

## CHAPTER **NINE**

### THE PRICE TAG OF LEADERSHIP:

# SELF- DISCIPLINE

**I**n reading the lives of great men, I found that the first victory they won was over themselves. . . . Self-discipline with all of them came first.”<sup>1</sup>

The Greek word for *self-control* comes from a root word meaning “to grip” or “take hold of.” This word describes people who are willing to get a grip on their lives and take control of areas that will bring them success or failure.

Aristotle used this same word to describe “the ability to test desire by reason . . . to be resolute and ever in readiness to end natural vent and pain.” He explained that people who are not controlled have strong desires which try to seduce them from the way of reason; but to succeed they must keep those desires under control.

Once, while conducting a leadership seminar, I defined discipline in the beginning of life as the choice of achieving what you really want by doing things you don’t really want to do. After successfully doing this for some time, discipline becomes the choice of achieving what you really want by doing things you now want to do! I truly believe we can become disciplined and enjoy it—after years of practicing it.

All great leaders have understood that their number one respon-

sibility was for their own discipline and personal growth. If they could not lead themselves, they could not lead others. Leaders can never take others farther than they have gone themselves, for no one can travel without until he or she has first traveled within. A great person will lead a great organization, but growth is only possible when the leader is willing to "pay the price" for it. Many potentially gifted leaders have stopped short of the payment line and found out that shortcuts don't pay off in the long run.

This is what Edwin Markham has to say about human worth:

We are blind until we see  
That in the human plan  
Nothing is worth the making  
If it does not make the man.  
Why build these cities glorious  
If man unbuilt goes?  
In vain we build the world  
Unless the builder also grows.<sup>2</sup>

## THE PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING PERSONAL DISCIPLINE

Frederick the Great of Prussia was walking on the outskirts of Berlin when he encountered a very old man proceeding in the opposite direction.

"Who are you?" asked Frederick.

"I am a king," replied the old man.

"A king!" laughed Frederick. "Over what kingdom do you reign?"

"Over myself," was the proud reply.

"Reigning" over yourself requires personal discipline.

## Start with yourself.

**We cannot  
travel without  
until we first  
travel within.**

A reporter once asked the great evangelist D. L. Moody which people gave him the most trouble. He answered immediately, "I've had more trouble with D. L. Moody than any man alive." The late Samuel Hoffenstein said, "Wherever I go, I go too, and spoil everything." And there is the classic Jack Paar line, "Looking back, my life seems to be one long obstacle course, with me as the chief obstacle."

My observation is that more potential leaders fail because of inner issues than outer ones. Each month I teach a leadership lesson to my staff, which is recorded live and sent to other leaders across the United States. Recently I spoke on the subject, "How to Get Out of Your Own Way." A tremendous response was received from many listeners who said, "The lesson was needed in my life. I am my worst problem!" Most of us can relate to the sign I saw in an office: "If you could kick the person responsible for most of your troubles, you wouldn't be able to sit down for weeks."

**When we are  
foolish we want  
to conquer the  
world.**

**When we are  
wise we want to  
conquer  
ourselves.**

### *Your Competitor*

An enemy I had, whose face I stoutly strove to know,  
For hard he dogged my steps unseen, wherever I did go.  
My plans he balked, my aims he foiled, he blocked my  
onward way.

When for some lofty goal I toiled, he grimly said to me,  
Nay.

One night I seized him and held him fast, from him the  
veil did draw,  
I looked upon his face at last and lo . . . myself I saw.

When we are foolish, we want to conquer the world. When we are wise, we want to conquer ourselves.

## Start early.

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**Hard work is the accumulation of easy things you didn't do when you should have.**

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Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not; it is the first lesson that ought to be learned and, however early a man's training begins, it is probably the last lesson that he learns thoroughly.

I'm not sure that my parents ever read these preceding words of Thomas Huxley, but they certainly practiced them! They modeled discipline and insisted that their three children develop that life-style. Time management, hard work, persistence, honesty, responsibility, and a positive attitude, regardless of the situation, were always expected of us. However, I didn't appreciate this training until I went to college. There I saw many students who couldn't get a grip on their lives or their studies. I began to realize that I had a decided advantage over others because of the disciplines already "under my belt." It is true—when you do the things you ought to do when you ought to do them, the day will come when you will do the things you want to do when you want to do them. Hard work is the accumulation of the easy things you didn't do when you should have.

## Start small.

What you are going to be tomorrow, you are becoming today. It is essential to begin developing self-discipline in a small way today in order to be disciplined in a big way tomorrow.

### *A Small Plan that Will Make A Big Difference*

1. List five areas in your life that lack discipline.

2. Place them in order of your priority for conquering them.
3. Take them on, one at a time.
4. Secure resources, such as books and tapes, that will give you instruction and motivation to conquer each area.
5. Ask a person who models the trait you want to possess to hold you accountable for it.
6. Spend fifteen minutes each morning getting focused in order to get control of this weak area in your life.
7. Do a five-minute checkup on yourself at midday.
8. Take five minutes in the evening to evaluate your progress.
9. Allow sixty days to work on one area before you go to the next.
10. Celebrate with the one who holds you accountable as you show continued success.

Remember, having it all doesn't mean having it all at once. It takes time. Start small and concentrate on today. The slow accumulation of disciplines will one day make a big difference. Ben Franklin said, "It is easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all that follow it."

## Start now.

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**Great leaders never set themselves above their followers except in carrying out responsibilities.**

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As John Hancock Field says, "All worthwhile men have good thoughts, good ideas, and good intentions, but precious few of them ever translate those into action."

In 1976, Indiana University's basketball team was undefeated throughout the regular season and captured the NCAA National Championship. Controversial and colorful coach Bobby Knight led

them to that championship. Shortly afterward, Coach Knight was interviewed on the television show *60 Minutes*. The commentator asked him, "Why is it, Bobby, that your basketball teams at Indiana are always so successful? Is it the will to succeed?"

"The will to succeed is important," Knight replied, "but I'll tell you what's more important: It's the will to prepare. It's the will to go out there every day training and building those muscles and sharpening those skills!"

Abraham Lincoln said, "I will get ready and then perhaps my chance will come." Too often the disciplines have not been developed and an opportunity is missed. Charlie Brown of the "Peanuts" comic strip once said that his life was mixed up because he missed all of the rehearsals. Before you can become a "star," you have to start. Now is the best time.

## Organize your life.

"One of the advantages of being disorderly is that one is constantly making exciting discoveries." That statement by A. A. Milne is true, but the discoveries are usually too late and consequently an opportunity is missed. Then you as a leader are perceived as being "out of control." This leads to uncertainty and insecurity among followers.

When you are organized, you have a special power. You walk with a sure sense of purpose. Your priorities are clear in your mind. You orchestrate complex events with a masterful touch. Things fall into place when you reveal your plans. You move smoothly from one project to the next with no wasted motion. Throughout the day you gain stamina and momentum as your successes build. People believe your promises because you always follow through. When you enter a meeting, you are prepared for whatever they throw at you. When at last you show your hand, you're a winner.

Christopher Robin, in *Winnie the Pooh*, gives my favorite definition of organization: "Organizing is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it's not all mixed up."

## MY TOP TEN LIST FOR PERSONAL ORGANIZATION

### 1. SET YOUR PRIORITIES.

Two things are difficult to get people to do. The first is to do things in order of importance, and the second is to *continue* doing things in order of importance. William Gladstone said, "He is a wise man who wastes no energy on pursuits for which he is not fitted; and he is wiser still who from among the things he can do well, chooses and resolutely follows the best."

Major events, such as my speaking at conferences, are scheduled a year or two in advance. The last week of each month I spend two hours planning my schedule for the next thirty days. On paper I list all my major responsibilities according to importance and time needed to accomplish those tasks. This becomes the gauge to help me "keep on track" and keep moving. As each assignment is completed in its allotted time, I check it off my monthly list.

### 2. PLACE PRIORITIES IN YOUR CALENDAR.

Once this list is written out on paper, I give it to my personal assistant, Barbara, who writes it on my calendar. This protects me from outside pressures that clamor daily for my time. This also makes me accountable to someone else who will help me stay on track.

### 3. ALLOW A LITTLE TIME FOR THE UNEXPECTED.

The kinds of work you do will determine the amount of time you set aside for interruptions. For example, the more you interact with people, the more time you must set aside. I set aside one-half day each week in my calendar for the unexpected.

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**Success depends  
not merely on  
how well you  
do the things  
you enjoy, but  
how  
conscientiously  
you perform  
those duties  
you don't.**

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#### 4. DO PROJECTS ONE AT A TIME.

A good general fights only on one front at a time. That is also true of a good leader. A feeling of being overwhelmed is the result of too many projects clamoring for your attention. For years I have followed this simple process:

- Itemize all that needs to be done.
- Prioritize things in order of importance.
- Organize each project in a folder.
- Emphasize only one project at a time.

#### 5. ORGANIZE YOUR WORK SPACE.

My work space is organized in two places: administrative and creative. My administrative office includes a room for small group meetings, my work desk, and a desk for my personal assistant. This allows me to constantly communicate any details immediately to my key people. This office contains my calendar, computers, and files, and allows me easy access to administrative help. My creative office is separated from everyone. It contains my books, a copy machine, and my writing files. This secluded place is off-limits to my staff and allows me a proper environment for thinking, reading, and writing.

#### 6. WORK ACCORDING TO YOUR TEMPERAMENT.

If you are a morning person, organize your most important work for the morning hours. Obviously, if you are a late starter do the opposite. However, be sure not to allow the weaknesses of your temperament to excuse you from what you know you need to do to work most effectively.

#### 7. USE YOUR DRIVING TIME FOR LIGHT WORK AND GROWTH.

My father gave me some great advice the day I became sixteen and received my driver's license. Climbing into the passenger side of the car, he placed a book in my glove compartment and said, "Son, never be in a car without a book. Whenever you are delayed in traffic you can pull out this book and read." My car also contains many tapes for me to listen to and a note pad to jot down thoughts. My car phone also allows me to make calls to people on the way home from work. Recently while driving I made twenty-one calls and saved hours of office time. Many times I take a staff person with me so we can discuss business and develop a closer relationship. I estimate that the average person could achieve eight additional hours of personal growth and work in each week by using driving time wisely.

#### 8. DEVELOP SYSTEMS THAT WORK FOR YOU.

Bobb Biehl says, "Systems—from to-do lists and calendars to libraries and computers—are your servants. They help you do things better and quicker, and by improving them, you decrease your time expenses and increase your results." Don't fight systems. Improve them.

#### 9. ALWAYS HAVE A PLAN FOR THOSE MINUTES BETWEEN MEETINGS.

Hours can be saved by making the best use of minutes. I keep a list of things to do that can be done anywhere in very short amounts of time. There are calls to make, memos to reply to or send, reports to scan, thank-you notes to write, and communication to share. Keep handy a list of things you can do in a short time.

## 10. FOCUS ON RESULTS, NOT THE ACTIVITY.

Remember Peter Drucker's definition of efficiency (doing things right) versus effectiveness (doing the right things)? As you spend time on personal organization, be sure to keep your focus on doing the right things, that is, doing what is truly important. Then use this rule of thumb for organizing your overall work strategy:

Work where you are the strongest 80 percent of the time.  
Work where you are learning 15 percent of the time.  
Work where you are weak 5 percent of the time.

### Welcome responsibility.

Winston Churchill said, "The price of greatness is responsibility."

### STEPS TOWARD RESPONSIBILITY

**Be responsible for who you are.** O. J. Simpson said, "The day you take complete responsibility for yourself, the day you stop making excuses, that's the day you start to the top." I believe that statement. In fact, I'd like you to consider how it relates to research done by a psychologist who studied some people on the bottom.

The psychologist visited a prison and asked various inmates, "Why are you here?" The answers were very revealing, even though expected. There were many of them: "I was framed"; "They ganged up on me"; "It was a case of mistaken identity"; "It was not me—it was somebody else." The psychologist wondered if one could possibly find a larger group of "innocent" people anywhere else but in prison!

That reminds me of one of Abraham Lincoln's favorite stories about the man who murdered both his parents and then when his sentence was about to be pronounced, pleaded for mercy on the grounds that he was an orphan! As the politician said to the judge,

"It's not my fault, your honor, I never could have done all that stuff if the people hadn't elected me!"

**Be responsible for what you can do.** It is rare to find a person who will be responsible, who will follow through correctly and finish the job. But when half-finished assignments keep returning to your desk to check up on, verify, edit, and upgrade, obviously someone is failing to take hold of the reins of responsibility.

I am only one,  
But still I am one.  
I cannot do everything,  
But still I can do something;  
And because I cannot do everything  
I will not refuse to do the  
something that I can do.<sup>3</sup>

### Pontius' Puddle



**Be responsible for what you have received.** John D. Rockefeller, Jr., said, "I believe that every right implies a responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation; every possession, a duty." Winston Churchill said, "It is not enough that we do our best; sometimes we have to do what's required." And Jesus said, "Everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required" (Luke 12:48).

**Be responsible to those you lead.** Great leaders never set themselves above their followers, except in carrying out responsibilities.

Coach Bo Schembechler tells about the third game of the 1970 season. His University of Michigan Wolverines were playing Texas A&M and they could not move the ball. All of a sudden, Dan Dierdorf, their offensive lineman—who was probably the best in the country at that time—came rushing over to the sidelines. Fed up with the team's performance, he yelled at Schembechler in front of everybody on the sidelines.

"Listen, coach! Run every play over me! Over me! Every play!" And they did. Michigan ran off-tackle six times in a row and marched right down the field. Michigan won the game.

When the game is on the line, great leaders always take responsibility for leading their teams to victory. This is my favorite "take responsibility" story.

The sales manager of a dog food company asked his salespeople how they liked the company's new advertising program. "Great! Best in the business!" the salespeople responded.

"How do you like our new label and package?"

"Great! Best in the business!" the salespeople responded.

"How do you like our sales force?"

They were the sales force. They had to admit they were good. "Okay, then," said the manager. "So we've got the best label, the best package, and the best advertising program being sold by the best sales force in the business. Tell me why we are in seventeenth place in the dog food business?"

There was silence. Finally someone said, "It's those lousy dogs. They won't eat the stuff!"

## Accept accountability.

Plato said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." Success and power have often crowded out of the leader's life a willingness to become accountable to others. Leaders in all areas of life are increasingly falling before the public because of this problem. Why does this happen?

## HUMAN NATURE CANNOT HANDLE UNCHECKED POWER.

Abraham Lincoln said, "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power." Power can be compared to a great river; while within bounds it is both beautiful and useful. But when it overflows its bounds, it destroys. The danger of power lies in the fact that those who are vested with it tend to make its preservation their first concern. Therefore, they will naturally oppose any changes in the forces that have given them this power. History tells us that power leads to the abuse of power, and abuse of power leads to the loss of power.

George Bush prayed in his Inaugural Address of 1989, "For we are given power not to advance our own purposes nor to make a great show in the world, nor a name. There is but one use of power and it is to serve people."

## LEADERS CAN EASILY BE SEPARATED FROM THEIR PEOPLE.

When Harry Truman was thrust into the presidency at the death of FDR, Sam Rayburn gave him some fatherly advice: "From here on out you're going to have lots of people around you. They'll try to put a wall around you and cut you off from any ideas but theirs. They'll tell you what a great man you are, Harry. But you and I both know you ain't."

Hubert H. Humphrey said, "There is no party, no Chief Executive, no Cabinet, no legislature in this or any other nation, wise enough to govern without constant exposure to informed criticism." That is true for any person who occupies a leadership position.

## DEVELOP INTEGRITY.

The book *Profiles of Leadership* reveals the answers America's top business and government leaders gave when asked what quality

they thought was most important to their success as leaders. Their unanimous answer: *integrity*.

Integrity is the human quality most necessary to business success according to the 1,300 senior executives who responded to a recent survey. Seventy-one percent put it at the top of a list of sixteen traits responsible for enhancing an executive's effectiveness. The dictionary defines integrity as "the state of being complete, unified." When people have integrity, their words and deeds match up. They are who they are, no matter where they are or who they're with. People with integrity are not divided (that's duplicity) or merely pretending (that's hypocrisy). They are "whole" and their lives are "put together." People with integrity have nothing to hide and nothing to fear. Their lives are open books.

Integrity in a leader must be demonstrated daily in a number of tangible ways. These are five that I strive to demonstrate to those I lead.

**1. I will live what I teach.** Deciding what to be is more important than deciding what to do. Often we ask young people, "What are you going to do when you grow up?" But the more important question is, "What are you going to *be*?" The character decision must be made before a career is chosen.

Early in my years of leadership, I read this poem by Howard A. Walter and adopted its principles:

### *Character*

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;  
I would be pure, for there are those who care;  
I would be strong, for there are those who suffer;  
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.  
I would be friend of all—the foe, the friendless;  
I would be giving, and forget the gift;  
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;  
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift.

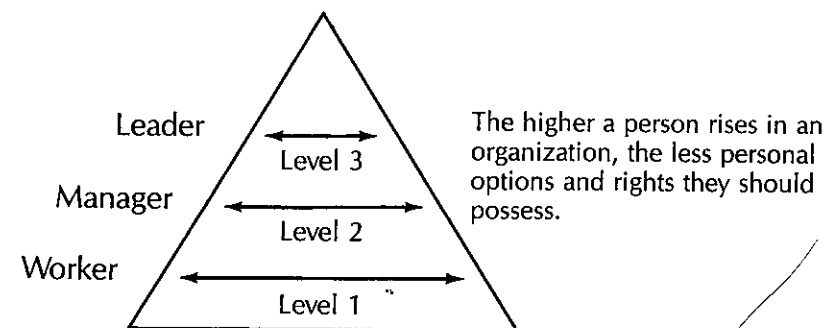
**2. I will do what I say.** If I promise something to a subordinate, colleague, or superior, I want to keep my word. The Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, North Carolina, released a study of twenty-one high potential executives who were termi-

nated from their companies or forced to retire early. The one universal character flaw or unforgivable sin which always led to downfall was betraying a trust; that is, not doing something that was promised.

**3. I will be honest with others.** If those who work with me ever catch me misrepresenting the facts or covering up a problem, I will instantly lose credibility. And it will not be easy to repair.

Dr. William Schultz, a noted psychologist who developed truth-in-management strategies at Procter and Gamble and NASA, believes the key to productivity is "how well people work together," and he believes that nothing "increases compatibility like mutual trust and honesty." Dr. Schultz says, "If people in business just told the truth, 80 percent to 90 percent of their problems would disappear." Trust and honesty are the means that allow individuals to cooperate so that they can all prosper.

**4. I will put what is best for others ahead of what is best for me.** The organization I lead and those I work with must come first. When I put the organization's best interests ahead of mine, I keep integrity with those who hired me. When I put the interest of those I work with ahead of mine, I develop friendships and loyalty. Below is the leadership pyramid that I have always tried to follow.





**5. I will be transparent and vulnerable.** Long ago I realized that in working with people I have two choices. I can close my arms or I can open them. Both choices have strengths and weaknesses. If I close my arms, I won't get hurt, but I will not get much help either. If I open my arms I likely will get hurt, but I will also receive help. What has been my decision? I've opened my arms and allowed others to enjoy the journey with me. My greatest gift to others is not a job, but myself. That is true of any leader.

### Pay now, play later.

There are two paths that people can take. They can either play now and pay later or pay now and play later. Regardless of the choices, one thing is certain. Life will demand a payment.

My father taught me this important discipline. Each week he would lay out the chores for the next seven days. Many of them could be done any time during the week. Our goal was to complete them by Saturday noon. If completed, we could do something fun with the family. If not completed, fun was forfeited and that individual stayed home to complete the chore. I needed to miss my deadline only a couple of times to realize that I needed to "pay up front" and finish my work on time.

This lesson has been valuable to me, and I'm teaching it to my children, Elizabeth and Joel Porter. I want them to realize that there is no such thing as a "free lunch," that life is not a gift—it is an investment. The sooner they can take control of their desires and submit them to life's demands, the more successful they will become. John Foster said, "A man without decision of character can never be said to belong to himself. He belongs to whatever can make captive of him." My friend Bill Klassen often reminds me that "when we pay later the price is greater!"

"I've never known a man worth his salt who in the long run, deep down in his heart, didn't appreciate the grind, the discipline," said Vince Lombardi. "I firmly believe that any man's finest hour—this greatest fulfillment to all he holds dear—is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle—victorious."

### Become character driven instead of emotion driven.

Most of the significant things done in the world were done by persons who were either too busy or too sick! "There are few ideal and leisurely settings for the disciplines of growth," Robert Thornton Henderson said, and Teddy Roosevelt said, "Ninety percent of the work is done in this country by people who don't feel well."

It is not doing the things we like to do, but doing the things we have to do that causes growth and makes us successful. John Luther said: "There's no such thing as a perfect job. In any position you'll find some duties which, if they aren't onerous immediately, eventually will be." Success depends not merely on how well you do the things you enjoy, but how conscientiously you perform those duties you don't.

Tenor Luciano Pavarotti is such a winner. He is often described by his admirers as "the new Caruso." In a newspaper interview, the six-foot, three hundred-pound tenor asked: "Do you want to know the hardest thing about being a singer? It is to sacrifice yourself every moment of your life, with not one exclusion. For example, if it is raining, don't go out; eat this, do this, sleep ten hours a day. It is not a very free life. You cannot jump on a horse. You cannot go to swim."

Successful people are willing to do things unsuccessful people will not do. My observation is that one of those things that makes a difference is this issue of being character driven instead of emotion driven. This is the difference:

#### *Character Driven People*

Do right, then feel good  
Are commitment driven  
Make principle based decisions  
Action controls attitude  
Believe it, then see it  
Create momentum  
Ask: "What are my responsibilities?"

#### *Emotion Driven People*

Feel good, then do right  
Are convenience driven  
Make popular based decisions  
Attitude controls action  
See it, then believe it  
Wait for momentum  
Ask: "What are my rights?"

Continue when problems arise	Quit when problems arise
Are steady	Are moody
Are leaders	Are followers

The late Louis L'Amour is one of the best-selling authors of all time. Nearly 230 million copies of his books are in print worldwide, and every one of his more than one hundred books is still in print. When asked the key to his writing style, he responded, "Start writing, no matter what. The water does not flow until the faucet is turned on."

That's a good word for life. Sometimes, what we need to do is just to do something. Help someone. Sometimes, just getting into action will release power in our lives. We ought to adopt this as our motto for life: "The water does not flow until the faucet is turned on."

Good character is more to be praised than outstanding talent. Most talents are, to some extent, gifts. By contrast, good character is not given to us. We have to build it piece by piece—by thought, choice, courage, and determination. This will only be accomplished with a disciplined life-style.

Stephen Covey said, "If I try to use human influence strategies and tactics of how to get other people to do what I want, to work better, to be more motivated, to like me and each other—while my character is fundamentally flawed, marked by duplicity or insincerity—then, in the long run, I cannot be successful. My duplicity will breed distrust, and everything I do—even using so-called good human relations techniques—will be perceived as manipulative.

"It simply makes no difference how good the rhetoric is or even how good the intentions are; if there is little or no trust there is no foundation for permanent success. Only basic goodness gives life to technique."<sup>4</sup>

## CHAPTER TEN

# THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON OF LEADERSHIP: STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership. Chapter 7 emphasized the general development of people. This chapter will center on the development of a staff, but it is impossible to go into depth on this important subject in one chapter. The intent of this book is to help establish a leadership foundation. Therefore, I have dealt only with basics in the hope that I can help you develop the leader in you. I will write another book that will enable you to develop the leaders around you.

A few years ago when I turned forty, I began to review my life. I made a list of all the things I was doing at that time. My list included:

- Senior pastor of a congregation of 3,500 attenders;
- Oversight and development of thirteen pastors;
- President of Injoy, Inc., a company that develops resource materials for thousands of people;
- A national and international speaking schedule with over four hundred engagements annually;
- Producing a monthly leadership tape for Injoy Life Club subscribers;