



LEADING YOURSELF

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**Equipping pastors to equip leaders for life.
Encounter & Encourage, Equip & Empower**



HOW PURE MUST A LEADER BE?

Discussion

Popular author and educator Chuck Swindoll, who also pastored for many years, discusses the importance of integrity in the life of a church leader:

Is integrity visible? Can you recognize a leader who has it?

Chuck Swindoll: With a person of integrity, you feel something solid. That's the idea in the Hebrew root word—there's something solid, of substance. It isn't a veneer.

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul tells Titus that overseers are to be "blameless," and yet we're all sinners. How pure does a leader need to be?

The words "without reproach" and "blameless" are a sweeping way to start that list. I don't think we can take "blameless" to mean simply "without blame, without sin"; in that sense, I've never met anyone blameless. I'm certainly not. The point is that when we do fail, we say it. Integrity means we don't hide our stumble; we don't act like we didn't.

Of course, there's some point on the spectrum of sin where disqualification for church leadership occurs. When you can sin and live with it, you're in trouble.

To what extent does the person's attitude toward the sin figure in disqualification?

Paul says, "Lest, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified..." I'm convinced certain sins reveal such a breakdown in integrity, the fallen one is disqualified from returning again to high-profile leadership.

I don't think repeated acts, such as sexual immorality or extensive cover-up, are only a matter of sin. I think they reveal a character flaw. People say, "Well, aren't sins forgiven?" Absolutely. I don't think it's a matter of forgiveness anymore; the person lacks the substance required of that office.

The only reason I am able to sit in this room clothed and in my right mind is that I have been absolutely forgiven by Jesus Christ. But for people in high-profile leadership, there are stricter requirements. As James says, we will be judged "more strictly."

But what about King David in the Old Testament?



CHUCK SWINDOLL

"Integrity means we don't hide our stumble; we don't act like we didn't."

That incident is the only case in Scripture where a leader guilty of moral misconduct was left in the same high-profile role of leadership. But after Bathsheba, his life turned sour. He was confronted, and he came clean, but he lost on the battlefield, and his family went crazy. He never reached the pinnacle he once had reached. I'm haunted by that.

I'm also haunted by the fact that not another person in Scripture had a high-profile leadership position, sinned sexually, and was put back into that position.

To whom should a leader be accountable?

I have carefully selected a group of three men with whom I meet. There's confidentiality, objectivity, and freedom for all of us. The purpose in meeting is not to dwell only on sin, but also to be friends. It's not for my benefit only, but also for the others.

I am regularly accountable to my staff and officially to our elder board, though the larger that gets, the more unwieldy it gets. With some board members, there isn't anything I wouldn't tell, and to others I'm not as close. I'm certainly also accountable to my wife and our grown children. All the Swindoll's feel the freedom to address any area or offer any warning. I admit it is occasionally painful to hear but being in ministry doesn't shield me from straight talk at home; it *requires* it.

In selecting people to hold you accountable, isn't it a temptation to choose people who see things your way?

Absolutely. I love yeses. But I need people like the man who leaned over my desk several years ago. A raw-boned construction guy, he looked right into my eyes and said, "Swindoll, do you have anybody to lean across this desk, look you right in the eye, and say, 'B.S.!'? (only he didn't say 'B.S.')." "

"Yeah," I said, "I've got several."

"Good," he said. "I see our rapid growth, and I get really scared that you can get alone in this office and start believing your own stuff."

I have a very small group of people to whom I voluntarily expose my inner being. With them, a trust has been built over the years.

Discussion & Application:

1. How can someone determine whether you are a person of integrity?
2. What behaviors disqualify a person for leadership in our church?
3. How can we as a team of church leaders grow in accountability with each other?
4. Often spiritual sins such as pride and sloth go unchecked in church leaders. What are some ways we can challenge each other in these areas?

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BIBLICAL EXPECTATIONS FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERS

The **chief biblical texts** that develop the requirements of leaders are: **1 Timothy 3:1-13, 2 Timothy 2:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, Acts 6:1-6, and Exodus 18:21-22.** The qualifications simplified in the following four words:

Commitment. Are you clearly surrendered to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? Is there a passion to know Him in all His fullness? While different personality types express passion differently, there must be evidence of a fire inside to know and obey the Crucified and Risen One.

Conviction. Do you have biblical convictions-about who God is, the meaning of history, the nature of the church, and the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection? Are they learning what it means to be transformed by the renewal of the mind (**Rom. 12:2**), to "think Christ" about every dimension of their lives-money, time, sex, family, recreation? (**Ephesians 4**). For this reason, Paul warns against being too quick to call recent converts to leadership (**1 Timothy 3:6**); commitment and conviction take time to deepen.

Competency. Do you know how to study and exegete the Scriptures? Can they help others find their way around the sacred pages (**2 Tim. 2:15**)? Do the would-be leaders have the appropriate gifts of the Holy Spirit (**Eph. 4:11-12, 1 Cor. 12:12-31, Rom. 12:3-8**)? Do they have the necessary relational skills for this position? Do their relationships manifest the integrity and love of Jesus, especially in their marriage and with their children (**2 Tim. 3:5**)?

Character. Are you taking on the image of Jesus? Someone has astutely observed, "It is not a matter of perfection, but direction." Are the potential leaders moving toward greater and greater Christlikeness?

Do you exhibit self-control, hospitality, gentleness (control of anger), a quest for holiness, temperance? Is there evidence of dying to the love of money, to manipulation, to always having it one's own way? Are they faithful to their spouse ("husband of one wife")? **Titus 1:5-9**

...**blameless** – *unaccused, irreproachable*

...**husband of one wife** – *a one-woman man*

...**faithful children**

...**a steward of God** – *manager, trustee*

- ...not self-willed – self pleasing, arrogant*
- ...not quick tempered – prone to anger, quick to react in anger*
- ...not given to wine – one who sits long with his wine, drunken, quarrelsome*
- ...not violent -bruiser, ready for a blow, pugnacious, contentious, quarrelsome*
- ...not greedy for money – eager to gain at the expense of others*
- ...hospitable - generous to guests*
- ...lover of what is good –loving goodness*
- ...sober minded – sound mind, curbing one's desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate*
- ...just - in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of god, approved of or acceptable of God*
- ...holy - undefiled by sin, free from wickedness, religiously observing every moral obligation, pure holy, pious*
- ...self-controlled - strong, robust, having power over, possessed of (a thing) mastering, controlling, curbing, restraining controlling one's self, temperate, continent*
- ...holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught - cleave to, paying heed to him*
- ...be able - powerful, mighty, strong, mighty in wealth and influence, strong in soul, to bear calamities and trials with fortitude and patience, strong in Christian virtue, to be able (to do something) mighty, excelling in something, having power for something*
- ...by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict –*
 - 1) to call to one's side, call for, summon*
 - 2) to address, speak to, (call to, call upon), which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, teach etc.*
 - a) to admonish, exhort*
 - b) to beg, entreat, beseech*
 - c) to console, to encourage and strengthen by consolation, to comfort*

As we review these qualities regarding church leadership, we recognize quickly that we are humbled and fall short of the ideal, while knowing that He is working in us having called & accepted us in the Beloved. Paul states,

4 "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:4-6, NKJV).

First and foremost, we need to deepen our relationship with the Father through prayer that results in an intimate relationship with Him. Then we will be able to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God and build leaders to take care of the needs of the people. Authentic leadership in the church is about servant leadership. Jesus came to serve and not to be served. He came to offer His life as sacrifice. He calls us to do the same.



ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS?

In 1 Timothy 3, the apostle Paul gives us the irreducible minimums, the must-have character qualifications for church leadership. But there are other, often-overlooked characteristics that effective church leaders share. Here are eight questions by which to evaluate your service in the church:

1. **Can I handle information correctly?** Information is power; someone fit for leadership will handle information as if he or she were driving a van of explosives. Jack Hayford, pastor of Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California, writes, "Controlling information is a process fraught with dangers, but it is vitally important to a ministry characterized by wisdom and integrity." Can you be trusted with sensitive or private information?
2. **Do I make righteous judgments?** People who make hair-trigger judgments do not make effective church leaders. Can you stifle your first reactions and make decisions based on solid argument and evidence?
3. **Am I willing to follow Holy Spirit?** Leaders need to listen to each other, but more important, they need to be able to hear God's voice. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the spirit says..."
4. **Do I understand the importance to confront appropriately?** Nobody likes conflict. But to lead with integrity, board members must be willing to confront—even one of their own. Unbridled anger, blatant deception, hurtful words—some things demand a loving challenge. The two extremes are either to avoid conflict or to act like the Terminator. Where on the continuum do you fall?
5. **Am I waiting on the Lord? (forward-looking, as Isaiah, Simeon, Anna)** Church tradition is life-giving; church traditionalism is life-threatening. The comfort of the familiar can also strangle church progress. Do you believe your church's best days are behind it?
6. **Do I have a "whatsoever things" (Philippians 4:8) temperament?** Some people seem to be "blessed" with pessimism. People with a can-do attitude are different. Instead of "Why should we?" as their first response, theirs is "Why not?" How do you respond to new ideas?
7. **Am I willing to take responsibility?** Godly leaders take responsibility for their sins. They are human, and they know it. They're not like the person who said, "The only time I've been wrong is when I once thought I was wrong." When was the last time you said to a colleague, "I blew it; I was wrong"?
8. **Do I exercise patience?** In the church, getting things done always takes longer than you think. There's always one more committee or congregational meeting to run your proposal by. Do I understand the importance of "in the multitude of counselors", (**Proverbs 11:14**)?

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LEADING YOURSELF

1 Corinthians 10:12-22

1. Accountability. *Those who fall have usually chosen to go it alone. Accountability demands that every leader have a regular meeting with a board or group of peers—to share feelings, reveal temptations, and identify problem areas in personal and spiritual growth.*

2. Responsibility. *The healthy leader must learn to balance the demands of church leadership with the demands of family and personal life.*

3. Integrity. Foremost is the issue of how we use our power. Do we share the power? Do we use it with compassion? Is our use of power merely ego-motivated? Second to power is the issue of honesty. True integrity requires not just uprightness with regard to finances, but also justice in the application of authority, graciousness in what we take credit for, and compassion in how we gain and use privileged information.

Questions you should ask yourself regularly as you evaluate your relationship with God and others.

- 🔥 Have I been totally honest in my dealings with people today?
- 🔥 Have I acted appropriately toward members of the opposite sex?
- 🔥 Have I indulged unsavory thoughts or sexual images, or fostered uncharitable feelings toward others?
- 🔥 Have I been above reproach in my financial dealings?
- 🔥 Have I fulfilled my obligations without compromise and with a willing spirit?
- 🔥 Have I worked too long or too hard without evaluating my true motives?
- 🔥 Have I spent enough time with my family or friends?
- 🔥 Have I taken care of my family's spiritual needs?
- 🔥 Have I attended to my emotional and spiritual needs, and integrated them into my daily walk with God?
- 🔥 Have I harbored unconfessed sin or unforgiven hurts? —ARCHIBALD HART

Steps toward change

If your answers to the above questions suggest a need for change, prayerfully consider the points below:

1. Using Psalm 139:23-24 ask God to reveal your heart to any unknown sin.
2. If appropriate, ask forgiveness from God as well as from those involved.
3. Determine to avoid that pitfall next time out; take evasive action.
4. Ask God for spiritual strength to overcome your weakness.
5. Share your need with a trusted friend and become accountable to him or her.





YOUR PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH

It is clear, leadership of the church is essential. First, we must have the leadership of Holy Spirit then, rightly placed leaders that He raises to serve God's people from the integrity for their heart and the skillfulness of their hands **Psalm 78**.

Consider what Bill Hybels wrote in an article entitled, *The Art of Self Leadership*. In **1 Samuel 30**, David, the future king of Israel, is a young emerging leader at the time. He is just learning to lead his troops into battle. He's green. But God is pouring his favor on David, and most of the time the battles go his way. One terrible day though, that pattern changes. After returning home from fighting yet another enemy, David and his men discover soldiers have attacked and destroyed their campsite, dragged off the women and children, and burned all their belongings.

This would define "bad day" for any leader! But it's not over. His soldiers are tired, angry, and worried sick about their families. They're miffed at God. A faction of his men spreads word that they've had it with David's leadership. They figure it's all David's fault, and they decide to stone him to death.

In this crisis David's leadership is severely tested. Suddenly, he must decide who needs leadership the most. His soldiers? The officers? The faction?

His answer? None of the above.

In this critical moment he realizes a foundational truth: he must lead himself before he can lead anybody else. Unless he is squared away internally, he has nothing to offer his team. So "**David strengthened himself in the Lord his God" (1 Samuel 30:6)**. Only then does he lead his team to rescue their families and what's left of their belongings.

David understood the importance of leading himself. And although self-leadership isn't talked about much, make no mistake; it is an essential part of ministry. How effectively can any of us lead others if our spirits are sagging, our courage is wavering, and our vision or commitment is weak?

Spiritual Growth

Ministry significance is found in your daily walk with God. It is relational action (working together with God) not desire that determines your ministry investment with people. A **spiritual growth plan** is simply a tool to aid your pursuit of God and His best for your life. The reality is we seldom live up to our God-given potential, simply because we are not intentional in the process of development.



A plan to lead yourself provide an intentional guide for what we are going to do. We must also develop an accountability structure for the process.

Start the process with prayer. Seek the heart of God as to His purpose for your life. When designing a Spiritual Growth Plan, begin with several Statements of Purpose—what you sense God wants to accomplish through you in the next year.

These statements could focus around at least three general areas of thriving:

1. Spiritual – Shalom
2. Relational – Loving God & Others
3. Physical – Exercise

Additional areas you may want to address may be:

1. Leadership
2. Financial
3. Educational
4. Career

Then, under each of these headings, you need to make 2-4 statements of how you intend to walk out your Statements of Purpose. These statements need to be realistic, challenging and measurable.

You may include some clarifying statements, if you so desire. Once the plan is written, pray over it and share it with an accountability partner.

Suggestions for Development

- 🔥 Create or embrace a Leadership Community for Accountability
- 🔥 You Version Bible App
- 🔥 IDisciple
- 🔥 Reading Scripture Chronologically
- 🔥 Devotional Guides
- 🔥 *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership, Ruth Haley Barton*
- 🔥 *Developing the Leader Within You, John Maxwell*
- 🔥 *11 Indispensable Relationships You Can't Be Without, Leonard Sweet*





WAYS TO GROW AS A SPIRITUAL LEADER

1 Timothy 4:15-16, Ephesians 4:13

1. Focus on personal spiritual development, not self-fulfillment. *The motive is the difference. Self-fulfillment means doing what I enjoy most and will receive the most strokes for doing. Personal development means doing what I am talented and uniquely fit to do, and that becomes my responsibility. Servant leader-self Serving leader.*

2. Grow through association. It is not always comfortable, but it is always profitable, to associate with people more gifted, educated, and equipped. It is necessary to schedule associations that keep you developing. We are challenged to grow when we associate with others who have grown and are growing.

3. Write your personal mission statement. As you see in writing what you have determined is your mission in life, you can stay better aligned with your vocational calling (*Ephesians 4*).

4. Be a lifelong learner. A lifelong learner doesn't learn to be thought of as brilliant—that's self-serving. A lifelong learner lets nothing pass him or her without absorbing it (*Matthew 13:51*).

5. Guide your decisions for learning & ministry opportunities by your vocation (passion). When you have an opportunity to attend two or three different meetings or to minister, choose the one in line with your vocation. Aligning your efforts with your passion and gifting is a healthy way to channel your energies.

6. Move from duty to delight. Many people approach personal development as one more thing they ought to do, whether they want to or not. Not doing it makes them feel guilty. The secret of growing for a lifetime is to move from seeing self-development as a burden to seeing it as a joy—the way to fulfill responsibility, the path of worthwhile accomplishment.

Discussion & Application

1. How does our church encourage its leaders to grow personally?
2. What are the consequences of a church leadership team that has stopped growing in spirituality and leadership?
3. What is one thing our church could do to foster leadership development among staff and lay leaders?





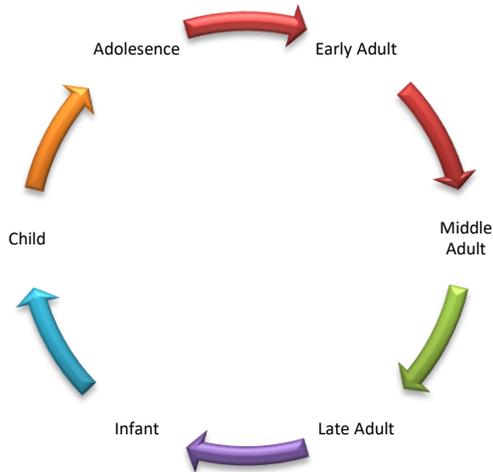
CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: GOD'S INTERVENTION

*The crisis in our life may well be the intervention of God
Hebrews 12:6*

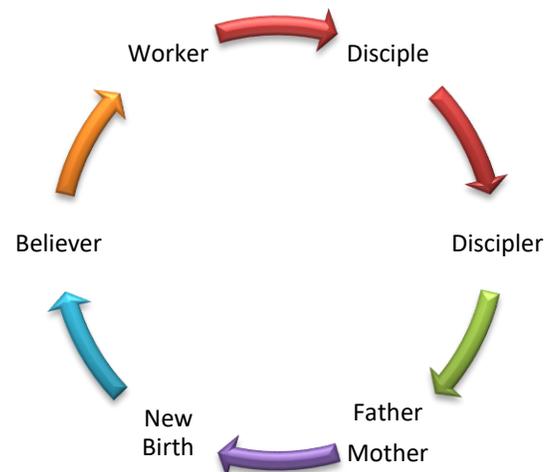
- 1: the series of stages in form and functional activity through which an organism passes between successive recurrences of a specified primary stage
- 2: a series of stages through which something (such as an individual, culture, or manufactured product) passes during its lifetimeⁱ

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Life cycle. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved April 20, 2020, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/life%20cycle>

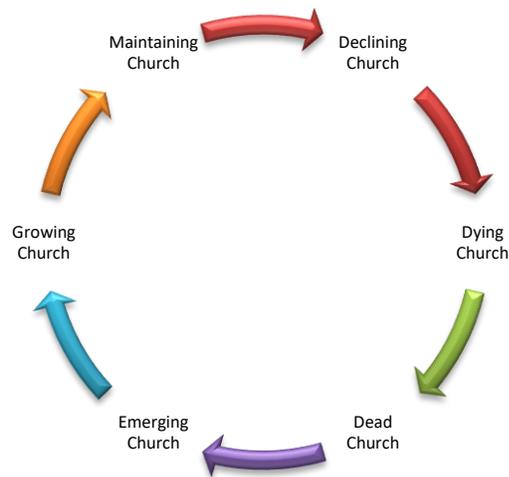
Life Cycle of the Human Being



Life Cycle of the Jesus Follower

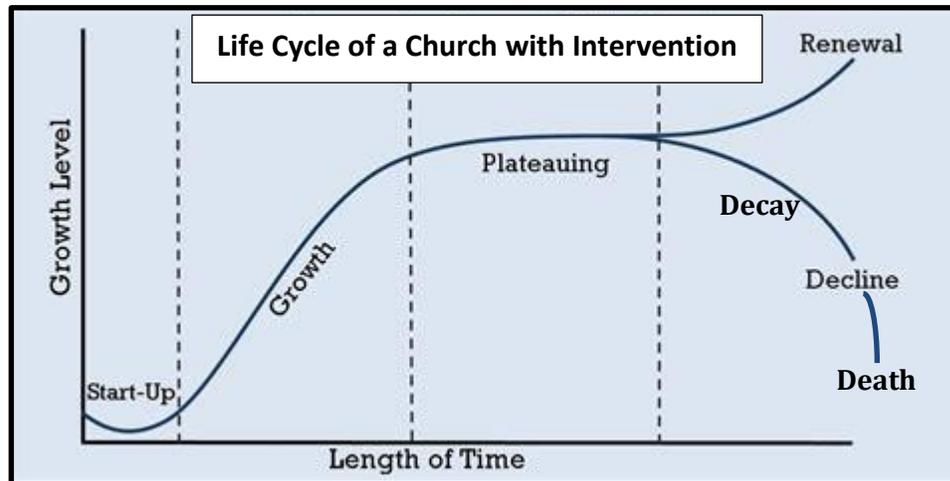


Life Cycle of a Church



Equipping pastors to equip leaders for life





Crisis reveals the adequacy or inadequacy of our lives and the systems we have designed to guide us in what we do in the midst of them, both personally and organizationally. We think our systems are effective until we get in the crisis and have to do what we designed. We must have systems personal and organizational.

Crises prove the function of our design. If the crisis reveals an inadequacy, we must be bold and courageous to make changes necessary that an appropriate function is accomplished. Intervention in times of inadequacy, shifts our cycle of surviving to thriving, from dying to living, from hopeless to hope.

In a learning module, we call Systems & Structures designed to equip pastors to equip leaders for life, we write, "without systems and structure within the body, the function of the body is limited, inadequate, or the body dies without an intervention."

More importantly, the crisis reveals character. Crisis reveals what's in your heart. In times of crisis, you can be overwhelmed with the enormity of inadequacy, or you can ask God for wisdom to understand what we do to shift to adequacy. You can give in to the panic, or you can surrender to the intervention. You can trust His designed process of purpose in the crisis. He is working NOW, step into His plan for your life and those you lead.

Remember this; sometimes, the **crisis is the intervention!**

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6 NKJV

Here are brief definitions for each stage of our church lifecycle survey:



Birth: The church is just beginning to get traction and momentum is building. People are optimistic about the church's future and tackle decisions spontaneously with a "can do" attitude.

Growth: People feel very good about the church. The majority "own" the church's goals and vision. It's easy to find volunteers and people from all levels are involved in church life.

Plateau: The church is maturing, leaders are delegating work, and people are excited about their ministry involvement. New people find a place to get involved and overall, people are excited to tell others about their church.

Decline: The church is losing momentum as people begin to lose their sense of vision. Few programs are being initiated and it's difficult to find volunteers. The church's structure is rigid, change is difficult, and confidence is diminished.

Death: The church is clearly entering its last season. There is a loss of sense of where we are going, programs are being eliminated because of limited funds or lack of people, and most of the work is being done by a few. Sadly, few people feel good about the church.





MY _____ SPIRITUAL GROWTH PLAN

Statements of Purpose

My desire is to:
(Spiritual) Example: Daily spend _____ in prayer, Bible reading, spiritual enrichment.

(Relational) Example: Plan a date night with my spouse _____ times a month

(Physical) Example: Exercise _____ times per week

Further, I will: Example: Sign up for a computer class



