

**Part Three:**  
**The Costs of Leadership**

## PART THREE

### THE COST OF LEADERSHIP

All quotes are from *Spiritual Leadership* by J. Oswald Sanders unless otherwise noted.

#### I. The Cost of Leadership

But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you are asking for. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?'" **Mark 10:38**

"True leadership always exacts a heavy toll on the whole person, and the more effective the leadership is, the higher the price to be paid. A cross stands in the way of spiritual leadership, a cross upon which the leader must consent to be impaled. Heaven's demands are absolute. 'He laid down His life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.' (**1 John 3:16**) 'Whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and *to give His life* a ransom for man.' (**Mark 10:44-45**, italics added)."

#### A. **Time** – "Making the most of your time, because the days are evil." **Ephesians 5:16**

1. Leisure hours can be either a great opportunity or a subtle danger.
2. You have a limited number of hours to use. Where will you invest them?  
**Luke 19:12-27**
3. "After making a generous allowance of eight hours a day for sleep and rest – and few really need more than that – three hours a day for meals and social intercourse, ten hours a day for work and travel on five days, there still remain no fewer than thirty-five hours unaccounted for in each week. What happens to them? How are the extra two days in the week invested? The whole of a person's contribution to the kingdom of God might well turn upon how those crucial hours are employed."
4. Invest in what God has called you to, **not what seems important.**
5. "You can't heal them all" – Jesus didn't!

"Few things tend to bring a conscientious leader into bondage more than the use of their time, and a balanced view of the matter must be arrived at. If they do not find a satisfactory answer, they will work under unnecessary strain. Even after they have done everything in their power to fulfill their

obligations, there will still remain vast areas of unmet need. Every call for help is by no means necessarily a call from God, for every such call cannot be responded to. If they sincerely plan their day in the Lord's presence and carries out that plan to the best of their ability, they can and must leave it there. Their responsibility extends only to those matters that lie within their control. The rest they can trustfully commit to their loving and competent heavenly Father."

## B. Criticism

1. **It can kill your heart.**
2. **It isn't always (often) Godly.**
3. "No leader is exempt from criticism, and his humility will nowhere be seen more clearly than in the manner in which he accepts and reacts to it."
4. "Samuel Brengle, who was noted for his genuine holiness, had been subjected to caustic criticism. Instead of replying in kind or resorting to self-justification, he replied; 'From my heart I thank you for your rebuke. I think I deserved it. Will you, my comrade, remember me in prayer?' On another occasion, a biting, censorious attack was made on his spiritual life. His answer was: 'I thank you for your criticism of my life. It set me to self-examination and heart searching and prayer, which always leads me into a deeper sense of my utter dependence on Jesus for holiness of heart, and into sweeter fellowship with Him.' With such an attitude, criticism is turned from a curse into a blessing, from a liability into an asset."

## C. Pressure

"We are **afflicted** in every way, but not crushed; **perplexed**, but not despairing; **persecuted**, but not forsaken; **struck down**, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body." **2 Corinthians 4:8-10**

1. "It might be thought by those who have not found themselves in a position of leadership that greater experience and a longer walk with God would result in much greater ease in discerning the will of God in perplexing situations. But the reverse is often the case. God treats the leaders as a mature adult, leaving more and more to their spiritual discernment, and giving fewer sensible and tangible evidences of His guidance than in earlier years. That perplexity adds to the inevitable pressures incidental to any responsible office."
2. "D.E. Hoste said to a friend: 'Mr. Hudson Taylor helped me very much. We were talking about guidance. He said how in his younger days, things used

to come so clearly, so quickly to him. "But," he said, "now as I have gone on, and God has used me more and more, I seem often to be like a man going along in a fog. I do not know what to do." 'But when the time came to act, God always responded to His servant's trust."

D. **Responsibilities** – "Preach the Word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction." **2 Timothy 4:2**

### 1. **Welfare of Others**

- a. "The true leader regards the welfare of others rather than their own comfort and prestige as a primary concern."
- b. "In an address giving some of the secret of Hudson Taylor's remarkably successful leadership, his successor, D.E. Hoste, said: 'Another secret of his influence among us lay in his great sympathy and thoughtful consideration for the welfare and comfort of those about him. The high standard of self-sacrifice and toil which he ever kept before himself, never made him lacking in tenderness, and sympathy toward those who were not able to go as far as he did in these respects. He manifested great tenderness and patience toward the failures and shortcomings of his brethren, and was thus able in many cases to help them reach a higher plane of devotion.'"

### 2. **To Discipline**

- a. "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted." **Galatians 6:1**

"And yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." **2 Thessalonians 3:15**

"Wherefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him." **2 Corinthians 2:8**

- b. "In approaching a matter that appears to require disciplinary action, five points should be borne in mind: (1) Such action should be taken only after the most thorough and impartial inquiry, (2) it should be undertaken only when it would be for the overall good of the work and the individual, (3) it should always be in a spirit of genuine love and conducted in the most considerate manner, (4) it should always be with the spiritual help and restoration of the offender in view, and (5) it should be done only with much prayer."

### 3. To Guide

"The ideal leader," said A.W. Tozer, "is one who hears the voice of God, and beckons on as the voice calls him and them."

### 4. To Risk

#### a. Vision

#### b. Venturesomeness

- 1) Can't always play it the same.
- 2) "The greatest achievements in the history of the church and of missions have been the outcome of some leader in touch with God taking courageous, carefully calculated risks."

## II. Perils of Leadership

"But I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified." **1 Corinthians 9:27**

A leader must remember "that 'Sabbathless Satan,' their relentless enemy, will take advantage of every inch of ground they concede in any area of their life."

### A. **Pride** – 3 Tests:

1. "**The test of precedence**. How do we react when another is selected for the assignment we expected or for the office we coveted? When another is promoted and we are overlooked? When another outshines us in gifts and accomplishments?"
2. "**The test of sincerity**. In our moments of honest self-criticism we will say many things about ourselves and really mean them. But how do we feel when others, especially our rivals say exactly the same things about us?"
3. "**The test of criticism**. Does criticism arouse hostility and resentment in our hearts and cause us to fly to immediate self-justification? Do we hasten to criticize the critic?"

### B. **Popularity (Hero Worship)**

1. Don't allow esteem to become adulation.
2. Refuse absolutely to be idolized.

3. "Success can go to my head, and will unless I remember that it is God who accomplishes the work, that He can continue to do so without my help, and that He will be able to make out with other means whenever He cuts me down to size." Spurgeon

### C. Infallibility

1. Being filled with the Spirit does not make one infallible.
2. "The leader who knows God, and probably knows Him better than his/her colleagues, is in danger of falling unconsciously into this subtle peril. Because his/her judgment has usually proved more accurate than theirs, because he/she has prayed and thought and wrestled with the problem more earnestly than they, it is difficult for him/her to concede the possibility of mistake and to yield to the judgment of his/her brethren. He/she must be a person of conviction and be prepared to stand for what he/she believes, but that is different from assuming virtual infallibility. Willingness to concede the possibility of an error of judgment and to defer to the judgment of one's brethren enhances rather than diminishes influence."

### D. Disqualification

"But I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified." **1 Corinthians 9:27**

1. The word "castaway" or "disapproved" = used metals that after being tested fail to survive and are discarded.
2. We must always be aware of our great enemies: Satan, World, and ourselves.
3. "In our studies of leaders, we can clearly conclude with few exceptions that those who experienced anointed ministry and finished well had a significant network of meaningful relationships that inspired, challenged, listened, pursued, developed, and held one another accountable." Robert Clinton
4. "Why do so many followers of Christ have so few friends? Can we lay the blame on individualism, which tells us that we must make it on our own and that seeking another's help is a sign of weakness? How about mobility? Most families move every three to four years. Time-oriented societies like America believe that "time is money" so relationships become subordinate to time. These all may affect our relationship building, but each one can be overcome if the commitment is present." Robert Clinton
5. "Sin always tends to make us blind to our own faults. We need a friend to stop us from deceiving ourselves that what we are doing is not so bad after

all. We need a friend to help us overcome our low-image, inflated self-importance, selfishness, pride, our deceitful nature, our dangerous fantasies, and so much else." Dr. James Houston

## E. Plateauing

"I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." **Philippians 3:14**

1. When a leader's motivation is other than being all God wants them to be, they often quit growing when esteemed, quit growing when comfortable.
2. Issue of Comfort
  - a. Skills must be challenged
  - b. Discernment sharpened
  - c. Spirit remain teachable
3. Preventing Plateauing
  - a. Love, compassion, and discernment must grow, not shrink.
  - b. Mature ministry flows through tested characters.
  - c. Spiritual authority is not a goal, but a by-product of a teachable spirit.

## F. Conflict

1. Used by God to deepen us
2. Exposes our weaknesses, inner fears
3. Teaches us to resolve issues
4. Drives us to God or away from God
5. Remember life is school and conflict is often graduate school, which forms mature character out of which will flow mature ministry.
6. Psalm 3

## G. Authority

1. "A developing leader will usually struggle with someone who is in authority over them. Learning submission is critical to learning what authority is, so emerging leaders must first learn to submit." Robert Clinton
  2. Conflict in ministry arises from several issues, including:
    - a. Philosophy of ministry (your approach vs. theirs)
    - b. Personality conflicts. "Healthy relationships are essential to effective ministry." Robert Clinton
    - c. Jesus paid great tribute to the one who understood authority. **Matthew 8:5-13**
    - d. David understood that Saul's authority was from God and being right was not as important as obeying God.
- H. "Our studies on how leaders develop over a lifetime indicate that *few leaders finish well*. There are numerous pivotal points in their lives where they can go astray. Five common pivotal points include:
1. Sexual relationships
  2. Power
  3. Pride
  4. Family
  5. Attitude toward and use of money