

2022 FLAGSHIP CAO GATHERING

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE ACADEMIC LEADER

Gregory Linton

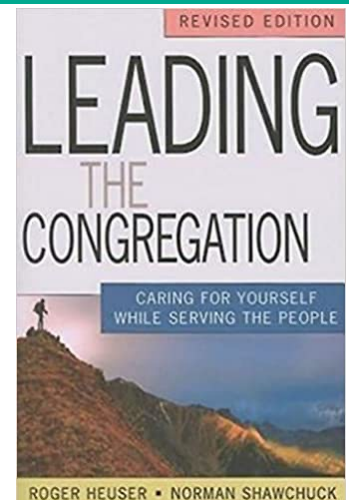
Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost
Johnson University
Knoxville, TN



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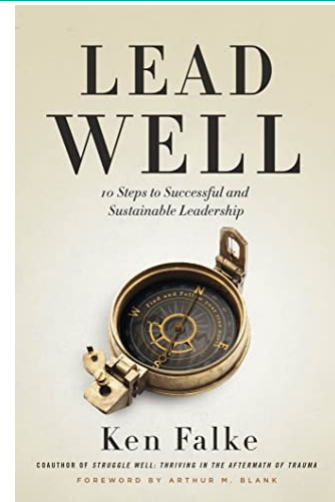
“Lead from within”



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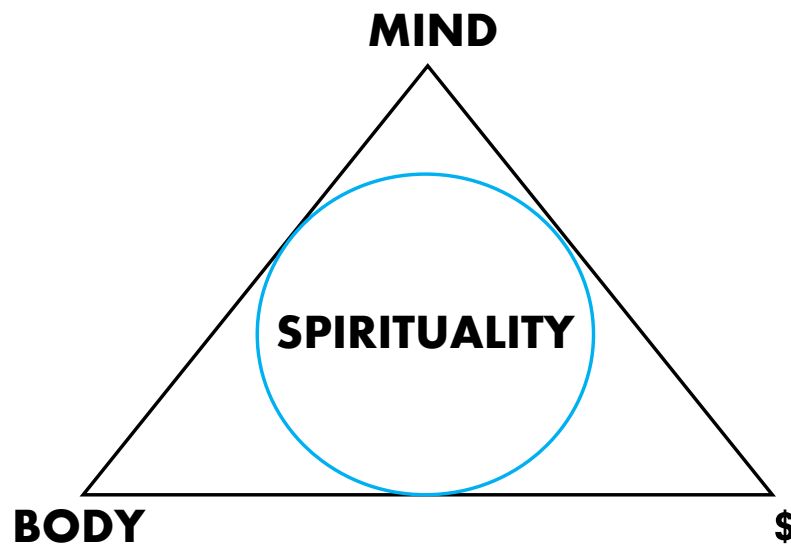
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“Lead yourself first”



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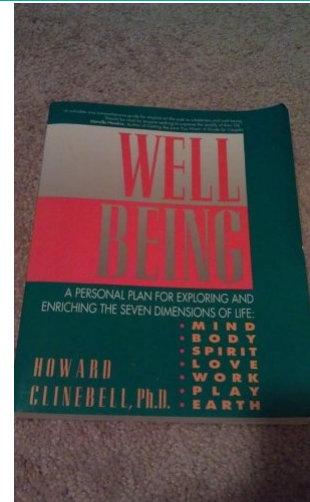
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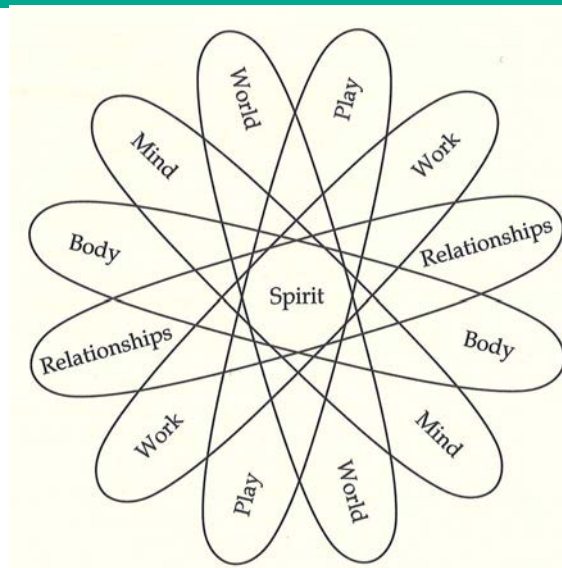
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“Wholeness-nurturing spirituality involves enjoying a growing intimacy with the divine Spirit of love and liberation.... The quality of your relationship with this divine Spirit influences how alive and loving you are in other dimensions of life” (7-8).



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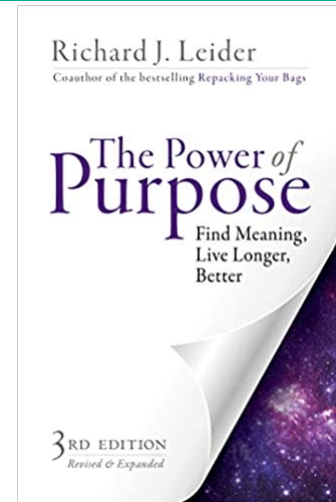
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“What does it take to inspire followers today? What does it take to rally people around a common purpose? It takes self-leadership. The difference between the success or the failure of leaders and followers alike, today, can be traced to how successfully they lead themselves” (96).



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The Spiritual Maladies of the Academic Leader



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The Spiritual Maladies of the Academic Leader

#1. Sloth



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Definition of Sloth

Acedia = lack of caring

An aimless indifference to one's responsibilities to God and to people

Inability to take interest in what we would normally be expected to have an interest or investment in



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Synonyms of “Sloth”



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DOROTHY L. SAYERS

Acedia is the sin that “believes in nothing, cares for nothing, seeks to know nothing, interferes with nothing, enjoys nothing, hates nothing, finds purpose in nothing, lives for nothing, and remains alive because there is nothing for which it will die.”



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Components of Sloth

1. Melancholy

2. Apathy

3. Inactivity



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Albrecht Dürer, *Melancholia*



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EVAGRIUS PONTICUS

The demon of *acedia*--also called the noonday demon—is the one that causes the most serious trouble of all. He presses his attack on the monk [from mid-morning to mid-day]. First of all he makes it seem that the sun barely moves, if at all, and the day is fifty hours long. Then he constrains the monk to look constantly out the windows, to walk outside the cell, to gaze carefully at the sun to determine how far it stands from [the hour of dinner], to look now this way and now that way to see if perhaps [one of the other monks appears from his call].



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The Spiritual Maladies of the Academic Leader

#2. Neurasthenia



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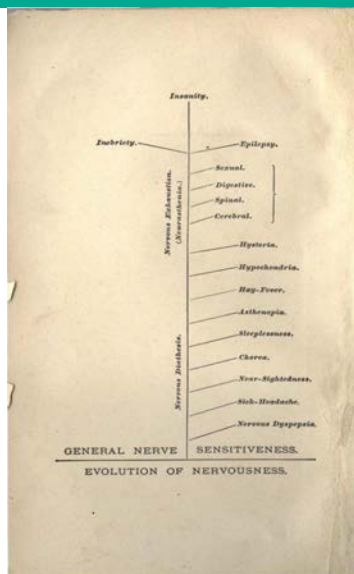
The Concept of Neurasthenia

- First described in 1869 by George M. Beard and Edwin H. Van Deusen
- A state of exhaustion brought on by excessive pressure on the nervous system
- William James called it “Americanitis.”
- In 1881, Beard published *American Nervousness*.
- In 1884, Wilhelm Erb attributed the neurasthenia epidemic to industrialization, globalization, technology, and political and financial crises.



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The Concept of Neurasthenia

- In 1925, William S. Sadler attributed neurasthenia to the hurry, bustle, and incessant drive of the American temperament.
- He estimated the death toll of the disorder at 240,000 lives a year.
- Originally, it was viewed as a common affliction of well-educated, cultured, wealthy Americans.
- Over time, it was expanded to Europe and to the American middle and lower classes.
- Remedies included hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, gold cures, vigorous exercise for men, and the “rest cure” for women.



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The Spiritual Maladies of the Academic Leader

#3. Burnout



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The Nature of “Burnout”

- “Burnout is the experience of being pulled between expectation and reality at work” (Jonathan Malesic, *The End of Burnout: Why Work Drains Us and How to Build Better Lives*, 2).
- “Burnout is an ailment of the soul. We burn out in large part because we believe work is the sure path to social, moral, and spiritual flourishing. Work simply can’t deliver what we want from it, and the gap between our ideals and our on-the-job reality leads to exhaustion, cynicism, and despair” (Malesic, 3).
- “At root, careerism is an attitude, a life orientation in which a person views career as the primary and most important aim of life” (Douglas LaBier, *Modern Madness: The Hidden Link between Work and Emotional Conflict*, 25).



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Development of the Concept

- The term was first used by Graham Greene in his 1960 novel *The Burnt-Out Case*.
- The concept was developed by Herbert J. Freudenberger who learned it from drug addicts in 1967-8 at a free clinic in Haight-Ashbury, San Francisco.
- In 1974, he published an essay on “staff burn-out” in the *Journal of Social Issues*.
- The foremost researcher on burnout has been Christina Maslach, who developed the Maslach Burnout Inventory.
- World Health Organization’s International Classification of Diseases: “Burn-out is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.”



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Components of Burnout

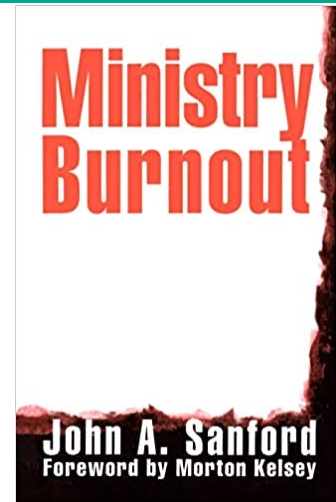
#1. Exhaustion



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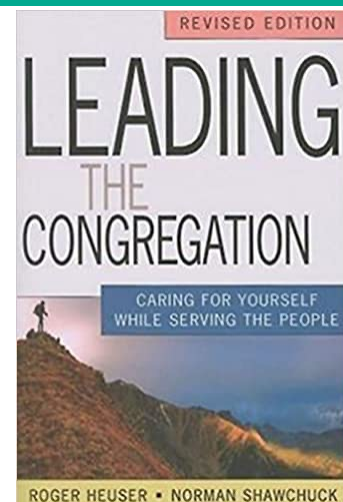
“The word ‘burnout’ is drawn from the imagery of fire, and fire is a form and symbol for energy. So in its broadest scope, the problem of Burnout is a problem of energy. As both Freud and Jung have shown, each individual has a certain quantity of libido or psychic energy at her disposal, and it is this energy that enlivens consciousness and makes effective living possible. This energy can be used up, but more psychic energy can also be generated” (4).



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“The same actions that energize a leader can also lead to a frenzied condition that eventually results in the leader’s exhaustion and a potential violence to the body, the breakup of relationships, and the disintegration of the organization he or she cared for and sacrificed to serve. Thus, the active life may bring the deepest joy as well as a most profound spiritual crisis. In a society that accepts (and sometimes honors) frenzied activity, religious leaders feel the pressure and guilt if they are not running the maze as fast as they can. In such a milieu, we may be reticent to confess that we sacrifice time to wait upon God, and many of us don’t” (47).



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Components of Burnout

#2. Cynicism



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Aspects of Cynicism

Feelings of negativity toward one's job

Detachment from one's job (depersonalization)

Criticism and complaining

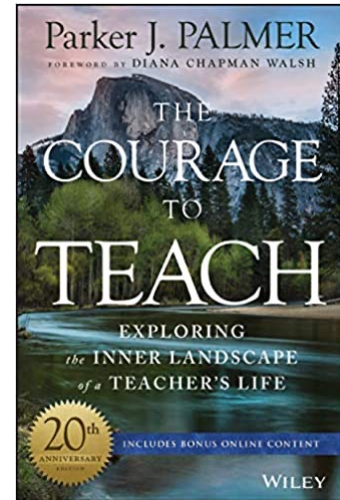
“professorial melancholy” (David Machell)



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“It is not unusual to see faculty in midcareer don the armor of cynicism against students, education, and any sign of hope. It is the cynicism that comes when high hopes one once had for teaching have been dashed by experience—or by the failure to interpret one’s experience accurately” (48).



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Components of Burnout

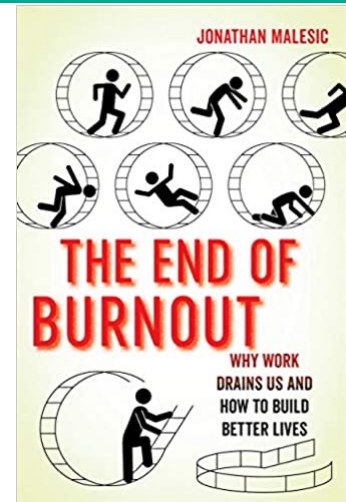
#3. Ineffectiveness



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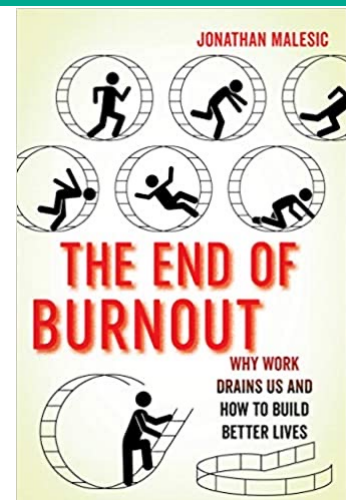
“Frustrated workers feel that their effort on the job is in vain. They cannot see the good they accomplish. The fruit of their labor may be abstract or ephemeral. They may have too little real work to do. They may be passed over for promotions, or there may be no possibility for promotion, or their supervisors may barely notice their effort and achievement” (80).



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“You’re burned out at work when you are constantly drained of energy (exhaustion), when you view your clients or students [or faculty] as problems rather than people you’re meant to help (cynicism), and when you feel that your work accomplished nothing (ineffectiveness)” (21).



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Gustave Doré, *The Neophyte*



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10 Causes of Burnout

1. The job of the academic leader is never finished.



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10 Causes of Burnout

2. The academic leader cannot always tell if his or her work is having any results.



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10 Causes of Burnout

3. The work of the academic leader is repetitive.



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10 Causes of Burnout

4. The academic leader is dealing constantly with people's expectations.



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10 Causes of Burnout

5. The academic leader must work with the same people year in and year out.



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2022 FLAGSHIP CAO GATHERING**10 Causes of Burnout**

6. Because he or she works with people in need, there is a particularly great drain on the energy of the academic leader.



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2022 FLAGSHIP CAO GATHERING**10 Causes of Burnout**

7. The academic leader deals with many people who come to him or her not for solid spiritual food but for “strokes.”



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10 Causes of Burnout

8. The academic leader must function a great deal of the time on his or her “persona.”



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10 Causes of Burnout

9. The academic leader may become exhausted by failure.



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10 Causes of Burnout

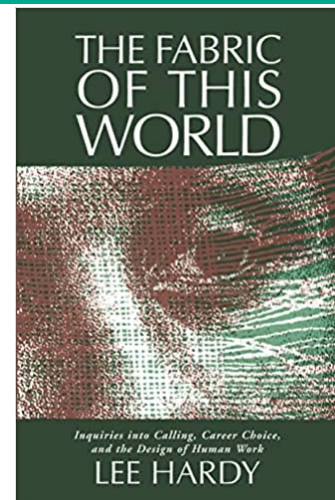
10. The academic leader must make multiple decisions every day.



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“Living in constant fear of failure, chained to the evaluations of others, their lives become filled with anxiety and caught up in a web of presence. When an occupation is no longer freely taken as a way of responding to a call from God, it can be a cruel taskmaster indeed. Luring the unwary into the portals of its temple with heady promises of worldly success, it demands more and more of their lives and gives very little by way of lasting satisfaction in return. Those who initially devoted themselves to their careers as a means of self-fulfillment now find themselves entrapped and enslaved by a capricious and unforgiving God” (21).



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Biblical Examples of Sloth/Burnout

Moses (Numbers 11:10-15)

Elijah (1 Kings 19)

Jonah 4

Jeremiah (1:6; 10:8-9; 15:10-11; 20:14-18)

Job



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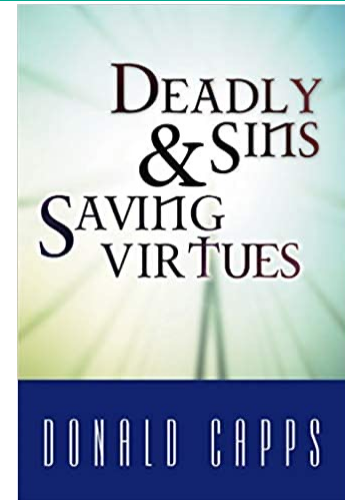
**Spiritual Self-Care of the
Academic Leader**



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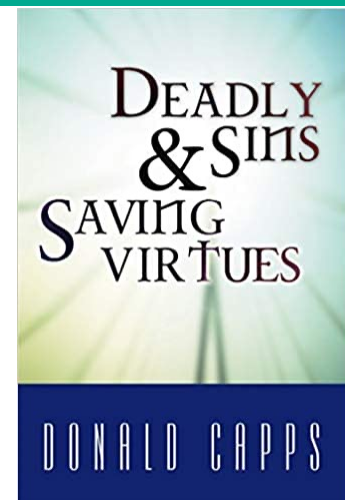
“Christians who have reflected seriously on the sin of *acedia* have recognized that the ultimate answer to the vicious cycle is some form of spiritual regeneration in which we are again moved by the indwelling spirit of God. If we view *acedia* only in terms of sloth or laziness, we imply that this is a sin under our own control. But the very impassivity that *acedia* effects leaves us impotent to combat the sin. Thus, in its passive form *acedia* reveals a spiritual emptiness and our need for spiritual regeneration” (61).



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“*Acedia* is a spiritual crisis, and the only solution to the crisis is a spiritual renewal through which the spirit of God moves within us and moves us to care again.... Though we cannot force the spirit to move within us and restore us to life again, we can open ourselves to the spirit and be receptive to it” (63).



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BLAISE PASCAL

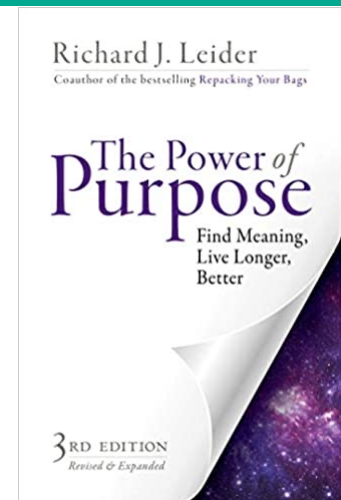
“Nothing is so insufferable to man as to be completely at rest, without passions, without business, without diversion, without study. Man then feels his nothingness, his forlornness, his insufficiency, his dependence, his weakness, his emptiness. There will immediately arise from the depth of his heart weariness, gloom, sadness, fretfulness, vexation, despair.”



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“One of the things most visible in our society is that many people are very busy doing many, many things, often with enormous intensity. If you look more closely, you realize that, in a way, we are busy trying to survive and to find recognition for our worth. We do many things in order to answer the question, ‘Why do you get up in the morning?’ Busyness is a way of gaining approval for our self-worth. Busyness is also a status symbol. But it is a nervous way of living because we continuously seek approval from outside ourselves and then end up saying, ‘What am I trying to do with my life?’” (45).



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Jesus' Example of Spiritual Self-Care

Luke 4:1-15

Luke 6:12

Luke 9:18

Luke 11:1

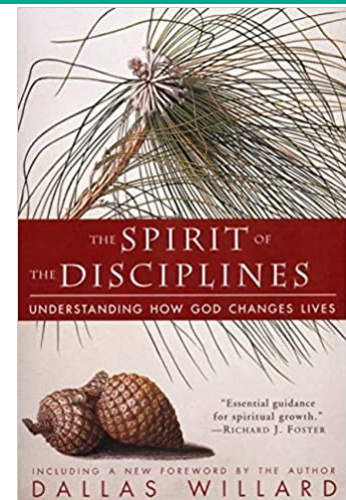
Luke 22:39-46



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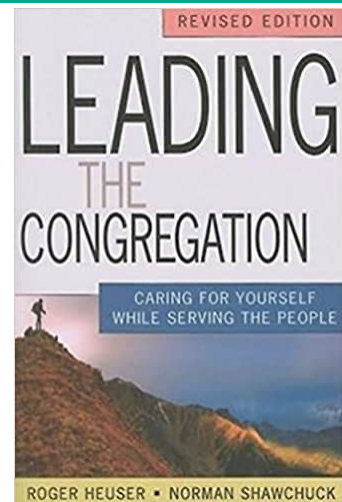
“A successful performance at a moment of crisis rests largely and essentially upon the depths of a self wisely and rigorously prepared in the totality of its being—mind and body.... As is obvious from the record of his own life, Jesus understood this fact well and lived accordingly.... We forget that being the unique Son of God clearly did not relieve him of the necessity of a life of preparation that was mainly spent out of the public eye” (4-5).



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“The care and feeding of the religious leader’s interior life is not auxiliary to ministry—it is the very basis of ministry. Without this foundation, all leadership efforts can eventually become sterile, and ultimately lead to apathetic boredom and insipidness. Neglecting the interior life reflects an identity that is often wrapped up in external accomplishments that are the hallmarks of an increasingly blind ambition. Eventually pressures consume leaders to the extent they lose control over their lives and ministries. However, relying on one’s public persona while being caught up in the rat race of ministry will eventually run its course; sooner or later, the leader will be forced to come to the truth about her interior life” (17).



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MEISTER ECKHART

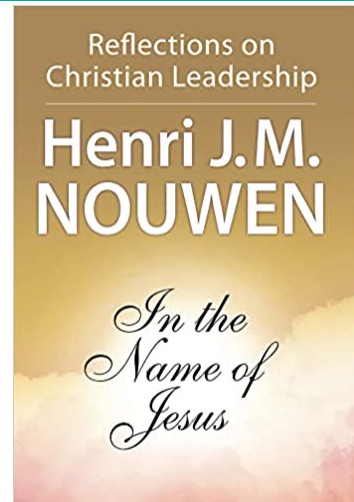
“God is nearer to me than I am to my own self. When the soul enters into her Ground, into the innermost recesses of her being, divine power suddenly pours into her. When I saw into myself, I saw God in me. Where God is, there is the soul, and where the soul is, there is God. To gauge the soul we must gauge her with God, for the Ground of God and the Ground of the soul are one nature.”



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“Christian leaders cannot simply be persons who have well-informed opinions about the burning issues of our time. Their leadership must be rooted in the permanent, intimate relationship with the incarnate Word, Jesus, and they are used to find there the source for their words, advice, and guidance. Through the discipline of contemplative prayer, Christian leaders have to learn to listen again and again to the voice of love and to find there the wisdom and courage to address whatever issues presents itself to them” (32).



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Spiritual Practices of the Academic Leader

#1. Contemplative Prayer



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The Need for Contemplative Prayer

Psalm 46:10

Psalm 131:2

Psalm 130:5-6



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“Through contemplative prayer we can keep ourselves from being pulled from one urgent issue to another and from becoming strangers to our own and God’s heart. Contemplative prayer keeps us home, rooted and safe, even when we are on the road, moving from place to place, and often surrounded by sounds of violence and war. Contemplative prayer deepens in us the knowledge that we are already free, that we have already found a place to dwell, that we already belong to God, even though everything and everyone around us keeps suggesting the opposite” (29).

Reflections on
Christian Leadership

**Henri J.M.
NOUWEN**

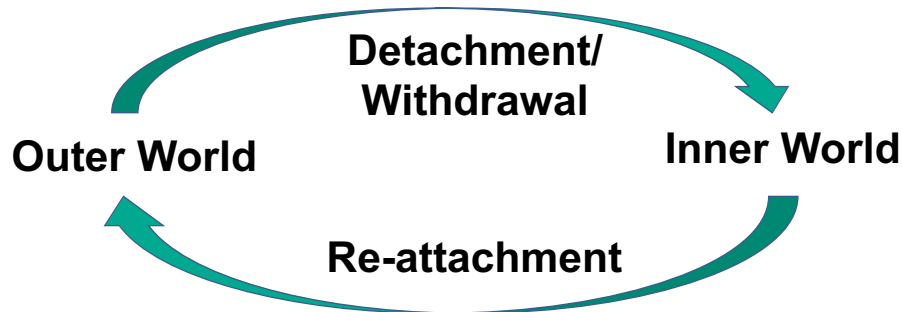
*In the
Name of
Jesus*



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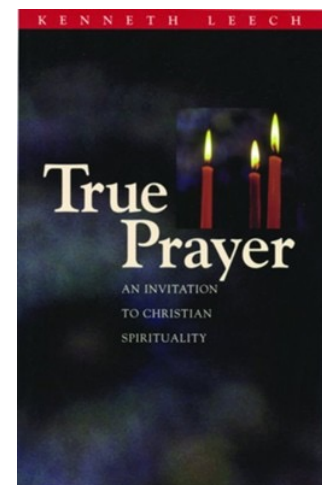
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE CYCLE



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“Essentially contemplation is a way of looking at God, a gazing in wonder, a prayer of attention, and waiting upon God. Its central marks are stillness, simplicity, silence, and darkness. Ruysbroeck describes it as ‘the simple staring with open heart into the divine brightness....’ In contemplative prayer, we usually experience a deepening of our love and an increased desire for God” (151-3).



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2022 FLAGSHIP CAO GATHERING**The Practice of Contemplative Prayer**

- 1. Find the time.**
- 2. Find a quiet place.**
- 3. Quiet the body.**
- 4. Quiet the mind.**
- 5. Enjoy God's presence.**
- 6. Return slowly to the outer world.**



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2022 FLAGSHIP CAO GATHERING**Spiritual Practices of the
Academic Leader****#2. Examen of Consciousness**

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Definition of *Examen*

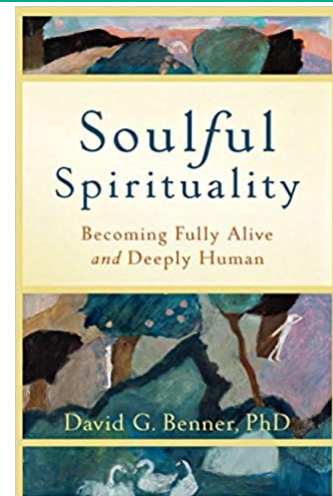
- Latin = tongue or weight indicator on a balance scale
- Conveys idea of accurate assessment of the true situation
- *Examen of consciousness* = We discover how God has been present to us throughout the day.
- *Examen of conscience* = We uncover those areas that need cleansing, purifying, and healing.
- The primary concern of the daily *examen* is to notice how God is moving and affecting us in the present moment.
- The *examen* is listening and being open to God (Isa 55:8-9; Ps 139:1, 23-24; 1 Chron 28:9).



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“Being a good Christian does not lead to becoming a vital human being if one is living without awareness. Tragically, it is remarkably easy to go through life mindlessly. The default state of consciousness for humans seems to be preoccupation and distraction. While Christian spiritual practices should awaken us—awakening being a core feature of authentic conversion—often they do not. Unfortunately, we will never be more aware of God or other spiritual realities than we are of our own bodies, our emotions, and our experience in the present moment. Living with awareness is a prerequisite to becoming deeply human, but it is not something that comes automatically with being a good Christian” (8-9).



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Means of Self-Examination

Life review

Spiritual journal

Ten Commandments

Beatitudes

Seven Deadly Sins/ Vice List (Gal 5:19-21)

Physical, emotional, social, and spiritual



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Spiritual Practices of the Academic Leader

#3. Sabbath Keeping



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2022 FLAGSHIP CAO GATHERING**Biblical Principles for Sabbath Rest**

- 1. God has called us to be free from a performance orientation (Gal 5:1).**
- 2. Keep work in its proper place (Luke 9:25).**
- 3. Follow God's example (Gen 2:1-3).**



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2022 FLAGSHIP CAO GATHERING**The Example of Martha and Mary****Luke 10:38-42**

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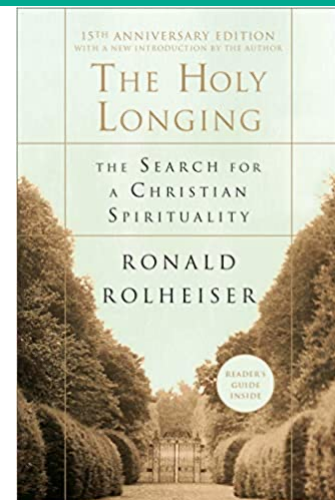
Johannes Vermeer, *Christ in the House of Martha and Mary*



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“There is within us a fundamental dis-ease, an unquenchable fire that renders us incapable, in this life, of ever coming to full peace. This desire lies at the center of our lives, in the marrow of our bones, and in the deep recesses of the soul. We are not easeful human beings who occasionally get restless, serene persons who once in a while are obsessed by desire. The reverse is true. We are driven persons, forever obsessed, congenitally dis-eased, living lives, as Thoreau once suggested, of quiet desperation, only occasionally experiencing peace” (3).



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Tintoretto, *Christ with Mary and Martha*



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The Spiritual Danger of Anxiety

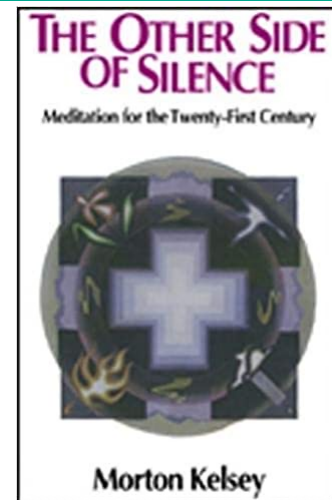
- *Merimnaō* = “divide”
- Anxiety chokes the growth of the word (Luke 8:14).
- Jesus instructed his disciples “do not worry” (Luke 12:11, 22, 25).
- Anxiety functions as a spiritual barometer.
- The greatest enemy of spiritual well-being is busyness and anxiety.



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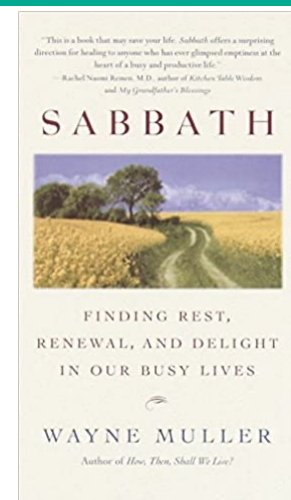
“There is simply no better way to keep ourselves out of a relationship with God than by simply having no time for Him, having no time to look within in meditation. An efficiently busy life, which keeps us occupied without being harried and keeps our attention entirely on interesting outer things, is probably more potentially destructive of spiritual growth than debauchery or alcohol or hard drugs. These obvious indulgences usually at least lead to emptiness, and sometimes to despair, and in such times one is dangerously vulnerable to being found by God. On the other hand, a quiet, efficient and busy life spent continuously in good works can shield an individual most effectively from any plunge into the depth where God dwells. Time for silence is a prime requisite for finding that inner depth through meditation” (83).



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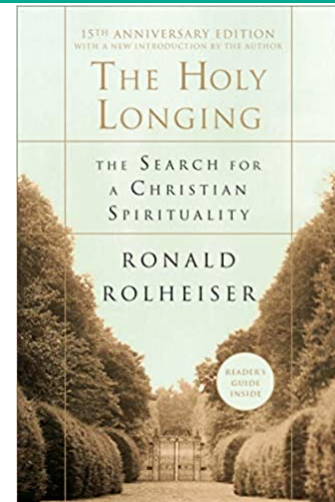
“Sabbath requires surrender. If we only stop when we are finished with all our work, we will never stop—because our work is never completely done. With every accomplishment there arises a new responsibility. Every swept floor invites another sweeping, every child bathed invites another bathing. When all life moves in such cycles, what is ever finished? The sun goes round, the moon goes round, people are born and die, and when are we finished? If we refuse rest until we are finished, we will never rest until we die. Sabbath dissolves the artificial urgency of our days, because *it liberates us from the need to be finished*” (82-83).



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“Both from what is best in the Christian and secular tradition, we hear the truth that sustaining a life of faith, and a balanced life in general, depends upon developing a habit of private prayer. Moreover, as these same sources assure us, we should not expect this to be easy. All the things that work against our faith also work against us developing the habit of private prayer. We must, however, continue to try, continue to consistently set a time to spend apart with God” (218-9).



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ISAIAH 58:13-14

If you refrain from trampling the sabbath,
from pursuing your own interests on my holy day;
if you call the sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the Lord honorable;
if you honor it, not going your own ways,
serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs;
then you shall take delight in the Lord,
and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth;
I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.



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2022 FLAGSHIP CAO GATHERING

JOHN WESLEY

“Deliver me, O God, from too intense an application to even necessary business. I know how this dissipates my thoughts from the one end of all my business, and impairs that lively perception I would ever retain of your standing at my right hand. I know the narrowness of my heart, and that an eager attention to the earthly things leaves it no room for the things of heaven. Oh, teach me to go through all my employments with so truly disengaged a heart that I may still see you in all things, and see you therein as continually looking upon me, and searching my reins; and that I may never impair that liberty of spirit which is necessary for the love of you.”

