

Emergency Leadership Tips

“A Biblical Response to Moral Failure in Leadership”

A publication of
Leadership Development and Church Ministries
Open Bible Churches
Compiled by Dr. Paul Leavenworth

Fall 2006

LEADERSHIP QUOTES

Sin, Repentance, and Finishing Well

“Sin always takes you farther than you intended to go and costs you more than you intended to pay.”
J. Oswald Sanders

“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.” Galatians 6:7-10 (NIV)

“Evil does not have an independent existence, nor was it created by God. Evil is created by sin.”
Chuck Olson

“Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”
James 1:15 (NIV)

“We find ourselves dealing with the same [temptations] again and again because we usually never get to the thing causing us to be so susceptible; we never discover what is setting us up to be tempted the way we are.”
Charles Stanley

“Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”
II Timothy 2:22 (NIV)

FINISHING WELL

Introduction

“A leadership study of 100 Bible leaders revealed that one out of four finished well in life and ministry.”
J. Robert Clinton

Text

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”
II Timothy 4:7

Finishing Well – “...at the end of a person’s life, they have a vibrant, growing relationship with Christ and they have essentially fulfilled their calling and left a legacy of righteousness [for generations to come].” (Clinton)

1. They maintain a *vibrant relationship with God* to the end
2. They maintain a *learning posture* throughout life
3. They *model Christ like character* through the fruit of the Spirit throughout life
4. They live their lives in such a way that their *convictions and the promises of God were seen to be real* in their lives and ministries
5. They left behind one or more *contributions or a lasting legacy*
6. They lived their lives with a *growing sense of destiny and made the necessary sacrifices to realize this* to a significant degree

Barriers to Finishing Well

1. Sexual immorality – Samson (Judges 13-16)
2. Misuse of finances – Solomon (I Kings 6-7)
3. Abuse of power – Saul (I Samuel 18-19)
4. Self-centered pride – King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4)
5. Problems with marriage and family – David (II Samuel 15-18)
6. Life and ministry plateauing – Gideon (Judges 6-8)
7. Emotional wounding – Peter (Luke 22, John 21)

Characteristics of Those Who Finish Well

1. they had a *long term perspective* on life and ministry
2. they had an expectancy and periodic experiences of *personal renewal*
3. they practiced *spiritual disciplines* as a means of developing and maintaining intimacy with God
4. they had a *learning posture*
5. they were *accountable to others* in mentoring relationships

STAYING WELL

How to Keep from Burning Out or Blowing Out

Introduction

Two primary barriers to staying well are burning out (lack of abiding intimacy) and blowing out (lack of consistent integrity).

Text

“The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.” I Timothy 1:5

Goal

Love (agape) – “Christian love has God as its primary object, and expresses itself first of all in obedience to his commandments... Self-will, that is self-pleasing, is the negative of love to God... Christian love is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with natural inclinations... Love seeks the welfare of all (Romans 15:2) and works no ill to any (Romans 13:8-10), love seeks

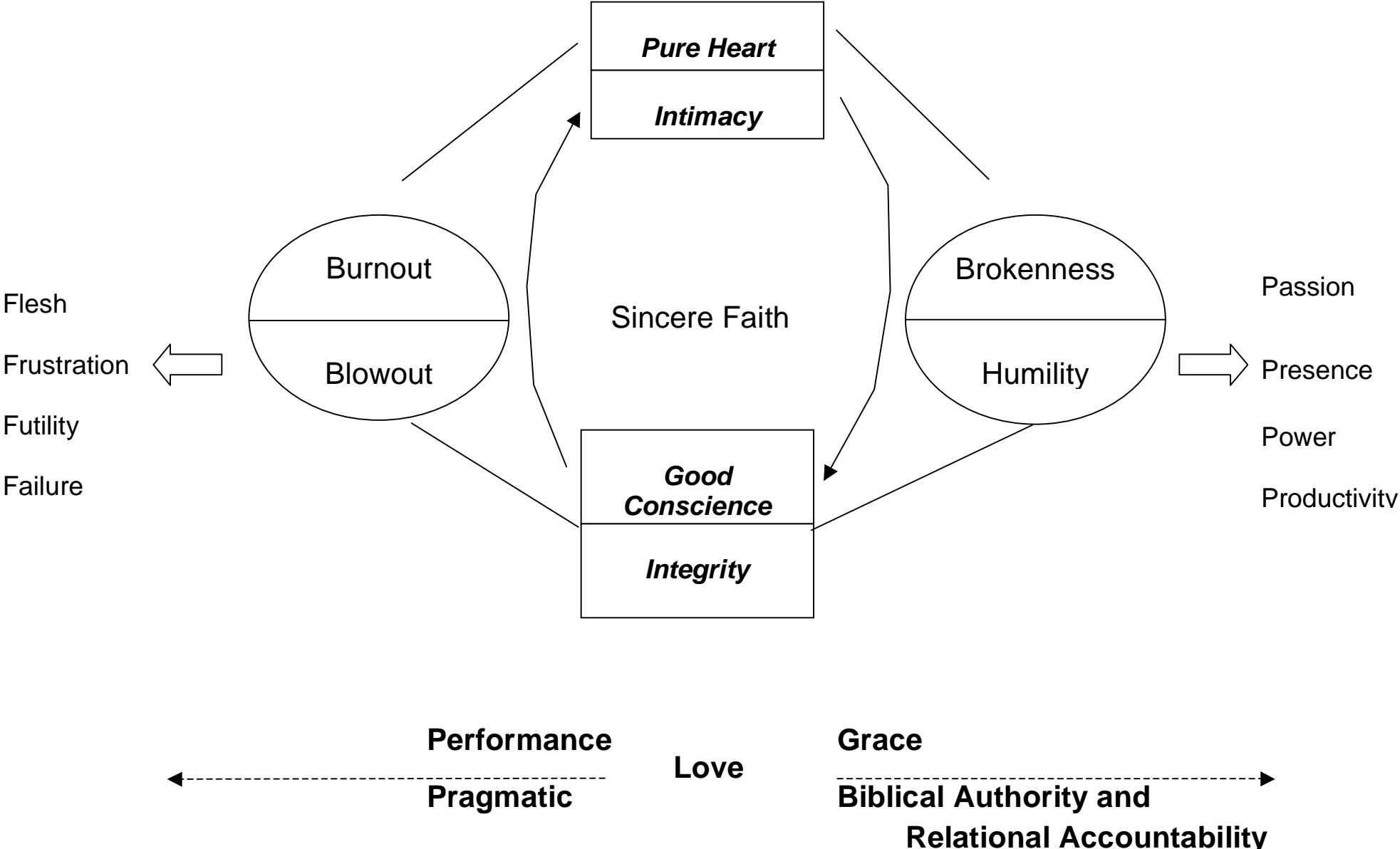
opportunity to do good to all (Galatians 6:10)... [it is part of the] fruit of spirit (Galatians 6:22, [it is the primary characteristic] of God (I John 4:8), [and is the primary means] for ministry (I Corinthians 13:1-3).”

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.” (Corinthians 13:4-8a)

Means to the Goal – from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

- **Pure heart** (kathros) – “free from impure admixture, without blemish, spotless...”
 - Critical for guarding intimacy and receiving revelation (Matthew 5:8)
- **Good conscience** (agathos) – “being good in its character or constitution”
 - Critical for guarding integrity (II Corinthians 2:10-11)
- **Sincere faith** (anupokritos) – “without hypocrisy...”
 - Critical for growth and maturity (Romans 1:17)

STAYING WELL: Avoiding the Pitfalls of Burnout and Blowout in Mid-Life Ministry (I Timothy 1:5)



10 Warning Signs of Burnout

1. Inconsistent devotional life (loss of sense of presence and peace of God)
2. Inability to manage daily schedule (regularly working more than 8 hour days)
3. Inconsistent day off (at least once per week)
4. Lack of recreational interests and regular exercise (2-3 times per week)
5. Frequent fatigue, discouragement, depression (prone to sickness)
6. Lack of enjoyment in life and ministry (frequent thoughts of quitting)
7. Frequent friction with spouse and children (easily frustrated and angry)
8. Frequent friction with box and staff/co-workers (easily impatient and judgmental)
9. Growing number of uncompleted tasks, projects (missed appointments and commitments)
10. Disconnection relationally with mentor(s) (lack of accountability)

0 – 2 OK, make sure that you are guarding and maintaining your intimacy with God

3 – 6 DANGER, evaluate honestly and take remedial action necessary to regain intimacy with God

7 – 10 CRISIS, stop what you are doing ASAP (even if it means resigning), get help, and take whatever remedial action necessary to regain intimacy with God

10 Warning Signs of Blowout

1. Secret life involving fantasy and behavior (eventually leading to bondage)
2. Justification of behaviors as personal “rights or liberties” (at the expense of living a life above reproach)
3. Inconsistent devotional life (loss of sense of presence and peace of God)
4. Lack of accountable relationships (unteachable and/or surrounding yourself with “yes” people)
5. Insistence of having your own way (dogmatic, argumentative, unwilling to compromise on “non-essentials”)
6. Pragmatic approach to life and ministry (the end justifies the means)
7. Blaming circumstances and/or others for problems (root of bitterness)
8. Tendency to use people up rather than build them up (viewing people as means rather than the end of ministry)
9. Neglect of primary relationships (spouse, children, key leaders/staff)
10. Dependence on personal power rather than spiritual authority (flesh versus spiritual power)

0 – 2 OK, make sure that you are guarding and maintaining your intimacy with God

3 – 6 DANGER, evaluate honestly and take remedial action necessary to regain intimacy with God

7 – 10 CRISIS, stop what you are doing ASAP (even if it means resigning), get help, and take whatever remedial action necessary to regain intimacy with God

SIN, REPENTANCE AND RESTORATION

In the life of David – Psalms 32 and 51 (II Samuel 11-12)

“Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven...” (Psalms 32:1)

“Have mercy on me, O God...” (Psalms 51:1)

Background

- David is about 50 years old and has served as king for about 20 years when he commits sins of adultery, cover-up and murder (II Samuel 11)
- Nathan, a prophet, confronts David about his sins (II Samuel 12)
- David repents of his sins (Psalms 32 and 51)
- Calamity in David’s household results (II Samuel 12:11)
- The child of adultery dies (II Samuel 12:18) and Solomon is conceived (II Samuel 12:24)

Observations

1. Sin separates us from God (and others)

- **Definition of sin** (hamartia) – “to miss the mark...a principle or source of action, or an inward element producing acts...” (Vine, *NT Words*)
 - **Sin is universal** (Romans 3:23), **the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin** (John 16:8), and **God is willing and able to forgive our sin** (I John 1:9)
- **Categories of sin**
 - Sins of ungodliness
 - Sins of unrighteousness
- **Pattern of sin** (James 1:14-15)
 - Step #1: Desire – stirring of the flesh
 - Step #2: Sin – willful embracing of desire
 - Step #3: Death – consequences of decision to live life apart from God

2. Repentance is the only way back to God (and others)

- **Definition of Repentance** (metanoia) – “to change one’s mind...to perceive afterwards...implying change...” (Vine, *NT Words*)

3. God forgives repentant sinners, but there are consequences from the sin

- **Definition of forgiveness** (aphesis) – “to send forth, send away...it involves the complete removal of the cause of offence...” (Vine, *NT Words*)
- **Characteristics of forgiveness**
 - Only possible because of what Christ has done for us – Mark 2:1-12
 - Forgiveness involves cleansing of moral stain – Isaiah 1:18
 - Forgiveness restores relationships – Luke 15:11-32
- **Forgiveness and consequences**
 - Forgiveness does not mean that there will not be consequences from our sin – II Samuel 12:11, 18
 - Consequences become the context to learn of God’s mercy – II Samuel 12:24
 - It is possible to have victory over sin through the power of the Spirit – Romans 6:11-14

Application

1. Everyone is vulnerable to sin, so we need to guard our relationship with God and learn how to resist temptations through the Spirit and truth
2. If we sin, we need to confess/repent right away and not let sin get a hold on our lives
3. If we sin and confess/repent, we need to submit to God in the working through of the consequences of our sin knowing that he can make something good out of it

Categories of Sin

(Smith, David L., *With Willful Intent: A Theology of Sin*)

Sins of Ungodliness

- Rebellion – “The willful rejection of and resistance to God’s standards.”
- Covenant unfaithfulness – “The fracture of the covenant effected between God and human beings.”
- Apostasy – “a form of rebellion on the part of those who have been accepted by covenant to become the people of God.”
- Idolatry – “the replacing of God with an object of one’s own choosing as the supreme recipient of one’s adoration.”
- Unbelief – “willful blindness to the truth and love of God as revealed in Christ Jesus.”

Sins of Unrighteousness

- Sensuousness – “the placing of the search for physical pleasure above all else in one’s life.”
- Selfishness – “the choice of self as the supreme end in one’s life (a form of idolatry).”
- Transgression – “a violation of the (biblical) standards or norms by which life is regulated.”