

The Heat of Responsibility



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That's some introduction. I think that was me. I am happy for the opportunity to be here. Let's give a hand for Bill Hybels, because I think this leadership conference teaches all of us so much, for the vision that he has brought. We are indeed grateful to God for the opportunity to share it with you. You saw Reverend Elaine, my companion for 32 years, who has shared in this vision. Bill talked this morning about sacrifice. Well, Bill, when Elaine was carrying our first baby (she was seven months pregnant), the Lord gave me the vision to come and pastor in New York. I was dean of students at Boston University, and I said, "No, I don't want to do it, because she's carrying a child. She doesn't want to change doctors." But then when she talked to me about it, she said, "No, you don't make decisions for me. If that's where the Lord wants us to go, that's where we're going." And that's where we have been for 32 years. She is here with me, and I'm grateful to God for the years that we've been able to share together.

I'm thankful today as I've had the opportunity to be a part of the morning sessions and to listen to Carly and to Bill, I realize that we're talking about basically the same thing: What leaders do, how they do it, why they do it, and why they do it in spite of the fact that in many instances they find themselves finding total opposition to the vision that the Lord has given. I believe that when you begin to talk about moving people, you talk about models of leadership.

Today I'd like to offer you, basically, five models of leadership. Some of them tie in together; some of them will stand alone. All of them are important for us if we're serious about being able to move to what will be our final stage, and that is transformational leaders. I hope that all of you who share in this conference are indeed concerned about conditions that need change and concerned about the way God can use you to become a part of that change.

Let me say to you that I have been in higher education, and still am in higher education, a congressman, and have also been pastoring this church for all of these years. So my career has taken me through various paths, also including a stint at Xerox, so I understand it from a number of perspectives. One thing I have come to realize: It doesn't matter what field it is in, there is always a need for some transition, some transformation, of an entity to bring it to the place where it is able to fulfill its best purpose.

Today, as we begin the process, I would hope that, regardless of where you are, don't just look at me as a preacher. I will probably insert some Scripture, but this is really about all of us learning how we might be able to find our best self, as God has called us to be in leadership, and how we might be able to use the best gifts that we have to be able to bring about the necessary changes in society.

You will see some clips here that show our community when we started, as you saw in this initial presentation, and you will see where we were trying to get to and what we were trying to do. We began the process by believing that it is important, once you receive the vision, to use new ideas to try to get people to think a different kind of way. Once you discover what the problem is, you understand that you have been purposed with the responsibility to try to bring about the necessary change, but it does not happen without getting the buy-in of numbers of groups and people who have the same commitment and dedication to try to see that change happen. It is extremely difficult, though, to sell new ideas. Selling new ideas to people who have had their traditions, have had their way of doing things, becomes extremely difficult because you're about to move them out of a comfort zone where, in many instances, they may be productive but not as productive as they could be, or not as capable in terms of the skill sets that are necessary to be able to bring about change. It is about how you get people engaged, involved, moving them beyond what they would consider to be the things that represent the essence of who they are, or who they feel they are. And that means moving them beyond their self-serving motives.

Many of us need to know, as leaders, that if we are self-serving, we might be able to lead people in a direction; we may be able to have some accomplishments. But the reality is when people see that you are selfless in your commitment, that you're willing to make the sacrifices to make something happen, people begin to follow you simply because they realize that at the end of the day

everybody benefits and that there's something for everybody in the process.

So we need to begin by setting some clear directives. We talk about transitional leadership, understanding who we are, what our role is, and understanding that in a transitional model, we may not be there forever. We may be the beginners of a process, and we may not be the people who ultimately are the ones who bring it to its conclusion.

A clear example of that would be John the Baptist. John the Baptist understood that he had a role, he had a time for which that role would be effective; but he also understood that his role was primarily to introduce the One who was coming after him. He knew his limits, he knew what God had called him to do, and therefore he set in motion all of the things that Jesus would be able to take charge of and all of the things that Jesus had the responsibility for ultimately accomplishing. He knew that he was there, he had a role, he was the leader; but he also understood that when Jesus came, he would no longer be in the leadership position.

One of the most difficult things that people have in trying to adjust is the reality that they will not be in their position forever. When we begin to talk about transcendency, we will talk about how we ought to be thinking about what we're doing and how what we're doing now may not be the thing that we need to be doing in the future; because, for any number of reasons, we may have to change from the place where we are. We have preset objectives. We know what we want to accomplish. This is not just hit-and-miss, trying to find out what we're going to do. If God has given you a clear vision for it, then you need to begin to put the meat on the bones to make it a reality. In putting the meat on the bones, it means that there must be goals and objectives. Too many things fail simply because too many people start the process without understanding where they are going. If you don't know where the goal line is, how are you going to find it?

Paul talks about keeping your eye on the prize, or keeping your eye focused on the goal. Many of us are just going in motion. We're going round and round, doing the same things over and over again. And we're finding that, though those things don't work, we're still trying to use them, trying to fit them in, trying to make them work, trying to get people to understand what we don't understand ourselves. If we don't understand where we're

going, it is extremely difficult for us to assume that anybody is going to follow us.

So then, we have to have a design for change so that people come to the realization that we are indeed focused on something, we believe in it, and we dare to believe that wherever the goal is, we will ultimately get there. It is not about some going in one direction and others moving in another. It is about understanding that there is a reason we're doing what we're doing, and the reason we're doing it is because we expect to have some conclusions in the end that give us the product that represents the best and the essence of what we ultimately had hoped for when we began.

Transitional leadership is about understanding that we need to focus on identified needs. To that degree, when I came to the church in 1976, I began to look around at community. I consider a pastor's role not to be merely the responsibility toward the development of a church or the ekklesia, because the ekklesia is not limited to brick and mortar and walls. It is really about developing community, whatever the needs of the community happens to be. Whether it is in business, whether it is in ministry, whether it is in education, wherever we are leaders, we have a responsibility to try to look at the whole spectrum of what that community need is.

As I did my surveys, I came to the realization that home ownership was at a low rate, that education was at a very low rate in a community that was supposed to be middle class. Every definition in the press talked about a community that was once middle class that was now on decline. This was once the community where African Americans like Lena Horne, Count Basie, James Brown, and Jackie Robinson, who could not move in a white community, this is where they moved. It was an upscale community, but now it was losing ground because those who were in leadership had not taken care to build the necessary institutional support systems that would allow the community to continue to be inviting. Therefore, people were moving out to the suburbs because there they found schools that were listed with properties; and they realized that those school systems would do a better job, or they found that their community was not falling apart because of drugs, murders, or other kinds of problems that were given by virtue of their criminal element that was operating in them.

As I read Acts 2:1-4 that talks about the coming of the Holy Spirit—the power of the Holy Spirit, being empowered to do the work of

the Lord—and then going down to Acts 2:43 to the end of that chapter—dealing with the reality that they built communities by virtue of staying in the place where the needs of the people were met—as we identified the needs, we began to open up a vision for the congregation so that they might believe that God had called us with the responsibility to respond to each and every one of those needs.

To that end, we began the process, first by building a school. You would think no one would object to building a school, but those persons who had been a part of the church, many of them in leadership, came to the conclusion that we are not in the business of educating. If there is a problem, we've identified the problem, how could we as a church sit on the sideline and watch as children were not educated? As you just saw in the film, and you will see at the end of this piece, those young people that we brought into that school were young people who just wanted a chance; parents who wanted an opportunity to have a place where they knew that their kid could be educated and they would not be mistreated. They would not be dropped into special education, or they would not be put in a situation where they did not have access to the best things available to them.

We started the process of trying to raise money, getting the buy-in of the congregation to build the school. Yet there were about three officers who did not believe this was where we ought to be. Fortunately, my wife, with a master's degree in education at the time and a former teacher, decided that she would take the responsibility for bringing together the resources for us to build a school. With some rapid assessment of what the community needs were, and with the process of trying to oversee how we might be able to make it happen, we were fortunate enough to get the congregation to raise about a million and a half to build a four-million-dollar school.

Understand, though, when you begin to think in this manner, you don't always get the necessary support in the places you expect. I went to about 20 different banks that would not make a loan on a school. They said, "If you were building apartments, we would be able to qualify it. We cannot qualify a school because we don't know how you're going to pay for it."

Now we said to them, "Look. We came here and we had 1,200 members. Now we've got about 5,000 members. When we came here, we were raising about \$3,000 a week. Now we're raising about

\$30,000 a week in tithes and offerings. We showed you a rise in our ability to be able to generate the revenue, and you're talking about a 20-some-thousand-dollar-a-month mortgage. We will raise that on the first Sunday. That's Holy Communion Sunday. People give on Holy Communion Sunday, and we'll raise enough on the first Sunday to be able to take care of this responsibility."

Yet there were those who did not believe. The banks did not believe, until one group of bankers came together. These were African-American bankers, and three banks came together and made it possible. Because of that, here we are 25 years later after the start of the school, being able to see transition taking place.

You have to look at a community. You have to see its failure. You have to see a community where it seems that all of the support systems of the city had turned its back on this community. It looked like many other communities in America. The school system, again, was one that was failing our students, and the community itself was failing because no longer did people want to live here.

Many of you are in communities just like that, whether they're in America, whether they're abroad. We see so many communities that, with proper leadership, could be turned around. Transition can take place, but it means standing up, sometimes to those who will be opposed to you, not because it's not a good idea, but opposed to you simply because this is not something they expect you to do or something that they expect could possibly be done.

We then moved to look at the urban renewal sites in the neighborhood. We took over every urban renewal site in South Jamaica and have built something on it, [for example,] senior citizens' housing. We talked to the mayor and said, "Mayor, our people are not homeowners. They need to be homeowners." We looked at every cavity in between good homes where there were homes that had been torn down. We built a brand-new home on them, two-family homes. Where we built two-family homes, people had one part of the house. The first floor they lived in had a basement, [and there was] a three-bedroom home on the top. We sold those homes for \$158,000, with \$797 a month in mortgage, 5% down payment, and got the state to give us subsidies for them. That home that they bought in 1985 now markets for \$550,000 to \$600,000. It's about building equity for people and about giving people the power to be able to live in their community.

It's the transitional stage where you begin to try to get a sense of what can be done. So you need to deal with realities, and pitfalls will come. Among those pitfalls: We can be compromised if we're not careful, because there are too many other people who don't want things to happen unless it happens for them. For instance, I met with one group who told me that if I built what I thought I was going to build, then I would not live to see it. You have to be willing to die, as Bill said this morning. If you're not willing to risk, you're not going to be the kind of leader that God needs to be able to transition and transform communities.

You need to understand that failure to focus on your core purpose can take you away, unless you develop new leaders so that you are not doing the whole job yourself. It means building systems whereby other people are able to take responsibility in some areas of leadership. Goals and objectives must be very clear, and you must understand people's traditions and understand why they may be reactive.

A second model of leadership deals with transactional leadership. That involves committee leadership in general. You heard a little bit this morning about buy-in. You have to get people to buy into the process. You need to make calls to individuals, as well as calls to groups who can be helpful in the process of turning things around. Transactional leadership can become extremely difficult; because if a leader does not have the ability to discern when it is time to move from mere discussions, mere committees, mere groups, and allowing everybody to have their input in the way that they feel like it, and having an opportunity to know that, there's a point that comes when somebody has to make a decision: That decision is we've talked about it long enough, we can move forward.

I like to tell people that I have been in three of the most transactional models of leadership known anywhere in the world. First of all, I pastor a church, and all of us know that's transactional leadership. You have to go to committees, you have to talk to people, you have to convince people that you want to do it.

Secondly, in politics, which is truly a transactional model in leadership, everybody wants to have a say in everything. If you're not careful, at the end of the day, the very thing that comes out does not do the things that you thought it should be doing. Or you make such compromises that your intentions are never fulfilled. That's why, as much as I like what happened in the Great Society

program for many people, there are things I dislike about it because the one thing that was not built in is the means to empower people. If people are on welfare or living in public housing, if you did not create a means by which they could ultimately become homeowners or move in another direction with their lives, you really have not empowered them to be independent enough to do the things that are necessary.

In higher education, where I'm a college president, if anybody here is in academia, you know everything goes to a committee. Everybody wants to be involved, everybody has a different idea, everybody believes their idea prevails over the ideas of other people. And if you are not strong enough to be able to stand and say, "Look, we're dying, we need to change," people will stay in the same place where they find a degree of comfort, and they never come to a conclusion. So you go year after year, day after day, dealing with theories; and theories really don't always evolve to the point where they become the necessary tools that allow you to be able to make the changes that are necessary.

We need the group buy-in, but we have to be strong enough leaders to stand up and say, "Okay, we talked about it. We've discussed it, we've involved everybody. Now it's time to make a decision."

We also need to learn the power of delegating responsibility. So many leaders cannot succeed simply because they think every idea that God ever created, He created only for them. Nobody else knows anything but them. When the leader is a person who does not have the ability to be able to allow other people to participate, then other people soon begin to disappear, and the leader is standing alone all by himself or herself.

You build support, you identify who your leaders are, you begin to process your plans, and you come to the point where you make some conclusions about what you expect or anticipate. You set some real deadlines that are honored, and you stay focused on those deadlines; because each of those deadlines represents not only the ending of a stage, but it also represents the beginning of another stage. As the process begins to move forward, you deal with the reality of some pitfalls. Some of that deals with passive leaders. Some folks just want to be leaders in name only. They don't want to do the hard work. But nothing that we accomplish can be done merely by talking about it or merely having a title that suggests that we have a role that is really not supported by the performance that we're able to give. It can slow down the

process.

We've done about \$150 million dollars' worth of various projects, and I've had projects that have slowed down simply because people sometimes got to a place where they were not satisfied with the way something was happening, so they made a decision that they were going to stop the process. In every encounter, it becomes important for you as a leader to be able to have the diplomatic skills to be able to move that process along, knowing that there is a time. Time is money, and wasting time and money is not what you want to do.

A transactional model of leadership also is time consuming. I spent many nights in Congress until 3:00 and 4:00 in the morning trying to get decisions made among ourselves, whether it was on a banking committee, or about housing, whether it was on some other area, dealing with our responsibilities. Then going through the whole process of going back to subcommittees and committees, and then getting to the point where we think we have a bill to take to the floor, only to discover when we get to the floor we don't have enough votes to pass it. So it winds up being something that we spent a lot of time on, and then we have gotten no results from it.

Then there are selfish motives, and I dare to say that in the political arena most of the motives are selfish, because everything is pretty much centered toward How do I get elected when the next election cycle comes around? My reality was I was elected by the people. I had the full benefit of not worrying about my next election, because I was producing for the people in a way that was empowering the people. Therefore I never paid more than \$80,000 to run a congressional election, because when people's needs are met, and you are meeting their needs, and you are fulfilling some of their visions and hopes for life, you will soon discover that they will continue to lift you to a position of leadership and allow you to be able to stay in the position. You don't worry about whether the election comes or not. And you don't worry about whether you are elected or not.

I made it very clear when I got elected, "I will be here for 10 to 12 years." I left at the end of my 11th year, having done all that I felt that God put me in Congress to do. When you know what your timetable is, what you expect to achieve, how you expect to achieve it, then you don't spend time pursuing goals that are not consistent or compatible with the things that you expect to

get done in life. Since I did not expect to spend a lifetime in the House, I knew that I could focus on things that were not directly or necessarily associated with my particular political party. And I also knew that it did not matter whether I got a position on some committee within the House, because ultimately I had been elected by God first and, because I knew my election was sure, I was not worried about what happened on the next election day. One has to believe in themselves.

Next, we move from transactional to transparency in leadership. As you know, one of the greatest problems we face, whether it's in the business community or in our churches, is transparency. As you have seen over the last few years, the problems of the business community, the number of leaders and businesses that have gone to jail because of a lack of integrity, leads us to have to understand that if we're going to be great leaders, we're going to have to be moral. We have to have moral sense of what it means to do things right. We have to understand that when goals have been set, those goals can only be met if we do it with a measure of integrity. We need to have information flow that allows people to be engaged, to understand.

I think, as Bill said earlier this morning, the day for Moses standing on the mountain telling the people what to do is no longer working. It does not work. The better way is to try to create means by which information flows to the people and information also flows back to the leader. Where there is information flow back and forth, it means that there is communication; and with communication, generally, problems can be resolved. There will always be some folk with whom you will never get problems solved. There are some folk who are just mean, and you have to accept that reality. There are some folk who are locked into a mindset, and I don't care what you say, it's not going to change them. But you have to make up your mind that you still will function with integrity.

I say make sure that your financial house is in order, not only because you are being watched over by the Internal Revenue Service, but because you are trying to establish a level of trust with the people who you expect to follow you. I have found that producing quarterly statements to the congregation and producing annual statements to the congregation makes a difference, because they know how much money is being raised and where their money is going. As many people dare to believe that the preacher is taking it all, they know that I'm not getting it all, because the evidence of it is the visible evidence that they

see in the things that are being produced in the life of the people, in the life of the community, in the life of the programs that we design that are not for us but designed to meet their particular needs.

It also requires of us choosing competent and qualified partners. A part of transparency is knowing that the people you have selected or God has pointed out to work in that organization are people who you can trust. And they are people who can be trusted by those who have been able to come into the organization. They are worthy partners, they understand the goals, they understand the vision, they understand there is a reason for having accounting and legal practices that emanate in such ways that they represent the best that it's possible to have.

Let me give you an example of why it is so necessary. Some years ago I said to the leadership of our congregation that it was important for us to get CPAs. They said, "No, we cannot afford CPAs. We have a public accountant who is a member of the congregation. He's always been a member of the congregation. He's always done our books." Well, we had a number of mistakes, and those mistakes came out very vividly when we began to make applications for loans at the bank. I said again to the leadership, "We need to get a CPA." And they said, "We cannot afford it." I said, "We cannot afford to have a CPA overseeing our financial system," but we fought about it for a long time. Then the day came when we had the federal audit. The audit came when I ran for congressional office. The visibility of the church now was known to everybody. The very people who told me we did not need CPAs were now the people who made accusations against me about how the financial system was operating.

You need to understand it from a historical perspective. You see, when I came, we had 42 groups. All 42 groups had individual bank accounts, and you know what happens when you start messing with money that people think they control. I said to them, "This is the church's money. It doesn't belong to this group or that group or that club or that organization. All the money must be brought into the church. We will create vouchers and mechanisms by which we can account for the funds, but all the money must come in." I tend to think that they were very hurt by the fact that they were not controlling the money. The love of money is a root of all evil; and so, because they loved controlling it, they wanted to continue to do it.

Eventually I went through a federal trial. Reverend Elaine and I sat side by side with the judge. We never got any cash. We made sure we were honest in our approach. We sat in that trial for four weeks, and the judge kept saying, "I don't see a case against the place. I don't understand the problem." The real problem was the church was growing, the community was responding, the school was being built, senior housing being built, homeowners were now in homes, and three members of the church leadership made up their minds that we were getting too big.

Leaders must understand that you stand with integrity. It does not matter where they take you. If God is in it and God is with you, God will deliver you. Reverend Elaine and I are living witnesses. The judge said, "Either you make a case against the place, or we're going to dismiss this case." The next day the prosecutors came, dismissed their own case, and three people from the jury came and joined the church. What more could you ask?

So we all go through the fire. We all go through the lions' den. We all go through these troubling moments of our life, but if we're real leaders we have to be strong enough to stand up. We're not afraid to have to go through it.

Let me just add this. My time is running out. It got so good in the courtroom that every morning my members came. We filled up the courtroom and we had praise and worship. After a while the bailiff was coming and saying, "Y'all don't have to worry. Everything's gonna be all right." We'd come through the metal detectors, and all the guards were saying, "You people shouldn't be here in the first place." We would go in, and by the time Reverend Elaine and I got into the courtroom, it was just filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, and we knew that everything would be all right. Trust God enough to be honest, to have integrity, and things will work out.

The next model of leadership deals with the reality of where we're trying to get. I'm going to spend the next 10 minutes on that. Seeing some of the problems of transformational leadership leads us to be able to get beyond what we started out doing and begin to see the change that begins to take place in the communities.

The last stage deals with the transformational leadership model. We need to understand that transformational leadership means an aggressive leadership model. It means that, though we know there are 26 characters in the alphabet, we don't have to go

through all 26 of them. We understand what the problem is, we know that there is a solution to it; but we then begin a process of implementation.

What I have discovered with transformational model leadership in the place where I am, I no longer have to bring a vision to the people. Sometimes people bring a vision to us. One of the things that they are constantly asking is, “What are we going to do next?” That’s a great model of ministry. That is a great model of leadership, whether you’re in business or academia. Wherever you are, when people start asking you, “What are we going to do?” it means that they’re really ready to make an investment in it. They will give their time, energy, and resources to it.

An aggressive leader who understands that if you give people the agenda, and the agenda is well understood by them, you will begin to see fruit being born in ways that it could not possibly be born otherwise. You will see people who are willing to plant seed, knowing that things may not happen immediately; but they trust the leadership enough to believe that as it has been done in the past, it will surely be done again.

There was a level of involvement. We would bring people in because of transformational model leadership. Sometimes people think it’s merely moving at such rapid speed that we get it done, and it’s over with; but, as has already been related, if you move too quickly without having all of the pieces in place, there is a probability or possibility that you will make some mistakes along the way. One of the ways you avoid those mistakes is that you deal with the reality that, first of all, you don’t need a unanimous vote, but you certainly need a majority support. A majority support gives you at least an understanding that you’re not the only person trying to sell an idea or sell a vision. If you’re trying to do it all yourself, it will surely fail; and if it fails, you need to take responsibility for its failure and then try to do everything you can to put it back on track.

Next, you need not be intimidated by the negative reactions. I don’t know anybody who does anything that represents change in a transformational way that does not have to deal with some negative reactions. Someone as visible as I am in New York, I expect that almost everything I do is under the microscope. I expect the press to have a response, but I cannot make decisions based on what I think God wants me to do because of how I think the press is going to respond to it. Things have to be done. I will say to you

the same press that used to beat me badly is now the press that writes good stories about the community that I'm privileged to be a part of, stating how this community has been turned around and transformed. And it's been done largely because of the leadership of this congregation with this person who stands before you as the leader. It makes a lot of difference when you understand where you're going, who you are, your place in the midst of it all, and not allowing yourself to be intimidated to the point of fear.

I told you my life was threatened. I was building a senior citizens' housing complex. A local community group wanted to do it, but they didn't have the resources. They called me to a meeting, and they said to me that I would die if that building got built, and I would never be able to see it. If we had not built that building, which represents the first of our projects, our community would probably look the same today as it did then; because that building represented the beginning of community development. We did not see housing as community development, but we came to the realization that this one building made all the difference in the world. After that we built the school, and after that we bought stores; and we kept on building and building, until now this is a community. The education system still does not list the schools with property, but today they write in the newspaper, in the real estate columns, "near the Greater Allen Cathedral." So the church has such an identity now that people are selling properties based on their nearness to what we have done as a leader and as a light in the community of which we are a part. You can make a difference!

Transformational leadership is always focused on the goal. It identifies the problem, identifies what solution will work, works through the solution, and then begins to implement the plan. If everybody has been on board throughout the process, it becomes easy to bring about change. And when change comes, people begin to have a different attitude about themselves, their community, and their church. I have come to the realization that if we are serious about evangelizing the world, and that is the commission that God has given to all of us, it is not so much about having denominations and names on churches. It really is about bringing about a change in the lives of people.

If we look at the early stages of the ekklesia, the church, the beginning of it, it was not about being in one place. It's about being in many places. I am here today, and I'll be in many places as I do many conferences. I'm at those conferences, in large measure, because when people look at the community model that

we have, they discover that it is a model that is replicable in almost anyplace in almost any country. Later this year I'll go to India. My wife will go to South Africa. As we go to different countries, we're finding that people look at this model, and they say it can work. If it can work there, it can work in the places where you are. If you take it back to the place where you are, all of this urban decay and problems that we see in relationship to the inability to educate classes of young people, and all of the decay that is built around communities that were once thriving but are no longer thriving, will not become just regentrifying communities, but they will be communities where homeless people can now find places to live. People who cannot afford rent in their communities will be able to find places where they will be able to build homes, to live in those homes, and their children will get a good education.

We have looked at every single aspect of life and the things that define the life of people, and as we looked at those aspects, we dealt with the reality not only of what we've been able to produce, but also the reality that we will not be able to do it forever. I'm at my 62nd year in life. I have already developed, lastly, what I call the transcendency plan. Many of our institutions fail because we have no sense of an obligation to create for the next generation.

When I look at the model of Jesus Christ, it is a model wherein He understood that He would not be with them long. He made it very clear to them that "I'm calling you. You are My followers. I will train you so that when I have gone, you will be able to take the responsibility for helping to continue to build the generations of those that I will not be here physically to be with or see. But you have been with Me, and so I want you to know that this ministry will transcend Me. I will die, but you will still live. And as you live, your responsibility is to continue to take this vision so that the rest of the world, for generations unknown, will be able to do the extraordinary works that have already been started. You will be able to heal, to give sight to the blind, to transform the lives of people. It's your responsibility."

I have already put together my transcendency plan for the next 10 to 12 years. I know I'm going to leave. I'm not fearful or upset about it, but my reality is that I have to leave something so the next generation can do it. Martin Luther King did the same thing. If you look at Dr. King's work, it clearly emulates the work of Jesus Christ. Jesus called four followers, then it came to 12 who became disciples, then it became the many who became the apostles. When you talk about Dr. Martin Luther King, you talk about

Andrew Young, Julian Bond, Jesse Jackson, John Lewis, a whole slew of folk who he trained so that they would be able to continue the work.

The future of our people—and our people represent the whole universe of people around the world—is dependent upon our ability in the time that we live to be purposeful in what we do for the Lord, to have plans that transcend ourselves, and to have a sense of responsibility that helps us not lock down believing that nobody can come after us and do what we have done. Instead we must deal with the reality that, as Jesus says, “You will do greater works than I have done.” Our job now is to create the next generation of those who will do even greater works than we have done. Be the best leader you can be so that the leaders who come after you will be even greater.

Thank you. God bless you. I thank you for this opportunity.