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THE USE OF MARK FOR THE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT
OF CHRISTIAN LEADERS

By

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INTRODUCTION

THE USE OF MARK FOR THE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT
OF CHRISTIAN LEADERS

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of the Problem

The following study is undertaken in order to determine what moral and spiritual characteristics are desirable for the Christian leader, and to discover how the Gospel of Mark may be used to teach and cultivate these characteristics. A series of lesson plans will be prepared on the basis of these discoveries which may be utilized in a leadership training course.

B. Justification of the Problem

An examination of the vast quantities of material available today in the field of leadership training reveals that they cover five areas in which the Christian leader is called upon to be outstanding. Materials seek to broaden the leader's knowledge in these fields, and to establish him with a background that will enable him to work effectively. The five areas are:

1. A mastery of the Bible. This involves a brief survey of the content of the Bible itself.
2. An understanding and a love of the pupil. This is a condensed course in child psychology giving the leader a basis for better understanding the people he is leading.
3. A mastery of principles and techniques. This phase of the training includes an opportunity to become acquainted with various basic teaching principles and techniques of classroom procedure.
4. An understanding of the organization and administration of the Sunday School or the Christian education program as a whole.

5. A chance to develop the Christian personality. This is aimed at offering an opportunity for the teacher or leader to grow spiritually.

Authors, in an attempt to cover all of these areas, tend to give a superficial treatment of the whole rather than a concentrated study of any of the parts. In seeking to teach the Bible, they give a general picture of what material it has, leaving little time for the assimilation of the material presented, little time for the application of the truth that is there, and no time for a detailed study for the benefit of the spiritual growth and development of the person taking the course. In this process a real acquaintance with the person of Christ is ignored. The fifth area of study receives similar treatment. Most authors make a vague reference to the necessity of having a personality that is captivated by Christ and a character which embodies His ideals, but give no details regarding the traits that should be cultivated, or what means to use in cultivating them.

Too many Christian leaders have failed to see the importance of these two fields of their work. Norman E. Richardson in his book, The Christ of the Classroom, has expressed it thus:

"...the teachers and directors of religious education who intend to do their work in Christian churches, should make a devout and thoroughgoing study of Jesus Christ, the teacher, and make this study a central, primary, and indispensable part of their training. There has been a relatively excessive emphasis upon process, technique, practice, objective standards, and too little upon spiritual content and personal devotion and consecration to the Savior and teacher of mankind and to his unfinished task. The true meaning and nature of the Christian faith should be grasped concurrently with the mastery of teaching techniques. Jesus Christ was more than a technician. Mastery of process may lead to a sense of technical superiority and to professional consciousness, but it may become, also, a serious liability, unless it is subordinated to a sustained desire to share the redemptive and creative passion and vision of Jesus Christ and a profound reverence for the church which he established as the primary accredited

agency of Christian education."¹

A study of this sort would of necessity cover the two neglected areas of leadership training, for an examination of His life would involve a detailed analysis of at least one of the gospels. Also, it would reveal the kind of character He had, and what techniques He used to cultivate similar character traits in His disciples.

The fact that He stimulated personality growth would encourage those who do not now have the moral and spiritual qualities that make for the most effective leadership to strive to attain them.

Wade Barclay in his First Standard Manual of Teacher Training says:

"The Christian teacher must train himself. He must take himself in hand in the school of daily life and make of himself the man he knows he ought to be. For we must remember that the ultimate determination of any person's character, personality, and abilities is largely within himself. If his childhood has not been what might be desired, he can not be held responsible, but he must hold himself responsible if he does not make his youth and his adulthood what it ought to be. He is 'the captain of his soul', he is 'the master of his fate'. The first concern of the teacher, therefore, will be to attain completeness of Christian character, to develop and enrich his personality, to constantly grow in ability...The man or woman who thus succeeds in the great task of being a Christian cannot fail in his task as Christ's teacher."²

It is with this challenge in mind that the following study is undertaken. It seeks to answer the questions, "What moral and spiritual characteristics are essential for the Christian leader; and Can the Gospel of Mark be used as a basis for cultivating them?" Once these questions are answered, lesson plans will be written to illustrate how the desired character traits can be developed.

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1. Norman E. Richardson: The Christ of the Classroom, p. x, xi, introduction.
2. Wade Barclay: First Standard Manual of Leader Training, p. 257.

C. Method of Procedure

In considering this particular phase of leadership training, the first step in the procedure will be to set forth the moral and spiritual characteristics that should be inherent in the life of the Christian leader. Since Christian leadership and Christian teaching are so closely related, and since characteristics for each of these types of leaders are so similar, this study will make no distinction between the qualifications of each. The essential traits will be used interchangeably in order to present the overall picture of the moral and spiritual characteristics of the Christian leader. In many cases the traits mentioned will be those any Christian should have; however, they are the vital essentials for the one who would lead others in Christian living. The character of Christ will be upheld as the one concrete example that is safe to emulate.

The second step will be to examine the Gospel of Mark to determine whether or not it contains the necessary instruction in character development that will make it a good basis for teaching the desired traits.

The third and final phase of the study will be a series of "sample lesson plans" showing how the Gospel of Mark can be used to teach character as it is set forth in Chapter One. These lessons will not seek to cover all of the traits mentioned, but will be selective and illustrative.

D. Sources of Data

In setting up the desired traits for the Christian leader, authorities in both the fields of leadership training and teacher

training have been consulted. In addition to materials which center on character traits for Christian leaders, certain outstanding books which treat the general subject of Christian character development have been used. Other sources are the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament and commentaries on the Gospel of Mark.

CHAPTER I
ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT
INCLUDED IN LEADERSHIP TRAINING MATERIALS

A. Introduction

In considering the character traits that have been listed by various authorities in the field of leadership training as essential for the Christian leader, it is first necessary to have a clear understanding of what character is as distinguished from personality, and also to know exactly what is meant by a "trait". In order to get a concise picture of what is involved in each, reference is made to the definitions given by Frances Cole McLester in Achieving Christian Character:

"Personality embraces all that one is and all that one does--every factor in an individual's make-up--including physique, manner and gesture, intelligence, quality of voice, temperament and other elements, some of which are not related to our conception of character. 'Character is a product resulting from the action of the environment upon the personality. The adaption of the personality ... thus results in patterns of reaction and modes of behavior, which in time become character'¹ The idea of character is thus seen to be more exacting and limited than the idea of personality. Some individuals who are unworthy may nevertheless be quite charming in certain aspects of their personality; their failure to live on a high level means that they lack an 'ethical quality' of personality that may be designed as character."²

In using the term "trait" it is to be understood that this involves more than a certain way of behaving. Beneath the behavior itself are certain reasons for the behavior, and unless the basic attitude is

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1. C. C. Fry and H. W. Haggard: The Anatomy of Personality, p. 13.
2. Frances Cole McLester: Achieving Christian Character, p. 11.

taken into consideration the behavior pattern is meaningless.¹ The character traits to be set forth here are to involve more than just the overt action of the individual. Ernest Ligon in The Psychology of Christian Personality says: "It is the force of his conduct, and not the external of it which measures the strength of his character."² Later in the same book he describes the process of character education thus:

"It is not intellectual assent to a code of ethics that constitutes character education. It is the transformation of the emotional attitudes so that the natural reaction of the individual is in conformity with the code of ethics."³

One other factor must be considered before discussing the specific aspects of the leader's character. Any character that will be free from flaws and imperfections must have a center of integration that is on a high level. No man can live an upright life unless there is one motivating factor that is sufficiently high around which his entire life can revolve. It is therefore understood that the man or woman who will lead others in Christian living must have his life integrated around the person of Jesus Christ. This involves being a Christian. His work is for the Gospel of Christ and to bring souls to Christ. Hence, the worker needs to be a follower of Christ himself. Jesse Hurlbut in Hurlbut's Teacher-Training Lessons expresses the concept of the leader's Christianity thus:

"1. He should be a Christian in belief. No man should undertake to teach the Bible unless he believes it to be God's book.

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1. F. C. McLester, op.cit., p. 18.
2. Ernest M. Ligon: The Psychology of Christian Personality, p. 110.
3. Ibid., p. 334.

2. He should be a Christian in experience, having met his Savior and having become reconciled to him, enjoying the consciousness of pardon, sonship, and communion with Christ. For only those who have entered into this experience can have sympathy with the Gospel, understand the mysteries, and teach it to others.
3. He should be a Christian in example. He is a teacher not merely for an hour on the Sabbath, but for seven days of every week; and his life is far more potent than his words. He should show forth the character which he would impart and live in the realm to which he aspires to lead the class."¹

Frances McLester says that specific instruction is necessary for the young Christian. It is not enough to tell him to live an upright life. Definite guidance must be given in helping him determine what character traits should be added or dropped.² So it is with the one who aspires to be an effective Christian leader. He too must have specific help in developing a dynamic Christian character. Therefore, the following moral and spiritual character traits presented are those which have their origin in the one primary essential that has already been stated.

In considering the classifications of characteristics it is necessary to understand that the traits are not mutually exclusive. Character and personality are so closely related that character traits cannot be separated. One trait stated will depend upon another, or perhaps grow out of another. In setting forth specific characteristics here the purpose is to point up the major aspects of character that are essential for the Christian leader.

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1. Jesse Lyman Hurlbut: Hurlbut's Teacher-Training Lessons, pp. 112-113.
2. C.F. McLester, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

B. Love

Closely related to the basic requirement for the Christian leader, e.g. the necessity of being a Christian, is the concept of love. Ligon lists this drive as second in importance as far as human drives are concerned. He further suggests that the individual who will seek to build strong character will therefore capitalize on this drive and make use of it in building the type of life that is desired.¹ He even goes so far as to say that strong character can be built only on this fundamental drive of love.²

In considering this qualification of the Christian leader, two things must be kept in mind; first, the nature of the love; second, the object. Love itself passes through five stages, and it is at the fifth level that it is a fitting center for integration. Briefly, the five stages of love are these: love of self, love of parents, love of members of own sex, love of members of the opposite sex, and finally parental love.³ This final stage in the development of love knows no bounds. It gives of itself until it cannot give more; it expands to include all things and all situations; it becomes the core around which all of life moves. This type of love presupposes the object of the love as being something outside of the self. The love of the Christian leader must be of the same nature as parental love, carrying him beyond himself. The primary object of his love should be Christ himself, with the secondary object his fellowmen.

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1. Cf. Ligon, op. cit., p. 124.
2. Ibid., p. 112.
3. Cf. Ibid., pp. 134-137.

With these distinctions in mind, the two objects will be discussed.

1. Love of Christ

The Christian leader who will be effective is the one who has the highest type of love for Christ. A love that is on a lower level cannot experience the highest that there is in His service. The individual who is more concerned about the personal benefits he will reap from his relationship to the Master cannot know the fulness of service for Him. McLester says:

"The fundamental difference between a person who has fine moral character and one who has Christian character lies in the fact that the latter has a definite consciousness of his relationship to God, and makes a serious effort to identify himself with the purposes of God. This relationship will determine the whole of his living; it will influence vitally all his ideas and ideals and activities..."¹

This wholehearted identification of the self with God goes beyond a mere belief in His name, or an acceptance of Him as Lord and Savior. What has been called parental love on a human level does not count the cost but rather gives of itself in spite of the cost. Neither does real love on the spiritual level. The Christian leader who has this type of love for the Master will not ask the question, "How little can I do in this position and still get by?", but rather, "What else can I do?"

In the book The Teacher that Teaches the author, Amos Wells, says that the only effective motive power for the Christian leader is love of Christ.² The motive power affects the quality of work that

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1. McLester, op. cit., p. 23.

2. Amos R. Wells: The Teacher that Teaches, p. 10.

is done, and unless motivation is based on the highest ideal the work that is done will not be of the highest. If self reigns in the human heart rather than Christ the job of the Christian leader will be based on lesser desires, and the individuals thus being led will not themselves know the highest that there is in Christian living.

2. Love of Fellowmen

The second object of love for the Christian leader is his fellowmen. The term "fellowmen" includes all men, not only the attractive and popular, but the wallflower, the introvert, and the individual with a base character.

Wade Barclay says: "In order for a teacher's contacts with his pupils to be most helpful, he will endeavor to cultivate certain personal qualities of special importance. First among these is a real love for the pupil."¹ This love cannot be on one of the lower levels, but rather must be the sacrificial love that neither knows an end, nor burns out when there is no response. This type of love cannot be cultivated in and of oneself, but instead needs the motivation of love for Christ and Christ's love for the individual. Amos Traver in Consecrated Leadership says:

"It is by way of our devotion to Christ that we discover the power for seeing others as one with us. Every Christian leader must discover this way if his life is to count in any large way for the Kingdom. Christ calls on us to be big enough to seek out the human need, whenever it calls to us. It is not a cry for alms but for love, for understanding, for Calvary."²

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1. Barclay, op.cit., p. 257.

2. Amos Traver: Consecrated Leadership, p. 8.

This kind of love for men will have certain natural results. Natural as these reactions will be, a brief discussion of the major issues will focus the attention on what authorities in this field have deemed the most important aspects of this trait.

a. Unselfishness

The first manifestation of a real love for men will be that of an unselfish nature. The young leader should be on the alert lest love of self creep into his relationship with those with whom he is working, and personal gain or satisfaction become the end in the service being rendered. Traver says that "Christian love can not keep its resonance when shut up in a glass of self-centered living."¹ Self and selfish desires must be subjected in love of Christ, and love for those whom one is serving. Christ's whole life was dominated by this one force. Self was forgotten in the needs of someone else. He spent long hours in counsel and private interview, and He traveled great distances when He knew of someone with a need. This is unselfish living.

In her book Christian Leadership, Mary Frances Preston summarizes the necessity of selflessness in the life of the Christian leader thus:

"Of all places where a selfish spirit is not to be desired, the place of leadership is that one. Here it is required that a real leader have the spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of unselfishness. To prefer others before self, to care not for the glory or the honor that might come, to forget self in rendering service to others for Christ's sake -- these are the things which the unselfish person seeks."²

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1. Ibid., p. 48.
2. Mary Frances Johnson Preston: Christian Leadership, p. 38.

b. A Generous Spirit

Placing the emphasis on the positive rather than the negative is one of the cardinal principles of secular education. This same attitude needs to become embedded in the personality of the Christian leader, for without it his love is not complete. The leader with this type of a spirit will not be eager to condemn, but will look for the good in all situations. When Barclay stated his qualifications for the Sunday School teacher he summarized this attribute in the following manner:

"He will put the best construction on every act of his pupils. He will be more ready for praise than for blame. He will be fearless and just, but never harsh and critical. He will have deference for the opinions of others. He will be broad-minded and tolerant; never narrow and bigoted, yet ever loyal to the truth as he sees it and ready to stand for it at any cost. He will never complain of his own pains and ills, but will ever have a ready word of sympathy for the distresses and sorrows of others."¹

A life that has Christ as its center will find this type of behavior pattern easy, for this is a direct result of such surrender. Christ found what was good in a man and then cultivated this attribute. The emulation of the principle is desired, but success is not possible unless strength is secured from a force greater than that which lies within the self.

c. Friendliness

A third characteristic growing out of love is that of friendliness. Man is a gregarious creature and men in all strata of life respond to the friendship of another. Because of this inborn

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1. Barclay, op. cit., p. 258.

tendency on the part of every man, the Christian leader must be able to draw another individual out of himself. Also, the Christian leader must be free from prejudice against any race or class which might cause him to erect barriers that will tend toward exclusiveness. Christ's example in contacting people is one that should be followed. With Him there were no barriers or prejudices that made Him show partiality for either the rich or the poor, the righteous man or the sinner.

Specific helps in knowing how to channel this attribute are given by Hurlbut in his description of the friendship of the Christian teacher. His description includes the following:

- "1. He must be a friend in sympathy. That is, in the capacity to feel with his scholars, which is very different from feeling for them. He must be able to put himself in his pupil's place, to see the world through his pupil's eyes and to have a full appreciation of his pupil's nature and surroundings. The way to win the scholar's love is to love the scholar.
- "2. He must be a friend in helpfulness. His friendship will show itself in acts, not great, save in loving spirit that promotes them; a glance, a grasp of the hand, a little gift, a helping hand to one in trouble; a willingness to trouble for another; these are the acts that make a teacher's influence potent."¹

Youth will seek the leader who has this trait, for they are eager to find someone who will understand their problems, and love them in spite of their failures.

C. Fellowship With Christ

Next to love as a requirement for the Christian leader is an awareness of the necessity of daily fellowship with Him. Mc Lester

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1. Hurlbut, op. cit., p. 114.

says that communion with God and fellowship with Jesus are the basic elements in the development of the truly Christian character.¹ This process, then, is not only an end, but also a means to an end in broadening the total Christian personality.

The Christian leader must have a real faith in Christ. Mrs. Preston maintains that this faith must be the kind that accepts and believes where it cannot prove.² Norman Richardson defines faith as "a mode of life that seeks first and fosters triumphantly the reign of right living, as made possible by Jesus Christ."³ Both of these concepts presuppose a knowledge of God. James Snowden in his book, Outfitting the Teacher of Religion, points to Jesus' example as the one way to know God. He says:

"...Jesus for his knowledge of God did not go to books about God, but he went to God himself and in fellowship with the Father learned the secret of his will and ways. 'My teaching is not mine,' he explained to the Jews, 'but his that sent me.' His knowledge of faith was not derived from a psychological analysis of faith, or from what others said about it, but from the faith he exercised in his own heart."⁴

He states further that one danger of our present era is that we rely too heavily upon schools, and doctrines, and creeds, and decide that the religious life consists only in these things. In regard to this he says:

"Infinitely more important it is that we have a well of water springing up in our hearts. We can have direct knowledge of God through faith and obedience even as Jesus had. 'If any man willeth

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1. McLester, op. cit., p. 23.
2. Preston, op. cit., p. 41.
3. Richardson, op. cit., p. 201.
4. James H. Snowden: Outfitting the Teacher of Religion, p. 126.

to do his will,' he said, 'he shall know the teaching whether it is of God.' Then our religious life will not be forced through us, insipid and stale, out of books, but it will gush out of us in streams of living water. The world is thirsty for such water, and our scholars will receive it from us with avidity and gladness."¹

The one solution to this problem is consistent fellowship with Christ. Richardson says that the person who would teach religion dare not fall short in his own religious life, and this maintaining of a high standard includes an intelligently purposeful devotional life. Vagueness and indefiniteness of performance of this phase of the life is one of the greatest obstacles to spiritual development.² Staleness is prevented when the source of the strength and freshness is tapped regularly. New spiritual depths are reached as the wealth of truths that are presented in His word are assimilated.

There are three phases of the devotional life: Bible study, prayer, and meditation.

1. Bible Study

Primary in the act of fellowship is Bible study, for it is through this medium that one becomes acquainted with the Master and His teachings and ways. This type of knowledge brings with it a strengthening of the spiritual life, and a building up of the reader's character which will carry over into his overt actions, and increase his effectiveness as he leads or teaches those with whom he is working.

Hurlbut says that the Christian leader must be:

- "1. A Bible student in teachableness, turning to the word, not in the spirit of criticism, but of reverence, studying it,

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1. Ibid., p. 127.
2. Cf. Richardson, op. cit., pp. 277-278.

not to inject into it his own opinions, but humbly seeking in its pages for the truth which shall feed his own soul and the needs of his class.

2. A Bible student in thoroughness. The cursory glance at a few verses may answer for the careless reader, but he whose work it is to teach the word must study it; not only the lesson, but the chapter, the book, the volume containing the lesson; for only as he has wide and full knowledge of the Bible as a book can he understand the specific lesson which he must teach his class."¹

When the Bible is studied in this manner the material there becomes one's own, and the task of teaching does not become a "hard job" but rather a giving forth of one's inner personality and depths. Likewise, he is kept constantly fresh, with no feeling of having "gone dry" spiritually. When the Christian leader has learned to go to the Bible for his source of strength, and to meet Christ through its pages, he is a third of the way on the road to maintaining real fellowship with the Master.

2. Prayer

Of equal importance in maintaining fellowship with Christ is the prayer life of the individual. This should be consistent and purposeful, for power for the Kingdom does not come from within one's self, but rather from above. Christ spent endless hours, not minutes, in prayer. This act was the source of His spiritual strength. Unless the leader draws upon this same source of strength and keeps fresh by this means, the life loses its effectiveness, and the sense of the reality of the divine presence is lost.

3. Meditation

The third aspect of fellowship is that of meditation.

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1. Hurlbut, op. cit., p. 113.

Richardson says, "Quiet, sympathetic meditation may put one in sympathy with his essential life purpose and his technique in carrying out that purpose."¹ By prayerful meditation the Christian leader finds God's will for every situation with which he is confronted. Also, as he contemplates the person of Christ in this manner he receives new insights into His essential nature and purpose. Bible study without meditation and contemplation is as eating food without digesting it, for there is no assimilation of the truth presented. Likewise, prayer that does not wait in silence for Him to speak is one-sided communion, and the true value of fellowship is lost.

D. Loyalty

While loyalty is listed as an essential for one who would be a leader in our Christian church, it is a dangerous thing, for many times the object of the loyalty is unworthy. Even the church worker can place false values on things, and needs to guard against supporting something of secondary importance. On the other hand, it can serve to bring out the highest there is in a man. When the definition given by Gains Dobbins in Building Better Churches is considered, one can see why. He says:

"Loyalty has been defined by a noted philosopher as 'the willing and practical and thoroughgoing devotion of a person to a cause.' A man is loyal, our philosopher continues, when he has some cause to which he is loyal; when he willingly and thoroughly devotes himself to this cause; and when he expresses his loyalty in some sustained and practical way."²

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1. Richardson, op. cit., p. 278.
2. Gains S. Dobbins; Building Better Churches, p. 251.

A man's loyalties therefore mold his entire character. For the Christian leader to align himself with any cause other than that of Christ is to miss the mark in his leadership. He cannot be effective if his allegiance is divided.

First, then, there must be loyalty to Christ himself which comes from a real love for Him. The devotion carries over into the responsibilities of the task at hand, and ultimately to the loves which are touched through this medium. When these things are considered, all actions should be geared to reveal this sense of obligation.

Second, there must be a loyalty to the church. This involves becoming a member of the individual church in which the work is being done, as well as maintaining the standards of the universal church. Youth reach their conclusions regarding the value of the church through observing the reactions of their elders to the church's program. If it is not important for the leader it will not be important for the youth. Loyalty to the church can be either fostered or destroyed by the actions and attitudes of those held in high regard.

E. Vision

Embedded in the characteristic of unselfishness that has already been discussed is the concept of an awareness of the needs of someone else as over against the desires of the self. This trait, called vision, has two separate aspects: that of a world-encompassing vision, and that of insight into the personality needs of others.

1. World Encompassing Vision

Herman Horne's list of five essentials for a world teacher

is headed by the necessity of having a vision that encompasses the world.¹ The one who is to teach or lead must be aware of the needs of those beyond his own immediate sphere of influence. This was the vision Christ had; it is the vision He attempted to give His disciples; it is the challenge He presents to the present-day disciple. Phrases like the following, taken from Horne, show His widespread concern for those not then being touched:

"Other sheep I have; them also I must bring.

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.

"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."²

The leader who has this vision is the one who inspires others with the challenge of lifting the eyes unto the fields. Once this vision becomes a part of the total personality it becomes a contagious influence.

2. Insight Into Personality Needs

This second aspect of vision allows one to see beyond the present barriers and obstacles of an unpleasing personality and find potential good in what on the surface seems to be inferior material.

Mrs. Preston includes the following discussions of the necessity of insight in her treatment of this subject:

"Oliver Wendel Holmes divided men into three classes: first, one-story men who deal with facts and fashion -- the scholars; second, the two-story men, who deal with theories and ideas -- the philosophers; third, the three-story men who live in the realm of splendid dreams and glorious visions and high ideals -- the prophets.

"In order to succeed, a leader must have something of this super-sight -- to see more in people and situations than others see -- to see beyond the difficulties and the present problems to the final successful good and outcome. There are some that can see

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1. Herman Harrell Horne: Jesus the Master Teacher, pp. 184-185.
2. Ibid., p. 185.

only self; others who can see beyond self to world needs; and then there are a few who by daily living in the presence of Jesus, and by walking close to Him, can see Him alone through faith's telescope, because self is forgotten in loving concern for Christ's cause."¹

Further light is thrown on this concept by Margaret Slattery in her book, The Highway of Leadership. She presents this vision in four phrases: eyes that see, ears that hear, a heart that feels, and a mind that interprets. These are essentials if one is to go beyond the externals and seek to cultivate in someone else a Christian personality.²

F. Sincerity

Perhaps the most subtle of all the essential character traits of the Christian leader is that of sincerity. Genuine sincerity is something which cannot be affected. Man is quick to detect insincerity, for impure motives color the attitudes and flow out into the actions. Life service is not enough in Christian leadership; the life must reinforce the words.

This sincerity, or honesty, as some have called it, in dealing with people leads to a realness or genuineness of character like that of Christ's person. He was never in any sense a copy, or an echo, and so He had strength and force. The leader in following His pattern will seek to emulate this part of Christ's life, for it leaves no room for deceit or laxness when the lives of youth are entrusted into his keeping.

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1. Preston, op.cit., p. 41.
2. Cf. Margaret Slattery: The Highway of Leadership, pp. 17-71.

Such sincerity will manifest itself in three areas of the life: the spiritual realm, the social realm, and the personal realm.

1. Spiritual Realm

Man can in no way deceive God, "for the eyes of Jehovah run to and fro throughout the whole earth ..."¹ God sees the heart and knows what is hidden there. Honesty with God includes admitting the impure motives which are buried beneath self-love and hypocrisy, and leaving the soul bare before Him. When one is thus sincere with Him, His healing power is available.

2. Social Realm

This includes the leader's relationship with the group, and sincerity in this realm takes on the guise of frankness. Frankness has been characterized as "being free in uttering one's real sentiments."² This can be no superficial freedom, but must spring from an inherent tendency. The "frankness" of the Christian leader includes two separate aspects of his work, yet each reveals the necessity of having the same basic freedom in expressing one's thoughts and actions. First, his life must be lived openly and without apology; and second, he must be open and free in the discussion of facts.

a. Frankness in Everyday Life

In considering the frankness in everyday life, bear in mind that our present society is built upon a system of complete openness. The public demands all of the facts about everything and everyone.

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1. II Chronicles, 16:9.
2. Webster, Collegiate Dictionary, p. 400.

There is no such thing as a private life for anyone, nor is there such a thing as a private religious life. It cannot be something that is compartmentalized and displayed only on certain occasions, but rather the religion of the leader must be something that can stand examination without fear lest someone find a suppressed imperfection. Traver points out the necessity of this kind of living when he says:

"People are talking about religion. But unless frankness in religion is more than intellectual gymnastics, more than expression for expression's sake, it is the mark of no special progress toward God."¹

Unless the leader has an inner life that can stand the test of exposure, his ministry will not have lasting effects.

b. Frankness in Discussing Facts

When a free discussion of facts is considered, this same principle of being able to express the real thoughts is of prime importance in helping youth face their problems. Today's youth demand an open discussion of life and the problems involved in living it. The former compulsion to do what one is told to do because an adult has ordained it is gone. Youth ask "Why?", and until they find someone who is not ashamed to discuss topics that were formerly taboo, they will go on paying no attention to the dictates of their elders. The leader who can wisely help them get an honest perspective is the one who will help build their lives.

3. Personal Realm

Finally, sincerity needs to be manifested in the personal

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1. Traver, op. cit., p. 94.

realm of life. The leader must be honest with himself; he must be able to examine his attributes and abilities objectively, be willing to admit his own weaknesses, and then cast himself upon God for help in overcoming them. Also, he must live so that there is nothing in his life of which he needs to be ashamed. In other words, he must maintain his own self-respect.

G. Humility

As the average man looks at successful leadership he takes for granted that the greatest man is the one in the foremost position. Christ reversed this pattern and made the greatest leader the humblest servant. His life was a perfect example of this type of living, for its very essence is humility. His life was freed from the two great dangers that attack humility, e.g., pride and indispensability.

Wells says, "Man's greatest peril in spiritual work is his pride."¹ Fear of failure, desire for pre-eminence, and concern over what people may think easily become weights which retard progress in Christian leadership. Traver says, "The pride of position must melt away before the consciousness of the greatness of our destiny as co-workers with God."² This leaves no place for a false or affected humility, for this involves self-enhancement. Complete surrender of the self to Christ and His cause is the means by which the natural, inner urges can be changed, and thus enables "affected actions" to become "natural tendencies".

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1. Wells, op. cit., p. 12.
2. Traver, op. cit., p. 118.

A second danger which Christ avoided was that of becoming indispensable. True humility discovers potential leadership in others and cultivates it. In the words of Traver:

"True humility always places the CAUSE ABOVE A CAREER, admits NO MAN IS INDISPENSABLE, and recognizes that there is VITALITY IN A CHANGING LEADERSHIP."¹

The great leader will therefore seek to find someone to replace him, and then when the understudy is prepared the teacher is willing to step aside and let him have a chance. This was the method of Christ. Rather than dominate the scene and make himself absolutely essential for the carrying out of his program, He trained twelve men with whom He left the responsibility of propagating His teaching and truth. For Him, the career yielded to the cause as it should do for any Christian leader.

H. High Ideals

In order for the personality to achieve the highest there is for it, the ideals of the individual have to keep ahead of the growth in personality and the mode of expression. These ideals have to be more than convictions about a thing; they have to be lived out as well as thought out. McLester says:

"Our so-called ideals are nothing more than ideas unless we actually strive to bring them to pass in everyday life. There are 'true values' and also 'value-claims', the latter being those fine things which we profess but which do not determine how we live."²

The Christian leader must have "true values", and his life must embody the highest ethical and moral qualities. Mrs. Preston insists upon

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1. Ibid, p. 158.

2. McLester, op. cit., p. 27.

this, for she says:

"The spiritual success of any group then depends upon the spirituality and consecration and ideals of its leader. 'Be not conformed-- but transformed' and the leader must stay close to his ideal, for he cannot lead others closer to Him than he is himself."¹

In addition to these personal ideals, there must be standards set for others. Vague references to their necessity are not enough; people need some kind of a guide in helping them formulate their convictions, and it, therefore, becomes the responsibility of the Christian leader to supply that pattern.

It is interesting to observe that while many writers mention the necessity of having high ideals only one of the authors studied made an attempt to state specific ideals that the leader should possess.

Dobbins says:

"The essential requirements of character for deacons should be equally high for others who serve the church in places of responsibility. 'Deacons in like manner must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.' Again Paul insists, 'And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless.' Concerning women who likewise serve the church, character requirements are particularized and stressed: 'Women (deaconesses) in like manner must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.' (I Tim. 3:8-11)."²

I. Consecration

As the preceding character traits were analyzed there seemed to be one dominant theme that cuts through each, namely, that the Christian leader's life must be a life that is consecrated to Christ, and as a result of that consecration be what Ligon calls a "worthy guiding

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1. Preston, op. cit., p. 40.
2. Dobbins, op. cit., p. 249.

fiction."¹ Only the life that is completely yielded to Him can be a worthy example in this sense. Ultimately one must be lead to imitate Christ, and a yielded, unselfish life is necessary if this transfer is to be made successfully.

Mary Frances Preston says:

"Consecration is, in fact, the one great essential in Christian work. Religion is a matter of heart and life, and the leader's spirituality and his final success depend upon his depth of consecration. It is required in a Christian leader that he seek first of all, to have the mind of Christ."²

Once the mind of Christ is sought and found, all of the other elements easily fall into place. The highest level of love then has a chance to rule the life, and the life's actions. When love rules, through consecration and submission to Him and His service, that life will be a living example for one who is struggling to reach a higher spiritual plane.

Horne listed the idea of being a living example as fifth on his list of outstanding traits for the world teacher.³ Here character and personality cannot be separated, for it is through the medium of the personality that the desired character traits are transfused. Programs have been built, the best equipment has been purchased, the buildings have been of the latest design, and yet the lives of young people have not been strengthened. Why? Because beyond the equipment and the training there must be a personality through whom Christ comes; there must be a guiding fiction for the youth the program is reaching.

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1. Cf. Ligon, op. cit., p. 334.
2. Preston, op. cit., p. 36.
3. Horne, op. cit., p. 185.

Barclay says:

"Nothing counts for so much in teaching as personality. A man weighs more than his words. Unless what he is speaks so loud and clear, the words of his mouth will fall on deaf ears. The spirit of the teacher, his moral and religious ideals, the atmosphere which he carries, the disposition which he manifests--these add to or detract from his spoken words and continue to speak when he is silent."¹

He further states that personality is supreme in teaching because:

(1) Religion is made real in persons. (2) Character growth is stimulated by personal influence...character comes not by drill but by contagion. (3) Personal influence abides.²

In teaching, leading, and training, the end result is much more certain when there is a pattern that can be followed. The consecrated leader is not one who will have to advertise that he is one to use as a pattern; the love of Christ will permeate his entire being so completely that those who come in contact with him will know instinctively that this is a safe "copy".

In the words of Traver, "the prayer of the Christian leader should be, not for long life, but for consecrated life."³

J. Summary

In the preceding study, books dealing with leadership training were examined in order to cull from them the outstanding spiritual and moral character traits the Christian leader should embody. Nine major characteristics were found, and these were broken down into their

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1. Barclay, op.cit., p. 256.
2. Cf. Ibid.
3. Traver, op. cit., p. 126.

various aspects, presenting an overall picture of the Christian leader. Christ's example was upheld as one that can be followed, and references were made to the training of the disciples, indicating that embedded in the lessons they learned are fundamental truths that present-day leaders need to apply as they deal with young lives.

One basic requirement was found for the Christian leader, namely, that of the necessity of being a Christian. Stemming from this fundamental truth the nine major characteristics are as follows: love, fellowship with Christ, loyalty, vision, sincerity, frankness, humility, high ideals and consecration. As these traits were analyzed and discussed separately some overlapping was found. This overlapping serves to emphasize the necessity of the Christian leader having a personality that is integrated around the personality and person of Christ.

CHAPTER II

THESE ELEMENTS AS THEY ARE FOUND IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

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A. Introduction

In the preceding chapter certain moral and spiritual character traits were listed and discussed that have been deemed necessary for the Christian leader by authorities in the field of Christian education. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the Gospel of Mark to determine whether or not it includes sufficient instruction regarding these traits to make it a valid basis for a series of lesson plans on character development for the Christian leader. In order to test its validity each character trait presented in chapter one will be dealt with separately, and Mark's teachings that are related to it will be briefly discussed. This treatment, however, will in no way attempt to be exhaustive. In many cases additional evidences of the same nature may be found, but in such cases the principal teachings will be those that are treated in detail.

Since character growth is stimulated more by personal influence than by drill,¹ it will be the life of Christ that receives the primary consideration in this chapter. Christ had one dominant purpose in life, e.g., to preach the gospel and to make possible man's redemption, but as the author of the Gospel of Mark presents this

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1. Ante, p. 28.

message He includes strong undercurrents of instruction aimed at teaching men how to live. It is in these undercurrents that one finds what Christ taught His leaders about character, and it is in His living that one sees those traits He deemed as essential embodied. Therefore, a study of this sort places primary emphasis on His life itself rather than His words.

B. Love

A brief examination of Mark's gospel reveals the fact that Jesus put "love" at the center of all Christian living. When He was asked to give the greatest commandment He responded with the following words:

"The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself."¹

This in a very real sense summarizes the teaching of the entire religious code of the day, the decalogue. Charles R. Erdman, in his commentary The Gospel of Mark, suggests that all moral and spiritual problems can be solved by the application of this one expression.² Love, then, is the essence of all living on a high plane. However, brotherly love alone is not enough. It must first be a love of Him who loved man, and then because of that love for Him, a love for one's fellowmen.

1. Love of Christ

That Christ was trying to inspire a real love for Him on the part of His disciples is evident by His every action. Through the

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1. Mark 12:29-30.

2. Cf. Charles R. Erdman: The Gospel of Mark, pp. 168-169.

miracles¹, which the disciples observed, He revealed His nature and character, and if for no other reason than this, they should have loved Him.

His dealings with them were attempts to cultivate this same response. Their failures disappointed Him², but they were never the cause for judgment. He gave them every opportunity to restore themselves. He patiently instructed them in the ways of the Kingdom³, and He emancipated them from the bonds of a legalistic religion.⁴

The most outstanding activity of Jesus which should have resulted in unending love and devotion was His death on the cross,⁵ that through Him men might have everlasting life. Such a sacrifice as this entitled Him to real love, and failure to respond can be caused only by indifference and lack of concern. Any honest person who had watched His life and had seen the final end could not help but love this One who made redemption possible.

2. Love of Fellowmen

The second half of the great commandment manifests itself in three forms, as previously stated, e.g., unselfishness, a generous spirit, and friendliness.⁶ Mark illustrates these principles through the activities of Jesus more than by direct quotation of His statements or instructions. Phrases such as: "And Jesus looking upon him loved

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1. Mark 1:25, 31, 42; 2:12; 3:5; 4:35-5:43; 6:41-42, 48, 51; 8:7-8; 9:25-26.
2. Mark 6:35-41; 8:1-6, 14-21.
3. Mark 4:1-34.
4. Mark 7:1-23.
5. Mark 15:24-39.
6. Cf. Ante, pp. 12-14.

him"¹ indicate His concern for those with whom He came in contact. Mark 6:34 reveals His compassion for the multitudes, as does 8:2. Other general indications of His love are seen in the miracles that He performed. These acts of mercy were not rendered to prove who He was, but because of what He was, and because He had a real concern for the needs of others as well as the desire to meet these needs.

As suggested in the preceding paragraph, love for fellow-men covers three distinct areas of living. The major lessons presented in this gospel will now be discussed.

a. Unselfishness

Two major teachings are found that focus attention on this aspect of love. One of these passages will be referred to later under the heading of humility², but the teachings are also applicable here.

First, consider the teaching of Mark 9:33-37. In this setting the disciples were more concerned about their personal gain in the Kingdom than they were about its work. Each wanted to be the greatest; each wanted the biggest reward. Note Christ's rebuke: "If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."³ Here Christ implied that selfish ends have no place in His work. The person who is willing to serve every man cannot do so if he is looking out first of all for his own interests. Complete abandonment of the human will and human desires must precede this type of service, and this is the kind of service that is necessary for the Kingdom.

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1. Mark 10:21.
2. Post, p. 51.
3. Mark 9:35.

Again in Mark 10:35-45 this same principle is set forth. Here two of the disciples had asked for places of honor in the Kingdom. Christ's rebuke was again gentle but firm, and carried with it the understanding that a selfless sacrifice is what puts a person in a position for receiving glory. Service rendered for the gain involved has no place in His Kingdom. Christ's statement of His twofold purpose in coming, e.g., (1) to serve, and (2) to give His life, are indications of the necessity of complete lack of selfishness if one is to serve Him.

In addition to these major considerations, consider also Christ's giving of Himself in selfless surrender for man's redemption.¹ Also, when His footsteps are traced throughout the land He is seen again and again answering the cry of someone in distress.² These answers to the needy are no direct instructions, but the disciples earnestly watching learned many lessons in selfless giving of time and talents by just watching their Master.

b. A Generous Spirit

Christ's generous spirit is revealed through His absence of criticism and His patient endurance of the failures of the disciples. The first indication of this kind of a spirit is found in Mark 1:36-38. On that occasion the disciples followed Him to His place of prayer in order to bring Him back to the crowd that was waiting for Him. Ignorance on their part regarding the true nature of His mission caused this

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1. Mark 14:49-15:37.
2. Mark 1:30; 1:32-34; 1:40-41; 2:1-12; 3:1-5; 3:7-10; 3:19-20; 3:31-35; 5:1-13; 5:21-43; 6:32-44; 6:45-50; 7:24-30; 7:31-35; 8:2-9; 8:22-26; 9:14-29; 10:17-22; 10:46-52.

action, but rather than being harsh with them, He patiently shared with them the plans He had for His work. A similar situation is found in 4:10 ff. The disciples had again failed to comprehend, and this time they questioned. His response in 4:13 shows desire for their understanding to be quickened; however, with the desire He explained carefully the parable.¹

Perhaps the most revealing incident of the generous spirit can be found in chapter six. The first part of the chapter tells how Christ sent the disciples out to teach and heal. They returned and reported. A multitude gathered to hear His teachings. Then, when the multitude became hungry they wanted to send the people away. Concerning this action on the part of the disciples G. Campbell Morgan in his book, The Gospel According to Mark, makes the following comments:

"So these were the apostles; these men, who when they had been on the mission and returned, could only say in the presence of the hungry crowd, Send them away to buy; these men, who when Jesus told them to do the most natural thing, and feed them, argued ... these men, who when He mastered the supernatural for them were amazed; these men who did not understand; these men who were dull and stupid! These were the apostles."²

Then, regarding Christ's reaction he says:

"He chooses and He makes no mistakes ... He equips ... He uses ... He gives rest, and He patiently bears with all inability to understand Him in the presence of the hungry multitude ..."³

Anyone without a spirit of love could never have been that generous in his reaction. Rather than condemn, He did the thing that He had asked the disciples to do, then later gave them another chance. The

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1. Mark 4:34
2. G. Campbell Morgan: The Gospel According to Mark, p. 154
3. Ibid.

fact that they failed again was not cause for dismissal. He forgave them and waited for further growth on their part.

The same spirit is seen when He walked on the water¹; when the disciples failed to understand the spiritual truths in the instructions regarding the leaven of the Pharisees²; when the disciples failed to cast out the demon³; when He blessed the children⁴; when He was in Bethany⁵; when they slept in Gethsemane⁶. Seldom was there condemnation, but instead there was patient acceptance of the situation that was there.

c. Friendliness

Hurlbut says that the Christian leader must be a friend in sympathy and helpfulness,⁷ and surely Christ's life is an example of this type of living. He never instructed His disciples in the art of winning friends, yet His aggressive friendliness was a living example of this Christian attribute. A study of His life as presented in this gospel shows His sympathy and concern for men from all walks of life. Note His tenderness in 1:44; 2:5; 3:20-21; 5:21-24; 6:34; 6:47-51; 8:12; and 10:17-22. Always He saw the heart of the man and was deeply moved by the conditions He saw there.

Each of the miracles reveals His helpfulness. As in the case of Jairus' daughter in chapter five, He was willing to leave what He was doing at the request of a distraught parent. Never did He see

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1. Mark 6:47-52.
2. Mark 8:14-21.
3. Mark 9:11-29.
4. Mark 10:13-16.

5. Mark 14:3-9.
6. Mark 14:32-42.
7. Cf. Ante, p. 14.

someone who needed His help without doing something to lift the burden,

His aggressiveness is also to be taken in consideration.

Phrases like the following: "He called ..."¹ "He went (or some other verb of action) ..."² reveal Christ's aggressive tendencies. Many times people came to Him, and when they did He responded to their request, never denying anyone His time or His services. He even took time to answer the questions of those who were His enemies.

C. Fellowship with Christ

What Christ deemed important for His disciples to know regarding fellowship is discovered by an analysis of the record of His experience with His Father. As stated in Chapter One³, the Christian leader must have a real faith in Christ which presupposes a knowledge of the Deity. Christ, for His knowledge of God, did not turn to books about Him, but rather to God Himself. Consequently, He had the essential quality of an inexhaustible supply of strength, power, wisdom, and insight. In addition, He was steeped in a knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures, and while it not stated directly, one can conclude that prayerful meditation made this material an innate part of Him so that He could quickly and without hesitation bring home His truths by supporting His claims with material that was recognized and accepted as the supreme religious authority.

1. Bible Study

Christ never told anyone to study the Scriptures, but His

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1. Mark 1:20; 2:14; 3:13.

2. Mark 1:39; 2:15, 3:1 ff.; 5:24; 6:1,7,47; 7:14,24; 8:1,23,31; 9:2,25; 10:1,49.

3. Ante, p. 15.

actions spoke louder than His words. That He was well acquainted with them is evident from phrases like the following: "Have you not read ..." 2:25; "Well did Isaiah prophesy ..." 7:6; "For Moses said ..." 7:10; "You know the commandments ..." 10:19; "Have you not read this scripture ..." 12:10; "Is it not written ..." 11:17; and, "David himself, inspired by the Holy Spirit declared ..." 12:36. In other places He casually referred to Old Testament prophecy or the writings of the books of law. From these indications one can conclude that at one time He spent long hours with the Hebraic Scriptures. From a study of this sort He would have gained a thorough knowledge of the Father, as well as material to use in His preaching and teaching. Many times when He was challenged He turned those who confronted Him to the spirit of what was written rather than to the letter.

The disciples no doubt caught the significance of these remarks. However, as important as this phase of training was, it was more important for them to study the person of Christ Himself. The Pharisees had books about God, and then when He was in their midst failed to recognize Him. The disciples, on the other hand, had few books, but they recognized Him, which was far more important. Their growing faith was built on time spent with Him, and because of this time with Him, time that is recorded in the scriptures for the present generation to study, they were soon able to do what previously seemed to be impossible tasks.

2. Prayer

Mark records but few of Christ's specific teachings on prayer, but the fact that He spent so much time in prayer was a potent lesson for His followers. If He needed to pray, how much more did they?

Two lessons on prayer will be discussed here. The first is a lesson through example; the second involves direct instruction.

Mark 1:35 gives the first hint of the Master's prayer life.

"And in the morning, a great while before day, He rose and went out to a lonely place, and there He prayed." Morgan describes this experience in the following words:

"That reveals the deliberate purposefulness of Jesus. The word 'praying' here connotes far more than asking. It suggests the going forward in desire to God, not for God's gifts only, but for God. It is the word for true worship, the word that describes the soul moving out toward God, desiring Him, and all He has to give."¹

From this experience, and it was one that was repeated often, Erdman lays down the two following rules for prayer:

1. Christ needed to pray, and if He needed to pray, how much more man needs to today!
2. The habit of prayer demands an appointed time and an appropriate place. The early morning hours are the best, and solitude is essential.²

Matthew B. Riddle in his commentary, The Gospel According to Mark, elaborates the first suggestion in regard to the prayer life of Jesus.

He says: "Prayer with Him seems to have been not only intimate communion with His Father, but a necessary preparation for His ministry."³

Christ's statement in 1:38, "Let us go that I may preach ...", came after hours spent in prayer, which indicates that prayer was a time for guidance as well as fellowship.

Chapter 11, verses 24, 25 have another striking lesson on

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1. Morgan, Op. cit., p. 37.
2. Cf. Erdman, Op. cit., pp. 39-40.
3. Matthew B. Riddle: The Gospel According to Mark, p. 15.

prayer and how to pray:

"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will. And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

These verses set forth two conditions that are necessary for prayer.

The first of these is faith. E. H. Pluntre in his commentary, The Gospel According to St. Mark, says that "here again is the implied condition that what is asked is in harmony with the laws and will of God. If it were not so it would not be asked in faith, and every true prayer involves the submission of what it asks to the judgment of the Father."¹ Prayer, then, involves a complete trust in the Father that He will answer. Secondly, there is the condition of forgiveness.

Erdman says, "Prayer must be offered in the spirit of forgiving charity."²

There can be no freedom or victory in prayer as long as there is enmity in the heart. Prayer that is not prayed in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount cannot and will not be answered.

Mark 14:32-42 refers again to the prayer life of Christ and the place it played in His life when tremendous decisions had to be made. Here is evidence of a prayer for strength and endurance, plus victory over the desires of the self. This focuses attention on the need for strength from beyond the self when difficulties arise. If Christ needed this power from above, surely the disciples grasped the importance of this as an essential part of their training program.

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1. E. H. Pluntre: The Gospel According to St. Mark, p. 178.
2. Erdman, op. cit., p. 161.

3. Meditation

In his commentary on the Gospel According to Mark, Edwin W. Rice says that the author of this gospel records no less than fourteen instances when Jesus retired for meditation, rest and prayer. The references he gives are the following: (1) following His baptism, 1:12, (2) flight from Capernaum, 1:35, (3) after cleansing the leper, 1:45, (4) retiring by the lake, 3:7, (5) in the mountain, 3:13, (6) following the rejection at Nazareth 6:6, (7) following the report of John the Baptist's death, 6:31, (8) into Tyre and Sidon, 7:24, (9) near Caesarea Philippi 8:27, (10) in Mt. Hermon, 9:2, (11) to Bethany, 11:11, (12) out of Jerusalem 11:19, (13) seclusion at Bethany, 14:3, (14) into Gethsemane, 14:32.¹ Each of these cases is preceded by some tremendous spiritual experience, or is followed by an experience that called for the best that was in Him. His all night sessions with the Father were times of learning His will and His plan of procedure. They were times of preparation for some difficult task, or rest and refreshment after a trying day. Sometimes the disciples were included in these times of quiet withdrawal, and these must have been high points in their religious experiences. Also, the inclusion of the disciples at times such as these gave them a chance to practice with Him the lessons on fellowship He had been teaching.

D. Loyalty

Loyalty, as defined in the preceding chapter, is wholehearted devotion to a cause or a person. The two aspects of loyalty

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1. Edwin W. Rice: The Gospel According to Mark, p. 421.

declared essential for Christian leadership are found in Jesus' actions, and through the medium of His activities He sought to inspire similar loyalties on the part of the disciples. The disciple is to be loyal to Christ, but since His loyalty to the Father was based on a similar necessity, His example in devotion to the Father and the Father's cause can validly be used to solicit complete abandonment to Him.

1. Loyalty to Christ

Jesus' loyalty to the Father can be traced back to Mark 1:11 where these words are found: "And a voice came from heaven, 'Thou art my beloved Son, with thee I am well pleased.'" This declaration came at the beginning of His ministry, and His life from that point forward shows that He accepted the responsibilities of the Son, and therefore He was never out of character. His decision to go and preach in 1:38 is in keeping with this acceptance of the task before Him. Here personal gain and popularity were forgotten and the preaching mission accepted. From that time in His career He was constantly on the move and never yielded to the temptation to stay where He was accepted and wanted. He ministered to the crowds and then moved on.

Chapter two, verse five reveals His devotion to the task He was given in spite of the opposition He met. His words, "My son, your sins are forgiven" set off a reaction that was heard for three years throughout Palestine, but He went on forgiving sins. A similar experience occurred when He declared that religious ritual and strict legalistic regulations had no place in worship as long as they became an end in themselves. Verses like 2:27; 3:4; 7:1-23; 11:15-16, and

12:11-14 reveal that Christ was more concerned with His Father's business than with what people thought or expected from Him. When He accepted the position as propagator of the new way of life every activity and every energy was used in that direction. He did not align Himself with the existing religious tradition, seeking to win its cooperation, nor did He seek to instruct by word only. His devotion to the cause before Him, and His sense of obligation to mankind brought out the highest there was in Him, and enabled Him to do and say what He believed in spite of threats of annihilation. A similar devotion is expected from His followers.

2. Loyalty to the Church

Christ's loyalty to the existing church, in spite of the fact that He did not agree with its policies and creeds, is seen by His use of that religious institution. A synagogue is described by Rice as "a place of worship and teaching,"¹ and the various synagogues in Palestine became centers of His operation.² Never did He ignore them; always He was there. While He may have criticized the practices and teachings of the Pharisees, never once did He condemn the institution itself.

When He made His last trip to Jerusalem, the temple was the first place He went,³ During the remainder of the week it was His center of operations.⁴ His respect for the temple and proper worship

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1. Rice, op.cit., p. 38.
2. Mark 1:21; 1:39; 3:1 and 6:2.
3. Mark 11:11.
4. Mark 11:15.

there is revealed by his actions in 11:15-17, when He publicly condemned the improprieties and stated the true purpose for the temple, e.g., that it was for a place of prayer. This condemnation heightens the view of the loyalty He felt toward the place of worship by revealing His desire to purify it. Rather than criticize and stay away, He declared Himself Lord of the temple and demanded certain reforms. When one examines the book of Acts it is seen that this teaching on loyalty to the church was effective, for the disciples used this same medium for carrying on their teaching and preaching after He was gone.

E. Vision

A sense of vision, as has been described in the preceding chapter, has two aspects, e.g., a sense of a world need and a sense of insight into the personality and character needs of others.

1. World-encompassing Vision

The author of this gospel omits the direct challenge of the world vision that the other gospel writers include, but he does not minimize the fact that the Gospel is for the whole universe. Two incidents will be referred to that point out the universality of His message.

The first is the healing of the daughter of the Syrophoenician woman in Mark 7:24-30. Prior to this time Jesus had spent all of his time in Jewish territory, ministering only to the Jews. Now He expanded the sphere of His activities, and not only set foot in Gentile soil, but also shared with a Gentile "the crumbs from His table." This incident serves as an indication of what was later to come to pass, e.g., a ministry that was not limited to just one race

of people.

The second incident to be referred to is Jesus' statement when He cleansed the temple in 11:15-19: "My house shall be a house of prayer for all nations." No amount of rationalization can change the impact of these words. Christ stated clearly and precisely what He believed about the universality of worship. He declared Himself the supreme authority on worship, and therefore He had the right to say who is to worship. The fact that He made it universal should be challenge enough to "lift the eyes unto the world".

2. Insight into personality needs

Time and space do not permit a careful analysis of Jesus' activities along this line. At every hand Christ could have turned away and considered Himself too good for those with whom He was associating. Personality defects loomed large wherever He turned. For an example of His treatment of such needs, consider the twelve disciples.

An examination of the type of men He called proves that He went beyond the externals when He considered individuals. In his book, The Training of the Twelve, A.B. Bruce says:

"He looked on the heart, and had respect solely to spiritual fitness. He had no faith in any discipleship based on misapprehensions and by-ends; and, on the other hand, He had no fear of the drawbacks arising out of external connections or past history of true believers, but was entirely indifferent to men's antecedents. Confident in the power of truth, He chose the base things of the world in preference to things held in esteem, assured that they would conquer at last."¹

For an illustration of this principle on the part of Jesus, consider the call of the four fishermen, Mark 1:16-20. One would think

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1. A.B. Bruce: The Training of the Twelve, pp. 19-20.

that in choosing a follower or a group of followers, only those who possessed very extraordinary qualifications would be considered. It was not so with Christ when He chose these four. In the words of Bruce:

"...at the time of their call they were exceedingly ignorant, narrow-minded, superstitious, full of Jewish prejudices, misconceptions, and animosities. They had much to unlearn of what was bad, as well as much to learn of what was good, and they were both slow to learn and unlearn."¹

Others of the twelve had just as many barriers to overcome. Levi was a tax collector² and his presence among the twelve created instantaneous antagonism from those on the outside looking at this new movement with a critical eye.

All of the disciples were poor, illiterate, insignificant Galileans, utterly void of social consequences; none would have been considered likely prospects for carrying out a great work. However, Christ did not stop with the external things, nor did He become discouraged when they failed. He had what Margaret Slattery called "eyes that see, ears that hear, and a heart that feels, and a mind that interprets."³ Patient instruction and patient waiting won the battle against unpleasant circumstances and personality difficulties. Once the lives of these men were grounded in Christ, He changed the personality, as is evidenced by the later activities of the disciples as seen in the book of Acts.

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1. Ibid., p. 14.
2. Mark 2:13.
3. Ante, p. 21.

F. Sincerity

An examination of the life of Christ reveals His genuineness of character, and His absolute honesty in every realm of His life. Christ's life stands out in sharp contrast to the lives of the recognized religious leaders who lived by law and tradition rather than love and personal conviction. This is first seen in Chapter One, verses 21-27 when Mark records the reaction of the people in the synagogue when He first taught there: "And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes." Regarding this Erdman says:

"It was not simply the substance of this message but still more His manner which occasioned surprise. In contrast with the scribes He spoke as having authority. They were unquestioningly dogmatic and intolerant; but they always spoke with borrowed authority... Jesus spoke with the power of personal conviction, He sounded the note of absolute certitude, His authority was that of divine insight."¹

A similar response is noted after He cast out the demon, "... What is this? A new teaching! With authority He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey Him."²

Other encounters with this group reveal the same genuineness and certitude of conduct. When the Pharisees demanded strict sabbath observances, Christ pointed out that they, by their much legalism, were failing to adhere to the real meaning of the sabbath, that had been ordained by God.³ When the Pharisees plotted to trick Him and prove His failure to adhere to Jewish tradition, He frankly told them

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1. Erdman, op. cit., p. 34.
2. Mark 1:27.
3. Mark 2:23-3:6.

that they were missing the whole purpose of the law and its ramifications.¹ When they came seeking a sign for proof, He bluntly declined their challenge, refusing to do more for their benefit than had already been done, and then later He warned His disciples against insincerity such as theirs.² Finally, during the last week of His life, He again warned against their hypocrisy and shallowness, and pleaded with those in the temple to realize the threefold evidence of insincerity: (1) their ambition for display and position and flattery, (2) their cruel avarice, (3) their shameful hypocrisy.³ These latter incidents are the sharpest contrasts Mark gives between the sincerity and openness that characterized Christ's life and teaching and the insincerity of the opposition. Other encounters could be cited, but these focus the attention on the underlying principle.

1. Spiritual realm

Christ taught His disciples honesty with God and in their relationship to Him through His uncompromising spirit in the face of the religious opposition. He had a duty to perform, and He knew that with God there could be no compromise of standards or methods. Rather than to submit to the traditional religious forces, He organized His own following and trained a select group, picked from among many, to help Him with His work.⁴ Christ had no impure motives to admit; rather He revealed their purity by His steadfastness. Another striking indication of this characteristic is seen in His subjection to the divine

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1. Mark 7:1-23
2. Mark 8:11-21.
3. Cf. Erdman, op.cit., p. 170.
4. Mark 3:13-19.

will in the garden of Gethsemane, and again on the cross. His words, "My hour has come"¹ point out not only the acceptance of God's way, but also the fact that He was right with God himself. Anyone with the power He had, and who had not accepted the motivation given by the Father, would never have accepted this humiliation of the cross with the serenity displayed by Christ.

2. Social Realm

That Christ was honest with the group is seen through the fact that He never in any way had to apologize for His life nor His conduct. When He was questioned regarding certain practices and beliefs, He answered without hesitation.² He never did anything for show nor to impress anyone; in fact, in one case He refused to do a work for its sake alone.³ His life was lived openly and without question, and was free for the examination of the public.

3. Personal Realm

That Christ was honest with Himself is seen by the evidence of His selfconsciousness. The Christian leader must know his own limitations, and must use his capacities to the fullest. Christ's utilization of His powers and knowledge is seen every time He performed a miracle, and every time He taught any spiritual truth. When He said, "Your sins are forgiven"⁴ He was aware of the power that was latent within Him. When He called Himself "the Son of Man"⁵ He knew who He

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1. Mark 3:13-19.
2. Mark 2:18-22, 23-28; 7:1-23; 10:2-9; 11:27-12:40.
3. Mark 8:11-13.
4. Mark 2:5b.
5. Mark 2:10, 28; 8:38; 9:9, 12, 31; 13:26, 34; 14:41.

was and why He was here. The recognition of human weaknesses is seen through His dependence on the Father for strength, especially to face the horrors of the last day. The night of prayer in Gethsemane¹ shows His casting of Himself on the Father for help in time of trouble when a task was too great for Him; rather than ignore the issues involved He went to His knees and then faced them. These examples from the Master's life certainly showed his followers the necessity of having a life that could stand a self-examination.

G. Humility

The necessity for specific teaching in humility is heightened by the aggressive tendencies which are deep rooted in man. Bruce says:

"...nothing is harder than to train the human will into loyal subjection to universal principles, to bring men to recognize the claims of the law of love in their mutual relations, to expel pride, ambition, vain-glory, and jealousy, and envy from the hearts even of the good. Men may have made great progress in the art of prayer, in religious liberty, in Christian activity, may have shown themselves faithful in times of temptation, and apt scholars in Christian doctrine, and yet prove singly defective in temper: self-willed, self-seeking, having an eye to their own glory, even when seeking to glorify God."¹

Mark clearly states that greatness in Christ's sight is gained only through real humility, a humility that is manifested in servitude based on love. Christ girded Himself against the two enemies of humility, e.g., pride and a desire to be indispensable; He taught definite lessons regarding the former, the latter He practised.

1. Freedom From Pride

Two distinct teachings are found that focus the attention on

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1. Bruce, op. cit., pp. 200-201.

this principle. The first of these is found in Mark 9:33-37. The central statement in this passage is Christ's words, "If any one would be first, he must be least of all and servant of all."¹ Plumtre asserts that these words state a twofold law: "(1) that the desire to be first defeats itself; and (2) that the only path to sovereignty is through humility, and that the one varies as the other."² Popular thought holds that a man must desire to achieve before he can, and then in order to receive a position of pre-eminence he must suppress and rule, by force if necessary, those beneath him. Not so, says Morgan: "... not the man who masters others, but the man whom everyone masters, and is thereby compelled to serve, is the greatest within the Kingdom."³ This idea is emphasized by the illustration of the child. When the Greatest One in the Kingdom took the child into his arms and declared that the Christian leader must be willing to receive little ones He did not mean merely children in the literal sense, but all that a child represents -- the weak, the insignificant, and the helpless.⁴ He punctured forever the hope of being able to take pride in a position of Christian leadership. In Christ's sight there is no gain for the man or woman who desires a foremost place. Erdman summarizes it thus:

"True greatness, then, consists not in attaining the first place in the notice and praise of the world, not in being served by many, but in being willing to stoop down to a humble place, not for the sake of self-effacement, not in timid diffidence, but

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1. Mark 9:35.
2. Plumtre, op. cit., p. 136.
3. Morgan, op. cit., p. 208.
4. Cf. Bruce, op. cit., pp. 201-203.

in order to serve others for the sake of Christ."¹

This is true humility, a humility that is not affected.

2. Desire to be Indispensable

The fact that Jesus had no ambitions related to indispensability is seen from the first days of His ministry. As previously stated, true humility discovers potential leadership in others and cultivates it.² Christ did just that. Early in His career He selected and began to train those who later took His place. Mark 1:16-20 tells of the call of the two pairs of brothers; 2:13 relates the call of Levi; 3:13-19 describes the naming of the twelve from among the many; and 6:7-13 tells of one period of actual experience in their training program. 6:7 says, "And he called the twelve, and began to send them out, two by two..." For a period of two or three years He worked with these men so that when His time had come He was able to leave the spreading of the gospel in capable, well-trained hands.

H. High Ideals

That Christ demanded a high standard of living is revealed through His emancipating men from the bonds of their sin. When the paralytic was brought to Him in 2:1-12, His first concern was for the spiritual condition of the man, and His statement, "Your sins are forgiven", which was accompanied by the act of forgiveness, would tend toward moral and spiritual purity, for forgiveness brings with it a cleansing from the cause.

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1. Erdman, op. cit., pp. 134-135.

2. Ante, p. 25.

I. Consecration

All that has already been discussed under the various headings can be summarized in one word, e.g., "love", but love itself leads to the devotion of the self to the one or the thing loved. This devotion is more than loyalty; it is more than surrender of the will; it is more than a complete yielding of all of one's self; it is in a sense a combination of all of these things, plus a seeking after and the finding of the will of Christ.

This kind of living covers many aspects of the personality. In a very real sense, all of the character traits discussed are involved in this seeking after and finding the will of Christ. As the book of Mark is studied, and Christ's life is analyzed, one sees in Him the marks of a completely surrendered, selfless life. This is revealed through His love of the Father and of people; through His fellowship with the Father in prayer and meditation, seeking the Divine will; in His loyalty to the Father and to His cause; through His sense of vision and sensitiveness to the needs of those around Him for His Father's sake; through His humility that leads to suffering; through the sincerity of His life; and through His obedience to the heavenly call.

For the disciples, their consecration began after Peter's confession in Mark 8:29, "Thou art the Christ." Consecration cannot come before there is faith, and Erdman says: "That Jesus is the divine Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of the world, is the first principle of the Christian faith."¹ Once this principle is understood, deeper,

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1. Erdman, op. cit., p. 122.

more abiding truths can then be mastered. For the disciples, this belief meant a beginning in the revealing of their Lord's future plans and purposes -- the cross. Then, in the Master's teaching, came the invariable law of Christian life: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."¹ The denial here, says Erdman, does not mean that one has to deny something to himself, but to renounce self, and the bearing of the cross means going to the place of crucifixion to die. Following Christ involves the denial and death of self.² Without this, there can be no consecration, for the consecrated life is victorious over the self and seeks only to please the one to whom the soul is consecrated. This was a hard and bitter lesson for the disciples to learn, and they failed many times when their yieldedness was tested. However, through the patience of their Master, as has already been pointed out in the preceding discussions, one by one their battles were won, and their consecration became complete.

J. Summary and Conclusion

In the preceding chapter the Gospel of Mark was studied with reference to the teachings it contained that are related to specific aspects of character that were set forth in Chapter One. This study was undertaken to determine whether or not there is sufficient teaching on those specific traits to make it valid to use Mark as a basis for lesson plans to teach character development to Christian leaders. As

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1. Mark 8:34.
2. Cf. Erdman, op. cit., pp. 123-124.

each trait was traced through the gospel, references were found that are usable as a basis for teaching each aspect of character set forth in Chapter One except that regarding the kind of frankness that enables a free discussion of life's problems.

The types of instruction found are two in number: first, there are the direct teachings on the part of Jesus, pointing out deliberate attempts on His part to teach His disciples certain aspects of a Christian character, and secondly, there is the undercurrent of Jesus' example which was a constant reminder to His followers of what a dynamic Christian character is like.

On the basis of the abundance of material in this gospel related to character development, this gospel can be declared valid for use in teaching Christian character.

CHAPTER III

LESSON PLANS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE USE OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK
FOR THE TEACHING OF CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

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LESSON PLANS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE USE OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK FOR THE TEACHING OF CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

A. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate how Mark's gospel can be used to teach character to Christian leaders. To do this certain segments of this gospel have been selected, and lesson plans prepared based on them. These plans are aimed at teaching the major character traits set forth in Chapter One. No attempt has been made to make this series complete in the sense that every aspect stated in Chapter One is given special emphasis. Rather, this series is illustrative, demonstrating the teaching of the predominant traits from selected passages of this gospel. Selectivity is based on the content of the passage, and its suitability for the purpose. For this reason some of the illustrations cited in Chapter Two will not be included.

Seven sessions have been planned. If a longer or shorter training period is desired these can be expanded, with additional sessions treating material in chapters omitted, or contracted, choosing the most important points of emphasis for the group. No attempt will be made to focus the attention on any one trait at a time, but rather as each segment is studied the various traits stressed in each will be emphasized.

In using a series of this sort, the group itself must be

taken into consideration, and the individual lessons adapted to meet their needs. The plans set forth here serve to open the passages and present the central lessons on character contained therein. Elaboration may be necessary, but this is a framework upon which to build.

Lesson I

Book as a Whole and Prologue

Purpose of the Lesson:

1. To lay the foundation through a presentation of the book as a whole for a detailed study of this gospel with special emphasis on its teachings related to Christian character.
2. To examine the life of one of the early Christian leaders to see why it was that he was effective, and what relevance these discoveries have for today.

Introduction

There are various ways to study any given portion of scripture. Among them are the following:

1. Content -- treats material to see what is there
2. Topical -- see what it has to say on a given series of topics
3. Biographical -- study the lives of the characters presented
4. Literary -- study purely for literary merits
5. Comparative -- comparing various passages
6. Historical-critical -- treats text itself; dates and authorship
7. Exegetical -- explanatory or expository

The approach to be used in this study will be a combination of the topical and the biographical. Emphasis will be placed on the teachings related to character development. In order to get the maximum amount of this teaching, an examination of the life of Christ will be involved.

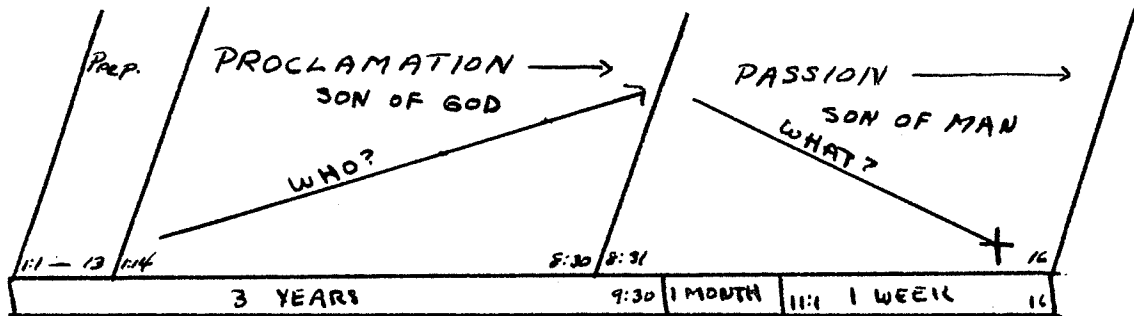
Any teaching of this sort is based on the structure of the book, for it is through the structure that the author reveals his purpose for writing. In addition to the primary purpose, however, many secondary currents are seen running throughout the whole. It is from these undercurrents that the teachings in this series will be culled. In order to get a clear picture of these currents it will first be necessary to view the whole so that the parts to be examined can be put in their proper places.

Questions to be used as a basis for the presentation:

1. What is the author's purpose in writing this gospel, and how is it accomplished? (Purpose of the question: to get the author's picture in mind before analyzing the parts.)
 - a. Purpose: To reveal the identity of Christ
To reveal the nature of His mission

b. Accomplished: Through a presentation of Christ's works and words

2. How does the structure reveal the purpose? Analyze the parts.



3. What are the general impressions of the book as a whole? (Purpose of question: To get a broad picture of the type of material the book contains. This lays the foundation for a detailed study.)

- a. The book is full of action; pictures Christ as the "mighty servant of Jehovah." This is seen through His works in healing, especially in chapter 5; His meeting man's material needs, chapters 6 and 8, feeding of the multitudes; His meeting man's spiritual needs, cf. Mark 2:1-12; and His own statement of purpose in 10:45.
- b. The book shows Jesus' disregard for the old Jewish law. His was a new way of life, not a revamping of the old. This is revealed through His responses to the religious leaders in chapters two and seven.
- c. The book shows that Jesus spent most of His time with the lower class of people, as revealed through the appearances of great crowds everywhere He went, 1:32-34, 45; 3:7-12, 19, 31; 4:1; 5:21; 6:33-34; 8:1-10.
- d. The book shows that He demonstrated powers of the deity: power over nature 4:35-41; power over the spirit 5:1-13; power over disease 5:24-34; power over death 5:35-43.
- e. The implications are in terms of spiritual things, cf. the parables of chapter 4, also, 8:15-21.
- f. Early in His ministry He appointed apostles to train so that they could carry on when He was gone. An emphasis is seen on their preparation. They observed, they heard, and they were sent out.

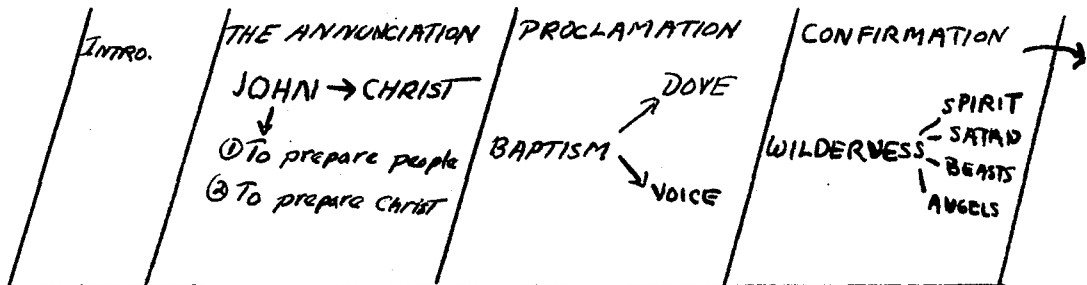
4. With a view of the whole before you, where does character development fit into the picture? What things should be given special

attention in the study? (Purpose of the question: to focus attention on the point of emphasis.)

- a. It comes through watching Him rebuild the lives of the disciples.
- b. It comes through the revelation of Christ. His character as the greatest of all Christian leaders is seen, and this is the life that must be emulated.
- c. Special attention should therefore be given to:
 - (1) Lessons He taught the disciples, both directly and through example.
 - (2) The nature of this One who has the power to rebuild personality.

The Prologue

- 1. Analyze the prologue, naming its parts, and noting unique elements. (Purpose of the question: to get the content before you.)



- 2. How are its parts related to the purpose of this study? (Purpose of the question: to show relationship between content and aim in lesson.)

- a. Introduction: states the time -- "The beginning"; introduces the central figure -- { Jesus - personal name
Christ - official title
Son of God - divine nature
- b. Annunciation: States necessary preparation of people for Christ; introduces a great Christian leader.
- c. Proclamation: Reveals Christ's preparation for His task
- d. Confirmation: Reveals His victory and His power; because He was victorious, He is able to help man.

3. Describe the message and character of John the Baptist. (Purpose of the question: To get picture of his life which can be used as an example of the type of leadership to emulate.)
 - a. Self-effacing -- showed Christ's greatness, 7
 - b. Spiritual minded -- had a sense of sin, 4-5
 - c. Conscious of his mission, 7
 - d. Unaffected, even in dress, 6
 - e. Bold, forceful, 4-5
 - f. Knew his limitations, 7
4. What was there about this character that made him an effective Christian leader? How are these factors applicable for present-day leadership? (Purpose of the question: to focus attention on characteristics of ideal leader.)
 - a. John's leadership was effective because of the nature of his life. It displayed:
 - (1) Humility -- as seen through his self-effacement and his unaffectedness.
 - (2) Sincerity -- as seen through his honesty with himself and with the group; he knew his limitations; he had the courage of his convictions.
 - (3) Loyalty -- as seen in the fact that he had the proper concept of his ministry, e.g., to preach repentance; he knew why he was here and he performed his duty.
 - b. These factors are among those deemed essential by authorities in the field of Christian education for effective Christian leadership. One who would work for the Kingdom today must seek to emulate them.
5. Consider the purpose of John the Baptist in light of Christ's ministry. What does this show regarding the place of Christian leadership today?
 - a. Purpose of John the Baptist -- to prepare the people for Christ and to point them to Him when He appeared.
 - b. Leadership today should likewise prepare people for Christ. He is waiting to be received by those who recognize Him for what He is. Before He can be received, however, there must be a period of preparation during which time the person receives an awareness of sin, which leads to the desire for a Saviour. "After me comes he who is mightier than I . . . he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." This kind of

leadership requires a life that shows that He is real, e.g.,
the kind of a life that John the Baptist lived.

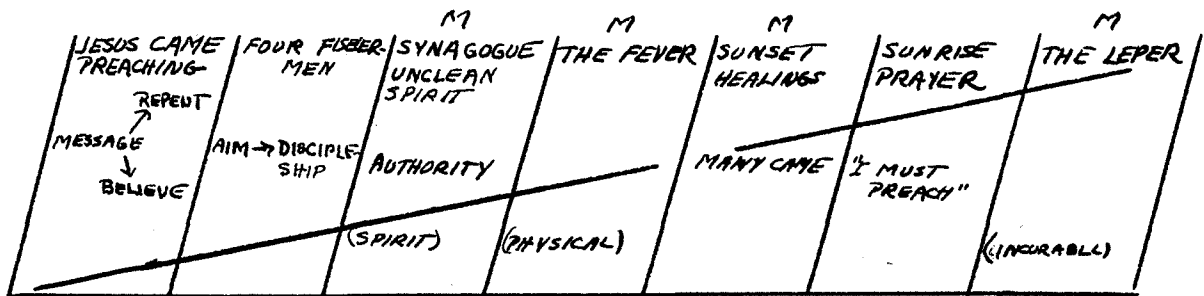
Lesson II
Chapter 1:14-45

Purpose of the lesson:

1. To discover the aspects of Christ's ministry and person that made Him popular, and to stimulate the emulation of these characteristics.
2. To discover specific lessons on discipleship which are applicable for today's leaders.

Questions to be used as a basis for presentation:

1. Analyze the structure, noting any repeated ideas and progression.
(Purpose of the question: to get the content before the students.)



2. What was Jesus' purpose in coming as stated in 1:14? How is this purpose to be carried out as seen through the structure of this segment? (Purpose of the question: to focus attention on the nature of His ministry.)

- Repent
- a. Purpose -- to preach the gospel of God -- Believe
 - b. Accomplished -- through the help of chosen individuals, 16-20 through direct preaching, 21, 38-39 through His works, 26,30,34

3. Study the call of the fishermen. What does it reveal concerning the calling of Christian leaders? How is this relevant for today? (Purpose of the question: to stimulate thought regarding the individual's call to leadership.)

- a. The fishermen themselves, and the purpose of their call:
 - (1) They were ignorant, laboring men, but men that were willing.
 - (2) They were called to be leaders in His Kingdom. This indicates that Christ was more interested in willingness to follow and teachableness than in superior education or talents.

b. The call of leaders:

- (1) There must be a time of decision in each leader's experience.
- (2) The invitation carries the message, "I will make you fishers of men."
- (3) The call involves sacrifice and separation.

c. Relevancy for today:

The call of Christian leadership still involves these same conditions. There must be a time of decision, either for or against following Him and availing one's self of the opportunity of entering His training school. The call still carries the same promise, e.g., that of leading men to Him. The call involves sacrifice as far as personal desires and ambition are concerned, and it also involves separation from those held most dear. Those who are today aspiring to be leaders in His Kingdom must consider these conditions and then decide whether or not they will follow the Master.

4. Study the reactions of the people to Jesus. What was there about Him that caused these reactions? (Purpose of the question: to focus attention on His character.)

a. The reactors and the reactions:

- (1) The fishermen -- they followed immediately
- (2) The people in the synagogue -- they were amazed
- (3) The common folk -- they came to Him
- (4) The leper -- told everyone; resulted in great crowds

b. Aspects of character which produced these reactions:

- (1) Love of men -- seen through His acts of mercy, meeting their needs.
- (2) Divine power -- here was something extraordinary
- (3) His conviction -- people immediately recognized that this was something different. "They were astonished at His authority."

5. In light of these reactions what was the place and purpose of prayer in Jesus' life according to verses 35-39? How is this applicable today? (Purpose of the question: to point up details of this essential in Christian leadership.)

a. Prayer for Jesus:

- (1) It was a necessity for fellowship.
- (2) It was the means whereby He learned what His Father would have Him do in light of the public acclaim.

b. Application for today:

- (1) If Jesus needed to pray, how much more does man today!

- (2) It has certain requirements: a set time, preferably early in the morning; a certain place, e.g., somewhere alone.
6. What is there about Jesus' ministry and person that should be emulated by present-day leaders? (Purpose of the question: to create thinking along the lines of what in His life can be copied.)
- a. His message -- the gospel of repentance
 - b. His character
 - (1) His plans to train those to take His place -- He had no desires to become indispensable
 - (2) His love for men
 - (3) His fellowship with the Father
 - (4) His loyalty to the Father, seen through His obedience, 38
 - (5) His loyalty to the church as an institution, 21, 29
 - (6) His conviction and sincerity
7. Why are these characteristics important for leadership? (Purpose of question: to crystalize thinking regarding the necessity of these characteristics.)

These characteristics are important for leadership because it is the personality of the leader that is the vital element with any group. Men learn about Christian living when they see it lived. Someone has said that one picture is worth a thousand words, and so it is with a life. One consistent Christian life is worth many sermons. If one will truly be effective for Him he will consider the call, and then after accepting the call seek to emulate the life of the One who called.

Lesson III
Chapter 2:1-3:6

Purpose of the lesson:

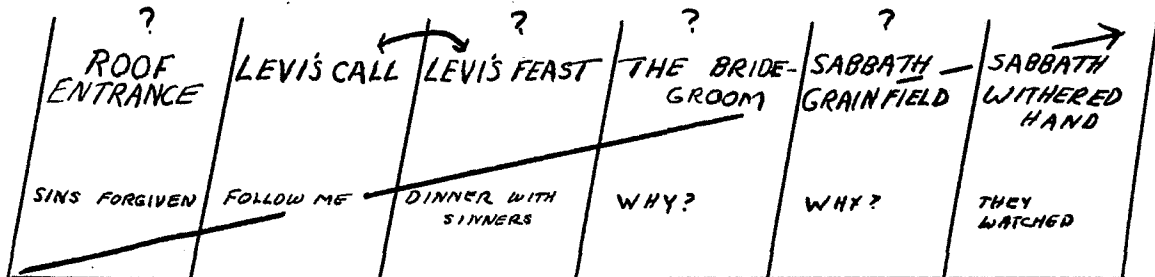
1. To discover how Jesus faced opposition, and why His method of facing it is exemplary.
2. To examine the claims Christ made for Himself and their implications.
3. To reveal the necessity of loyalty to Him.

Introduction:

A man's true character is seen when he faces opposition. His reactions reveal what things are basic in his life, and what things he deems most important. How did Jesus face opposition? How did He respond? What basic concepts are inherent in His reactions for today's leaders? Chapter 2:1-3:6 will answer these questions.

Questions to be used as a basis for the presentation:

1. Analyze the structure, noting repeated ideas. Is there any progression here? If so, what?



2. Describe the mounting opposition in this chapter. What caused the opposition in each case? What was its nature? (Purpose of the question: to get a picture of Jesus' activities and the responses to them.)

Cause

- a. Claimed to forgive sins, 5-12
- b. He associated with sinners, 13-17
- c. His disciples didn't fast, 18-22
- d. He broke the sabbath, 2:23-3:6

Nature

Inward questioning
 Questioned disciples
 They questioned Him
 They counseled to destroy Him

3. As Jesus met these challenges, what claims did He make for Himself? What is the significance of each claim? (Purpose of question: to analyze Jesus' reactions and to determine what they revealed about Him.)

a. He met the charges by making certain claims about His character, nature, and person.

b. The claims He made are these:

- (1) 2:5-13 He is equal with God. He proves this by the working of the miracle of healing. Many claimed to be able to do works in the realm of the spirit, but only God can heal the body. Proved His divinity by this act of mercy. This act also reveals another aspect of His character. The fact that the man's sins were forgiven focuses attention on the truth that forgiveness of sin tends toward moral and spiritual purity. Christ here showed the validity of His ability to cleanse and to lift men to a higher level of living.
- (2) 2:15-17 He is the physician. Here He claims to be the healer of the souls, and as the healer of souls it is essential that He go where souls are sick. His answer here is a sharp rebuke to the pious Pharisees who had shunned those who needed the love of God to lift them up. Jesus' words, "I came not to call the righteous but the sinners" are a statement of His mission on earth, as well as a clear indication of what is expected of those who will follow Him.
- (3) 2:18-22 He is the bridegroom. The picture here is that of a wedding feast. The disciples are the guests and Jesus the bridegroom. He declares that there is no point in fasting as long as He is there. By this statement He condemns the Pharisaic fasts which far surpassed those stated by Moses as part of the divine order of worship. He declares that the principle of a fast is to remind one of the spiritual significance, but when that aspect is forgotten the fasts are useless and avail nothing. This answer also reveals the nature of His religion, e.g., it is something new and not an attempt to revamp something old. Also, it is a trend away from legalism. The inward attitude, according to Christ, is much more essential than the outward show.
- (4) 2:23-3:6 He is Lord of the Sabbath. The force of this claim lies in the statement, "The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath", indicating that the sabbath was a day of rest made for man. Jesus here declared that His Lordship was so great that it extended

even to so necessary an institution as the sabbath. "As it was made for man, He the representative Man, the Saviour of man, was not a slave to its demands; in a case of necessity, he could disregard its laws; he would free it, for a time, from the formal restrictions imposed by Pharisees, he would restore it to a place of real helpful service to men."¹

4. What aspects of Christ's character are revealed through these claims? How are they applicable for today's Christian leadership? (Purpose of question: to center thinking on necessary character traits of Christian leadership.)

a. His loyalty to His purpose. This is clearly brought out by the way He faced the opposition. He met every challenge with a positive answer:

- (1) He proved His divinity by a miracle
- (2) He stated the purpose of His coming
- (3) He revealed the characteristics of His religion

He refused to compromise His standards or His goals; He did what He felt was right in spite of the reaction it caused.

b. His love for people is seen again through the miracles, and in the fact that He met the needs of the sinners.

c. His sense of vision, or insight into a man's personality needs is seen in His call of Levi the tax collector. This reveals that He saw beyond the externals, and relied more on ultimate results than present circumstances.

d. His emphasis on high ideals for man is seen in His helping man receive moral and spiritual purity through the forgiveness of sins.

Application:

Today's leader needs these same qualifications. Similar situations will continually confront him; he will be criticized and questioned; he will be condemned for his convictions, but He must stand firm and loyal to His cause. At the same time, he must exercise Christian love in ministering to the needs of all those with whom he comes in contact. It is hard to be no respecter of persons; it is hard to go to the one who is socially outcast and bring him in as an equal, but it is necessary for His sake. Actions such as these can be fostered only through a real love for Him which leads to love for the people being served, and complete abandonment of the self to the task that is at hand.

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1. Erdman, op. cit., p. 57.

Lesson IV
Chapter 4

Purpose of the lesson:

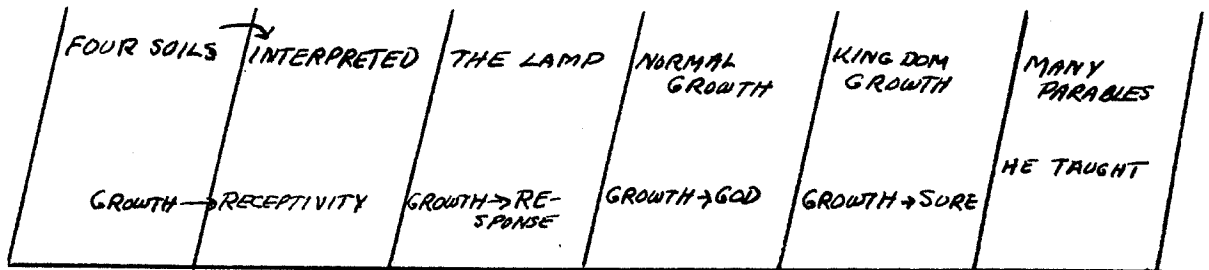
1. To teach the lessons Christ taught on the responsibilities of leaders in His Kingdom.
2. To teach the necessity of continued response even after the call to leadership is accepted.

Introduction:

In the face of the opposition that was traced in the preceding lesson, Christ officially appointed twelve men who would receive special training in the work of the Kingdom. (Their appointment is recorded in chapter three.) This chapter begins their period of intense preparation, and Christ's attempt to inspire complete confidence in Him.

Questions to use as a basis for presentation:

1. What are the major impressions of the chapter. (Purpose of the question: to get before you the basic framework.)
 - a. It is built on the "words" of Jesus -- parables
 - b. There is one dominant theme -- The sower and the seed
 - c. There is one major emphasis -- The nature of the Kingdom



2. Why did Jesus use parables? (Purpose of the question: to reveal the value of this type of teaching.)
 - a. To teach those who were ready to be taught
 - b. To keep those who were not ready from understanding.
3. Why were these teachings presented at this time? (Purpose of the question: to reveal Christ's purpose for giving these particular instructions.)

- a. To encourage the disciples in the face of opposition
- b. To reveal to them their responsibility in the Kingdom

4. Consider the following rules for interpreting parables, and then carefully analyze the first and second. Consider the terminology, state the central idea, and discuss its relevancy for today. (Purpose of the question: to get at the heart of the major truths and to point up the necessity of applying them today.)

- a. Rules for interpreting parables:
 - (1) An analogy between things on a physical and spiritual plain cannot be perfect.
 - (2) First get the central truth, and then relate other truths to it.
 - (3) Introduction and application must be carefully heeded. Keep in context.
 - (4) The interpretation must be easy, and it will explain all the main circumstances.
 - (5) Parables are not to be used as a primary or exclusive basis of doctrine.
 - (6) Remember that the comparison is to the whole parable.

b. The Parable of the Soils

- (1) Terminology: Sower -- the witness
 Seed -- Word of God
 Soil -- human heart
 Path -- wayward, hardened; no germination
 Rocky ground -- shallow, purely emotional; germination, but no growth
 Thorny ground -- Doubleminded; germination, growth, fruitlessness
 Good ground -- undefiled; germination, growth, fruitfulness
- (2) Central truth: Men will react differently; expect it.
- (3) Relevancy: These same conditions exist today. The disciple must expect this; not become discouraged when results not seen every time. Most important, however, for the leader is his response to the commandments of God. How receptive are you?

c. The Parable of the Lamp

- (1) Terminology: Lamp -- symbolic of light received.
 Light has just one purpose.
- (2) Central truth: Responsibility of the one who has received the light is to witness.
- (3) Why share:
 - (a) Because of the nature of what you have.
 - (b) Because of the consequences. An important spiritual principle is seen here. When a man responds to what he has received, more will be given; if he

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does not respond his receptivity will be dulled and even his present knowledge will lose its force. Receptivity and response are inseparable.

(4) Relevancy: Human tendency, even in leadership, is to fail to grow. Once man "thinks he has arrived" he is tempted to become indifferent to further instruction and further knowledge. This parable is a warning against such action.

7. How are verses 26-29 related to what precedes? (Purpose of the question: to reveal the relationship and the one additional truth.)

In the preceding paragraph the emphasis was on doing. Now He tells them of the nature of the growth they can expect from their sowing. "You do your part; God will do His." The central idea is that growth, after the seed is planted, depends upon God.

8. What is the central idea in verses 30-32? How is it relevant to what He has been saying?

a. Central truth -- No matter how discouraging things look now, the Kingdom will ultimately triumph.

b. Relevancy -- Here He again emphasizes the fact that God is responsible for growth. Even though the seed is small, and the first fruits meager, there will be ultimate triumph.

9. What does this segment contribute to the progress in character development of the Christian leader? (Purpose of the question: to focus attention on specific attributes of character and how they are treated.)

a. It contributes toward the development of humility, for it presents the necessity of dependence upon God. Man cannot do the work alone; he has certain responsibilities, but there is a point beyond which he can do nothing. Since ultimately everything said and done for the Kingdom depends on Him, man has no room for taking pride in his accomplishments.

b. It contributes toward the development of loyalty to His cause. Christ has set forth certain conditions relevant to the work of the Kingdom, e.g., growth depends on receptivity and response. If there is no response, dullness sets in. If there is a response there is spiritual vitality. The very nature of the consequences, then, stimulates loyalty and devotion to the task He has given them.

c. It contributes toward an understanding of what real love of

fellomen is. Love manifests itself in service, and the emphasis in this segment reveals that love for men cannot be separated from the sharing of the good news which is the primary duty of Christian leadership.

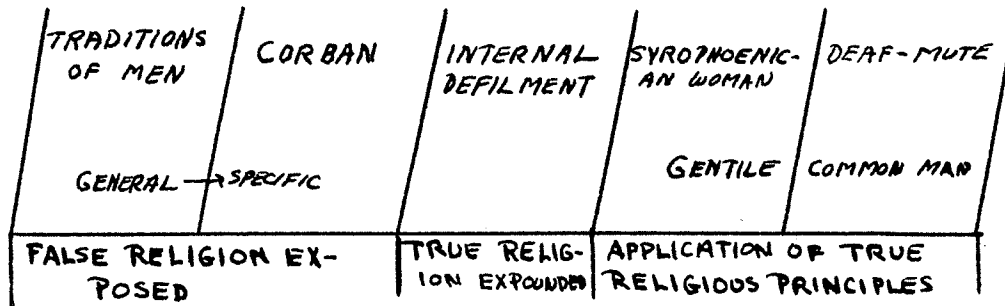
Lesson V
Chapter 7

Purpose of the lesson:

1. To point up the basic concepts of Jesus' religion.
2. To show its effects upon character.
3. To inspire a world-wide vision.

Questions to consider as a basis for the presentation:

1. Examine the parts. What are their relations to each other?



2. What was the cause of the discussion in 7:1-23? What were the traditions of the elders? (Purpose of question: to point up the differences in concepts of religion.)

- a. Basis of discussion lay in fact that Jesus' disciples failed to observe the traditions of the elders. In reality, it was a clashing of religious ideals.
- b. The traditions of the elders were "precepts orally transmitted, illustrating, applying, expounding the written law . . . Precepts originally planned to meet a need, but they gradually expanded in number in an attempt to keep pace with the ever growing complexity of the conditions of life, until there had grown up a great body of traditions; traditions which in the first place were intended to be interpretations of the law, and applications of the law to local circumstances; tradition which in the second place became interpretations of traditions and applications of traditions; and traditions in the third place which were interpretations of interpretations of traditions! So the movement ran, until there existed between the people of God and the law of God such a mass of traditions that the law of God was out of sight and practically forgotten."¹

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1. Morgan, op. cit., pp. 107-150.

3. In the light of the preceding discussion of the traditions of the elders, how did Jesus answer their questions? What was His analysis of their religion? What was the basic fallacy? (Purpose of the question: to reveal the nature of this warped religion.)
 - a. His answer contained:
 - (1) An analysis of their religion
 - Heartless
 - Automatic
 - Hypocritical
 - (2) A counter charge -- "You break the laws of God."
 - b. Basic fallacy is insincerity
4. What evidences of insincerity are found in it? Are there any modern counterparts that the Christian leader may fall prey to? What is the remedy? (Purpose of question: to focus attention on modern relevancy.)
 - a. Evidences of insincerity
 - (1) Religion vocal, going no further than the lips, 6b
 - (2) Religion manmade, worshipping vainly, 7
 - b. Modern counterparts
 - (1) Traditions of the church which become binding and meaningless
 - (2) Tendencies toward creedalism
 - c. Solution -- Center in Christ, not principles
5. Characterize Jesus' view of religion. What is its basic principle? (Purpose of question: to reveal heart of Jesus' religion.)
 - a. Jesus' view of religion
 - (1) Heart the center of moral ethics, 21
 - (2) Primary emphasis inward and not physical, 16,18,19
 - b. The basic principle is the fact that the internal condition of a man is the essential thing. Therefore Jesus' religion was limitless and universal.
6. How do verses 24-37 contribute to the revelation of Christ's view of religion? (Purpose of question: to show Jesus' religion in practice.)
 - a. Contributions to Christ's view of religion by demonstrating the universal, limitless aspect of it.
 - (1) The first indication of the universality of Christ's religion is His treatment of the Syrophenician woman. She was a Gentile; Jesus did not refuse to heal her daughter. Why? Because His religion was not limited to one group or race of people.

(2) The second indication is His treatment of the deaf-mute. He was a common man; Jesus had compassion on all types of humanity and refused to help none.

b. Reveals the love that this kind of a religion puts in one's heart -- doing for someone else.

7. What are the effects on character of the Pharisaic view of religion? Of Jesus' view? How are these pertinent today?

Pharisaic View

1. Tends toward insincerity
2. Stimulates pride
3. Real spiritual fellowship lacking
4. Narrow outlook, religion limited
5. Ideals shattered

Jesus' View

1. Tends toward sincerity, honesty with self and God
2. Stimulates humility
3. Fosters spiritual fellowship
4. Worldwide vision
5. Maintains high ideals

A person who really holds Jesus' view of religion and seeks to adhere to its basic principles will gradually develop a better character. The character traits listed above will be developed because the very nature of His religion motivates their growth. Because of the new character, the person thus transformed will go anywhere, regardless of race or class and minister unto the people there.

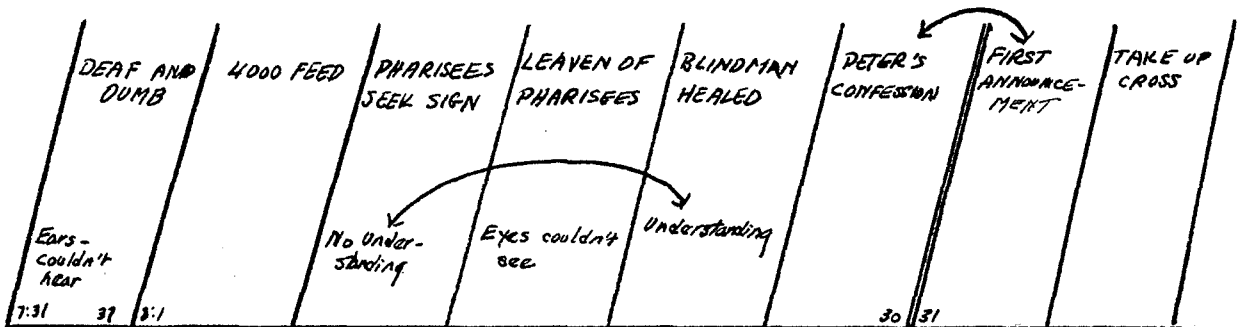
Lesson VI
Chapter 8

Purpose of the lesson:

1. To relate the warning against hypocrisy to the life of today's religious leader.
2. To present the meaning of the cross and the place it should have in the life of the Christian leader.

Questions to be used as a basis for presentation:

1. Analyze the structure, showing the relations of the various parts. (Purpose of the question: to get the whole before the student; facilitates the examination of the parts.)



2. What was the leaven of the Pharisees? Why did the disciples need this warning? How is the warning applicable to present-day leadership? (Purpose of the question: serves to point up the insincerity of those false leaders, and reveal its dangers today.)
 - a. The leaven of the Pharisees:
 - (1) Materialistic emphasis on life
 - (2) Spiritual blindness; lacking spiritual understanding
 - (3) Hypocrisy; knowing but not acting upon knowledge
 - b. The disciples needed this warning because their belief in Him had not progressed beyond the material element in His ministry. They saw Him as an earthly king, one who could perform mighty deeds and one who satisfied their needs, but that was all. The complete concept of who and what He was was not theirs.
 - c. This same warning is applicable today because today's leaders face these same dangers. There is a tendency to take the eyes off the spiritual qualities of the Kingdom and to place them on outward forms. Christ clearly states that there is no room for such insincerity in His Kingdom.

3. What is the force of Jesus' words in 8:18? How is this related to 7:31-37, and 8:22-26? What implications are here for today? (Purpose of the question: to point out the necessity of coming to Him for the "second touch".)
- a. The force of the words "Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear?" lies in the fact that He used these same words on the Pharisees. Failure to respond to the light received always leads to hardening and the disciples were on the verge of this.
 - b. Relation to miracles:
 - (1) Deaf man had ears but could not hear; Jesus opened ears.
 - (2) Blind man had eyes, but could not see. Note the two steps in the healing of the blind man: he saw dimly, then he saw plainly.
- The disciples were in the same condition, but spiritually rather than physically. They had ears, but failed to understand the full impact of the teaching. They had eyes but failed to see the full personality that was before them. They saw dimly but needed the second touch in order to understand. Many Christian leaders today need that same "second touch" for they too have failed to fully comprehend the full nature and person of Christ.
4. How does the author prepare the reader for the questions in 8:27-29? What is the relation of this question to the life of today's disciples? (Purpose of the question: to focus attention on one's own decision regarding Him.)
- a. The author has prepared the reader through the recording of what people had seen Him do, how they had heard Him teach, and how they had seen His life. They had questioned among themselves concerning His ministry. Now Jesus asks the questions. He is seeking to find out what conclusions people have drawn, and most important, what conclusions the disciples had come to concerning Him.
 - b. This question is of vital importance to the life of Christian leaders, for on his answer hinges the reality of the work done. When Peter said, "You are the Christ" what he was saying was, "You are the divine Messiah; you are the Son of God; you are the Saviour of the world!" Without this concept of Him, Christian leadership loses all of its force and vitality, for the living Christ is at the center of all Christian living.
5. Consider verses 31-33 in light of Peter's confession. What additional information does it give concerning the mission of Christ? (Purpose of the question: to point up the full mission of Christ.)

- a. This is the first indication regarding the propitiation; the doctrine of the cross.
 - b. Previously He had preached salvation, now He revealed the means of salvation through suffering, rejection, death and the resurrection.
6. What did Jesus mean by "Let him take up his cross?" What did cross bearing mean to Jesus? Why is cross bearing essential to discipleship? (Purpose of the question: serves to draw attention to the necessity of the abolishing of one's own will.)
- a. For Jesus it meant:
 - (1) Death
 - (2) Humiliation
 - (3) Obedience to God
 - b. The disciples must be willing to undergo this, for theirs is a similar mission. Self must be abrogated at the foot of the cross, and there must be a complete willingness to go and do whatever is required in spite of the impulses of the self.
7. Consider the terms in verse 35. How is the central truth relevant for today's Christian leadership? (Purpose of the question: serves to emphasize the necessity of complete consecration.)
- a. Terminology; implications based on contrasts
 - (1) Save life (keep it for self) -- lose life in eternal judgment.
 - (2) Lose life (deny self) -- save it for eternal life.
 - b. Christian leadership demands self-denial and sacrifice. What is more, it demands consecration, or the complete abandonment of the self to Christ and His mission on earth. In a very real sense, the entire list of essential characteristics for Christian leaders can be summed up on that one term, consecration, for it involves love, devotion, loyalty, fellowship, high ideals, sincerity, humility and a sense of vision. Once self is denied for the sake of the cross there is no room for insincerity such as that displayed by the false religious leaders, nor can there be a lack of faith in Him, for consecration itself is based on faith. First belief, then complete surrender, and then a character like His is inevitable when His life is emulated.

Lesson VII
Chapter 11:1-25

Purpose of the lesson:

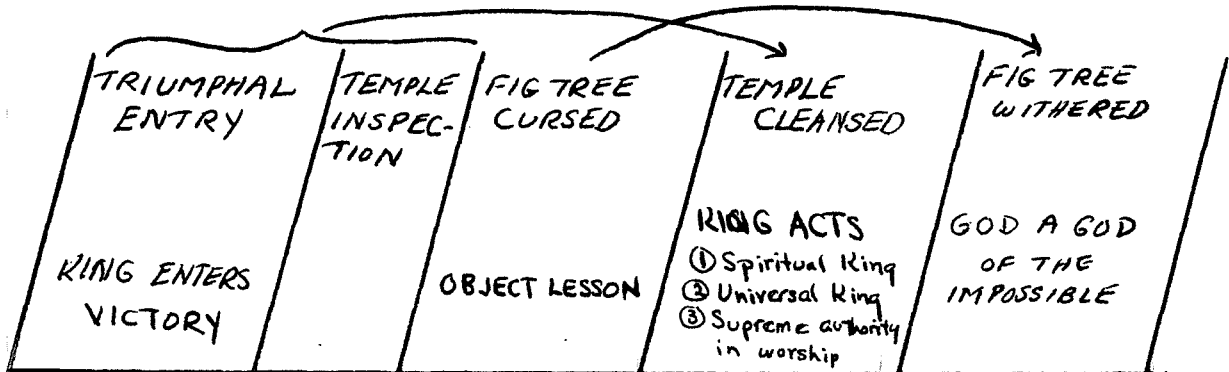
1. To emphasize the spiritual aspect of Christ's Kingdom and the necessity of loyalty to it.
2. To challenge with the world vision He had.
3. To present the specific teaching on prayer contained in this passage.

Introduction:

Christ is about to die. The activities of His last week on earth would therefore be extremely significant. His disciples still were not ready for their places of leadership, for they failed to understand. Somehow, during this last week He had to motivate personality and character changes. An analysis of this segment reveals certain outstanding attempts to motivate and bring about the required transformation.

Questions to use as a basis for presentation:

1. Analyze the structure, noting repeated ideas.



2. Consider the triumphal entry in light of the purpose of this series of lessons. What aspect of character does this point up?
 - a. The triumphal entry was for the crowds a real triumph from a worldly sense for they felt that at last He would proclaim Himself King. For the twelve too, it was their recognition of Him as King. Amid the pomp and ceremony Christ entered

the city in all humility, seated upon a donkey. If ever Christ's humbleness were revealed, it was then. With the city ready to crown Him King, He chose the lowliest of all beasts and entered "King of Death."

- b. Transfer the thought to a situation where a Christian leader could be proclaimed and lauded. Human tendencies are to glory in the honor; Christ's way is to humbly submit.
3. What is the significance of the emphasis on the temple? What aspects of Christ's character does it point up? What must it have meant to the disciples?
 - a. Emphasis on the temple reveals that He was much more interested in a spiritual kingdom than a physical.
 - b. This factor indicated His loyalty to the Father and the task He was called upon to do, as well as loyalty to the existing church as an institution.
 - c. Undoubtedly the disciples caught the significance of this, perhaps not without some disappointment, but their later lives reveal the same loyalties - loyalties that should be inherent in any Christian leader.
 4. Describe the action in 15-19. What is the heart of the teaching? Why is it significant?
 - a. Action of passage:
 - (1) Drove out those who sold and bought.
 - (2) Allowed no one to carry things through the temple.
 - (3) Taught - a. positive instruction.
b. negative condemnation.
 - b. Heart of teaching: My house is a house of prayer for all nations.
 - c. Significance:
 - (1) Jesus proclaimed Himself the supreme authority in worship.
 - (2) He declared the universality of worship.
 - (3) He stated the primary purpose of the temple - for prayer.
 5. Keeping in mind the place that Jesus gave prayer in the temple, what is the teaching on prayer in 20-25? How is it related to the withered tree?
 - a. Three conditions must be met before prayer is effective:
 - (1) Faith is essential. Faith in the character of God, and that He will do what we ask.
 - (2) Action plus certainty. Pray and believe.
 - (3) Forgiveness.

- b. The fig tree incident is used as an object lesson, demonstrating faith of this kind.
6. Why is forgiveness necessary for prayer?
 - a. Because sin blocks faith.
 - b. It corrects faith. A terrific power is at the prayer's disposal. Forgiveness insures the right use of it. Forgiveness of fellowmen leads to forgiveness by God which leads to pure motives; therefore petitions are valid.
7. What should be the place of prayer in the life of the Christian leader? Why are the prayers of Christian leaders sometime ineffective?
 - a. Place of prayer-prominent for it is essential if one is to have fellowship with Him. Only through spending time with Him can we learn His will.
 - b. Prayer sometimes ineffective because:
 - (1)Lack of faith. This is due to sin in life, or failure to comprehend character of God. Have cre~~at~~al knowledge but not experiential. Caused by failure to meditate.
 - (2)Lack of certainty. Often not sure of God's will, therefore don't pray with assurance, or else pray contrary to His will.
8. Ponder the statement, "My house shall be a house of prayer for all nations." What does this reveal concerning the scope of His mission, and the duties and obligations of those who have answered His call to leadership?
 - a. Scope of mission is world-wide. No nation should be excluded from the opportunity of true worship.
 - b. This challenges the honest-thinking individual with His unfinished task of ministering to all the nations.

Conclusion:

Consider your place as a co-worker with Christ in His Kingdom on earth. If you have honestly accepted the conditions of your call to service, have you tested your character by the standard that Christ set? One has only to look at His life, to see what He requires; one has only to call upon Him in faith for strength to be able to emulate those vital characteristics which are found in Him. He changed a group of ignorant, almost uncouth men to powerful leaders for Him by revamping their old lives and personalities, and He'll do the same for you.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to discover what moral and spiritual character traits the ideal Christian leader should embody, and then to determine the effectiveness of the Gospel of Mark for use in cultivating them. Once the value was determined, illustrative lesson plans were prepared, showing how this gospel could be used to motivate the growth of those desired characteristics.

The first step in this process was to compile a list of these character traits which were deemed essential for Christian leaders by authorities in the field of Christian education. Since character is a part of personality, and since personality is such a complex thing, it was hard to determine just where one trait stopped and another began; therefore there was a great deal of overlapping in the realms covered by the characteristics.

One basic requirement was found for the Christian leader, and that was the necessity of being a Christian in belief, in experience, and in example. Stemming from this one basis, eight other major characteristics were discovered. These major traits each have their divisions, and through an analysis of what was involved in each an overall picture was compiled of the effective Christian leader.

The first essential for Christian leadership stemming from faith in Christ was found to be that of love. The love of the Christian leader should have two objects: first Christ and secondly his fellowmen. Love of his fellowmen was found to be manifested in three realms:

first in unselfishness, second in a generous spirit, and third in friendliness. Next to love as a requirement for leadership was found necessity of an awareness of the need of daily fellowship with Him. Fellowship itself has three aspects: prayer, Bible study and meditation. These three are essential if the leader is to walk close to his Master. Next to fellowship was found a sense of loyalty; loyalty to Christ and loyalty to the church. A sense of vision was also included as an essential if leadership is to count for Him. Vision includes both that which encompasses the world, and that which sees into the personality needs of others. Sincerity and honesty were grouped together since the two ideas tended toward a great deal of overlapping. Honesty was deemed necessary in three realms of the life: first the spiritual realm in which the effective leader is called upon to be absolutely honest with God; second in the social realm in which he must be open and free with the group; and third in the personal realm in which he must be honest with himself, realizing both his limitations and his capacities. The effective leader must also have the humility that frees one from pride and eradicates the desire to be indispensable. He must also have high ideals, for he cannot lift anyone else higher than he has already climbed himself. Finally, his life must be absolutely yielded and consecrated to Christ. Complete surrender to Him involves all of the other aspects, and results in what has been called "being a worthy guiding fiction."

Chapter Two in this study was an examination of the Gospel of Mark to test its value for use in teaching these desirable character

traits. In order to do that, each trait was considered separately and the gospel examined to find evidence of teachings related to it. Two kinds of teachings were found. There was the direct teachings of Jesus, or His words when He was trying to teach them something specific, and there was His life as a living example of what a Christian character should be. Since character is taught more by contagion than drill, it was an examination of the latter that proved the most fruitful. Evidences of character education were abundant, and the conclusion at the end of Chapter Two was that the Gospel of Mark is valuable for use in teaching character to Christian leaders.

On the basis of this conclusion a series of lesson plans was prepared, illustrating how this book can be utilized in teaching character development to Christian leaders. The plans were by no means exhaustive in the sense that they covered all of the traits mentioned in Chapter One, but merely an attempt to illustrate how these characteristics can be taught from this gospel.

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