

Loneliness & the Leader

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Lonely Times for a Leader

1. The leader's _____ — When we see things before others see them.
2. The leader's _____ — When we feel things before others feel them.
3. The leader's _____ — When we do things before others do them.
4. The leader's _____ — When people you counted on, don't come through.

Loneliness is sensing the spirit of one you love pulling away from you.

Q. When was the last time you lost some sleep? What was the issue?

2 Timothy 4:9-17 . . . Last day in Paul's Life

"Get here as fast as you can. Demas, chasing fads, went off to Thessalonica and left me here. Crescens is in Galatia province, Titus in Dalmatia. Luke is the only one here with me. Bring Mark with you; he'll be my right-hand man since I'm sending Tychicus to Ephesus. Bring the winter coat I left in Troas with Carpus; also the books and parchment notebooks.

Watch out for Alexander the coppersmith. Fiercely opposed to our Message, he caused no end of trouble. God will give him what he's got coming.

At my preliminary hearing no one stood by me. They all ran like scared rabbits. But it doesn't matter — the Master stood by me and helped me spread the Message loud and clear to those who had never heard it."

The Message

Paul's words to Timothy give us insight into a leader and relationships.

1. You will have people who will _____ you.

"Demas, chasing fads, went off to Thessalonica and left me here." *The Message*

"Demas . . . has deserted me." *NAS*

"Demas . . . has forsaken me." *KJV*

People who disappoint me the most:

- A. Those with the most _____ .
- B. Those who I have _____ my life into.
- C. Those who have been with me a _____ time.
- D. Those who are _____ to me.

Success — Those closest to me, love and respect me the most.

2. One person _____ meet all of your needs.

As a leader, I need . . .

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. Margaret

3. Some difficult relationships can be _____ .

“Bring Mark with you; he’ll be my right-hand man since I’m sending Tychicus to Ephesus.” — This statement is a testimony that people grow up; relationships can be healed; and people can find working together again a positive experience.

Lessons learned in endeavoring to heal relationships:

A. Leaders are to take the _____ in restoring relationships.

B. A healing relationship requires the wholeness of _____ people.

Hurting people hurt people. — John Maxwell

Hurting people are easily hurt by other people. — Kevin Myers

4. You will have people work _____ you.

“Watch out for Alexander the coppersmith. Fiercely opposed to our Message, he caused no end of trouble.”

The loneliness that causes the most pain is _____ .

5. There are times when you will stand _____ .

“At my preliminary hearing no one stood by me. They all ran like scared rabbits.”

In Psalm 142:4, David uttered what must be the saddest phrase known to mankind:

“I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.”

Inner _____ — “I’m going nowhere and nobody cares.”

Inner _____ — “I’m going somewhere and nobody cares”

Inner _____ — “I’m going somewhere and somebody cares.”

6. _____ will stand with you, when others leave.

"But it doesn't matter — the Master stood by me and helped me spread the Message loud and clear to those who had never heard it."

A Step Further

"If God's mind was small enough for me to understand, He wouldn't be God . . . Sometimes I can't stand being in a wheelchair, but there God's grace takes over. Even in my handicap, God has a plan and purpose for my life." She continues, "God began his life (earthly) in a stinky stable. He got angry. He was lonely. He went without a place to call his own, abandoned by his closest friends. He wept real tears. This is a God I can trust. I know my tears count with him."
Joni Erickson Tada

What does God have to say about your loneliness? The first thing He says is, "I understand. I really understand." The Son of God knows what it's like to be lonely. In Jesus' darkest hour, in the time just before He was crucified on the cross, as He was in the Garden of Gethsemane, all of His friends fell asleep. When the soldiers came and took Him to the trial, all His disciples fled. Soon Peter denied Him three times. When Jesus took the sins of the world upon Himself on the cross He cried out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?"
Mark 15:34

How Paul Combated Loneliness

1. _____ .

"Bring the winter coat I left in Troas with Carpus; also the books and parchment notebooks."

Loneliness has a tendency to paralyze us!

Leaders who utilize their time well, ask two questions:

(1) _____ ?
This gives us focus

(2) _____ ?
This gives us freedom

2. _____
"At my preliminary hearing no one stood by me. They all ran like scared rabbits. But that doesn't matter . . ."

It's not what happens to me, it's what happens in me that matters.

How to handle the hurts in leadership:

1. Understand that getting hurt is a part of the _____ package.
2. Travel the _____ .
3. Find a way to _____ .
4. Focus on the _____ of the organization.

3. _____ .

"But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me." _____

"The Lord will deliver me." _____

"God is too good to be unkind,
He is too wise to be confused.
If I cannot trace His hand,
I can always trust His heart."

C.H. Spurgeon

If your heart is broken, you'll find God right there. If you're kicked in the gut, he'll help you catch your breath. — We've been surrounded and battered by troubles, but we're not demoralized; we're not sure what to do, but we know that God knows what to do; we've been spiritually terrorized, but God hasn't left our side; we've been thrown down, but we haven't broken. — Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace.

4. _____ .

"But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, in order that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished and that all the Gentiles might hear."

*So send I you to labor unrewarded,
To serve unpaid, unloved, unsought, unknown,
To hear, rebuke, to suffer scorn and scoffing,
So I send you to toil for me alone.*

As much as we might admire the courage of that hymn, we ought to question its biblical realism. To labor alone, without reward or encouragement, is more the theology of the High Plains drifter than the biblical Christian. Jesus, Paul, Titus, Timothy, Elijah, Moses, Joshua — to name a few — needed support. They found it in their common life with others of the same vision.

Yes, some callings are more lonely and difficult than others, but loneliness and futility are not the earmarks of the Holy Spirit's power through us. What makes us think we can maintain a high level of motivation all alone, when God did not design either individuals or the church for that purpose?

When launching a ministry, we do well to ask: Who supports me? Who has affirmed my gift for this ministry? Who has urged me to go in this direction? Who is willing to go with me? Who will guard me against myself? The fastest way to burn out is to tackle a tough task alone.

Answers: Vision; Emotions; Commitment; Relationships; Disappoint; Potential; Poured; Long; Closest; Cannot; Stretchers; Relaxers; Doers; Partners; Closers; Dreamers; Healed; Initiative; Both; Against; Rejection; Alone; Emptiness; Frustration; Fulfillment; God; He Utilized His Time; What Can I Do; What Can I Not Do; He Minimized His Hurts; Leadership; High Road; Relieve Stress; Vision; He Recognized God's Presence; Yesterday; Tomorrow; He Poured His Life Into Others.