

IN GOD'S ARMY, ONLY WOUNDED SOLDIERS MAY SERVE

FOREWORD
BY V. DAVID
SCHWANTES

THE ODYSSEY OF CHARLES G. PARTEN

FROM WOUNDED SOLDIER TO PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS COACH

“REFINING THE BRIGHTEST AND BEST BUSINESS TALENT IN THE WORLD.”

“When I’m reading, I can always measure the value of the book by the number of page corners I bend over. As I read your book, I found myself bending down more pages than not... I plan to pass [the book on] to a number of people that will benefit from your honest insights... this effort will touch many.”

**Tom Morgan, Chief Executive Officer, Hughes Supply Company,
a Fortune 500 Company in Orlando, Florida**



FOR THIRTY YEARS, Chuck Parten has been “building business relationships” and his broad career has touched thousands of lives. Since 1985, he has been sharing these talents with others.

In roles ranging from ...

- Business Advisor
- Marketing/Sales Strategist
- Manufacturing Company CEO
- Writer/Author
- College Guest Lecturer
- Professional Speaker
- CEO Advisor/Confidant/
Sounding Board

to “Personal Effectiveness Coach” he has had a profound impact on many, many people — simply by helping each person he meets discover the best they can be ... no matter who they are, where they are, or what they do.

How Others describe Chuck

- Strong Seasoned Judgment / Strong Advisor with Depth of Understanding
- A Strong Encourager to Everyone He Meets
- A Powerful Communicator
- He Builds Strong Relationships
- High-Impact Delivery in His Presentations
- Maturity and Integrity / Trustworthy
- Drive for Stakeholder’s Success
- Leadership Versatility
- Charisma
- Broad Business Savvy
- Entrepreneurial Risk Taker
- Empowers Others to Be Their Best
- Fosters Open Dialogue
- Public Image Skills / Bring Out One’s Best in Any Setting
- Adaptability / Flexibility
- Contagious Energy and Enthusiasm
- The Consummate “Cheerleader” to One and All

Call on Chuck for:

- Coaching your “brightest and best” business talent
- Masterful facilitation in building excellent teams
- A dynamic and inspiring speaking engagement
- His high energy and enthusiasm to inspire / uplift / encourage your organization

Visit our web site at: www.CharlesGParten.com

Or contact us by Email: cparten@CharlesGParten.com

What I've Learned by Where I Have Been and What I've Done

Source	What I've learned
My Mom and Dad	Love / Respect / Caring / Refinement / Christian Life / Strong Values
High School/College	Relationships / Fun/Learning / Knowing Where I Fit In / Broad Education
U.S. Army	Discipline / Learning and Experiencing Different Cultures / Honors Received
Dun and Bradstreet, Inc.	Business Basics / Selling / Credit Analysis
Parten Machinery Company	Family Business / Strategy / Customer Service / Relationships / Business Competition / Ownership / Leadership / Financial Successes and Failures
Lifescapes, Inc.	My Own Business / Professional Speaking and Coaching / Risks / No Guarantees / Unknown Territory / Failure, Success and Great Learning
Clyde Meredith Company	Career Coaching / Marketing / Professional Speaking
Brad Martin & Associates	Selling High-Profile Services/Learning The Selling Nuances / Positioning
Personnel Decisions, Inc.	Career Coaching / Marketing / Networking / Group Leadership / National Exposure
ChangeMasters, Inc.	Perception Coaching / Marketing To the Top / Positioning / Building Relationships
Performance Strategies, Inc	Selling Strategic Planning and Team Building Services

What Chuck Does as a “Coach and Team Builder”

Chuck's work typically falls into these broad categories...

- Sounding Board to Top Executives
- Interpersonal/Soft Skills Development (Emotional Intelligence)
- Team Building
- Conflict Resolution
- Business Advice/Strategy/Decision Making/Problem Solving
- Leadership
- Career Advice and Focus
- Presentations/Speaking

“Uplifting! In God’s Army, Only Wounded Soldiers May Serve is that—and more!”

Sheldon Bowles, of Winnipeg, Canada, co-author with Dr. Ken Blanchard of best selling books Gung Ho, Raving Fans, and Big Bucks, is president of Ode to Joy Limited, a diversified holding and management company, and founding president of Domo Gasoline corporation.

“Chuck not only practices what he teaches, in this book he reveals how you can live a life on purpose.”

Richard J. Leider, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, Founder, The Inventure Group and best selling co-author of Repacking Your Bags and Whistle While You Work.

“I just finished reading Wounded Soldiers and I want to thank you for sharing it with me. It certainly played on my heartstrings and I felt encouraged as I turned each page. When I’m reading, I can always measure the value of the book by the number of page corners I bend over. As I read your book, I found myself bending down more pages than not. I have been down some of the roads that you shared and I found your comments to be very similar to my experience. It’s great to see how God uses our struggles to bring us closer to him. We don’t deserve it, but He is faithful. This effort will touch many! Thank you for allowing me to preview Wounded Soldiers. I plan to pass it to a number of people that will benefit from your honest insights.”

Tom Morgan, Chief Executive Officer, Hughes Supply, Inc., a Fortune 500 Company in Orlando, Florida

“Chuck wants to be sure everyone understands what he’s trying to communicate and goes to great lengths of explanation to be sure his message is clear. He views fame as a medium for spreading what he knows as TRUTH. He doesn’t desire limelight for the sake of limelight, but limelight for the platform of “spreading the news” of TRUTH and lessons he has learned.”

Angela Mae Guimond, business associate in Minneapolis, Minnesota

BUSINESS / RELIGION

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*“The real test of a man is not when he plays the role he wants for himself
but when he plays the role destiny has for him.” – Václav Havel*

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*I dedicate this book
to my two daughters*



Marit Parten Hsich
Kara Parten Newland

*—gifts from God to me
and to their mother, Alice.
A good portion of this book, and what
I have learned as a result,
is because their love and support
were always there.*

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THIS BOOK IS WRITTEN TO HONOR AND THANK THE FOLLOWING KEY PEOPLE IN MY LIFE:

My parents, Marian and Carl Parten, who gave me all of themselves to the best of their abilities. I love and miss them and cherish many fond memories.

My former wife, Alice, who invested half her life in me. "We gave each other our youth," she once told me. God bless you, dear one.

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The pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; the optimist, the opportunity in every difficulty. —L.P. Jacks

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To the 2,000 individual men and women I have been privileged to serve since 1985 as coach, mentor, advisor, sounding board and friend.

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Long ago my grandfather, the Rev. Gustaf F. Johnson, told my mother: “God has a very special plan for Chuck.” Over the years, I have written and rewritten my goals, dreams and life purposes in an effort to grasp “that plan” he spoke of. Perhaps he meant the life I now lead as coach, mentor, sounding board and advisor to some of the “brightest and best” business men and women in America. I see my life’s purpose contained in one simple phrase: *To expend myself daily as a servant to fulfill God’s great commission through my life...for anyone at any time and in any place for as long as I live...to be fully used up when I die.*

“My life,” wrote the Apostle Paul, “is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about God’s wonderful kindness and love.”
— Acts 20:24, New Testament

AUTHOR’S PREFACE

Why this book was written

AS I HAVE COACHED LITERALLY HUNDREDS of top-talent women and men over the years, a question I ask each one is this: “What are your personal guiding principles” or, put another way, “What do you believe in so strongly that you’d risk your very life for?” Few, if any, have a ready answer. In fact, fewer than three in ten lists anything to do with a relationship or a faith in God. Their answers are primarily family, financial security, and happiness. I happen to believe strongly, in fact I would place my very life and existence on this fact, that a faith and belief in God and His plan for every one of us is not only important, but absolutely critical to a “life that matters”.

It is often said, “Too soon old, too late smart.” Isn’t that the truth! Another reason for this book is to answer the question many people ask me: “How did you get into this work?” In a word, by *failure!* Few people can “boast” of as many failings, sins and mistakes as I have made in my sixty years of life. In fact, a big reason that my coaching appears to work as well as people assure me it does is because I’ve already tried and either succeeded or failed/messed up. My resultant learnings become a critical part of the coaching wisdom I dispense to a wide range of executive talent across the United States. In fact, I can say with some authority and boldness that I’ve got a pretty good handle on a good part of life and can say with some confidence, “Go that way” or “I don’t believe that is a good decision or direction for you.” How can I say that? Because I’ve been there and have my life experiences to back up what I suggest. What I do and say must work because I have received well over 200 letters of reference from satisfied individuals and organizations all across America. Having now coached more than 2,000 individuals (including over 200 presidents and chief executive officers), what I do in guiding and refining high business talent must be working, as they keep coming back for more and refer others to me as well.

Though it offers contradictions and contrasts, my story is meant to cause each of you as readers to step back, to reflect and then to look at your own life with new vision and purpose.

Climb aboard. Let me give you a new set of eyes as I chauffeur you through a story, and life's resulting lessons, that could change your life forever, as they did mine.

— Chuck Parten
Spring, 2004

FOREWORD

V. David Schwantes

HUMILITY MIGHT BE life's toughest lesson. It's not a given, nor is it automatic. It is learned. And the learning process is sometimes extremely painful. Yet if we have any hope of happiness, satisfaction, contentment or peace in our lives, hope is realized only as we become truly humble.

Most of us find it easy to acknowledge our vital need for humility. Generally we are drawn to these people because of their modesty, humility and likability.

On the other hand, if we aspire to any accomplishment or position—especially in our competitive world—or if we simply want to use our talents and skills effectively, we must have inspiring and motivating confidence. The enigma is that too much confidence drives away humility while too little confidence throttles inspiration.

Finding that precious balance between the two sometimes requires decades of good and bad experiences. Chuck has had both in his quest to achieve that balance. He's not perfect, but he keeps working to grow and improve. He cares deeply about balance in his own life while helping others to find theirs.

For that reason, and many others, it's easy to understand Chuck's success in his role of coaching some of "the best and the brightest." He has become my true and valued friend. This book can make him yours as well.

INTRODUCTION

BEING A COACH IS MY PASSION. In the early hours of each new working day, I can hardly wait to get to my first meeting, then to the next... and the next. I am truly blessed to be able to use the lessons life has taught me to help my clients and the people they touch to improve the quality of their lives and to grow through each experience.

My “fervent desire” is to lead each client into a more meaningful life and career... to share my life’s experiences and learnings with the next generation as well... to help each client to realize her/his own God-given gifts and talents... to demonstrate that to promote a life centered only on self, personal power and wealth (to exclude all else) does not work... that life’s “priorities” must begin with God, family and others in order to provide real meaning and fulfillment.

Successes and failures, losses and discoveries, questioning and pretending, along with times of confusion and loneliness, often steal away the luster of life and turn our lives into drudgery.

All of us continually experience growth. Just when we think it’s over, we enter a new trial. When we think we’ve learned it, we are reminded that we have not at all. When we think we’ve arrived, events show us hard places ahead through which we must still pass.

In 1984, I had a dream to help people in some way, yet I lacked a vision and a plan. That business was named “Lifescapes, Inc.” and it lasted about 16 months and generated about \$750 in total sales. While it failed as a “going concern,” its core principles then are much of what I do today under Charles G. Parten, Inc.

A year later, in 1985, three friends gave me the following bits of their seasoned wisdom whose value did not register with me at the time. Many years later, their messages are finally sinking in as my life and my business are enhanced. Perhaps yours will be, too, as you ponder the following friend’s advice to me:

**Jeff Pope, Co-Founder of Custom Research, Inc.,
Minneapolis, Minnesota:**

Everyone who hears about your business idea of helping others the way you have described it to me will say, “Great idea, Chuck.” Then ask them this

question: “Will you pay for it?” All I could answer originally was “No.” It took me more than a dozen years to change that answer to “Yes.”

**Don Terwilliger, Senior Creative Director at Campbell
Mithun, Inc. Minneapolis, Minnesota:**

Your idea of how you want to help people is an excellent one, yet people will not recognize their need for you.”

Bill Bowles, 3M Company, St. Paul, Minnesota.

What problems, issues and challenges must an organization be facing where they call on you as the solution?

My story that follows will answer that question and many more, yet it took me more than a dozen years to answer their challenges and suggestions.



FIVE LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP

THE TERM “LEVEL FIVE LEADERSHIP” comes from an article of the same name written by Jim Collins published in the January 2001 issue of *Harvard Business Review* and in his best selling book, *Good to Great*. The author describes Level Five Leadership as the ability “to build enduring greatness through the paradoxical combination of personal humility, fierce resolve and professional will.”

This joining of humility and resolve is vital in anyone’s quest for success as a senior executive. Not achieving it will eventually sow seeds of failure and personal anguish.

COLLIN’S LEADERSHIP LEVELS...

Level One

The highly capable Individual who makes productive contributions through talent, knowledge, skills and good work habits.

Level Two

The contributing Team Member who helps to achieve group objectives and works effectively with others.

Level Three

The competent Manager who organizes people and resources toward the effective and efficient pursuit of objectives.

Level Four

The effective Leader who generates commitment and pursuit of a clear and compelling vision while stimulating performance at high standard levels.

Level Five

The Executive who builds enduring greatness through the paradoxical combination of humility, resolution and will.

The intrigue of finding balance between professional will and humility is desirable in all five levels, but it is most critical at the Executive Level—Five. Helping people to find and energize that balance is the essence of my Personal Effectiveness Coaching. In the lives of my clients, this critical dimension—when askew—often lies at the heart of their inability to achieve professional success and personal satisfaction. That is what I seek to address as their coach to achieve those critical dimensions of leadership in each and every client I serve.

“I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I’ve got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.”

—George Bernard Shaw

Achieving Both Humility and Resolve

Today’s top executives deal with a hierarchy of capabilities. They must become the essential component toward transforming a “good” organization into a “great” one. Moving from one level to another does not have to be sequential. However, “Level Five” requires of a person all the talent and skill required of the other four levels, plus a delicate balance between humility and resolve.

Most great business leaders have had all the talents and skills characteristic of leaders in the first four levels. Only a few, however,

“There is no limit to what you can accomplish if you don’t care who gets the credit.”
— unknown

“We are all faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations.” — unknown

enjoy the delicate balance between humility and resolution of will.

Of the two characteristics, humility is probably the most important. For certain it is the most difficult to develop and nurture. Resolve can be described as an “other-directed” phenomenon driven by our cultural values of status, power and money. Humility, an inner quality, is driven by our personal life experiences. Accepting the need for resolve is fairly easy; accepting my need to be humble is more difficult.

My pastor and friend, Dale Sisam of Life Church in Eden Prairie, MN., told me, “Humility is a willingness to be known for who we really are,” whereas “Arrogance is an unwillingness to be known for who we really are.” His words express it well. They imply accurately both self-knowledge and self-acceptance. The dictionary further defines humility as: modest, unassuming, unpretentious, meekness in behavior, attitude and spirit of deferential or submissive respect. In a word, a humble person is a servant to all by putting self last.

Humility is a strange phenomenon. The moment you think you have it, you’ve just lost it. If one is aware of the loss, humility can be recovered. The forces that drive our lives constantly challenge us to keep our humility. Life should continuously remind us: Know your limits, accept your limits, respect others, and serve them.

Humility is essential in our service to family, neighbors and employers. It is essential most of all in serving God. In the hierarchy of the divine, the first shall be last and the last shall be first. That does not apply if going to the end of the line is a hypocritical, self-ish tactic leading to vainglory. True humility puts others first and self last, and that’s not always easy.

Humble leaders invariably are genuine, kind, open and vulnerable. They listen until they understand. Their honesty and optimism help build a team. Their word is their bond as they undertake projects with enthusiasm and energy.

By focusing on the other person, humble people eagerly accept feedback. They make life fun and interesting by asking questions to learn, they admit their mistakes and shortcomings, and freely give

“Do not follow where the path may lead...go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.” — unknown

credit when others achieve.

Humility enables a person to get things done through others.

Humble leaders always seem to be in the right place, doing the right thing, at the right time. They are happy themselves and they often make others happy as well.

Executives who are genuinely humble usually create superb results. They become the critical catalysts in the evolution from a “good” organization to a “great” organization. Their unwavering resolve to produce long-term results, regardless of the difficulties, sets standards required of an enduring company.

Level Five executives are a joy to work with. After getting to know many of them, I’ve discovered that Level Five executives were not always true, consistent, and balanced in their resolve. All of them had experienced various failures, losses and serious life challenges, yet they grew to be more effective as a result.

The Enduring Example of ‘Honest Abe’

Perhaps the best example in history of Level Five leadership is that of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States.

LINCOLN’S ROAD TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Failed in business in 1831
 Defeated for Legislature in 1832
 Second failure in business in 1833
 Suffered nervous breakdown in 1836
 Defeated for Speaker in 1838
 Defeated for Elector in 1840
 Defeated for Congress in 1843
 Defeated for Congress in 1848
 Defeated for Senate in 1855
 Defeated for Vice President in 1856
 Defeated for Senate in 1858
 Elected President in 1860

Despite his early difficulties and failures, Abraham Lincoln still inspires people all over the world. This awkward, ruffled man who signed his name simply “A. Lincoln,” is perhaps our most classic illustration of humility and resolve.

The Art of Coaching

Lincoln's cabinet members eagerly told him how to respond to the challenges of Congress and the people they represented. The President always listened carefully, digested their thoughts, then made his own decisions as good leaders do. Most of us, however, are not Lincolns. We need coaching. And we need to learn how to digest, then apply the information available to us.

For most of my life, I badly needed input and coaching. My personal transition to maturity involved joys and sorrows, mistakes and failures. Yet every experience, planned or not, equipped me to become a coach to some of our "best and brightest" leadership in the U.S.A. Many of my friends have called me a "wounded soldier." By the grace of God, I've survived to commit my life to refining the strengths and talents of top business leaders across our great land.

Early in 2001, Fortune magazine wrote about those "new found" executive coaches. This new breed advertise their MBA's and Ph.D's to justify their academic theories. However, much more than advanced degrees and classroom time is needed out where the rubber really meets the road. Out there, "only wounded soldiers may serve."

"There comes a special moment in everyone's life, a moment for which that person was born. That special opportunity, when one seizes it, will fulfill their mission—a mission for which they alone are uniquely qualified. In that moment, they find greatness. It is their finest hour."

—Winston Churchill

As Sir Winston Churchill did, I also have discovered my mission, my purpose, perhaps the reason I was born. Through failures and disappointments, along with a few successes, I've discovered numerous special opportunities for service. Many of my wounds and experiences from the past uniquely qualify me to be a coach.

The Reader's Digest years ago observed editorially, "The happiest

"When you are falling on your face, you are actually moving forward." — Dr. Bruce Roselle

people are those who discover that what they *like* to do and what they *are doing* are the same thing." That's true for me. It defines my work as a coach, a sounding board, an advisor. It's what I love to do and it is what I'm doing. How sad it is that so few today find their true life purpose. I'm one of the fortunate ones who at long last has discovered his.

Getting there took me on a circuitous route, a path of many bumps and bruises.

Books, like lives, have chapters. Mine has seven—fittingly, the Biblical number of completion: Birth, Childhood, Growing Up, Early Adult Years, my Middle Years, Discovery and Purpose, and finally, Lessons Learned and my suggestions to pass them along. My life includes times of pain and loss, then the growth and fulfillment which continues today.

Just imagine: What if you, the reader, had...

**Power / Prestige / Influence / Money / Home / Autos /
Boats / Travel / Real Estate / Leisure / Vacation Property
/ A Growing Career / Memberships / The Right
Connections / Success / Inward Pride
...and said, "Wow! Look at Me!"**

**And suddenly it was all gone.
Then what would you do?**

Ever hear anyone say, "That could never happen to me"? If you do, take note. I didn't believe it myself, and lived to experience the toughest challenges that life had to offer.



THE LIFE I HAVE LIVED

I ARRIVED ON PLANET EARTH the year the Second World War exploded. My unmarried birth parents, I learned many years later, were Shirley and Kenneth. They named me Kenneth Lewis. A mixture of Danish, Irish and Norwegian, I learned later that my natural parents had no other children. For reasons still unknown to me, they placed me in a foster home a week after my birth where I was presented for adoption. Three months later, Marian and Carl Parten of Swedish descent adopted me and named me Charles Gustave Parten.



Charles Gustave Parten, age 10
1951

People respond in different ways, and with different feelings, to life's major events. Enormous advances in discovering how the brain's chemical factory works have not told us much about feelings. My adoptive Father, who I loved very much, was at times stern and stoic; I was high energy—into everything, a Norwegian / Irish / Danish kid growing up in a traditional Midwestern Scandinavian home—not always a good match. I was six when Mother told me I had been adopted. Some people take adoption in stride; for me, it changed everything about my world. I began to see the world through new eyes. That moment shook me to the core and began to alter every part of my entire being

forever. For well over four decades, I struggled to keep that embarrassing information secret, perhaps even from myself. Masking this basic fact of my adoptive heritage required creativity but I mastered the deception. It became second nature.

The Class Clown

Being adopted, for me, meant fundamental rejection, not belonging, loneliness and abandonment when I wanted to feel love. Out of these feelings came repressed anger and rebellion. I was a person without identity. I became internally a boiling mix of self-centeredness and shame. I imagined that I had done something wrong and carried guilt as my constant companion. A needy kid, I nevertheless rejected attempts of others to help meet those needs for love and security. I blame no one.

Without my own identity, I unconsciously set about to create one that would fit into my world. “Kenneth Lewis” was repressed. So was “Chuckie,” as my parents called me. I longed to become accepted, welcomed and popular.

As the class clown, a crazy kind of kid, I could make friends. As I refined this approach, I truly became “another person”. As a people-pleaser, I was loved in return. Love, and the right to belong, I thought I had to earn. The person on the surface was not the real Chuck Parten. I was being what I felt others wanted and expected me to be. Twenty-four hours a day I struggled. My need for love and identity was insatiable. I yearned for people to know me, not the person I pretended to be. I knew that being a clown was superficial. I hated that *me*, that unconscious, perfected secret *me*. I had become another person and left the little wounded “Chuckie” behind.

Now I had two burdens—the feeling of being rejected at birth and the feeling of being a phony to be accepted. Classmates and friends liked me and accepted me; I did not. My birth parents didn't accept me; my adoptive parents were generous, loving and caring, yet at times demanding.

“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be...and you help them become what they are capable of being!” —Goethe

The Saboteur

So, there I was—the adopted son of loving, generous Christian parents with high expectations of their two sons in their upper middle-class life. People told me my parents were rich; others said my grandfathers were men of status—one a prominent preacher, the other a successful business owner.

At family gatherings, I'd wander off alone. Life in high school, and later in college, were repeat performances of phoniness. Parents, teachers and coaches repeatedly told me, "You can be anything you want to be..." My response to being tagged "bright," and "athletic," was to sabotage each opportunity to excel. I barely graduated, under achieving at everything. I was a lost soul. My army stint went better because I applied myself and became a star soldier. It proved I could do it if I wanted to.

The true "me"—the one that felt abandoned and isolated—would eventually surface in nearly every activity and relationship—the "me" to whom my "class clown" behavior was hypocritical. I had perfected the ability to be what others wanted me to be. When the real "me" surfaced, it sabotaged whatever intimate relationship I had developed, sometimes with my parents, sometimes with teachers or coaches, sometimes with friends with whom I had developed strong bonds. My core belief was that I was unlovable, so I had to destroy any semblance of who I really was.

In this mad dash to self-destruct, I sabotaged acceptance... a sense of belonging... the assurance of being worthy—the things I desperately wanted most of all. Confused, I became angry at my birth parents for rejecting me, at my adoptive parents for their occasional demands, and at myself for my self-made superficial behavior and neediness.

'Even If It Kills Me'

Each summer, beginning in my teen years, my parents sent me to summer Bible camp. This I enjoyed. I was the popular guy, surrounded by girls, sports, and a great outdoor setting. And there was the presence of Jesus Christ. Important seeds were quietly sown in my soul those days that would one day nurture me and lead me in

"The poor man is not he who is without a cent but he who is without a dream."
— Harry Kemp

an everlasting way, but I still had miles to go on my reckless road to full surrender.

I was hired to work at that Bible camp as the athletic director and camp counselor. The camp queen in 1962 was a beautiful girl named Alice. We dated, fell in love, and were married in 1965. My queen was as smart as she was beautiful—an honors graduate from college who became a loving teacher in elementary education.

Our first child, Kara Marie, was born in 1970, a precious little "pumpkin" we adored. A year and a half later, Marit Anne was born, a second precious package of joy. We had become the All-American Family, privileged people building a life together, making babies, chasing dreams....

An unknown poet wrote: "Many a failure turns about, when he might have won if he'd stuck it out; so stick to your task, though the pace seems slow, for you may succeed with one more blow." The writer concluded: "You can never tell how close you are, it may be near when it seems afar; so stick to the fight when you're hardest hit—it's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit."

But I was still two people: A gregarious charmer on the surface, a rejected, lonely, angry hermit inside. Even the love of my wife and children could not fill the void. I drove myself not only to keep up with the Joneses but to better the Joneses at whatever they did.

As part of the family business, my subtle personal focus became building wealth and on becoming an "important" person. Though I had more in my thirties than many people dream about in a lifetime, it wasn't enough. Humility wasn't even on my mind. Wasn't



*Charles Gustave Parten
1963*

"If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got." —Earnie Larsen

I the up-and-coming guy with style, the right family, the right business? Why would I need humility?

Then I met another beautiful woman who was not my wife. Our affair lasted almost a year. When Alice learned of it, my sin nearly destroyed her. The affair ended but scars remained. Our “All-American Family” began to dissolve.

The energy wasted on my affair I then transferred to my quest for wealth. One sunny afternoon in 1979, while I was relaxing on the dock of my parents’ Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota home, I had these thoughts: I was a millionaire. I had the love of my beautiful wife who stayed with me. I had two wonderful daughters. My parents were steadfast and supportive. Members of my extended family and friends were so numerous I couldn’t count them all.

I had no lack of assets: Part ownership in two manufacturing companies, ownership of several commercial real estate properties, a Lake Superior, Minnesota retreat, property on Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota, three new cars, five boats, investments, a large home, and more.

My attitude was subtly cocky and arrogant. Everything was “A-OK”. As I entered my forties, I laid plans to build my empire larger and larger. Marriage, children, relationships, my Christian life, family and friends—these were not as high on my list of priorities.



©Roy Terwilliger, Edina, Minnesota

From left: Marit, Alice, Chuck and Kara
family vacation, 1981

A wise person wrote: *I have to live with myself, so I want to be fit for myself to know. I want to be able as days go by, always to look myself in the eye. I don’t want to stand in the setting sun, and hate myself for the things I’ve done. I don’t want to keep on a closet shelf, a lot of secrets about myself; and fool myself as I come and go, into thinking nobody else will know—the kind of man I really am.*

I was supposedly successful, but was I real? I had toys, but little humility and my stuff was not able to drive away rejection and anger. Neither did the loves of my life. I still had to prove every day that I mattered. After all, if my birth parents didn’t think I was important enough to keep, why should anyone else?

In the early 1980s, our 90-year-old manufacturing company gradually faced major challenges and became less competitive. New technologies emerged. Our business environment changed. Volume declined. Foreign products entered the market. The banks became nervous and started calling in their loans. I was equipped to handle good times but not the bad ones.

Sure, we had the challenge of some losses but what was the worst that could happen? I silently boasted that whatever the worst was, I could handle it. But before I could turn around, **Alice and I were divorced; the bank foreclosed on our home; a part of our business closed; my investment in it became worthless.**

Life Catches Up

Several years later, in 1987, **flood waters ruined the house Alice and our daughters were renting during** Minneapolis’s “Storm of the Century.” **My daughter Marit was badly hurt, her friend seriously injured. Most of our family possessions were lost. Six months later, Alice and my daughters moved permanently to Arizona, which just broke my heart.**

What’s the worst that could happen? I was about to find out. My arrogance mocked me. My heart broke under the pressure. My characteristic upbeat, cheerleader persona broke wide open. Why...? How...?

My mother died of ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease) in 1990. I went through five career changes. I relocated seven times,

“Denial” is not just a river in Egypt. —Unknown

went through two bankruptcies, twice was admitted to a hospital for stress. In 1994, I lost my family inheritance; in 1997, my dad died. I was hitting bottom.

The Return

When my bubble burst, I had two choices: Go down or go on. I was conscious of neither choice so I wandered between them. However, seeds of recovery had been sown. The change began the day I again picked up my Bible. At first, I read short passages. Then chapters. Then entire books. I began devouring God's word, underlining verses, then underlining what I had underlined, then using different colors of ink....

Close friends drew their wagons of comfort and support in a circle when I needed them most. They accepted me, not what I owned, because I had nothing. The fool had been pretty well devastated by life's forces and by his own arrogant ways. Dramatic changes altered my life as I began to share with friends on a new and deeper level. I recommitted my life to Christ and fashioned many spiritual bonds of relationships with many people.

Like clawing up the sides of a deep pit, I made progress. Alice and my daughters supported me. In continued communications, they wished me the best. This loving relationship between us has grown into a wonderful experience of mutual cooperation, affirmation and love.

As I listened and learned, slowly I felt better about myself. Others, too, had been bruised, wounded and hurt. I was not alone in error, failure, sin and loss. My experience helped me to feel their pain and my pain became their gain.

In my first career change after these losses, I had strong and compassionate abilities to interact with others who struggled, as I had, through problems and loss. I joined an organization that assisted executives in career transitions. As an account executive, I met one challenging story after another as clients were faced with loss of resources and self-esteem. Together, we struggled to find the bright side of opportunity ahead. (I had found my calling.)

"I have discovered that true success requires the ability to go from failure to failure without a loss of one's enthusiasm." —Winston Churchill

A second employer advised executives and managers on interpersonal behavior patterns that needed modification—patterns that impeded their progress and limited their effectiveness. Following that stretch of employment, I joined a firm to help fashion business strategies for companies. My clients felt renewed after discussing their issues with me. Each thanked me for "understanding their problems" as we shared our experiences, then mapped out a workable strategy for success.

My clients knew that I brought to the table not a formula or a template to fix any problem they might face, but just myself. It was just me—my baggage, my wounds, my struggles and my learnings. The interaction made us all better people, ready and eager to move forward.

People fight battles on many fronts. Some thrive despite the inevitability of more battles to come; others buckle under burdens too heavy to bear. Survival, I discovered, depends not on formulas and templates but on God's provision for healing by humble acceptance of His will.

In the mid 1990s, with the encouragement of a few true friends—John Pope, Bob Cass and Mike Simpson—I hung out my own shingle as a Personal Effectiveness Coach.

I listen, I empathize, I challenge, I build trust, and I get critical issues on the table. My own past wounds and experiences have helped me to identify with my clients. I know the price that's being paid but more importantly, I recognize their path of success that begins with acceptance and humility.

What better use can I make of my life than to help where I can, to grow with my clients, and to continue coaching them as they achieve success? We are all ministers, either for good or for evil.

Taking Stock

From learning these lessons and others—often painfully—I began to build a sense of self-worth. I began to resolve that inner turmoil and shed the hypocrisy. What I was inside, I began to let show outside. I had spent years trying to prove myself, trying to demonstrate that I was important and belonged. Now I no longer feel the need

"Success is not measured by the position one has reached, but by the obstacles which have been overcome." —Booker T. Washington

to do that. I'm becoming okay with who I am. I'm even okay with who I was, though I regret many parts of my past and the hurt I caused to others. I'm okay with the loss of material things; I'm grateful for what remains in my life.

My daughters are grown, graduated from college and have husbands and families to care for. God keeps me going with less wealth than I've ever had, but with more blessings than I will ever deserve. The more I place my trust in God, the more answers I'm given—though the puzzle pieces are still being put together. I wouldn't trade a moment of experience for anything.

Now I say, "Thank you, God, for giving me a second chance." We all get them, as well as third, fourth, and more chances. We can survive adversity. We can be useful. We can coach each other, for we are richer for our experiences.

The most critical part of the book, the "lessons learned," follow. Please read them carefully and thoughtfully. They are, in my opinion, quite universal in their meaning and, if followed, will lead to a better life for one and all.

"I shall grow old, but never lose life's zest, Because the road's last turn will be the best."
—Henry Van Dyke



LESSONS LIFE HAS TAUGHT ME / VALUES I HOLD DEAR

- I've learned from being both "*rich*" and from being "*poor*" that *neither is better*. Wealth gives one more freedom (more choices) and free time, *yet does not in any way guarantee* a person more happiness than that of a "financially poor" person. In fact, I believe the "poor" person has an *advantage*...nothing to lose, hoard or protect. Their worth is *not* in what they own or control. "*Treasures laid up on earth*" (real estate, possessions, investments, 401K's, insurance plans, savings and securities) are nice to have, but really are not truly important toward a fulfilling and joy-filled life, although it seems that *90%* of the people seem to spend much of their time building up their own "*earthly treasures*."
- Although I grew up in a relatively prosperous home and surroundings, I have learned that "*There is no free lunch*" for anyone. We must all pay our own way, family history notwithstanding.
- **Forgiveness** is the most important lesson of all. The Bible says: "Keep short accounts...Do not let the sun go down on your wrath...Make amends quickly." When we forgive others, we free them from being in our debt. How we can use our energy instead would be to reflect upon our own weaknesses.

"What can I do? I'm only one! But I am one...and I can do something!"—Mother Teresa

- I know many people of great wealth, power and influence. While that used to impress and also in some ways intimidate me, now as a coach to many of them, I realize deep inside we are all *really only little kids after all*, and we “put our pants on, one leg at a time.” We are all *equal* in God’s eyes (didn’t Abraham Lincoln tell us that too?) and to “fawn” over those of prominence, wealth and power is wrong...just as wrong as it is to look down upon those who are poor, different or physically challenged.
- I believe I am a positive influence in the lives of many people I come in contact with on a daily basis yet I am frequently reminded that I control no one but myself.
- I have experienced the *joy of helping men and women open up*, to really share about the *important matters of the heart* (not just sports, business, news and weather), and to **get their stuff out on the table** for discussion. Even the most arrogant, once they feel safe and secure, will open up and become vulnerable. Frequently, their lives are forever altered...for their own good and for the good of everyone around them... **“to lose what they cannot keep to gain what they cannot lose.”** Jim Elliot
- I have learned that *if one is not competent or skilled* in an area they profess to be, there will be *a day of reckoning*. They will be found out the hard way. Until people find their unique place in this world and discover their own gifts and talents, they will feel unfulfilled and may feel envy when they meet someone who is fulfilled in this way.
- My “wealth” today is in *who I have become, what I have learned, and what I give away to others*...It is *not* in what I own or possess. I have nothing to prove anymore. (I’m okay just as I am...I am enough. I belong. I matter...to God and to others...and they matter to me.) I am forgiven and loved by God and that makes me okay just as I am.

“If you are what you do, then who are you when you no longer do it?” —Dr. Bruce Roselle

- I have learned that when you obey God and follow His word as taught in the Bible **you cannot go wrong**...I have also learned that when you **disobey** God and His word, *you will pay a price* (whether now or later, you **will** pay a price. There is **no option** to that rule.) God’s *Ten Commandments* are just that... **commandments!** They are not **suggestions**. When you break them, there is a price to pay. (I know that because at one time or another in my life, I have broken them “**all**.” As for the commandment “thou shalt not kill,” I have done so with words, not physically, yet I am still guilty.)
- As a man, I’ve learned a little about a woman’s heart. We as men are often insensitive; we want our needs met first and only secondarily focus on their needs. When we try to meet **their** needs first, then ours will be met automatically. “If mama ain’t happy, ain’t nobody happy!”
- I have learned there are battles worth fighting, and others to walk away from. Battles I choose to fight will always center around; the love and protection of my children and grandchildren; my values; human respect and decency; good verses evil – God verses satan.
- I have learned about **sacrifice**; about needs versus wants; that it is far greater to give to others in need than to satisfy one’s every selfish whim. To have and own the latest car or boat, to live in the best neighborhood doesn’t really matter. (Nice to have, but really not important)
- I relish jumping into the middle of **conflict!** I like to help identify the “real” issues and get them on the table in a safe environment. This leads to talking things out and seeking a win-win solution for everybody involved. As Laurie Beth Jones, author of *Jesus, C.E.O.* writes, “No one wins unless we all do.”
- There is no such thing as “situational ethics.” What’s right is right and what’s wrong is wrong. Take a stand! **Risk everything** for what you know to be right – speak the truth in love!

- I have learned that each person must discover what really matters. I may offer suggestions as one's coach but **what is important** is up to individuals to decide for themselves. As their coach I may help facilitate the process of making those decisions, but in the end the individual must decide.
- I have learned that in some cases a person's outward "**appearance**" of being successful may be a cover up masking their inner emptiness. I was a good example of that for many years.
- No longer do I want anyone I know or am privileged to work with to say an **unkind** word "*about*" themselves or "*to*" themselves or "*to*" others! I challenge them to say positive things only...just as a habit can be made or broken in 21 straight days, so can one learn to be disciplined in using *positive* and *humble* words. It is my intention to make "*positive speech*" everyone's lifestyle! The tongue can be a powerful force for good...or for evil.
- I have learned that to build true, deep lasting relationships takes *time and effort* over an entire lifetime and the rewards reaped in doing so are *priceless*.
- I have learned how one can go from success to failure very quickly. Make wise choices in how you live each day (or each moment of the day.)
- Do you *always* have to be right? Let the other person be right once in a while, and you will have a friend for life. Be open to giving and receiving feedback. *You only grow when you truly know*. Even though you should stick up for what is right, allow the other person to grow in their discernment of what is right.
- I have learned that in dealing with **conflict** with another, it is best to go directly to that individual, thereby avoiding *triangular (3 way)* situations.

"If nothing changes, nothing changes" —Earnie Larsen

- It is important to seek and to find a mentor...a role model one can follow; one to learn from ...their character, integrity, honesty, what they believe in. A mentor will change one's life. It starts with a friendship, a desire to grow and to learn from one another. In my opinion, each and every young person (teens and into one's twenties) would benefit greatly from having a mentor, a guide, a listening ear and a friend.
- The screen saver on my friend Dan Tonn's computer reads as follows, "If you **do** have integrity, nothing else matters; if you **don't** have integrity, nothing else matters." How true!
- I know that the greatest hunger people have is to be *needed, wanted and loved*. I work hard to help identify those feelings in others and then figure out the best way to learn how to help them to find what they are truly looking for.
- I know that positive people **attract** others while negative people **repel** others.
- We can all learn and grow from one another...*no man is an island!* —John Donne
- I am learning to **die to myself** every day. Whenever I put me first and God and others second, I fail.
- There are three types of behaviors...*passive, assertive and aggressive*. The closer one sticks to "*assertive*," the more fulfilling his/her life will be. Passive and aggressive traits usually do not work.
- There is only one thing you should ever do behind another's back and that is to **pat it**. If you are going to make fun of someone, **make sure it's yourself!**

"All that is essential for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."
—Edmund Burke

- I've learned how to make others feel important by truly listening to **them**, focusing on **their** needs and by doing this, they feel important and know they have been heard.
- I have learned to hold everything loosely. If we "must" have this or that possession, and we do not get it, we are devastated. Possessions do not make a person great...humility and giving what we can to those less fortunate does!

Section IV is entitled *Choices*. In it, I wish to share with you some of the most meaningful writings I have ever experienced. Of all those I have quoted, I only know one personally (Dr. Arthur Rouner) yet each author has had a profound impact on my life. It was thus important, I felt, that I add their words to *In God's Army, Only Wounded Soldiers May Serve*. If this book were a commercial venture, I would have secured their permission to reproduce parts of their stories mentioned here. Hopefully, the addition of their input will cause you, the reader, to gain as I have first hand the incredible depth of wisdom from these well-known individual authors...enjoy!



CHOICES

IN APRIL 1986, *Henri Nouwen, professor and priest at Notre Dame University, made a great impact on my life through his book “Out of Solitude.” I trust the following words excerpted from his writings will have the same impact on you. Reflect on the message and listen to your own heart strings.*

Our Life in Action

It is not so difficult to see that, in our particular world, we all have a strong desire to accomplish something. Some of us think in terms of great dramatic changes in the structure of our society. Others want at least to build a house, write a book, invent a machine, or win a trophy. And some of us seem to be content when we just do something worthwhile for someone. But practically all of us think about ourselves in terms of our contribution to life. And when we have become old, much of our feelings of happiness or sadness depend on our evaluation of the part we played in giving shape to our world and its history.

Although the desire to be useful can be a sign of mental and spiritual health in our goal-oriented society, it can also become the source of a paralyzing lack of self-esteem. More often than not, we not only desire to do meaningful things, but make the results of our work the criteria of our self-esteem. And then we not only have successes, we become our successes.

When we start being too impressed by the results of our work, we

Remember: “No one wins unless we all do.”—Laurie Beth Jones

slowly come to the erroneous conviction that life is one large scoreboard where someone is listing the points to measure our worth. And before we are fully aware of it, we have sold our souls to the many grade-givers. Then we become what the world makes us.

In short, we are worthwhile because we have successes. And the more we allow our accomplishments—the results of our actions—to become the criteria of our self-esteem, the more we are going to walk on our mental and spiritual toes, never sure if we will be able to live up to the expectations which we created by our last successes.

Underneath all our emphasis on successful action, many of us suffer from a deep-seated, low self-esteem, and are walking around with the constant fear that someday someone will unmask the illusion and show that we are not as smart, as good, or as lovable as the world made us to believe. *When we have sold our identity to the judges of this world, we are bound to become restless, because of a growing need for affirmation and praise.* When our actions have become more an expression of fear than of inner freedom, we easily become the prisoners of our self-created illusions.

Our Life in Solitude

When we cling to the results of our actions as our only way of self-identification, then we become possessive and defensive, and tend to look at our fellow human beings more as enemies to be kept at a distance than as friends with whom we share the gifts of life.

In this solitude we discover that *being* is more important than *having*, and that we are worth more than the result of our efforts. In solitude, we discover that our life is not a possession to be defended, but a gift to be shared.

In solitude, we become aware that our worth is not the same as our usefulness.

In 2001, Dr. Larry Crabb wrote an incredible book entitled "Shattered Dreams." As I read and reread his fine work, this parable on pages 9-13 jumped right off the pages at me. I thought "This is me... my story... Chuck Parten's story" yet Larry Crabb doesn't know me. Perhaps this parable is meant for you, the reader, too! It will touch your heart as it did mine—enjoy!

The man's life was pleasant. So too was his worship. The two always go together.

God was not pleased. So He allowed the man's life to become unpleasant.

The man responded at once with shock. "How can this be? How could this happen in my life?"

Beneath the shock, the man was smug. But he could not see it. He thought it was trust. "This will soon pass. God is faithful. Life will again be pleasant." His worship remained shallow.

God was not pleased. So He allowed more unpleasant things to happen in the man's life.

The man tried hard to handle his frustrations well, like someone who trusted God. "I will be patient," he resolved.

But he didn't notice that his efforts to be patient grew out of the conviction that a pleasant life was his due. He did not hear his own heart saying, "If I'm patient, God will make things pleasant again. That's His job."

His worship became a way to convince God to restore his pleasant life.

God was not pleased. So He pulled back His hedge of protection around the man a little farther. The man's life became miserable.

The man got angry. God seemed unmoved, indifferent, uncaring. Heaven's door slammed shut. The man knew he could not pry it open.

He could think only of better days—not of better days coming, but of better days before, days that no longer were and that showed no signs of returning.

His highest dreams were a return to those days, to the pleasant life he once knew, when he felt what he had called joy.

He could not imagine a higher dream than going backward to what once was. But he knew life never moved backward. Adults

never become children again. Old people never recover the energy of their most productive years.

So he lost hope. God had withdrawn His blessing, and there was no indication He would change His mind.

The man fell into depression. His worship stopped.

God was not pleased. So He released the forces of hell into the man's life.

Temptations that formerly were manageable now became irresistible. The pain of living was so great that the pleasure the temptations afforded, relief really, seemed reasonable and necessary. But after the pleasure came a new kind of pain, a kind of pain that covered his soul with a fog that not even the brightest sun could penetrate.

The man could see only his pain. He could not see God. He thought he could, but the god he saw was one whose job is was to relieve pain. He could imagine this god, but he could not find him.

He addressed the only god he knew. He begged for help. Beneath his words of pleading he could almost hear what his heart was saying: "You *owe* me help. I will never believe I deserved all this to happen. This pain is not my fault. It's yours."

His worship had always taken the form of a demand, but now the demand was so obvious the man could almost recognize it.

God was not pleased. So He let the struggles continue. And God allowed new troubles to come into the man's life.

In the part of the man's heart that dreamed his greatest dreams, he had been certain he would never have to face these new troubles that were now in his life. For years he had said in his heart (without actually hearing it), "That could never happen to me. If it did, my life would be over. If *that* happened, I'd have no choice but to conclude that God isn't good. I would have to dismiss God. And no one, not even God, Could fault me."

But still the man could not hear his heart speak. What he could hear was a seductive voice that made the worst temptation he had ever faced—to lose hope in God—seem noble, bravely defiant, the only way left for the man to find himself.

The battle waxed hot. But a flicker of hope remained. The man held on to his faith. Even as he did, he could not hear his heart saying, "I have every right to give up on my faith. But I'm choosing

the truly noble way. I still believe in You. I still believe You're there and that my highest hopes for joy—whatever hopes are left—lie with you. Does *that* impress you? If not, my God, what does?"

His worship was more desperate than ever. But it was still proud.

God was not pleased. So He allowed the man's trials to continue and his pain to remain unabated. God kept His distance from the man. He provided no comfort, no tangible reason to hope. It was difficult for God not to make everything better in the man's life. It was even more difficult for Him not to appear directly to the man and assure him of His presence.

But He didn't. God had a greater dream for the man than a return to a pleasant life. He wanted the man to find true joy. He longed to restore the man's hope for what mattered most. But still the man did not know what that was.

The fog around the man's soul thickened until he could feel it, like walls closing in. All that was left was mystery; there was fear certainly, even terror, but more acute was the sense of mystery, the mystery of a bad life and a good God.

Where *was* He? When the man became most aware of his need for God, God disappeared. It made no sense. Was God there or not? If He was, did He care? Or didn't He?

The man could not give up on God. He remembered Jacob. So he began to fight. But he fought in the dark, a darkness so deep that he could no longer see his dreams of a pleasant life.

In deep darkness, you cannot see. But you can hear. He could hear for the first time what his heart was saying.

"Bless me! he cried. From his deepest soul, he could hear words reflecting a resolve that would not let go of God.

"Bless me! Not because I am good, but because You are good. Bless me! Not because I deserve Your blessing, but because it is Your nature to bless. You really can't help Yourself. I appeal not to who I am. You owe me nothing. I appeal only to who You are."

He still saw his pain. But now he saw God. And the cry for blessing was no longer a demand for a pleasant life. It was a cry for whatever God wanted to do, for whoever He was. The man felt something different. It was the beginning of **humility**. But the very fact of what it was kept him from seeing what it was.

The man had forgotten himself and discovered his desire for God. He did not find God right away, but he had hope, hope that he might experience what his soul most deeply longed for.

Then he saw it. Fresh water bubbled up from a spring in the desert of his soul, and he saw it. It was a new dream. He could see its contours take shape. It was a dream of actually knowing God and representing Him in an unpleasant world. The dream took on a specific focus; he saw how he could know God and represent God to others in a way that was *his* way and not someone else's. It felt like coming home.

He realized immediately that his power to speak on behalf of God to others in the midst of their unpleasant lives depended on his speaking from the midst of his own unpleasantness. He had never before felt grateful for his troubles.

His suffering became to him a doorway into God's heart. He shared God's pain in His great project of redemption. Suffering together for a single cause made him feel closer to God.

A new thought occurred to him. "I will join with whatever forces are opposed to the root of this unpleasantness. I will ally with goodness against evil. I will not wait to see more clearly; what my hand finds to do, I will do. But I will stay close to the spring. My soul is thirsty. A pleasant life is not water for my soul; whatever comes from God—whoever God is—this is the only true water. And it is enough."

The man worshiped God, and God was pleased. So God kept the water bubbling up out of the spring in the man's soul. When the man didn't drink every morning from that spring or return every evening to drink again, his thirst became intolerable.

Some things in his life got better. Some things stayed the same. Some things got worse.

But the man was dreaming new dreams, greater dreams than a pleasant life. And he found the courage to pursue them; he was now a man with hope, and his hope brought joy.

God was very pleased. So was the man.

This is my story... almost better told by Dr. Larry Crabb's parable than I could articulate myself! Wow!

One of the Christian faith's strongest and most prolific writers, A. W. Tozer, authored the book "The Pursuit of God" in the 1940's. It was re-published in 1982 and 1983.

In "The Blessedness of Possessing Nothing," Chapter 2, pages 21-30, I have extracted certain key words and paragraphs that I hold most dear, and the longer I live, the more his words reflect my own beliefs at this stage of my life.

The Blessedness of Possessing Nothing

Before the Lord God made man upon the earth, He first prepared for him a world of useful and pleasant things for his sustenance and delight. In the Genesis account of creation these are simply "things." They were made for man's use, but they were meant to be external to the man and subservient to him. In the deep heart of the man was a shrine where none but God was worthy to come. Within him was God; without, a thousand gifts which God had showered upon him....

Our woes began when God was forced out of His central shrine and "things" were allowed to enter. Within the human heart "things" have taken over. Men by nature now have no peace within their hearts, for God no longer is crowned there.

There is within the human heart a tough, fibrous root of fallen life whose nature is to possess, always to possess: It covets "things" with a deep and fierce passion. The pronouns **my** and **mine** look innocent enough in print, but their constant and universal use is significant. The roots of our hearts have grown down into "things". *"Things" have become necessary to us, a development never originally intended. God's gifts now take the place of God.*

There is within each of us an enemy which we tolerate at our peril. Jesus called it "life" and "self", or as we would say, the *self-life*. Its chief characteristic is its possessiveness; the words *gain* and *profit* suggest this. To allow this enemy to live is, in the end, to lose everything. To repudiate it and give up all for Christ's sake is to lose nothing, but to preserve everything unto life eternal.

The way to deeper knowledge of God is through the lonely valleys of soul poverty and abnegation of all "things." The blessed ones who possess the kingdom are they who have repudiated every external thing and have rooted from their hearts all sense of pos-

sessing. These are the “poor in spirit.” They have reached an inward state paralleling the outward circumstances of the common beggar. These blessed poor are no longer slaves to the tyranny of “things.” They have broken the yoke of the oppressor; and this they have done, not by fighting, but by surrendering. Though free from all sense of possessing, they yet possess all “things.” “Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Abraham in the Old Testament, latter part of the book of Genesis, possessed nothing. Yet was not this poor man rich? Everything he had owned before was his still to enjoy. *He had everything, but possessed nothing. There is the spiritual secret. There is the sweet theology of the heart which can be learned only in the school of renunciation.*

The words *my* and *mine* never again had the same meaning for Abraham. The sense of possession which they connote was gone from his heart. “Things” had been cast out forever. They had not become external to the man. His inner heart was free from them. The world said, “Abraham is rich,” but the aged patriarch only smiled. He could not explain it, but he knew that he owned nothing, that his real treasures were inward and eternal.

There is no doubt that this possessive clinging to “things” is one of the most harmful habits in life. Because it is natural, it is rarely recognized for the evil that it is. But its outworkings are tragic.

We are often hindered from giving up our treasures to the Lord out of fear for their safety. We need have no such fears. Our Lord came not to destroy, but to save. *Everything is safe which we commit to Him, and nothing is really safe which is not so committed.*

Our gifts and talents should also be turned over to Him. They should be recognized for what they are, *God’s loan to us*, and should never be considered in any sense our own. We have no more right to claim credit for special abilities than for blue eyes or strong muscles.

The Christian who is alive enough to know himself even slightly will recognize the symptoms of this possession malady, and will grieve to find them in his own heart. If the longing after God is strong enough within him, he will want to do something about the matter. Now, what should he do?

He should put away all defense and make no attempt to excuse himself either in his own eyes or before the Lord. *Whoever defends himself will have himself for his defense, and he will have no other. But let*

him come defenseless before the Lord and he will have for his defender no less than God Himself....

If we would indeed know God in growing intimacy, we must go this way of renunciation. And if we are set upon the pursuit of God, He will sooner or later bring us to this test. So we will be brought one by one to the testing place, and we may never know when we are there. At that testing place there will be no dozen possible choices for us—just one and an alternative—**but our whole future will be conditioned by the choice we make.**

“When you want something you’ve never had, you need to do something you’ve never done” —Earnie Larsen

One of the world's greatest Christian writers, Chuck Colson, wrote a book "Loving God" in 1983. It had a profound impact on my life in the mid 1980's. In the prologue, page 24 and 25, he writes as he is about to be introduced to a prison audience...

"As I sat on the platform, waiting my turn at the pulpit, my mind began to drift back in time...to scholarships and honors earned, cases argued and won, great decisions made from lofty government offices. My life had been the perfect success story, the great American dream fulfilled. But all at once I realized that it was NOT my success God had used to enable me to help those in this prison, or in hundreds of others just like it. My life of success was not what made this morning so glorious — all my achievements meant nothing in God's economy. No, the real legacy of my life was my biggest failure — that I was an ex-convict. My greatest humiliation — being sent to prison — was the beginning of God's greatest use of my life; He chose the one experience in which I could not glory for HIS glory.

Confronted with this staggering truth, I discovered in those few moments in the prison chapel that my world was turned upside down. I understood with a jolt that I had been looking at life backward. But now I could see: only when I lost everything I thought made Chuck Colson a great guy had I found the true self God intended me to be and the true purpose of my life.

It is not what we do that matters, but what a sovereign God chooses to do through us. GOD DOESN'T WANT OUR SUCCESS, HE WANTS US. He doesn't demand our achievements, He demands our obedience. The kingdom of God is a kingdom of paradox, where through the ugly defeat of a cross, a holy God is utterly glorified. Victory comes through defeat, healing through brokenness, finding self through losing self."

His message then should impact us all now!

Dr. Arthur Rouner, one of our country's greatest preachers and now an ambassador of reconciliation and healing with many people in poor third world countries, was for many years the senior pastor of the Colonial Church of Edina, Minnesota. In the 1970's, a number of his sermons were reproduced in a booklet entitled "Here Comes the Judge." I was profoundly impacted by Arthur's ministry and especially his sermon in that series entitled "The Case for the Spirit." I share part of his words found on pages 23-25 as they greatly touched my heart and soul...

"When the Holy Spirit controls our lives He will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, humility, self control;" and here "there is no conflict with Jewish laws."

The history of the church is strewn with the wreckage wrought in human hearts by Christians who forsook the forgiving spirit of Jesus and set themselves up as judges over their fellow Christians.

The Christian who has the Spirit of God in his life, knows that he is also a natural man, he knows that he has "evil desires," he knows that he's a sinner, that many and many a time he has turned his back upon God. And it is in repentance that he approaches his Saviour. It is in sorrow that he comes seeking. It is in brokenness that he bends the knee.

The true man of the Spirit has nailed his sins to Christ's cross and crucified them there with Jesus! The cross is a terribly public place, isn't it? And crucifixion is a very shaming thing. It's even being "despised and rejected," as Jesus was. It's dying to the whole cheap oneupsmanship game of modern society, and affluent sub-urbia. It's refusing to play the game. It's giving up the rat-race and saying, "Okay world, you might as well know the truth. I'm not all I'm cracked up to be. I'm not the smooth exterior, the cool manager, the swinging jet-setter you thought I was. And I've messed up in more ways than I'd like to remember. I'm ashamed of that. I'm sorry. But I'm trying. I'm holding my head up. He's forgiving me. I haven't made it yet. But I'm on His side—and I'm on the way!"

That rings true to me. That has the sound and the tone and the style of the saints! For 2,000 years, they were marked by their sense of sin, and their sense of forgiveness, and consequently their sense

of joy and hope!

The Spirit is the sure rock. The Spirit is security. It's a place to stand. It is certainty. It is knowing. It is saying with the saints and martyrs, even in the face of the final fact of death, "I know that my Redeemer liveth!" "If we are living now by the Holy Spirit's power," Paul say to the Galatians, "let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. Then we won't need to look for honors and popularity, which lead to jealousy and hard feelings."

Do you know what the key is? It's knowing what you want to be able to say of your life when you're 50, 60, 70, 80. It's saying: "Christ is first for me. His love in my life—that's what I want more than anything else in life." When you can say at 85, "I lived for Him. I may not have been lots of things. There's lots of money I never made, lots of places I've never been, lots of thrills I've never had—but Christ alive was the one thing I cared about. Jesus was the most," then I think you have been "living by the Holy Spirit's power." That's "following (His) leading in every part of our lives."

The scripture says, for instance, "We won't need to look for honors and popularity, which lead to jealousy and hard feelings." And isn't that a burden lifted? Most of us are cursed by ambition, by grubbing to get ahead and be recognized. It dogs the heels of all kinds of people—of actors, authors, lawyers, doctors, and businessmen, too!

But what if we didn't have to prove anything to anybody? What if we really believed Jesus when He says, "My friend, if you'll deny yourself, and bring all your crosses, all your burdens, to Me, I'll manage the rest of your life. I know you're afraid to let go—and you think you'll end up poor, or unimportant, or in a theological seminary, and all the fun will be gone. But, you're wrong. I'll make you bigger and better and more useful to the world that you've ever been. And the inner turmoil will find peace, and the great questions of your life will find answers, and for the first time—you'll be your own man. You can laugh at the world. You can wear long hair and flowered pants, and go to the office and make a million—but you'll be mine. We'll be in touch. We'll communicate. You'll have power you didn't have, and love you didn't have, and a renewed family you didn't have, and life you didn't have. You'll laugh a lot. You'll be happy. If you'll try!" There's something to knowing what really is

important and just where you stand.

Christ is alive. And He comes in the Spirit—unseen like the wind. But as real as love.

In his book *The Blessings of Brokenness*, published in 1997, Dr. Charles Stanley, one of America's greatest preachers and men of God, writes these words...excerpts drawn from p. 30, 31, 38-49, 90,91

We must be willing to die to our affections, dreams, desires, ambitions, and goals, and then be totally willing for the Lord Jesus Christ to have his way in our lives... We must die to self...

We must break ourselves of our intense love of self if we are ever to allow God's love to envelop us and fill us...

The result of pursuing what Satan holds out as desirable is a spirit of striving. Striving is hard work—it depends solely on what an individual person is capable of doing (or of convincing others to do). Striving has an element of greed to it—there's always more to be achieved, earned, or acquired. Striving has self at its core—it wants what it wants... Striving is raw ambition... striving is bondage.

The Christian life is not defined by what we *do*... Being a Christian isn't a matter of doing, it's a matter of *being* in relationship with Christ Jesus. The *doing* work is his. He is responsible for transforming us into the image of himself...

A main obstacle to our receiving blessing from brokenness is our talents and gifts...

Very often, the most gifted have the most difficult time with God's breaking process. The gifted are often the most determined to succeed in life, and they have the most self-confidence. As far as the world is concerned, they are the ones who have the most going for them.

The trouble with gifts and talents is not in *having* them, but in *relying* on them and trusting in them...

Those who are satisfied with what they have rarely look to God to supply them with what they truly need...

...Those who hold tightly to the reins of their own lives are very often those who have many talents or many possession. They believe they have a lot to lose, and therefore they do whatever is necessary to secure what they have, even to the point of hoarding it or locking it away far from public use or view.

What the highly gifted don't realize is that you can never lose in surrendering your all to God. You can never lose in giving yourself away...

...What we give to God, he gives back to us in greater abundance...

Neither can you do more with your life than God can do with your life...

When the highly gifted are broken, they often try to fix the situation in which they find themselves by using their own strengths and abilities...

In fashioning and shaping our lives, God intends to bring every area of our lives into submission to his will... God removes from us every hindrance that keeps us from being fully surrendered to his will...

God's purpose for our lives is that we trust him completely...

...We trust ourselves. We are born with a proud independence. Many people have put out a big sign on the wall of their souls: "God, Keep Out."... We want to go where we want to go, buy what we want to buy, do what we want to do, have the kind of friends we want to have, live where and how we want to live.

...If we are to have the fullness of his power, wisdom, and love, we must trust him completely and we must reserve no part of ourselves for ourselves.

We also trust in money or in material assets...

Some people trust in their beauty or the appearance of success. They rely on their image to get them through life.

...outer beauty didn't really matter... growing inner beauty does.

Some people trust in their own accomplishment... They rely on reputation to see them through life...

Anytime we seek to rest on our laurels, we are in danger of being broken...

...In what area do you choose to remain in control? What part of your life would you prefer that God ignore? Into which areas of your life would you rather that he not snoop?...

We each have... areas of our lives in which we want to maintain total control... they are *precisely* the ones into which God moves...

What happens in the breaking of a horse?... it is the horse's *independence* that is broken. The breaking of a horse results in the horse giving instant obedience to its rider.

When a child of God is broken,... we lose our independence. Our will is brought into submission to the will of the Father...

When we act independently,... we put ourselves into danger...

Brokenness is the condition whereby our will is brought into

full submission to his will so that when he speaks, we put up no argument, make no rationalization, offer no excuses, and register no blame,...instead instantly obey the leading of the Holy Spirit as he guides us. The end result is one of blessing...God desires that our concept of self be totally and completely embedded in his love and his definition of what is worthy and valuable....

God want you to rely completely on him...God crushes, breaks, shatters, and removes anything from our lives—very often something dear to us, cherished by us, held tightly by us, counted as valuable to us—that separates us from his love or that forms a barrier between us and God...

In his 1983 book "The Mystery of God's Providence," author Paul Billheimer writes the following... "God uses only broken people..." I summarize his words as they deeply touch my life.

God uses mostly broken people.

Sometimes the only way God can work real brokenness in us is by our failure. The human spirit is so immense, so magnificent, so monumental, so rich in potential that without grace it aspires to be a god. All self-will is the result of the desire for self-worship, to be one's own god. *The human spirit is the only spirit in the universe that was created in the image of God. ... the human spirit retains the satanic aspiration to be equal with deity.* This is why God uses for His greatest purposes only meek people, people that have been broken, emptied of themselves, delivered from their unholy ambition to dethrone God. This is why it has been said that "whole, unbruised, unbroken men are of little use to God"... Because the world worships success, sometimes the only way God can break us is by failure.

... God is more interested in the worker than the work. Without the worker, the work is nothing, a cipher. God created the universe for one purpose, people—people created in His image to prepare for rulership with Him in the ages to come. ...He will go to any length to produce a man or a woman who will serve His purpose in eternity. ...

No one is prepared to rule until he is broken, made pliable, submissive, responsive to God's will and purpose. God cannot use for His purpose unbroken men who are still rebellious. He will spend one's lifetime to bring a man or a woman into real submission. Sometimes the only way He can do that is by failure. If necessary, He may allow a work that He has raised up and blessed to fail in order to discipline a successful leader into brokenness.

...God must create brokenness in the leader before He can develop it in his followers. ... Our danger is to worship a successful enterprise, even a spiritual enterprise.

When a spiritual leader falls into the trap of worshiping apparent success and fails in his devotional life, God may allow the work to fail in order to discipline the leader and restore the relationship. The important thing is not the work we may feel we are doing but the relationship we maintain. God's purpose is being accomplished even though visible results may seem lacking.

Today most of us are enamored with success. We have a success complex. Perhaps you are asking, what is wrong with success? ...

Success that is only temporal is a farce, a deception. ...

... God is the supreme authority on success in the universe.

Only His ideal and principles of success will survive the ravages of time and the crash of worlds.

... We are often mystified at the methods God uses in developing us for a great work and sometimes apparent failure is a part of God's training and discipline. Strange as it may seem, apparent failure seems to be an instrument in God's hands in preparing His people for larger service. Failure! We never could think of failure as a part of God's plan for us. The world worships success.

Not many of us believe this theology, but a man may be greater in failure than in success. I wonder how many of us are willing to risk failure in order to have God's best. All the heroes of faith faced impossible hazards.

... Popular philosophy counsels, "Promote yourself, be a public relations expert, polish your image, publicize your name. You can't accomplish anything unless you are popular, unless you are in the public eye."

... Sometimes failure is a part of God's discipline and training to prepare for higher service. Failure may be necessary to beat the stiff backbone of self-confidence out of us.

God is much more interested in what we are than in what we do, in what we become than in what we achieve. If failure works better than success to make us unselfish, considerate, sympathetic, and helpful to others, if it matures us in agape love, then God may permit failure because our eternal promotion is involved. ...

Defeat may serve god's purpose.

It may be that God will have to smash even the work which He has raised up in order to keep us meek, humble, broken, and devoted altogether to the Person of Christ. When everything is going well, we are in mortal danger of worshipping success.

*"The following statement was made by Mike Peters in Indianapolis under the heading **With the Mind of Christ.**"*

"I am part of a following of the unashamed. I have Holy Spirit power. I am a disciple of Christ. I will not let up, look back, or slow down. My past is redeemed, my future is secure. I am done with low-living, small planning, smooth knees, mundane talking, chincy giving and dwarfed goals. I no longer need pre-eminence, prosperity, position, promotion or popularity. I don't have to be right, first, tops, recognized, praised, or rewarded. My face is set: my goal is sure. My road is narrow; my way is rough, my companions few. My God is reliable, my mission is clear. I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, delayed or deluded. I will not flinch in the face of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy or meander in the maze of mediocrity. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. I must go on until He comes, speak of all I know of Him, and work until He stops me. And when He comes for His own, by the grace of God, he will have no problem recognizing me, because my colors are clear."

"I am no longer my own, but Yours. Put me to what you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be employed for You or laid aside for You, exalted for You or brought low for You. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to Your pleasure and disposal." —John Wesley

“A great article by Bob Gass ministries,” April, 2003.

God hates arrogance because we haven’t done anything to be arrogant about! Do art critics award the brush? Is there a Pulitzer Prize for ink? No, they’re only tools! Why would God even use us? *“For His name’s sake!”* There’s only one name on the marquee, His! What’s the big deal?” you ask. “Does God have an ego problem?” No, but we do! With the same intensity that He hates pride, God loves humility. “I live with people who are...humble” (Is 57:15 NCV). So here are few tips on cultivating more humility:

(1) Evaluate yourself honestly: “Don’t cherish exaggerated ideas of yourself...but try to have a sane estimate of your capabilities by the light of the faith that God has given to you” (Ro 12:3 PHPS).

(2) Learn to celebrate others: “In humility consider others better than yourselves” (Php 2:3 NIV). Every touchdown in life is a team effort. Be like the little boy who came home from the try-outs for the school play and announced, “Mommy, I got the part. I’ve been chosen to sit in the audience and cheer.” When you can do that, your head finally fits your hat size.

(3) Don’t announce your success before it occurs: “One who puts on his armor should not boast like one who takes it off” (1 Ki 20:11 NIV). When one of Spurgeon’s students stepped up to preach with great confidence, but came down having failed miserably, Spurgeon told him, “If you’d gone up the way you come down, you’d have come down the way you went up.” God honors only what’s done “for His name’s sake.” Try to remember that!

“If you want people to notice you, be in the front of the room...If you want to see and experience the dynamics of the room, keep quiet and observe from the back of the room.”

—Mary Pat Myss

“Are you leaving a legacy?” A study of two 18th-century men serves as a reminder that each life leaves a powerful legacy.

Consider *Max Jukes*, who lived in New York State. Max did not believe in Christian training and married a woman of like character. A study of more than 1,000 descendants from their union reveals that: 300 died prematurely, 100 were sent to prison for an average of 13 years, 190 were public prostitutes and 100 were drunkards. The Jukes family cost the state \$1.2 million, and they made no demonstrable contribution to society.

Now consider another 18th-century man who also lived in New York State. This man was a devout Christian and married a woman of like mind. A study of 729 descendants from their union reveals that this family has produced: 300 preachers, 65 college professor, 13 university presidents, 60 noted authors, three United States congressmen and one vice president of the United States. This man’s name? *Jonathan Edwards*, one of America’s great theologians and preachers who helped lead the Great Awakening.

Each of our lives leaves a powerful legacy. The Bible says God will punish “*the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.*” but also show “*love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments*” (Exodus 20:5,6).

Contentment comes not from great wealth but from few wants. —Author Unknown

The ancient Greek philosopher Socrates (469-399 BC)

...believed that if you are truly wise you will not be obsessed with possessions. Practicing to an extreme what he preached, he even refused to wear shoes.

Socrates loved to visit the market-place and gaze with admiration at the great abundance of wares on display. When a friend asked why he was so allured, he replied, "I love to go there and discover how many things I am perfectly happy without."

The responsibility of success, leadership, ethics and humility.

A few questions every CEO and top leader must eventually answer.

Every company, no matter how successful, no matter what size, creates a legacy.

What will yours be?

What mark will you make?

Years from now, will your employees look back at this time and feel it was time well spent?

Or will they feel used?

When you tell your children what you accomplished here, will they be proud?

Will you be proud?

Did you help your community?

Were your business practices honorable?

What was stronger in your workplace, ideas or politics?

Was it all about money? If so, what did you end up doing with that money?

Were the sacrifices too great? Did you ask others to make sacrifices that were too great?

Were you committed to providing opportunity?

Did your company set an example for your industry?

Did people really want to work for your company?

Would you have wanted to work for your company?

Did you have fun?

Did you make a difference?

— *Author Unknown*



INSPIRING QUOTATIONS

ATTITUDE

*Attitude is more important than facts.
It is more important than the past, than training, than money,
Than circumstances, than failures, than successes,
Than what other people think, say or do.
It is more important than appearance, talent or skill.
It will make or break a company
Or a home...or a life!*

*The remarkable thing is that we each have a choice every day
regarding the attitude we will have for that day.
We cannot change the inevitable.
The only thing we can do is "play on the one string"
We have, and that is our attitude.
It appears that life is 10% what happens to a person
And 90% how they react to it.
And so it is with you.
Only you are in charge of your attitude.*

—Chuck Swindoll

IF

*If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs, and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting, too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good nor talk too wise;
If you can dream and not make dreams your master,
If you can think and not make thoughts your aim,
If you can meet with triumph and disaster,
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;
If you can make one heap of all your winnings,
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings,
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the will which says to them: "Hold on!"
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And what is more, "You'll be a man, my son."*

—Rudyard Kipling

WATCH

Watch your thoughts, for they become your words.
 Watch your words, for they become your actions.
 Watch your actions, for they become your habits.
 Watch your habits, for they become your character.
 Watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.

— *Author Unknown*

I asked God for strength that I might achieve,
 I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.
 I asked for health, that I might do greater things,
 I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.
 I asked for riches, that I might be happy,
 I was given poverty that I might be wise.
 I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,
 I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
 I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life,
 I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
 I got nothing that I asked for—but everything I had hoped for.
 Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
 I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

— *Found in the pocket of an unidentified
 Civil War soldier*

- Pray all the time.
 If necessary, use words.
- Pursue forgiveness, not innocence.
- Succeed in what matters.
- You may regret opening your mouth;
 You'll rarely regret keeping it shut.
- You will never forgive anyone
 anymore than God has already forgiven you.

— *Max Lucado*

DO IT ANYWAY

By Bishop Able Muzore, African National Church

People are unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered.
Love them anyway!
 If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish motives.
Do good anyway!
 If you are successful you will win false friends and true enemies.
Succeed anyway!
 The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.
Do good anyway!
 Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.
Be honest and frank anyway.
 The biggest people with the biggest ideas can be shot down
 by the smallest people with the smallest minds.
Think big anyway!
 People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs.
Fight for some underdog anyway!
 What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.
Build anyway!
 Give the world the best you've got and you'll get
 kicked in the teeth.
Give the world the best you've got anyway.

BE KIND TO OTHERS

How far you go in life depends upon your being...

Tender with the young
 Compassionate with the aged
 Sympathetic with the striving
 Tolerant of the weak and the strong
 Because...
 Some day in your life,
 You will have been all of these.

— *George Washington Carver*

THE VICTOR

By C.W. Longenecker

If you think you are beaten, you are.
 If you think you dare not, you don't.
 If you like to win but think you can't,
 It's almost a cinch you won't.
 If you think you'll lose, you've lost.
 For out in the world we find
 Success begins with a person's will.
 It's all in the state of mind.
 If you think you are outclassed, you are.
 You've got to think high to rise.
 You've got to be sure of yourself before
 You ever win the prize.
 Life's battles don't always go
 To the stronger or faster woman or man.
 But sooner or later, the ones who win
 Are the ones who think they can.

I counted dollars while God counted crosses.
 I counted gains while He counted losses.
 I counted my worth and my things gained in store but
 He sized me up by the scars that I bore.
 I counted honors and I sought degrees
 While He counted the hours that I spent on my knees.
 I never knew until one day by the grave,
 How vain are the things that we spend life to save.

—Dr. John Maxwell

THE SECRET KINGDOM

Holy Paradoxes

The world says hate your enemies. The kingdom says love your enemies.

The world says hit back. The kingdom says do good to those who mistreat you.

The world says hold onto your life at any cost. The kingdom says lose your life and you will find it.

The world says a young and beautiful body is essential. The kingdom says even a grain of wheat must die if it is to have life.

The world says push yourself to the top. The kingdom says serve if you want to lead.

The world says you are number one. The kingdom says many who are first will be last and the last first.

The world says acquire gold and silver. The kingdom says store up treasure in heaven if you would be rich.

The world says exploit the masses. The kingdom says do good to the poor.

—Pat Robertson

A PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;
 Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
 Where there is injury, pardon;
 Where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope;
 Where there is darkness, light; and
 Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not
 So much seek to be consoled as to console;
 To be understood, as to understand;
 To be loved, as to love;
 for it is in giving that we receive;
 It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
 and it is in dying that we are
 Born to eternal life.



AFFIRMING WORDS FROM TOP EXECUTIVES ABOUT CHUCK'S WORK

“I have known Chuck for over 10 years as a fellow Christian, friend, business associate and coach. On any basis, Chuck ranks as one of the most astute people I have met, with a unique ability to get individuals to ‘open up’. He is an exceptional listener, an excellent sounding board with a nice way of counseling others on their short spots. I have used Chuck as an advisor on acquisitions, a counselor on interpersonal relationships and as someone I could share some of my crazy ideas with to see if they had any merit. I highly recommend Chuck....”

— *President and C.E.O. Fortune 1000
High Technology Company*

“Thank you for your valuable coaching. The reason I have recommended you as a coach to so many of my colleagues is because of the value I have gained from your insights. Most simply stated, you have taught me to think about what I am trying to do and get a perspective on how others view what I am trying to do. You make it happen, and in a classy and enjoyable way.”

— *Division Head, International Corporation*

“Thank you for the work you have done. We met and at that time I told you that my dream was to be a good leader. I had aspirations of winning the top position of my division, should my boss move on. You worked with me to understand my strengths and built my confidence. You were honest with me about my challenges and gave me good advice as to how to overcome them. Unbelievably, my boss did move on. After a grueling interview process, I was named President. Although I’m not a perfect leader, I have a good foundation to fall back on. I am very appreciative of the role you played in my success.”

— *Health Care Division President,
Fortune 50 Corporation, Virginia*

“Thanks, Chuck, for the work you have done in coaching me and for the work you have ongoing with several of my staff. I very much appreciated the time we had together and your help in getting me to examine how I focus on the path ahead.... You have a truly authentic approach to people that makes them want to participate and learn—a rare talent that you use in a wonderful way.”

— *President, Worldwide Commodities
Organization, Florida*

“In my estimation, Chuck is particularly effective at providing feedback in a cogent manner, which tells you the impact that you are having on your organization, particularly in your direct reports. He then gives you the opportunity to discuss those issues essentially as a friend who is interested only in your well being. Chuck is a pest (and I say that with respect). He follows up until he gets the job done, and he does not allow you to avoid difficult issues too long. He is a great listener and a good friend.”

— *President, Shared Services, International
Organization*

“We’ve experienced many changes in our business these last few years. The one thing that will not change is my gratitude for the superb contributions of our Executive Team. It appears that Chuck has had more than a small impact on their effectiveness. For this I am profoundly grateful.”

— *Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Multi-Billion-dollar Worldwide Organization*

“It has been a privilege for my team members and me to have worked with you. While coaching is a very trendy thing, it sometimes has a negative tone to it because of the poor performance of the coaches themselves. What you do and the way you do it is a true testament to the profession as you are so good at getting great results. The members of my team have come a long way in working together after the great work you did and that team effectiveness is really starting to pay off. Personally, I have enjoyed the tough questions you asked and I thank you very much for trying to make me a more efficient leader. Thanks for your friendship as well.”

— *President, Marketing Company
(multi-national) Europe*

“Chuck has been a bright spot in my life. He is an energetic, clear thinking, positive influence in all settings. He has promoted unique and interesting methods for improving the effectiveness of business leaders. Chuck is a unique human being...one to be trusted and included in business and personal relationships.”

— *President, Engineering Organization*

“Chuck’s coaching is candid, with confidential discussions of wide-ranging limits, from discussions of tough people issues to time utilizations.”

— *Corporate President, International Food Company*

“Thank you for your coaching services and support during the past year. Based on the advance input I received from others in the company, I had extremely high expectations when we started the process, but you have managed to surpass them in every respect. It is evident that you practice what you preach, and I believe that is the key to your professional success. When it is all said and done, the modeling you demonstrate, in terms of interpersonal effectiveness, sincerity and ‘let the real you out’... well, that real-life application is the ultimate definition of coaching.”

— *Division Head, Worldwide
Organization*

“Thank you for the great presentation at the kick-off meeting for participants in our undergraduate mentorship program! I have witnessed few events here at the University that have engendered such enthusiasm and excitement among the students and alumni. Everyone I talked with after the program indicated they found your presentation both informative and inspirational.

The message you delivered regarding the importance of building relationships in business was exactly what our students needed to hear. The tips you presented regarding how to get started building these relationships and how to conduct oneself in the process were insightful and practical. I was not surprised that the alumni found the session just as useful as the students.

I was especially impressed with your ability to engage the audience directly in your presentation. The time flew by and, thanks to the guidance and encouragement you gave during the session, the reception afterward was lively and gave the participant an immediate opportunity to practice skills you highlighted.”

— *Department Head,
Carlson School of Management,
University of Minnesota*

“As I think back over the years that Chuck and I have known one another, I really can’t remember anyone who has had a greater joy for life than Chuck. Nor anyone who has been able to convert that joy to effective results better than he has. His experience as a business manager gives you insights. I have always marveled at Chuck’s upbeat attitude and his Christian ethics. I would confidently recommend Chuck for almost any activity he chose to tackle!”

— *President, Major Real Estate Organization*

“I want you to know that I always look forward to the occasion of the meetings. Most importantly, I want to recognize you for the professional coaching that you have provided to me over the years. You have the ability to quickly understand situations, and then offer intelligent, insightful recommendations. Your talents are of great value...to me. I am grateful for your enthusiasm and I appreciate the fact that you are flexible to my schedule.”

— *President, Agricultural Industry World Wide*

I have made an unequivocal commitment to my employees and customers to provide the highest level of customer service along with a product line that surpasses our competitors. In order to fulfill that commitment I had to lead...I decided to call a few colleagues in the business and found that a couple of them had used Chuck’s services and were highly impressed with their results. I met with Chuck, liked his style and approach and engaged him to work with our members of upper management. He quickly grasped the nature of our business as well as the culture of our organization. In the course of a year, Chuck has been an invaluable asset to both me and my executive team by being an exceptional listener, providing excellent guidance and by having the ability to cut to the heart of the matter and stay focused while still allowing everyone to open up. His broad background in building and improving interpersonal relationships allows for a flexible approach to any organization. He’ll provide you with feedback...then gives you the opportunity to discuss those issues essentially as a friend who is interested in your well being. I would strongly recommend Charles Parten as a professional coach.

— *President, Chemical Manufacturer, Florida*

“Thank you for the positive impact you have had on my life. I was truly ‘blown away’ when the two of us recently reviewed the goals and opportunities for improvement I had developed with your help back at the inception of our relationship. Your support and coaching has helped me to be a more positive and effective leader and has helped my leadership team to achieve a more honest and effective method of communicating with each other. I will always remember our first meeting and your genuine concern for me. That genuineness along with our probing style of questioning helped me to open up to new potential in my personal and business life that I didn’t know was possible at the time. Please let me know if I can ever be used as a reference. I would consider it an honor.

— *President, Personal Care & Cosmetic Industry*

“Chuck has been richly blessed with a personality, disposition and mature patience that is necessary for influencing others. Besides the basic Christian ethics by which he manages his personal and business affairs, I believe that the energy and enthusiasm with which he tackles a task makes the difference in his being a winner. There are so many in our world who need the caring assistance and help that he brings.”

— *President, Large National Manufacturing Company*

“If you have a need to train your sales force, prepare for a presentation to an important customer, further develop your management team or assess how others see you as a manager, I couldn’t think of anyone more qualified to deal with these issues than Chuck Parten.”

— *President/Chief Executive Officer, Major Worldwide Sporting Equipment Manufacturer*

“I have found Chuck to be honest, loyal, moral and ethical in every circumstance, whether as a friend or a business associate. And always enthusiastic. During the years I have worked with him on a number of special projects—several involving hundreds of people. To every occasion he brought imagination and creativity, and the energy to complete the project.”

— *President/Owner, Internationally Known Theater Company*

“I have come to know Chuck as an extremely compassionate and caring individual—always there when needed and interested in how others are doing. He is always cheerful and upbeat while presenting a pleasant, positive can-do attitude. In his business life, he is known as a man of integrity and dedication. If he believes in what he is doing or selling, he will be the most committed person possible for the task and remain tenacious in pursuing a successful conclusion.”

— *Chief Executive Officer,
National Architectural Organization*

“Thank you for your keynote address as you led over 300 business school alumni and present students alike in our second annual graduate school of business forum. There have been many favorable comments about your presentation and your evaluations by the audience were excellent.”

— *Department Head,
Graduate School of Business,
University of St. Thomas*

WINNING

*Winning is giving your best self away
Winning is serving with grace every day.
You'll know that you've won when your friends say it's true
"I like who I am, when I'm around you."
You look for the best in the others you see
And you help us become who we're trying to be.*

*Winning is helping someone who's down
It's sharing a smile instead of a frown.*

*It's giving your children a hug by the fire
And sharing the values and dreams that inspire.*

*It's giving your parents the message "I care.
Thanks, Mom and Dad, for being so fair."*

*Winners are willing to give more than get
Their favors are free, you're never in debt.*

*Winners respect every color and creed
They share and they care for everyone's need.*

*The losers keep betting that winning is getting
But there's one of God's laws that they keep forgetting.
And this is the law you can live and believe
The more that you give, the more you'll receive!*

— *Author Unknown*

LIST OF BOOKS THAT HAVE MADE
A BIG DIFFERENCE IN MY LIFE
AND GROWTH SPIRITUALLY AND
PROFESSIONALLY...

The Holy Bible

<i>Battle Field for the Mind</i>	Joyce Meyer
<i>Be a People Person</i>	Dr. John Maxwell
<i>Be Your Own Brand</i>	David McNally/ Karl Speak
<i>Blessings of Brokenness, The</i>	Dr. Charles Stanley
<i>Boards at Work</i>	Ram Charan
<i>Bondage Breaker, The</i>	Dr. Neil Anderson
<i>Bringing Out The Best in People</i>	Dr. Alan Loy McGinnis
<i>Day After Christ Returned, The (1924)</i>	Rev. Gustaf F. Johnson
<i>Day by Day</i>	Gwen R. Shaw
<i>Drama of the Gifted Child</i>	Alice Miller
<i>Experiencing God</i>	Henry Blackaby/ Claude King
<i>Failure... Back Door to Success</i>	Dr. Erwin Lutzer
<i>Family Blessing, The</i>	Rolf Garborg
<i>Five Temptations of a C.E.O.</i>	Patrick Lencioni
<i>Gaining Through Losing</i>	Evelyn Christenson
<i>Game Plan</i>	Bob Buford
<i>God's Crippled Children</i>	Lana Bateman
<i>Good To Great</i>	Jim Collins
<i>Growing Deeper in the Christian Life</i>	Charles Swindoll
<i>Guatemala "Cry From The Heart"</i>	V. David Schwantes
<i>Gung Ho</i>	Sheldon Bowles/ Dr. Ken Blanchard
<i>Half Time</i>	Bob Buford
<i>Hearts Aflame</i>	Rev. Gustaf F. Johnson
<i>Here Comes the Judge</i>	Dr. Arthur Rouner
<i>How to Love</i>	Dr. Arthur Rouner
<i>Inventurers, The</i>	Janet Hagberg/Dick Leider
<i>Jack—Straight from the Gut</i>	Jack Welch
<i>Jesus, C.E.O.</i>	Laurie Beth Jones

<i>Leadership Lessons of Jesus</i>	Bob Briner/Ray Pritchard
<i>Leadership is an Art</i>	Max DePree
<i>Life of Our Lord, The</i>	Charles Dickens
<i>Loving God</i>	Chuck Colson
<i>Loving Monday</i>	John Beckett
<i>Making the Grass Greener on Your Side</i>	Ken Melrose
<i>Management Method of Jesus, The</i>	Bob Briner
<i>Managing by Values</i>	Dr. Ken Blanchard/ Michael O'Connor
<i>Mystery of God's Providence</i>	Paul Billheimer
<i>Next Generation Leader, The</i>	Andy Stanley
<i>Obsessions of An Extraordinary Executive</i>	Patrick Lencioni
<i>Out of Solitude</i>	Henri Nouwen
<i>Prayer of Jabez, The</i>	Dr. Bruce Wilkinson
<i>Power in Praise</i>	Melvin Carothers
<i>Power of Optimism</i>	Dr. Alan Loy McGinnis
<i>Pursuit of God, The</i>	Dr. A. W. Tozer
<i>Rebuilding Your Broken World</i>	Gordon MacDonald
<i>Repacking Your Bags</i>	Dick Leider/David Shapiro
<i>Secret Kingdom, The</i>	Pat Robertson
<i>Selling The Invisible</i>	Harry Beckwith
<i>Servant, The</i>	James C. Hunter
<i>Seven Habits of Highly Effective People</i>	Dr. Stephen R. Covey
<i>Shattered Dreams</i>	Dr. Larry Crabb
<i>Smart Moves For People in Charge</i>	Deep & Sussman
<i>They Found The Secret</i>	Dr. V. Raymond Edman
<i>Too Busy Not To Pray</i>	Dr. Bill Hybels
<i>Tuesdays With Morrie</i>	Mitch Albom
<i>Ultimate Gift, The</i>	Jim Stovall
<i>Visioneering</i>	Andy Stanley
<i>We are The Beloved</i>	Dr. Ken Blanchard
<i>When Bad Things Happen to Good People</i>	Harold S. Kushner
<i>When Smart People Fail</i>	Carole Hyatt/ Linda Gottlieb
<i>Wishcraft</i>	Barbara Sher
<i>You Are The Message</i>	Roger Ailes

If you have enjoyed this book, or if it has changed your life in some way, we'd like to hear from you.

Please contact us by calling:
612.889.4491

Or by emailing us at:
cparten@charlesgparten.com

Additional copies of this book are available.

“The world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through and in a man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him.” — Henry Varley

My goal is to be that man! — Chuck Parten

