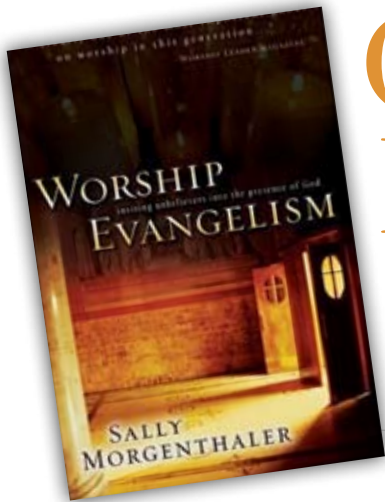


The Mentoring Series

Sally Morgenthaler:



On Healing, Hope & Redemption

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A Beacon of Light in the Darkness

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A Beacon of Light in the Darkness

Discovering comfort in the company of one “who’s been there.”

by Janine Petry

I’ll never forget our conversation. My mentor leaned across the table and said, “One day, you’ll be doing this for someone else.” I had come to her for help—no, for more than that; for *hope*. You see, I was in a pit—a dark pit. And I didn’t know which way to go to find light. One of its first glimmers came through the simple discovery that my admired mentor had been in that same darkness. *That truth*—that secret spoken out loud—became a powerful beacon that pointed me in the right direction. *He delivered her; he will deliver me too.*

As leaders in church ministry, we face the burden and pain of sin and failure constantly—whether our own or others’. While at times it seems crushing, the healing and redemption offered to us through Christ gives us great hope. The apostle Paul said it like this: “Therefore, since through God’s mercy we

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have this ministry, we do not lose heart . . . We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body” (2 Corinthians 4:1, 8–10).

No one knows the truth of these words better than Sally Morgenthaler. Having been through the pain and difficulty of failure and sin, Sally offers the hope she’s found in Christ and the comfort of one “who’s been there.” In this guide, you’ll be comforted and challenged as you explore the topics of hope, healing, and redemption with Sally as a capable guide. You’ll find thought-provoking questions to help you go further in understanding how this issue applies to you and your ministry. And you’ll also find plenty of other resources packed inside to help you go even farther in growing in your understanding of the issues. May God bless your efforts as you find your hope in him.

Blessings,

Janine Petry
Contributing Editor, Gifted For Leadership
Christianity Today International

Introduction





LEADER'S GUIDE

How to use the Mentoring Series from **Gifted for Leadership** in your ministry meetings.

You've purchased an innovative resource that will help train you and those you serve alongside in ministry. Here's how to use the materials in this pack for individual study, or with your board, staff, or ministry leaders:

- Print and photocopy the article(s) you'd like to use (you have permission to photocopy for church or educational use).
- Hand it to your team to read through and complete.
- Lead a discussion based on the team's insights and answers.

The featured author in this Women Mentoring Women pack is Sally Morgenthaler, one of GIFTED FOR LEADERSHIP'S editorial advisors and regular contributors.

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Leader's Guide

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Sally Morgenthaler is recognized as an innovator in Christian practices worldwide. Since 1992, she has been pioneering new worship forms characterized by both cultural relevance and worship faithfulness. Her prophetic role among church leaders and local congregations continues to increase in denominational scope and impact, as her work now broadens into new forms of leadership and the untapped potential of women.

Known best for her book *Worship Evangelism* (Zondervan, 1998), Morgenthaler became a trusted interpreter of postmodern culture and a guide to the crucial shifts the North American church must make if it's to have a transforming presence within pre-Christian communities. She also has been a contributing author in eight books. Her latest collaborative effort is *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, released in April 2007 by Baker Books. Morgenthaler's chapter, "Leadership in a Flattened World: Grassroots Culture and the Demise of the CEO Model," has been hailed as a prophetic work, a clear alternative to the ego-driven ministry leadership paradigms of the 1980s and 1990s.

Morgenthaler has been a featured speaker at numerous worship conferences, including Injoy's Catalyst, The American Society for Church Growth, The Beeson Institute, The Emergent National Conference, Net Results, Integrity Hosanna's Seminars4Worship, and The National Pastors Convention. She lives in her native state of Colorado, where she runs SoulPix, a card company featuring her intimate photography of the Rocky Mountains.

This pack is dedicated to issues of healing and finding hope for women serving as leaders, and Morgenthaler explores this topic with passion, biblical integrity, and deep, personal insight. We hope you and your group members are challenged and benefited by this resource.

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INTERVIEW

Behind Closed Doors: Sally Morgenthaler's Story

No one knew what was happening
at the parsonage.

From the editors of LEADERSHIP JOURNAL

How did you learn your husband's sexual addiction had led him to molest the neighbor's daughter?

We were on vacation, and the neighbor watching our house called to say he'd picked up a phone message from a detective wanting to speak to my husband. I thought it was so strange, and when I mentioned this to my husband, his face went white.

The day we got back from vacation, the detective called. "Mrs. Morgenthaler, we have reason to believe that your husband has been involved in a molestation case with the girl who lives next door. She told her school counselor a few weeks ago. He needs to turn himself in."

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I hung up the phone and went to the garage (it was kind of his haven) to tell him the police wanted him.

He minimized his behavior. “Well, something might have happened, but we were just playing together and she must have misunderstood,” he said.

Perhaps out of my own denial, I decided to believe him.

Were there any clues through the years that something was wrong?

I met my former husband in high school. We were married right after my senior year of college. He had a conversion experience in his last year in college, and he said God was calling him to seminary.

We were both in our late 20's when he accepted his first church position. We had a young son, and soon afterward our daughter was born.

I certainly had no idea that he had developed a secret addiction to pornography (he'd been introduced by a relative at the age of 12 or 13). I did know early on in our marriage that something was not quite right. Our relationship was strained and distant. He worked long hours, which is not unusual in the ministry. However, after a few years, both I and the office staff began having problems finding him during the day. Later I would wake up the middle of the night, and he would be gone. Sometimes he was in the garage or on the back porch.

What was happening during this time in the church?

The cracks started to show. After six years at his first congregation, he started a mission church, and I was the worship coordinator.

He visited several megachurches and became consumed with the dream of building a large church. He pressed this model on people, leading to conflict after conflict.

At first he'd gotten a lot of kudos for being a personal, compassionate pastor. He was the one that people could call on—a people pleaser, and he got much of his identity from being the man who would be there for people, day or night.

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But a distance grew between him and the congregation—absences, forgotten appointments, capriciousness on decisions, increasing focus on power and control, inability to follow through. An addiction takes time and energy. It consumes big chunks of brain power. It's a vicious circle: as more things went wrong in the ministry, he slipped deeper into his addictive cycle.

What about your marriage?

My life became all about rescuing him from himself and holding our family life together. I became a co-dependent. I tried to hide his behavior while suffering (with our children) its daily consequences. I just kept the plates twirling.

What happened when you found the pornography?

When I found him with the first magazines, ten years into our marriage, I was—I was incredulous. It was decimating to me as a woman, as his wife, to think for the first time that I wasn't enough. It wasn't till years later that I learned his addiction had nothing to do with me. It had to do with an untreated behavioral disorder he'd developed long before we met.

Was pornography a "gateway drug" for him? The first step on the downward slope?

Yes. Three years after his conviction I finally learned his whole sexual history: from print to peeping to sexual encounters with adults to exposing himself in public places.

Then finally, he had repeated sexual contact with my daughter's best friend, a girl who was retarded. Over a two-year period, while I was away from the house, he fondled her approximately 50 times.

Then the detective called.

I hired a high-priced attorney to make sure he didn't get arrested. At first I thought he was innocent. Protecting him and proving his innocence was my goal. I didn't want to subject my children to the shame.

He had left the church a few months earlier, and we were starting our own business.

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A year after the start of the investigation, he was convicted and put on probation. But while he wasn't molesting anyone else, via polygraph tests, he admitted developing a fantasy life about our daughter. She was 13 at the time.

Finally he reoffended by exposing himself in a public place. He was sentenced to a year in jail and eight years in a halfway house and an intensive sex-offender program.

How was your spiritual life during that time?

Oh, it hit some real lows. I kept asking the "God, are you still there? Do you still love me?" questions. I remember sitting in the waiting room at the jail, watching all these women I had so little in common with, except our offender husbands and boyfriends, and wondering, *God, where are you?*

The lowest moment was the day probation officers had me read his sexual history from about age eight. His history included things I had never known—affairs, risky behavior. It was like reading about a stranger. Nothing about our marriage relationship had been true.

That night I called a suicide hotline. I had sent my daughter up the street to a friend's house, because the next day I was ready to commit suicide. I didn't, because of God's still small voice drawing me and helping me to see that, though I felt I was nothing, I was all these children had. If I couldn't save myself for myself, God had given me these beautiful children, and that was a calling. God drew me out of that horrible dark place with that calling.

While I felt God was near, I didn't necessarily know that he loved me.

When did you regain the sense of God's love?

I filed for divorce after my husband was released from jail and began his time in the halfway house (2000). My children and I began the long journey into hope. We had the ability to choose a new kind of future. My son had been strong through it all. He graduated from college in 2002 and has established himself as a film editor. My daughter had some rough years, but by God's grace, her life turned around. She is graduating college next spring, and she is engaged to a wonderful young man.





Sally Morgenthaler: On Healing, Hope & Redemption

Behind Closed Doors: Sally Morgenthaler's Story

God has blessed us in so many ways, and all of our needs have been met. Every one of them. God has redeemed the years the locusts had eaten.

How has this experience changed your ministry—your view of yourself and of God?

No question, I was humbled and leveled. I have often wondered why people, especially those between 18 and 30, are so drawn to who I am and what I do. It can't be explained by my views about worship, leadership, or the church.

I've come to believe that they're drawn by God's humbling process in my life. My vulnerability has been pretty clear.

How has this affected your view of worship?

At its foundation, worship is real people meeting a real God, not a patty-cake rehearsal. Where are the psalms of lament, of confession? Is it more than "nice"?

I have experienced God's presence through what seemed like hell, like darkness that was outside of God's reach. But like the psalmist in Psalm 139, I've learned God is there. Always. Life happens, and come what may, God is in the midst of it.

This article first appeared in the Winter 2006 issue of LEADERSHIP JOURNAL.

Thought Provokers

- *How can you, or those you serve, relate to Sally's story of pain and turmoil while serving in a ministry setting? What was the outcome of the situation and how did this affect your spiritual life?*
- *How has your view of ministry, yourself, and God been changed through this experience? Where have you found healing and hope in the middle of the struggles?*





Sally Morgenthaler:
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The Antidote for Darkness

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GETTING DEEPER

The Antidote for Darkness

The light of hope dawns through
truth and mercy.

She sat in the second row. Long brown hair. A high-school look to her, and yet, her eyes belied way too many journeys to fit into a 16-year-old timeframe.

I was teaching a class about ministry and dark places. Not so much about ministry in dark places, but about the darkness we and/or our spouses bring with us into ministry. I started the hour by saying, “Unfortunately, I’m qualified to teach this class.”

Her tears came slowly. They’d been held close under the lids, but 20 minutes into the hour, they could no longer contain what had collected there. I showed a clip from the movie *Seabiscuit*, the part where an injured racehorse was about to be put down, and a stable hand yells, “Stop. I’ll save you the bullet. I’ll take him.” Cut to the scene when a horse buyer (played by Jeff Bridges) asks the stable hand if the horse will ever race again. “No, not that one.” The horse buyer is silent, unable to take in the meaning. Then he asks the obvious. “Why? Why are you bothering with him then?” The stable hand responds, “Because I can. Just because someone’s banged up a bit doesn’t mean he isn’t worth anything.”

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Banged up leaders. Banged up Christian leaders. The tawdry details of leaders' indiscretion and moral failure have filled a lot of newspapers and talk shows. We scratch our heads and wonder how these things can happen. Some of us retreat into denial. It didn't really happen. The charges were trumped up. Others of us get sick to the stomach. One more example of hypocrisy. No wonder *Christianity* is a bad word in America. Some of us take the opportunity to reflect on our own leadership. We think about our own failings, our own destructive, secret habits. And we have no idea what we'd do if anyone ever found out. And if we're honest, more than a few of us reach for the shotgun.

I wondered about this young woman, and the pain she was carrying. Were her tears about herself, her own dark places? Or was she married to someone with a secret, a leader with a double life? I didn't know. But I do know that her entire countenance changed at one point. It was toward the end of the hour, and the class had been discussing strategies for dealing with fallen leaders. They'd all been wrestling with specific situations in their various congregations, situations where no one confronted their leaders' destructive patterns until it was too late. Until much damage had been done. We had been affirming to each other how important truth telling is, more important than saving a career or saving a congregation's squeaky-clean image. But, then I said "truth must always come in the context of grace extended in tangible ways" (read, "an intentional healing process that usually requires much time and sacrifice"). I explained that truth and mercy were the two inseparable antidotes to darkness. Then, the light of hope dawned on her face.

She came up after the class. Looking into my eyes, she asked through her tears, "What do you do when you find out your father is a predator? It happened six months ago, and my mom just told me." More tears. "He was my hero. It's like I don't know who I am now. He's a pillar in the community. I don't want to face the truth, but I have to. We weren't the family I thought we were. He wasn't the man I thought he was. What do I do now?"

Somehow bullets don't work so well on family members. And though truth must be the first thing that is told, outside the context of lived mercy, it is like a bullet. We may want to put a leader down. It may feel good. It might even make our day. But just because someone's banged up doesn't mean he or she isn't worth anything.

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The hope in this young woman's eyes came when she suddenly realized, "My dad may have done this, but God is not done with him. And he's still my dad." She answered her own question about what she does now: Face the truth, all of it, and walk alongside him on the long and arduous journey toward emotional and spiritual wholeness.

Maybe we need to remember the two antidotes to darkness the next time we hear about a fallen leader. Or the next time we fall. Tell the truth. Offer real healing to ourselves, to others. That means, like this young woman, we commit for the long haul. We don't pull out of the process like one well-known leader did in the face of his colleague's devastation. Now, that's hypocrisy.

The horse may have to get out of the race, but it's still good for something. No, it's good for incredible things. That's called redemption.

This article first appeared on GiftedforLeadership.com on July 6, 2007.

Thought Provokers

- *What did Sally mean by: "truth must always come in the context of grace extended in tangible ways?" How are truth and mercy the two inseparable antidotes to darkness, and how do these give birth to hope?*
- *Do you agree with the thought that "just because someone's banged up doesn't mean he or she isn't worth anything?" If you do, what will that mean the next time you deal with a fallen leader or a personal failure? How is this a part of redemption?*

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Sally Morgenthaler:
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Embrace Your Now

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How To

Embrace Your Now

It's time to live in unprecedented,
unfettered honesty.

You may be in a period of deep questioning right now. A new year begins. Perhaps your children are going to be starting school soon. The summer wasn't near what it could have been, that dream of family closeness never achieved. Perhaps you will be changing jobs or ministry positions. Yet, what should be a time of adventure, of new possibilities, feels oddly leaden and lifeless. Maybe you're in the same old place in your job, your marriage, as a single parent, or as a single human. The routine has become deafening and stifling, just as God is becoming more distant and unreachable.

If this is your place right now, I grieve with you over the loss of joy or clarity; the inability to make sense of life, or simply the inability to find yourself in the old, familiar places. While we grieve together, I encourage you to embrace your now: this obscure and murky place. Because, in this now, you can live in unprecedented, unfettered honesty. Instead of reaching for the nearest spotlight, reach for your journal and begin saying those things you haven't even dared whisper.

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Or reach for a paintbrush, a sketchpad, the piano, or your camera. Paint, scribble, compose, or picture this strange, new world you inhabit, this landscape in which you feel an utter misfit. This is your time of psalmody, and unless you take it from yourself, it will not be taken from you. It is your gestation into new life.

*As a deer thirsts for streams of water,
So my soul pants for you, my God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go to meet with God?
My tears have been my food
Day and night,
While people say to me all day long,
“Where is your God?”
These things I remember
As I pour out my soul:
How I used to go to the house of God
Under the protection of the Mighty One
With shouts of joy and praise
Among the festive throng.
Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
For I will yet praise him,
My Savior and my God.
—PSALM 42:1–5, TNIV*

*Excerpted from Soul Care for Women Leaders, a new downloadable resource from **GiftedforLeadership.com**. This article appeared on GiftedforLeadership.com on June 23, 2008.*

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Thought Provokers

- *How do you handle uncertainty, or “the inability to make sense of life, or simply the inability to find yourself in the old, familiar places?” How could you follow Sally’s advice and “embrace your now” by living honestly?*
- *How can a time of grief be a “gestation into new life?” Reread Psalm 42 carefully. How can you relate to the psalmist? How did the psalmist embrace the now and experience the joy of “unfettered honesty?”*

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Sally Morgenthaler:
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A More Soulful Religion

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SOUL MATTERS

A More Soulful Religion

Am I really leading a dusty, spittle-mixed-with-dirt life?

In his best-selling book, *Care of the Soul*, Thomas Moore describes the soul as that which makes us human. “Soul,” he writes, “is revealed in attachment, love, and community, as well as in retreat on behalf of inner communing and intimacy. Tradition teaches that soul is in the middle (between the material and the spiritual) holding together mind and body, ideas and life, spirituality and the world. And it remains patiently in the present, close to life as it presents itself day by day.

“Care of the soul speaks to the longings we feel and to the symptoms that drive us crazy. A soulful personality is complicated, multifaceted, and shaped by both pain and pleasure, success and failure. Life lived soulfully is not without its moments of darkness and periods of foolishness. Care of the soul is not solving the puzzle of life, it is an appreciation of the paradoxical mysteries that blend light and darkness into the grandeur of what human life and culture can be. Care of the soul is an application of poetics to everyday life, the re-imagination of those things we think we already understand.”

As I read this passage, I couldn't help wonder if our expressions of Christianity could use a bit more soulfulness. A bit more of the

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“inbetween-ness” and the “patiently present, closeness to life” Moore describes. Does spirituality really need to be so distant and “other”? Does it need to be as we so often experience it in contemporary worship settings: removed from the world, with eyes closed, shut off from everyone else in the room, and shut off from the world?

The Jesus we see in the Gospels seems so very soulful. Present and close to life. At ease with the dust on his sandals, between his toes, embedded in his clothes. So amazingly earthy as he mixes dirt with spit and rubs it on the blind man’s eyes. If soul is midway between the non-material and the material, then I guess Jesus would come by that naturally. Incarnation is, after all, the ultimate meeting of the two.

As I muse about the Church in this era and how those outside its doors seem to be craving a dustier God, I wonder how long we can keep offering the distant, sanitized, unreachable Jesus. The Jesus sanitized and removed by moralism, finger-pointing politics, and big-top shows. I suppose it’s easier and safer to offer this floating, disconnected version of God. If we offered the connected, dirt-stained Jesus, we might have to follow suit. We might actually have to stay close, be present, and meet people where they are. Soulfully. Entering the mess and embracing people in the midst of darkness and light, mingled.

As I search for more soulful ways of living with my family, neighbors, colleagues, and the strangers I meet every day, all I know is I keep getting drawn back to Jesus and the way he lived: patiently in the present, close to life, at home with unanswered questions and mystery.

I also keep getting drawn back to the reality that my search for a more soulful Christ-following must begin with me. I may teach pastors, consult with churches, and write about what congregations need to be doing now that the world has turned on its end. But am I really leading a dusty, spittle-mixed-with-dirt life?

It is time that my own faith becomes more imagination than mental reduction; more human, humane, and therefore, gracious; more poetry than principle.

*This article first appeared on **GiftedforLeadership.com** on December 7, 2007.*

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Thought Provokers

- *How would you describe your own spirituality? How could you use more “soulfulness”?*
- *How are you leading “a dusty, spittle-mixed-with-dirt life”? How can your faith become “more imagination than mental reduction; more human, humane, and therefore, gracious; more poetry than principle”?*

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The Audacity of Dreams

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FAITH IN ACTION

The Audacity of Dreams

As leaders, our best dreams call people to live their faith in the midst of the watching world.

Dreams are powerful things. They help propel us forward in life. They are the aspirations of our hearts, and we hope, the framework of the extraordinary. For better or worse, what we think and what we dream tends to materialize. “As a person thinks in the heart, so a person becomes” (Proverbs 23:7).

The best dreams call us to our higher selves, participating creatively in the things and plans of God. Good dreams reflect a Philippians 4:8 orientation: “Brothers and sisters, think about things that are good and worthy of praise. Think about the things that are true and honorable and right and pure and beautiful and respected.”

Dreams that are “worthy of praise, dreams of the Spirit” come to us from many places: our family of faith; a worship experience; deep prayer and meditation. Yet, some of the best dreams come to us from simply living on the planet and being present to what’s going on around us. These are the yearnings for loftier ways of

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living, refracted through what's best in our culture, filtered through leaders we respect, and revealed in the everyday interactions with the issues and people around us.

Can we as Christians dream dreams along with those who do not acknowledge Christ as Savior? That is a crucial question as the Church struggles to provide real hope to a world where hope is now being provided elsewhere: Those outside of the community of faith who are working diligently on issues that matter, on a higher vision of what humans can be together. Those working to alleviate the devastation of AIDS in Africa, who are combining forces to steward the planet's dwindling resources. Those who are making the necessary sacrifices to reverse climate change.

Recently, I was part of a panel at a conference. Part of our session's goal was to address what seems to be an increasing myopia within evangelicalism. One of the observations that surfaced concerned the narrow vision surrounding morality within evangelicalism, i.e., what is moral in the conservative church so often revolves around sexual practice. Why? Are not justice, poverty, disease, hunger, and planet degradation also moral issues? If so, does our silence and lack of engagement on these issues belie a dearth of dreams? We may wish the Philippians 4 passage only applied to our favorite behaviors and issues. Or we may wish we could retreat into the safety of the abstract (holiness divorced from action). But that is hypocritical faith. It is what Jesus confronted in the Pharisees—a white-washed-tomb religion.

As leaders, our best dreams call people to live their faith in the midst the watching world. We are not called to live in denial and to stay within our comfort zones. We are not called to talk about the things of God in platitudes. In these days when people outside the Church are wanting to connect to movements and causes that actually make a difference, we must ask ourselves if our highest Christian dream is to amass personal possessions and personal happiness within a fortified subculture. If so, we are certainly making that dream come true.

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The dreams of much of conservative Christianity seem to be incredibly self-focused and small. We can do better. To dream Philippians 4 dreams as the Church is literally to be people of hope in action: to do what is necessary to usher in the reign of God “the reconciled and reconciling kingdom” in a broken world.

*This article first appeared on **GiftedforLeadership.com** on June 15, 2007.*

Thought Provokers

- *How are dreams powerful? How is it true that what we think and what we dream tends to materialize? How has this been true for you?*
- *Sally writes, “As leaders, our best dreams call people to live their faith in the midst the watching world To dream Philippians 4 dreams as the Church is literally to be people of hope in action: to do what is necessary to usher in the reign of God ‘the reconciled and reconciling kingdom’ in a broken world.” How are you dreaming “Philippians 4 dreams” and becoming a person of hope in action?*

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Sally Morgenthaler:
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Becoming Enough

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LEADERSHIP TOOLS

Becoming Enough

Learning to say yes to God's unique calling on our lives.

It can be frustrating to be around co-workers on the extreme side of dominance. They tend to control their image at all costs and continually offer up whatever they've accomplished for display. They also tend to take up a great deal of emotional space, leaving others with precious little. Having worked with plenty of extreme dominants, I'm also familiar with the feeling of loss: loss of voice, loss of confidence, loss of self. It's as if big chunks fall away, sort of like an iceberg, sheering off its edges as the heat rises.

Of course, we have choices as to how we respond to dysfunction. My choice to feel bad about myself could be countered with another choice: I could recognize the person's over-the-top behavior for what it is and refuse to go to give myself over to self-pity and self-doubt.

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Over-the-top dominants can be male or female. Yet, whether by nature, nurture, or both, women tend to be the more deferring and conciliatory gender. And as good as that sounds, a pattern of repeat disappearance in life, silencing one's voice, burying one's gifts, and obliterating one's opinions in order to avoid conflict robs ourselves and others of what God crafted in us: a miraculous and unique self. Is this not at least part of the message of Psalm 139:13–16?

*You made my whole being:
You formed me in my mother's body.
I praise you because you made me
In an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.
You saw my bones being formed
As I took shape in my mother's body.
When I was put together there,
You saw my body as it was formed.
All the days planned for me
Were written in your book
Before I was one day old.*

NCV

It is not easy to for any of God's children to live out God's unique calling; to say yes to God's sovereign crafting. Especially if we are dealing with dominant personalities who, for whatever reason, believe God created them as the model for all others, i.e., they are the ultimate expressions of God's creativity.

But this holy task of saying yes to how God designed us is even more difficult if you happen to be female. The psalmist may say that we have been put together in an amazing and wonderful way, but women are used to seeing themselves as never enough: not intelligent enough, strong enough, disciplined enough, tough enough, assertive enough, decisive enough, strategic enough—well, you fill in the blank.

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What about you? How do you see yourself when you are in the presence of the uber-dominant? How do you see yourself as a woman as compared to the men in your life? If we say to ourselves that we are not enough, then what does this Psalm mean? When we're tempted to disappear, hide, or to denigrate our gifts, can we make another choice? Can we see ourselves and others as amazing and wonderful, and do so without guilt?

*This article first appeared on **GiftedforLeadership.com** on September 22, 2007.*

Features





Additional Resources

More places for more information.

A Spirit Fit to Lead, a downloadable resource from **GiftedforLeadership.com**, will help you explore ways to keep your spirit uplifted so you will be able to lead others. When our souls aren't being nourished, it can be easy to bring unnecessary challenges into leadership situations—whether at church, work, or even at home. Maybe we aren't as patient as we could be. Maybe we seek conflict instead of peace. Maybe we ignore the promptings of the Holy Spirit when we should be focused on them.

An Emergent Manifesto of Hope, by Doug Pagitt and Tony Jones (BakerBooks, 2007). Many have heard of the emerging church, but few feel they can grasp what the emerging church believes and represents. *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope* is a collection of divergent voices, writing about, and representing the latest thinking from those within the emerging church. This unprecedented collection includes articles from 25 contributors including important voices in the emergent conversation such as Brian McLaren, Dan Kimball, and Sally Morgenthaler. The articles cover a broad range of topics, such as spirituality, theology, multiculturalism, post-colonialism, sex, evangelism, and the Bible. Any person interested in what the emerging church believes will find *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope* a perfect place to start.



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Facing Fears as a Leader, a downloadable resource from **GiftedforLeadership.com**. This downloadable packet offers practical advice and biblically sound insights from authors to help you go farther in living the fearless life you desire.

Forgiveness, a downloadable resource from GiftedforLeadership.com. This downloadable packet from **GiftedforLeadership.com** helps you find the wisdom and practical insights you need to gain a better understanding of what forgiveness is and learn how to experience its freedom authentically in your own life.

Leading with Confidence, a downloadable resource from **GiftedforLeadership.com**. God often calls us to do things that at the very least stretch our gifts or at the most force us to step out on faith in unknown territory, depending on God alone to equip us with what's needed for the tasks.

Listening to the Holy Spirit, a downloadable resource from **GiftedforLeadership.com**. This downloadable packet from Gifted for Leadership helps you see what it means to lead in the power of the Holy Spirit and invites you to see if you are using the gifts the Spirit gives us.

Loving Hard-to-Love People, a downloadable resource from **GiftedforLeadership.com**. This packet gives you wisdom for loving difficult people in your congregation, small group, ministry team, or workplace

Ministry for Today's Women, a downloadable resource from **GiftedforLeadership.com**. Running women's ministries is a tough job, for so many reasons. Not the least of which is that churches today still fail to recognize that women are not all the same, do not all have

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the same needs, and can't be ministered to in a cookie-cutter approach. Because we believe in the importance of ministry to women and the good work of women's ministry leaders, Gifted for Leadership created this booklet. We've designed it to offer you some honest opinions on the way things look today, some ideas of what women would like to see, and some encouragement and wisdom to make it happen.

Trusting God When You Don't Understand, a downloadable resource from the TodaysChristianWomanStore.com. If you have been sitting in what the Bible calls "the desert" for weeks, months, or even years don't lose heart. Download this guide today and let these articles and stories encourage you. This resource provides practical ways for you to stay strong by keeping your focus on God and not on your circumstances.

Why Do Bad Things Happen?, a downloadable resource from the TodaysChristianWomanStore.com. You may have asked this question many times. Most people do and the truth is, we may never know. If you are facing this haunting question, we hope that the following Life Guide will help. Read how others have dealt with tragedy, loss, and suffering while placing their hope in God. When it comes to matters of the heart, staying true to the Father, despite the struggle, is what matters most.

Worship Evangelism, by Sally Morgenthaler (Zondervan, 1999). Now with a study guide to help you apply worship strategies more easily! Drawing from both traditional and contemporary practices, Morgenthaler shows you why and how worship can help win non-believers to Christ. Discover how to achieve worship that's culturally relevant, authentic, and best of all—life-changing!





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