



Free Resource

FROM LEADER BREAKTHRU



Leading With Spiritual Authority

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About This Resource

Very few things are original. Almost all of what we know has come from the insights of another. We each stand on the shoulders of those who came before us.

The source for many of the ideas, paradigms and concepts within the resources at Leader Breakthru come from the teaching of Dr. J. Robert Clinton. (www.bobbyclinton.com).

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Leading With Spiritual Authority

True leadership and influence flows out of spiritual authority.

Spiritual Authority is the influence God grants to a leader. In a classic Kingdom paradox it is also something in which every leader must participate.

In many ways it is part of the “inside-out” nature of the Kingdom leadership. Spiritual authority is the by-product of a life of intimacy and dependency on Christ.

God grants to a leader spiritual authority, it is nothing something that is produced or gained through self promotion. Intentional character processing of a leader helps contribute to spiritual authority.

Spiritual authority is characteristic of a God-anointed leader. It enables the leader to influence followers from a base of experiential power through persuasion, modeling, and moral expertise toward God’s purposes.

Spiritual authority comes from a life and ministry which demonstrate the presence of God. A leader with spiritual authority knows the heart and call of God, and is able to demonstrate that intimacy in his or her leadership.

What then, are the postures of a leader who is surrendered to God, and whereby God grants a greater sense of presence and authority to bring Kingdom influence?

There are at least four postures that leaders take that experience increased spiritual authority. Each of these four postures runs in direct opposition to that which comes “natural” for most leaders. In every case it is easy to minimize our personal tendencies instead of seeking to embody these attitudes.

THE POSTURE OF SURRENDER

Surrender stands in direct opposition to our desire to be in control; our fear of releasing control. It is all about who is allowed to reign and about our willingness to trust the King.

The challenge of surrender means admitting that just like Adam in the garden my deep desire is to be like God, to be the ruler of my own domain.

**The key question of Surrender is:
“Who is in control?”**

THE POSTURE OF ALIGNMENT

Alignment confronts the fact that we love our own ideas and we love to do things our way. After surrendering control, the challenge is to align ourselves with His plans.

Each of us love to make plans, devise schemes, and then try to ask God to bless them. Our plans actually become our maintaining of control, and our negotiating with God for our desired outcomes. In reality its means the creative asking the King of the universe to compromise His plans by adopting our own.

When we act this way we are in effect saying to God: “Follow me” The challenge of alignment means admitting that I really do believe my ideas can accomplish kingdom work. That I really do want to do God’s work my way.

**The key question of Alignment is:
“Who follows who?”**

Whether it be money, time, status or effort, we give it away gladly, in pursuit of God (Luke 21:2–4; 2 Corinthians 8:1–5).

THE POSTURE OF BROKENNESS

Brokenness is being released from dependence on giftedness and competency and ministering in absolute dependence on God for anything of significance. The process of brokenness is one of separating a leader from their security and reliance on abilities, skills, giftedness, competencies, plans, notebooks, etc.

It is about learning that the needs of people go beyond the silver and gold they ask us for and which feels so great for us to give. It is the upside down message of Paul throughout Corinthians; the gospel of foolishness, this treasure in jars of clay (chamber pots), so that I might know His all, surpassing power.

It is the realization that it is not me at all and that the Kingdom is not a matter of words, or tools, or fads, but the power of God. It is about freedom from the need to be known "for my stuff."

The challenge of brokenness means admitting that I want people to be impressed with me. That I want to deliver from a posture of positional and experiential authority.

The key question of brokenness is:

"What do I rely on? What do I bring to the table expertise or desperate dependence?"

THE POSTURE OF VULNERABILITY

Vulnerability admits that I need those I am here to serve, as much, or more than they need me. It is the demonstration that I am not someone who has arrived, or mastered life. I am a servant, in dependence and servant- partnership with Jesus.

Transparency is the process of letting people see into my life; it is letting them know about weaknesses and our needs. Vulnerability is the willingness to let these same people minister to those points of weakness and needs.

Transparency says: I understand, I am like you.
Vulnerability says, I need you... probably more than you need me.

The challenge of vulnerability is not only admitting that I have needs, but releasing the last vestiges of that desire to impress people. It is about confronting the sin based lie that pretends ministry flows out of what I do.

The key question of Vulnerability is:

"Will I admit I need you?"

Will I choose distance (sanitary safety) or relationship?
Will I allow people into the process of God's work in my life?"

These four postures are not a formula, but they open the door for building of greater spiritual authority from the leaders standpoint. Leaders willing to assume these postures begin to see ministry flow out of *beingness*, as oppose to expertise or position.

TWO BARRIERS

Challenges to a leader's spiritual life often occur in leaders who seek to move from focused ministry to convergent ministry. Two recognizable barriers deal with issues of plateau and brokenness.

These barriers can either serve to hold a leader back, or they can become bridges to growth and greater spiritual authority.

The Plateau Barrier

Leaders must learn to reassert their commitment to growth and intimacy with Christ. Many leaders have a tendency to arrest in their development once they have developed some skills and gained some ministry experience.

They may be content to continue ministry as is without discerning their need to develop further.

What is needed is often a paradigm shift where God uses mentors, training, reading and new insights from the Scripture to bring break through.

The Deep Processing Barrier

Leaders must also see the need to address their own issues. As God revisits the life of a leader, he challenges them to go deeper, You will never fully understand your calling, until you come to terms with your own, personal, woundedness. God often uses deep, even hurtful processing like ministry conflicts, leadership backlash and crises to challenge the status quo of a leader.

The Point: God will eventually, providentially, challenge a leader to take steps to develop and use their giftedness for greater capacity. Often the leader is unaware of this need to move forward until God brings it to the surface. It is a call to the leader to greater development, in which he or she is challenged, corrected, and inspired to press on in the faith.

POWER & SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

All leaders (whether godly or not) operate out of some form of influence and utilize some base of authority. Abuse of leadership often comes when leaders utilize inappropriate forms or bases of power, and there is an absence of spiritual authority.

Forms of power

- Force: Use of physical means to gain compliance.
- Manipulation: Gaining compliance when followers are unaware.
- Persuasion: Exhortations, appeals, arguments, debate.
- Coercion: Compliance gained by threat of force or punishment.
- Inducement: Promise of reward or gain for the follower.
- Personal: Compliance gained by some virtue or expertise.

Bases of Power

- Personal appeal: Personality and abilities.
- Organizational: Positional influence and abilities.
- Money: Accumulation of resources used to gain influence.
- Knowledge: Education, study degrees, extended research.
- Unique presence of the Holy Spirit: Powerful expressions and fillings.
- Giftedness: Unique giftings and abilities to minister.

De Sales wrote:

"We should submit ourselves to the direction of a faithful friend, who, by the prudence and wisdom of his counsels, may guide us in all our actions, and secure us from the ambushes and deceits of the wicked one.

Such a friend will be to us as a treasure of wisdom and consolation, in all our afflictions, our sorrows, and relapses; he will serve as a medicine to cure, and as a cordial to comfort our hearts in our spiritual disorders; he will guard us from evil, and make us advance in good; and should any infirmity befall us, he will assist in our recovery, and prevent its being unto death."

THE INFLUENCE CONTINUUM

The tie between leadership being influence and influence related to Spiritual Authority, can be summed up in the influence continuum.

The Continuum can be depicted as the following:

Influence is an issue of Spiritual Authority



Spiritual Authority is shaped in its deepest form through greater character formation



Character Formation is often shaped the most as leaders address issues of pain and woundedness

The continuum flows in both directions.

As leaders address issues of woundedness, God grants greater formation and depth to their character.



As a leader's character deepens, he grants to them a larger measure of *Spiritual Authority*



And as leaders gain a wider measure of spiritual authority, their *Influence* for the Kingdom broadens.

SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

Spiritual Authority spiritual power and influence God grants to His followers for the purpose of extending His purposes and sovereign plan.

Spiritual authority is a by-product of a Christ-followers personal life with God, and a sovereign God who grants authority to whom, and whenever, He chooses.

“We are praying, too, that you will be filled with his mighty glorious strength so that you can keep going no matter what happens--always full of the joy of the Lord, always thankful to the Father who has made us fit to share all the wonderful things that belong to those who live in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us out of the darkness and gloom of Satan's kingdom and brought us into the kingdom of his dear Son, who bought our freedom with his blood and forgave us all our sins. (Col 1:11-14)”

I pray that you will begin to understand how incredibly great his power is to help those who believe him. It is that same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in heaven, And God has put all things under his feet and made him the supreme Head of the church--which is his body, filled with himself, the Author and Giver of everything everywhere. (Eph 1: 19-20)

Far, far above any other kin or ruler or dictator or leader. Yes, his honor is far more glorious than that of anyone else either in this world or in the world to come. (Eph 1:21-23)

Last of all be reminded that your strength must come from the Lord's mighty power within you. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand safe against all strategies and tricks of Satan.

“For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies--the evil ruler of the unseen world, those mighty satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge number of wicked spirits in the spirit world.

So use every piece of the God's armor to resist the enemy whenever he attacks, and when it is all over, you will still be standing up. (Eph 6:10-13)

The next page provides a reflection exercise related to spiritual authority and your leadership.

You & Spiritual Authority

One of the best ways to see the relevance of this topic is to evaluate how you bring influence, and how you have seen spiritual authority exercised by those you have observed or followed. Invest a few minutes to complete the following reflection, then spend time discussing the topic with someone else.

Do an evaluation of the forms and bases of power, first in the ministry of an influential leader you have observed, and then in your own ministry (1=little, 5=much)

FORMS OF POWER	AN INFLUENTIAL LEADER					MY LEADERSHIP				
Force	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Manipulation	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Persuasion	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Coercion	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Inducement	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Personal	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

When under pressure, I most exhibit the _____ form of power.

Others would characterize my leadership as using the _____ form of power.

BASES OF POWER	AN INFLUENTIAL LEADER					MY LEADERSHIP				
Personal Appeal	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Organization	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Money	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Unique presence of the Holy Spirit	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Giftedness	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

When under pressure, I most exhibit the _____ form of power.

Others would characterize my leadership as using the _____ form of power.

Suppose you have been asked to interview for a new ministry position, and you are asked the following questions, how would you respond?

How do you influence people?

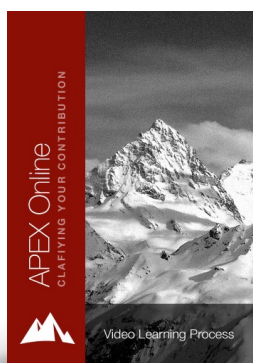
What evidence do you have that the spiritual authority you exhibit is increasing?

What experiences have most contributed to increasing your spiritual authority to lead?

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RESOURCES ON CLARIFYING CONTRIBUTION



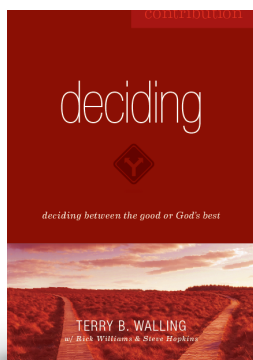
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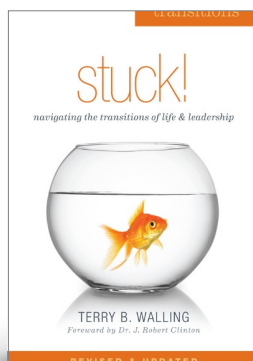
Deciding

DECIDING BETWEEN THE GOOD & GOD'S BEST

Beyond the discovery of your calling is the need to clarify one's contribution. "Of all the things that you could do, what should you do?" Do you dare to step into all that God has created you to be and do?

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