

Leaders Who Finish Well—Mentoring

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Transcript of video below:

Good afternoon faithful E-news readers. It's Lance Finley coming to you from the Archives and Museum here at the General Conference office in Findlay. I thought this was an appropriate place to come today as we talk a little bit more around this idea of being a leader and being a leader who finishes well. I am kind of surrounded by a lot of the leaders of the past in the Churches of God and the contributions that they've made to the Churches of God, General Conference.

Last fall I was reading a great book. I'd recommend it to you; *Creating a Missional Culture* by JR Woodward. It is great read and very helpful in thinking through missional leadership. He shares a story where he was at Fuller Seminary and he did some study or some work with Bobby Clinton, who is a name perhaps you recognize as one of the best known voices on leadership. Clinton has done the work of identifying that nearly 70% of leaders, whether we're talking the biblical narratives or we're talking modern-day leadership, 70% of leaders tend not to finish well. That means that only 30% of leaders finish well. And he found in the course of studying leaders and their lives and ministries, five common themes of leaders who finish well.

First of all, there were leaders who were engaged in experiences that renewed them. Secondly, leaders who finish well tend to practice the spiritual disciplines. Thirdly, leaders who finish well had a posture bent towards learning. They were lifelong learners. Fourthly, leaders who finished well had typically 10 to 15 significant mentors in their life. And lastly leaders who finished well had a broad perspective, meaning they were able to see their lives and the broadness of their lives and the different aspects (emotionally, spiritually, financially) and have an accurate assessment of themselves in those kinds of areas.

Today I thought I would zero in on one area. When I saw that list it hit me full force. It was this idea of leaders who finish well have 10 to 15 significant mentors in their lives. That stopped me cold. Have I been the kind of leader who has sought out others to speak into my life, to encourage me, to teach me, to allow them to challenge me when necessary? I don't know if I've had that many significant mentors in my life. I've had some good ones. And I certainly have had some. But it's just made me that much more aware how I as a leader who wants to finish well need to be proactive and need to be intentional about seeking out folks to mentor me; to speak into my life, to challenge me, to encourage me, to allow me to learn from them so I can become the man that God desires me to be.

It also challenges me on the flip side, who am I investing in? Who am I offering my life and the experience that I've acquired so that someone else may not make the same mistakes I did or someone else may benefit or be blessed by my influence in their life? So today I just wanted to encourage you with that thought. Are you a person who has sought out the mentors in your life that are necessary to be able to finish well; to get to the end of your life the end of the race and still be firmly engaged in the work that God has given you? And are you the type of leader that, because of that influence and because of the blessing of others investing in you, are turning around investing in others as well that are coming up behind you? I think for the church to thrive, for the Churches of God General Conference, to do the work God has called us to do, we need to be a group of people committed to finishing this life well. To do that we know that we need others before us speaking into us, challenging us, encouraging us, pouring their lives into ours so that we can do the same sort of work and even greater work than they did. Then we need to be the type of people that turn and look behind us and say, "who do we give into? Who do we invest in? Who do we pour our lives into for the sake of them becoming leaders and the men and women that God's called them to be?"

So I would encourage you this week, just to think about who have been significant mentors in your life? Who have been the people that have poured into you? How many of those folks have there really been? Is it time for you to go ask someone, "Hey, I noticed your life and there are things that I admire about your walk with the Lord and just the way you live out life and I'd like to learn from you". Maybe, you need to initiate that process. Or maybe you need to go to someone else and say, "You know I don't have it all figured out and I'm certainly not perfect but the little bit I have figured out I'd like to allow you to see into my life and invest in you. And to pour whatever it is that's good in me out into your life so you can benefit from that". Let's be that type of people - that are allowing others to speak into us and challenge us and shape us as well as giving that away to the ones that come behind us so that we can be people who finish well to accomplish God's will and to give Him glory. We'll see you next week. Have a great weekend.