

Please bow your heads in prayer:

Dear Lord, *Bless this time we spend together this morning. Take our Ears and truly listen with them, Take our lips and speak wisely through them, take our minds and think thoughtfully with them, take our hands and work with them and take our hearts and set them on Fire.*

The Subject of today's sermon: A Teacher, A Preacher, and A Reacher was selected as a request from my daughter, Gracey.

In confirmation class Ken often talked about using the bible as a learning roadmap or guide. Today, I hope to impart very practical lessons on how Jesus and the Disciples taught many lessons through actual life and we learn that while Jesus was patient and kind to those less fortunate, Jesus and the disciples also taught us to strive to be the best we can be, taking common acts of kindness and turn them into great lessons. Also that Jesus believed in discipline and the need to live in the framework his almighty father taught him. In the past, I often talk about how we can recognize the presence of God in our everyday lives through others and through our own actions. Most of us have learned these life lessons from our parents, our teachers, our ministers, our coaches and sometimes by less influential people (our friends, class mates, or co-workers).

My mom was an educator and started a couple private schools. She was very innovative for her time, and believed in the typical classroom teaching but also rhythmic education, arts, and music influences to balance the education process. She was very particular in the selection of teachers and one of her favorites was a teacher named Ms. Nancy. Among other things, Ms. Nancy had the added challenge of having an exceptional active 5 year old boy named Peter. Well, as Ms. Nancy often did, she would ask the class current event questions, and if you knew the answer you raised your hand and stood by your desk to answer the question. This particular day, Ms. Nancy asked who was running for President. The first answer was from John Stankey, who stood by his desk and said Richard Nixon". The next question was can anyone tell us about Richard Nixon, and a girl named Mary Alice stood up and said, Nixon is a great man and will guide us through these hard times. Ms. Nancy then asked who is running against Mr. Nixon, and a boy named Peter raised his hand and stood up in the last row of the class and said George McGovern. This was a little unusual as Peter very rarely answered any questions and did not pay attention in class. Ms. Nancy, the teacher then asked do you know anything about this George McGovern to Peter? And Peter promptly replied, yes, he is a S.O.B. Now I used those acronyms as we are here in church but in truth, Peter said the entire phase out load. No one in the class understood what Peter had said, but the teacher Ms. Nancy. She was laughing so hard that she had to excuse herself from the classroom to halt her laughter. Ms. Nancy knew all too well that Peter had learned this phase directly from his father and could not wait to tell her boss, Lisa Kirchof, what her 5 year old son had just said.

Every moment in life is a teaching opportunity. Jesus taught us this, but Leaders can also inspire others - this is often referred to as Preaching, and often **preaching** further inspires other to **Reach** for excellence. Hence what Grace referenced in her reading of the scriptures earlier this morning: my personal leadership model of Teaching, Preaching and Reaching.

I think we can all agree that Jesus is the greatest teacher, preacher and reacher to ever walk the face of the Earth.

So how did Jesus and his Disciples teach?

Told Stories

Jesus told countless parables (Mark 4:34). He pulled spiritual truth from everyday life. Not only did these stories make Jesus' preaching more memorable, they also connected in a much more profound way. Think about the parable of the Prodigal Son. Jesus could have proclaimed, "God loves you so much that He will welcome you back to Him no matter how far you have wandered away." That is definitely true. However, Jesus instead chooses to tell the story of a boy who disowned his family, partied away his inheritance, came home to beg for mercy, but was surprisingly welcomed with open arms by his father who waited daily for his return. Which is more powerful? If you want to preach like Jesus, tell stories so you can connect with people. Lots of them. I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to meet many great leaders that have learned this method very well and use this method to educate often.

Use Shock and Aw, Selectively

Jesus often used hyperbole. He taught using outrageous examples, exaggerations, or shocking statements that got people's attention. These statements were not all meant to be taken literally, but they definitely got the point across. For example, Jesus didn't really mean we have to rip out our eyes and amputate our hands for causing us to sin (Matthew 5:29-30), or else all Christians would be blind amputees. He also didn't mean that the people he spoke to literally had logs in their eyes (Matthew 7:3-5). Jesus was simply making a very clear point. Jesus said things that shocked people and exaggerated the truth to emphasize his point. Does this sound like a technique of any politicians you know from NY? Say outrageous things that aren't meant to be literal, but grab attention to communicate a point.

Use Memorable Sayings

Jesus spoke poetically. He often used catchy sayings and plays on words. This isn't always apparent in English translations. However, in the original language, Jesus made it much easier for his listeners to remember what he said. For example, Jesus memorably said, "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you." (Luke 6:37-38a, ESV). Another great example is the Golden Rule (Luke 6:31) Make the main point easy to remember. If people remember the message, they will be able to take it with them wherever they go. In my business life I often start a meeting with a phrase my associates will remember: "Act Now, Do It, Today, Get Results" or "Inspect what you expect", or "You will not get in trouble for Bad judgement but you will for bad behavior."

Ask a lot Questions

Rather than tell everyone the answer right away, Jesus used the Socratic Method. He led His audience to conclusions by asking a lot of questions. For examples check out (Matthew 16:26 or 22:20-21). Questions are a powerful teaching method, especially when teaching a hostile crowd or young people. Questions stimulate critical thinking. Asking good questions makes the audience hungry to find the answers. If you want to reach others like Jesus, ask a lot of questions. Do not reveal the answer immediately. Help your audience use their own brain Firepower.

Use Object Lessons

Jesus often used object lessons to communicate to his audience. He washed the feet of the disciples to teach servant leadership (John 13:3-17). He called a little child to him to discuss childlike faith (Matthew 18:1-4). He described unselfish giving after watching a widow drop two small coins into

the temple offering (Mark 12:41–44). When he told the parable of the sower, there is a good chance he was standing near a field. Visually communicating truth is far more powerful than mere stated truth.

Use Repetition

Jesus helped his audience learn His lessons by frequently repeating Himself. He taught the same major themes again and again. For example, Jesus spoke of his death and resurrection over and over again (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34), and the disciples still didn't get it. Most people need to hear something seven times over before it fully sinks in. In addition, teachings that get repeated get remembered. Find the main point of your message and say it again and again.

So how does this all come together?

People need examples of joy and dependence on God even in human imperfection. They need to see what it means to be a Christian and human at the same time. There are always bad examples around, I am often that example myself, this may come as such a surprise to you but I am pretty tough on our girls. Like Paul, I know what the girls are capable of: Pam and I strive to teach our girls to be humble, hard-working, helpful to others, and always empathetic. Like Paul, be a responsible person.

Paul said he had all the incentives of an eternal hope. He was free to reach toward excellence because he had a strong confidence in the future. "***Our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.***"

Our earthly situation is always compelling in the past and now—politically (Trump and Hilary) or economically (Brexit), or tragic, the Orlando shooting recently. Current events and circumstances may appear dark and grim. But as Christians we are not locked into this situation. While this does not excuse our carelessness or unconcern, it does deliver us from anxiety, because "***our commonwealth is in heaven.***" Staying centered when the world is very much spinning around you.

No matter what circumstances he faced, Paul could continue to reach for excellence because he was a hopeful person. He wrote, "***May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope***" (Romans 15:13).

Paul was determined to be the best person he could be, for God. He said, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (verse 14).

Every Christian has ample reason to say with Paul and Popeye: "***I will be all that I can be.***"

So there it is my personal Leadership model. Trust me, I often get it wrong, I get very frustrated at times, (there is just a massive amount of Blonds in my life), and so if I appear confused at times it is simply because I am. But you persevere, keep striving to be better and improve. Hopefully, this has provided a new perspective and an insight on a different way to apply the learnings and stories in the bible in your own personal life.

Thanks Be to God.

Amen