



Spiritually Plateaued Leadership

From *Organic Leadership*
Neil Cole
Baker Books, 2009

The leader is committed to maintaining the work he or she has begun but is no longer growing as a leader.

A Spiritually Plateaued Leader...

1. Avoids relationships of personal accountability

Feeling the pressure to appear perfect, many leaders hide their spiritual failures behind closed doors and smiling masks. The result is that the world doesn't believe our message is truthful because the smell hidden secrets and even delight in exposing the hypocrisy.

2. Rarely applies the truths of God's word to him or herself personally

They have become experts in the Bible, thus believing they have no more to learn

3. Has replaced his or her joy, peace and love with envy and resentment.

When the Spirit is not in control, the fruit is not evident and no amount of hard work can make it so. Instead of being bearers of Christ's love and forgiveness in the world, many leaders have begun to think it's their right, even their obligation, to judge and criticize others.

4. Frequently looks for greener pastures in other places

They attribute the 'success' others have to the luck of landing in the right place at the right time. Leaders who think like this are always looking to move to a better place where their ministry will be truly appreciated and

the success they deserve will finally come. They are jealous of other leaders 'success'.

5. Finds faults in others more often than in self

These leaders find introspection difficult and rarely evaluate themselves, though they are often busy evaluating everyone else. Speck and Plank leaders (Matt 7:3)

6. Is burned-out from lots of busyness that has been substituted for simple intimacy with Christ.

They are exhausted because they are usually deceived into thinking the more effort and more activity are ways to gain closer access and blessing from God. There is no substitute for intimacy with Christ.

While carrying out religious business may grant us a sense of importance, it does not renew our hearts with joy and purpose. Instead it robs us of the strength we need. Only intimacy with Christ can renew our hearts and supply us with power and strength so we can accomplish the great things God wants to do through us.

7. Compromises on ethical principles once held dear.

Using grace and liberty as excuses, they continue to function publicly without regret or remorse, while behind closed doors they carry out sinful practices.

8. Stays within safe areas of expertise rather than branching out into new learning endeavours

Wants to be seen as an expert rather than a learner and therefore has no intention of exploring new fields or gaining new understanding.

9. Is unable to acknowledge the wisdom of others

This leader talks more often than listens, is uninterested in what others have to say, and is easily offended if someone contradicts his or her idea. It is impossible to tell this person anything new.

10. Has reduced the Christian life to a routine

Is in a kind of holding pattern and is not moving forward in his or her walk with Christ.

The Impact of Spiritually Plateaued Leadership

- **Needs to control all ministry.**
- **Needs to filter God's voice**
- **Promotes upper-class Christianity**
- **Emphasizes knowledge at the expense of obedience**
- **Sees church as a worship service more than a service of worship**
- **Is lured by fame and fortune**

Recalibrating

- **Make space for God to work in your life and then minister from the overflow.**
- **Spend time in the Bible and cultivating spiritual disciplines**
- **Practise being creative – don't become institutionalised**
- **Make room for life**
- **Live life deeply with others – guard against consumerism**
- **Read widely (but not as a substitute for scripture)**
- **Remain teachable always**
- **Stay sharp in terms of strengthening your giftedness**
- **Grow in your leadership gifts**
- **Celebrate life and especially the success of your colleagues**
- **Pray for other ministries**
- **Avoid becoming addicted to 'success'**