

Hillcrest Encouragement

Elders

- John Barton
- Terry Brown
- Neal Coates
- Malcolm Coco
- David Copeland
- Ray Ferguson
- Duwain Houston
- Cam Hurst
- Robert Marion
- Charles Perkins
- Don Pope
- C. D. Pruett
- Jack Stewart
- Phil Vardiman
- Cledly Varner
- Gary Varner
- Steve Wages
- Jim Watts
- Odies Wright

Chairman of the Elders

Robert Marion
rmarion@hendrickhealth.org

Ministers

Alan Clute, *Involvement/Seniors*
aclute@hillcrestonline.com

Cynthia Coates, *Children's*
cynthia@hillcrestonline.com

Taylor Cockrell, *Assistant Youth*
taylor@hillcrestonline.com

Brian Davis, *Mission & Evangelism*
briandavis@hillcrestonline.com

Jack Hardcastle, *Family*
familyman@hillcrestonline.com

Justin Hatfield, *University*
justinhat@gmail.com

Matt Haynes, *Preaching*
matt@hillcrestonline.com

Evan Simmons, *Youth*
evan@hillcrestonline.com

Corrosive Power

In 1992, a Boeing 747 crashed in Amsterdam, taking the lives of over 50 people. In 1999, a Maltese oil tanker broke apart and sank, releasing 30,000 tons of oil in the process. Both of these disasters had the same cause: rust. Rust, or iron oxide, is created when iron substances are exposed to water, causing a breakdown of water molecules thereby allowing the resultant oxygen to bind with the iron to form iron oxide. The more water that iron is exposed to, the more quickly something will rust. As we all know, rust can convert something strong into something weak: a sturdy bridge can no longer support a car, and a durable boat may break apart and sink. Many of us have experienced the disappointment of rust on our belongings or things.

But what about us - can we "rust?" One thing that can "rust" a person's soul is power. As with rust and water, the more power an individual possesses the more quickly they will corrupt. In Tolkien's Lord of the Rings trilogy, the ring of power corrupts all who possess it; those who don't desire power, or those who are more simple or innocent, corrupt more slowly than those who willingly seek power. But in the end, power always corrupts. In agreement with Tolkien's notion, there are many biblical examples of this including kings David, Solomon, and Hezekiah. All these men were faithful in their youth, but after many years of being in power, they eventually succumbed to sins that prompted God's judgment. Likewise, American politics is replete with examples of corruption by those in power and sometimes when a nation becomes a world power, their abuses of power practically become a national pastime.

But God is different. Though He is all-powerful and has been so from before the creation of the universe, he remains incorruptible. No amount of power for any length of time will corrupt God. This should give us hope - that though we are weak and corruptible, He is not. When we need justice, He will be faithful and we will be delivered perhaps not in our timing, but at just the right time. Though we may be swayed by authority, charisma, or greed, God does not succumb and he judges justly.

Have you ever been in a position of power, one which prompted others to listen to you? Many of us have been in such capacities, whether as teachers, preachers, elders or executives, and these positions are worthy of aspiration because they can be used for good. Yet we must be careful as even the best of these positions can lead to the corrosion of our souls. To combat the corrosion, may we instead fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, doing nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but rather, in humility consider others better than ourselves (Hebrews 12:2; Philippians 2:3). Let us pray to increase in humility so we can minimize the corrosive effects of the power we wield.

Ryan Jessup

The Hillcrest family is led by the Holy Spirit to glorify God, proclaim the truth of Christ which transforms lives, and encourage one another toward faithful service and maturity.