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GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT

# LEADING OURSELVES

Equipping Session

# SELF-LEADERSHIP!

## SELF-CARE

Self-Leadership is a process of learning how to lead yourself. It is an act of developing the whole person to be the best leader that God created you to be. You cannot lead others well if you have not learned to lead yourself. Self-leadership aims to foster better health, lower stress, visionary leadership, purposefulness, and overall effective leadership of others.

To succeed in the leadership of others, one must learn to lead oneself, this will provide clarity of his or her direction before leading others. As a leader, you are called to be a servant who is attentive to the concerns of others by putting their needs first. In addition, you have a responsibility to set the tone for constructive leadership and conversation, pointing the direction others are to go. This requires being open to learn and grow in your leadership.

I learned from Ruel J. Khoza, a renowned leadership development expert in Africa, that Leadership is not about titles or positions. It is the responsibility to pursue a vision that reflects collective yearnings and the inspirations of the followership. A leader devises pathways and goals for the followers that they might not themselves have dreamed possible. But, it is important to recognize that, "no leader can be all-knowing all the time. To lead, a person has to depend on the hearts and minds, eyes and ears of others, and be capable of dealing with complexity in an intellectually sensitivity. To use the language of psychology, it is up to the leadership to sense intuitively (conatively) and grasp intellectually (cognitively) the yearnings of followers.

It is the expectations and perceptions of the followership that set out the path of leadership, but without sense and sensitivity that leader cannot respond appropriately – nor can the leader act confidently as a pioneer, taking the unexpected route with poise and assurance, the route no one expected him (her) to follow, but the route that nonetheless is the one that will carry the followership to their hoped-for goals. Leaders, by listening, becoming pioneer by nature. A very good leader will be an optimizer of coordination."<sup>1</sup>



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There are many reasons why leaders do not practice self-care. It could be that where one is serving, there is a lack of personnel, resulting in a few leaders being appointed or elected to serve in multiple assignments. Sometimes this happens because the church is in its initial developmental phase. Still, in other contexts, it results from a poor job in developing the future generation of leaders. It would be very remiss of me not to mention those who find it hard to practice self-care because they are bi-vocational. They have to be bi-vocational to serve the church well and care for their families. Finally, another group is those who think that being busy 24/7 is synonymous with effective leadership; they have never seen a good model of self-care from their mentors. Regardless of the reasons and circumstances of each leader, the truth is that we all need to learn to find a balance.

Our bodies need rest. Therefore, if we are going to be effective leaders, we will need to embrace God's call to be holy in every dimension of our lives, including taking a need for rest seriously. The idea of a sabbath is not human-made; it is God's gift to humanity so that we can rejuvenate and restore our energy.

I used to think that Spiritual well-being is all that mattered to God. I grew up in a family that cared a lot about spiritual well-being. I learned at an early age to have quiet time, value personal and family devotion time, and value corporate worship. We had robust Sunday School; in those days, we were not in a hurry to leave the church service and many other church gatherings. The singing was good, the testimony was tremendous, and the preaching of the Word was central. There was a clear invitation to enter and live in a relationship with the Lord Jesus. The spiritual disciplines I learned at my parents' home and my local church as a young person are still a big part of my continued walk with the Lord. It was instilled in me the importance of spiritual wellness.



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