

Lesson 6

THE COST OF LEADERSHIP

I. Self-Sacrifice

- A. A leader wants to serve his God and others. To do this he must have a servant's heart.
- B. A leader will give up many personal desires for God and others—money, position, power, prestige, friends, family, retirement, etc.

II. Loneliness

- A. A leader must identify with the people he leads and yet he must be separate from them. A leader who gets too close to his followers (buddies) will soon feel their contempt.
- B. A leader must share himself and yet stand alone at the top of the pile.
- C. A leader is sometimes all alone in his thinking and therefore totally isolated from others.
- D. A wise leader draws close to God and pursues personal holiness of life. He will also make himself accountable to others who will dare to ask the right questions.

III. Criticism

- A. A leader will be criticized by those within the organization as well as those outside of it. Criticism from Christians can often be brutal. It is much more difficult to accept criticism from the saved world than from the unsaved world. Often our expectations are too high for the saved world.
- B. A leader knows how to evaluate criticism, dividing the unjust from the just criticism. He deals with the just criticism and leaves the rest in God's sovereign hands.
- C. Criticism can and will work for good if the leader has the right attitude about it. Surely it will teach him patience and humility.
- D. How does one deal with criticism?
 - 1. Don't defend or attack.
 - 2. Respond in humility and thankfulness.
 - 3. Find what is true in the criticism and do what you can about it.

IV. Fatigue

- A. Leaders work hard, put in long hours, deal with people and are open to criticism. The life of a leader is demanding and often results in extreme fatigue. Yet, without the price of fatigue, we have mediocrity.
- B. A wise leader knows how to change his pace, use quality time, take Sabbaths, and engage in rest and relaxation. He works hard and plays hard.
- C. Fatigued leaders neglect God, themselves and others. This sets up guilt patterns which lead to depression.

V. Rejection

- A. All leaders will face rejection by others from time to time. In fact, if a person cannot take rejection, he ought not to be a leader.
- B. People often have standards too high for leaders and sometimes leaders have them too high for themselves. The leader's goal should be to live his life for Christ and his standards, not those of mere men.

- C. Rejection increases a leader's faith because it thrusts him on Christ alone (Isa. 43:1-3) for power to get the task done (where he should have been all along).
- D. "Often the crowd does not recognize a leader until he is gone, and then they build a monument for him with the stones they threw at him in life" (L. B. Cowman).

VI. **Pressures**

- A. Leaders have constant demands and pressures—hard decisions, not enough time, demands of people, real crises and false crises.
- B. Leaders have to prioritize sacrifices—sacrifice a few things for the good of the whole.
- C. Often spiritual maturity brings uncertainty. God seems to leave more to one's spiritual discernment and gives fewer sensible, tangible evidences of His guidance than earlier. Hudson Taylor said later in life that knowing God' will was like he was in a fog and he didn't know what to do.
- D. In the midst of pressure, Christians know God will respond in time, even though it may be the eleventh hour (Prov. 3:5-6).

VII. **Cost to Others**

- A. The wife and children of a leader pay a price for his leadership—time, comfort, money, sensitivity. Many times a leader wrongly takes out his frustrations on his wife and children mistakenly believing that they will not reject him because they love him.
- B. The followers of a leader pay a price when the leader makes bad decision, falls into sin, falls into depression, etc.

VIII. **Final Thought:** Spiritual leadership has a definite price tag on it. A man must count the cost, evaluate and determine to pay the price if he will aspire to leadership. He must know he is called of God to lead or he will fail or quit.
