DAG HEWARD-MILLS



Why Loyalty?

by Dag Heward-Mills

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Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible

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Contents

[Chapter 1 - An Important Subject]

[Chapter 2 - Loyalty and the Ministry]

Chapter 1

An Important Subject

Why teach on the subject "Loyalty and Disloyalty"? I believe the Lord has laid this practical subject on my heart for various reasons. First of all, I have seen the relevance of this subject in the Word of God. The Scriptures are replete with accounts of faithful and treacherous people. There is a lot to learn from these accounts in the Bible.

My few years in the ministry have also made me very aware of loyal and disloyal people. I have noticed the impact that this has on churches and ministries.

In the next few pages I will share with you a few reasons why the subject of loyalty is such an important one.

1. Loyalty is the principal qualification for every minister.

An inexperienced person is likely to think that the more gifted you are, the more qualified you are for the ministry.

My little experience has shown me that it is the faithful and loyal people in church who are most qualified to be leaders.

Friendly and Flashy!

An inexperienced person would think that a friendly brother would make a good pastor. He may also think that someone with good oratory skills would make the best preacher. Do not make that mistake. The Bible teaches us that the cardinal requirement for leadership is faithfulness and not anything else.

…**it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.**

1 Corinthians 4:2

I have many wonderful pastors who work with me. Many of them are not overly friendly, flashy or particularly gifted. But time has proven that they are the best gifts that God has given to His church and to me.

2. To fight the 5th column

Very early in my ministry I realized that the devil is an expert at destroying the church from within. If you are a good minister, called of God and doing the right things, the devil will have very little opportunity to fight against you from outside. Like Jesus said,

…**the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.**

John 14:30

You will realize that Satan often does not have the occasion to launch deadly attacks against you from outside. Jesus was saying that though the enemy was coming after him, he did not have any grounds to destroy him. There are many anointed preachers in this same category. Satan has no basis for which to overcome them so he has to use someone from within. In the case of Jesus it was a traitor (Judas) whom Satan used.

I recall reading the story of an army general who surrounded a large city with the aim of conquering it. This city was heavily fortified with a high and imposing wall and gate. The army general surrounded the city in readiness to attack.

One friend of the general came along and asked him, "Sir, how do you think you are going to overcome the defences of this city? No one in recent history has been able to conquer this great city."

The army general smiled and said, "It's my 5th column. I'm depending on them to do the trick."

The general's friend was very interested and asked, "What is this 5th column? I thought you only had four columns."

The army general replied, "I do have a 5th column."

"Oh, I see. Is it a special commando unit or are they airborne paratroopers?" the man asked.

I Will Fight from Within

The general laughed, "No, it's none of these. My 5th column consists of my spies, agents, friends and supporters who are already within the city.

They will open those big gates from within and my armies will rush in."

This is the only way the enemy can destroy a successful and powerful ministry that is doing all the right things. The 5th column comprises the disloyal, double-faced, double-tongued and discontented people within every ministry. If these are allowed to wreak havoc as they so very well can, they will destroy the church.

I Had a Disloyal Associate

I remember years ago when I started out in the ministry, I experienced the effect of having a disloyal associate. This person although officially standing on my right-hand side, did not believe in me and was murmuring against me all the time.

His home was the meeting place for all the discontented people in the church. Every time they gathered, they would discuss and criticize me. At times, they would talk about the way I preached. At other times, it was the way I sipped water in the middle of my sermons. Yet again, some felt I was not friendly enough.

But the Lord revealed all these things to me. I prayed about it and asked the Lord what to do.

God told me, "Get rid of that guy."

I said, "Lord, do you mean he must leave the church?"

And the Lord said, "I mean exactly that! Dismiss him, otherwise you will never have peace and your church will never grow."

So I called for a meeting of the elders of the church. At the meeting I said, "I realize that Brother X is not in support of me. He's constantly full of bitter criticisms."

I said to Brother X, "I know that you do not believe in my leadership anymore. I trained you. I brought you up. And today you are too big to remain under my authority."

I asked, "What do you think we should do?"

Then the brother said, "Let's work things out."

But the Scripture that the Lord had shown me came floating up to my mind.

Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.

Proverbs 22:10

I spoke up, pointed to my assistant and said, "You know as well as I do that it's not going to work. You don't believe in me anymore."

I went on, "From today, I have relieved you of all your duties in this church."

He sputtered, "What!" Then he said, "I will continue coming to church even though I may not have certain responsibilities."

You Must Leave This Church Now!

But I said to him, "No! You must leave! You are not part of us. Your presence in the church will only be destructive."

I tell you, it was no easy thing to dismiss a friend and associate of many years. But it had to be done. The Bible tells us that when Abraham was in conflict with Lot he directed Lot to go somewhere else! Abraham was saying, "If we are apart there will be peace and the work of God can go on."

A disloyal person breeds strife, hatred and murmuring. These disloyal sentiments are like smoke that fills an entire house. The only way to get rid of the smoke is to get rid of the fire.

If we want to have a large church, we need to minister with love and with oneness. If we cannot be one, let's stop pretending. You see, I encourage people to walk out of my church if their hearts are not with me.

He that is not with me is against me…

Matthew 12:30

I will beg you to leave, if I have to. I am serious about this. I will even give you money to pay for your transportation and snacks as you leave us! So

that those of us who love one another and are confident about each other can stay together and continue working.

Get Rid of Pretenders

I don't know how to pretend. I simply don't know how to do it. But there are many pretenders in the church. They pretend to love you and support you but in their hearts they despise you.

3. For the love of God to fill the church

The ministry is supposed to operate with the power of love, unity and teamwork.

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

John 13:35

To minister as effective leaders you need to exhibit the love that Jesus spoke about. People are attracted by love. When they see leaders who flow together in genuine love they are attracted. You must never forget that your church members are not blind. Neither are they deaf. They can see and feel disunity and discord when it is there.

Sheep Only Drink from Still Waters

One thing that every pastor must know about sheep is that they drink from still waters. If the water is murky and rough the sheep will stay away. You see, they are not sure there is no crocodile in the water!

…**he leadeth me beside the still waters.**

Psalm 23:2

Whenever there is treachery and distrust your church members become scared and wary and stay away.

Chapter 2

Loyalty and the Ministry

Let me now share with you a few reasons why every ministry should have loyal and dedicated people.

1. To have a large and successful ministerial team

One man can only do so much. One pastor can only be at one place at a time. He can only minister until his strength (which is limited) is exhausted.

Because of this, anyone who wants to extend his ministry and bear much fruit has to learn to work with many other people.

These people are the team that I'm talking about. **However, it would be better to work alone than with a team of disloyal, disgruntled, disunited and disaffected people.** In fact, it is not possible to have an effective team with such people. I believe I have only been able to do as much as I have done because of the team with whom I work.

2. To have a mega church

As I am writing, there are Lighthouse churches in countries all over the world - in Ghana, South Africa, New York and Switzerland to mention a few. These churches are part of a network that is loyal to the headquarters of the church in Ghana. People often ask me, "How do you sustain churches in all these different locations? What sort of controls do you have?"

You see, much of the system depends on loyalty. The churches are pastored by ministers who are loyal to the Lord, to me and to the Lighthouse vision.

Without loyalty every network or denomination of churches constantly undergoes disintegration. They frequently divide into splinter groups and smaller sub-churches.

Their Church Disintegrated

I remember the story of a branch church that disintegrated because of disunity. Some longstanding seeds of disloyalty manifested shortly after a fundraising event in the local church.

As a result of this disagreement, the pastor decided to resign and start his own church. He was so angry that he returned all the monies he had raised. The church members of course were very surprised that the money they had given to the church was being returned.

This pastor spread many bad stories about his denomination and its senior ministers. Naturally, this church virtually disintegrated following the pastor's actions.

Dear friend, I can give you story after story of why churches (especially branch churches in big cities) constantly divide and break off. What I can say for sure is that **without principled and loyal pastors, the ministry of our Lord will always be limited.**

6. To have a long-lasting ministry

One person has only a few years of practical and effective ministry. Jesus only ministered for three and a half years but he extended his ministry and his influence through an effective and loyal team. Notice that Jesus' ministry has branched out into the whole world and has spanned almost two thousand years.

If I die now, the Lighthouse Chapel is going to live on! It does not depend on me. I have not built a church around my personality. The church will continue. None of us is indispensable. God can do without us. That is why we need to build a team of loyal successors.

7. In order to reap our full reward

Those who benefit from the blessings of success are the faithful and loyal ones. One day, we all hope to hear those famous words: "Well done, good and faithful servant." Those who stick with you through difficult times are different from those who come in when everything is working well.

Well Done!

Jesus himself told His twelve disciples that they would be treated differently from any other famous minister. They would have a special kingdom and their names would even be written on the foundations of the New Jerusalem.

And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles...

Revelation 21:14

Even the great men of God we know today will not qualify for this special reward. Jesus gave a reason for this special reward - they had been loyal to Him through the most difficult part of His ministry.

Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations...I appoint unto you a kingdom...

Luke 22:28,29

You see, loyalty is most appreciated in hard times. In the good times everybody seems loyal.

A Few Have Stood

I appreciate very much the pastors who have stood with me throughout my ministry. They have watched me rise and supported me, even in my mistakes. To me they are different from others. Like Jesus said, they have a special reward!

Be a loyal person so that you can have great growth in your business or ministry. Be a loyal person so that you can have God's favour over all that you set your hand to do.

May you one day hear those coveted words, "Well done, good and faithful (loyal) servant." May you experience the good fruits and benefits that belong to every faithful Christian.

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Other Best-Selling Books by Dag Heward-Mills:

Loyalty and Disloyalty

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