THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

November 3 & 4 '07
"True Identity - Find It, Live It" Series

This Week's Message: **"A Well-Oiled Ministry Machine"**
Pastor Mark Burch

I Peter 4:10 *"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms…he should do it with the strength God provides."*

The most powerful engines in the world are useless without the lubricating effect of high-quality oils, grease, or synthetic polymers. They would literally burn themselves up as the internal friction of the engine heated the motor to dangerous temperatures, and the engine seizes…so too with the engine of ministry.

There are, and always have been, the invisible ones.
Who never made a name; rejected fame.
The brick and pillars, the crossbeams of the Church.
Who stood up for justice; stooped down to serve
Reached out to heal, and sheltered the defenseless.
Mothered the motherless, lifted the depressed
And loved the despised.
It matters that they lived; it matters how they died.
It matters that they answered the Call.
Without them the foundations would groan & crack & finally, fall.
(Taken from Leadership Summit Fast Forward Video)

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

History (Making it Personal)

1. Talk around your group about times in your life you "came alive" in using a serving gift….what was it that motivated you to give, to serve, to care? How did it make you feel?
2. Name some of the "behind the scenes" people in your life that have "oiled the gears" of ministry and made serving the Lord a real joy…focus on the "invisible ones" that might never make front page news!
3. Serving is not limited to the Christian community – millions of people around the world volunteer, give, serve, and make major sacrifices to make the world a better place – what is it that motivates them?

Digging Deeper (Looking to the Bible)

4. Read our "theme" texts: Romans 12:6; I Corinthians 12:7 & 11; Ephesians 4:14-16; and I Peter 4:10. Briefly discuss the basic information and implications these texts give us about the gifts…try to list 10 "facts" about gifts.
5. Now take time to read Romans 12:1-8 and dig in a bit to the "serving gifts." Remember to add to your list the gifts of serving/helps, administration, and hospitality from I Corinthians 12 and I Peter 4. What would the family of God look like if no one took these roles?
6. The Romans 12 "gift list" follows the call to transformation and spiritual worship (vv 1-2) and leads into a discussion of how we love one another (vv 9-21). Read these and add into your discussion I Corinthians 13:1-3 and talk about the proper expression of the gifts.
7. Why do you think Romans 12:3 is included in this discussion? Implications?
8. Paul's illustration of the physical body and it's many parts is very powerful. How often do you think the church has limped along without the full participation of every member? If our physical bodies were in the same "shape" as our spiritual community – how healthy would we be?
9. Encouragement, service/helps, giving, mercy, hospitality. Who in your group has these gifts – go around the circle and encourage each other in your giftings.

Taking It Home (Application)

10. Pray for one another – that each person will discover and live their "true identity" in Christ. Pray that the barriers or obstacles that keep them from full expression may be removed.
11. Pray for the WPC family – that we might be a fully-engaged team – working together – side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder bringing transformation to our region!