

# **THE LEADER'S “DISCERNMENT”**

**(Seductive Leadership Behaviors To Avoid At All Cost)**



## **“Healthy Leaders Live”:**

- ◆ Without Imbalance
- ◆ Without Entitlement
- ◆ Without Hypocrisy
- ◆ Without Self-Display

***“Other vineyards have I kept, but my own vineyard have I not kept.”***

**(Song of Solomon 1:6)**

**Bill Kirk**

# “THE LEADER’S DISCERNMENT”

(Seductive Leadership Behaviors To Avoid At All Cost)

I love Mark Driscoll’s words in the Forward of Dave Kraft’s book, “Mistakes Leaders Make.” Driscoll writes:

*“As a leader, knowing **what not to do** is often just as important as knowing **what to do.**”*

In other words, a guardrail at the top of the cliff is better than a hospital at the bottom. In other words, yellow lights and stop signs save lives. In other words, God’s Word (truth) will protect you from a multitude of poor decisions and unhealthy behaviors. Following are some important truths to protect your mind and heart from **lies that lead to poor decisions**. Blessed reading as together we seek to be Gospel centered, grace oriented, healthy leaders.

1. **Thinking that your security is in how much people approve of you, when in reality your security is in how much the Lord has already approved you.**

*“To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved.”* (Ephesians 1:6)

*“Those who fear the Lord are secure; He will be a place of refuge for their children.”* (Proverbs 14:26)

- This truth will protect you from being manipulated or paralyzed by the fear of **rejection!**

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because all of us (to some degree) want other people to like us, receive us and affirm us, in the journey; and God did not create us to meet everyone else’s expectations.

2. **Forgetting that no set of leadership skills can ever compensate for the lack of receiving fresh grace on a daily basis at the feet of Jesus in earnest prayer and in the Word.**

*“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.”* (Isaiah 40:31)

*“Pray to your Father in secret and your father which seeth in secret shall reward you openly.”* (Matthew 6:6)

- This truth will protect you from living on “empty” and with a “hurried”, “restless” or **“impatient”** spirit!

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because keeping our walk before our work will allow us to remain sensitive to God’s “Divine Whispers” for direction; preventing us from becoming a slave to the wrong agenda.

3. **Believing that you are more righteous and holy than you really are, which makes you resistant to inward personal change and correction.**

***“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags.”***  
(Isaiah 64:6)

***“The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?”***  
(Jeremiah 17:9)

- This truth will protect you from focusing more on the weaknesses of others, than searching your own heart for those **secret** sins not yet revealed and brought to the surface!

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because merciful people (that God blesses) are those who understand where they would be without the Grace of God (and this makes us gentle instead of harsh with imperfect people).

**4. Seeking to find true joy in outward signs of ministry success when true joy is an inside job of the heart!**

***“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church.”***  
(Colossians 1:24)

***“But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.”***  
(II Corinthians 4:16)

- This will protect you from seeking (using) statistics, titles, position, people and ministry accomplishments to **validate** your spirituality.

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because Gospel centered “grace orientated” leaders minister to an audience of One (and do what they do as “unto the Lord” for His approval).

**5. Refusing to forgive anyone of anything that has hurt you in your past, instead of relinquishing every offense over to God’s sovereignty and healing power!**

***“The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.”*** (Proverbs 19:11)

***“Forgive one another even as God for Christ’s sake has forgiven you.”***  
(Ephesians 4:32)

- This will protect you from carrying around a **self**-protective list of previously experienced wrongs against you.

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because a forgiving spirit cuts the umbilical cord that keeps you anchored to past offenses (and frees you from the control of what anyone else has done to you.)

**6. Looking for your motivation in ministry in the esteem of others, the buzz of being needed, the allure of being in charge or the power of being right!**

***“For the love of Christ constraineth (motivates) us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all...we should not live unto ourselves.”*** (II Corinthians 5:14, 15)

***“For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves among ourselves, for if we do, we are not wise.”*** (II Corinthians 10:12)

- This truth will protect you from refusing to admit it when you are wrong and refusing to share the **credit** with fellow team members!

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because genuine humility isn't concerned with impressing other people or drawing attention to itself (and makes it possible to focus on our condition instead of our image).

## **7. Fearing the unknowns of the future (and people) in a broken world of constant unpredictability!**

***“Be still in the presence of the Lord and wait patiently for Him to act; don't worry about the schemes of others.”*** (Psalm 37:7)

***“The Lord preserves knowledge but He ruins the plans of the deceitful.”*** (Proverbs 22:12)

- This truth will protect your **peace** and joy even though you don't have a clue what may greet you around the corner!

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because worry over people or circumstances outside of your control is accepting responsibility that God never intended for you to carry; and living in the future carries its own anxiety.

## **8. Having unrealistic expectations instead of understanding that every human being has a heart that is stained by sin!**

***“As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one.”*** (Romans 3:10)

***“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”*** (Romans 3:23)

- This will protect you from becoming cynical and critical when you are hurt, wrongly judged, misunderstood or feel like life isn't **fair**!

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because it's possible to forget that when people treat you badly, God still treats you good; and you don't have to “withdraw” or “drop out” from serving people – because of people

## **9. Possessing a “It's my way or the highway” mentality instead of trusting the sovereignty of God who does “all things well” and works “all things together for good,” even when you don't get your own way!**

***“Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.”*** (Luke 22:42)

***“My soul waits only upon God; for my expectation is from Him.” (Psalm 62:5)***

- This will protect you from losing growth opportunities through personal demands and a sense of **entitlement!**

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because if you are only happy when you get what you want, you will be a very unhappy person; God is bigger than the idol of “me” and “my way”.

**10. Refusing to confess your faults because of an inner desire to impress other people – instead of living transparently and with accountability before God and man!**

***“Confess your faults one to another and pray one for another that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)***

***“Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off.” (Psalm 138:6)***

- This truth will protect you from the snare of self-referencing, self-glory, self-promotion, self-display, and self-**destruction.**

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because real “grace oriented” leaders live to make God’s name famous, never their own (and there is a “freeing, joyful power” when you live transparent before God and man).

**How Good Is This Truth?**

**“  
A humble person is so centered  
in Jesus,  
so much at peace and at home  
in Christ,  
His love and acceptance,  
that neither people  
nor circumstances take him  
on a roller coaster ride.”**

Dave Kraft in  
“Mistakes Leaders Make”, pg. 44

Nuf Sed!  
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