# 10 WAYS TO CARE FOR YOUR HEART AS A WORSHIP LEADER

AND WHAT HAPPENS OVER TIME IF WE DON'T.

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# A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR

**IF YOU ARE A WORSHIP LEADER,** YOU PUT YOUR HEART ON THE LINE EVERY DAY, AND EVERY WEEK. THANK YOU. YOU ARE LOVED. YOU ARE VALUED. YOU ARE A GIFT TO YOUR COMMUNITY. BUT YOU ARE ALSO *LIMITED* AND *VULNERABLE*. AND WE NEED YOU TO WIN AT LIFE FOR THE LONG HAUL.

**AS A WORSHIP LEADER AND MENTOR** OF WORSHIP LEADERS FOR OVER 30 YEARS, I'VE WATCHED HUNDREDS OF OUR PEERS – MEN AND WOMEN – RISE AND FALL IN MINISTRY AND IN LIFE. IN EVERY CASE, THE QUIET WAYS OF THE HEART ARE ALWAYS BEHIND THE SCENES, MOVING US EACH ON A SLOW TRAJECTORY TOWARD LIFE OR DEATH.

**THIS SHORT BOOK SEEKS TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO CARE FOR YOUR HEART.** MAY YOU FIND STRENGTH IN EACH PAGE. I'M CHEERING YOU ON, TO FLOURISH IN HOPE AND JOY. DAN +

# 1. KEEP YOUR FAMILY CLOSE.

**IF WE DO:** THERE IS NO MORE POWERFUL WAY TO KEEP YOUR OWN HEART STRONG THAN BY PAYING YOUR BEST ATTENTION TO THE TENDER HEARTS CLOSEST TO YOU. LOOK UP FROM THE TASK, AND MAKE SURE THE HAPPIEST PEOPLE IN YOUR CHURCH LIVE IN YOUR HOME.

**IF WE DON'T:** WHILE IT MAY COME AS A SHOCK, MANY OF US AS WORSHIP LEADERS STRUGGLE WITH IDENTITY ISSUES, PUSHING US TO DRAW AFFIRMATION FROM THE ENERGY OF THE CROWD, THE STAGE, AND THE TASK. OVER TIME, PAIN CAN BEGIN TO APPEAR IN THE FAMILY.

**QUESTION:** HOW COULD YOU PAY MORE ATTENTION?

# 2. KEEP YOUR FRIENDS NEAR.

**IF WE DO:** FRIENDS ARE USUALLY THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO VESTED INTEREST IN OUR SUCCESS OTHER THAN OUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING. BEYOND WORSHIP LEADING, MAKE SURE YOU ARE HANGING OUT WITH PEOPLE WHO MAKE YOU LAUGH. YOU WILL STAY STRONG.

**IF WE DON'T:** THE MORE TASK-ORIENTED WE ARE, WE MAY EQUATE DOING THE WORK OF WORSHIP LEADING (AND IT IS HARD WORK) WITH BUILDING HONEST, VULNERABLE, RENEWING FRIENDSHIPS. IF WE CONFUSE THE TWO, WE'LL BURN OUT, OR MISS OUT, EVENTUALLY.

**QUESTION:** DO YOU PLAN REGULAR FRIEND TIME?

# 3. PLAY HARD, THEN WORK.

**IF WE DO:** DO YOU REST IN ORDER TO WORK MORE, OR WORK IN ORDER TO REST MORE? THE SABBATH PRINCIPLE TELLS US THAT REST IS GOD'S GIFT TO US – WE ARE NOT SLAVES. PLAY DOING SOMETHING OF NO CLEAR BENEFIT – THE HABIT WILL GIVE YOU HEALTH.

**IF WE DON'T:** LEADERS WHO DON'T KNOW HOW TO PLAY DON'T ONLY WORK THEMSELVES TOO HARD; THEY WORK OTHERS TOO HARD AS WELL. REWARDING OURSELVES WITH NETFLIX OR FOOD, OVER TIME, WILL DISTORT OUR VIEW OF REST. LEARN TO PLAY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

**QUESTION:** WHAT IS PURE PLAY FOR YOU?

# 4. CREATE GOOD ART, ALWAYS.

**IF WE DO:** THE SLOW AND STEADY WORK OF WORSHIP LEADING, EVEN IF DONE CREATIVELY AND FROM LOVE, CAN PUT US IN A RUT. FIND SPACE TO CREATE ART THAT IS BEAUTIFUL AND MEANINGFUL, EVEN IF IT DOESN'T MEET AN EXPLICIT WORSHIP NEED. IT MATTERS TO YOU.

**IF WE DON'T:** SOMETIMES WE AS WORSHIP LEADERS ARE SO BUSY TRYING TO GIVE EVERYONE WHAT THEY WANT OR NEED, WE FORGET TO GIVE WHAT WE HAVE TO GIVE. KEEP CREATIVE WORK GOING THAT IS FROM YOUR CORE, FROM YOUR CENTER, EVEN AS YOU CONTINUE TO LEAD.

**QUESTION:** WHAT CREATIVE VOICE IN YOU IS QUIET?

# 5. FIND YOUR GUIDE.

**IF WE DO:** A GUIDE IS SOMEONE WHOSE END GAME IS TO SEE YOU THRIVE. WHETHER THAT GUIDE IS A PARENT, A MENTOR, OR A SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR, INVEST TIME, ENERGY, AND MONEY BEING WITH THAT PERSON. WITH A GUIDE, WE FLOURISH WITH WISDOM AT OUR BACK.

**IF WE DON'T:** ANY LEADER CAN GO YEARS, EVEN DECADES, WITHOUT FACE-TO-FACE MENTORS. BUT OVER TIME, OUR LACK OF INPUT FROM A GUIDE WHO IS AHEAD OF US IN LIFE (AND/OR SKILL) WILL REVEAL ITSELF IN SHIPWRECKS OF HOPE, VOCATION, SPIRIT, OR FAITH.

**QUESTION:** WHO IS A STEADY GUIDE IN YOUR LIFE?

# 6. TAKE MORE CHANCES.

**IF WE DO:** BEING A CHRISTIAN IS MEANT TO BE AN ADVENTURE, NOT A BURDEN. SOME OF US NEED TO BREATHE, GETTING BEYOND THE DISCIPLINES TO THE DELIGHTS, BEYOND THE HAVE-TOS TO THE GET-TOS. TAKE SOME RISKS, AND TRUST GOD AS YOU DO.

**IF WE DON'T:** MANY OF US WERE DISCIPLED INTO BELIEVING THAT THE MORE STABLE SOMETHING IS, THE MORE GODLY IT US. THAT IS TRUE OF MARRIAGE, BUT IT IS NOT ALWAYS TRUE OF FAITH. FAITH IS A LEAP, AND MITIGATING ALL RISK CAN LEAD TO A WANING SPIRIT.

**QUESTION:** IS THERE A RISK GOD IS INVITING YOU TO?

# 7. BE SILENT EVERY DAY.

**IF WE DO:** SILENCE IS A LANGUAGE OF THE SPIRIT; WE HEAR OUR HEARTS BEAT, FEEL OUR BODIES RISE AND FALL AS WE BREATHE, AND ALL OUR THOUGHTS SPIN DOWN AS WE CENTER ON JESUS AND HIS LOVING FAITHFULNESS. SILENCE, OVER TIME, BRINGS HEALTH.

**IF WE DON'T:** YOUR PHONE WILL ALWAYS HAVE MORE AND MORE AND MORE TO SHOW YOU, GIVE YOU, AND OFFER YOU. BUT IF IT'S POWERED DOWN, WE CAN BEGIN TO HEAR GOD SPEAK. WE CAN BEGIN TO HEAR OUR OWN EMOTIONS. IF NOT, WE CAN BECOME SPIRITUALLY DEAF.

**QUESTION:** WHEN COULD YOU ENGAGE WITH SILENCE?

# 8. KEEP GOOD RHYTHMS.

**IF WE DO:** OUR LIVES ARE BUILT AROUND RHYTHMS. WHAT WE DO RHYTHMICALLY IN OUR LIVES IS WHO WE BECOME. DECIDE WHO YOU WANT TO BECOME, AND CREATE RHYTHMS THAT BUILD YOUR SPIRITUAL MUSCLES – LIKE WORSHIP AND DAILY GRATITUDE PRACTICES.

**IF WE DON'T:** HAPHAZARDLY EXPECTING LIFE WILL ALL WORK OUT AS WE FOLLOW OUR PASSIONS CAN END – OFTEN – IN A STRAINED LIFE (AND RELATIONSHIPS). FORCE YOURSELF TO MAINTAIN GOOD RHYTHMS, OR THE MUSIC OF YOUR LIFE WILL START TO FALL APART.

**QUESTION:** WHAT RHYTHMS ARE CREATING YOU?

# 9. EAT GOOD FOOD & CARE.

**IF WE DO:** FOOD AND DRINK ARE MEDICINE, AND WHAT WE CHOOSE TO EAT AND DRINK MATTERS. CARING ABOUT OUR HEALTH MEANS WE CARE ABOUT OUR MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL STATES, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE. CHOOSE TO EAT HEALTHY FOODS AND TO EXERCISE DAILY. CARE.

**IF WE DON'T:** WE ALL LOVE FUN FOODS AND DRINKS. BUT IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT OUR BODIES WEREN'T MADE FOR THE CONSTANT INFLUX OF COMFORT FOODS WE GIVE THEM. CHANGE YOUR TASTES, AND LEAD YOURSELF IN HEALTH. SICKNESS MAY COME, BUT HEALTH WILL FIGHT.

**QUESTION:** WHAT MORE CAN YOU DO TO BE HEALTHY?

# 10. STAY CLOSE TO JESUS.

**IF WE DO:** IF JESUS REMAINS THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE, AND END OF YOUR LIFE'S PURPOSE, YOU HAVE A CHANCE OF FLOURISHING IN THIS LIFETIME. DISCOVER WHAT KEEPS YOU TETHERED TO YOUR BELOVEDNESS, TO YOUR GOOD LORD, AND DO THAT. SEEK HIM, FIND HIM, DAILY.

**IF WE DON'T:** WORSHIP LEADING CAN LOOK AND SOUND LIKE A DEVOTIONAL LIFE, BUT IT'S NOT THE SAME THING. IF WE DON'T CULTIVATE A SECRET LIFE THAT IS BIGGER THAN OUR PUBLIC LIFE, WE WILL CAVE IN ON OURSELVES LIKE A SINKHOLE. STAY CLOSE TO JESUS.

**QUESTION:** WHAT KEEPS YOU CLOSE TO JESUS?

# TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEART, PLEASE.

**AS A WORSHIP LEADER, I BELIEVE YOU ARE ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE ON THE PLANET.** I MEAN IT. WHO ELSE WILL LEAD HUMAN BEINGS OF EVERY KIND, THROUGH THE POWERFUL VEHICLE OF MUSIC AND THE WORSHIP ARTS, TO BECOME MORE LIKE JESUS?

**YOU WILL, AND I WILL, AND THAT'S AS HIGH A CALLING AS ANY IN THIS WORLD. THE WORLD NEEDS JESUS.**

I'VE DEVOTED MY DAYS TO SEE YOU AS A CREATIVE LEADER THRIVE IN LIFE AND MINISTRY. IT'S WHAT I LOVE TO DO. IF THIS RESOURCE ENCOURAGED YOU, PLEASE LET ME KNOW AT **DANWILTRESOURCES@GMAIL.COM**.

I'M CHEERING YOU ON. DAN +