks to nurture, hone and develop the natural strengths of an individual.

Organizational atrophy:

It was Tom Peters who wisely said "Celebrate what you want to see more of ". And this will demand that talent management is not merely the domain of the Human Resource department but a functional driver for every line manager – from the CEO to every departmental head or overseer. An approach where celebrating the talent and natural gifting of each employee is demonstrated by zooming in on what the person delivers best.

Talent is the one area where the employee can give and give and give – and not run dry. And engaging the talent resident in each individual will ensure tapping into that inexhaustible source of energy resident in each individual, which when harnessed will enable the person to produce extraordinary results.

A disturbing corollary is that when an organisation is not talent-sensitive, it will accelerate down the road of collapse and demise. We call it organisational atrophy – a wasting away, a progressive decline by the neglect (or even denial) of the talents and productive capabilities resident within the organisation..

Whenever a vision or ideal is birthed and people rally around a common goal – regardless of whether the person's talent is finding meaningful engagement in that mission – such an endeavor not sustain in the long run because it is not talent-sensitive. And on the contrary whenever people are allowed to find their niche on a team, there is a progressive regeneration of vision and a dynamism that is buoyed by the engagement of the specific talents of those on board.

Which is what talent management is all about – the consistent, constant and intentional engagement of each individual employee's natural productive capabilities.

Remove this piece and you will remove the cornerstone of effective leadership – which is essentially managing, maximizing and motivating people *to do more of what they do best!!*

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(Acts 21:9).

The Apostle Paul, himself, wrote in Galatians 3:28 that "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." A period of dispensation which was heralded by Christ's death on the cross and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost removed any racial, social, and gender barriers and all have come together as one body in Christ. Further, the event in Acts 2 was a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel: "In the last days God will pour His Spirit on all kinds of people – your sons and daughters will prophecy. Equality before God does not imply a subordinate position for women where she could not perform the role of the man as a servant of God, specifically, as a pastor in the church. It is the calling and gifting of God on a person's life that brings him or her into the ministry of the Lord and both man and woman are called by God to His service.

[1] Aida Besancon Spencer, *Beyond the Curse – Women Called to Ministry* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc., 1985) 23.

[2] "Dictionary and Word Search for 'achar (Strong's 0310)". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2008. 7 Feb 2008.

< <http://cf.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=H0310&Version=kjv> >

[3] L.E. Maxwell with Ruth C. Dearing. *Women in Ministry*. (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1987) 33.

[4] Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for t•shuwqah (Strong's 08669)". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2008. 9 Feb 2008. < <http://cf.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=H08669&Version=kjv> >

[5] Gilbert Bilezikian *Beyond Sex Roles* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1985) 55.

[6] Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary, 1 Corinthians*. (Grand Rapid: Baker Academic, 1993) 512-513.

[7] Lyman Coleman. *The Antiquities of the Christian Church*. Google Books Book Search. 4 Feb. 2008 <<http://books.google.com/books?id=Ei3J9CZWkRgC&printsec=frontcover&dq=the+antiquities+of+the+christian+church,+coleman&lr=&sig=9p0eBMLp7-vHcbxJ5z-NhX5GjFc>>



Book Review

Spiritual Restoration: Reclaiming the foundations of God's Word, by Skip Moen, Ph.D., Xulon Press, ISBN 978-1-60647-555-3.

In his latest book, Dr. Moen asks the following questions: "Why is it so difficult to live the way the Bible teaches? Why don't things work out when we try to be truly holy? Why does the world give us so many problems?" These are not just questions asked by nearly every Christian living in our postmodern world; these are questions that go to the very heart of what it means to be a Christian.

In Spiritual Restoration, Moen reveals the startling differences between the worldview of the present culture, and what is actually taught in Scripture. The reader will be shocked to learn that it is not the Biblical worldview that is out of touch with reality, but rather it is the culture itself that is tangled, tortured and totally destructive of the very things we long to experience in life.

MJ cannot recommend too strongly that every Christian *needs* to read Spiritual Restoration. Whether you are a seasoned veteran of Christian ministry or a newly born-again child of God, reading this book will be more than an intellectual exercise, it will almost certainly prove to be a pathway to your own Spiritual Restoration!

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Come onboard the Winter 2009 Edition where we will rock the other side of the boat on this one! Views expressed in the Ark Rocker are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the position of Master's Journey or the Divinity School. MJ

