

# Spiritual Leadership: Defined

March 2015- It was time well-spent.

Sitting outdoors. Enjoying chicken kabobs, grilled vegetables, and pita bread with hummus. Spending time with a handful of colleagues. A veritable trifecta.

Our preloaded conversation was about spiritual leadership. Understanding it. Defining it. And most of all, living it.

Jogging around the table, each of us doled out our take on spiritual leadership. Here was my contribution to the discussion: **Spiritual leadership ultimately is a sacred stewardship whereby a person influences, serves, and inspires others to fulfill God's purposes based on the intimate work of God in his/her own life.**

Let's break down that definition a bit...

- Spiritual leadership is a sacred stewardship. It is something that God hands off, entrusts to you. And true to form like any other stewardship, there is a built-in anticipation that leaders will manage well that which has been bestowed on them. This is the big idea of the parable of the talents found in New Testament where ROI is a fundamental, non-negotiable expectation.
- Spiritual leadership is about influence and service and inspiration. Think about the leaders who have stamped their imprint on you. They influenced your thinking, your attitude, your perspective, your priorities, your life. They served you by calling out something in you that you did not see in yourself or opened a door for you that on your own you could not have opened. And they inspired you by modeling for you that leadership ultimately is about putting it all on the line for a cause that is big, that is noble, that is lasting.
- Spiritual leadership is about leading people in the direction of God's purposes. What's the delta between everyday leaders and spiritual leaders? The former works their agenda, the latter God's. A spiritual leader is constantly in discovery mode, seeking to comprehend the unfolding chapters of God's plans for His people. He knows that his job is not to develop the plans, but to discern them.
- Spiritual leadership is about leading out from the intimate work of God in your life. When it is all said and done, a spiritual leader needs no convincing that leadership is ultimately leading with your life. It's inside out—God works intentionally in you so that He might work powerfully through you. In His leadership economy, everything you do is an extension of His presence and power in your life. He intends to maximize your most

important leadership asset: YOU.

What would be your single-sentence statement of what it means to be a spiritual leader?

If you don't have one, you're welcome to borrow mine, but only until you've crafted your own. Every spiritual leader needs their own definition, in their own words, emphasizing their journey, their experience, their understanding. Because like the windshield wipers on your Range Rover, your statement will provide you with essential clarity when the rainstorms of leadership blow into town.