



## Finishing Well—Easier Said Than Done

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It happened again this week. Another high-profile Christian leader stepped down from a ministry role due to allegations and scandal. The allegations are painful to read: long-standing patterns of sexual misconduct, abuse of power, and adultery. The word “allegations” is important as the accused has categorically denied all the above allegations and claims an independent investigation has verified his innocence in these matters.

His accusers disagree and claim the independent investigation fell far short of appropriate independence to warrant a thorough examination of the issues at hand.

Stories like this emerge far too frequently across the landscape of the North American church culture. This particular story may capture our attention more easily because of the enormous influence of this particular leader and this particular church, but stories like this emerge far too often, even within the CGGC. We are not immune from this. You are not immune from it. I am not immune from it. Any of us have the capability to journey down the same broken paths.

It's hard to finish well as a leader. Few finish well. Too many leaders fall short of finishing well, they see their leadership cut short or rendered less effective for a variety of reasons. Some fall short of finishing well as a result of their failure to work out their own discipleship and obedience to Jesus: they fail to deal with their own temptations, sin and brokenness. Others fall short of finishing well because they either get tired, experience exhaustion or burnout long before the finish line. Others fail to deal appropriately with change or disappointment and thus allow bitterness to sour them and curb the potential of the influence of their life and work. Some just experience the slow fade: their passion for the Lord wanes and their capacity for loving others diminishes over the course of time. It's not always wrapped in scandal and public shame, but far too many leaders fail to accomplish all that God intends for them to accomplish.

So how do we finish well? What can you do now to ensure that the end of your life's journey looks different from so many who fail to finish well? Here are a couple key places to start.

**Take your own discipleship seriously.** Am I working out my own salvation with fear and trembling? Are you regularly repenting and believing? Where do you need to continue to experience God's grace and mercy to experience the growth necessary to continue to mature in your faith? What is God saying to you and how are you responding to Him? I cannot lead someone else to a place that I'm unwilling to

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The weekly eNews is provided by CGGC Executive Director Lance Finley



go. How are you growing in Christ? How is He shaping your identity? What areas of your life are you hesitant to yield before the Lord and why?

Leaders who finish well take their own discipleship seriously. Leaders who finish well live with a deep understanding that they never “arrive” in their journey to spiritual maturity. Leaders who finish well often embody a genuine humility that grows out of their followership of Jesus and the understanding that they’re never done growing as a disciple of Jesus.

**Resist the bend toward isolation.** I was in a meeting recently where another leader mentioned that because of our broken, sinful nature, we all have a propensity toward isolation. I believe he’s right. Here’s the catch: the Christian life is not meant to be lived alone. The journey of following Jesus is not meant to be walked all by yourself. You have to have others who are able to speak into your life, encourage you, equip you, challenge you and even lovingly rebuke and correct you from time to time.

Leaders who finish well resist the bend toward isolation. They recognize isolation as one of the greatest strategies of the enemy, who always seeks to isolate and attack. Too many leaders end up leading in isolation, with no support, and no real sense or experience of community. Leaders who finish well recognize their desperate need to have others in their lives who love them genuinely, but who are not overly impressed by them nor intimidated by them. They have others in their lives who have access to their lives and who can approach them and speak the truth in love, giving honest feedback and reflection.

Do you have others in your life who love you but can speak hard truth to you? Have you invited that kind of honesty, where you ask other brothers and sisters to help you see what you can’t see about yourself? The enemy wants to isolate you and make you ineffective. Are you investing in the kind of relationships that will foster the kind of interdependence that we all need as we follow Jesus?

Do you want to finish well? I want to finish well. I want you to finish well. We need more leaders finishing well. If we’re going to live into the kingdom of God, if we’re going to fulfill our kingdom mandate, we’ve got to have leaders who are committed to doing whatever it takes to finish well. What do you need to start doing today that will help ensure that you’ll increase your likelihood of finishing well?

Christ’s Peace,

**Lance**

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