

LeaderLesson 13: Prayerful Rest

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April 23, 2013

When we first moved to Charlotte in 1998, I had heard about Pastors' Prayer Summits, but had never attended one. That year, I went to my first with the group from our area. It is four days of worship and prayer with fellow pastors and ministers. I just returned from my fifteenth Pastors' Prayer Summit recently. Once again, I was reminded how important it is to unite with fellow servants of the Lord in prayer, and how important it is to take time away to rest as a follower of Jesus.

As a leader in the church, no matter how you do it or where you do it, it is vitally important that you make the effort to spend quantity and quality time with God, practicing the spiritual disciplines that help renew and grow us as Christ-followers. If we are too busy to take a day or two away from our schedules to listen to and talk with the Lord, soak in the Scriptures, and rest in silence and solitude, then we are too busy for our own good. If a church will not allow their pastor to get away for a few days like this, that church is being selfish and insensitive to the needs of the leader God has sent to serve His people.

Next month, we host the Awaken Pastors and Church Staff Retreat at the MBA Building on May 30, from 9 am until 12:30 pm, with lunch following, along with an Associational Awaken Prayer Rally with Chris Schofield and John Franklin at 7 pm that evening at Mulberry Church. We are also planning a one-night-away Pastors' Prayer Retreat in September of this year. The cost will be low and the result for those who participate will be valuable. Stay tuned for more to come on these important opportunities to join together in prayer for revival in the church and awakening in our culture.

We still have a Prayer Room set aside, a quiet space for pastors and leaders to get away and pray at the MBA Building. This is done intentionally – for you. All you need to do is drop by and make use of these places devoted to prayerful rest.

If the church is to experience revival, the leaders of the church must help show the way. We can do that best by example – demonstrating for those we serve the blessings God gives to those who take time to rest in and depend fully upon Him.

The Disciple's Renewal

O my Savior, help me.

I am slow to learn, so prone to forget, so weak to climb;

I am in the foothills when I should be on the heights;

I am pained by

my graceless heart,

my prayerless days

my poverty of love,

my sloth in the heavenly race,
my sullied conscience,
my wasted hours,
my unspent opportunities.

I am blind while light shines around me:

Take the scales from my eyes,
Grind to dust the evil heart of unbelief.

Make it my chiefest joy to study You,

Meditate on You,

Gaze on You,

Sit like Mary at Your feet,

Lean like John on Your breast,

Appeal like Peter to Your love,

Count like Paul all things dung.

Give me increase and progress in grace so that there may be

More decision in my character,

More vigor in my purposes,

More elevation in my life,

More fervor in my devotion,

More constancy in my zeal.

As I have a position in the world,

Keep me from making the world my position;

May I never seek in the creature

What can be found only in the Creator;

Let not faith cease from seeking You until it vanishes into sight.

Ride forth in me, O King of kings and Lord of lords,

That I may live victoriously, and in victory attain my end.

"A Disciple's Renewal" adapted from Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions, 1975, page 184.

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