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The Leadership Dynamic:

A Biblical Model for Raising Effective Leaders

A Quick Focus

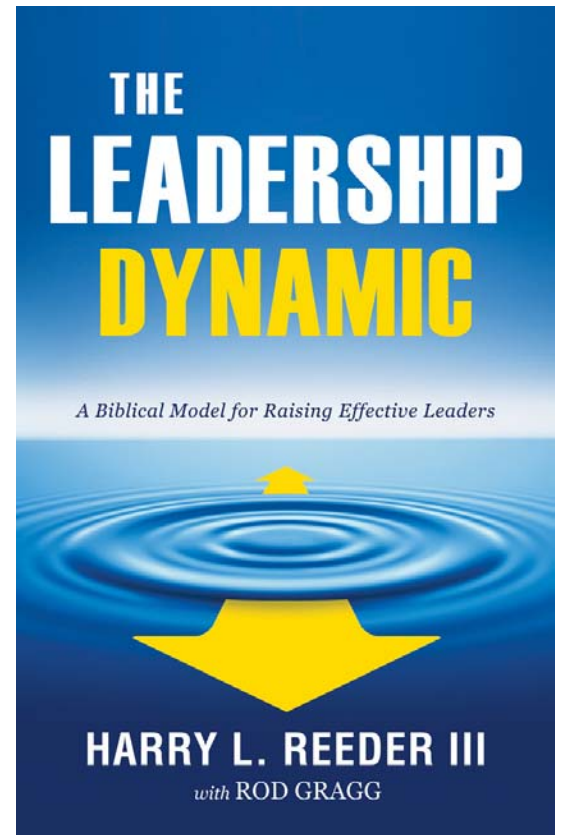
The Book's Purpose

- Call the church to turn away from the world's teachings on leadership and return to the biblical model
- Provide a biblical definition of leadership
- Teach how we can develop leaders the way Jesus developed them
- Urge churches to become distribution centers for deploying biblically trained leaders into the world

The Book's Message

The American church is on a downward spiral accelerated by worldly leadership. Instead of going to God's Word as the basis for developing leaders, churches have adopted the models of big business. Certainly, churches can profit from corporate principles. But the church is not a business; and pastors are not CEOs.

Churches must rise above such worldly models and return to biblical leadership principles. They must study the life of Christ and the way He trained His disciples. The biblical model focuses on a three-fold strategy that involves defining, developing, and deploying believers who will model Christ-centered leadership and intentionally multiply themselves for the purpose of transforming the world.



by Harry L. Reeder III with Rod Gragg
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Eight Main Points

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Clarifying the Model

Leadership based on the world's wisdom will always ultimately conflict with God's Word. So why would Christians want to learn from the world's model?

The American Model

Today's church inflicts itself with a poisonous wound when it practices leadership principles of corporate America's board rooms. Traditional American capitalism has been supplanted by a contemporary capitalism based on greed, wealth, and secular humanism. In this country's early days, Christians helped birth a capitalistic approach that promoted servant leadership based on a biblical model. But modern capitalism is marked by self-absorbed leadership. It focuses on the leader and not on leadership. Power and profits are the bottom line.

“The lack of biblically based leadership in American culture has left our society reeling like a boxer on the ropes after a knockout punch.”

The Biblical Model

The way to gain lost ground is to reject the world's model and to emulate the one that God provides in the Scriptures. Following the biblical model will require more than a few sermons and leadership classes.

“The Christian church must become a leadership factory and distribution center for the world, and by the grace of God, it can ...”

Too many unbiblical models have infiltrated the church under a Christian label. These counterfeits have names such as self-esteem and material prosperity. Since the Bible teaches sacrifice, suffering, and self-denial, we must repent for allowing these substitutions to infiltrate our churches.

3-D Leadership

Regaining a biblical model for leadership requires a strategic, focused pursuit of three primary initiatives. We call these initiatives the “Three Ds of biblical leadership.”

First, we must **define** leadership. Today's congregations tend to be biblically illiterate. Jesus' words about the first being last and the last first might sound familiar; but the words rarely find their way into the lifestyle of to-

day's leader. People are hungry for authentic leadership, not only in our churches but throughout the world. Leaders who live out the biblical model are sacrificial, courageous, nurturing, compassionate, and visionary. God has called congregations to produce this kind of leader so that the churches become factories and distribution centers for biblically trained leaders.

Second, we must **develop** godly leaders. How? By making disciples. By definition, biblical leaders develop other leaders. They multiply and reproduce more and more leaders.

Third, we must **deploy** these leaders in the church and around the world. These deployed leaders, if developed biblically, will be armed with the love of Christ and the truth of God's Word. They will permeate every realm of society as business leaders, parents, law enforcement officers, attorneys, and elected officials.

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Building A Definition

To build an adequate definition of leadership, we first must look to Christ, the ultimate model to follow. He demonstrated what a leader is, how to produce leaders, and how to keep leaders focused and unified around the vision. Here is a definition based on the Jesus model: *“A leader influences others to effectively achieve a defined mission together.”* To help understand this definition, let's look at three of the key words.

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Influence

As influencer, the leader must develop five leadership skills.

Modeling. First, the leader influences others to imitate him. Unless his walk matches his talk, he will never be a successful leader. Jesus modeled; then He mentored. Most of what the disciples learned from Jesus they acquired from watching Him and then imitating Him.

Mentoring. Second, the leader influences others by educating them. Until people know the right thing to do, they cannot do it. For example, in Acts, Apollos was passionate about working for the Lord, but he didn't have adequate knowledge. Aquila and Priscilla provided the instruction (mentoring) he needed (Acts 18:26).

Motivating. Third, the leader inspires others through empowerment. Many stories could be told about Douglas MacArthur. As colonel he assigned the second-in-command to a most strategic charge and assured the major that he would receive an award similar to the one he was wearing. MacArthur walked away, but then turned back to the man and gave him his own medal and told him he wasn't going to wait until the end of the battle. That's empowerment.

Managing. Fourth, the leader equips others for the purpose of implementation. He provides them with all the resources needed for success. Nothing can be more frustrating than having an assignment with no resources to accomplish the task.

Ministering. Fifth, the leader evaluates his team for the purpose of improvement. If he truly loves his team, after a task is completed, the leader will take the time for both celebration and evaluation. Evaluation reveals strengths and weaknesses that will allow for future growth and development.

“To press on without taking the time for celebration and evaluation is demoralizing and therefore counterproductive.”

Effectiveness

Big business in America promotes efficiency. Christian leadership focuses (in order) on faithfulness, effectiveness, and then efficiency. To develop future leaders along these focus areas requires four steps.

First, there must be a commitment to doing the right things (effectiveness). Christian leaders must prioritize those biblical responsibilities and relationships that are essential for a life that glorifies God. Time in prayer, in the Word, and in worship is absolutely essential. So is time spent with spouses and children.

“In today's society, leaders are encouraged to learn efficiency for the purpose of multitasking~but doing the right thing is more important than doing many things.”

Second, there must be a commitment to doing things the right way (excellence). “Well done” are the words we want to hear our Savior say. Notice the first word in that phrase~well. The word suggests excellence, not mediocrity. We may not ever be the best at anything; but we can always do our best in everything.

Third, there must be a commitment to doing the right thing in the right way and at the right time (efficiency). This step is evident when a pastor decides to take someone with him when he visits the hospitals. By doing so, he is not only showing his love and care for the flock but also equipping new leaders.

Fourth, there must be a commitment to doing everything for the right reasons. The two highest priorities in kingdom work are glorifying God and edifying others. The two greatest commandments reflect these priorities: love God and love your neighbor.

Togetherness

The principles for effective leadership listed above tend to bring people together. Three team building dynamics will produce a healthy leadership team.

First, a unified team must accept the team leader. People don't automatically follow just because someone has a title. Members must be placed on the right team. And then they must follow, support, embrace, and encourage the leader.

“Diversity brings strength, but only with unity~and team unity begins with the acceptance of the team leader.”

BUILDING A DEFINITION

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Second, the team must be completely unified around the defined mission. Personal agendas must be set aside or the team will never be able to function.

Third, it is essential that team members accept one another. In productive and in tough times, there must be mutual appreciation and support of each other.

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Instilling the Qualities

Why do churches go after personalities, occupations, or professional achievements when the biblical qualifications are so easy to find in the Scriptures? Compiling the teachings of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 allows us to identify four qualities required of every Christian leader.

Four Qualities

The first quality is the presence of a divine call.

“The leader seeks the position, the position does not seek the leader.”

The leader's call is both internal and external. Internally, the Holy Spirit calls the person and gives him the passion and motivation to use his God-given gifts. This drive comes not from an inflated ego but from a selfless desire to serve. Externally, the leader seeks affirmation and verification from Spirit-led church members.

The second quality is godliness, a trait that is more important than giftedness. Giftedness without godliness will lead to destruction. We learn in 1 Timothy 3:2 that the leader must be above reproach. Only God can produce true godliness. And He produces it only when the person lovingly submits to the Father.

The third quality is a disciplined lifestyle. The leader demonstrates maturity through how effectively he leads his family. The extent to which his church affirms him and his community respects him are other barometers of a leader's godly lifestyle. God is not just at the top of his priority list. He is the priority list-period. When Christ is Lord, all other priorities fall into place.

Finally, the leader is a position-bearer, not a position-wearer. The Timothy and Titus passages remind us that leadership is hard work that is filled with pressures. It requires sacrifice. The Christian leader is not after a title that will look good on a resume. Instead, he serves for the purpose of glorifying His Lord and shepherding his family and congregation.

“Leadership is a call of love and passion, but it's also *work-hard work*: the work of mature faith rooted in the sufficiency of Christ and growing us in grace, maturing in leadership, and walking confidently and carefully for Christ.”

Three Traps

Rest assured that Satan always attacks leaders. He successfully uses three common schemes to destroy them. Leaders must know how to avoid these traps.

The first trap is laziness. The congregation depends on its leaders. So, there is no room for indolence. Proverbs reminds us that an undisciplined life does not bring glory to God. Jesus was never hurried but was always moving to the next task. He was energetic and focused. The Christian leader must never put himself in the position of being accused of laziness.

The second pitfall is immorality. Nothing destroys a Christian leader more quickly than sexual immorality. Certainly, sexual immorality is not the unpardonable sin. But to be restored to ministry after a moral failure requires extensive counseling over a lengthy period of time. God's advice is straightforward and simple: flee every temptation. One of the most effective means of guarding against this trap is to find an accountability partner with whom to meet regularly.

The third trap is insubordination. A leader is not prepared to lead anyone if he cannot submit to others. Hebrews 13:17 reminds us that we must submit to our leaders. Members submit to leaders;

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INSTILLING THE QUALITIES

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leaders submit to those in authority over them. The leader who habitually fails to submit disqualifies himself from biblical leadership.

“The privilege of leadership does not elevate the leader above submission; instead, it calls the leader to be a model of submission.”

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Developing Leaders

Leadership can be learned and developed, even if one is not a natural leader. Jesus represents the only person who ever developed perfectly. Luke 2:52 summarizes, “And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.” This verse gives us the biblically based plan for leadership formation.

“The Word of God has thus given us a biblically defined plan for personal formation that is far wiser than anything that human ingenuity could produce, and our Savior has given us the power by his transforming grace to enact it.”

Intellectual Formation

“Jesus increased in wisdom.” Wisdom is apparent in the one who makes God-honoring decisions. The book of Proverbs teaches us that wisdom comes from fearing the Lord. To fear God means that we love Him intimately and reverently. The Bible also reminds us that wisdom is ultimately demonstrated by how we behave.

Knowledge is insufficient. Nowhere in the Bible does God tell us that we need to be smart. But He does expect us to have wisdom. And that wisdom begins by acknowledging that God is sovereign over the universe, by behaving in a way that honors Him, and by obeying His Word.

Physical Formation

“Jesus increased in ... stature.” The Bible teaches clearly that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. As such, we should always strive to prioritize rest, exercise, and diet. We should never live to eat because that is idolatry. Instead, we should eat to live for Christ and His glory. This latter approach is an act of worship.

Daily rest is also important. God commanded us to labor for six days and then to rest on the seventh. God gave the Lord’s Day as a gift to us. In the Gospel account in which the disciples could not stay awake to pray, Jesus knew that in their hearts they really wanted to pray for Him. But physically they were not prepared for such a task.

The apostle Paul stayed in physical shape because he knew the demands of ministry were difficult. First Corinthians 9:7 informs us that he buffeted his body so that he would be prepared for upcoming challenges. We need spiritual discipline first because it directly impacts our physical discipline. Spiritual growth, without fail, encourages physical discipline.

“Your body is not a container that carries your spirit and soul. Your body is like a single thread, and your spirit and soul is another thread. These two threads are woven into one cloth, which is your life. What you do to one inevitably will affect the other.”

Spiritual Formation

“Jesus increased ... in favor with God.” What keeps people from living the lifestyle of a genuine Christ-filled disciple?

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DEVELOPING LEADERS

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First is not being able to say no. Christians are far too busy. They let the world establish their schedule.

Second is not spending time alone with God. When things get busy, a person's quiet time is often the first thing to go.

Third is living beyond one's means. Materialism is alive and well. Believers need to practice the discipline of setting aside the tithe and other offerings first and then living off the rest.

Fourth is passing up the opportunity to give sacrificially. When Christians discipline their spending habits, they will be able to give sacrificially when special needs arise.

Fifth is giving in to sexual sin. Whether it is pornography or adultery, sexual sin will zap the spiritual vitality out of anyone.

Relational Formation

"Jesus increased ... in favor with ... man." Developing meaningful relationships is an essential part of the leadership development process. The Luke 2:52 passage includes developing relationships with both the lost and the saved. The lost should see that Christians are different, that they demonstrate a loving and caring heart. They should see the sacrificial and humble model of Christ. The greatest thing a Christ-follower can do for the Father is to show the Father's love to others. Every relationship is affected by one's relationship with the Lord.

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Growing the Heart

Christian leaders must understand the difference between being a rancher and a shepherd. A rancher drives herds, cracks the whip, and instills fear. A shepherd leads the flocks and knows the sheep by name.

"Ranchers drive herds and shepherds lead flocks."

It was no accident that the Lord referred to Jesus as the Good Shepherd and His followers as the sheep. Leading sheep requires a heart that is constantly growing.

A Shepherd's Heart

A shepherd knows his sheep, and they are able to recognize his voice. The ability to establish this type of relationship grows out of a genuine love for the Lord and His people. It requires time to know the needs of the people and to be there for them when they are in need.

A shepherd is also willing to lay down his life for the sheep. Of course, Jesus is our ultimate model. A Christ-centered leader will set the pace by positioning himself in front of the sheep. A false shepherd will abandon

the sheep when the heat is on. A false shepherd seeks profit from the sheep, while the true shepherd sacrifices for the sheep.

A Servant's Heart

We all know how important a servant's heart is. But it is more often taught than modeled. This truth is especially prevalent in America where Christian leaders would rather rule than serve. Once again, we look to Christ who modeled the heart of a servant leader when He took a towel and washed His disciples' feet. Jesus is the perfect example. Christian leaders must learn to serve everyone and not seek to lord it over anyone.

"Jesus Christ calls us to be leaders who serve, not lords who abuse."

Servant leadership actually doesn't require a lot of instruction. But it does require a lot of humility and motivation. Leaders seek to serve and not to be served. It is the small, everyday, seemingly insignificant things that evidence a servant's heart.

A Superintendent's Heart

It is not sufficient just to have the heart of a shepherd and a servant. Sheep also need someone to oversee them. Leaders, according to 1 Timothy 3:4-5, must know how to superintend people and processes. Such leadership begins with managing one's own family well. Managing the household well equips one for effective church leadership.

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“When you exercise superintendent leadership, whether in the home or in the church, not only do those in your care grow in the Lord, but so do you.”

How does the leader learn to develop the heart and skill of a superintendent? By knowing what God teaches in His Word. The congregational leader is responsible for overseeing the public “means of grace,” including the preaching of God’s Word, public prayer, ministry, fellowship, evangelism, and the sacraments.

Leadership Styles

As leaders seek to grow the heart of a shepherd, servant, and superintendent, they will do so by using their own unique personalities and God-given gifts. Generally speaking, three Bible-based leadership styles can be identified. The first is authoritative leadership. This type of leadership is needed when clear, direct orders are needed. For example, in emergency situations, such as disaster relief, decisive and responsive leadership is needed. However, it should be noted that this style of leadership is short-term. After the emergency is over, authoritative leadership tends to produce confusion and discouragement.

The second style is participatory leadership. Superior to the authoritative style, participatory leadership is great at building respect and encouragement, and reproducing and multiplying leaders. Mutual respect and high morale are natural byproducts of this style.

The third style is delegated leadership. This style most effectively promotes 3-D Leadership. To delegate responsibility requires defining, developing, and deploying new leaders on the basis of their passions and spiritual gifts. This style should be the norm in local congregations.

“Please, Lord, enable me to lead like Christ~ the Good Shepherd, the Suffering Servant, and Vigilant Superintendent. May my leadership be marked by the ways of your Word and not by the ways of the world.”

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Multiplying Leaders

Acts 2 describes life in the early church. It tells how the new believers loved to worship, pray, hear God’s Word, and give. It also reports the amazing multiplication of leaders who had been equipped by the apostles Christ had trained.

The Early Church Leaders

One early convert’s life had been so drastically transformed that his name was changed to fit his strengths of sacrificial giving and encourage-

ment. The old Joseph received the new name Barnabas (literally, “Son of Encouragement”) because of the new heart God had given him.

Another drastic conversion happened in the life of someone who terrorized, imprisoned, and even killed Christians. Saul’s name was changed to Paul (literally, “small”) to describe his genuine humility. Soon after his conversion other believers were skeptical that he had really changed. But Barnabas defended him and spent a lot of time discipling him. Before long, Paul emerged as a strong leader, and Barnabas found himself playing the role of second fiddle.

We also see Paul and Barnabas equipping other leaders. Paul tutored Silas; Barnabas tutored John Mark, who later became a strategic leader in Peter’s ministry.

The Multiplication Model

Jesus modeled leadership deployment with his disciples. They in turn multiplied disciples who became key leaders in the early church. In his final letter to Timothy, Paul put in writing the model that Jesus demonstrated.

**“You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also”
(2 Timothy 2:1-2).**

Notice the progression in this text. Paul, who in these verses is the principal leader, imitated Christ. Timothy, who learned under Paul, became a proven leader. Timothy continued the multiplication process by developing potential leaders who had proven to be faithful. These potential leaders were to pour their lives into possible leaders. This model is still effective today when the pastor is the principal leader. He invests time discipling proven leaders (staff, other key leaders). The staff and other key leaders train potential leaders, who then develop teams of possible leaders.

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When this biblical model is practiced, tremendous benefits follow. For example, many proven leaders emerge through experience and training. Moreover, the 3-D model is implemented through the life of the church. The pastor holds the key. When he is willing to work intentionally through leadership teams, the church becomes a factory for deploying equipped and effective leaders throughout the community and into the world. This model is the plan Jesus had in mind when He issued the Great Commission.

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Selecting Leaders

A leader never uses the Lone Ranger approach. Selecting other leaders is crucial to carrying out the 3-D model. But what is the best way to find these leaders?

Six-Fold Criteria

Before selecting leaders, one must determine the criteria by which he will select them. First, he must seek a person who has a calling. Has God called the person to lead? Is he willing to pay the price? Do others recognize him as a leader? Second, he must seek a person of character. Just because someone is saved and has spiritual gifts does not qualify him for leadership. The Bible teaches clearly that leaders are called to a higher standard. Third, he must select a person of content (one who is knowledgeable). The candidate must have a firm grasp on the Word of God and understand what it means to be a follower of Christ. He should also understand Christian leadership in general and should be an “expert” in his area of ministry in particular.

Fourth, the leader should select someone who is competent. It is insufficient just to be knowledgeable. The prospective leader must have a high competency level in the skills needed to accomplish the ministry assigned to him. Fifth, the leader should select someone with an unwavering commitment to the task. The commitment should not be motivated by self-fulfillment but by self-sacrifice. Sixth, the leader must consider chemistry, how well the person works on a team, both in relationships and in performance.

Other Considerations

In addition to the criteria listed above, the leader must not overlook or neglect the importance of prayer or the wise counsel of others. He should develop a team who places top priority on prayer. Seeking the wisdom of counselors is prudent. Their insights can be invaluable. The book of Proverbs, especially, teaches that there is wisdom in many counselors.

“Remember, a Christian leader should not only pray for the work of the ministry but realize that prayer *is* the work of ministry. Nothing else we do is more important than intercessory prayer for leaders and leadership.”

Another consideration is recognizing when a change in leadership is needed. It is essential that biblical teachings be followed. If the mission is not being achieved, either the mission is wrong or the team needs to be re-formed. The principal leader should examine himself to determine if he has contributed to the absence of success. If the problem is with the team, he should consider these two questions. First, if this person were to resign, would I be glad? Second, if that particular position were vacant, would I fill it with the same person?

If a change is needed, the principal leader should always help the individual discern God’s will for the future and help him accordingly. And he should never forget the role that confession, repentance, and mutual forgiveness play.

Building Team Vitality

Just as the human body experiences ups and downs, energy levels on a leadership team rise and fall. Five energy sources will keep the vitality level high among the team members.

First, the team should embrace the team leader. Passion is contagious but not very productive unless the team embraces the leader. The leader must recognize that support comes when trust and respect are high.

Second, the team must embrace the vision and mission. Seeing firsthand the spiritual growth of others provides a tremendous boost of energy to a discipleship team.

Third, the principal leader must embrace the members of the team of leaders. When team members encourage one another and challenge one another to improve, energy increases. The principal leader must be careful not to assume team responsibilities. He should let the team carry out its assignment, encouraging each member along the way.

SELECTING LEADERS

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Fourth, the team must embrace obstacles as opportunities. Challenges will come. And if the other three energy sources are in place, the team will be ready to face any obstacle and seek God's wisdom.

Fifth, the team must always celebrate the victories. Moving on to the next assignment without taking time to celebrate is a mistake that can easily lead to discouragement.



Recognizing the Enemy

Satan is a defeated foe; yet he still leverages all-out attacks on Christians, especially Christian leaders. God calls us to clothe ourselves with His armor and to be prepared to fight the good fight against the arch-enemy.

The Enemy's Strategies

Satan hates God's people. He successfully uses plans of attack to thwart the work of God. First, he uses a persecution strategy. He sets up world forces to bring persecution to God's church. He uses governments and tyrannical leaders to accomplish his goals. He targets Christian leaders especially. These strategies always backfire because our sovereign God sees to it that persecution always becomes an instrument that leads to the growth of His church.

Second, Satan uses a penetration strategy to get a foothold in the local congregation by getting believers to fight one another. He's never satisfied until he destroys a body of believers. He uses gossip, complaints, and grumbling. And he infiltrates the ranks of leaders by breeding discouragement among them. Leaders must always remember that the Bible doesn't teach that they should flee the enemy. Instead, they are to resist him and he will be the one fleeing.

The Enemy's Schemes

Satan skillfully uses three schemes of attack on believers to draw them away from Christ: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and pride (1 John 2:16). We find these schemes of his in the Garden of Eden being used with Adam and Eve and being used in the wilderness with Jesus. Eve noticed that the fruit was good for food (flesh), it was delightful to the eyes, and it would make her wise (pride).

In the wilderness, Satan tempted Jesus with bread because He was hungry (flesh). Next, he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world (eyes). Finally, he tempted Him with the pride of life by daring Him to jump from the highest pinnacle of the temple. In each case, Jesus used the Word of God to thwart the enemy's relentless attacks.

God sends tests our way to help us grow. Satan stages temptations to destroy us. God can actually use the temptations of Satan as tests to move us toward spiritual maturity as He did when Peter denied Him three times. What should be our response to the devil's schemes? We should flee, use the Word of God as our sword, put on the full armor of God, and pray.

The Enemy's Snares

There are three addictions Satan uses to snare believers into his grip. First is the addiction to power. Leaders succumb to this addiction when they end up controlling people instead of serving them. Every leader needs to have someone with higher authority to whom he is accountable. And then he must be willing to submit to that person.

Second is the addiction to sex. Look through the Scriptures and you will see that Satan has used this snare for a long, long time. Once again, the leader needs someone in his life to hold him accountable. He must put as many safeguards around him as possible.

Third is the addiction to money. God only knows how many leaders have been destroyed because of this addiction. The leader needs to develop a lifestyle that is centered on the supremacy of Christ instead of the deceptive lure of money.

Standing Up to the Enemy

Satan tries his dead level best to instill fear, frustration, and fatigue. The leader must add margins of exercise, rest, and spiritual renewal into his life. The best means of generating spiritual renewal is to schedule a day of rest every week.

“At all times it is absolutely crucial that the Christian leader recognize and remember the victory of Christ over Satan at the cross. Resist Satan, and Scripture promises that he will flee—and do not fear. Remember, your confidence should not be in yourself: it's the Lord who deals with Satan on your behalf.”

RECOGNIZING THE ENEMY
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When the enemy attacks, the leader should flee the temptation and resist the attacker. And he should draw upon the strength found in the cross, remembering that at the cross Jesus defeated the devil and all his cohorts of darkness. He should remember also that the Holy Spirit lives within him. And He is certainly greater and stronger than all the power Satan can muster.

And, finally, the leader should remember that Jesus Christ is always interceding for him. He stands before the very throne of God talking to the Father on his behalf.

“Reestablish the church as a leadership factory and distribution center. And by God’s grace we may hear again, ‘These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also’ ” (Acts 17:6).

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