

Flood Gates: Holy Momentum for a Fearless Church

Sue Nilson Kibbey

Flood Gate #1 - Coachability

*“You will never possess what you are unwilling to pursue.
Choose to become stronger than your excuses.”*

Acknowledgement: *All effective leadership begins with effective self-leadership.*

Coachability Ingredient #1: Teachability

Please re-read the story of Pastor Own and First Church found on page 10 and 11 of the book.

1. Who or what do you believe was responsible for the stagnation and decline of First Church? Can you relate to anything in the story?
2. Identify every decision point that presented itself through the entire story. What different decision(s) could have been made at each point?
3. Why do you think each individual decision happened as it did?
4. Could even one different decision along the way have changed the outcome and opened this Flood Gate? If so, at what point and how?
5. How motivated were the church leaders to see new changes take place at First Church? How motivated was Pastor Owen? Give a reason for your opinion. What might it take for their urgency to increase?
6. Do you see any similarities between what happened in the story and what is happening in our church(es)? What, if anything, do we need to do to open this Flood Gate at our church(es)?

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Teachable: your willingness to own and exercise your capacity for learning beyond what is currently safe and familiar to you.

“In a **fixed mindset**, students believe their basic abilities, their intelligence, their talents, are just fixed traits. They have a certain amount and that’s that, and then their goal becomes to look smart all the time and never look dumb.”

“In a **growth mindset**, students understand that their talents and abilities can be developed through effort, good teaching and persistence. They don’t necessarily think everyone’s the same or anyone can be Einstein, but they believe everyone can get smarter if they work at it.”

- Which mindset do you think is most prevalent in our church(es)? Which mindset do you fall under? Why?
- What would our church look like if we adapted a growth mindset? How do we get there?

Coachability Ingredient #2: Actionability

“You may never know what results may come of your action, but if you do nothing there will be no result.”

- Mahatma Gandhi

Look at the various excuses Sue Nilson Kibbey lists on page 15 and 16. What excuses have you heard or maybe even used that have kept you, your team, or our church(es) from taking action? Why do you think those excuses were made?

Fear-Facing Truth #1: *Perpetual, daily-life chaos is a smoke screen intended to prevent growth and change.*

- Take a look your life. Do you view everything through the lens of chaos? *If so*, try the new mandatory morning habit at the top of page 20. *If not*, I encourage you to also try the habit on page 20 to strengthen your actionability!
- At the start of each day, take a look and identify one actionable step for the church’s future (and at least one for your own personal growth and transformation) that you can accomplish today, regardless of what comes up?

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Fear-Facing Truth #2: *Blaming other people or my circumstances, casting myself as the victim, demonstrates my stagnation in a plateaued present that I'm fearful to handle, rather than confident movement towards an exciting future that I'm capable of leading.*

- Re-read the story at the bottom of page 20 and on page 21. Have you ever cast yourself as the victim in a similar situation? Think about how that actually makes you appear? How might that hinder you and your team's ability to get things done?

Fear-Facing Truth #3: *A leader's self-sabotaging habit of speaking negatively about potential future plans or steps validates any resistant congregational undercurrent, and results in preservation of ministry stagnation or decline.*

- Have you ever seen a leader (or possibly even yourself) talk negatively about a future plan of action or step? How did it make you feel? How do you think it made others on your team or in your congregation feel?

If you have negative thoughts about a future plan or step, wrestle with them and determine why you have these thoughts. Is it because of fear? Try to remain positive and let God be your guide.

Question to keep in mind: *Have you considered that your spiritual path following Christ is intended to guide you to face your fears as part of your transformational process, not to protect you from them or to help you avoid them?*

Do the personal reflection exercise on page 23.

Coachability Ingredient #3: Accountability

- Take a look at the three kinds of accountability on pages 24 and 25. Who do you have that holds you accountable? If you do not have any, who could be your accountability partners?
 - **Pre-accountability partner(s):**

 - **Active accountability partner(s):**

 - **Course-correction accountability partner(s):**

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Which of the following benefits of accountability relationships do you believe to be the most valuable?

Accountability...

- Helps you move past your fears and avoid relapsing into them.
- Helps you practice honesty and transparency of agenda by asking you, “Why?”
- Opens you to assistance and resources when needed – you are not going it alone.
- Helps keep your ego in check.
- Guides you to deal honestly with the direction of your call.
- Allows you to give yourself permission to move out of the way if you realize YOU’RE the one holding a Flood Gate closed for your ministry or church.

Can you give an example of one or more of these benefits that you have received through a pre-, active, or course-correction accountability relationship you have had? If not, which kind of accountability do you need to establish right now? Would you add any other benefits of accountability to this list? If so, what?

Final Questions

1. Do you think that this first flood gate is closed at our church(es)?
2. If so, why? If not, what is keeping the gate closed?
3. What steps can we make today to open this flood gate (or keep it open)?