



- August 5 – Mission, Love Others (Prepare for community)
- August 12 – Love Yourself (Prepare for leadership), Part 1
- **August 19 – Love Yourself (Prepare for leadership), Part 2**
- August 26 – Love God (Prepare to prayerfully study His Word), Part 1
- September 2 – Love God (Prepare to prayerfully study His Word), Part 2

### Spiritual Formation – its origin

The Holy Spirit.

### How can one make the Holy Spirit bring spiritual formation?

You don't.

### So where does that leave us?

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892): "... the Holy Spirit comes and shows the sinner the cross of Christ, gives him eyes anointed with heavenly eye-salve, and says, 'Look to yonder cross. That Man died to save sinners; you feel you are a sinner; He died to save you.' And then the Holy Spirit enables the heart to believe, and come to Christ."

"The aim of the (Small Group Leader) should be to encourage in every (Small Group member) an intelligent response of faith laying claim to the provisions of Christ's redemptive work, a daily standing on the four platforms...: *You are accepted, you are delivered, you are not alone, you have authority*" (Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 210).

**WORKSHOP :: From Last Week "Authoritative: J. Oswald Sanders, Spiritual Leadership, 1967"**

Where are you going?

SG mission

1. Renewal/revival
2. Gospel growth
3. Being (and growing) as a community of faith

**Do you have in mind where you are going and where you want your group to go?**

**What are you doing to go there?**

Ideas

**Self-Differentiation**

Murray Bowen, Family Systems Therapy

Self-differentiation is "the ability to hold on to who you are and who you are not... People with a high level of differentiation have their own beliefs, convictions, directions, goals, and values apart from the pressures around them." Pete Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, 58.

Peter Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works*, 12:

- Defining yourself and staying in touch with others
- Being responsible for yourself and responsive to others
- Maintaining your integrity and well-being without intruding on that of others
- Allowing the enhancement of the other's integrity and well-being without feeling abandoned, inferior, or less of a self
- Having an "I" and entering a relationship with another "I" without losing your self or diminishing the self of the other

**What do you stand for? What are your core values?**

**Who are you?**

## Be Separate Together

"Being separate together... It is a life-long learning process, never attained, always tested." Steinke, 12.

"Let him who cannot be alone beware the community... Let him who is not in community beware of being alone." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 77.

### **Galatians 3:26-29**

26 for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

What is Paul trying to teach the Galatians in this passage?

## Seven Habits of a Healthy Leader (taken from Peter Steinke's "How Your Church Family Works")

### **1. Focus on Self, not Others**

Lead from what you believe to be true. Do not worry about whether people agree with you.

#### **Luke 4:28-29**

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. 17 And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, 18 *'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor...'* 28 When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. 29 And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff.

### **2. Focus on Strength, not Weakness**

Own your weakness, repent, turn to Christ, and enjoy His work in your life! You are made for great works.

#### **Ephesians 2:8-10:**

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 **For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

### **3. Focus on Process, not Content**

Hospitality: see others and love them for who they are. You don't see enemies in your group members. You see fellow sojourners – journeymen who need grace and are the givers of grace.

#### **John 7:53 – 8:11**

7:53 They went each to his own house, 8:1 but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 2 Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. 3 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst 4 they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. 5 Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" 6 This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. 7 And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." 8 And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. 9 But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. 10 Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."

**How to deal with sin in your group?** Pray. Apply Matthew 18. And pray some more.

### **4. Focus on Challenge, not Comfort**

Challenge the group on what they think, act, feel. Don't comfort people. Hold a mirror up to them, and hold the holiness of God up to them. And do this with yourself too.

#### **Galatians 1:10**

10 For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

John Woolman, Quaker in the 18th Century.

### **5. Focus on Integrity, not Unity**

*House of Cards* and/or *Game of Thrones* are bad examples of leadership.

#### **Philippians 4:8**

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Peter Senge: "People often want a formula, a technique, something tangible that they can apply to solve the problem of structural conflict. But, in fact, being committed to the truth is far more powerful than any technique."

## **6. Focus on System, not Symptom**

When focused on a symptom, we become fixated on cause and relief. Instead – look at the whole group and show wisdom in what is going on.

### **Ephesians 3:17-19**

17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

In today's modern world, parents don't want to be termed authoritarian, so they drop their God-given authority.

## **7. Focus on Direction, not Condition**

Where are you going? Not where have you been.

### **Philippians 3:12-21**

12 Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. 16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

## So What?

As Christian leaders, our job is to know our God and know ourselves.

Augustine, *Confessions*:

"How can you draw close to God when you are afar from your own self? He prayed:  
'Grant, Lord, that I may know myself that I may know thee.'"

Ephesians 4:22-24:

22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Spend time to know who you are – to think about what you believe, what are your core values. And as you lead, lead from your Gospel strength – don't lead from your fears, your anxieties, your worries. Lead from what is TRUE – true ontologically, and true existentially.

**Wanna know what is true?** Jesus lived perfectly, died our death as a substitute, defeated death and rose again on the 3rd day and ascended into heaven. We receive the benefits of Jesus' life death and resurrection through faith in Him alone, by grace alone.

**Wanna know what is true?** You are in Christ – heirs according to promise. Live that way. You have been forgiven. You have been given the cloak of a son of god – the fattened calf has been slaughtered for you. And God has given you great gifts to share His blessings with the world. Don't hog those gifts. Use them for God's glory and the glory of His redeeming world.

**Beloved in Christ, you need to know who you are, independent of anyone else, and you need to remain close to one another.**