

Leadership Distortion

Four Personal Needs that can Unknowingly Sabotage your Leadership

Effective leadership is about more than skills and techniques. Good leaders create emotional bonds with people that energize and motivate them. Each of us has four basic needs that are meant to be filled by the Father. When these needs are met in a leaders heart he or she is a natural channel of God's father heart to others. When not, they distort leadership in profound and far reaching ways. Recognizing and resolving these leadership distortions can significantly increase your effectiveness as a leader.

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I. Introduction

- a. Examples of leadership distortions

- b. What are your most basic needs?

- c. We see perfect relationship expressed most clearly as we watch God the Father with his Son. Twice in Scripture we actually overhear the Father talking to Jesus. What does he say?
 - i. Matt 3:17

 - ii. Matt 17:5

- d. **The four streams of God's father heart:**
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____

These four streams are designed to meet the most basic needs of our souls.

- e. What do we experience from our earthly fathers, or other father figures in our lives?
 - i. Because of the fall, none of us have perfect fathers. We are marked by sin- and so are they. As we grow up, each of us ends up with a combination of...
 1. Father _____
 2. Father _____
 3. Father _____

II. How does this affect our relationships and behavior?

- a. Father Gifts produce ...
 - i. a generous and open flow of **giving**
 - ii. responsive and grateful **receiving**
(like blood flowing in and out of a heart)
- b. Father Wounds produce ...
 - i. **distortions** (overreaction, anger, attack, despair). The response does not match the event. This is because it touches already existing pain
 - ii. **walls** – barriers designed to protect us from more pain
- c. Father Vacuums produce...
 - i. **pulls** – constant attempts to fill the vacuum with something else
 - ii. **walls** – turning off or closing down this area of our hearts. Acting as if we have no needs or desires in this area. This creates a certain “deadness”, or indifference.

Illustration:

III. How does this affect your leadership?

- a. **Identity** – John 5:16-19
Who am I? Am I valuable? Do I have to be just like you to be significant? Am I competent, capable?
 - i. Without identity from the Father you will be defined by the people and circumstances around you. This will be constantly changing, and unstable. You will be very vulnerable to your environment, and not have a clear sense of self. You will constantly need to prove yourself, or defend yourself.
 - 1. Instead of “I failed” you think “I am a failure”
 - 2. Instead of “They are disappointed” you think “I am disappointing”
 - 3. Instead of “It didn’t work, I have to try again” you think “I am incapable”
 - 4. Instead of “That wasn’t worthwhile” you think “I am worthless”
 - 5. Instead of “Your opinion is important” you think “I am what you think of me”
 - ii. How does this distort your leadership?

b. Love – John 5:20

- i. Am I loved unconditionally? Am I precious and treasured to someone? Do I matter to anyone? Does someone care deeply about me? Do I feel and hear your love and affection?
- ii. Without love you will be constantly trying to gain love from those near you. Their love will never be enough and you will be chronically disappointed. You may cope by turning off your emotions and becoming distant and cold.
 1. You will have a hard time trusting love
 2. It may not penetrate
 3. Your relationships will become consumed with getting rather than giving.
 4. You will have a hard time giving love to others
- iii. How does this distort your leadership?

c. Pleasure - John 5:30, 41-44

- i. Are you proud of me, do you delight in me? Are you pleased with who I am, do you enjoy my presence? Do you like being with me? Do I bring you joy?
- ii. Without pleasure from the Father you will become addicted to pleasing people, and vulnerable to hedonism. You may cope by avoiding all possibility of failure or rejection.
 1. You could be easily addicted to almost anything – food, alcohol, money, clothes, sex, adrenalin, unhealthy relationships.
 2. On the other hand, you may be passionless, without excitement, dead to joy and healthy pleasure.
 3. You may exhibit a great deal of avoidance behavior – not to maximize gain, but minimize loss. It is easier not to try, than to try and fail.
 4. Disappointment from others will be toxic for you.
- iii. How does this distort your leadership?

d. Place - John 5:21-27

- i. Do I have purpose, does my life matter? Is there some place that is uniquely mine, do I fit? Do I belong, am I a part of something bigger than myself? Do I have something to give, would you notice if I was gone?

- ii. Without place you will be constantly fighting to make a place for yourself. You will fear that your life has no significance, and be easily threatened by others. You may cope by scaling back your expectations, and making a place that is small, but defensible - like when people curl up in a ball, hide behind something, or retreat to a corner.
 - 1. You will be restless and easily distracted by “greener grass”
 - 2. You will not be confident in your role
 - 3. You may often feel threatened by others who are secure
 - 4. You will shrink back from your God-given responsibilities
 - 5. You will overreact to criticism
 - 6. You may use “power plays” to defend your space
 - 7. You will feel a constant need to prove yourself
- iii. How does this distort your leadership?

IV. Is there a way out?

- a. Yes, but only through Jesus and the redemption he provides (John 14:8-10, 18-21, Eph. 1-3). Through him we have the opportunity to be re-fathered by God.
- b. The key steps in this path are:
 - i. Awareness
 - ii. Cleansing
 - iii. Restoration
- c. Channeling the Father heart to others