

DAVID ASHCRAFT: The Summit Value of Humility (5:27)

It's very much an honor and a privilege to be part of The Global Leadership Summit. I, too, want to welcome you to the 29th Global Leadership Summit. Just so you know we are actually a part of a group of over 300,000 people in a whole lot of countries all around the world and all of us are trying to be better at leadership and, so welcome, good to have you here. Also, wanted to say thank you to Willow Creek Community Church, Pastor Dave Dummit for hosting us at South Barrington as the broadcast site. So, thank you to Willow Creek Church for having us here.

Because I'm here in a new position, and I've spent some time going back and looking to see what those who came before me; what did they say when we would start each leadership summit. I've taken the liberty to write down some of those comments, some of those challenges. Some of them I've written out word for word and I want to share with you some of those comments today because they are still true today, just as true as they were 29 years ago and over the last 29 years.

Bottom line, our mission as an organization is crystal clear. What we would like over the next several days is to actually stretch your minds. What we would like for you over the next several days is to grow your hearts and we would love to invest in your leadership development. We say it every year and we say it again and again. Craig's already said it today. Everyone wins when a leader gets better, and you are about to get better. You're about to be a better leader.

Now you and I both know that the stakes in leadership have never been higher. Our troubled world is demanding a better brand of leadership. Leadership that will unite instead of divide. Leadership that will build instead of tear down. Our world is wondering if there are any leaders left that will put the interests of others before their own self-interest. Our world is waiting for leaders that are bold enough to put a bold plan on the table as opposed to fighting with each other and kicking the can down the road.

Craig said already that we believe you are not here by accident. We believe it's your destiny to be seated in the seat you are right now and facing the exact set of circumstances that are challenging you today. For what it's worth you have been prayed for by more people than you would possibly imagine. And, at some point I really believe you will really feel the power of those prayers over time in your life.

Those of you that are veterans of the Summit know the highest value of the Summit is humility. It starts with each and every one of us declaring at the outset that we have so much more to learn about this mysterious powerful force that we call leadership. Here's what we know, armed with enough humility, leaders can learn from anyone. Pastors can learn from business leaders. Business leaders can learn from Pastors. Armed with enough humility, older people can learn from the younger and the younger from the older. In fact, with sufficient levels of humility the

religious among us can learn and grow from those who consider themselves less religious at this stage in their lives and vice versa. It's all about humility. It's all about learning.

And while this event emanates from a Christian church in Chicago, we hold sincere respect for those who consider themselves less religious. For those who may choose to worship differently or may choose to not worship at all. Our request is that you simply afford those of us who are trying to follow Jesus Christ, we would just ask that you afford us the same amount of respect.

So, when we pray, we would just say allow us to pray. Just humbly we ask for a spirit of humility and understanding and openness. And, if we grant one other these good gifts of respect and humility, I predict that amazing things are going to happen in each of our lives over the next several days.

So, before we welcome our next speaker I'm going to pause and I'm going to pray and I'm going to invite you to join me if you are so inclined. When we pray, we are simply talking to God. When we pray, we bow our heads and that's really a sign of respect to God. When we pray, typically we close our eyes and that's really to keep us from being distracted from the things that are going on around us. So, I'm going to pray, and I invite you to pray with me and let's ask God to continually bless our time together.

Heavenly Father, we just want to say today, thank you, as we start off the 2023 Leadership Summit. We just want to ask you to give us spirits of humility to learn from one another. God we're all here to improve in our leadership skills, our leadership capacity. God, I ask that you work in our hearts that in a spirit of humility, in a spirit of openness and understanding of others that you would use the speakers that are going to speak to us today and tomorrow and Father that we would walk out of each of the host sites different people as leaders that lead the people we trust and are willing to follow. God, thank you for this opportunity. Thank you for loving us and we love you and I pray in Jesus name. Amen.