

I have heard it said that courage is the catalyst of passion. It is my goal to passionately convey our vision and core values. I believe that by clearly defining vision and core values, new staff will be drawn to fulfill their mission through Lamplighter's expanding workforce, prayer partners will increase and become passionately and actively engaged, and financial supporters will respond to the avant-garde opportunity to change the world for Christ. Why do I believe this will occur? Because "there is no more powerful engine driving an organization toward excellence and long-range success than an attractive, worthwhile, achievable vision for the future, widely shared."¹ And I would add, "worthy values that inspire partnership and sacrifice."

Burt Nanus writes, "The right vision attracts commitment and energizes people. People seem to need and want something they can commit to, a significant challenge worthy of their best efforts."² Nanus continues by saying that "vision inspires people by transcending the bottom line. People are willing, even eager, to commit voluntarily and completely to something truly worthwhile, something that will make life better for others..."³ A vision with values that are truly worthy to follow, will create meaning for the recipients and the staff. In a culture where the extended family has virtually vanished, where churches are losing their sense of community, and communities have become pockets of isolation, people need a sense of meaning in their work that they can live for—together. As tragic as 9/11 was, it created a strong sense of purpose, sacrifice, and unity. People are empowered when there is a vision worth striving toward. In his book *Man's Search for Meaning*, psychologist Victor Frankl shares how people need a defining purpose for their lives, something to believe in, something to hope for, something to strive for.⁴

Vision, values, and support are the main themes of this research. Weaving these themes together is the task at hand. With our vital vision and values, it is my passion to attract a financial and prayer partnering network, where Lamplighter serves as a platform from which others will be able to fulfill their own personal mission and goals. From families to foundations, Lamplighter now

¹ Finzel, H. *Change is Like a Slinky*, Northfield Publishing 2004, p. 81.

² Nanus, B. *Visionary Leadership*, Jossey Bass 1992, p. 16.

³ Nanus, B. *Visionary Leadership*, Jossey Bass 1992, p. 16.

⁴ Albrecht, K. *The Northbound Train*, Amacom, New York 1994 p. 23.

provides an opportunity for others to be intimately and intricately involved in front line Kingdom work, bringing redemptive hope to those desperately in need.

Introduction:

It is the intent of this paper to provide a vision for the future of Lamplighter Ministries in regard to the financial development of this organization so that the key areas of our infrastructure can begin to grow, thus helping us to fulfill our mission. Through clearly defining Lamplighter's mission, vision, and values, a unique strategy for generating revenue will be designed. A primary focus will be our unique set of values. At the heart of Lamplighter Ministries, our core values are the catalyst that drives this organization.

Mission:

The mission of Lamplighter Ministries is “to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, by building Christ-like character one story at a time.” The mission of this ministry is deeply rooted in the truths found in Malachi 4:6 and Luke 1:17. The gospel writer Luke quotes from Malachi 4:6 in his first chapter. His handling of the text is peculiar because he leaves out part of the quote and adds a sentence that changes the entire meaning of Malachi’s text. In Malachi we read: *“To turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”* In Luke we read: *“To turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”*

The first part of this verse is identical in both passages. The second part, “turning the hearts of the children to their fathers” is similar to “turning the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.” It appears that Luke is emphasizing that children’s hearts (the disobedient) will turn to their fathers, if their fathers’ hearts become righteous and worthy. The last part of the verse in Malachi, “lest I come and smite the earth with a curse,” has been deleted and new text has been added, thus changing the meaning. Generally, the New Testament writers will change an Old Testament text to help clarify the intended meaning, but here Luke changes the meaning of the text entirely. Whereas the Old Testament closes out with the word “curse” and a strict warning, the New Testament closes out with hope and an emphasis on grace—“the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen.”

By Divine design the Old Testament closes in “curse” and the New Testament closes with “grace.” When Luke the physician quotes Malachi 4:6 and removes the curse, I believe he was adding that which is at the heart of Christian discipleship—“making ready a people prepared for the Lord.” As I studied Luke’s addition, I realized that the words “make ready” and “prepared” are the very essence of our mission. The word “ready,” in Greek, ἐτοιμάζω, *hetoimazō, het-oy-mad'-zo*, means *to prepare, provide, construct, create, or make ready through internal fitness*. The word “prepared,” in Greek, κατασκευάζω, *kataskeuazō, kat-ask-yoo-ad'-zo*, means *to build, make,*

*ordain, or prepare thoroughly and properly by **external equipment***. Lamplighter Ministries has a two-fold focus: preparing people to serve the Lord through **internal** character development and **external** career preparation. The words “ready” and “prepared” form the foundation for our mission at Lamplighter. We are building Christ-like character *internally* through inspiring and godly role models, and motivating individuals to live a life of excellence through *external* opportunities that cultivate their God-given abilities into the highest level of skill and excellence.

Vision:

Lamplighter’s vision for the future consists of what we would like to become and accomplish over the next five, ten, and twenty-five years. In order to fulfill this vision, it is my goal to cultivate and develop new partnering relationships that will propel this vision forward. The vision of Lamplighter’s future has a five-fold focus:

1. Life-Transforming Seminars — addition of drama and music to our Life-Transforming Seminar format.
2. Lamplighter Audio Productions — creation of dramatic audios for radio, web, and podcasting.
3. Lamplighter Film Productions — creation of film for theaters and dvds, produced from Lamplighter books.
4. Lamplighter Art and Graphic Studios — creation of apprenticeship opportunities to illustrate for a young children’s collection of rare books.
5. Lamplighter Facility — purchase of land and building a Mission-style facility for offices, bindery, and apprenticeship school.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to go into detail on the development of these future plans; the purpose of this paper is to develop a plan to finance this vision. First, I will briefly describe the work that has started since August 1, 2007, in regard to the above vision and then elaborate on Lamplighter’s values that are inviting and teeming with potential to change lives and cultures.

Vision Strategies:

1. Life-Transforming Seminars — Two additions to our current seminars will be added. The first will be a mime presentation by Charles White. I met Charles while speaking, and was very moved by his presentation of the crucifixion through mime. The second addition is drama, including the production titled, *Everything*. This powerful presentation can be previewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyheJ480LYA>.

2. Lamplighter Audio Productions— As of August 15th, *Family Life Today* has proposed a joint partnership for the creation of dramatic audios. As of September 12th, we have begun our own audio versions, the first to be completed by October 30th, featuring our most popular children’s book, *Teddy’s Button*. Our own audio versions, which will consist primarily of narrative with sound effects, will give our readership an opportunity to purchase our stories for all ages, providing a welcome alternative to the media enticements of our day.

3. Lamplighter Film Productions— After five years of attempts to contact media mogul and multi-billionaire Phillip Anschutz, I have finally made initial contact. On August 14th, after meeting with businessman and author John Segal, John was pleased to forward our name to Mr. Anschutz’s advisor, whom he is meeting this week. With funding, we are prepared to release our Lamplighter stories to Walden Media for film production. Lamplighter Productions will have a supervisory role.

4. Lamplighter Art and Graphics Studio – On September 7th, Lamplighter sponsored two of our artists to attend a three-day workshop with an accomplished painter, David Leffel. They returned inspired and hopeful that we will soon receive the funding to expand our art and graphics program to include apprenticeships (see supporting photos #'s 7-15).

5. Lamplighter Bindery & Apprentice School— In August, one of our graphics staff members attended a two-week bindery course, preparing for the start-up of our bindery production (see supporting photos # 24-31).

6. Lamplighter Facility — As I write I am sitting on the land which I desire to purchase for a new Lamplighter facility. Nestled around a lake surrounded by woods, trails, and a variety of wildlife, this haven contrasts markedly with the neighboring development. The natural setting of this one hundred fifteen-acre property would be maintained at all cost. Photos of the property can be viewed in the Powerpoint support documents #'s 34-42. The first photo was taken from the early 1900s. Our facility will follow the turn-of-the-century, mission-style architecture as was our first facility, built in 1999. The philosophy and aesthetics of this arts and crafts-style architecture is in line with Lamplighter’s values, which will be discussed in the next section. Believing that God calls each of us to the highest standard of excellence and beauty, this architectural design will attract people toward that excellence and beauty that is a reflection of God. The construction of our new facility will follow the rules of form and function, promoting a culture of creative excellence that leads to inspiration, imagination, and innovation.

Values:

Lamplighter Ministries’ core values can best be understood through the acronyms **LIFE** and **LAMPLIGHTER**. The first acronym, which provides a brief overview our core values, is used to introduce Lamplighter to initial contacts, to develop casual relationships, and as a means to briefly inform conference attendees about our ministry. The lengthier acronym, **LAMPLIGHTER**,

provides a more detailed, in-depth look at our ministry for donors, staff, and those who wish partner with Lamplighter Ministries. Once the core set of values have been outlined from each acronym, I will then expound upon them to reveal the mechanics of the form and function of this ministry.

- L** – life-long learners
- I** – inspiration, insight, imagination, innovation
- F** – forgiveness, friends, family
- E** – excellence, endurance, entrepreneurship

L – As life-long learners, the pursuit of the knowledge of God is the most important aspect in becoming a participant in Lamplighter Ministries. In order to have a strategic approach to a successful ministry, each staff member and partner must be intimately connected with the knowledge and will of God. A blueprint for this first core value can be seen in the following verses: Joshua 1:8; Ezra 7:6,9,10; Psalm 1; Psalm 19; Psalm 119; and II Peter 1. In each of these portions of Scripture we find an emphasis on the essential nature of the Word of God in one's life. The Word makes our way prosperous, enabling us to find good success (Joshua 1:8). The Word provides nourishment and stability to our souls, so that everything we do will prosper (Psalm 1). Knowledge and skill in the Word opens the door for those in authority to seek our advice (Ezra 7). Knowledge of the Word helps us to discern our errors, keeping us from hidden faults and presumptuous sins (Psalm 19). An understanding of the Word gives us a true north direction, helping us to negotiate the turbulent waters of life while taking comfort in the sovereign plan of God for our future (Psalm 119). Lastly, the knowledge of God enables us to grow in our faith as we grow in Christ's character (II Peter 1).

Being a life-long learner doesn't end with an understanding of Scripture. From this foundation, we must branch out into the areas about which we are most passionate. Pursuing degrees, reading books and magazines, attending seminars, and meeting knowledgeable people are part of this core value of becoming a life-long learner. It is our goal to provide opportunities for Lamplighter employees to advance in their skills so that we can strategically and efficiently fulfill our mission.

We believe that the Hedgehog principle that Jim Collins writes about is a perfect example of how we seek to accomplish this goal: through passion, skill and revenue. In the book *Good to Great*, we find that fanning the flames of one's passion will lead to motivation; motivation will lead to the pursuit of becoming the very best in the field, which will lead to an increase in revenue.⁵ As a non-profit ministry, the fact that we have a resource to sell makes us unique in that we can operate our publishing ministry without the need for financial support. However, if we are to expand and reach a greater segment of our culture and world, support will be needed.

I - As we grow in the knowledge of God and develop our natural abilities, we open the door for inspiration, insight, imagination, and innovation. As we increase efficiency and effectiveness, we set in motion a revolving door of insights that lead to imagination and innovation. By seeking inspirational models such as Wegman's and Starbucks, we will gain insight into the inner workings that make an organization great. These core values—inspiration, insight, imagination, and innovation—develop a living organism; always growing, always changing, always improving.

With healthy change and growth from within, we are then equipped to inspire those from without. As we attain a level of excellence in graphics, editing, art, shipping, customer service, storytelling and public speaking, we birth inspiration and motivation. This is true north leadership, which will create a desire that will inspire others to follow.

William Kirk Kilpatrick, a contemporary Christian psychologist and social critic, reveals how stories infuse moral values through models who demonstrate concrete ethical behavior.⁶ Stories with heroes and heroines, along with poetry and music, have been the foundation for a child's education until the 20th century. One of the greatest teachers, Francois Fenelon of the 17th century, transformed an incorrigible child into a prince by using stories as his primary curriculum.⁷ Stories inspire readers to act morally by motivating them to imitate the characters that have become their heroes and heroines.

⁵ Collins, Jim. *Good to Great*, Harper Collins, 2002, pp. 95-98.

⁶ Veith, G.E. *Reading Between The Lines*, Crossway Books, 2000, p. 61.

⁷ Fenelon, F. *The Education of a Child*, Lamplighter Publishing, see the preface.

At Lamplighter, it is not only our conviction to live according to these core values, but to produce stories that will inspire our readers to do the same. It is our commitment that each Lamplighter book instills moral values through role models that either demonstrate exemplary behavior or suffer consequences of making wrong choices. A riveting plot, a worthy theme, and endearing characters motivate readers, both young and old, to adopt a similar moral code by emulating the characters that have been etched into their awakened conscience.

One of the most important components of this core value is imagination. John Piper said it well: “One of the great duties of the Christian mind is imagination. God’s world—all of it—rings with wonders. Imagination is like a muscle. It grows stronger when you flex it. And you must flex it. It does not usually put itself into action. It awaits the will. Imagination is also contagious. When you are around someone (alive or dead) who uses it a lot, you tend to catch it. So I suggest that you hang out with...those who are full of imagination.”⁸ Once the muscle of imagination has been engaged, there are infinite possibilities, as long as we believe that nothing is impossible with God. It is at this point that we “expect great things from God and attempt great things for God!”⁹

Lamplighter Ministries is passionate about making ready a people prepare for the Lord by building character, one story at a time. Building character is a vital aspect to our mission. We believe that when inspiration, insight, imagination, and innovation are not firmly established, there is no foundation upon which to build solid character. Charles Spurgeon said, “Many, though wishing to be great, have failed to be good.”

F – Core values of forgiveness, friends, and family give the Lamplighter team, both within (staff) and without (supporters/partners), a unified, committed spirit. A commitment to confront as well as forgive brings a refreshing sense of accountability. It gives assurance that we are a team and will do what it takes to reach our goals with relentless passion. Forgiveness produces a healthy environment of vulnerability, because where forgiveness is, there is love; and where love is, there is absence of fear. At Lamplighter, each staff member knows that he/she is fully loved, fully

⁸ Piper, J. *Meditation on the Imagination*, Tuesday, February 25, Northwestern College.

⁹ William Carey

known, without any fear of rejection. This lack of fear builds trust and encourages our staff to be willing to attempt things outside their comfort zone. Furthermore, the fear of rejection is of minimal consequence because mistakes are seen as opportunities for growth. Theodore Roosevelt once said, “Success is failure upon failure with great enthusiasm!” As forgiveness rules out fear, trust develops. Within this environment of forgiveness, grace is extended. Grace—that character quality best demonstrated by outstretched arms—is offered to each of us by God when we humble ourselves.¹⁰ It is a Lamplighter core value to demonstrate the same.

In Patrick Lencioni’s book, *Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, he charts how the absence of trust is the foundation for four remaining dysfunctions of a team:¹¹

Inattention to RESULTS

Avoidance of ACCOUNTABILITY
Lack of COMMITMENT

Fear of CONFLICT

Absence of TRUST

Lencioni’s five dysfunctions are clear guidelines that Lamplighter has adopted for staff training and serve as routine reminders of our responsibilities toward one another.

If the definition for vulnerability is “trusting oneself with God and others,”¹² then I believe Lamplighter is beginning to experience the stuff that makes a truly great organization. Vulnerability makes friends feel like family. Another core value, friends and family, encourages an environment of grace for each of our Lamplighter friends, both close and distant. For example, if a distraught customer calls, frustrated about a late order, it is our policy to treat this customer as we would a best friend. Each staff member will go out of his/her way to be a patient listener, and to spend the time necessary to provide the most meaningful recommendations for each individual.

¹⁰ I Peter 5:5,6.

¹¹ Lencioni, P. M. *Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, Jossey Bass Publishers, 2002, p. 97.

¹² Thrall, B., NcNikol, B., McElrath, *The Ascent of a Leader*, Jossey Bass, 1999, p. 88.

Our customers are, as in Bossidy's words, "arguably your most precious asset."¹³ Unless we know the needs of our customers, we serve only ourselves. To meet these needs effectively, we cannot think ourselves into a new way of acting but act ourselves into a new way of thinking.¹⁴ Forgiveness, friends, and family are core values that will keep our attitudes in check and in constant realignment as we work as a team in this very intensive environment of relentless accomplishment.

E – Lamplighter's core values of excellence, endurance and entrepreneurship are the crowning features for our mission. We strive to be the best in each of our endeavors, as is demonstrated in the publishing branch of our ministry. Our award-winning books have held the admiration of countless readers and continue to set the standard among publishing companies. At New York City's largest publishing convention, Lamplighter was held in high regard for its excellence, uniqueness, aesthetic beauty and craftsmanship. Our core value of excellence as exhibited by Lamplighter books is a reflection of the God we serve. This distinction can be seen on the cover designs and within the pages of our books (<http://www.lamplighterpublishing.com/>). It is our intent that when a family reads a Lamplighter story together, they will build a lasting memory that will far surpass the fleeting moments of mediocrity.

As God's representatives, it is our goal to be an extension of his beauty and excellence. Peter states that "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to *his own* glory and excellence:"¹⁵ When God created the heavens and the earth, each day he saw that it was good. The satisfaction and fulfillment that comes with a job well done, a job filled with beauty and excellence is another chief core value of Lamplighter.

Our core value of excellence is to be practiced in all areas of our lives, whether at home or in the office. In so doing, we will inspire others to catch the spirit of excellence. In the book of

¹³ Bossidy, L., Charan, R. *Confronting Reality*, Crown Business, 2004 p.83.

¹⁴ Bossidy, L., Charan, R. *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done*, Crown Business, 2002 p.89.

¹⁵ II Peter 1:3

Proverbs, Solomon teaches that a diligent person will be granted special privileges. In the King James Version we read: “*Show me a man diligent in his work and he will stand before kings and not mean men.*”¹⁶ In the English Standard Version we read: “*Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings, he will not stand before obscure men.*” The words “diligent,” “mean,” or “obscure” are significant to Lamplighter’s core values. A diligent person, a מְהִיר מְהִיר *mâhîyr mâhir, maw-here’, maw-here’* is one who is *quick; skillful*. The range of meaning for “diligent,” also carries the idea of *hasty, ready*. The Hebrew meaning for “mean,” or “obscure” comes from the word חָשׁוֹךְ *châshôk, khaw-shoke’*, and carries the idea of *dark*. Hence, a diligent person, one who is skillful in his God-given abilities, is one whose work will be sought after by the best of men. But those who would use you for their advantage—at your disadvantage—will not prevail.

In the book *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, Jim Collins writes about a culture of discipline. It is within this culture of discipline that attention to detail and a focus on results occurs. Sustained great results depend upon building a culture full of self-disciplined people who take disciplined action, fanatically consistent with their passion, skill, and ability to generate revenue.¹⁷ A culture of discipline is not just about action. It is about “disciplined people who engage in disciplined thought and who take disciplined action—operating with freedom within a framework of responsibilities—this is the cornerstone of a culture that creates greatness. In a culture of discipline, people do not have jobs; they have *responsibilities*.”¹⁸ In his book *Good to Great* Collins states: “When you have disciplined people you don’t need *hierarchy*. When you have disciplined thought, you don’t need *bureaucracy*. When you have disciplined action, you don’t need *excessive controls*.”¹⁹ Lamplighter Ministries falls in line with this philosophy of a culture of discipline. The primary reason for a core value of excellence is the belief that it opens the door for the gospel. Today, Christianity is not enticing for the vast majority of non-Christians. A Christian

¹⁶ Proverbs 22:29 KJV

¹⁷ Collins, J. *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, A Monograph to Accompany *Good to Great*, p. 34.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.34.

¹⁹ Collins, J., *Good to Great*, Random House Business Books, 2001, p. 302.

who lives a life of excellence, governed by humility, will be looked upon as one who is worthy to be followed. A life lived well will cause others to ask for a reason of the hope that is within us.

It is our core value of endurance that leads us to hope—a hope that does not disappoint. In the book of Romans, chapter five, the apostle Paul teaches that “suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint.”

Suffering tests or gives us opportunity to forge our character through endurance. Without genuine character development, all is for naught; without Christ-like character, the most accomplished individual enjoys only temporary achievements at best. In the Psalms David teaches that suffering allows us to trust God more than any other experience in life. This connection between hope and suffering is foundational, not only for Christ-like character development, but for what it takes to become a Kingdom-hearted entrepreneur. David, who understood this connection, gives us this revelation from Psalm 119:

*It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes.
I know, O Lord, that your rules are righteous, and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.
When will you comfort me?...How long must your servant endure?
If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.
I am severely afflicted; give me life, O Lord, according to your Word!
With my whole heart I cry; answer me, O Lord! I will keep your statutes. I call to you; save me, that I may observe your testimonies. I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your Words.*

David’s understanding of suffering and hope is profound. When understood in connection with Paul’s formula for character development, it is not difficult to see the essential value of suffering, as it brings forth great hope. Simply, when one endures suffering, even in something as non-threatening as a difficult assignment, our character is being forged. As we experience a sense of reward for enduring, our hope becomes a reminder for our next test of endurance. Each time we endure, our character is forged, our hope increases, and we learn to trust God. This leads us to believe the truth that all things really do work together for good, to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

As one's character develops, he experiences confidence and worthiness. In response to God's value upon our lives (He paid a great price), we are motivated to live a life of worth. The word worth is important because it is the foundation of entrepreneurship. An entrepreneur by definition is "a person who organizes and starts an enterprise, usually with considerable initiative and risk."²⁰ Built upon sacrifice (risk), endurance, and character, we at Lamplighter seek to cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit that leads to a worthy life—a life that is worth living. Creating entrepreneurial initiatives that make an eternal difference in the lives of others is Lamplighter's final goal. It is our desire to equip and propel God's people into action—making them ready and prepared to serve the Lord and others.

The lengthier version of our core values, under the acronym **LAMPLIGHTER**, will be briefly summarized except where the value was discussed under the **LIFE** acronym.

L – Life Long Learning as summarized in the previous section.

A – "A" represents "Ask God and Others." Charles Spurgeon said that he didn't "pray more than five minutes at a time but didn't let five minutes pass without praying." It is a Lamplighter core value to ask God throughout the day, before each phone call, prior and during the creation of each graphic, while packing each shipment, and scheduling each conference. I have found that prayer really does make a significant difference in the effectiveness of our ministry.

Today there are over 1000 prayer partners on the team and we welcome all who would like to join. The prayer ministry is a vital force for the work that we have been called to do and its effects have been apparent to all. Of all the work that Lamplighter is involved in, our Prayer Partners are held as our most important partnership.

²⁰ Lexico Publishing Group, LLC, Dictionary.com

Asking others allows us to demonstrate humility and vulnerability, which opens the door to learning. Vulnerability means to place oneself under another's influence.²¹ When we place ourselves under the authority and guidance of another, no matter how far up the ladder one may be, we allow ourselves to be influenced, shaping our choices and destiny. I believe Solomon understood this well when he said, "In the multitude of counselors there is safety *or* victory."²² Howard Schultz also holds to this idea of asking for help as a core value. He shares how important it is to expose your weaknesses; "Admit you don't know what you don't know. When you acknowledge your weaknesses and ask for advice, you'll be surprised how much others help."²³

"A" also stands for "Add at Your Own Expense." In II Peter 1, we read, "*Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control perseverance, and to perseverance godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.*" The word "giving" is important to understand because it introduces the idea of "simultaneously." From the Greek word *παρεισφέρω*, *pareispherō*, *par-ice-fer'-o*, to *bear in alongside*, that is, *introduce simultaneously*, the word "giving" prepares us to understand that Peter's steps are not to be considered sequential but are to be integrated into our daily lives in their entirety. The word "diligent" also carries weight as it introduces the idea "to move quickly with haste; stopping a runaway horse, turning it completely around." Having raised horses, I know from personal experience that the only way to stop a runaway horse is to let go of one side of the reins and pull back on the other side with both hands. Once the horse's head turns toward you, he will stop immediately because he can no longer see in front of him. Only then can you begin to turn in a different direction. The same is true with character development. In partnership with the Spirit of God, one must make haste with a deliberate choice in order to begin the process of change—change begins with a deliberate choice.

²¹ Thrall, B., McNikol, B., McElrath, *The Ascent of a Leader* Jossey Bass, 1999, p. 77.

²² Proverbs 24:6

²³ Schultz, H., Yang, D.J. *Pour Your Heart into It: How Starbucks Built a Company One Cup at a Time*, Hyperion, 1999, p. 152.

Once deliberate choice for change occurs, one needs, according to Peter, to “add” at their own expense. I use the phrase “at their own expense” because the Greek word ἐπιχορηγέω, epichorēgeō, *ep-ee-khor-ayg-eh'-o*, to *furnish besides*, that is, fully *supply*, aid or *contribute*, is a fundamental part of our core values. Lamplighter Ministries provides redemptive stories of hope, both in book form and in living models, who demonstrate that the character of Christ is developed through sacrifice, or “adding at one’s own expense.” In Greece, at the time when Peter wrote his letter, a new citizen was required to pay a considerable amount for entrance into the country. If he could not meet the demands, a sponsor would be required to help. Once these demands were met, there would be a new citizen’s celebration welcoming the new citizen. Musicians, a banquet, and sometimes drama were part of the event. The more money spent, the more grandiose the event, and the more celebrated his new citizenship. The same is true for a Christian; the more one is committed in showing his appreciation for his “new citizenship” in Christ, the more he/she is willing to sacrifice, thus the word “add.”

We believe that character and career development take place proportionate to our willingness to sacrifice. Without sacrifice, there cannot be a true team approach to ministry because where much is received, much is required; and as a team, we trust that each staff member are equally giving of themselves for the mission of making ready a people prepared for the Lord. King David describes this sacrificial commitment best as he ends his speech in II Samuel 24:24

“I will not give to the Lord, that which cost me nothing.”

M – “M” stands for mentoring. After reading a Lamplighter book, my seventy-five year old dad said, “It is the first time I have understood God.” Another book later he said, “Each story gives me a new perspective on how to live my life; I wish I had read these stories when I was young.” What I love about Lamplighter stories is that they are both juvenile and adult, reaching across the boundaries of age and gender. I would have to agree with my dad. For the past ten years, these stories have truly mentored me. *The Basket of Flowers* taught about wise and godly parenting; *The*

Hedge of Thorns, showed how God hedges our way through difficulties. These stories have literally guided my character development.

As a core value however, we recognize that we can only teach that which we possess. Knowing the stories intimately and being changed by them, allows us to share our own redemptive story. As we have been comforted in all our tribulation, we are now able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.²⁴

P –Passionate perseverance, tempered with patience, results in great pleasure, because all things are possible with God. To be on the Lamplighter staff, one must possess a spirit of perseverance.

In the book *Change Is Like A Slinky*, Finzel writes about the result of movement in an organization.²⁵ What is important about this concept of movement is that as a core value, each task we encounter needs to be approached with a relentless, persevering passion. Whether it be shipping a package, editing a book, or getting a quote from the printer, no job can be approached without continual movement and passionate perseverance.

It is our goal to connect each staff member's passion with his/her responsibilities—at least sixty percent of the time. The other forty percent will focus on responsibilities which they can adequately perform and are necessary for Lamplighter to be successful. Answering the phones, cleaning the office, stuffing envelopes, acting as a representative at a conference, are good examples of this distribution.

Passion and perseverance result in pleasure and satisfaction. It is my goal to make sure that what we do brings deep satisfaction and pleasure. John Piper said it best when he reworded the Westminster confession: “The chief end of man is to glorify God BY enjoying Him forever.”²⁶ Christian hedonism as Piper defines it is one who lives for the pleasure of God. It is my goal to cultivate a spirit of Christian hedonism throughout the Lamplighter staff and its supporters.

²⁴ II Corinthians 1:4

²⁵ Finzel, H. *Change is Like a Slinky*, Northfield Publishing 2004, pp. 29-31.

²⁶ Piper, J. *Desiring God*, Multnomah Books, Sisters Oregon, 1996, p. 15.

Working for the King of kings should bring great delight. In Psalm 37 we read, “Delight thyself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.” The Hebrew word for “delight,” ענג “ânag, *aw-nag*’ comes from a primitive root, meaning to be *soft* or pliable, or luxurious and delicate. Though pleasure is a core value of Lamplighter, it must be understood that pleasure doesn’t imply the absence of pain or suffering. But in spite of the pain, the passionate worker will experience pleasurable fulfillment just as is clearly illustrated in each of our stories, that God *is* the God of the impossible, regardless of the pain one might have to endure.

L – Loving Leadership is the next core value that is simply demonstrated through acts of kindness, in an environment of grace, through a spirit of vulnerability. It is within this spirit that we look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.²⁷ It is within this same context in Philippians that the Apostle Paul writes about maintaining a likemindedness that is unified, comforting one another in love. He further admonishes that we are to do nothing in strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind, each of us is to esteem each other better than ourselves. In an environment where artists and editors are under constant pressure to produce the highest quality work, it is essential for each of our staff to work together in the spirit of unity. Our goal is to bring glory to God and to represent Him well with our work. The way we will know that we are living according to this value, will be seen in acts where in lowliness of mind, we esteem one another better than ourselves—particularly in rejoicing in the success of another. When experiencing failure, we encourage one another to see it as an “opportunity to begin again, more intelligently.”²⁸

As the leader of Lamplighter, it is my personal goal to follow the principle of loving leadership, which will manifest itself in helping others to be successful. Lamplighter Ministries is not my kingdom on earth. It is a platform from which others can use their God-given abilities to fulfill the mission of making ready a people prepared for the Lord.

²⁷ Philippians 2:4

²⁸ Henry Ford

I – Instruction leads to inspiration, which leads to imagination, which leads to innovation. Although this core value was thoroughly discussed in the shorter version of our core values, it is noteworthy that, as Lamplighter continues with its forward momentum, we guard against moving from inspiration to institution, from passion to policy, from movement to machine, and from bravado to bureaucracy.²⁹

G – Practically speaking, grace within the context of Lamplighter Ministries is our number one core value. Without God’s grace, everything we do would be accomplished through self-effort, which will eventually rear its ugly head in frustration or vainglory. Living by grace will present itself first in humbling oneself, and showing deference to one another, for God resists the proud but *gives* grace to the humble. Grace will also be demonstrated when we ask for help, admit wrong, forgive, or simply take a moment to ask God for help.

H - Hope is a core value that is found in each of our stories and seminars. Hope makes one not ashamed, according to Paul’s letter to the Romans. In addition to the explanation of Romans 5 in the short list of core values, I would like to highlight the fact that the word *hope* is found one hundred thirty times in the Bible; it is repeated fifteen times in the book of Job and twenty-two times in the Psalms. Both of these books lend themselves to serious crises and conflict, teaching us that in the midst of darkness we can hope, because deeply etched into the fabric of God’s character is the truth that He loves us and values us deeply. Not only does God promise to deliver us from all our fears and troubles,³⁰ but we can hope even when it appears that all hope is lost.³¹ Henry Nouwen writes, “The roots of loneliness are very deep and cannot be touched by optimistic advertisement, substitute love images or social togetherness. They find their food in the suspicion that there is no one who cares and offers love without conditions, and no place where we can be vulnerable without being used.”³² Because of our core value of hope, we are committed to

²⁹ Finzel, H. *Change is Like a Slinky*, Northfield Publishing 2004, p. 243

³⁰ Psalm 34

³¹ Lamentations 3:18-27

³² Nouwen, H. *The Spirituality of Fund-Raising*, Henry Nouwen Society, 2004, p. 19.

disarming distrust, removing masks, and breathing hope back into every life we come in contact with—it is for this reason we exist.

T – The core value, trust, is based on speaking the truth in love. Too often when there are hurt feelings, misunderstandings, and miscommunications, we build walls, become bitter, or attack. In order to function within an environment of grace, speaking the truth in love is necessary. No one enjoys confronting a problem, but if we are to maintain unity of spirit, practicing this core value is essential.

Here at Lamplighter we are intricately linked together as a team that needs each member's unique contributions. Each staff member is an integral part of the whole, and contributes greatly to the success of the ministry. No one is more important than another. To ensure that we maintain a unified team, we must speak the truth in love when we see a team member falling short in their commitment to excellence. Holding one another accountable raises the level of trust.³³ Truth spoken in love demonstrates the deepest level of commitment to our mission.³⁴

E – Endurance, Excellence, and Entrepreneurship. Please see pages 11 and 12 for a complete review of this core value.

R – Results Oriented, As the leader of Lamplighter Ministries, I am obsessed with a passion to build an organization that exudes excellence, flaming the fires of a motivated work force that imaginatively thinks outside the box in order to creatively meet the needs of others, is proactively innovative, and

³³ Kotter, J. P., *Leading Change*, Harvard Business School Press, 1996, p. 61, 63.

³⁴ See Galatians 6.

zealously contributes to continuous daily improvements (*kaizen*).³⁵ Even if we struggle with making a significant improvement today or even tomorrow, we will press on in the spirit of Albert Einstein who said, “I think and think for months and years. Ninety-nine times, the conclusion is false. The hundredth time, I am right.”

It has been said that people miss the mark because they are aiming in the wrong direction. Our bus is heading in a specific direction, but we have many seats that need to be filled. Those who would join us must first be warned, as did the famous explorer, Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton, before he set sail to the Antarctic:

*Men wanted for hazardous journey. Small wages, bitter cold,
long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return
doubtful. Honor and recognition in case of success.*

The same holds true here at Lamplighter. We are looking for men and women who are willing to give their lives for a greater cause, a specific result—to develop Christ-like character...one story at a time.

On this voyage, travelers must be passionate about the cause, or at least daring enough to see if their heart will follow their head and hands. Just as a seaman must respond to the changes in the sea, so too must our Lamplighter staff be quick to change sails to catch the current winds of our cultural and global economy. We have an overarching vision, clear, orienting values, and a strategic plan; but it is what we do from moment to moment that will make us truly a life-changing ministry.³⁶ Each staff member must be nimble, quick, and opportunistic.³⁷ These three characteristics are what made Southwest Airlines able to fly profitably for the last thirty consecutive years, even in the face of a failing industry. With a strong sense of urgency,³⁸ we can reach our desired results if we pursue information diligently (ask questions), communicate effectively, contribute thoughtfully (*kaizen*), are willing to take risks (never say I can't), quickly learn from our mistakes, and never stand still. An airplane that stands still while in the air will hit

³⁵ Finzel, H. *Change is Like a Slinky*, Northfield Publishing 2004, p. 39.

³⁶ Heifetz, R.A., Linsky, M. *Leadership On The Line*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, 2002, p. 73

³⁷ Finzel, H. *Change is Like a Slinky*, Northfield Publishing 2004, p. 29.

³⁸ Kotter, J. P. *The Heart of Change*, Harvard Business School Press, 2002 p. 15

bottom quickly. This is not to say that times of sobering reflection aren't necessary, but a healthy organization is one that is on the move. Revolutions do not wait for change; they cause change.

In his book *Change is Like a Slinky*, Hans Finzel tells the story about his trip to New York City, noting how many Starbucks he saw on almost every corner. He notes that in Vancouver, the taxi drivers claim there is only one street in the downtown area without a Starbucks!³⁹ But this was not always the case. In fact, before owning Starbucks, the owners resisted Howard Schultz's plans to serve coffee in the stores, saying it was not their goal to get into the restaurant business. After visiting Italy and seeing coffee bars on practically every block, he experienced an epiphany. He learned that they not only served excellent coffee, they also served as social gathering places that functioned as the societal glue, and there were over 200,000 of them! Frustrated, Schultz quit and started his own coffee-bar business; one year later he bought Starbucks for \$3.8 million. Even after 217 out of 242 investors turned him down, he passionately persevered, believing that those who cared more than others think wise, risk more than others think safe, dream more than others think practical, and expect more than other think possible, will birth dreams into reality.⁴⁰ The goal for Shultz was not just "to serve a great cup of coffee," but "to build a company with soul." Asked the secret of his success, Schultz recounts four principles: "Don't be threatened by people smarter than you. Compromise anything but your core values. Seek to renew yourself even when you are hitting home runs. And everything matters."⁴¹

We would like to model after Schultz in his belief that indeed, everything matters. Each phone call taken, each email answered, each package shipped, and each story written, are approached as if life hangs in the balance. That is why we are willing to give sacrificially; to not only build a company with soul, but "to save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins."⁴² This is the most desired result of all.

³⁹ Finzel, H. *Change is Like a Slinky*, Northfield Publishing 2004, p. 101

⁴⁰ Nightingale Conant. *Unlock the Leadership Code*:

http://www.nightingale.com/AE_Article~i~228~article~UnlocktheLeadershipCode.aspx

⁴¹ My Prime Time. *Great Entrepreneurs*, <http://www.myprimetime.com/work/ge/schultzbio/>

⁴² James 5:20

The reward for reaching our desired results will be first and foremost in the satisfaction of a job well done. There is a deep satisfaction that occurs within each of us when we have contributed something of value that makes a difference for eternity. But rewards also need to be in the form of compensation, organizational expansion, state-of-the-art equipment, and benefits for the care and future of each team member.

It is my heartfelt hope that the passion expressed in this paper will draw people who see Lamplighter as an exciting and fruitful platform from which they can fulfill their goals for the Kingdom of God. I am seeking partners who will enthusiastically contribute through prayer, finances, and expertise as they follow the promptings of the Spirit of God. I am seeking people who have been released from the bonds of obligation and with a spirit of gratitude are prepared to offer themselves freely and fully for the work of the Kingdom.⁴³

Philosophy and Biblical Theological Perspective for Donor Development:

John Piper said, “*God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him*” It is with this in mind that I will share Lamplighter’s philanthropic philosophy, which is based on the truths found in Exodus 36:

...every craftsman in whom the Lord has put skill and intelligence to know how to do any work in the construction of the sanctuary shall work in accordance with all that the Lord has commanded. And Moses called...every craftsman in whose mind the Lord had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work. And they received from Moses all the contribution that the people of Israel had brought for doing the work on the sanctuary. They still kept bringing him freewill offerings every morning, so that all the craftsmen who were doing every sort of task on the sanctuary came, each from the task that he was doing, and said to Moses, ‘The people bring much more than enough for doing the work that the Lord has commanded us to do.’ So Moses gave command, and word was proclaimed throughout the camp, ‘Let no man or woman do anything more for the contribution for the sanctuary.’ So the people were restrained from bringing, for the material they had was sufficient to do all the work, and more.

⁴³ Nouwen, H. *The Spirituality of Fund-Raising*, Henry Nouwen Society, 2004 p. 35.

Fourteen years ago, when Lamplighter Ministries was birthed, it was my personal goal to create a non-profit ministry that could generate its own revenue so that it would not be dependent upon donor support. Since that time, donor support has played a very minor role—less than 2%. My narrow-sightedness and misunderstanding of partnered relationships stalled the realization of goals that are part of a vision for the future, particularly dramatic audio, film, expanded seminars (which will include the ministry of drama and music), and the apprenticeship initiative.

Lamplighter began without any financial backing; it was brought forth through the sacrifice of the founders and initial staff. Because we have had the philosophy of zero debt, Lamplighter continues to operate in the black, though each month has brought its share of pressures. It was and is our belief that sowing the faithful seeds of our core values will attract and influence others toward Christ's likeness and will bring in needed resources and commitment in God's timing. According to Collins, in his treatise on *Building Momentum by Building the Brand*, the excellent results that Lamplighter has delivered should bring about greater resources and commitment, thus building a stronger organization and even better results. "This is the power of the flywheel. Success breeds support and commitment, which breeds even greater success, which breeds more support and commitment—round and around the flywheel goes. People like to support winners!"⁴⁴ Though I do not consider "winner" to be the term that describes Lamplighter, his concept is worth consideration. I would consider our present momentum as God's blessing and reward for years of consistent excellence and faithfulness to Kingdom principles.

I believe that the values, mission, and vision of Lamplighter Ministries are not only attracting ministries such as *Family Life Today*, *Revive Our Hearts*, and *Focus on the Family*, but is a platform from which others can fulfill their Kingdom mission.

My priority is not to increase our donor base, but to increase the transforming work of Christ in me and in those who would see Lamplighter as a platform from which to fulfill their Kingdom goals. It is a fact that the more grace we receive, the more we desire to give. We at Lamplighter are

⁴⁴ Collins, J. *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, A Monograph to Accompany *Good to Great*, p. 24.

motivated to give sacrificially through our service, creativity, and conviction of excellence, to reach and disciple those who are without hope. We are seeking partners who are motivated to give from their abundance to help us fulfill this mission together.

Jim Elliot said, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

Our eyes are on the King and His Kingdom, and the present state of mankind is not good. A PBS television program, *Affluenza*, gave the following statistics:⁴⁵

- The average American shops six hours a week while spending forty minutes playing with his/her children.
- By age twenty, we’ve seen one million commercials.
- In 2001, more Americans declared bankruptcy than graduated from college.

One of Lamplighter’s goals is to influence our image-oriented society with great Christian literature that reinstitutes family reading time in the home and provides role models for young people to emulate. We seek to provide opportunities to initiate discussion about important social issues and moral dilemmas through the reading of captivating stories. We live in an image-dominated culture that has produced monumental consequences: disregard for authority, the rewriting of history, lack of interest in science, self and pleasure-centeredness, and, according to G. E. Veith, the emergence of new values based on instant gratification and the need to be continually entertained.⁴⁶

Through Lamplighter’s great Christian literature and inspiring stories (through books and seminars), readers engage in principles from God’s Word on almost every page. I believe Lamplighter is truly a stealth operation, infusing our Godless culture with God’s life-sustaining, guiding, and life-changing Word.

As I mentioned previously, a very personal example is that which has recently occurred in the life of my dad. For over thirty years I have been praying for his salvation, or for fruit that would give me the assurance of his salvation. A Christless eternity terrifies me, especially for those I love so deeply. Six weeks ago I asked my dad to read *Buried in the Snow*, one of our favorite

⁴⁵ Alcorn, R. *The Treasure Principle*, Multnomah Publishers, Oregon, 2001. p. 50.

⁴⁶ Veith, G.E. *Reading Between the Lines*, Crossway Books, 2000, p. 21.

Lampighter children's books. I chose this story after receiving a letter from a fourth grade teacher who shared what a significant impact this story had on her class. I thought this would be a good place for my dad to start, if he was willing to read it. Read it he did! Now, six weeks later, he has read ten more books, and the latest report from my mother was that she wanted to know how to get him to stop! He called me and said, "Mark, these stories have really changed my life."

Why am I so passionate about re-establishing reading in the home? As I travel across the country, I am alarmed by a culture of young people who have no interest in reading. Reading cultivates a sustained attention span. It conditions us to think in terms of abstract ideas, objective truth, and sustained reflection. But television and other media that depend on images condition us to subjectivism. TV cultivates a short attention span and a purely emotional response. It increases the demand for constant, entertaining stimulation and undercuts the capacity for delayed gratification.

In his book *Reading Between the Lines*, Gene Edward Veith states;

Reading promotes continuity, the gradual accumulation of knowledge, and sustained exploration of ideas. Today we have become a nation of channel surfers, and we are paying the price in political apathy, moral indifference, and the mad pursuit of sensation. Even our books are often reduced to the entertainment formulas of the pop culture. The old problem was illiteracy, that many people could not read. Today, although illiteracy remains even in products of our school system, the bigger problem is a-literacy, that many people can read but never do. The new media conditions us for time-compressed experiences, short-term relationships, now-oriented achievement, easy and instant solutions.

Arthur W. Hunt, in his book, *The Vanishing Word*, reveals how Christianity and the written word have flourished together. He also discusses the consequences when the habit of reading is lost and people orient themselves to sensate images. Reading encourages thinking, meditating, and the nurturing of truth that connects with reason, but image cultures tend to be driven by subjectivism, superstition, hedonism, and propaganda. Statesmanship and debate that once captured the attention of audiences for hours, has now been reduced to sound bites of insults.

The great media critic, Neil Postman, revealed how reading encourages certain habits of the mind. Reading teaches children and even adults to think in a logically connected way. Most of our

current phenomenon of ADD would become less of a revenue source for the pharmaceutical companies if the minds of adults and children were once again being renewed through the transforming power of the Word of God.

Thankfully, we are making a difference. We receive hundreds of letters, emails, and phone calls that testify to the marvelous transformation that is taking place on a daily basis. A twelve-year-old girl wrote:

Dear Mr. Hamby,

Recently I read the Lamplighter book, Mary Jones and Her Bible. Since reading this story, I have not been able to stop thinking about how much Mary sacrificed to have her own Bible. Saving her money for ten years made me think that I have not tried to save for anything more than a few months. The value she placed on the Bible has truly changed my life. Since reading this story, I have been reading my Bible every day and whenever I have time throughout the day, I am finding things I didn't know were in the Bible and feel a sense of sheer splendor as I read. I just can't wait to read more, even during my breaks during school. Thank you so much for giving me a new perspective on what is truly most important in this life. My life will truly never be the same. Carla

Through stories of hope, we are giving children and adults inspiring role models to follow.

Collins brings forth a good point concerning what makes an organization worthy of support. He states: "The organization makes such a unique contribution to the communities it touches and does its work with such unadulterated excellence that if it were to disappear, it would leave a hole that could not be easily filled by any other institution on the planet...The organization can deliver exceptional results over a long period of time, beyond any single leader, great idea, market cycle, or well-funded program. When hit by setbacks, it bounces back even stronger than before."⁴⁷

With conviction and humility, I believe Collin's description of a great organization worthy of support describes Lamplighter Ministries. Supporting and partnering with us will help us to become an even greater organization so that we can have a greater impact upon society and the world. This requires, first and foremost, not a great program, but a great organization with a great staff and great partners.

⁴⁷ Collins, J. *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, A Monograph to Accompany *Good to Great*, p. 8.

C.T. Studd once said, “Only one life, ‘twill soon be past; only what’s done for Christ will last.” In regard to financial support, I recognize that neither I nor anyone else can out-give God. David teaches, “*But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from You, and we have given You only what comes from Your hand.*”⁴⁸ The prophet Malachi proclaims, “*Test Me in this...and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.*”⁴⁹

In his book, *The Treasure Principle*, Randy Alcorn tells the story of his friend Dixie Fraley who said, “We’re most like God when we’re giving. Gaze upon Christ long enough, and you’ll become more of a giver. Give long enough, and you’ll become more like Christ.”⁵⁰

Every organization rises and falls on leadership. At Lamplighter it is our conviction that each Lamplighter representative, from president to secretary, sees his/her primary role as a leader—a role model of Christ’s likeness. In the book of Chronicles we read: “*The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord.*”⁵¹ As goes the leader, so goes the organization. During the last fourteen years, the leadership of Lamplighter Ministries has enjoyed the capital of a blameless reputation and good standing with all who have participated with us. This unblemished record is recognized to be a blessing from the hand of God. To boast in our goodness is of no value, as He knows the heart of man. But as we strive to be servants of the most High, we count each day a privilege to serve Him and others. The rewards far outweigh the cost. The leadership at Lamplighter, by God’s grace, has been tried and proven to be worthy of one’s vested interest.

Summary:

It has been the purpose of this paper to demonstrate that Lamplighter Ministries possesses a Christ-centered mission, an attractive, worthwhile, achievable vision for the future, eternal values, and a trustworthy leadership team that is prepared to move forward with greater responsibilities,

⁴⁸ I Chronicles 29:1

⁴⁹ Malachi 3:10

⁵⁰ Alcorn, R. *The Treasure Principle*, Multnomah Publishers, Oregon, p. 30.

⁵¹ I Chronicles 29:9

greater faith, and greater support from those whom God would stir and lead. The Lamplighter team possesses the character qualities that make a truly great organization. We have counted the cost and are willing to sacrifice in order to finish our race.

During the time of the Judges in the Old Testament, the prophetess Deborah challenged Barak to go forth into battle because the Lord would give him victory. He recoiled and said that he wouldn't go unless Deborah went into the battle with him. I will never forget her words: "And she said, *'I will surely go with you. Nevertheless, the glory will not be yours on the road in which you are going.'*"⁵² Our Lamplighter team possesses the faith to be a front line organization that has and will continue to bring redemptive hope and inspiring role models to help make ready a people prepared for the Lord by building character, one story at a time.

In closing, I am reminded of the story of Mordecai and Esther, as he said to her: "*If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will rise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?*"

Implementation of Strategic Plan for Donor Development:

The first stage of the strategic plan is to contact our current prayer partners to begin a concerted effort in laying hold of the throne of God for the present work that Lamplighter is trying to accomplish. Prayer updates are sent by email to our prayer partners summarizing the accomplishments, trials, and needs of the Lamplighter team. Since these prayer teams have begun, we have experienced significant blessings and trials—the trials being that of greatly increased demand for our services and books, which has placed considerable pressure upon our staff. It appears that we are being tested in the areas that we believe to be our core values. Establishing a prayer partner team has been a very positive step forward as we move toward a greater network of support—both prayerfully and financially.

⁵² Judges 4:9

The second stage in the strategic plan for donor development is to contact each of our donors by phone to share the idea of building relationships, not building an empire. It is my intent to get to know each donor on a more personal level. Through personal meetings and telephone conversations, I believe Lamplighter will best be served by serving others. Therefore, I have decided to take Lamplighter to the people rather than waiting for the people to come to Lamplighter.

On August 10th my first meeting was scheduled. During this meeting we discussed the donors passions, their family, and what was important to them. Through their graciousness, I was given a tour of their Christian school and met with their school principal. This led to a new relationship, which opened the door to further ministry involvement and opportunity to fulfill our mission. The weekend turned out to be a perfect fulfillment of my desires. I am convinced that through fervent prayer, our prayer team made this possibility a reality.

The third stage in the implementation of this strategic plan involves the creation of a new network of potential supporters through the network of our existing donors. At the meeting we discussed this network of potential supporters, which was greeted with a positive response. A follow-up letter has been sent to encourage this family on a personal and spiritual level, and a second letter will follow to encourage the networking of potential supporters (both prayer supporters and donors). What I love is that none of this was preplanned, except for the initial meeting. I went with a genuine desire to build relationships. The third stage of this strategic plan came forth from our interaction and encouragement of one another to love and good works.

The fourth stage of this strategic plan is the creation of a ten-minute promotional film that shares the essence of our mission, vision, values, and strategic plan. This film will also show Lamplighter in action as well as interviews with those whose lives have been significantly changed for Christ. The film will be used for potential donors that we connect with via our current supporters.

The fifth and final stage is the creation of our web-based, long-term giving program. Working together with Philanthropy International, we will now be able to offer our supporters a Heritage Partner Program that will allow them to leave a legacy to Lamplighter Ministries. This partnership will provide via our website:

- Self Administered planned giving audit
- Volunteer planned giving officer to respond to inquiries
- Communications kit for message integration
- Quarterly activity report

Partnering with Philanthropy International will allow Lamplighter to offer the services of a planned giving officer with numerous support services without having to hire an internal officer at this critical stage of our ministry where we are experiencing unprecedented growth. Additionally, this partnership will provide professionally produced DVDs and marketing materials that deliver compelling, consistent and conservative messages related specifically to Lamplighter.

In closing, I am reminded that “unless the Lord builds the house, we labor in vain who build it.”⁵³ May God build this house, and may the light burn brightly for many generations to come.

⁵³ Psalm 127:1