

E-News July 2009

Clergy &
Congregations



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Tempted to Burn Out Due to Spiritual Vigor



"I rather wear out than rust out."
Dick Bass, Mountain Climber

"Whichever path you choose, go to the front edge, the curl of the wave, the wild frontier, and throw your life and your efforts there. That's where we need you."
Brian McLaren as Neo

"Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ."
Apostle Paul to Colossian Christians,

Pinnacle People

Mark Tidsworth

Doug Cushing

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Susan Leonard-Ray

Rusty Sullivan

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Martha Beahm

Coaching
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On Purpose*

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3:23-24, Holy Bible

Those of us who work with ministers and church staff often focus on Life Balance....a strategy for practicing Sabbath, spiritual disciplines, and renewal. Many E-News articles focus on Life Balance, as do the books we review. In Coach training venues, Life Balance is a major topic, with encouragement to coach one's clients towards balance so that they may avoid burning out.

While all this emphasis on Life Balance is good and worthy, it's not what's most important. Life Balance, though good, is not the end game nor is it the goal...to live a balanced life. Instead, Life Balance is only a strategy for managing ourselves well when we are living out our callings with passion and vigor. That's the end game....living out God's calling for us as fully as we possibly can. Life Balance is simply a way to manage our callings so that we are not burned up in the living.

What about you? Does your calling ignite you so much that burning out is a possibility? Could you be consumed by it? Are you into it that much? Is it that important? Just how urgent and significant is the mission you are on? Is it worth spending a life (yours) on?

Here's a way to think about this. Imagine for a moment fast-forwarding to the end of your work life, to the end of your ministry days. When there, imagine looking back over your ministry and reviewing what you did; reflecting on what you were engaged in along the way. Imagine also that while looking back, you have the distinct awareness that your ministry is nearly done; completed. And while there, you asked yourself..."Was it worth it? Was what I did worth giving myself to? Did I lay down my life in a way that brought glory to God and honored God's calling for me the best way that I could? **Is what I did what God and the world needed from me?**" I hope we would answer in the affirmative. If not, then we have some Discernment Work and Life Planning to do.

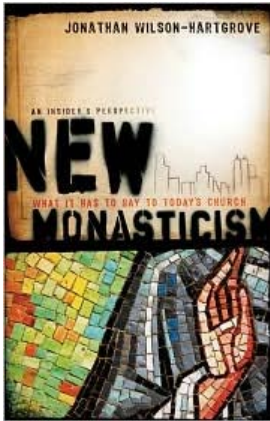
So, Life Balance is not the first and primary issue. Discerning our callings, identifying how we can make our contribution to God's kingdom as fully as we possibly can, is the first and primary issue. When our callings find us, our passion is up and we are rolling. We find joy in serving, in laying down our lives day by day in service to God. We get exhausted, but with waves of satisfaction rolling over us. A life lived in congruence with God's calling is a beautiful thing.

May we be tempted to burn out, because we are so enthralled with living as Jesus followers. May your spiritual vigor make burn out an actual possibility.

Mark Tidsworth
President, PLA

Book Review:
[New Monasticism: What It Has To Say To Today's Church. Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove](#)

(Brazos Press, Division of Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI, 2008)



Significant renewal movements are happening in the North American Christian church these days: New Monasticism, Emergent Church, and Missional Church. Why here now? Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove says it this way, *"And almost everywhere I go these days, people agree that something is wrong in American Christianity. Whether I'm talking to Pentecostals or Presbyterians, Democrats or Republicans, academics in a coffee shop or neighbors on their front porch, there seems to be a consensus on this: the church in America isn't living up to what it's supposed to be. Somehow we've lost our way."* When I grow aware of the big picture of church participation in the USA with its declining statistics, it's hard to disagree. I regularly meet sincere people who read about Jesus in the Bible and want to follow him, but believe their church doesn't engage in much that encourages them to follow the authentic Jesus of the scriptures (having sold out to a watered down, nice, culturally, and politically acceptable Jesus).

One response to the need for renewal in the larger church is the New Monastic Movement. In contrast to parachurch organizations, the New Monastics function within the church, desiring connections with other churches and denominations. These don't appear to be the kind to quit church, but instead are those who want to live their faith at a deeper level within the church. Looking at church history, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove describes how monastic movements arose to call disciples and the church at large back to focus on Christ. From the examples and stories found in this book, it appears as if thousands of Christ-followers are moving to new monastic-like faith communities, seeking to more authentically live their faith. Wilson-Hartgrove is a pastor at Rutba House in Durham, NC, a new monastic community. Many more in various places across the USA are described throughout these pages.

So what do they do and what are they about....these New Monastic Communities? As with any movement, the beliefs and practices are not homogenous. On the other hand, Wilson-Hartgrove includes "12 Marks of a New Monasticism" in the book, coming from a gathering of new monastics several years ago (p.39). They are remarkable. These people seem to really believe that Jesus intended to transform the world.

They engage in a rule of life, commit to a simple lifestyle, live in some form of intentional community, and submit to the Christ's body (the church), among other commitments.

Do I recommend this book? Yes and no. If you have a hunger for something more in your church life, read it. If you are ready to go deeper and ask WWJD without stereotypical answers, read it. Don't read this book if you want to cruise along, believing American culture and Christianity are pretty much the same thing. Don't read it if your life is so discombobulated right now that your concept of God needs to remain static to keep you upright. I'm guessing the New Monastics would advise you to pray about it before doing anything.

The Leadership Assessment at PLA

This summer we have noted an increase in individual clergy and denominations requesting The Leadership Assessment for clergy. Some of these requests grow out of pain and crisis, wherein a minister is struggling with effective leadership and/or functioning. Other requests for The Leadership Assessment grow out of a desire to lead at a higher level or toward a new goal. And then, some ministers are considering new challenges or moves, and need to assess and discern their ministry skills.

What does The Leadership Assessment involve? Usually we combine various services to achieve the desired outcomes of the Assessment. Below are some items that may be included:

- Inventories to get a baseline view of one's personality and leadership competencies
- A lengthy questionnaire; gathering input on one's life and vocational journey thus far.
- Interviews with church members and peers who know one's ministry well.
- Personal interview with the minister.
- Feedback session, plus a written report
- Crafting a learning plan based on the assessment.
- Many build on The Leadership Assessment with a Learning Plan to implement goals based on what's learned.

To learn more or explore The Leadership Assessment, contact Pinnacle at 803-673-3634 or info@pinnaclelead.com

Trainings Available

We are now scheduling leadership development training events for the Fall/Winter. Pinnacle enjoys partnering with denominational groups and congregations to bring training to your constituents. Some events you may want to choose from are:

-Increasing Your Leadership Capacity Through Emotional Intelligence

-The Peopemap Communication System
-Discovering Disciple Development Coaching

803-673-3634

Pinnacle Calendar

The following is a smattering of our events and services, to help you get a taste for what we do.



Interactional Congregational Event: Practicing Congregational Hospitality

-Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Simpsonville, SC
-August 2
-Susan Leonard-Ray, Facilitator



Disciple Development Coaching(c) LDM2 Training Course

-Aug-Dec, 3rd Thursday each month, Columbia, SC, St Andrews Baptist Church
-\$300 Tuition
-Register ASAP
www.pinnaclelead.com/calendar for brochure

Lead Pastor Cohort 1

August 26

Lay Leadership Team Retreat

Brookland United Methodist Church
August 29
Columbia, SC
Mark Tidsworth, Retreat Facilitator

Leadership Initiative

Providence Presbytery-Nine month training program in congregational leadership
-For clergy and church staff of Providence Presbytery, Rock Hill, SC
-May be open to additional ministers if room
-Tuition, \$995
-Mark Tidsworth, Facilitator
-Contact: Kathryn McGregor at www.providencepres.org or kmcgregor@providencepres.org



Discovering Disciple Development Coaching

CBF of Mississippi
Saturday, October 10 at 10AM
Irce Harrison, Presenter

www.pinnaclelead.com
info@pinnaclelead.com
803-673-3634

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