

Responsible to Risk



The Trinity Forum Academy Fellows hosted over sixty guests at Osprey Point January 29-31, 2010 for a collaborative weekend focused on assessing power structures within our society and how to humbly wield our personal power with love and wisdom. Keynote speakers Michael Lindsay and Andy Crouch, themselves committed friends, challenged guests to consider how they, along with members of their community, might use their own position of influence to serve people in need. To put the ideas immediately into practice, guests gathered in small groups to discuss case studies on real-time leadership issues in business, international justice and academic freedom of speech.

Keynote Speakers

DR. D. MICHAEL LINDSAY | Friday 7:30pm

Drawing from interviews conducted for his book *Faith in the Halls of Power* and his most recent research on the prestigious White House Fellows, Lindsay presented a framework of ten approaches for understanding what people do with power. What do people do with power?

They flaunt, covet or fall into it. They can hoard it, be owned by it, squander it or in the best sense, venture upon it. Lindsay used anecdotes of notable leaders such as Colin Powell and Stephen Colbert to illustrate each instance. In conclusion he focused on Christ's use of power as a model for our own: it is most effective when put to use for those who have none.



ANDY CROUCH | Saturday 9:45am

Sex. Money. Power. The three ethical dilemmas of our modern society. Crouch argued that misuse of power is perhaps the most pervasive dilemma we face, but it is the very issue that the church fails to deal with in a meaningful fashion. He first challenged the commonly held cynical perspective against power, instead recasting it as a gift from God that is correlate to freedom and fundamental to human flourishing. We need power to know God and to be agents of his shalom, and it is in Christ alone that we have such power. He demonstrated that power is at the heart of our relationship with God, and our abuse of such power leads to idolatry and injustice. The compelling call of Crouch's message was to consider how to use our own power not to provide privilege for ourselves – which requires no risk – but to risk our power in order to serve others. How can we appropriately deal with power? Only through true worship of God. It is within the church that Crouch hopes to see more effective education about what power is and how we can steward it well.



Group Case Studies

Saturday afternoon conference guests gathered in small groups led by Academy Fellows and Keynote Speakers. The Case Studies were designed to challenge guests to put their new ideas of how to faithfully steward power into immediate action. By working through real-time decision-making scenarios in a community setting, group members developed proposals for how they would tackle a range of issues.



Case 1: Business >> How should eHarmony, a company led by a Christian who is committed to establishing strong marriages, respond to a lawsuit claiming equal services should be offered to homosexual singles looking for relationships?

Case 2: Academia / Ministry >> When Dr. Peter Singer, a highly controversial philosopher, was appointed to a professorship at Princeton, Manna Christian Fellowship had to decide whether to affirm or condemn his appointment. Should they join with the other campus ministries or risk taking an independent stance?

Case 3: International Justice >> How could a reputable justice ministry think creatively about serving the victims of human trafficking *as well as* the perpetrators?

Panel Discussion / Q&A

Dr. Bill Edgar moderated a panel that included guests **David Kim**, Director of the Gotham Fellows Program at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, and **A.B. Puckett**, Founder of Global Connections. The panel addressed topics including Puckett's recent trip to an orphanage in Port-Au-Prince and the challenges Kim faces with students struggling to pursue their calling in light of worldly fame and profit. One of the most compelling interchanges regarded how to understand the difference between "high-profile" and "low-profile" leaders. If I am not a "high-profile" leader, what responsibility do I have? Crouch and Lindsay collectively challenged the group to consider that while the world can measure this limited type of success, God makes no such distinctions, rather he often chooses faithful people of no worldly significance to accomplish his work.



Jazz Concert



On Saturday evening following dinner, Academy Fellow and professional jazz trombonist, James Hall, partnered with Academy Senior Faculty Member and Conference Moderator Dr. Bill Edgar, to provide guests with a reflective end to a day of thought and discussion. The concert included classics from the blues and spiritual idioms, as well as original compositions by James. "Solzhenitsyn," James' instrumental reflection on the nature of calling, received its world-premiere.

Exquisite Cuisine

The menu for the weekend was designed and prepared by Fellows who, while at the Academy, receive professional training from Osprey Point's distinguished Chef Dawn McLaughlin.

Menu Items Included:

- ~ Baked Eggs with Spinach and Sun Dried Tomatoes
- ~ Challah French Toast with Sugared Raspberries
- ~ Basil Grilled Cheese on Ciabatta
- ~ Homemade Roasted Tomato Soup
- ~ Rosemary Pork Loin with Roasted Fennel
- ~ Red Velvet Cake, Honey Ice Cream, Chocolate Crackle



Worship

The weekend culminated in a Fellow-led worship service. Bill Edgar offered a message and opened the floor for a time of sharing which gave guests the opportunity to express ways that God was working through the conference. The poignant comment was made that lyrics to the closing hymn "Nothing But the Blood of Jesus" were timely as everyone gazed out the library window onto eight inches of freshly fallen snow: *O precious is the flow, the makes me white as snow, no other fount I know, nothing but the blood of Jesus.*

Guest & Speaker Comments

Michael Lindsay

"This was one of the most enjoyable experiences I've had speaking in several years. The conversations were smart and wide-ranging, the food and facilities were superb, and you did everything imaginable to make me feel welcome...."

Anna Carrington

"THANK YOU for the fantastic weekend....a great example of "exercising authority" to provide a beautiful space for creative and candid conversations."

David Kim

"The weekend was one of the most thought provoking conferences we've been to, and that's saying a lot from semi-professional Christian conference goers."

Jim Riordian

"We were inspired and encouraged by the people and wisdom we encountered and are blessed to have been included....as the hours have passed we have recalled and discussed even more of the wisdom and insightful prompts that Andy and Michael shared. As important as the quality of information shared, however, is the degree to which the sharing soul is submitted to and in awe of Jesus. For me, this activates the information."

Learn more about Trinity Forum Academy and future gatherings at www.ttf.org/academy or email academy@ttf.org.