

Emotionally Healthy Leader

Over the years, Peter Scazzero has done an extraordinary job in helping people understand the indispensable connection between one's emotional health and spiritual maturity. In *The Emotionally Healthy Leader: How Transforming Your Inner Life Will Deeply Transform Your Church, Team and the World*, he brings this vital framework to the life of leaders. His thesis is captured well in these words: *But who you are is more important than what you do. Why? Because the love of Jesus in you is the greatest gift you have to give to others. Who you are as a person — and specifically how well you love — will always have a larger and longer impact on those around you than what you do. Your being with God (or lack of being with God) will trump, eventually, your doing for God every time.*

As one who believes deeply that our leadership must overflow from the inside out, this book provides the practical pathway. Check out these Book Notes to see what awaits you in pursuit of leading with your life.

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Title: *The Emotionally Healthy Leader: How Transforming Your Inner Life Will Deeply Transform Your Church, Team and the World*

Author: Peter Scazzero

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Book Description:

Becoming a better leader starts with a transformed inner life.

Do you feel too overwhelmed to enjoy life, unable to sort out the demands on your time? Are you doing your best work as a leader, yet not making an impact? Have you ever felt stuck, powerless to change your environment?

In *The Emotionally Healthy Leader*, bestselling author Peter Scazzero shows leaders how to develop a deep, inner life with Christ, examining its profound implications for surviving stress, planning and decision making, building teams, creating healthy culture, influencing others, and much more.

Book Quotes:

It wasn't until I understood that these beneath-the-surface components of my life had not been transformed by Jesus that I discovered the inseparable link between emotional health and spiritual maturity — that it is not possible to be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature. LOCATION: 200

It wasn't long before I was engaged in more activity for God than my being with God could sustain. LOCATION: 212

The emotionally unhealthy leader is someone who operates in a continuous state of emotional and spiritual deficit, lacking emotional maturity and a “being with God” sufficient to sustain their “doing for God.”

LOCATION: 347

When we talk about emotionally unhealthy Christian leaders, we are referring to the emotional and spiritual deficits that impact every aspect of their lives. Emotional deficits are manifested primarily by a pervasive lack of awareness. Unhealthy leaders lack, for example, awareness of their feelings, their weaknesses and limits, how their past impacts their present, and how others experience them. They also lack the capacity and skill to enter deeply into the feelings and perspectives of others. They carry these immaturities with them into their teams and everything they do. LOCATION: 349

Spiritual deficits typically reveal themselves in too much activity. Unhealthy leaders engage in more activities than their combined spiritual, physical, and emotional reserves can sustain. They give out for God more than they receive from him. They serve others in order to share the joy of Christ, but that joy remains elusive to themselves. LOCATION: 353

Emotionally unhealthy leaders tend to be unaware of what is going on inside them. And even when they recognize a strong emotion such as anger, they fail to process or express it honestly and appropriately...They ignore emotion-related messages their body may send — fatigue, stress-induced illness, weight gain, ulcers, headaches, or depression. They avoid reflecting on their fears, sadness, or anger. They fail to consider how God might be trying to communicate with them through these “difficult” emotions. LOCATION: 389

Whether married or single, most emotionally unhealthy leaders affirm the importance of a healthy intimacy in relationships and lifestyle, but few, if any, have a vision for their marriage or singleness as the greatest gift they offer. Instead, they view their marriage or singleness as an essential and stable foundation for something more important — building an effective ministry, which is their first priority. As a result, they invest the best of their time and energy in becoming better equipped as a leader, and invest very little in cultivating a great marriage or single life that reveals Jesus’ love to the world. LOCATION: 420

Emotionally unhealthy leaders are chronically overextended. Although they routinely have too much to do in too little time, they persist in saying a knee-jerk yes to new opportunities before prayerfully and carefully discerning God’s will. The notion of a slowed-down spirituality — or slowed-down leadership — in which their doing for Jesus flows out of their being with Jesus is a foreign concept. LOCATION: 443

Emotionally unhealthy leaders do not practice Sabbath — a weekly, twenty-four-hour period in which they cease all work and rest, delight in God’s gifts, and enjoy life with him. LOCATION: 469

But who you are is more important than what you do. Why? Because the love of Jesus in you is the greatest gift you have to give to others. Who you are as a person — and specifically how well you love — will always have a larger and longer impact on those around you than what you do. Your being with God (or lack of being with God) will trump, eventually, your doing for God every time. LOCATION: 595

In The Five-Stage Process of How We Learn and Change Benjamin Bloom, a great educational psychologist, along with a team of thinkers, developed a brilliant taxonomy that describes how people learn in different domains.

1. Awareness: “Slowing down is an interesting idea.”
2. Ponder: “Help me understand more about slowing down.”
3. Value: “I really believe it is important for everybody to slow down.”
4. Prioritize: “I am shifting my entire life around as I slow down to be with Jesus.”
5. Own: “All my decisions and actions are based on this new value.” LOCATION: 707-725

Leading a church, an organization, or a ministry that transforms the world requires more than the latest leadership strategies and techniques. Lasting change in churches and organizations requires men and women committed to leading from a deep and transformed inner life. We lead more out of who we are than out of what we do, strategic or otherwise. If we fail to recognize that who we are on the inside informs every aspect of our leadership, we will do damage to ourselves and to those we lead. LOCATION: 756

Mature spiritual leadership is forged in the crucible of difficult conversations, the pressure of conflicted relationships, the pain of setbacks, and dark nights of the soul. Out of these experiences, we come to understand the complex nature of our inner world. Moreover, as we develop new practices and rhythms robust enough to withstand the pressures that leadership exerts on the inner life, we naturally become stronger and more effective leaders. And we move on from simply affirming truth and wisdom to owning and applying what we know. LOCATION: 784

Most leaders search out books on leadership to discover new tools, ideas, or skills. We are charged with the task of knowing what to do next, knowing why it is important, and then bringing the necessary resources to bear to make it happen. Yet the first and most difficult task we face as leaders is to lead ourselves. LOCATION: 793

Fortunately, it's been my experience that once leaders understand what the shadow is and realize they're not alone — that we all have shadows — most will courageously face it. In the process, they also discover God's grace and the Holy Spirit's wind at their back. LOCATION: 871

Your shadow is the accumulation of untamed emotions, less-than-pure motives and thoughts that, while largely unconscious, strongly influence and shape your behaviors. It is the damaged but mostly hidden version of who you are. LOCATION: 876

Aspects of the shadow may be sinful, but they may also simply be weaknesses or wounds. They tend to appear in the ways we try to protect ourselves from feeling vulnerable or exposed. LOCATION: 880

If we buy into the lie that the shadow is what is most true about us, we may well be overwhelmed and potentially throw up our hands, believing there is nothing we can do. And this has grave consequences. Yet, we can't ignore the shadow without paying a price. LOCATION: 982

If our desire is to lead and serve others, we have to come to grips with this plain, hard fact: the degree to which we ignore our shadow is the degree to which our loving service to others is limited. LOCATION: 1058

One of the great truths of life is this: You cannot change what you are unaware of. However, once we acknowledge our shadow — both its root causes and expressions — her power over us is diminished, if not broken. Exposing the shadow to the light of Jesus is the first, and most important, step we must take in order to receive this gift. LOCATION: 1098

Neuroscientists now confirm that growing up in family environments where feelings are not expressed leads to underdevelopment in parts of the brain. This damages our ability to work and love well. The good news is that the damage isn't permanent. Using brain imaging, researchers have documented how our brains are rewired when we learn to name our feelings. Even at the cellular level, something powerful is tamed and changed within us when we recognize and identify our emotions. LOCATION: 1171

A genogram is a visual tool to document the history and dynamics of our family relationships, and their impact on us, over three to four generations. Constructing a genogram helps us examine unhealthy patterns from the past that we bring into our present leadership as well as our relationship to Christ and others. LOCATION: 1200

If you're ready to take a life-changing step, you can access this tool on our website, www.emotionallyhealthy.org/genogram. LOCATION: 1222

1. Describe each family member in your household with three adjectives and identify their relationship to you (parent, caregiver, grandparent, sibling, etc.).
2. Describe your parents' (or caretakers') marriage(s) as well as your grandparents' marriage(s).
3. How were conflict, anger, and tensions handled in your extended family over two or three generations?
4. Were there any family "secrets" (such as an unwed pregnancy, incest, mental illness, or financial scandal, etc.)?
5. What was considered "success" in your family?
6. How did ethnicity or race shape you and your family?
7. How would you describe the relationships between family members (conflicted, detached, enmeshed, abusive)?
8. Were there any heroes/heroines in the family? Any villains or favorites? Why were these individuals singled out in this way?
9. What generational patterns or themes do you recognize (addictions, affairs, abuse, divorce, mental illness, abortions, children born out of wedlock, etc.)?
10. What traumatic losses has your family experienced? (For example, sudden death, prolonged illness, stillbirth/miscarriage, bankruptcy, divorce?)
11. What insights (one or two) are you becoming aware of that help you to make sense of how your family of origin, or others, impacted who you are today?
12. What are one or two specific ways this may be impacting your leadership? LOCATION: 1230

Reflecting on the past enables us to identify and change these negative scripts that were handed down to us. LOCATION: 1252

Another helpful tool that has benefited many leaders, including our staff at New Life, is the Enneagram, a typology that uses nine personality types to help people identify and understand the forces that motivate their behavior. LOCATION: 1291

Keep these four pathways for facing your shadow before you and commit to following through on at least one of them as a first step: tame your feelings by naming your feelings, use a genogram to explore the impact of your past, identify the negative scripts handed down to you, seek feedback from trustworthy sources. These pathways will serve you well on the journey of facing your shadow. But most important is to stay close to Jesus in this process. He is your anchor as you navigate these challenging waters. LOCATION: 1318

Each time you pass through a season of facing your shadow, you will be transformed even more into the image of Jesus. LOCATION: 1329

Every Christian has the same primary calling or vocation: We are called to Jesus, by Jesus, and for Jesus. Our first call is to love him with our whole being and to love our neighbor as ourselves. LOCATION: 1433

If you want to lead out of your marriage, then you must make marriage — not leadership — your first ambition, your first passion, and your loudest gospel message. LOCATION: 1558

The first ambition for married Christian leaders must shift from leading our church, organization, or team to loving our spouse passionately. We must cultivate a strong desire to make visible the invisible — the love of Jesus for his church — in and through the love we have for our spouse. We then lead out of the overflow of this love. In other words, out of the giving and receiving of love in our relationship, we have extra "give away" love. It overflows from the nurturing, connection, and sense of well-being we receive from one another. LOCATION: 1564

When Christians marry, we make a covenantal vow to love our spouse faithfully, freely, fruitfully, and forever. From this point on, every significant decision we make is to be informed by that vow. The pace of the church or organization we serve, the commitments we make, and the focus of our heart's passion are all to be informed by that vow. To put it bluntly, if you are married, it is no longer an option for you to live as if you were single. Why? You made a vow to be married. Yes, it is sometimes painful to connect to your spouse, but in the long term, it is even more painful not to. LOCATION: 1569

This means the first item on your leadership job description is to conduct your life in such a way that your demeanor and choices consistently demonstrate to your spouse that he or she is loved and lovable. You make what is important to him or her important to you. LOCATION: 1573

My definition of leadership success was transformed beyond merely growing the church to nurturing a passionate marriage that overflows to the rest of the world. LOCATION: 1695

As Christian leaders, it's unlikely most of us would take issue with any of this. Of course we need to experience loving union with God! Who is going to disagree with that? Here's where the problem comes in. Doing our part to cultivate a relationship of loving union with God requires time — time that, paradoxically, we don't have because we are too busy serving him. And so, intentional or not, we find ourselves bypassing our relationship with God. In the process, we drift into prioritizing leadership over love. In other words, we fail to slow down for loving union with God. LOCATION: 2070

Loving union is not the de facto equivalent of devotions and quiet time. Nor is it about engaging in a long list of spiritual practices. Or having emotionally intense experiences with God. Loving union is not about managing your schedule better or simply not being busy. It is not so much about having a sustainable pace of life. As important as such things may be, it is possible to engage in them without necessarily experiencing loving union. So what is loving union, and why does it require so much time? In his classic book *Prayer*, theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar describes Jesus this way: "Here is a man, sinless, because he has lovingly allowed the Father's will full scope in his life." Think about that simple but profound statement for a moment. Read it a few more times until it really sinks in. What von Balthasar is describing here is loving union — to lovingly allow God to have full access to your life. These are Jesus' words to the Christians in Laodicea and to us: "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me." (REVELATION 3:20) LOCATION: 2077

In loving union, we keep that door wide open. We allow the will of God to have full access to every area of our lives, including every aspect of our leadership — from difficult conversations and decision-making to managing our emotional triggers. Cultivating this kind of relationship with God can't be hurried or rushed. We must slow down and build into our lives a structure and rhythm that make this kind of loving surrender routinely possible. LOCATION: 2088

The question we must wrestle with is this: In what ways does my current pace of life and leadership enhance or diminish my ability to allow God's will and presence full scope in my life? LOCATION: 2092

So when was the last time you took matters into your own hands and "struck the rock" in your leadership? What "promised land" might you be sacrificing right now? Whatever the particulars of your situation, I can promise that one of the first things to go will be Jesus' joy and peace. Leadership will become hard. The people you serve will feel like a burden, and you will find yourself wishing you could be somewhere else. You will begin to feel like you are wandering in a desert asking, Where is God? What happened? You might eventually realize where you got off course and attempt to go back and do it all over again. But then you may wonder, "What will be the cost of that?" LOCATION: 2257

Jesus spent over 90 percent of his life — thirty of his thirty-three years — in obscurity. In those hidden years,

he forged a life of loving union with the Father. The observable greatness of his three-year ministry is built on the foundation of the investment Jesus made in those unseen years. And Jesus continued to make this investment in his relationship with the Father throughout his three-year ministry, regardless of the ministry pressures he faced. From his first days in Capernaum, waking up early in the morning to pray (Mark 1:35), to his final hours in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36 – 46), Jesus set aside time to be with the Father. LOCATION: 2294

It's a conversion I hope you might experience as well. In asking you to make the necessary changes to slow down for loving union with God, I am not asking you to add one more item to your already over-burdened schedule. I am asking you to make a U-turn and rearrange your life around an entirely new way of being a leader. In fact, what I am asking you to do is nothing short of a groundbreaking, culture-defying act of rebellion against the contemporary Western way of doing leadership. LOCATION: 2327

Throughout Scripture and the history of the church, the desert has been a place of spiritual preparation, purification, and transformation. Moses spent forty years in the desert before God called him to lead his people out of Egypt. The prophet Elijah lived in the desert and, as a result, stood firm as God's prophet in one of the lowest moments of Israel's history. John the Baptist spent much of his adult life in the desert. Out of that place in God, he called a nation to repentance and discerned Jesus as the Messiah. Paul spent three years in the Arabian Desert receiving God's revelation before going to Jerusalem to begin his apostolic ministry. Jesus intentionally moved back and forth from active ministry with people to a desert place of being alone with the Father. In order to slow down for loving union, we need to develop a similar rhythm of finding our "desert" with God. LOCATION: 2335

The term Rule of Life has its linguistic roots in an ancient Greek word that means "trellis." A trellis is a support structure that enables plants such as grapevine to get off the ground, grow upward, and become fruitful. It's a beautiful image of what a Rule of Life is and how it functions — it is a support structure that helps us to grow up and abide in Christ. This in turn enables our lives to thrive spiritually and our leadership to be abundantly fruitful. LOCATION: 2375

The best way to begin crafting a Rule of Life is to first do some prep work. Before filling out a sheet with commitments for prayer, rest, relationships, and work, take some time to work through the following questions:

- What do you currently do that nurtures your spirit and fills you with delight?
- What people, places, and activities do you need to avoid because they deplete you or make it difficult for you to remain anchored in Christ?
- What "have to's" impact your rhythms in this season of life? LOCATION: 2407-2416

Biblical Sabbath is a twenty-four-hour block of time in which we stop work, enjoy rest, practice delight, and contemplate God.

- Stop. Sabbath is first and foremost a day when we cease all work — paid and unpaid. On the Sabbath we embrace our limits. We let go of the illusion that we are indispensable to the running of the world.
- Rest. Once we stop, we accept God's invitation to rest. God rested after his work of creation.
- Delight. After finishing his work in creation, God pronounced it "very good" (Genesis 1:31). This was not an anemic afterthought — Oh, well, it's nice to be done with that — but a joyful recognition and celebration of accomplishment. As part of observing Sabbath, God invites us to join in the celebration, to enjoy and delight in his creation and all the gifts he offers us in it.
- Contemplate. Pondering the love of God is the central focus of our Sabbaths. What makes a Sabbath a biblical Sabbath is that it is "holy to the Lord." We are not taking time off from God; we are drawing closer to him. LOCATION: 2522-2578

On Sabbath, we practice eternity in time. We look forward to that day at the end of our earthly lives when we

will perfectly stop, rest, delight, and contemplate the glory of God. For a brief moment in time, we reorient ourselves away from this world in all its brokenness and anticipate the world to come — how things on earth are meant to be. In a very real sense, the practice of Sabbath joins heaven and earth, equipping us not merely to rest from our work but also to work from our rest. LOCATION: 2598

What is that “something”? What lies behind the resistance — for some, even terror — when leaders consider slowing down for Sabbath? After observing and talking with pastors around the world for many years, I believe the answer is shame. LOCATION: 2634

It’s important to distinguish shame from guilt. Guilt is about something I do. For example, “I ran a red light.” It is one mistake I made, not a reflection of my entire person. Shame, on the other hand, is about who I am. “I didn’t just make a mistake when I ran that red light, I am a mistake.” When we fall short as a leader, we think things like, I’m such an idiot. I’m awful and worthless! I’m such a fraud — this wouldn’t have happened if I were a decent leader. Shame testifies not to wrong doing but to flawed being. LOCATION: 2640

Part of who we are is what we do. God is a worker, and we are workers. But that is not the deepest truth about who we are. We are first of all human beings. But when things get switched around and our role or title becomes the foundation of our identity, we are reduced to human doings. And when that happens, ceasing work or productive activity becomes extremely difficult. LOCATION: 2700

On Sabbath, something of God’s holiness and goodness is revealed, not simply in the way he works but in the way he rests. This means that when we fail to receive God’s gift of Sabbath, we miss out on something of God — something we can’t get any other way. LOCATION: 2881

As someone who has been in leadership for nearly three decades, I can tell you that Sabbath is without a doubt the most important day of the week for my leadership. It is also the one day of the week I most believe — and live out — a fundamental truth of the gospel. How? I do nothing productive, and yet I am utterly loved. LOCATION: 2983

I considered starting this book with the four chapters that follow on the outer life of a leader. Why? Because most of us in leadership look for practical material and new ideas we can implement immediately. I discovered, however, that when we start with outer life practices without addressing our inner lives, the positive changes we make are unsustainable. LOCATION: 3054

They were to trust the goodness of God and his hard-to-understand ways. Theologian Robert Barron describes the heart of Adam and Eve’s rebellion as the refusal to stop and accept God’s rhythm. It’s not all that different from my refusal to surrender to the limits God has for me and for those I lead. It has always been my greatest leadership temptation and struggle. And I am not alone. LOCATION: 3281

A hardened heart is a big problem for a leader in any context, but it will utterly derail any hope of being able to clearly hear and do the will of God. We cannot engage in plans and decisions that honor God until we prepare our hearts and are intentional about keeping them soft and responsive to his leading. LOCATION: 3302

Success is first and foremost doing what God has asked us to do, doing it his way, and in his timing. LOCATION: 3337

The simple principle we follow at New Life is: the weightier the decision, the more time is required for preparation. LOCATION: 3422

My goal in preparing my heart for planning and decision making is to remain in a state Ignatius of Loyola referred to as indifference. By indifference, he does not mean apathy or disinterest. He simply means we must

become indifferent to anything but the will of God. Ignatius taught that the degree to which we are open to any outcome or answer from God is the degree to which we are ready to really hear what God has to say.

LOCATION: 3447

What this means for me is that I pray for indifference so I can pray the prayer of indifference. Every day, I pray for the grace to honestly say, Father, I am indifferent to every outcome except your will. I want nothing more or less than your desire for what I do. And I pray for both daily. If I fail to engage in this necessary heart preparation — praying the prayer for indifference and the prayer of indifference — I run the risk of missing God's voice. LOCATION: 3461

Limits are often simply God's gifts in disguise. This makes them one of the most counterintuitive, difficult truths in Scripture to embrace. It flies in the face of our natural tendency to want to play god and run the world.

LOCATION: 3651

Team building is fairly easy to define; it involves mobilizing a group of people with diverse skills who are committed to a shared vision and common goals. Culture, however, is somewhat more challenging to describe. Why? Because it consists primarily of unspoken rules about "the way we do things around here."...Culture is that imprecise something, the invisible presence or personality of a place that can be difficult to describe without actually experiencing it. It is often more readily felt than articulated. LOCATION: 3786

Over the years, I've identified four core characteristics for emotionally healthy culture and team building. When an organizational culture and team are healthy, these things are true:

- Work performance and personal spiritual formation are inseparable.
- The elephants in the room are acknowledged and confronted.
- Time and energy are invested in the team's personal spiritual development.
- The quality of people's marriages and singleness is foundational. LOCATION: 3835-3837

Minimally transformed leaders will always result in minimally transformed teams doing minimally transforming ministry. LOCATION: 3884

Instead of saying, "You should have returned my e-mail sooner," we say, "I'm puzzled about why you didn't respond to my e-mail sooner." Making "I'm puzzled" statements forces us to acknowledge that we don't know why. It helps us to pause and catch our heart before it jumps to judgment. LOCATION: 4017

To unlearn negative generational patterns from their family of origin, we encourage people to use the phrase I notice . . . and I prefer as the formula for making a complaint. For example, when a supervisor sends a PowerPoint presentation to the tech volunteer at the last minute, instead of stuffing frustration and annoyance, he might say, "I notice that you sent me your PowerPoint two hours before your presentation, and I would prefer if you could send it one day ahead of time so I have time to upload it into our computer system."

LOCATION: 4021

That conversation flowed out of a conviction: Emotionally healthy organizations are inseparable from the level of health experienced by leaders in their marriage or singleness. The apostle Paul knew it was impossible for leaders to create a healthy church if their own home life was not in order (1 Timothy 3:8). LOCATION: 4185

When Geri and I allowed God to do an extreme makeover of our marriage in 1996, we didn't set out to change New Life Fellowship Church. We simply did our best to learn new ways to negotiate differences, assert our preferences, manage our reactivity, differentiate with empathy, bond, and speak truthfully and respectfully — to name a few. God led us to break a number of negative legacies from our families of origin. We became different people with ourselves, with each other, and with God. Within a few years, this powerful change in our

marriage began to overflow to our entire church. How could it not? God changed not only our relationship and behaviors with one another but our interior lives as well. It was inevitable that this transformation would then spill over into the rest of our relationships and the wider church culture. LOCATION: 4192

The most elegantly simple description of power I know is this: power is the capacity to influence. LOCATION: 4305

A good test of a person's character is how they deal with adversity. But the best test of a leader's character is how they deal with power. LOCATION: 4419

Entitled leaders act as if the world revolves around them. Their thinking goes something like this: I've been blessed. I have gifts and influence. I have worked hard and deserve to be treated well. This is what I refer to as "power over" others leadership. The opposite of an entitled leader is a grateful leader. Grateful leaders continually marvel at all they have received from God. But as a leader's sense of gratitude shrinks, their sense of entitlement grows in equal measure. LOCATION: 4525

While the world practices a "power over" strategy characterized by dominance and win-lose competitiveness, Jesus taught a "power under" strategy characterized by humility and sacrificial service. LOCATION: 4529

Another indicator I monitor in my own life to ensure I am using my power to come under others is to examine my heart. I watch to see if I am still grateful for the privilege to represent Jesus and have a level of influence in the lives of other people. Perhaps the best test I know for alerting me that I have strayed from a healthy use of power is when I resent people treating me like the servant I claim to be. LOCATION: 4559

A dual relationship is when we have more than one role in someone's life. We observe this, for example, when a small group leader builds her real estate business by soliciting members of her group, when a doctor becomes a patient's golfing buddy, when a pastor hires his son to work for him. LOCATION: 4616

I do not believe it is healthy or biblical to try to entirely eliminate dual relationships from Christian leadership. Drawing rigid professional boundaries in a church or para-church organization may well limit what God is doing. These boundaries simply need to be prudently and carefully monitored. LOCATION: 4625

The responsibility to set a healthy boundary rests first with the leader, not with those he or she serves. Why? The leader has been given the greater power. Following through on this responsibility isn't easy. It requires self-awareness, thoughtfulness, the ability to have honest and clear conversations, and a healthy level of confidence and personal maturity. LOCATION: 4637

A mature, disciplined, differentiated leadership will need to monitor the impact family members have on the health of the larger body to ensure that no lines get crossed that could be interpreted as favoritism or nepotism. LOCATION: 4683

When family members are able to serve in leadership and it works well, it is amazing. When it doesn't work well, it is very bad and difficult to unravel. So, like any decision, it must be carefully discerned and discussed. LOCATION: 4692

Embracing endings in order to receive new beginnings is one of the fundamental tasks of the spiritual life — and this is especially true for Christian leaders. LOCATION: 4834

Like the ending of the seasons, we experience leadership endings with those we serve. In fact, I would say leaders experience even more endings and losses than the average person. Such losses may span a continuum from large to small, but a loss is a loss, and each one leaves its mark on us. To a greater or lesser

degree, these endings drain our energy and diminish our ability to rise for the next challenge. They knock us off balance — at least for a time. LOCATION: 4842

Why are endings and transitions so poorly handled in our ministries, organizations, and teams? Why do we often miss God’s new beginnings, the new work he is doing? We miss seeing what is ahead in part because we fail to apply a central theological truth — that death is a necessary prelude to resurrection. To bear long-term fruit for Christ, we need to recognize that some things must die so something new can grow. If we do not embrace this reality, we will tend to dread endings as signs of failure rather than opportunities for something new. LOCATION: 4912

Although the process of navigating endings and new beginnings is almost always complex, we can say we are making a healthy transition when our process takes us through four phases:

- We accept that endings are a death.
- We recognize that endings and waiting in the confusing “in-between” will often take much longer than we think.
- We view endings and waiting as inextricably linked to our personal maturing in Christ.
- We affirm that endings and waiting are the gateway to new beginnings.

LOCATION: 5015

The failure to identify and prepare for endings and the accompanying loss is perhaps the biggest obstacle that prevents so many of us from moving on to something new.

LOCATION: 5029

No one enjoys waiting. But waiting for God is one of the central experiences of the Christian life. It is also one of the most difficult lessons we need to learn as leaders.

- Abraham waited almost twenty-five years for God to follow through on his promise of the birth of Isaac.
- Joseph waited somewhere between thirteen and twenty-two years to see his family again after being betrayed by his brothers.
- Moses waited forty years in the desert for God to resurrect a purpose for his life.
- Hannah waited years for an answer to her prayers for a child.
- Job waited years, not months, for God to reveal himself, redeem his losses, and take him into a new beginning.
- John the Baptist and Jesus waited almost thirty years before the Father’s time for their ministries came to fulfillment. LOCATION: 5074

They are descriptions of what it means in concrete terms to be on an authentic life journey with Christ and to become a missional presence of God in the world. LOCATION: 5471

1. Slowed Down Spirituality

- The rhythms and pace of our personal lives are slower and more deliberate. We operate out of a contemplative activism, with doing for Jesus flowing out of being with him.
- We commune with and are transformed by Jesus through a consistent, daily practice of reading Scripture.
- We encourage, respect, and value Sabbath observance as a key spiritual discipline.
- We view and practice prayer as part of a lifestyle of loving union with Jesus.
- We consider spending time in solitude and silence to be foundational to remaining centered in Christ.
- We believe that discernment of God’s will requires sensitivity to what is happening inside of us (consolations and desolations), as well as seeking insights from Scripture and wise counsel.
- We make radical, intentional life changes (adopting a “Rule of Life”) in order to cultivate a personal relationship with Jesus and to avoid living off of the spirituality of others.
- We affirm and practice a theology of delight — both personally and corporately.

LOCATION: 5472

2. Integrity in Leadership

- Pastors and ministry leaders lead out of a deep interior life with Christ.
- Leaders consider their marriage or singleness to be their loudest gospel message; they intentionally make this aspect of their life a reflection of their eternal destiny of marriage to Christ.
- Pastors and teachers experience Scripture as a deep well for their own soul, and not simply as a tool for teaching others.
- The work of church governance (elder board, leadership team, etc.) flows out of an intentional spiritual discernment process focused on following God's will when making strategic decisions.
- Leaders seek to be appropriately connected to others, yet calmly differentiate their "true selves" from the demands and expectations of those around them.
- The church and its leaders are aware of the complexity of power dynamics and the challenges of navigating dual roles in the course of ministry work and building community.
- Leaders humbly preach and live out of truth and authenticity; they refuse to engage in pretense, impression management, or exaggeration.
- Spiritual authority allows for and encourages people to ask questions and to say "no" when appropriate.

LOCATION: 5485

3. "Beneath the Surface" Discipleship

- We go back to go forward, seeking to break negative patterns from our families of origin and cultures that hinder us from following Jesus.
- We acknowledge and respect our personal limits and the limits of others.
- We maintain a profound awareness of and appreciation for our brokenness.
- We seek to integrate a healthy love of self and good self-care with our love for God and others.
- Our measure of what constitutes a mature spirituality is love, humility, and approachability, not gifts, power, or success.
- Losses and disappointments are seen as opportunities to meet God and discover more about ourselves.

LOCATION: 5498

4. Healthy Community

- We affirm and practice deep listening as an indispensable means of loving others well.
- We voice our assumptions and expectations about what others might be thinking, rather than relying on "mind reading."
- We seek to use new language that enables us to respectfully articulate our wants, needs, and differences. For example, "I'm puzzled about," "I notice," or "I prefer," rather than making accusations or angry outbursts.
- We continually seek to master the skills and nuances of "clean fighting."
- We maintain a healthy sensitivity to over-functioning (doing for others what they can and should do for themselves) and under-functioning (relying on others to do what they can and should do themselves).
- We pursue the unity of the church by respecting individual differences (valuing different viewpoints, choices, and spiritual journeys).
- We challenge ourselves and encourage others to share out of our weaknesses and vulnerabilities.
- We consistently invite one another to all take responsibility for our own lives and to do so without blaming or shaming. LOCATION: 5507

5. Passionate Marriages and Singleness •

- We acknowledge, honor, celebrate, and support both singleness and marriage. This is reflected in everything from regular sermons to retreats and equipping events.
- Married couples and singles understand that they are becoming living signs of God's love for the world, cultivating a love for others that is passionate, intimate, free, and life-giving.

- Our oneness with Christ is closely connected to our oneness with our spouses (for married people) and to our close community (for single people).
- We talk openly about sexuality, recognizing that the beautiful relationship between Christ and his church is to be reflected in the sexual relationship between a husband and wife, or in the chastity of singles.
- We differentiate between “using” and “loving” by monitoring the interior movements of the heart, treating others as unrepeatable and invaluable.
- We accept the marriage paradigm of two differentiated, separate individuals (each with different hopes, values, ideas, and preferences) as the pathway to oneness.

Note: should you wish to find any quote in its original context, the Kindle “location” is provided after each entry.