

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1561 Leadership and Our Schools

When should young people be exposed to leadership principles? When do we begin to show children how leaders can impact their world? How early is too early? I'm Jerry Roberts, and yesterday I spent two exciting hours with an old friend, talking about a topic we're both passionate about — leadership. I'll tell you about it, next on The Extra Point.

When someone feels as strongly as you do about a subject, conversations can be exciting. I had one of those yesterday, when I spent two hours talking leadership with Jared Baldwin, the executive pastor at Harvest Ministries.

Jared and I go back about 20 years, when he was an associate pastor at Harvest, and wrote a column for Directions magazine called *Higher Thoughts*. Jared captured real life, business life, workplace life, and blended in spirituality in such a way that even those who were non-spiritual would still get something from his writing.

Jared recently returned to Guam, and has taken over the lead role in the operation of all facets of the Harvest mission — the school, the church, and perhaps more that I'm not aware of.

He has 1,000 students to serve, along with 150 employees. Needless to say, Jared has large responsibilities. Leadership is absolutely essential for someone in his position. Without it, you invite chaos.

Over a glass of refreshing Calamansi tea from Harvest's Hub beverage spot, we shared some of the experiences we had been through since our last connection with Directions.

We finally settled on leadership in the schools, both agreeing that it has to start early. That being said, how early should it be? I've stated publicly that elementary school is appropriate.

That might be too aggressive for some, but I believe children need to understand how to be a good leader, and how to be a good follower,

early in life. They need to understand how a business operates. They absolutely need to understand how their government operates, and how strong leaders can bring about a time of prosperity; versus weak leaders who have put us \$34 Trillion in debt, with another trillion tacked on every 100 days.

They're the ones who are going to pay for it, so isn't it fair to show them how good and bad leadership determines quality of life?

Jared and I agree that middle school and high school students need leadership training, as well as solid information on how to start a business as an option to working for someone else. We have a need for new entrepreneurs in Guam.

How important is this? Not all of Harvest's 1,000 kids are going to get their degrees in the mainland and build their lives thousands of miles away. Some will stay in Guam or come back, and we desperately need young people with training in leadership to enter both the private and public sectors.

Counting all island schools, thousands will stay here. Leadership training is critical, even if an individual doesn't want to be a leader. With that level of understanding, at least they'll know what good and effective leadership ought to be, and they can do a better job of holding people accountable.

I'm sure Jared completely agrees with me that every person on his team is an influencer. If you work on a school campus — any school campus — with fresh-faced youngsters coming every day to learn about the world they will soon inherit, you absolutely are an influencer.

Therefore, should all staff members in a school have at least some level of leadership training? I believe they should.

They should also learn about what it means to be an influencer, and the responsibilities that go along with it. (Con't.)

Those 150 at Harvest, and the thousands more who serve at private, charter, and the GDOE schools...you are all influencers. You are all leaders.

Jared Baldwin knows that. I pray that every school administrator does.

If we have the desire to do this, we'll have the opportunity to equip this generation of young people with the tools they'll need to finally turn things around.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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