

COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION THROUGH SERVANT LEADERSHIP

by
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He sat down, called the Twelve, and said,
Whoever wants to be first must be last of all
and servant of all.

Mark 9:35

OPENING SENTENCES

Community Transformation Through Servant Leadership began as an exploration of the spiritual dimension of leadership. The study was motivated by the writer's participation in an annual leadership training program called Leadership Shreveport*Bossier (LS*B) sponsored by the Shreveport, Louisiana, Chamber of Commerce. As the study progressed and the writer's involvement in the LS*B program deepened, the study turned more towards finding an appropriate paradigm for expressing the wholistic dimensions of persons of faith involved in the leadership of the community in all its arenas and as a model for bringing justice and reconciliation to the community.

The image that persistently surfaced as this paradigm was best reflected in the writings of Robert K. Greenleaf in his book *The Servant Leader*. Reflections and application of Greenleaf's thoughts on servant leadership, examples of implementation follow theological reflections on economics, community, and leadership and a description with evaluation of the LS*B experience in an expanded version of this paper that was the product of a directed study in the Doctor of Ministry program at Candler School of Theology. All quotations of biblical texts are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) unless otherwise noted in the manuscript. Because of the academic nature of the paper, the writer refers to himself when mentioned in the third person.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP: A MODEL FOR COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

The theme servant leadership has recently found its way into a number of books about leadership in the business world. The concept arises from Quaker businessman and former AT&T executive Robert K. Greenleaf's 1977 book entitled *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*.

In the 1960s, after retiring from AT&T, Greenleaf lectured at leading business schools such as Harvard. He advised companies, universities, foundations, and churches including his own. He founded the Center for Applied Ethics in Indianapolis, now the Robert K. Greenleaf Center.

In *Servant Leadership*, Greenleaf gathered his essays and speeches representing the best of his thought on the subject. For Greenleaf, the test of leadership was: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And what is the effect on the least privileged?

He called for a new ethic in the workplace. The work exists for the person as much as the person exists for the work. The business then becomes a serving institution serving those who produce and those who use.¹

Since Greenleaf's death in 1990, the Greenleaf Center carries on his work. The Center's mission is to improve the caring and quality of all institutions through a new approach to leadership, structure, and decision making. This new concept called servant leadership emphasizes service to others, a wholistic approach to work, promoting a sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision making.²

Though he would not claim to be a regular practitioner of organized religion, Greenleaf's life and views were influenced profoundly by his spiritual roots, the spiritual loneliness in the writing of German novelist and poet Herman Hesse, and by intuitive insight.³ He writes of the deep influence of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel who had the understanding for the realness of the spirit and for the holy dimension of all existence ... not primarily the result of book learning but the

cumulative effect of life lived among people who were sure that everything hinted at something transcendent; that the presence of God was a daily experience and the sanctification of life a daily task.⁴ Heschel's lifelong credo was simply expressed: Just to be is a blessing. Just to live is holy.⁵

Greenleaf defined servant leaders as first among equals.⁶ Servant leaders take inspired initiative, are better than most at pointing the direction, listen and understand, communicate imaginatively, and know when to withdraw. They, also, practice acceptance and empathy, have a sense for the unknowable (intuitively, spiritually), have a sense of foresight or timing, are aware and perceptive of both the conscious and unconscious minds, know the strength of weakness, know what is of primary importance to do, heal and serve, and take the individual and the community seriously.⁷

Servant leaders behave as different from other persons of goodwill because they act on what they believe. Consequently, they 'know experimentally' and there is a sustaining spirit when they venture and risk.⁸ Servant leaders stand in and negotiate the gap between opportunity and performance in a society. They stand for transformation of institutions which are made up of individual human beings. Sometimes, servant leaders are seen as naive for their beliefs.

Servant leaders may stand alone, largely without the support of their culture, as a saving remnant of those who care for both persons and institutions, and who are determined to make their caring count *wherever they are involved*. This brings them, as individuals, constantly to examine the assumptions they live by. Thus, their leadership by example sustains trust.⁹

Greenleaf believed contemporary Western society was living in a day in which institutions are crying out for a new mission of transcendence, a mission that would raise institutions to a stature as servants of society and drastically reduce their impact as sources of suffering and injustice.¹⁰ He sought those who would participate in the healing, in the being made whole (*shalom*), of society in its relationships with itself, human beings, and the created world.

That healing work would be religious in the root meaning of the word, *religio*, to rebind: to bridge the separation between persons and the cosmos, to heal the widespread alienation, and to re establish men

and women in the role of servants *healers* of society....*By their intense and sustained listening they will make the new prophet who will help them find that wholeness that is only achieved by serving.*¹¹

Greenleaf asserted that the clergy and the church they serve have opportunities to specify in detail a new moral basis for an institution bound society and give insistent guidance to those who have power to render these institutions more serving.¹² Ministers lead by serving those who lead by serving.

Servant leaders in business bring healing to the institution when they begin to love, not the institution, but the people who are the institution. Businesses, despite their crassness, occasional corruption, and unloveliness, *must be loved* if they are to serve us better. They are much too large a presence in the lives of all of us to have them in our midst and *not* serve us better.¹³ The servant leader's new ethic of business removes manipulation and acknowledges the work exists for the person as much as the person exists for the work.¹⁴

Because of the moral authority expressed through servant leaders proven and trusted as servants, those who are servant followers will freely respond.¹⁵ Servanthood gives the leader a new posture as an agent of transformation and reconciliation before those the leader serves.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN THE WORK OF OTHERS

Greenleaf's ideas are expressed in a speech by Dexter F. Baker on ethical issues and decision making in business on Christian faith and economic values delivered to a conference of young business people gathered in Hilton Head, South Carolina. Baker, Chairman of the Board of Air Products and Chemicals, Inc., a \$3 billion corporation with operations in 30 countries on four continents, proposes that government, business, and community leaders must always keep in mind the value of business ethics for industry to attain excellence.¹⁶

The spirit of Greenleaf's vision of healing and wholeness are present as Baker speaks of the business community as stewards of our nation's wealth creating processes [who] have a special responsibility to ensure that the value systems upon which our business operates are based upon the highest ethical standard we can conceive. You cannot be one kind of person at work or play and a different kind of person

at home or in church. Your consistent adherence to high ethical standards in business and in private life will help secure for you the firmest foundation for success your self respect and the key to the Kingdom of God.¹⁷ While not defining exactly what the Kingdom of God means to him, Baker pushes for the highest possible ethical standards that help the business person deal with issues such as:

How do we treat people, employees, applicants, customers, shareholders, and the people who live near business facilities?

Are we free of systemic, or individual, practices of discrimination?

What is our concern for safety, not only of our employees, but also our customers and our neighbors in communities in which the business operates?

How ethically do we compete? How ethically do we work with governments?

How honest are our communications to our employees and our public advertising?

The ethical business person addresses these issues in part with their presence. Baker quotes Emerson: What you are stands over you the while and thunders so that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary.¹⁸

These are qualities of the servant leader.

Walter Kiechel, III, writing on the leader as servant as a management philosophy in *Fortune* magazine, May 4, 1992, recommends the concept of leading by putting oneself in a position of servitude.

As the Lee Iacoccas (Chrysler), Donald Trumps (real estate), and John Sculleys (Apple Computer) fall as leadership models, the requisite concept already quietly at work in some nonprofit institutions and a few businesses across the country is Greenleaf's servant leadership.¹⁹

This leader exists to serve those whom he nominally leads he takes their fulfillment as his principal aim. Peter Hammerschmidt, professor of economics at Florida's Eckerd College, argues, The servant leader says human beings have a value in their own right. He doesn't have to have an end beyond that. He calls for doing what's good, even if it doesn't pay off. Max DePree, quoted in the same article, sees a key in the servant leader's authenticity: I see authenticity as an inherent

value or right we're authentic before we get to the workplace, and must be treated in the same manner when at the workplace.

Kiechel cites TD Industries, a \$75 million a year mechanical contracting firm in Dallas and Pepperdine University in California as having long term, success with servant leadership. Servant leadership has led to the hottest new management buzzword emerging among consultants working with restructured companies grief work, describing the healing and rebuilding of trust necessary for the people in these companies to move toward community.

SOME OBSTACLES TO SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Narcissism: The Search for Self in Self

In Greek mythology, Narcissus is a beautiful youth who refused all love. As punishment for his indifference, he was made to fall in love with his own image in a pool, whereupon he pined away for love of himself and was transformed into a flower. By definition, narcissism, love of one's own body, hence inordinate love of self, is a psychological term that has come to contain a variety of meanings: self absorption, grandiose self love, a retreat to privatism, asocial individualism, and bourgeois acquisitive individualism. What these meanings hold in common is that the narcissist is more involved with self love than love for others.²⁰ For thoughtful observers like Christopher Lasch, writing in *The Culture of Narcissism* (Norton: New York, 1979), narcissism is seen as primary characteristic of contemporary North American culture. Narcissism, by definition, stands opposed to a culture which would produce servant leaders.²¹

As cited by John Killinger, Distinguished Professor of Religion and Culture, at Samford University, a psychologist, in a recent interview, discussed her study of attitudes and beliefs of 287 college age young people. She was dismayed at what she learned. Almost all the young people, she said, wanted either greatness or satisfaction out of life; yet few of them understood that there was any connection between being great and serving others. They are a generation accustomed to being served, she concluded, not to serving.²² In a narcissistic age, persons peer into the well of grace and see their own reflection rather than God's.

Craydon McDonald, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Studies at

Loyola University of Chicago, seeks to clarify and define what *appears* to be self love among the narcissistically inclined. Perhaps this perceived self love is in reality a self loathing created through the complexities of early parent child relationships. In short, the person who finds himself or herself consciously or unconsciously unworthy of the love of others behaves in narcissistic ways which leave no room for others or for painful rejections. McDonald finds hope for change in his work with persons to apply all of this to our mandate to 'love your neighbor as yourself.'²³

Prestige and Money: External Validation

Jacob Needleman, in his book, *Money and the Meaning of Life*, writes about the companion to narcissism, the search for meaning through the pursuit of prestige and money. The problem of money dogs our steps throughout the whole of our lives, exerting a pressure that, in its way is as powerful and insistent as any other problem of human existence. And it haunts the spiritual search as well.²⁴

The usual concerns about money are reduced to getting or managing it (check out the business shelves of any popular bookstore). Needleman thoughtfully addresses the relationship between the quest for money and the quest for meaning. In no other culture or civilization that we know of has money been such a pervasive and decisive influence.²⁵

Needleman, who teaches a course having the same title as his book at the University of California at Berkeley, describes what he terms the new poverty. He began to notice the same complaint from almost everyone he knew. People who seemed to have so much yet expressed feeling so empty. People who strove to be accepted and to succeed in their professions, yet described their lives as going through a very bad time just now, or a rough period.

But I soon realized that these 'rough periods' were occurring with greater frequency; they had become a permanent feature of people's lives. Yet my friends and acquaintances continued to speak as though they were only passing through something and would soon break into calmer waters. These are all talented, mature people. Many are professionals physicians, executives, editors, scientists, engineers, schoolteachers, artists. Many live in beautiful homes and have fine

cars or even boats. These are people who seem to 'have it made.'

Almost all these people admitted to being 'better off' than they had ever been before earning more money, living in better homes, having better cars, nicer clothes. Yet, almost without exception, they were all in a 'difficult period.'

A huge contradiction loomed in front of me. It was obvious that in some deep, essential sense, we were not wealthy at all, but actually quite poor. For myself, I have always pictured poverty as associated with fear and anxiety about the future, fear of abandonment, fear of physical danger, and fear of loneliness. I see the poor as trapped, tense, cunning, harsh. I see them bored, empty of hope, or consumed by absurd fantasies, or drugging themselves with some poison that destroys their bodies while offering only the relief of temporary oblivion. I see them living and dying like animals. Their lives are the very image of hell.²⁶

For the theologian, Needleman has described a picture of life without God. A more modern word for this condition is neurosis, or, more recently, addiction. The persons Needleman describes are caught in lives with ever increasing wants that can never be satisfied. They are part of a business and culture which feeds on itself.

Needleman quotes John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Affluent Society*: One cannot defend production as satisfying wants if that production creates the wants. Production only fills a void [in a person] that it has itself created.²⁷

Max Weber, in his work examining Protestant Christianity and the rise of capitalism, theorizes that the modern obsession with money is, largely, a *misplaced religious quest*. Men and women, especially in Western Christianity, turn to money as though it were God, or close to God!²⁸

The noblest and most powerful ideas can make the strongest poison for the mind and soul, writes Needleman, assessing Weber's description of the American love affair with money.²⁹

Race

In the writer's opinion, the major obstacle to serving in the South perhaps in the country has been race. The potent image of segregated drinking fountains at the A&P grocery store near his childhood home

remains strong in his memory. One was labeled White and the other was labeled Colored. He had to ask his mother for an explanation: he had never seen colored water before. How can one serve someone whom that person deems as genetically inferior or morally corrupt because of color of skin?

Writes John Claypool: The great tragedy of so many forms of segregation is that they keep us from the very kinds of contact that could shatter our illusions and make clear the commonalties that exist along with the diversities. And yet that is precisely the problem with so much of our seeing. We look only at outward appearances. We perceive but a fraction of the mystery of another the color of their skin or the color of their ideas or the color of their uniform or the color of their behavior. We let these 'adjectives' get escalated into 'nouns' and we proceed to act, not on the basis of all another is, but on the tiny fraction we have seen. We miss so much and tragically distort things at the relational level.³⁰

In *A Way Out of No Way*, Andrew Young, chronicles his involvement in nonviolent protest during the Civil Rights Movement. On Maundy Thursday 1963, 55 demonstrators and thousands of bystanders marched from the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church to the jail in Birmingham, Alabama. The demonstrators marched for a place to eat lunch, the possibility to apply for a clerical job, and to be allowed to register to vote without hassle. Other leaders of the movement had been jailed; the marchers were going to pray, sing, and give comfort to those behind bars.

Chief of Police Bull Conner had other ideas. Fire hoses and police dogs were set on the demonstrators. People were screaming, dogs were barking, fire hoses were sprayed directly at people with such force that it knocked them to the ground. The crowd retreated to the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church.³¹

On the following Easter Sunday, over five thousand people, mostly women and teens, began the march back to the jail. Singing hymns and offering prayers, some on their knees, they attempted to reason with Bull Conner.

Then a remarkable thing happened. In the praying and in the singing, something happened. Slowly and deliberately, people began to help each other to their feet, and the march resumed heading right

for the dogs and fire trucks. The dogs were no longer barking or straining on their leashes. I distinctly saw a tear in the eye of one of the firemen who was standing there pointing the pressure hose at us. At that close distance, the stream of water would have broken a person's ribs. Bull Conner stood there shouting, Stop them! but nobody responded. The movement that seemed dead three days earlier now was raised up with new life and enthusiasm.³² In giving themselves in service to something greater (the cause of equality and civil rights), a society moved toward transformation.

MODELS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP FOR COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

To best grasp what a servant leader looks like and how a servant leader functions, three models of persons who behave as servant leaders are offered. All three are different in the changes to society their leadership brought. One would certainly have objected to having been called a leader. Her conduct indicates otherwise.

Max DePree: Businessperson as Servant Leader

The stereotypical image of the businessman as profit obsessed, merciless, hard human being is being challenged today. Servant minded business leaders who care about people are rising to prominence.

Take for example, Dave Thomas, founder of Wendy's, lives out of his own past as an adopted child by underwriting the adoption of children by Wendy's employees. Thomas expresses care for those who work for him, too. In *A Passion for Excellence*, Tom Peters quotes an admonishment to Peters by Thomas on the occasion of a speech Peters was about to deliver to Wendy's franchisees: Now you hear this. Take good care of those people in that speech of yours. In this room are the finest 1,200 people in this country. They deserve the best you can give.³³

Max DePree is an author and chairman emeritus of Herman Miller Furniture, Inc., a company that regularly appears in lists of the best companies to work for in the United States. DePree praises Greenleaf's contributions and looks at servant leadership as 'a way of thinking about stewardship as opposed to ownership.' DePree's own

thinking about stewardship leads him to a fairly strong critique of capitalist ownership. 'One of the great problems of the capitalist system during its first couple of hundred years is that it has been primarily an exclusive system. It has been built primarily around contractual relationships and it has excluded too many people from both its processes and a generally equitable distribution of results. The issue here is much more than financial reward: Most people never get the opportunity to be meaningfully involved in the working of the system.'³⁴

In an article featuring DePree's induction into the National Business Hall of Fame, DePree is recognized as someone who showed that a caring environment and commercial success can be combined.³⁵ He believes that companies should be inclusive the way successful families tend to be listening to all voices and sharing ups and downs. He devoted his career to making Herman Miller more like a family.

Under his leadership, the company, begun by his father in 1923, has been a tremendous success. During DePree's tenure as CEO from 1980 to 1987, sales increased 220%, from \$230 million to \$743 million. Although Herman Miller was No. 439 on *Fortune's* list of 500 largest industrial companies when DePree stepped down as CEO, the company's 27% average annual return to investors over the previous ten years placed it 39th by that critical measure. And according to *Fortune's* survey of America's most admired corporations, Herman Miller was then, and is still, No. 1 in its industry.³⁶

DePree has been influenced toward the inclusive corporation and the model of servant leadership by his own family, their devout involvement in the Reformed Church in America, and the Gospel of Luke. In his book *Leadership Is an Art*, DePree writes of covenantal relationships, the right to be needed, and the work of people being determined by their gifts. He believes in people, forgiveness, commitment, and the leader as a servant and a debtor. He urges weeping over superficiality, a lack of dignity, injustice, great news!, tenderness, arrogance, betrayal [and] people who are gifts to the spirit³⁷. He wrote policies to limit the salaries of top executives and hired four female vice presidents and two black vice presidents.

DePree writes of the day his father as a young manager visited the

widow of a key employee, the millwright, soon after his death. To fill the awkward silence between them, the widow asked if she might read some poetry. DePree's father agreed. She left the room, came back with a bound book, and read piece after piece of beautiful poetry. After she had finished, he asked of the author of this beautiful poetry. She replied that her husband, the millwright, was the poet. It is nearly sixty years since the millwright died, and my father and many of us at Herman Miller continue to wonder: Was he a poet who did millwright's work or was he a millwright who wrote poetry?³⁸

Max DePree believes leaders should endorse a concept of persons which serves the person and the world. Max DePree consistently behaves in the manner in which he preaches.³⁹

Beulah Mae Donald: Marginalized as Servant Leader

In 1988, Beulah Mae Donald, aged 67, died⁴⁰. Beulah Mae Donald, female, black, poor, uneducated, weary, and diabetic, faced tragedy, but only as heroes face it with grace and courage⁴¹. The Alabama mother crippled the United Klans of America in 1987 by winning seven million dollars for the 1981 murder of her youngest son Michael, 19, in Mobile.

In March 1981, Michael left to play basketball with friends. Chosen at random by Klan members seeking revenge for the failure of a predominately black jury to convict a black man for killing a white police officer, Michael was beaten, knifed, then hung from a tree across from the killers own house.

Mobile officials at first refused to declare race as motivation for the killing. No one was arrested. The FBI found no possible civil rights violations in the case and halted their investigation.

Intimations of Michael's involvement as drug dealer spread by police. Donald knew her son had done no wrong.

Proof, arrest, and conviction came about like this: Beulah Mae Donald had been in the first class of foster grandparents ever operated by the Mobile Community Action Program and she took the toughest kids, working at the school for retarded children.⁴² The fiancee of a young social worker she was especially fond of was dating a young black lawyer, who would later become a state senator. The young lawyer's brother had been named Assistant United States Attorney in

1978. The brother made it his highest priority to get the Justice Department to reopen the case.

Two Klansmen were arrested. Morris Dees, a white man, and the Southern Poverty Law Center, represented Donald in a lawsuit against the Klan designed to restore Michael's name and bring justice.

One of the murderers spoke directly to the jury during defense summations. Crying, he described how he had lost his family and of how his life was in danger now. He pleaded with others who might be motivated by hate to learn from his history. He confessed his guilt.

To Beulah Mae Donald he turned and said, I can't bring your son back. God knows if I could trade places with him, I would. I can't. Whatever it takes I have nothing. But I will have to do it. And if it takes me the rest of my life to pay it, any comfort it may bring, I hope it will.

Beulah Mae Donald responded that she had forgiven him and his accomplices a long time ago. She had turned them and justice over to God.

The jury awarded Donald the \$7 million judgment. Having no money, the Klan turned over its only asset, its headquarters building. Donald seeks no money. What money she does receive, she uses to help others, as she always has.

She beat the Klan; she may have broken it. Her major source of strength is her faith. God cannot cure the pain she still weeps for Michael but God can take away the anger and bitterness, so she can look at his killers and pray for them.⁴³ One of them is now on death row for the murder. Donald does not favor execution as she believes only God can give life or take it away.

Jesus as Servant Leader

D. Elton Trueblood, in his book *The Encourager*, writes, in a chapter where he later quotes Robert Greenleaf: More and more I am convinced that the most revolutionary conception exhibited in Christ's words and practice is the servant idea.⁴⁴

To speak of Jesus as servant leader is not to trivialize the Godhead or to artificially construct a description of Jesus around a twentieth century management idea. If Christian people are to be agents of

transformation within their communities of involvement whether business, professional, non profit, governmental, or educational then they must reflect Jesus in manner of being and doing. Jesus designates himself as one who is a servant and who has come to serve. Through his service (or ministry), the ultimate transformation of persons into the Kingdom of God take place.

When faced with debates among his disciples over greatness, Jesus' characteristic response, seen here in Luke 22:24-27, reverses their expectations and redefines the one who would be great:

²⁴ A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. ²⁵ But he said to them, The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. ²⁶ But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. ²⁷ For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

Mark 9:33-37 (Marcan parallel to the passage quoted above), Mark 10:35-45 (James and John come looking for favored positions of leadership oblivious of the fact that Jesus in describing his death in the preceding verses has described his greatness), and Luke 9:46-48 (Jesus ascribes greatness to children and the childlike in faith) demonstrate Jesus' strong words regarding the leader as the one who serves.

In admonitions on watchfulness in Luke 12:35-38, Jesus tells a brief story of a master who returns after an absence finding his servants faithfully waiting for him. The servants are rewarded by the master: Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. (Luke 12:37)

In the establishment of the Lord's Supper in the Synoptics (Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22), Jesus plays host, servant, and interpreter of the meal. The Gospel of John recounts not the Eucharist on that last night with his disciples, but instead, tells of Jesus placing

himself subservient to his disciples in his kneeling before them with towel and basin to wash their feet (John 13). Jesus' actions are precursor and reflect what he will soon do for them on the cross.

Jesus intentionally goes out of his way to identify with those he serves. His favorite self designation, found term nearly 80 times in the Gospels, is Son of Man .

Jesus' inclusion of women and children as disciples is a radical departure for his culture, as is his acceptance of Samaritans and Gentiles.

The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:7) reverses the accepted structure of power and authority. The poor in spirit see heaven; those who mourn having lost all discover they have all in God; those who show mercy find that mercy includes loving your enemies; and those who are peacemakers (*shalom* makers) stand against the false peacemakers who establish the PAX ROMANA.

Finally, the power of the Incarnation itself is the coming of Emmanuel: the God with us. In the mystery that is God's love, the Father becomes the Son who gives himself for humanity. He is our Trailblazer Savior Healer Leader who gives ultimate service for the redemption of the human community in the created world.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

In the Epilogue to his book *Leadership Jazz*, Max DePree recounts a story about the nineteenth century English architect, Sir Gilbert Scott. In the late fourteenth century, the members of New College, at Oxford, moved into their quadrangle, the first structure of its kind, intended to provide for the residents all that they needed. On the north side of the quadrangle sit the chapel and the great hall, beautiful buildings and the focus of the life of the college.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, almost five hundred years later, the college hired Sir Gilbert Scott to restore the roof of the hall. The roof and the great oak beams that supported it had badly rotted. Representatives from the college with Sir Gilbert visited Great Hall Woods, in Berkshire, where they expected to find trees for replacement beams. The replacements were standing there, waiting to be hewn out of the living oak trees planted a century before for just

that purpose.⁴⁵

DePree tells this story to affirm the fulfillment of the vision of an anonymous and chronologically distant leader.

Through this paper, the writer has tried to present servant leadership as a model for bringing justice and reconciliation to the community.

The church must seek to understand and add to the conversations of business, society, government, the military, politics, and education. Life has a spiritual dimension woven into the fabric of humanity. The spiritual adds ethic and weight to the other participants in the conversation. Other participants work to keep the spiritual dimension honest and congruent to the real needs of people for growth, care, justice, and faithfulness.

What is required is a covenant partnership between the spiritual and religious and the institutions of our world that functions to bring economic security, wholeness of mind and body, truth to thoughtful minds, and justice. This partnership must, through servant leadership, model new ways of relating to business, law, and government. It must supplant the image of clergy unconcerned or afraid or incompetent in dealing with the real world with an image of servant leadership as ambassador of the Source of healing. This partnership is grounded in humility, in listening, in responding appropriately to need to build community and reconciliation.

As a practical application, those who wish to become servant leaders may grow towards servant leadership through 1) forming groups designed to support one another in servant leadership; 2) reading everything the servant leader can get her hands on concerning servant leadership, the shape of the times of the servant leader, and how to understand the needs and concerns of the community being served; and 3) seeking mentors who are experienced servant leaders whether these mentors be flesh and blood individuals in the community who guide the young servant leader or known only through stories such as those given above in the section entitled Models of Servant Leadership for Community Transformation.

Community transformation begins with the smallest element of the community the individual. As servant of God and servant leader, the individual touches other individuals who touch others eventually forming a network of concern.

Community transformation through servant leadership takes time. It takes individuals willing to be like DePree's anonymous and chronologically distant leader who plant saplings that grow to be mighty oaks under the covenant care of many servants.

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3. *Ibid.*, 12.

4. *Ibid.*, 252.

5. *Ibid.*, 254.

6. *Ibid.*, 81.

7. *Ibid.*, 14-48, for a fuller discussion of these characteristics.

8. *Ibid.*, 329.

9. Ibid., 330.

10. Ibid., 221.

11. Ibid., 222.

12. Ibid., 5.

13. Ibid., 136.

14. Ibid., 142.

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26. *Ibid.*, 25-26.

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32. Ibid., 83.

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