

## LIFE-GIVING CHARACTER

Karen Hodge, Guest Write

### Today's Treasure

*Moses said, "Please show me Your glory." And He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you My name 'The LORD.'"*

*...The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin."*

*Exodus 33:18-19, 34:6-7*

I am not going to lie, I have cried more than a few times as a leader. There have been times I shed tears in the wilderness. God has also placed difficult, dare I even say, stiff-necked people in my life. But the place and the people He calls us to is no accident. There are times I wanted to trade them both in but I am slowly learning they are for my good and His glory. Moses was a focused leader. He was focused not on others, not on self, but on God's Glory. He loved this obstinate flock enough to plead with God on their behalf. He focused on God's character and His covenant promise that they were His people. God's gracious response was "My presence will go with you and I will give you rest" (Exodus 33:14). Moses knew God's presence was what distinguishes His people from everyone else. Our prayer life reveals the depth of our understanding of God's character. When I am weary and frustrated as a leader, honestly my first prayer is not for God's presence. There is often more whining than worshipping. My prayers sound more like, move me or move them. Deliver me from this mess! I intercede for my deliverance rather than interceding for my people. **I cry out for comfort and convenience. Moses cried out, "Show me Your glory!"**

At this point as a leader I probably would have commenced with the list making. I would design a ten-step plan to get us to the Promised Land. God did not give Moses a plan, He revealed His Person. He knew Moses didn't need different people or circumstances, he needed a different perspective. He used the people and the place to show Moses what he really needed- more of Himself. He placed Moses in a place he could see only what he could handle, the back side of His glory. God reveals the essence of His character, mercy, grace, steadfast love, and faithfulness. God shows Himself as Yahweh, His personal name whereby He binds Himself to His people in covenant loyalty. God displays His covenant love and mercy to His people despite their sin. This is what Moses needed to know. He knew he could not depend on the people to keep the

covenant. The only way he could continue to lead stiff-necked people was to gaze at the glorious goodness of God and reflect that glory to them.

What does a life-giving leader look like? What is at the core of their character? **They radiate the glory of God because they live in His presence.** Their prayer is for ongoing grace to reflect the brightness of God's character even in the wilderness to stiff-necked people. Maybe like me, you have been blamed, criticized, and dismissed by stiff-necked people, be encouraged. **Becoming a life-giver is a life-long adventure of being transformed by the renewing of our minds into the image of Christ.** This transformation is pervasive, profound, and progressive. We don't always have a plan. We don't know the solution. We are not sufficient for the task, but "beholding the glory of the Lord [we] are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18). **We become what we behold.**

### LIFE-GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

- What is my cry of leadership? Self-glory or show me Your glory?
- What distinguishes my life and leadership from those around me?
- What words or phrases describe what radiates from my life and leadership?
- Is my first response to worship and pray for those I am called to lead?

