LEADING TRANSFORMATION #11:
SOURCES OF GOOD CHARACTER (PART 2)

CULTURE
Culture is a collection of social norms that shape behavior in particular communities. There is a strong influence of culture on individual behaviors; and yet at the same time culture is the overall effect of individual behaviors. The two are therefore interrelated.

Culture is the social environment within which we live our lives. Its influence is revealed and clarified when it conflicts with other cultures. In essence, culture is a taken for granted influence until it is challenged. When enough individuals in a social context challenge selected elements of culture, it becomes possible to agitate for changes.

Culture is therefore dynamic; always changing. It has many facets including social media, global fashions or trends, and institutions of law and order.

People of good and consistent character are people who have come to the place of living both within and above culture.

RELIGION
Religion is perhaps the strongest external influence on human behavior. The reason is that it defies contemporary rationality and logic as its basis of validity. It claims supernatural revelation usually based on ancient wisdom. Hence good behavior as determined and demanded by religion is less negotiable. In other words, religion is based more on faith in ancient wisdom or revelation than on contemporary rationality or logic.

How is religion impacting our individual lives and cultures today? Are we translating our religiosity into spirituality based on principles that shape our morality and ethics? Is our leadership and governance informed by moral and ethical principles that are based on carefully selected and shared moral values? The answers to these questions determine the nature of the influence of religion on culture.

In conclusion, we have looked at 4 sources of good character—CONSCIENCE, NATURE, CULTURE and RELIGION. But there are other influences like FAMILY, EDUCATION, SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS, and CRITICAL EXPERIENCES that challenge assumptions and prejudices.