

3 More Risks in Leading Reformation

I believe there is a remnant, a very small army of prayer-devoted awakeners, who will respond to the mission God put into my spirit years ago. But there is significant risk when we consider what we are talking about here.

On Thursday, we took a look at three such risks involved. Here are three more, and it is my hope that it will eliminate fears and compromises as you develop your ministry.

1. Invisible realities are invisible nonetheless. The true church is a supernatural church. When you start leading people into the invisible, you will lose those who walk by sight and not by faith.

I often counsel pastors and others to check on who really is and who is not with them. Is their team invested in the vision? The way to do this is simple—throw a prayer meeting and develop a prayer culture. Create an environment for your leaders where only those who are walking in the spirit can keep up with you. Those who are living according to the flesh, or who are leaning on their own understanding instead of living in the spirit will be quickly exposed.

The desire for unbiblical community (as opposed to biblical community) is a result of focusing on the visible more than the invisible. I regularly encourage people to get their satisfaction primarily from the invisible, spiritual realm—be with God and encounter him daily! The person that truly follows that advice is rare indeed.

True, biblical community actually exists in the spirit realm! In the invisible realm!

The problem with leading people into the invisible realm?

Those people have to invest radically into a life of consecration, fervent prayer and going deep in God. Those who don't do this won't even understand where you are going or how to follow. Leading a spiritual church requires a spiritual people. For those who are invested at a lesser level, they will struggle, and usually leave. It is hard to lead a supernatural church.

Understand, I'm not talking about a church where the supernatural manifests in the natural; I mean a supernatural church that exists in the invisible realm. Those who truly walk in the spirit aren't focused on physical manifestations nearly as much as they are on encountering God in the spirit.

It feels quite spiritual to cry out for God to manifest in our natural realm, but His desire is for us to manifest in His supernatural realm. The call isn't "on heaven as it is on Earth," but "on Earth as it is in heaven."

2. Not so friendly fire. There is a temptation to minimize the cost when moving out into a mission. However, a revolution is bloody. It's not for the weak-minded, or those who are looking for personal affirmation or a lot of friends. You absolutely will be slandered, attacked, accused, talked about, mocked and ridiculed. When you don't lead the way others believe you should, trouble follows.

The reason this point is so important to understand is that the enemy is extremely proficient at using the fear of friendly fire to keep leaders in alignment with his unholy plans.

You better be good at separating out people and devils! We cannot wrestle against flesh and blood. It's extremely important for me to be able to easily, without issue, give those who have wounded me a big hug if I ever saw them again. That is the goal. The friendly fire will come, often through well-meaning people who just don't know how to facilitate

their grievances. If you are afraid of the attack, you will compromise your mission before you even begin.

False-expectations will lead people, at times, to become quite fierce in their resistance. Since you are bringing reformation to a system they may value, you better get ready for a spiritual battle!

Gossip is revenge. I often teach on this, and I mention that I can most always feel the spirit of gossip, even when I have no natural indicators that its taking place. It's a spirit of witchcraft, and I am very alert to that demon.

I'll be very raw and honest with you. It's grieving, but nonetheless a reality in my life: I am gossiped about a lot. I feel it. My family feels it. The wounds are real. It's usually spiritualized gossip, wonderful people sharing their concerns about our ministry's lack of "balance" with other wonderful people. The spirit of Absalom is crafty. It highlights often accurate analysis about a leader, and it devises a plan to cause what they want to come to pass—or else.

You cannot avoid this! Stay humble and full of love. I was talking to a national leader once about a website that was fully devoted to communicating the author's issues with him. It was vile. He even secured the domain of that leader's name! He was intent on exposing and destroying. He was frustrated, mad, hurt and in disagreement with this leader. He used Scripture to "back up" his claims and gathered other people around him to discredit the leader.

What was the leader's response me when I asked him about it? He said God sent that man as a thorn in his flesh to keep him humble. Friendly fire turned to good!

Mike Bickle at IHOP has regularly been accused of not caring about people or creating an environment where people can socially connect with one another. What his accusers didn't understand was that God was requiring him to develop a

reformed culture where ministry to God was primary, and any ministry that stole focus from that had to be tabled until it could be developed in such a way that it supported the prayer movement.

Mike wasn't anti-community; he was anti-distraction. He was guarding the main thing. However, the assaults against him have been merciless. Thank God, Mike has stayed the course and hasn't compromised the mission of intercession for the nations.

3. High potential for failure. If you fear failure, you better find another line of work!

I'll give you a glimpse into my book, *Piece of Cake*, where I address this issue in detail. Keep in mind, it's a rough draft and I will be adding to it as I get closer to completing the book:

Sweet Failure!

Yes, you are going to fail. Go ahead and wrestle with it now—you can't avoid it. I don't mean ultimate failure, of course. But, I do mean that you will pray much, do your best to gain insight from God, consider your best options, seek wisdom from others and then move out with at least a measure of confidence—and you will experience failure!

Most young ministers crave for others to presume them to be successful and steady, with a pipeline directly into the command center of heaven. The reality? We see in part. We understand little. We have clarity on a small part of the big picture, and when we initiate action, others will watch as we stumble and struggle. Are you OK with that?

Thomas Edison said, "Just because something doesn't do what you planned it to do doesn't mean it's useless" (quoted in Artifacts: An Archaeologist's Year in Silicon Valley (2001) by Christine Finn. p. 90).

Your job is not to be so careful that you avoid failure; it's to be instant in obedience. In fact, failure is sweet when you learn how to handle the pressure it brings. Failure is an effective and desirable teacher. You may actually find yourself enjoying the various failures you experience, as a researcher would in a laboratory, in your pursuit toward efficiency and success. Really, the main thing standing in the way of the sweetness of failure is pride. If our goal is to impress people instead of developing ministries that set them free, we have no business even considering entering into a ministry project. We need to mature a little bit more first.

One of the most prevalent issues I come across on a regular basis is the fear of missing God. Often people feel led to initiate a ministry, or to make a move in that direction, and they are afraid of being outside of God's plan. This is a legitimate concern, but fear should not drive us. Wisdom should.

I am fully confident that a lot of sweet failure is ahead of me, and I learn how to stay joyful and teachable as I learn from every ministry experiment.

Keep in mind, I am not advising a haphazard life. That will only cause you unnecessary frustration. Measure your decisions and step according to wisdom as you live in the spirit, and refuse to fear knowing that both temporary failures and ultimate victory are both ahead! {eoa}

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church in the nations to repentance from casual Christianity and to burn in a manner worthy of the King of kings. He is equipping people to confront the enemies of God (established religion, Jezebel and so on) that hinder an extreme, sold-out level of true worship.

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