

REDEEMER

R E P O R T

MARCH 2007

MINISTRY CAN BE DANGEROUS TO YOUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH

BY TIM KELLER

We want Christians to be active in ministry, not just ‘consumers of spiritual services.’ We want Christians to become volunteers, and lay leaders, and church officers, and staff members of churches and ministry organizations. There is nothing so fulfilling as to see lives touched and changed through your service.

But the Bible sounds a cautionary note. Christian leadership entails telling people every day, “God is so wonderful!” You will constantly point people toward God’s worth and beauty, despite the fact that often your own heart is numb or dead to any sense of divine love and glory. What will you do in response to that? There are two things you can do.

The first (and right thing) to

do is to watch your heart far more closely than you would have otherwise, being very disciplined to observe regular times of daily prayer. In these times you may find your heart warming a great deal to God’s reality. Prayer then fans the flame of that reality constantly, so you can speak to others out of what God is giving you in your walk with him.

It is also possible that your heart may stay feeling spiritually dry or even dead. In that case you keep your stated times of prayer even more diligently. And you humbly acknowledge to God your dryness and set your heart to trust him and seek him despite it and during it. That deliberate act is itself a great step of spiritual growth and maturity. When you

talk to God himself about your dryness (rather than just avoiding prayer times) it reminds you of your weakness, your dependence on his grace for absolutely everything. It drives home the importance and preciousness of your legal standing in Christ.

The second (and wrong thing) to do is to rely not on prayer and your personal walk with God, but on the excitement of ministry activity and effectiveness. In other words, you can rely more on your spiritual gifts (of ministry) than on spiritual grace. In fact, you will probably mistake the operations of your spiritual gifts *for* the operation of spiritual grace in your life. ‘Gifts’ are abilities God gives us to meet the needs of others in

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REDEEMER LAUNCHES NEW WORSHIP SERVICE

When we started Redeemer with a vision to invite people to church who wouldn’t otherwise go, the last thing we wanted was a sign on the door saying we’re full! But that’s exactly what has been happening at our 7:00PM west side service at First Baptist Church. We’ve been reaching the fire code limit of 950 people for more than a year and turning away ~10-100 people weekly. So we’re obviously excited to announce that on March 18, 2007

at 1st Baptist Church (79th & Broadway), Redeemer will **add a 5th service** to the regular Sunday worship schedule!

Adding this new service connects to Redeemer’s vision in several key ways:

First, the 5th Service enables Redeemer to welcome many more people who have never been to church before. We believe that a visitor or drop-in will feel most welcome when its easy to

find a seat, meaning no more than 80% of the seats filled. As people move to the new 5:00PM service from our East Side morning and both existing West Side services, where we operate close to or at capacity every week, we will be able to accommodate hundreds of additional people at all services. This is one of the easiest ways to support Redeemer’s vision. And there’s more time for dinner with friends when you get out of the service at 6:15! *(Cont’d on page 2)*



REDEEMER DIACONATE'S NEW DIRECTOR: JENNY CHANG

BY BRIAN SUMNER

Jenny Chang was chosen to take on the role of Diaconate Director at Redeemer effective February 1 upon the resignation of previous (and only) director Andrea Mungo, who is at home full-time caring for her newborn son, Malcolm. We are saddened to see Andrea leave after nearly a decade of faithful service in leading the Diaconate. However, because of Andrea's effective mentoring of her over the past 3 1/2 years while serving as Diaconate Associate Director, Jenny has been thoroughly prepared to take on the directorship.

Though Redeemer staff and members of the Diaconate have great respect for Jenny personally as well as professionally, the Board of the Diaconate felt that an open search for the next director was appropriate to ensure that the right person filled the position. Thus, we advertised widely within, and outside of, the Redeemer community. In the end, it was the unanimous consensus of the Board as well as the Executive Team of Redeemer that Jenny be offered the position. We are grateful that she accepted.

Jenny received her MSW from

Columbia in 2001, and worked in case management and accounting until joining the Redeemer staff as Diaconate Associate Director in 2003. Combining compassion for those in need with poise, courage, a keen intellect, and a joyful spirit, Jenny is well equipped for her new role.

It is clear that Redeemer's staff continues to be blessed by an abundance of talent across all ministry areas and at every level. Please join us in supporting Jenny as she leads the Diaconate during this exciting time of growth and development at Redeemer.

NEW WORSHIP SERVICE (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

Second, it allows us to better cultivate and grow our west side community in preparation for opening our newly purchased property on 150 West 83rd Street in 2010. Half of the vision campaign funds were directed towards the purchase of our first church property in the city. As our Vision Campaign begins to come to fruition, we want to make sure we have a strong Redeemer neighborhood community ready to move into our new building in three years. This means we need new volunteers and additional leaders to create welcoming worship services and more attendees to invite their neighbors to join them for church.

Third, A 5th Service allows us to develop additional preachers – Tim Keller will preach four of the

five services each week, and several of our younger pastors will now preach on a regular basis at the other service. Because our church multiplication strategy plans for us to be 3-4 strong sister-churches in 10 years, it requires that we develop a number of pastor-leaders with strong preaching skills. Here's how it will work: either John Lin or Dave Bisgrove will preach from the same text as Tim at a different one of the five services each week, rotating through all five services. Tim will preach at the remaining four services.

First Baptist Church has generously provided us this opportunity for a 5th Service at just the right time. They're helping us bridge the next three years until we're able to move into our newly

purchased building in 2010.

To make this expansion a success we need your help. We need hundreds of new volunteers to help with ushering, communion (must be a member), children's programs, the information center, the welcome center, and sermon/book tables. To volunteer to serve at the new 5th Service, please contact: phoeb@redeemer.com

We also need additional deacons and elders to support our growing west side congregation. We need FG leaders, CFW leaders, Citilights leaders and additional leaders for other ministries to support our growing church. And most importantly, we need hundreds of you to change the time that you attend worship so as to attend the new West Side 5:00PM service.

REDEEMER REPORT

Kathy Keller
Carl de Prado
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The Redeemer Report is a publication of the Redeemer Presbyterian Church.

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HUNTER COLLEGE AUDITORIUM
East 69TH (Between Park & Lexington)
services at 10:30AM • 5:45PM

ETHICAL CULTURE
West 64TH and CPW
service at 9:15AM

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Corner of West 79TH and Broadway
service at 7:00PM

HOW TO BE GOOD AND ANGRY!!

BY LOIS KEHLENBRINK

What is anger? We all experience it. It seems natural to the human experience. It eats at us and shows itself in so many different ways: coldness, sarcasm, yelling, rage, self-injury, disrespect, abuse, and silence.... Do we have to resign ourselves to just managing our anger, keeping a tight lid on it, so it does not overflow?

Yet anger is one of God's holy attributes, so therefore we as his image-bearers have the capacity for godly anger. However, since his image in us has been corrupted, we also have the capacity for resentment and hatred. We often start out with what we believe is a righteous

anger against injustice, but then something goes wrong; what started out as good becomes selfish and destructive.

A seminar entitled "How to be Good and Angry," taught by Dr. Paul Tripp on Sunday, April 1, will help us deal with the fact that we have a problem with anger but that we can be hopeful as we face it. The Bible is shockingly honest about anger's cause and wonderfully encouraging about its cure. Let's learn to be both good and angry at the same time. What would that look like? How is that possible?

Our guest instructor, Paul David Tripp, is the author of *War*

of Words, Lost in the Middle, and *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, as well as co-author of *How People Change and Relationships, A Mess Worth Making*. He also teaches "Methods of Biblical Change" at Westminster Theological Seminary and travels extensively teaching at conferences all over the world on how God enables us to change "right here, right now."

Come join us on Sunday, April 1, at Hunter College Auditorium from 1:30PM to 4:30PM. To register please visit www.redeemer.com. For more information you may contact Redeemer Counseling Services at (212) 370-0475 x131.

REDEEMER FAMILY ARTS!

Redeemer announces a new collaborative venture between Family Ministries and Arts Ministries: Family Arts! This program will include arts classes for young people as well as opportunities for families to experience the arts together.

On Saturday, March 24, at 11:00AM, Threads Productions and Redeemer's Arts Ministry will present a staged reading of *The Phantom Tollbooth*, adapted by Susan Nanus from the beloved book by Norton Juster. Kids (age 5 and up) and kids-at-heart will enjoy Milo and Tock's colorful adventures in the Kingdom of Wisdom. What is a staged reading? Imagine storytime...with actors! After the reading the audience will get to talk to the actors about the play. The location is 411 Theater, Times Square Arts Center, 300 W. 43rd St., just west

of 8th Avenue, 4th Floor. Free admission, but seating is limited. Visit www.faihandwork.org/tollbooth to more information and to make reservations.

Then, on Friday evening, March 30, we invite parents and potential students to get a taste of Redeemer's new arts classes for young people from 7:00PM to 8:30PM (pizza served from 6:30 to 7:00PM) at the Redeemer Offices, 1359 Broadway, 4th Floor). Students will experience the process, while parents will learn more about the philosophy of the classes, future plans, and the benefits of arts education.

In the first phase, arts classes will be limited to students age 6-11 (first through sixth grades). An existing work of art—a painting, a poem, a play—will be the inspiration for explorations of

ideas the work raises. Students will be invited to discover artistic disciplines that they haven't experienced before, as well as those in which they are already interested.

Our arts classes will have three goals:

- To stimulate interest in and appreciation of the arts
- To build skills and encourage existing talents
- To explore the Christian worldview and how it influences our art-making and experiences

Reservations for the kick-off event are required, and space is limited, especially for student participants. For more information and to make reservations, visit www.faihandwork.org/familyarts.



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MINISTRY AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

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Christ's name—speaking, encouraging, serving, evangelizing, teaching, leading, administering, counseling, discipling, organizing. 'Graces' (often called spiritual *fruit*) are beauties of character—love, joy, peace, humility, gentleness, self-control. Spiritual gifts are what we do; spiritual fruit or grace is what we are. Unless you understand the superior importance of grace and gospel-character for ministry effectiveness, the discernment and use of your spiritual gifts may be very dangerous.

The terrible danger is that we can look to our ministry activity as evidence that God is with us, or as a way to earn God's favor and prove ourselves. If our heart remembers the gospel, and is rejoicing in our justification and adoption, then our ministry is done as a sacrifice of thanksgiving—and the result will be that our ministry is done in love, humility, patience, and tenderness. But our heart *may* be continuing to do the same self-justification it has always done—seeking to control God and others by earning and proving our worth—*through* our ministry performance. When this is the case, there will be the tell-tale signs of impatience, irritability,

pride, hurt feelings, jealousy, boasting. We will identify with our ministry and make it an extension of ourselves. We will be driven, scared, and either too timid or too brash—until we see what we are doing. And perhaps, away from the public glare, there may be secret sins. It all shows that the ministry performance is exhausting and a cover for either of the two forms of pride: self-aggrandizement or self-hatred.

Here's how this danger can begin. Your prayer life may be non-existent; you may have an unforgiving spirit toward someone; sexual desires may be out of control. But you get involved in some ministry activity and the situation draws out your spiritual gifts. You serve and help and people tell you how great you did. You see yourself touching lives. And then you conclude, "God is with me." But actually, God was helping someone through your gifts, even though your heart is far from him. Eventually if you don't do something about your lack of spiritual fruit and grace, and instead build your identity as a Christian on all your ministry activity, there will be some kind of collapse. You will blow up at

someone or lapse into something that destroys your credibility. And everyone (including you) will be surprised, but no one should be. Spiritual gifts without spiritual fruit is like a tire losing air.

So examine yourself. Despite being effective in ministry—is our prayer life dead? Do we struggle with feeling slighted? Are our feelings always being hurt? Is there a lot of anxiety and joylessness in our work? Do we find ourselves being highly critical of other churches or ministers or co-workers? Is there a lot of self-pity? If these things are true, then our ministry may be skillful and successful, but it is hollow, and probably we are either a) headed for a breakdown, or b) doomed to produce crowds and funds but superficial long-term effects. Kuyper somewhere said that Phariseism is like a shadow—it can be deepest and sharpest closest to the light.

The ministry polarizes people. It makes them far better or far worse Christians than they would have been otherwise, but it will not leave you where you were! There are enormous pressures in the ministry on your integrity and character.