

Remedy for Burnout

The bolts of your gates will be iron and bronze, and your strength will equal your days. **–Deuteronomy 33:25**

God never promotes us to the level of our incompetence. What He truly calls us to do, we can do. As St. Augustine prayed, “Command what Thou wilt; give what Thou commandest.” God always provides grace for what He has called us to do. “Your strength will equal your days” (Deut. 33:25). If you or I are operating at a level that brings fatigue and leads to what we now call “burnout,” then something has gone wrong; we moved outside our anointing at some stage. It should never happen.

This is not to deny that God may hide His face from us. It is not uncommon to experience the “dark night of the soul.” But this is not necessarily the same thing as burnout. God may leave us to test us, as He did Hezekiah, “to know everything that was in his heart” (2 Chron. 32:31). But burnout is what we bring on ourselves by taking on what God did not command.

The apostle Paul came to terms with his limitations and strengths. When his enemies scoffed, “His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing” (2 Cor. 10:10), it stung. It hurt. But he spoke with disarming frankness when he implicitly acknowledged nonetheless that his public speaking probably did not flow with the eloquence of a trained orator. “I may not be a trained speaker, but I do have knowledge” (1 Cor. 11:6).

“But I do have knowledge,” he could say. He may not have been a trained speaker, but he knew what he was talking about. And as it happened, his expertise touched on the very issue that had become the focus at the time. So his anointing came through where it counted. It turned out he had training that mattered. To Paul’s opponents, the issue was how you said it; to Paul, the issue was what you said. In other words, Paul’s

anointing of knowledge more than compensated for his deficiency in public speaking.

There are some lessons here for you and me. First, as I said already, nobody has everything. That is enough to keep all of us humble. But there is another lesson: For every limit there is a compensation. You may not have the gift you envy in another, but God has given you an anointing that person probably does not have.

Excerpted from *The Anointing: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*
(Charisma House, 2003).