

## Church Leadership In Rural America Working Wounded

Your ministry and church is not shaped by your theology or scriptural knowledge and amazing skill set alone, it is largely shaped by the heart condition of its leaders. It is worthwhile to note that as a pastor you may not be the only or even the real leader of your church.

### **CHURCH AND MINISTRY IS A FULL CONTACT EVENT PRODUCING THE POSSIBILITY OF PAIN AND WOUNDEDNESS.**

- ☞ Church and ministry can hurt and you can be wounded.
  - ☞ Staying hurt is optional; holding onto pain past its useful life is dangerous.
  - ☞ Assuming responsibility for your growth is imperative.
  - ☞ No one can control your thoughts, heart, response, or growth without your cooperative permission.
  - ☞ Cynicism is an experientially chosen response that comes from unforgiveness, unmet expectations, and unrealistic expectations.

\* Forgiveness is the fragrance the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it - Mark Twain.

### **WOUNDED FACTS AND SIGNS**

- ☞ Anger transfer.
  - ☞ Tone, physical expression, victim mentality, and offense.
  - ☞ Language interpretation - hearing from your pain and then having to explain what you meant.
  - ☞ Alienation and wonder - pushing people away and wondering why no one wants to hang with you.
  - ☞ High level frustration - when yesterday's problems keep clouding today's thoughts, growth, and ability or desire to handle issues.
  - ☞ Trigger points and extreme sensitivity - when a wound is not cared for properly it increases sensitivity and over-reaction becomes a standard response.
- ☞ Intense busyness and performance orientation.
  - ☞ Busyness and performance orientation can become a coping mechanism for woundedness.
  - ☞ Busyness and performance orientation can become a value mechanism for worth in woundedness.

\* A vacation may take you from the busyness but may not remove the weight you are carrying. It is much easier to deal with the pace than the weight!

- ☞ Self-medication.
  - ☞ Wounds need to be treated properly to insure healing.
  - ☞ Numbing is not generally appropriate since God is often in the pain!
  - ☞ Non-clinical depression is not a healing medication - hiding in pain only magnifies the pain's effects.

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#### **BURNOUT IS A COMMON RESPONSE TO PAIN, WORKING HARDER AND LONGER WILL NOT ERASE THE DIFFICULTIES.**

- ☞ Burnout does not come from the church.

\* Burnout is the use of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual energies without the use of appropriate boundaries in those areas.

- ☞ Your calling by grace will not produce burnout; grace is not the use of your energies alone.

#### **BURNOUT FACTS OR SIGNS**

- ☞ Denial is when everyone else can see it and you refuse to acknowledge.
  - ☞ Denial is an accelerator of burnout. Working harder may not be the road to success that you imagine.
- ☞ Pride and fear of man - the horizontal versus the vertical.
  - ☞ Pride in what God does versus the pride in what we've done for God.
  - ☞ Fear is an issue of creation integrity. We were created to fear God, but the same wiring left to our flesh will cause us to fear man. Fear produces distorted thinking.
- ☞ God is in the pain.
  - ☞ Burnout is a sign of personal dependence.
  - ☞ God is moving us to a place of personal crucifixion.
  - ☞ Corrosion of the soul is gradual - when caring for your soul becomes tomorrow's plan. Today is yesterday's tomorrow!
- ☞ Normal will be new.
  - ☞ You cannot return to your old ways and expect to create something new.
  - ☞ You likely will not restore your heart with old ways and personal strength.