

Encouraging Spiritual Vitality Amongst Global Workers

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Spiritual Anemia Amongst Cross-cultural Workers

- Thematic to our work:
- 2008 Field Leader Survey. Those in leadership less than 3 years say their spiritual life is not well. 50% of field leaders acknowledge growing spiritually. Only 20% of leaders say that supervisors ask them about the well being of their soul.
- Most NA workers are sent into spiritual environs much more challenging, resistant and intense than what they what is experienced in one's own culture. Further, the complex array of stressors to everyday life and work depletes emotional, spiritual and physical reserves. The simplistic, catch-as-catch-can "devotional" life of most NA's simply is insufficient.
- One of the primary works of God in the life of the worker is to invite them deeper into their communion with God. Cross-cultural workers go to see others come to God and discover God is after them!
- Spiritual Vitality is a topic that missionaries must be directly asked about, given permission to significantly invest in, and mentored in more meaningful practices.
- Thus, cross-cultural life and work requires an ever deepening communion with Christ that is fostered by an intentionally designed and practiced life that tends to one's personal vitality - spiritual, emotional, relational, physical and professional.

Jesus' earthly life - A Life of Service Marked with Balance

The Gospel writers grant us glimpses into Jesus' Father-dependent life.

Fascinating is the theme in the Gospels of Jesus' personal pursuit of solitude in the midst of immense needs and a very short time frame to complete His Father's work.

Jesus Example: John gives us what he taught, Luke his actions:

John 5:19-30

Luke 4:31-44

5:15-16

6:12-19

Jesus' Instruction to Us

John 15:1-5

Luke 9:1-10

PAUSE: A time to record what is stirring in you

Eugene Peterson writes, "Here is the clue to our erratic life patterns, our inconsistency, our unfaithfulness, our inability to distinguish between fashion and faith: we don't rise early and listen to God. We don't daily find a time apart for preparing for the day's journey. 'A very original [person],' says Gary Wills, 'must shape life, make a schedule that allows her to reflect, and study, and create.'"

"The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways...a prudent man gives thoughts to his steps." Proverbs 14:8, 15

"A person of understanding keeps a straight course (i.e. has purpose and focus)." Proverbs 15:21

- What is God speaking to you about thus far in this discussion?

- What are some growth steps you already know you need to take to ensure your own spiritual growth and vitality?
- Record a short psalm of prayer to God of your heart's desire regarding this matter.

A Rule of Life

“Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart that I may fear your name alone.” Psalm 86:11

A “Rule of Life” is simply a pattern of habits, actions, and attitudes. A rule of life seeks to respond to two questions: How is God inviting me to be in relationship with him? How is he inviting me to respond to him? A rule of life responds to these two questions with a set of daily, weekly, monthly and annual rhythms or practices that facilitate the practices allowing for deep transformation and maintaining holistic vitality.

Designing a Rule

- Daily Objective: Attentiveness toward God
- Weekly Objective: Sabbath rest; Reflection on week
- Monthly Objective: Day of solitude; Reflection on God's activity in recent weeks
- Yearly Objective: A spiritual-intake event or two

	Activity/Discipline	How & when; what resources needed?
Daily		
Weekly		
Monthly		
Annually		

Facilitating Growth in those You Support and Partner with

- Mentor/coach/spiritual director - encouraging some sort of relationship that nurtures them spiritually. In fact, I would strongly encourage this. Who are they talking to regularly? Who is pouring into their lives? These relationships are *essential* for health and vibrancy. Health and vibrancy are essential for the work at hand.
- Please resource for spiritual renewal events: retreats, conferences, books. Set money aside in the budget to under write these types of renewing experiences. A key marker of those who finish well is regular and repeated times of personal renewal.
- Regularly communicate permission to pursue solitude, time in Word, taking Sabbath seriously, reading books for personal intake, play, rest, etc.
- Constantly granting permission for all the above.

Resources

- *Delighting in the Trinity* Michael Reeves
- *Enjoying your Prayer Life* Michael Reeves (electronic version only?)
- *With Skye* Jethni
- *Called to be Saints* Gordon T. Smith
- tendingscatteredwool.com A blog I write that addresses this topic with regularity