

10 Contrasts Between Pastors as Entertainers and Pastors as Leaders

There is a tendency within human nature to crave the affirmation of other human beings. Some people's need for affirmation is so great that it hinders their ability to discern God's will from the will of man.

One of the many reasons this is alarming is that those who lead churches and Christian organizations are not exempt from this tendency. If you are a local church pastor or CEO of a ministry or business, you are called to lead, not entertain. Many leaders do not understand the difference.

If your primary goal is to make people happy, then you should become an entertainer, not a leader. Leaders should be on the cutting edge of God's will. They should challenge people to leave their comfort zones, even though this often makes others upset. Leaders should also keep people accountable to standards of excellence.

This becomes especially difficult when a leader is close friends or family with those who are also under their spiritual authority. Many do not understand how to discern between business and friendship, which often causes a rift in the relationship.

The following are 10 contrasts between entertainers and leaders:

- 1. An entertainer's primary goal is to make people happy. A leader's goal is to empower people to achieve excellence.** An entertainer's primary focus in their ministry is to keep their people happy and satisfied. Sometimes folks are content because they are comfortable

and feel secure, but their hearts are deceiving them. A true leader's primary goals are to disturb the comfortable and provoke them to excellence. For example, if a coach never pushes his athletes to the point of pain in his training, the athletes will never excel. True leaders push their people to the perimeter of their potential in Christ.

2. **Entertainers perform. Leaders lead.** Pastors who are entertainers put all their effort into the public performance. This includes becoming a more polished speaker, having a cutting-edge worship team, employing the best visual effects and keeping an excellent public appearance. They fail to take a whole lot of time evaluating whether their followers are growing in Christ. A true leader should not only care about their public appearance but should also put more focused time toward bringing people into the promised land of their destiny.
3. **Entertainers avoid disagreement at all costs. Leaders often provoke disagreement and discomfort.** Since entertainers crave affirmation because of their lack of self-esteem, they will attempt to avoid strife and disagreement with their people. True leaders don't care so much about conflict because their primary motivation is to move people from passivity to purpose.
4. **Entertainers gauge their success based on numbers. Leaders base their success on obedience to their assignment.** Pastors who are entertainers count nickels and noses. It is all about church attendance and offerings, and if both are high, they are happy. True biblical leaders gauge their success on remaining faithful to the call of God upon their life and organization. For example, Jeremiah is considered one of the greatest prophets of all time, yet he had only a few who believed him. He was not only rejected by his

leaders and thrown into prison, but he also died in exile. When the prophet Isaiah received his mandate from God, God told him nobody would listen to him, and the cities would eventually become desolate (Isa. 6). John the Baptist had only a six-month ministry and died in prison. Yet, Jesus called him the greatest person ever born of a woman (Matt. 11:11). By today's standards of success, Jeremiah, Isaiah and John the Baptist, to name a few, were very unsuccessful. Even Jesus had only 120 faithful followers after more than three years of ministry (Acts 1). The real gauge of success in the kingdom is obedience to our assignment, not numbers.

5. **Entertainers are popular with the mainstream.** Leaders are often disdained by the mainstream. Entertainers always put their hands in the air to sense where the wind is blowing, then they go in that direction. They are like politicians who crave the vote of the majority and do not care about the holy minority. They only preach what will receive the least resistance and always stand on the edges of compromise, so as not to offend. They will never say anything controversial when it comes to social and moral values. It is not just what they say but what they will not say that matters. Leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Winston Churchill spoke the truth even when it might have cost them their careers or lives. When true leaders lead, they are often on the prophetic edge of what God is saying and only have "innovators and early adaptors" as their followers. It is easy to go with the mainstream but difficult to swim upstream. Leaders swim upstream and are counter-cultural.
6. **Entertainers make people feel good. Leaders transform people.** Entertainers dream about the ways they can make people feel good about life or themselves. Leaders dream about how they can make disciples who will transform the

world. Entertainers focus on attracting the crowds, but leaders, like Jesus, focus on the few that will eventually build a movement that will change the world.

7. Entertainers long for acceptance. Leaders provoke respect. Entertainers live to be loved, while leaders primarily desire influence and respect. For example, good parents are not always liked, but they are respected by their children even after correcting the children. Good parents have their children's best long-term interests in mind. Likewise, leaders understand that maintaining respect is more important to release God's purpose than garnering social acceptance and likeability. Jesus wasn't always liked and understood, but His followers always respected Him (see John 6:60-71).

8. Entertainers are focused on the present. Leaders focus on the future. Entertainers are focused on making people feel happy in the moment. They base all their strategies around programs, hype and visceral experiences that lift the soul. Leaders want to lift the soul emotionally and want to transform the lifestyle of the soul toward a divine trajectory.

9. Entertainers focus on their public persona. Leaders focus on their interior life. Many entertainers spend hours in front of the mirror, practicing their public speaking and reviewing their body language and appearance. They focus primarily on their outward appearance to attract the most followers. In contrast, true leaders focus more on their interior life and give God space to transform their souls. They obey the words of Jesus, who said that one should first cleanse the inside of the cup, and then the outside will also be clean (Matt. 23:26).

10. Entertainers receive the accolades of men. Leaders

receive their accolades from God. At the end of the day, entertainers may go down in history as popular with men, but what will the verdict be when they stand before God? In eternity it will be known that many loved the glory that comes from men more than the glory that comes from God (John 12:43). Leaders may not always be the most popular ones while they are alive, but they will be received into eternity with a rich reward and will eventually have the most influence on the earth with men. {eoa}

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