

## LEADING THROUGH PAIN

The same Jesus that gave us the Great Commission to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel" also said "Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows." What do you do when these 2 realities intersect? How do you continue to lead while experiencing pain?

### I. Preparation

John 13-17 shows us what Jesus said to prepare his followers for the most painful time in their lives.

#### A. Know it's coming

John 16:33 NLT *I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.*

### II. Diagnose

Learn to know the difference between pain, being hurt and being injured.

#### A. Purpose

1. God wants to use your pain for your growth. Our enemy wants to use your pain for your destruction.
2. James 1:2-4 NLT *Dear brothers and sisters, **when** troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. 3 For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. 4 So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.*

#### B. Pain - It tells us something is wrong.

1. It is an alert system that tells us we need to pay attention.
2. It reveals what's going on inside.
3. Pain is an opportunity for God to get our attention.
4. Understand the reality of YOUR pain.  
\*\*\*The weight of your pain can't be compared to anyone else's. The worst season of your life is still your worst season and will not compare to anyone else's.

#### C. Hurt - having a sensation of pain

1. There is discomfort, but often you aren't going to make it worse by pushing through. When given short respite, it gets better. It can be a sign of growth and things getting stronger.
2. In ministry, it is inevitable. Why? because people are involved. And you are a people. When people are involved you get people issues. You work in a hospital, and you are not a robot.

#### D. Injury - to cause or do any kind of harm

1. Being injured means that if you resume with your normal routine, you will make the problem worse. Often a result of a catastrophic event. Obvious signs of damage can be seen. Your movement is restricted. Over time it often gets worse and if left untreated can cause disability or even death.
2. In ministry there are things we can't just "push through". They need to be addressed. There are events that happen that leave us injured. We cannot afford to have people in ministry that just ignore it and end up disabled or out of ministry.

### III. Treatment

#### A. Prevention

1. It is the best treatment. It won't keep you from pain, but it will prepare you to handle it better.
2. Take steps to prepare for pain
  - a) Be rooted in Christ. Build your foundation on the rock. He is the vine.
  - b) Be filled with and working in concert with the Holy Spirit
  - c) Know it is temporary. In the end He wins. No more pain.
  - d) Strengthen yourself in Spiritual Disciplines
  - e) Deal with underlying issues physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually.
  - f) Remember your Calling. It is an anchor in a time of uncertainty.

#### B. Training

1. We have to increase our capacity.
2. What might crush you, someone else may be able to handle with ease. Don't fall for the trap of comparing your pain/hurt/injury to anyone else.
3. As I grow what would have crushed me when I was weaker doesn't now. As Christ heals and strengthens, our ability to handle more increases.

#### C. Rest

1. Learn to Sabbath well.
2. If it was good enough for Jesus... sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is get alone in the mountains or take a nap on a boat.

#### D. Get help

1. Admit there's a problem. Be vulnerable. It shuts down the Superman stigma. It identifies you as human.
2. You were not created to do life alone.
3. Exodus 18:17-18 NIV *Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. 18 You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone.*
4. Know your limitations. Rely on those God has put around you. Your family, your friends, your Network, etc.

#### E. See a Specialist

1. Sometimes you need a professional.
  - a) Counselors. Use the back of your credential card. Talk to someone that knows what they're doing.
2. No one knows (exactly) what you're going through, only Jesus. Keep your eyes on Him. He is the Great Physician and knows exactly what you need. (Isa. 9:6 ; Heb. 4:15-16)

### IV. Recovery

1. Being hurt or injured SHOULD cause us to rely on the Lord as our strength and on others to help carry the load. His strength is perfected in our weakness (2 Cor 12:9)
2. You may need to take some time off pending on the severity
3. You may need to let others take care of things or let other things fall off.
4. Coming from a place of pain is NOT the time to make major life decisions.
5. Not everyone knows how to handle another person's pain, hurt, or injury. Give them grace and don't expect to find from them what you are expected to find in Christ.