

"Learning to Lead"

Fred Smith

Notes by Dave Kraft

Fred: "A leader is not a person who can do the work better (9) than his followers; he is a person who can get his followers to do the work better than he can." (10) People in church leadership positions didn't necessarily know how to lead. (14) *Leader* is not a title but a role. You only become a leader by functioning as one. (22) But if everybody in the church is your boss and you're their servant, you've got an absolutely intolerable position. (24) There are shepherds who constantly ask the sheep which way to go. As leaders we have to say, "I'm going to get my ultimate strokes from God." If my gift is leading (as evidenced by my having followers), then my serving is leading. (25) Some people ask if leadership is innate or learned. I think it can be coached but never implanted. I don't believe you can make a leader out of someone without an innate gift of leadership (26) *Am I occupying a place of leadership without the talent?* (27) A true leader is committed to the cause, and does not become the cause. *Am I satisfying my ego through this ministry or sacrificing my ego to it?* (29) A leader must personify the vision, be dedicated to it personally. (33)

Define it specifically. In my view, nothing is properly defined until you write it down. Writing forces you to be specific; it takes the fuzz off your thinking. (34) I spoke at a church not too long ago that claimed its vision was to be staunchly evangelistic. Yet they had fewer conversions in a year's time than they had staff members and officers. It made you wonder how long since they'd realigned their direction with their vision. (36) The second function of a leader is to coagulate followers around the vision, not around himself. (37) Lasting motivation is really *persuasion by comprehension*. (38) Oversupervision is the great sin of leaders against managers. The leader's task is to say, "Here's where we are, and there's where we ought to go." The administration's task is to determine how to get there. (39) When leaders fail, more often it is a result of a character flaw than lack of competence. (47)

The price of freedom to serve Christ alone is often your willingness to be disliked. (48) ...the ability to concentrate is one of the greatest attributes of a leader. Intensity is like using a magnifying glass with the sun—you can burn a hole in something that way. Organizations are almost always in the hands of the intense. (51) Woodrow Wilson said, "Many men are seduced by secondary success." Small successes prevent them from achieving big success. They're satisfied too easily. A helpful exercise is to write down three words by which your friends describe you. And then write down three words you *would most like* to describe you. Then you can work on making those traits so prominent in your life that people can't keep from recognizing them. (56)

Small minds talk about things; average minds talk about people; great minds talk about ideas. (58) One of the measures of maturity is whether our ideas are growing, whether we're able to handle larger concepts, and whether we're comfortable with people who think. First, your relationship to yourself. Jean Paul Sartre was once quoted as saying, "If you're lonely when you're alone. you're in poor company." A second test deals with relationships with other people:

Am I increasingly able to spend time profitably with people who are different? Immature individuals can't enjoy people who are different. They prefer people just like themselves. Maturity is being comfortable with diversity. (59) Maybe I've missed something, but I always thought if you were successful, you had *more* time, not less. (77) As Donald Bloesch puts it, "busyness is the new holiness." Lack of time is a status symbol. Most of us don't let other people spend our money; likewise, we should limit their power to spend our time, also. I have been given the same amount of time each day as everybody else. The great achievers of the world don't have any more time than I do. It is simply untrue to say, "I don't have enough time." What is *not* the same for everybody is energy. (78) I decided a long time ago that my ultimate goal in life was to stretch other people. I wanted them to live a bit better, fuller, bigger, more nobly than if they hadn't met me. This is my sense of redeeming human situations. With a goal in life and an intent in each conversation, I think I'm more efficient, more effective. (79) Too often people don't know the difference between a fast track and a frantic track.

I enjoy a fast-track life, but I don't relish being frantic. It's just as foolish to use every minute for activity as it is to spend every nickel you've got. (80) Many people don't know how to invest their time because they have never identified their unique purpose in life. What can make this situation livable? I believe the solution lies in stating that your purpose in life is to accomplish what is uniquely *you*, not just whatever comes along. (81) People who are *doing things* respect not only their own time but others' as well. Strong people have an agenda of their own. (84) Maxey Jarman once said to me, "Many people can make good decisions, but they *won't*." Because that means putting their ego on the line. (88) Statistically, however, most management failures come from lack of character rather than lack of intelligence. (95) Third, I want a person who is *flexible*—and who doesn't confuse flexibility with lack of integrity. (96)

Successful people work within the limits of what they can control and don't waste their energy on other things. (100) It's part of training to say how a job fits into the whole—not so much to increase the importance of that particular function as to build up the importance of other things. Otherwise, people start developing little empires of their own that nobody else can break into. (113) Motivation is getting people to do something out of mutual advantage. Manipulation is getting people to do what you want them to do, primarily for *your* advantage. (120) I may not have a right to manipulate, but neither can I allow the fear of manipulation to be a rationalization for not doing the hard work of instilling motivation, which is, after all, one of the leader's most important tasks. (122) Whether speakers or talkers, we must think of what our listeners need to hear, not what we need to say. Our content should grow out of a careful analysis of the needs of the listeners. I try to remind myself I'm speaking to people, not to a subject. (139)

The focused, unsegmented life is a rarity today. (153) Maturing Christians are people who are becoming less and less compartmentalized. All of life is an expression of their faith. (155) Increasing the level of activity is not the goal; increasing the level of *maturity* is the goal. (158) As Lincoln said, "I would rather fail in a cause that will ultimately succeed (170) than succeed in a cause that will ultimately fail." (171)

1. *Am I enjoying what I am doing?*
2. *Am I happy with where I'm going?*
3. *Am I satisfied with what I'm becoming?* (174)

Few leaders can stay motivated unless they've learned to appreciate the vicarious thrill of seeing other succeed. (181)