

Defining Moments: Emotionally Healthy Leadership
Bill Hybels and Peter Scazzero

Pete: We lead out of an interior life with God. We do His will. Unless we have that deep interior life, we can't gift God. I can only give that interior life that's inside of me.

Narrator: Welcome to *Defining Moments*. This month we are discussing the issue of emotional health and its effect upon leaders in the church. You know, Bill, emotional health has been a value around Willow for many years. We always stressed for people to seek help when they need it from trained professionals. That's often encouraged through your teaching. You've often reinforced that by giving your staff counseling benefits. Why is this an important issue for your and our church?

Bill: Emotional health is essential to church leaders because we have seen the damage of the lack of emotional health. When people do not mature optimally, when we drag some of the baggage of our growing-up years into leadership, and we make decisions not based on the true work of the Holy Spirit in the moment. We decide based on past hurts or excesses of one kind or the other. We came to a time in our own church where we saw the consequences of unhealthy emotional living. So as a staff we said, "Let's pay whatever cost we have to pay to leave the past behind us and let God do a fresh work and a sustainable work in our lives. This value of emotional health in our leadership became one of our primary values we hold up high. The work of ministry includes that internal work of God. Just as recently as the last thirty days of my life I have gone through some losses, the loss of my mother and some other less dramatic ones, but I've had conversations with close friends on how those circumstances effect how I'm leading others right now. The pain can affect how I preach, how I relate to family and friends, and to my congregation. Something happens beneath the veneer of our lives that affects everything above that line, and we have to pay attention to that pain.

Narrator: Well, before we go any further, I'd like to introduce our guest today. We have with us Pete Scazzero, pastor of New Life Fellowship Church. He founded that church in 1987 in Queens, New York. New Life is a large, interracial, international church and Pete is also an author of *Emotionally Healthy Church* and a new book called *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*. Pete, we are really glad that you are with us today. You have coined this new term, "emotionally healthy spirituality." What exactly do you mean by that?

Pete: "Emotionally healthy spirituality means loving well. Grief, loss, understanding of our family of origin affects who we are today. We must embrace limits as a gift from God. Contemplative spirituality involves slowing down my entire life so that I can be with God. Emotionally healthy spirituality could be called integrity because it's being congruent with who I am on the outside vs. who I truly am on the inside. That integrity touches all areas of my life: my spouse, my family, my friends, and my ministry. I was your classic "type A" church planter. In 1987 I planted a church. I wasn't doing an inward journey-only as it affected my outward journey. The church grew very quickly in my early years, but six or seven years into the ministry, things began to crumble. Everything fell apart. I was exhausted, stressed out and I had a lot of pain and anger

inside. I didn't know what to do with that anger, because Christian pastors are not supposed to be angry. My wife was miserable. I really found myself at a wall. All of discipleship at that point-you could say I was a poster child for evangelicalism.

But I said, "something's wrong here." So I began to go to a Christian counselor in 1994. There was so much introspection-"How are you feeling? What happened in your family of origin?" All of this was a surprise...but in January 1996, the bottom fell out. My wife came to me and said, "I quit." Your leadership stinks. I don't want to follow it anymore. You don't have the courage to make the difficult calls that are needed. So I'm going to take the kids and I'm going to another church." She got my attention. God got my attention. It was at that time that I realize I can't separate emotional health and spiritual maturity. I was an emotional infant trying to build mothers and fathers in the faith.

That's when I began to integrate into our church what we call emotionally healthy spirituality. It seemed like a small change but it was transforming. I love pasturing now. There was another way to do this thing.

Bill: I don't meet that many other pastors that admitted they have visited a counselor. But in my own life it was in the early nineties that I visited a counselor for the first time. It took such courage to say the four-letter-word, "help!" I remember sitting in that waiting room wondering why I couldn't figure this out. Because I am the kind of person that usually can figure stuff out. I was stumped as to how to figure out the complexities of my inner world. I experienced a mixture of shame and fear and anger. The counselor said to me, "Tell me three times your mother touched your soul." My initial reaction to this was "this process is going to be very expensive." I didn't understand the question, and certainly not why he was going to look at that area of my life. I thought at that moment that there was a whole world inside of me that I had not paid attention to. I realized we were going on an exploration of that whole universe. I was frightened to death. My journey opened up the Scriptures for me-like the Psalms. I never understood the psalms, the poet was suicidal, why he was depressed, why Jeremiah cursed the day he was born, why Jesus was on His face in the Garden of Gethsemane. There is a whole theology of grief and loss. The whole book of Lamentations is a study of grieving. I'm a pastor, not a therapist, but it opened up a number of truths to me that I never understood before. I was so busy building the church and making it happen. It took me on a theological journey that was tremendous. So my passion became "How do we mentor and disciple the whole person?" My challenge was "What does it mean to impact this whole emotional component?" We started doing genograms with people so they would understand the complexity of family relationships. It was frightening, looking at one's family three or four generations back and how it's impacted who I am in the present. I would tell my wife, "We don't need to talk about the past. I am a new creation in Jesus." She said, "No, you're not. I live with you." "You're not a new creation."

Being in ministry can exacerbate these issues in a unique way. Many pastors have had to let go staff because of the economy and do more ministries with less people. Then when you add ministry to your home life. You can struggle with pace of life so much.

Narrator: All of us know how demanding ministry can be. That's what accelerated this, I'm sure, for both of you. I am sure the leaders who are listening today, many of them would say, they've had to reduce their teams this year because of the economy, we are doing the same amount of ministry with less people, then when you add ministry to the rest of your life-your home life, your family issues, we can just struggle with pace of life so much. So Bill, what kind of impact does the pace of life have to do with a leader's emotional and spiritual health?

Bill: I kind of draw it out pictorially in my mind. When your velocity line goes up and to the right, it's pretty difficult to pay attention to matters of the soul at that same increase. At some point, speed wins. You can feel it happening. You can drive in the driveway at night just hoping that your wife or your kids don't have a problem, because you don't have the margin to deal with it. If you are meeting with God, you are impatient with that meeting. You want it to go fast. If there is a sin to be confessed in your life, you don't ponder it slowly, you go "oops" and motor on. Rich thoughts, deep thoughts. You only have time for "reflects." No contemplation is possible. Preaching, those of you who preach, you grab the first idea that comes into your mind, instead of living in a text and ruminating upon its truths. You don't have time to wonder a little bit and get underneath the first thoughts. You don't feel your own emotions because you don't have time to deal with them. Slow conversations with friends don't happen anymore. I get brittle. Little things upset me more than they should. Little delays seem outrageous to me. I start putting pressure on other people because my pace is too fast. I don't allow anyone around me to relax and enjoy life. I have struggled with this my whole life. This isn't so much about overt sins, but about a life that is being lived too fast. The consequences are often worse than if you went out and intentionally did a sin here and there because it actually undermines the whole of your life. It undermines your relationship with God, spouse, kids, friends, church, preaching, everything! It's more insidious and consequential than an old-fashioned "screw up." It's often more tolerated in the Christian community than an overt sin.

Pete: Here are some additional sins that could be added to the list: Mary and Martha are my biggest example. How much quiet do I need to sustain my activity in ministry? I think God has given us different capacities. How much time do we need to be Mary "sitting?" Grabbing to make something happen is so tempting, so enormous-especially when things are going well.

Crossing through limits is one of the greatest dangers. I think of Jesus in the wilderness, He was waiting thirty years...He now thinks he has the chance to make an impact and the Devil comes and says, "now, bow to me" and it's all done. But He was able to wait and be patient. I find my self-will is so twisted, that when I'm going fast, I'm usually doing my will and not God's. I know how dangerous I am. I'll cross that line and it's like all hell is breaking loose. Things are spinning. And there's no fruit here at this point. Even if things are being done well outside, inside I know I'm off.

Bill: What has been confusing to me, but at different junctures is that sometimes the external part of my life, appears to be incredibly fruitful, people are coming to faith, they

are being baptized, people are joining small groups, people are serving the poor like crazy... So if I just looked at the effects of my ministry sometimes, that doesn't give me enough of a warning to take some of this seriously. The part that no one can see is the vacuousness of my interior life. That can't be measured on charts and graphs. However, I feel it. And what keeps me from dealing with it is the externals are all positive. Others say "do more, you're doing great."

Peter: We can be growing our churches and it's not the glow of God at all. The pace at which we go doesn't honor God at all. I may grow a church to 5,000, and the Lord says, "Pete, I never asked you to do that." That was Joe's job down the street. You were to bring the church to this place, to release these workers, in fact, some of those people were supposed to leave your church and start some other churches." What makes us different than leadership in the corporate world is, yes, you want to learn leadership skills. But we lead out of a deep interior life. Absolutely. We do His will. That is success for us. Success is not numbers, it's not buildings, it's not numbers of small groups, it's really "Am I doing God's Will?" personally and is our church doing God's Will. So the fact that we can do something, like open another service, doesn't mean it's God's time to do it. You can only give others what's inside of you, and as you know, the cracks are there and they will come out. The dam's going to break, and that's a very scary place to be.

Narrator: Pete, you used an interesting phrase-what do you mean "Using God to run from God." What does that mean? Saul was anointed and gifted. He had tremendous leadership gifts, but he was jealous.

Peter: Saul's a great example. Saul was anointed and gifted. Saul had tremendous leadership gifts, but he was emotionally unaware of his jealousies, his stubbornness. He was getting the job done, trouncing the Amalekites. Nor did he spend time with God like David. You don't see him writing psalms, panting after God. It was a downward slope. I can use God and build a ministry and have Bill say, "Great job." Instead of looking at God, I need you to validate me and tell me that I'm doing a great job. I'm preaching the gospel, but I'm living law. It's so easy to use God for my unmet needs going way back. Feeling like I'm inadequate, I'm stupid... Because I'm not taking the time to slow down and look at these larger issues, I think I'm getting by because no one is asking the hard questions around me. You don't have the long-term fruit, the transformation of lives. It can only come out of power-a life on a life. As leaders, we think we can have it quick and easy. We may preach one way about joy in Jesus, but we really don't want people to imitate our lives, because we are living our lives another way. Our lives are out of control. That's a long way from Paul's statement, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ." I think to get congruent is our first big challenge, it's our ministry.

Bill: You used a phrase I like to reflect on when my life is getting "wobbly." I ask myself, "Would I wish the interior life I am experiencing right now, would I wish this on a close friend?" If the answer to that question is no, then something is out of whack here. Then there are other times when I feel like I am "congruent" and I reflect and say, I wish all my friends could feel in their inner world, today, like I feel in mine. I feel relaxed in God, I feel He's in control of my life, I'm not given to anxiety today, and I feel liberated

from feelings of competitiveness or stress or whatever. That principle has given me a great measuring stick. Is my life right now the life that I would wish upon my friends? It gives me greater objectivity.

Peter: My dream is that we can raise up pastors for churches that are missional like ours, and yet live a life that is rooted in contemplation. I find many folks that begin to slow down their lives, and they are spiritual directors of retreat centers, counselors, and I'm not against that, but can we be committed to global missions, reaching people for Christ? *And* having a deep interior life with God and growing churches as well. But out of a different place. That, to me, is the critical issue for the long-term future. I think the American church has suffered from superficiality and I think this is our greatest challenge. Life is coming at senior pastors like tidal waves. It takes grace and commitment. We have to walk with Him first and have integrity. "Follow me as I follow Christ."

Moderator: Pete, how could someone assess how emotionally healthy they are?

Pete: I think you ask your spouse and ask the people who work closely with you if you have the courage. How do you experience me? How am I coming across? How safe am I? If someone says, "Pete, I hate your sermons. Your sermon last week really stunk." Do I reply, "That is your problem!"? Or am I able to say, "What was it about that problem that really stunk for you?" That's safe. That person can open up. It's a journey. I know that we never really grow into complete Christlikeness. There is a diagnostic tool that you can download free from my book to evaluate if you and/or your church is emotionally healthy. Topics include breaking the power of the past, grief and loss, limits, vulnerability... Test yourself. Am I an emotional infant, child, adolescent or adult?

Bill: Pete, I thought that was a phenomenal way of looking at your maturity level. I thought that was a fantastic part of your book. Could you tease that out a little bit, so we can get a feel for that?

Pete: When I think of discipleship, or "whole people in the image of God" We are physical beings, social beings, relational beings, we are spiritual beings, but we are also emotional beings. I broke down what does it mean to be mature emotionally? There are seven components. Going deep beneath the surface. Am I aware of what's going on inside of me? Do I resolve conflict in a clear, respectful manner or do I do it by appeasing, avoiding or blaming like my family of origin did? So it's questions like that? Limits-would people say that my life is out of control, that I bite off more than I can chew? The evaluation is on a scale of 1 to 5, helping pastors and leaders to ask the question, "Where am I?" I was in bad shape. My discipleship never included those areas. Seminaries, Bible Schools, we didn't talk about these things. It was just take the next hill. So I realized I was on the verge of a train wreck and I realize that I'm standing here by the grace of God. I want to see pastors make it after 20, 30, 40, 50 years and enjoying leading and serving others. Not wishing that I was saying, God I wish I were in a pew just enjoying you. I must suffer up here while they are having a good time in Jesus.

Bill: I remember talking with a pastor one time, and this is a guy I really liked and had a close friendship with, and he was always describing the day when he could get out of the pastorate. Finally I said, this is about the fifth time that you have told me your goal is to get out. He said, "I have never been able to find a rhythm of sustainability and joy while leading a church. That's very sad to me. I would like to believe that in following Christ and doing His bidding, that we could actually increase in joy in the long haul, decrease in reckless anger, spending more days rather than fewer days a year being centered, more filled with trust than stress. I was thinking of people in the Scripture-Jeremiah for one, who was given a very tough assignment. He never had a lot of external success. He had his heart broken when they were dragged off to the exile, but he was the guy who wrote in Lamentations 3-"Your mercies are new every morning." He still has a sweet spirit. All he experienced, by the world's standards was a bust. Yet he flourished in his interior life so that he could say, "I understand what's happening in my interior world regardless of what's happening out there." I have the vision of pastors having joy-filled, long-term runs, despite down turns, staff reductions, despite the complexities that happen.

Pete: Jesus said, "My yoke is easy. My burden is light." I used to say, "if that's true, Jesus, why is the burden heavy? I finally concluded it's not His yoke that I'm carrying. I'm taking on a yoke that's heavy and hard. It's not His yoke. There's suffering involved in leadership. I don't know any leader who does not suffer. I don't care where you are in the world, rural, urban, suburban, small, large. But one can suffer and experience an "easy yoke." My joy is in Him; it's not in results. "Nothing I desire outside of Him." Psalm 73. And I am able to lead with joy. But I think it's going to require very different leadership models than I know I had and the generation before me as well. We are working seven days a week, 78 hours a week. Our spouses are miserable, and our kids have often walked away from church. I don't want to go back. That was fifteen years ago, but I now know there's another way.

Narrator: When you talk about another way, one of the pathways you describe is protecting the Sabbath and also what you call the "rule of life." Can you elaborate on that a little?

Peter: About 2003, I did a "monastic sabbatical." We got a little grant and we traveled and visited monasteries. Catholic, orthodox and evangelical. We went to England, France and around the United States. We took some married couples, some with singles. We tried to leave our own way of doing things and experience this monastic life. We lived rhythms of silence, solitude, the Office-pausing to be with God four or five times a day. I realized that I had died with Him more in my relationship that He had asked me to. "Die to defensiveness, Pete, die to judgmentalism, but don't die to Me, because you are working for Me," He said. We were so broken by these words, we wondered if God was calling us to a monastic life. But we realized we were to stay in Queens and pastor New Life Church. We came back and the emotional health will slow you down. But the contemplative life will really slow you down. So we remained missional, but we incorporated Sabbath-keeping into our community as a formation discipline, but nothing legalistic. But we needed to create rhythms in our daily life. No more quiet time just once a day, we began to have quiet time with God frequently-morning, midday, evening. We'd

structure our days being with Him and then working. Being with Him, and then working. We would also keep weekly rhythms of Sabbath for a twenty-four hour period. We started like the Jews did, with a candle-stop, rest, contemplate and delight. This was very different than a day off. Not, as Eugene Peterson says, “a bastard Sabbath,” but a day off unto the Lord. The Sabbath has certain qualities that make it for the Lord our God. I should lay down my work. In my case, it’s leadership. I’m enjoying life. I’m going to the park, I’m reading books, I’m going to the beach, but I’m not working.

Bill: You do an electronic fast, don’t you?

Pete: I stay off the Internet if it has anything to do with work, or e-mail. I don’t know how I ever lived without it. It’s been incredible. I was doing it in ’96, but really in earnest in 2003. Now we encourage it throughout our whole community. We just finished a seven-week initiative. We taught it for six or seven weeks. We sold candles. We did panel discussion-marrieds, singles. We observed it from Saturday night to Sunday night, from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. That is a starting point. If you can’t do that because of work, do a Friday to Saturday. It’s not about the day, but we discovered people needed the support of a community. Our members said that teaching has been so impactful, that it’s difficult to stop. It’s like getting off crack. So we talk as pastors, “tithes, and God will bless you financially.” You can trust God. He’s running the world the world without us. We can stop and taste Eternity. Because one day we will stop and the world will run fine without us. Every Sabbath is a taste of heaven. We are with Him, enjoying the gifts He has given us. I think it’s one of the great spiritual practices that we need to bring back into the church in a non-legalistic way. It’s marked by “delight” because God delights in the first Sabbath. We are teaching people how to delight in the joy of life. I think many of us as pastors and leaders do violence to our souls. We work and we work, and our souls are dying.

Narrator: For you, I’m sure your Sabbath is not on Sunday, but on Friday.

Peter: I do have things to do—laundry, shopping, fix the car, clean the house, and pay bills. Those are work things to do. I don’t enjoy that. So if I’ve got to work around the house that’s not bringing me joy. On the Sabbath, I need to do the things that bring me delight. That means that I can’t be working a sixty-seventy hour week. It forces me to deal with a lot of issues. Do I really believe that God is on His throne? Can I really surrender? It touches very profound issues in your family of origin. My family was “you are what you do.” If you don’t work, why do you even exist? Do I really believe in grace? That God loves me for me, without my accomplishing anything. We’ve been talking about this in our church for years, but until we began this initiative did I realize how really difficult it is-to build that rhythm into our American culture. It’s a global issue, not just a North American issue.

Narrator: You know, Bill, as long as I’ve known you, you have been following your own rhythms and rule of life. You’ve been very intentional about that. What does it look like, and how has it changed over the years?

Bill: I think that it has been great, but one of the misunderstandings of the subject matter is that it's the myth of finding that "magic rhythm" and it working the same way for a decade or two. When my kids were little, I had to find the rhythm of sustainability in the disciplines of replenishment one way. When they were in junior high and high school, that changed dramatically, and when Lynn and I became empty nesters, I had to re-do my whole life because it had been so impacted by having kids around all of the time. Now we are in the grand-parenting season. I'm learning a whole new set of lessons about maintaining some kind of discipline of replenishment in the stage of life that I am in now. Throw in international travel, and how our services change around Willow, when we had two mid-week services and four weekend services. Pete, you said in your book, and I was so glad to read it because so few people speak as plainly and candidly as you do. I've just had one mantra about spiritual replenishment-experiment and find what works. If it doesn't work-I don't care whom else it works for, keep experimenting until it works for you. Some of the things I do would not work for anybody else. When I am asked in Q & A sessions what my daily patterns are, what my weekly patterns are, I can just watch people. They are thinking, "That would never work for me!" When I ask them what theirs is, I say, "that would never work for me." Just listening to you, spending four months cruising through monasteries, but for me, four months on a sailboat, I'm going to be good with God, I'm going to be good with the world, I'm going to be good for another ten years of ministry. So I think when you understand the kind of basic spiritual formation guidelines that we are talking about here, the application has to be customized non-stop experimenting. And I keep saying to people, "Why don't you experiment more? Try this! Try that! If anybody knew the joy I've been getting the last year of my life, with two bird feeders on my deck in the backyard...my family can't get over the fact that I've gotten into these bird feeders and "squirrel protectors." When I'm spending time with God and I see a cardinal land on that bird feeder, fifteen years ago I would have said, "Any pastor that has time to look at a bird feeder ought to be arrested, and shipped somewhere." I'm at the stage in my life where I need more of nature. I need more reflection time for God's work to be done right. So I've set some experiments of where I sit, what I look at when I'm meeting with God and try to let His Word get more into me, and that nature and bird thing is just working for me now. (I know that sounds silly).

Narrator: Both of you guys as senior pastors lead teams, and staff cultures. So how does your emotional health impact your teams? Starting with you, Pete, obviously you have seen this impact the team that you lead.

Peter: First of all, I moved our staff to a monastic rule of life. Monasteries are built around a monastic rule. They seek Jesus, but you join a particular community because you love the way they are following Christ. So rule of life is the structure of spiritual disciplines, your unique combination of how you follow Christ. One is agreeing together on how we are going to live our lives. For example, things like our marriages and our families being first. Silence, solitude, offices, Sabbath-keeping, recreation, that we would live that out together. So, for example, the third week of every month each one of us agrees to go somewhere to be alone with God. I try to get to a beach. They are going to spend that day-we are going to pay you-to be alone with God. This is not to prepare

sermons, not to prepare talks, but to be with Him, however God is leading you. We ask them to spend one day in silence and solitude with the Living God.

Bill: Is this for your whole staff?

Pete: Our whole staff, the pastoral staff, yes.

Bill: So not the I.S. people, the administrative staff...

Pete: Just the pastoral staff. Although they are negotiating to say that they should be included in this.

Bill: It doesn't sound fair or holistic not to include them...

Pete: Yeah, you caught me on that one.... but we are more concerned about process than we are about results. For example, wild Christmas productions, sure, we'd have thousands of people who would come, but I would have bodies laying everywhere staff-wise. We don't do that anymore. Do we have the interior life as a staff to sustain this next initiative? That's always a question. We are looking constantly at marriages. Can my marriage sustain this next initiative? So, for example, we just initiated a third service in the evening last October. But we bought this very large building and all our financial people are saying; "we have to add a third service immediately." They are thinking "money...we've got to pay for the building. It's a no-brainer. New York is a night culture. Have the service, an identical service. It's not going to kill anybody." But I knew. I did not have the capacity at that point. We did not have a preaching team yet. We just went to a team this past October. You may add a few hundred people overnight, but it just adds stress to the system. Adding staff, integrating onto your team, takes time.

We are asking questions like, "what are the limits God has given us that we are called to break through?" Those are character issues. What are limits given to us as a gift? Like John the Baptist was able to say in John 3: "A man is given to Him only what has been given to Him from heaven." I want to be sure I give to the church only what has been given from God and not take something that belongs to some other church. So we went to the third service, and we are experiencing a lot of growth, and we are feeling a lot of stress. We want to live our values. I do not want to have a church where we preach values that we ourselves are not living. It is so easy as the numbers come in, and it's just a faceless crowd. We just had Easter Sunday and it was gigantic, we had four services. You know, people can become faces-not people. I don't want to have a ministry where we have people in a crowd, made in God's image, I don't want to have our staff so wasted we are not ministering effectively to those God has given. So we are always monitoring that. And if something uncomfortable happens in a staff meeting, on any level, we are going to go after it. So if I sense attitude, I'm going to go back to that person and make it right. But who has time for these conversations? In the past I didn't have time, but we make time now. So it slows the church down. People are staying long-term. One of my goals is that I want people to love being on staff. I feel like one of my greatest jobs is to

keep us mission-focused, but keep that and us rooted we are not going beyond our capacity.

Bill: You are truly trying to do what very few people do and succeed. It's moving the Kingdom Ball ahead, because the words of Jesus say, "Work, for the night is coming, when no one will work again." There's work to do. So we need to abound in the work of the Lord without losing our ability to abide. There's that tension in the Kingdom. You have your "abounders" who are not abiding, and you have your "abiders" who are not abounding. I wrestle with that every day of my life. Am I getting that equation about right, is there too much abounding, is there too much abiding, where is my natural propensity to fall on one side or the other, and when we hire staff people, are we going to pay someone to "abide?" You can't afford to pay someone to just "abide." There's work that has to be done, but if you pay a bunch of people who are "worker bees" who don't carry the values of the kingdom, and live the kind of lives that no one wants to replicate, that's not so great either. So I just admire how you are going after it-you are naming it-you are describing the tension, and you are asking your staff and your congregation to live in that tension. That's cool!

Pete: What's interesting is it's the younger generation that's responding the most quickly. People in their twenties and in their early thirties, and teenagers. I'm saying "what is it about them?" They are all disillusioned with church, and a lot of young church leaders are looking at our generation and saying "I don't want to do it like you guys did it. I don't want to live like that." They are hungry for a change, and I think God is doing that; He is doing something in that generation and we are probably going to learn from them in the years to come. They are longing for authenticity, they are longing for a pace. They want to serve Christ, but not eighty hours a week. Not at the sacrifice of their souls.

Narrator: Well, I'd like for each of you to give us one final challenge. Pete, if you could say anything to the leaders who are listening right now, about why this is such a priority, what would you say to them?

Pete: I think for us as pastors and leaders, we cannot lead people where we have not gone. And we cannot give to people what we do not possess. We can love with a human love, but not with the love of Christ unless it's overflowing out of us. My number one job as a pastor and as a leader is to be with God, out of which I lead for God. My role is to do His will, not my will, and not the will of others. I follow Him regardless of where that leads me to go. To stay in that place requires an interior life, nourishing and drinking of Christ. Don't live off of other people's spirituality and don't let your people live off of other's spirituality. We have to go before them-we have to lead first. We must say, "Follow me," at least in broad strokes, not a cookie cutter. It's as you follow Christ and find your pathway.

Narrator: Bill, any final thoughts?

Bill: I go back to the word, "experiment." I wish people would feel the freedom, as they've listened to this session, if you have an sensitivity to matters of the Spirit,

something inside of you, while you are listening to this session, would say, “I long to be with God.” True Christians want to live in the presence of Christ. They want to do His bidding; they don’t want to have a vacuous interior life. They don’t like how they are when they are living too fast, and are brittle and coarse and stressed out. We know that’s not right. My recommendation would be to experiment for seven days with the things that were discussed in this session and see how it works for you. If it doesn’t work for you, then do a totally different experience for the next seven days. Then do another one. Take the parts of them that work. Integrate them into your practices, and if other stuff doesn’t work, let them go. Don’t keep beating on them thinking they should work. It only really has to work for you. I’ve never met anyone whose life I really respect that couldn’t describe for the fact that they went through many, many iterations of spiritual practices before they found those that worked for them. I’m always excited to be around people who say, “I’ve tried something new in my practices, and it’s really helped me.” Our practices will change from season to season, but I say, “Seek and ye shall find at the end of the day.”