

The Lord Jesus has enabled us to serve in the following capacity:

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Pedro Gelabert

Spanish Minister
Charlie Gomez

Youth Minister
Roger Wine

Marriage Counselors
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Minister of Finance
Arthur Shlesinger

**Long Island School
Of Evangelism**

Office Telephone
(631) 348-7322

www.licoc.org

Info@licoc.org

P.O. Box 607M
Bay Shore, NY 11706

Growing Faith

Just as there are physical stages of development for the body so there are spiritual stages of development for the soul. A few decades ago a man named John Westerhoff described four stages of faith that resonate as true when compared to my experience and observations in the Kingdom. Lynn Anderson expounds on them from his experience as an elder in They Smell Like Sheep Volume 2. For this article I'll just share a basic overview of the four stages. They are as follows:

Stage 1 is experienced faith. This can be called the infancy of faith when like a newborn child or a newborn Christian we experience the faith of those around us.

Stage 2 is affiliative faith. This can be seen as the childhood of faith. During this stage a person can tell you what they believe but they believe primarily because of the people they are affiliated with. For example, someone not yet mature in the faith may be able to tell you the steps to salvation and even the scriptural references for them. But they may have little ability to defend or explain it when questioned or when the conversation takes a turn.

A person at this stage of faith may become dogmatic and defensive when thrown off or questioned about what they are sharing. There is nothing wrong with affiliative faith, it is a normal part of the growth process but it's not good if one gets stuck there. Like a healthy body our souls need to continue through the stages of growth.

Stage 3 is searching faith. This can be called the adolescence of faith, and like its physical counterpart, it can be uncomfortable. Many of us remember how tough it was to be an adolescent. Your body is metamorphing and your voice is changing and as if that weren't tough enough you're also trying to figure out who you really are.

At this stage, we need to differentiate ourselves from our parents (be it physical or spiritual) so that we can become freestanding individuals. We challenge everything we have been taught up to that point. We need to do so, or we will never reach the next stage of development which is owned faith.

Owned faith is stage 4, and it is known as the adulthood of faith. This is a more mature stage of faith where we learn to stand on our own convictions. Our faith is our own, and we understand more of what we are talking about. It's not that we have all the answers or are completely able to live out what we know with perfection, but it does mean that we have examined what we believe and why. Our convictions are our own, and our faith has been internalized.

There is much to be said about these stages and much to learn about how to help ourselves and others through them. If we take the time to meditate and pray I am sure our Father will help us to grow.

To Him be the glory!

Roger Wine

PERSONALITY CONFLICT?

Kevin Booker

Have you ever observed that there are aspects of your personality that are helpful in being a disciple of Christ but at the same time there are others which are detrimental? When I became a Christian, I realized that my temperament was going to be beneficial in my walk with Christ, but there were aspects of my personality that conflicted with living as a disciple. I was a person that didn't like to draw attention to myself. I was a loner. I protected my heart by not letting people get too close and tried to avoid confrontation at all costs. If I let my personality guide me, then there was no way that I was going to effectively share the gospel. How would I bond with my brothers and sisters or have transparent relationships? How would I serve others without fear of being taken advantage of? Praise God that after being baptized into Christ, I decided that my personality would no longer dictate who I would be. After all, in Christ, we are new creations (2 Cor 5:17), and we must not follow our flesh because it is no longer our master (Rom 8:12-14, Jn 8:34-36). Instead of relying on our personalities, a part of our flesh, we need to rely on the word to be our guide: **(Psa 119:105) Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.**

The word of God is powerful and is able to transform and guide us to living holy lives. It is not easy to overcome our flesh, but we can do it with training from the Scriptures: **(1Ti 4:7) Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; (2Ti 3:16-17) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.**

By training myself with the Scriptures and through the help of the Holy Spirit, I have overcome these weaknesses in my personality to effectively serve the Lord, to the glory of God! Your personality does not have to dictate who you are. If you are willing to train yourself with the word of God, then you can overcome and truly be transformed into the person that the Lord wants you to be!

DATE	NAME	TOWN
12/06/08	Kevin Layell	Richmond, VA (Internet)
12/17/08	Kevin Freeland.....	Middle Island, NY
1/4/09	Courtney Francis	Rosedale, NY
1/4/09	Jane Ahern	Oyster Bay, NY
1/18/09	Dolci Tellers	Hempstead, NY (Boston)
1/18/09	Farrah Mondesir.....	Hempstead, NY (Boston)

Weekly Budget: \$ 9,000		
DATE	ATTENDANCE	CONTRIBUTION
1/4/2009	278	\$7,596
1/11/2009	303	\$9,316
1/18/2009	278	\$7,371
1/25/2009	287	\$7,558

“But because You say so...”

In Luke 5, we read the account of Peter as he’s finishing a long night of fishing – and catching nothing! After washing their nets, Jesus tells him to go back out again and drop the nets. As a fisherman, this probably made not one bit of sense to Peter! He had just been out all night, caught nothing, was probably really tired, and probably thought, “I already know there are no fish out there!” But look at Peter’s response in v.5, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. **But because you say so, I will let down the nets.**” This response is key to being a disciple – being willing to obey the master even when it makes no sense to you, being willing to obey “every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”. (Mt 4:4)

Sometimes obedience is simple. I think about my baptism. It only took a few studies to understand that Jesus said I needed to be baptized. I obeyed. Simple. Some commands aren’t as simple. Or aren’t they? I have found that it’s when my heart, my pride and arrogance, my sinful nature gets in the way that my thinking gets clouded and it is no longer simple to obey. However, if I can remember and put into practice those five words, “but because You say so”, my discipleship in any area—marriage, parenting, evangelism--will be successful and productive.

My mentorship group is covering the Debi Pearl book about being a help meet. A lot of what I’m learning or being reminded of is very challenging, sometimes makes no sense to me, and certainly doesn’t come naturally. But as I obey God’s word, the results are always amazing! When Peter, in verse 6, let down the nets, it says “they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break and the boat began to sink!” Peter’s obedience was blessed, and so is mine. We belong to such an awesome God who can’t wait to bless us as we honor him. That motivates me to obey when nothing else will. My way, Satan’s way, always fails. God’s way always works.

I just want to encourage you, sisters, that even when it doesn’t make “earthly” sense to obey, we must obey the word of God--it’s the only thing we can stand on. For whatever area of your life that you need to strengthen, find the instruction from our Master in that area. Build your library on the subject. Be determined to have the mindset that whatever God says you will obey, when it’s easy and especially when it’s not.

-- Carolyn Shlesinger

“For the building up of the Body...”

Ephesians 4:12

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 📖 We will not meet for Wednesday night Bible class on February 11th (Long Island and City).
- 📖 **Devotional Services:** February 6th and 20th at 8:00 PM. Please come early to fellowship and encourage one another.
- 📖 **Video Library:** If you have any items taken out from the video library, please make sure they are signed out or return them if you're done with them. Please see Rob Dixon in the back foyer Sunday after services for more information.
- 📖 If you would like to order a cassette tape of a past sermon or seminar, please see Rob Dixon.
- 📖 We are now reserving the front two rows for people who wish to be prayed with, during the song of invitation. Please try to find seating elsewhere. Thank you!
- 📖 All announcements should be submitted to David Luhrs.
- 📖 Address/telephone changes can be e-mailed to directory@licoc.org.
- 📖 **Parking reminder** - Public Safety has issued a statement requesting that all church members and visitors **refrain** from parking on any **grass areas** beyond the parking lots surrounding the chapel. Thank you for your cooperation!

MISSIONARY SUPPORT

- ✝ Apologetics Press.....International
- ✝ We Care Ministries.....West Monroe, Louisiana
- ✝ Ron Clayton.....India
- ✝ Oswaldo Sanchez.....El Salvador, Central America
- ✝ Doug & Lucy McDougle.....Ukraine, Russia

“Your faith toward God has gone forth...”

1 Thessalonians 1:8

COMMUNITY BIBLE CLASS MINISTRIES

Long Island Ministry.....(Wednesday 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.).....Robert Carr.....(631) 348-7322
New York Institute of Technology Chapel, Carleton Avenue, Central Islip, N.Y.

City Ministry.....(Wednesday 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.).....Pedro Gelabert(347) 392-4339
Individual House Churches

Spanish Ministry.....(Tuesday 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.).....Charlie Gómez.....(631) 772-2889
New York Institute of Technology Chapel, Carleton Avenue, Central Islip, N.Y.

UPCOMING KINGDOM EVENTS

For anyone wanting to use his/her vacation in a fruitful way, take a vacation to help bring souls to Jesus. :) Join a “We Care Ministry” soul winning team and help bring people to the Lord. Learn the techniques of the “We Care Ministry” team leaders: Larry West, Willie Tolison, and Bill Oden. Room and board will be provided. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Bob Carr.

We Care Campaign Itinerary

2009	Location
April 15 - April 26	Amarillo, TX