

Stress Fractures!

Serving hurt, in the ministry . . .

DEFINING STRESS FRACTURES: Cumulative pressures in ministry which, exceeding our (felt) limits in magnitude or duration, injure us... emotionally, spiritually, or physically... leaving us, not crippled, but serving in pain.

STRESS FRACTURE FACTORS:

Fears . . . Finances . . . Fatigue . . . Frustration . . . Family

PART 1- Setting the Context (Our Personal Experiences)

PART 2- Learning the Lessons (What are the SOURCES of Stress Fractures?)

Seeking to Heal (What are the RESOURCES for Stress Fractures)

PART 3- Observing the Principles (What Bible truths anchor us in these times?)

PART 4- Forming Conclusions (What do we take away from this discussion?)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

MINISTRY IS LIKE NO OTHER CAREER FIELD, LARGELY BECAUSE IT IS NOT A CAREER, IT IS A CALLING FROM GOD!

1. BURNOUT is a word that was coined in the early 70's by a psychologist, to describe symptoms of people in 'helping careers' that were over worked and under rested. It is never God caused.
 - A. Having said that, we must be careful how we manage ourselves and our walk with God in seasons of great physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual expenditures.
2. OVERDRAFT is another word that describes a condition in which people in ministry write 'checks' which their body, soul, and/or spirit simply cannot cash.

IT MAY BE HELPFUL HERE TO BRIEFLY LOOK AT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF MOSES AND ELIJAH

1. Moses: Ex. 18:13-24 – The DANGER OF OVER-EXTENSION
 - a. Jethro's advice... listen to the voice of experience (19)
 - b. Jethro's advice... know your limitations (17,18)
 - c. Jethro's advice... share the load, delegate (20-22)
 - d. Jethro's advice... pursue God's confirmation and serve for the 'long haul' (23,24)
2. Elijah: I Kings 17, 18, 19 – The DANGER OF CUMULATIVE-EFFECT
 - a. What were the expenditures that you note in chapters 17 and 18 emotionally, physically, and spiritually?
 - b. Observe Elijah's collapse in 19:1-... What were the factors? How was it evidenced?
 - c. Would this be 'burn-out'? It is important to note how God responded to him!
 - d. The important role of rest, good food, listening to God, quiet reflection and submissive obedience
3. My experience in 1979... my wrong assumptions about serving God...
 - a. Led to broken health
 - b. Led to spiritual overdraft
 - c. Led to spiritual 'dryness'
4. **FOUR IMPORTANT CONCLUSIONS**
 - a. Never underestimate the importance of a daily walk with God
 - b. Never overestimate your importance in the work to which God has called you
 - c. Learn the importance of God-directed delegation... it is spelled discipleship... Share!
 - d. Rest and Recreation are not the same things... be very careful of fun things that take your time, but give nothing back to your soul. Enjoy some, but beware of over-indulgence! For me it was golf in my mid-20's.