

ChalcedonReport

MINISTRY NEWS FROM THE CHALCEDON FOUNDATION® APRIL 2023



Mentoring: That the Word of God Be Not Reviled

Andrea Schwartz

Many women expect a perfect world this side of heaven. Not only is this not going to happen, the very fact that it won't challenges us to pursue God's purposes and His right to place us in certain situations—pleasant or otherwise. Sometimes, Biblical perspective is best achieved with the help of a mentor.

What Is Mentoring?

Mentoring is helping another utilize God's directives as solutions with their struggles. A common myth is that one who mentors needs to have a picture-perfect life. If that were true, no one would be qualified to mentor. Another myth is assuming that seeking out a mentor means one has failed and is a loser. The Titus 2 model refutes these misconceptions and encourages women to help and seek help.

A mentor does not charge for her services; rather, she is one who assumes a position of older woman (either by age or experience) to help another who needs to be reminded of the Truth of God's Word.

With the women I have had the privilege to mentor, I am more than

willing to share the ups and downs, the successes and failures, and the certainties and uncertainties I've faced in my life. Approaching the interaction this way serves to establish a friendship along with a mentorship while avoiding being raised upon a pedestal.

In the course of mentoring conversations, I find that I learn quite a bit from those who come to me for help. Thus, there is no hierarchy of relationship. We each remain not-fully-sanctified sinners walking the journey of life.

A Perfect World This Side of Heaven?

The expectation of a perfect world this side of heaven demonstrates a lack of faith in the veracity of God's Word. In Scripture the word "perfect" denotes maturity, whereas we often look at it as the absence of sin, and expect we'll achieve it. Only Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and we must desire the Kingdom to exist in earth as it does in heaven.

We are not called to make the world perfect; we are called to be obedient. An

important aspect of mentoring involves making sure mentees understand the scope and purpose of the Kingdom of God.

"Fixing the Unfixable"

When I am approached for advice on serious matters, the first thing I do is listen. I often can discern the underlying issues, but it takes my listening to the person's exposition of what is wrong to allow me to speak knowledgeably.

A popular radio talk-show personality regularly takes calls, sometimes up to ten an hour. With insufficient time to adequately get to know the caller, not even looking face-to-face, she spouts off a solution.

How does this radio counsellor know if her callers are telling the truth? How can she know all the circumstances that led up to the call? She can't. In any counseling/mentoring situation, it is vital that the person attempting to help doesn't make matters worse by projecting her own assumptions. That is why taking on a mentoring role should not be casual. While experience is helpful to impart, the crux of the interaction is to impart

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Biblical wisdom and solutions.

When I point out that some things aren't fixable, I often get a defeated response. I point out that if a problem exists that is not fixable, then we can proceed with how to properly act and react to it. It truly is a comfort to know that we are not sovereign, and that God has not lost track of us or the struggles we face.

Take, for example, Job. He had no clue that he was the subject of an intense discussion between God and Satan. It isn't even clear that he ever knew. What was unhelpful from his "friends" was their arrogant assertions that they knew the *source* of his problems. The *source* was his righteousness, and the events that happened to his business, family, and his body were in place for more than just Job. Today we still read and talk about him, knowing a lot more about suffering for righteousness than we would have known otherwise.

Being compassionate and caring with mentees, and building up trust and respect, allows me to communicate the often surprising fact that life is *not* all about them. God may, indeed, have a bigger and greater purpose for our sufferings and pain.

Wishing People Were Different

The problems we have with others stem from the fact that others are not made in *our* image. Many struggles result from the reactions and preferences of another, because "that is not how *I* would do things."

I remember a funny encounter with my two daughters, separated by 7 ½ years. One day the older one came to me frustrated and indignant that her younger sister was no longer complying with all she instructed her to do.

"She won't do what I tell her to do," came out as outrage. She believed that her dominance would always prevail. I informed her that her sister was an individual who had particular likes and dislikes. The look of shock on my older daughter's face was quite revelatory.

This is not to imply that people shouldn't change; merely a recognition that despite our best efforts, only the

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Holy Spirit is capable of changing another in significant ways. And, we might have to acknowledge that often, we are the one in need of changing.

There are those who are punctual to a fault. There are those who think church services, movie times, dinner invitations are all fluid suggestions rather than definite points in time. There are those who are always uncomfortably hot and those uncomfortably cold. These traits are often found within marriages and families. Is the solution for each to demand the other change? From personal experience I can assure you that these demands are never received with a grateful attitude.

Once again, it behooves the irritated person to either adjust her time schedule or make provisions for the inevitable delays that will occur. And for the person annoyed by the "time-keeper" or "temperature czar" it might prove helpful to anticipate those areas that produce irritation and find ways to avoid conflict.

Romans 12:10 (ESV) tells us to outdo each other in showing honor. This might just be the key to shifting one's focus from wishing people were different to identifying how we can please and contribute to another.

Willingness to Be Wronged

Turning the other cheek is much easier in theory than in practice. Turning the cheek means that you have just received a slap and that you are opening yourself up to have it repeated. Many are

familiar with the expression that it takes two parties to have a fight. Scripture posits it differently. One needs to determine if a fight is necessary or even preferable. Some will take this to mean that one should never resist evil or should put up with unsafe and sinful behavior from another. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

We are always under obligation to obey the commandments of God. We must remove ourselves from dangerous situations. However, this is not what I mean by the willingness to be wronged. When the situation at hand isn't a matter of God's Word being violated, but merely a personal affront or slight, by not harboring bitterness we are not condoning the behavior but merely not making it take center stage.

Suppose that you are blamed for something that someone else did. Suppose that you communicate that it wasn't your doing. Suppose no one believes you or even cares about your feelings. Rather than devote your entire life to sharing with anyone and everyone your sorry plight, you must assure yourself that God knows the truth and that you are fully known by Him. He promises that vengeance is His.

Didn't Jesus endure accusations and assertions that were blatantly false? Did He correct every false allegation, or did He know that His mission was foremost and that God's vengeance would prevail? We must know the law-word of God well enough to discern those battles we fight and those we leave to God. After all, when all is said and done, when we stand before God in judgment, His opinion and verdict will be the only one that matters.

"Trusting your Faithful Prayers"

We hear stories of faithful mothers who prayed for the conversion of their children even if they were not openly rebellious. These women didn't just want better superficial behaviors in their children but the remaking of their inner person by means of the Holy Spirit.

Too often mentees come to me dejected because, despite their prayers, their children or their husbands seem not

to have changed much from when they started praying for them. In this regard, they miss the astounding reality that they are talking straight into the “ears” of our Lord, and the Spirit is voicing what they cannot put into words. Is there any better position one could assume? Speaking directly to Him who has all authority and power is no minor status. My task is to help them see that whatever draws them closer to their Savior and Lord is a benefit, not a cause of despair.

“Does it Really All Depend on Me?”

Many of the women I regularly mentor are exhausted because they have taken on the job of *being God* and judging themselves to the degree that *their* will is not done. This is especially true with homeschooling moms who seem to place a heavier load on themselves as if they are being judged by an anonymous jury who wants nothing better than to convict them.

I love to relate an image to them of a trap I regularly fell into during my homeschooling years. I had a vision that if I didn’t do something that needed to be done, then somehow it would not happen. I *knew* that it all depended on me. I would go out on a *virtual* limb getting farther and farther away from the trunk and begin to fall—gravity was taking me out. When I would demand help, asserting that those around me should, and were capable to assist, the response I got was often, “I never asked you to do that in the first place.” Apparently, none of them felt it really did all depend on me.

When we act in this way, we are *not* being still and knowing that God is God. Funny how we can play God under the most noble of circumstances and wish that others appreciated our magnanimity. Gaining the Biblical perspective of what our callings actually are can mitigate those circumstances where we go out on unnecessary limbs.

“I Need Fulfillment in My Marriage”

Maybe it is a result of all those Hallmark movies, but many women truly consider that marriage is all about their fulfillment. When the dominion

mandate was given to Adam and Eve, satisfaction was never foremost in God’s directive. To be fruitful and to multiply would indeed bring satisfaction, but satisfaction was a by-product, not the main thing.

With a consumer mentality, we can focus on how satisfied or dissatisfied we are with what we have. That has never been the focus of seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. There are many times in the best of marriages where fulfillment is not at a peak. Part of depending on the Lord is to maneuver through life with the partner you are married to until death, despite how rewarding each day is.

Rather than focus on how to find fulfillment, I have my mentees consider how they might fulfill their calling as a living sacrifice unto the Lord. All one needs to do is examine the many great examples in Scripture to acknowledge that some of our most faithful forebears probably had a dearth of personal satisfaction. It was the grace of God, allowing them to persevere, that marked them as people to emulate.

How Not to Project Defeat

For women who hold the positions of wife and mother, it is important not to project a countenance of overwhelming defeat or failure. I’m not suggesting pretense, rather I am suggesting that they walk by faith rather than by sight.

If one is trying her best and is evaluating herself based on the standard of God’s Word, then there is no good reason to expect failure. In fact, as we face the “Goliaths” in our lives, we are given the genuine opportunity to proceed with the assurance that “greater is He that is in us than he who is in the world.”

I’m the sort of person who likes to make lists. Somedays my lists have fewer “cross outs” than others. I like to be very specific as to what I hope to accomplish and commit these projects to the Lord. Sometimes my only accomplishments include making the bed and taking a shower, leaving much else undone. Rather than deem myself a failure, I am able to reevaluate how I approached

things and seek a remedy. When a recurring situation presented itself, and I couldn’t find a remedy, I went to older women for counsel and guidance. After all, even mentors need mentoring!

“Rethinking Our Practical Theology”

It is one thing to read through the Bible yearly and to involve oneself in Bible studies. If we are not endeavoring to put what we know and understand into daily practice, then we have just become armchair Christians. Study for study’s sake is not the fruit of one committed to serving the Lord.

If we ever get to a point that we are unable to “translate” the theory into practice, we need to find someone to help us do so. Of course, this won’t happen unless and until we recognize that we are in dereliction of duty. Carrying out our duty involves taking the knowledge acquired and using it in tangible, practical ways.

If you cannot discern how a portion of Scripture is relevant to your everyday life, then you need to re-examine your commitment to the two Great Commandments, the 10 Commandments, and the practical workings of them. Imagine what the effect of God’s people would be in all areas of life and thought should all who profess Christ make this a number one priority!

Jesus’s practical theology amounted to His laying down His life for us. None of what He said or did would matter if the cross was not His foremost duty. With His resurrection and ascension, we can have confidence that our focused obedience will produce that which He has promised us.

Conclusion

We are called to bear one another’s burdens. That means we need to be ready to share our burdens so that others may serve God by helping us. The Body of Christ is the key to working out our salvation with fear and trembling. The health produced in this way furthers God’s Kingdom and ensures that His Word is not reviled. 📖

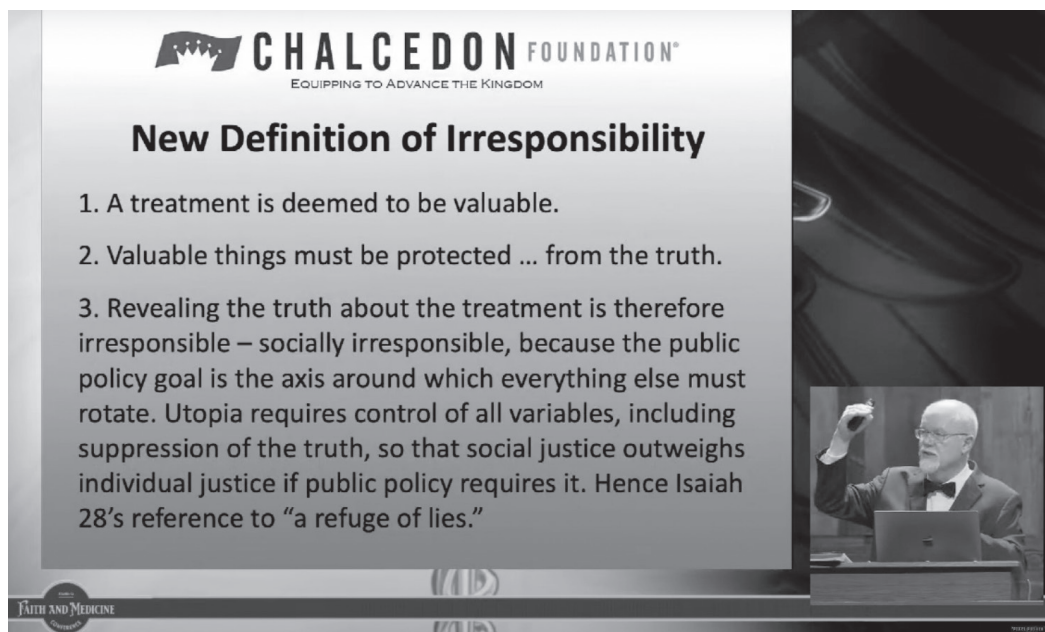
The Intersection of Biblical Faith and Medicine

The *Faith and Medicine Conference* returned to Atlanta, Georgia in 2023, featuring a strong complement of speakers. Held on February 3rd and 4th at Grace Fellowship of South Forsyth in Cumming, this ongoing annual conference (spearheaded by Dr. Rhett Bergeron) featured Dr. Peter McCullough, MD, MPH as the final speaker for the Friday night session – a well-known figure fighting a courageous uphill battle in an age of medical censorship. Dr. McCullough’s lecture, “Medical Freedom, Personal Responsibility, and Call to Action,” elicited a well-earned spontaneous standing ovation at its conclusion.

Other speakers included Rev. Chris Strelvel, Suzy Griswold, Dr. Joel Robbins, DC, ND, Dr. Grant Scarborough, MD, Dr. Lou Priolo, DDiv, Martha Peace, Ginger Taylor, MS, Ricardo Davis, and Martin Selbrede of the Chalcedon Foundation. The after-conference panel discussion sponsored by the Georgia Republican Assembly concerning the “Intersection of Politics, Medicine, and Theology” featured Ricardo Davis, Dr. Heidi Klessig, Martin Selbrede, and Dr. Joseph C. Morecraft, III, with Nathaniel Darnell serving as emcee.

It is worth noting that Chalcedon’s own Andrea Schwartz has interviewed several of these speakers for Chalcedon’s *Out of the Question* podcast, including Rev. Strelvel, Dr. Klessig, and Dr. Bergeron. These podcasts are indicative of Chalcedon’s interest in seeing that Biblical principles be applied without compromise in the field of medicine.

One could perhaps argue that this conference is ultimately a great-grandchild of Dr. Rushdoony’s influence, in a manner of speaking. The instigating line of Biblical reasoning might with justice be traced from Dr. Rushdoony to Dr. Morecraft to Dr. Edward Payne, whose work with *The Journal of Biblical*



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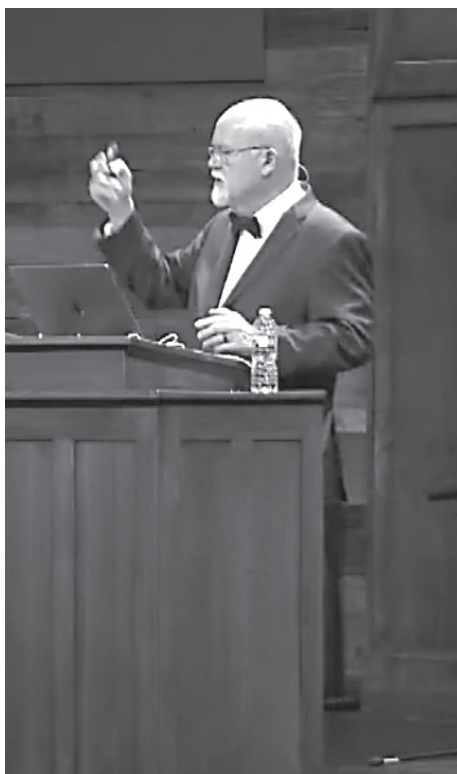
New Definition of Irresponsibility

1. A treatment is deemed to be valuable.
2. Valuable things must be protected ... from the truth.
3. Revealing the truth about the treatment is therefore irresponsible – socially irresponsible, because the public policy goal is the axis around which everything else must rotate. Utopia requires control of all variables, including suppression of the truth, so that social justice outweighs individual justice if public policy requires it. Hence Isaiah 28's reference to “a refuge of lies.”

FAITH AND MEDICINE CONFERENCE

We look forward to many more opportunities for Martin to represent Chalcedon at speaking events.

Ethics in Medicine (1987-1994, now available online at www.bmei.org/jbem) and its associated conferences had set the ball in motion in the late 20th century. After a long hiatus, the torch was effectively passed on to Dr. Rhett Bergeron to resume the work started by Dr. Payne, and attendance (in person and via online streaming) for this second



Faith and Medicine Conference was much larger than the previous year.

Martin Selbrede had been scheduled to speak at the 2022 conference last year alongside Dr. Payne and other speakers, but Covid-19 sidelined him, postponing his presentation to this year’s conference. Martin’s lecture, “Health for All of Life: Bridging the Gap between Spiritual and Medical Health,” explored the many ways in which God’s revelation undergirds the medical enterprise in terms of biology, physiology, psychology, epistemology, and ethics. To provide a real-world example of how Biblical dynamics play out in the medical field, the final third of Martin’s presentation focused on how the field of addiction medicine was completely reconstructed by the late Dr. Punyamurtula Kishore, whose work was featured in a series of eighteen articles in *Faith for All of Life*. The vicious deplatforming of Dr. Kishore twelve years ago was a harbinger of things to come in the subsequent age of pandemics and the associated disintegration of the medical enterprise by dint of mindless governmental interference. 🇺🇸