

7 Common Stumbling Blocks That Tempt Leaders Into Sexual Sin

Unfortunately, we have all too often heard of spiritual leaders (i.e. pastors) who fall into sexual sin. As a spiritual leader who has worked with other spiritual leaders for many decades, I have observed the following demonic strategies employed by seducing spirits. Since I am a man, I will speak in the context of a male leader being tempted.

The following are seven common strategies to seduce spiritual leaders:

1. Counseling alone with the opposite sex

It is a no-brainer that a spiritual leader should rarely, if ever, conduct a private counseling session with a person who has the potential for a mutual attraction. When alone in such a setting, emotional intimacy develops because of the nature of the conversations. This easily leads to a strong emotional connection that can result in sinful physical and emotional intimacy. To protect their spiritual leaders, church boards should have clear guidelines prohibiting this kind of counseling arrangement.

2. Praying alone with the opposite sex

Satan comes as an angel of light and not with a red suit and a pitch fork. I have seen people with a seductive spirit attempt to use “religious reasons” for proximity to a spiritual leader. Using religious terminology and/or action to seduce an unsuspecting believer is nothing new, based on the admonition found in Proverbs 7:6-27. The rule of thumb is to never conduct private prayer sessions with a person of the opposite sex as it can lead to unbiblical emotional,

spiritual, and physical intimacy.

3. Working alone with the opposite sex

It is a common thing to hear that a spiritual leader fell into sin with their secretary or co-worker. This is because of the commonality of dealing with the same issues together as a spiritual team can easily lead to emotional and physical attachments—way beyond what is normal in the work environment. The enemy can easily have a foothold when a spiritual leader spends an exorbitant amount of time alone with their (attractive) secretary or co-worker.

To limit exposure to seduction, spouses of spiritual leaders should be part of the vetting process of who works with their spouse, and the church board should insist on guidelines that limit their alone time and emphasize team meetings.

4. Private social media connections

Spiritual leaders who utilize social media for their work and ministry have much exposure to those with seducing spirits (e.g. I am continually receiving personal contacts and/or seductive pictures from beautiful women via Twitter and Facebook, and it is my M.O. to immediately delete names from my account that are suspect). One way to limit exposure of this kind is to allow your spouse the ability to view all your social media as well as text messages at any point they desire. Also, a spiritual leader should allow an assistant access to view all their accounts on a regular basis to make it difficult to hide unbiblical relational dynamics.

5. Altar ministry

During the church service, it is common after the message for people to respond to the teaching by coming to the front for prayer. I told my female leaders years ago to watch out for any potential female who continually responds to my messages and insists on being prayed for by nobody but me—I told these

trusted female leaders to move them away from me and pray for them so to protect me from their possible veiled advances.

6. Soul-tie attractions

When in church ministry, you are continually in proximity to all kinds of people—including those you can possibly be attracted to spiritually, emotionally, and physically. It is not hard to imagine the potential for dangerous soul ties to develop if the way is made for continual contact with a person with the potential for a soul tie (under the ruse of church activity or ministry). At the end of the day—spiritual leaders can use and abuse their position of authority and will be held more accountable in the eyes of God if they indulge their desires and pursue such soul ties.

Even without physical intimacy, spiritual leaders can be guilty of committing “emotional adultery” with a person who is not their spouse. Unfortunately, much of the time these relationships end in full blown sexual intimacy and adultery.

7. Marital conflicts

All church ministry is fraught with tension that can spill over and negatively affect the marriages of spiritual leaders. This coupled with meeting and working with attractive church members (who treat spiritual leaders with respect and understanding) can lead to temptation, seduction and adultery.

In closing, if a spiritual leader wants to fall into sexual sin, it will be hard to stop them since there are too many opportunities to fall. For those who have a heart for God and walk in the fear of the Lord it is incumbent upon them to cultivate accountable relationships, craft strict guidelines, and be self-aware and honest with themselves regarding their motives when relating to those of the opposite sex.

My prayer is that this article will help lift the standards of holiness in church ministry and that church leadership will

take whatever steps necessary to protect their spiritual leaders from seducing spirits and adultery. {eoa}

Joseph Mattera is an internationally known author, futurist, interpreter of culture and activist/theologian whose mission is to influence leaders who influence nations. He leads several organizations, including The United States Coalition of Apostolic Leaders (). He also has a blog on Charisma magazine called "The Pulse." To order one of his books or to subscribe to his weekly newsletter go to .