

GLEF 2021 Theme & Prayer Topic

“For even the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45)

GLEF stands for Global Leadership Empowerment Forum. “Leadership” has been the core value we wanted to learn through GLEF for the last 3 years.

In GLEF 2018, we learned Jesus’ leadership through inductive Mark’s gospel Bible studies. We learned that Jesus called ordinary people to be his disciples. Jesus’ servant leadership transformed his disciples from selfish and narrow-minded men into global leaders with God’s heart that embraces the whole world.

In GLEF 2019, we learned Moses’ leadership with professionalism and vision through studying the five books of Moses. Under Moses’ leadership, 600,000 people like slaves entered the promised land after 40 years of wilderness life. Moses always reminded them of God’s hope and vision to be a kingdom of priests and Holy nation. Practically, he planted the law of God into their hearts and lives. Eventually, the next generation came to share the same vision that Moses had and conquered the promised land.

In GLEF 2020, we learned Nehemiah’s leadership. Under his leadership, the Israelites started and completed the rebuilding of the broken walls of Jerusalem that had been laid waist for 120 years in only 52 days. In the time of darkness, Nehemiah’s leadership empowered the Israelites to live and keep their identity as the people of God until the Messiah Jesus came.

The theme of GLEF 2021 is “Spiritual authority”. In the world leadership is associated with birth, wealth and position. But none of these qualifies for leadership. Leadership has something to do with authority. We can understand the true notion of authority when we learn from Jesus in Mark’s Gospel. From an outer perspective, Jesus was a poor man. He had no money and no standing. But he had authority. He had authority to heal the sick and drive out demons although he had never studied medicine nor psychology. He had authority to preach the word of God so that sinners repented and their lives were changed even though he had never acquired a degree in theology nor was he an accredited Pharisee. He had

authority to mobilize people. Many young people, including but not limited to his 12 disciples, followed him and grew as leaders of the early Christian church. He had authority to do miracles, to feed 5000 men with five loaves and two fish as well as to curse a fig tree and purify the temple. He had authority to resist the temptations of the devil and to fulfill God's salvation plan through dying on the cross for our sins against all odds. Finally, he had authority to rise from the dead and to send his disciples in to all the world in order to conquer the world.

Is spiritual authority exclusive to Jesus? No! UBF was once a grassroots bible study movement among campus students in Korea in the 1960ies when Korea was one of the poorest countries in the world. They were in need in many ways. They thought that rich countries like the US or Germany should give them something. But Dr. Samuel Lee taught them that authority does not come from receiving something but from learning Jesus. When they learned from Jesus many broken lives were changed and transformed. Many students became shepherds and leaders themselves with spiritual authority to mobilize and raise disciples of Jesus. Finally, they became missionaries. UBF did not have an organizational structure with a board of directors, many committees and jobs that was acceptable to other mission organizations. UBF was more like a living organism, driven by people who learnt and obeyed Jesus very practically. Although UBF was not recognized but instead persecuted by other mission organization and so could not acquire external funding, through UBF more than 3000 self-motivated and self-supporting missionaries went into all the world. UBF missionaries with spiritual authority went into all the world and made disciples of Jesus among intellectual campus students in rich countries like Germany and USA. When they started praying in 1985 to go as missionaries into the countries behind the iron curtain within 5 years the iron curtain fell. When UBF missionaries challenged world mission with Jesus' authority, God himself moved many mountains into the sea. UBF was and continues to be one of the most powerful and influential mission movements in recent history, and most importantly, a spiritual leader raising movement.

My father and my mother have served disciple making ministry among campus students in Bonn, Germany through bible study and life-together ministry for 40 years. They could not speak German. They were only immigrants from a third world country. But when they learned from Jesus, they had spiritual authority to serve many German intellectual students as well as 2nd generations and to raise

them as disciples, bible teachers, messengers, house church leaders, chapter leaders, and eventually global leaders. They are now in their seventies. They could live as Grandfather and Grandmother with many spiritual children and grandchildren in comfortable retirement. But they say: "Live starts with 70." They have a vision to raise global spiritual leaders and challenge the next iron curtain with Jesus' spiritual authority. Do you know what the next iron curtain is? It is the 'M' mission!

Nowadays, UBF has become more like an organization. They have an organizational structure based on a democratic grant of roles and power, an idea taken from Greek philosophy. They have a board of directors, an ethics committee and their own statutes. They are very interested in theological education and degrees. They probably have to do this in order to be recognized by other organizations. But it is clear that it has nothing to do with spiritual authority. Spiritual authority and power do not come from organizational structure, technology, funding, or degrees.

We gain spiritual authority as we learn from Jesus through inductive bible study, in GLEF. Inductive Bible Study (IBS) is more a way of life than a method. Inductive bible study transforms our lives and helps us to learn and practice Jesus' spiritual authority. In Oxford I learned the meaning of 'research'. It means, to 'search again'. As we go into the fourth year of GLEF, we want to 're-search' IBS. Also, we want to 're-search' Jesus' authority through Mark's Gospel Inductive Bible Study in five passages by five excellent messengers. Most importantly, we want to search again the bible and go back to the bible.

God bless GLEF 2021. God bless you through IBS and learning the life of Jesus through Mark's gospel to acquire spiritual authority and influence. God bless you to become Global Leaders and challenge campus mission, online mission, 'M' mission and world mission in your generation for the Glory of God.