The Rev. Dr. J. Carlton Allen City-wide Institute

**Mobilizing Seniors for Five Star Outreach**

Sponsored by the Baptist Ministers’ Union of San Antonio and Vicinity

Held at the Maranatha Bible Church of Converse, TX

January 22-25, 2018

By

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*Theme: To explore the concept of five star ministry as it relates to mission outreach and to provide a framework that incorporates, appreciates, and celebrates the contributions of senior saints.*

The Five Star Concept (Biblical Overview of the Kingdom Mission)

January 22, 2018

I. The “Five Star” Concept Refers to the Highest of Quality

A. In the Military, Five Star Generals or Admirals are rare, distinguished officers of valor

1. Highest Rank Achievable in the Military

2. Obtained only in times of war

3. Examples:

George Washington (posthumously designated)

Dwight Eisenhower

Omar Bradley

John Marshall

Douglas McArthur

Henry Arnold

George Dewey

Chester Nimitz

William Leahy

Ernest King

William Halsey, Jr.

B. In the restaurant and hotel business, refers to the highest rated amenities and service

1. Five Star branding provides name recognition that reflects quality in hotels…

Ritz-Carlton

JW Marriott

Four Seasons

The W in NYC

2. Also applies for restaurants…

Ruth’s Chris

Perry’s

Chama Gaucha

The Palm

Silo’s

II. What Does Five Star Really Mean?

1. At its core, it is a subjective assessment by a participant
2. It involves quality, but also value, accessibility, responsiveness, appearance, etc.
3. It suggests that all the expectations of a guest are met and exceeded

III. Is it something that an effective Church Should Strive to Achieve?

1. In matters of faith, I believe quality should be based on at least two things…

1. The expectations of God…the highest priority

2. The expectations of the congregant…subordinate to #1, but still important

B. The challenge is to meet the standards of both without compromising either

III. How to Achieve a Five Star Rating in Church

1. Be Careful! The Itching Ears Concept May Get You Five Stars (2 Tim 4:3)
2. If you give the people what they want, they may rate you highly
3. You may get five stars from them and no star from God
4. Example: The issue with the Children of Israel after Egypt (Exodus 32:1-10)
5. Be Careful! You can get distracted by desires and forget about needs
6. 1 Sam 3:11-13..Tingling ears at the move of God
7. Romans 10:1-3…Zeal but not knowledge, establishing own righteousness
8. While we seek to meet the congregants’ needs, we cannot compromise truth

1. Customers may always be right, but church members aren’t

2. Sometimes we need what we don’t want; and want what we don’t need

D. To Achieve the Five Star Rating

1. Keep the Main Thing as The Main Thing (Matthew 28:18-20)

2. Strong Prayer Leads to Strong Ministry/Outreach (Luke 18:1)

3. Recognize that the most important rating is from God

4. Seek to understand the needs of your people under the guidance of God

5. Seek to exceed expectations that *are consistent with doctrine and polity*

6. Seek to gather feedback from those you serve

7. Incorporate the feedback into future ministry opportunities

8. Involve the members in establishing, shaping, and monitoring the ministry

9. Gather feedback continually to meet shifting expectations and needs

F. Always remember Matthew 6:33!

The Importance of Senior Saints in Five Star Outreach Ministry

(Spiritual Empowerment to Accomplish the Mission)

January 23, 2018

So what defines a Senior Saint? Is it age, experience, body habitus, grey hair?

I. Senior Saints of the Scriptures

A. Moses: 80 when he began his ministry; 120 when he died (Exodus 7:7; Deut 34:7)

B. Caleb: Claimed his inheritance at 85 (Joshua 14:8-11)

C. Simeon (Luke 2:25-35)

D. Anna (Luke 2:36-38)

E. Gamaliel (Acts 5:33-39; Acts 22:3)

F. Paul to Timothy and Titus (2 Timothy 4:5-8)

II. Senior Saints bring Wisdom, Experience, Practicality, Availability, and Energy

1. Each Senior Saint demonstrated vitality, usefulness, purpose
2. Their advanced age/experience was a benefit; not a hindrance

*(Just because there is snow on the roof doesn’t mean there isn’t any fire in the fireplace)*

III. Senior Saints bring Perspective that Provides Ministry to the Young and Old

A. Seniors can speak to the experiences of youth, young adults, mature adults, & elders

B. No other group can provide that perspective because no other group has lived all life stages

C. Senior saints can share lessons-learned through previous failures and successes

IV. Senior Saints Bring Stability in Giving

1. Senior Saints are less likely than younger persons to engage in risky behavior
2. Senior Saints have less pressure to move to different locations/jobs
3. Senior Saints demonstrate a greater commitment to the local church body

V. The Battle against Depression and the Fear of Being Inconsequential

A. I have noticed that many seniors are concerned about being overlooked

B. There must be a sense of purpose and usefulness, particularly in retirement

C. Inactivity is associated with physical health problems, in addition to depressed mood

1. Coronary Artery Disease

2. Blood Clots of the legs and lungs

3. Shortness of breath of deconditioning

4. Decreased energy

5. Possibly worsened joint pain

D. Using their considerable skills and availability benefits the seniors and the church!

VI. Churches that are most effective minister to multiple generations

1. Can’t get distracted by Youth Programs Only
2. The health of a “Five Star” Church is reflected in its programs for *all saints*

1. Example: The Seniors’ Conference led by Dr. Dolores Williams at Antioch

2. Sermons that focus on Seniors

3. Awards and recognition for senior service

1. Must be responsive to the needs of each generation

VII. The Importance of Using the Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes of Senior Saints

1. Seniors help you reach those who may feel unreachable
2. Moses was able to reach the children of Israel and eventually Pharaoh
3. Caleb was able to engage the people of his community to claim his inheritance
4. Gamaliel was able to reason with fellow members of the Sanhedrin Council
5. Seniors are able to say what others cannot or will not

1. Personal wisdom

2. Respect afforded by years of service

1. This is the reason, I believe, that most effective senior leaders are senior citizens
2. Seniors are empowered through the Spirit, through extensive experience, through sage wisdom, through seasoned expertise to accomplish the mission

1. Use the skills of the Senior to do what only seniors can do

2. Continually seek the cover of the Holy Spirit & the direction of scripture

3. Use the seniors’ wisdom in tandem with the youth’s vigor

How to Mobilize Senior Saints for Outreach

(The Gift of Encouragement to Empower Others)

January 24, 2018

I. Recognition of the Importance of Senior Saints

A. Contributions

B. Diversity

C. Wisdom

D. Availability

E. Willingness

II. Equip Seniors for the Task

1. Encouraging through Equipping at Home (Matthew 6:33; Matthew 16:18; Acts 11:26)
   1. Senior Fellowships
   2. Senior Bible Study
   3. Senior Conferences
   4. Senior Services
   5. Senior Transportation
2. Encouragement through Sending Forward for Outreach (Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Cor 12:14; acts 13:1-3)
3. Senior Transportations
4. Senior Interface with the Unchurched
5. Senior Proclamation through Preaching, Teaching, Encouraging
6. Invitations for others (conferences, seminars, breakfasts, banquets, etc.)

III. Encouraging Seniors for Ongoing Service

1. Sermons for Seniors
2. Seminars for Seniors
3. Senior Leadership in Associations, State Conventions, National Conventions, etc.
4. Senior Social Events
5. Senior Support Services
6. References for Seniors

The Tangible Benefits of Senior Saints in Outreach Ministry

(Dynamic Ministry to Impact the World)

January 25, 2018

I. An Able Body of Believers (Deuteronomy 34:7-10; Genesis 5:18-24; Joshua 14:8-11)

A. Experience

B. Technical Expertise

C. Wisdom

D. Buttressed by dynamic prayer and committed application of the Word

II. An Available Body of Believers

A. Seniors in service

B. Executive Positions, if actively working, with flexibility

C. Readily available, if retired

III. A Willing Body of Believers

A. May be searching for ways of sharing with those that are younger

B. May be searching for ways to share with those who are peers

C. May need “to get out of the house”: socialization

D. May be eager to share their wealth of knowledge, skill, and wisdom

IV. Tangible Benefits of the Dynamic Ministry of Senior Saints

A. Strong and capable leaders; Energetic and knowledgeable workers, willing to follow

B. Activation of Strong Prayer Warriors and Sage Scholars of the Scriptures

C. Attraction for persons with similar experiences and knowledge

D. Affordable expertise

E. Growth of the church and enhancement of the body

F. Continued Growth and Development in Faith, Family, and Fellowship

G. Establishment of a “Five Star” Church that celebrates Age-Diversity

NOTES