

Larry Tomczak: 10 Tips to Finish Well in Your Kingdom Calling

In 50 years of ministry, I've learned a great deal of humility and what can happen if you don't completely surrender and sell out your life to God. You can go through an entire lifetime of "serving God," but still not feel satisfied in your relationship with Him unless...

Unless you can say that you've adhered to these 10 principles—precepts for finishing well in your kingdom calling. Which of these do you lack and can you improve upon?

1. Live your life loving God and loving others. Jesus summed everything up with these two priorities (Matt. 22:37-40). Not just family and friends but everybody!

Rick Warren in his recent farewell address (after 43 years at Saddleback Church) finished by telling 23,000 members one thing: "Live a life of love!"

2. Glorify God by fulfilling your destiny. No matter what comes your way, be flexible, forgiving and full of faith to fulfill His plan for your life (). Destiny is a matter of choice not chance. So, turn your trials into triumphs, your stumbling blocks into steppingstones and your tests into testimonies!

You'll face betrayals (check out the traumatic experiences of Joseph, Paul, David and Jesus). Resist comparing and counting (remember David grieved God in numbering the people in 2 Sam. 24:10). Don't deceive yourself with adulation and diminished anointing, Samson went out "as did not know that the Lord had left him" (Judg. 16:20).

3. Stay in His Word and in His church. We're called to mature by regular study, application of scripture and being meaningfully involved in a local church. To do otherwise is to live beneath God's revealed will for your life.

4. Build friendships for support, sharpening and sustainability. Recognize four groups: just friends (social); rust friends (older—keep some, let some go); trust friends (counselors); and must friends (lifelong gifts from God).

5. Adjust with seasons. God ordained seasons (Eccl. 3:1) and sensitivity to the Spirit enables us to make transitions and not burn out. After decades of planting churches and discipling leaders, God directed me to entrust our church to our son and his wife, and transition to the calling of "watchman on the wall" as a cultural commentator addressing "hot button" issues from a biblical worldview to develop informed influencers for a Great Awakening. Recently I identified 30 critical issues and released them free as 5-minute informative videos on YouTube to equip us to engage with others.

6. Guard your health. God's will for us is to practice "temple maintenance" as we age so we age well and remain fruitful! Whitfield died at 57; Wesley at 87 with 30 more years of productive service! My primary heroes in ministry lived long and fruitful lives (Billy Graham—99); (Chuck Colson—80); (Derek Prince—88).

Don't retire but re-fire to conquer new mountains as you balance work with rest, recreation, relaxation, wise eating, sound sleep, stress reduction and regular exercise.

7. Cultivate consistency and being faithful. Don't strive to be successful. Strive to be faithful, and leave your success in the hands of God.

Success in life really boils down to doing a few important things consistently every day. These are "holy habits" that

spell the difference between productivity and longevity versus passivity and mediocrity.

People gravitate to individuals who are faithful. Remember: "Consistency is a daily deposit in the bank of trust." One day we all long to hear Jesus tell us, "Well done good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:23).

8. Excel in serving. When Moses died God didn't say "Moses My man of faith and power..." but simply, "Moses My servant is dead" (Josh. 1:2).

Jesus washed the disciples' feet as an example then told them, "If you know these things, blessed (happy) are you if you do them." (John. 13:17). My personal mantra is . (Help other people everyday).

Be intentional in serving not just when it's convenient but when it costs you sacrificially.

9. Give generously. Jesus said, "It's more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Practicing a spirit of generosity in blessing others practically helps others, paves the way for gospel sharing plus brings a significant and satisfying life.

Babies are born with clenched fists. We die with open hands. Many never learn the lesson of lavish and joyful giving.

10. Share the gospel consistently. When we leave this life for heaven we'll keep worshiping, learning, maturing and fellowshiping but there's one thing we'll no longer do—evangelize the lost. For decades I've encouraged multitudes to write a personal testimony tract and enjoy daily "divine appointments" where you plant "gospel seeds" to change lives. I engage with people daily and usually give out at least three of my spiritual journey tracts that enables me to reach over a thousand every year!

We're "ambassadors" (2 Cor. 5:20) and messengers called to share the gospel intentionally and consistently. Many opportunities for sharing Christ come disguised as unwelcome interruptions. So, to finish well let's re-consecrate ourselves to this sacred task. Go to "Loving Lifestyle Evangelism" to enjoy the adventure of natural, relational, enjoyable evangelism! {eoa}

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