

Cultivate September 2025 Leadership Begins in the Soul

Suggested Readings

Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership - Ruth Haley Barton

In the Name of Jesus - Henri Nouwen

Leading From the Soul

Barton

- “One of the greatest dangers of leadership is losing your soul before anyone notices - or even cares.”
- “We are called to lead from the very places where we meet God ourselves.”

Nouwen

- “The temptation of relevance, popularity, and power constantly pulls us away from intimacy with God.”
- True leadership flows from being “deeply rooted into the love of God.”

Key Points:

- Many leaders are spiritually dry because they pour out without refilling.
- It's not about doing more for God - it's about being more *with* God.
- Leadership is not primarily a function - it's a flow from the soul.

Nouwen's Three Temptations of Leadership - Jesus in the Wilderness

1. To be relevant (turn stones into bread)
2. To be spectacular (throw yourself down)
3. To be powerful (rule over kingdoms)

Which of these temptations is most real for you?

Discussion

- What does 'leading from intimacy with God' mean to you personally?
- Have you experienced a season of 'successful leadership' but spiritual dryness? What might that reveal to you?
- How do you think God sees you apart from your work, productivity, or leadership?

Rhythms of Solitude, Silence, and Discernment

Barton

- “Solitude is the place where we give God our full attention.”
- “Silence creates space for God’s voice to rise above the noise.”

Discernment is not just about making decisions - it’s about aligning with God’s will from a deep place of listening.

Core Rhythms

1. Solitude - Withdrawing from people and noise to be alone with God.
2. Silence - Stillness of the external and internal noise.
3. Discernment - Learning to recognize and follow the voice of God.

Jesus’ Example (Luke 5:16)

- “Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.”
- Before calling the disciples
- Before performing miracles
- Before facing betrayal

Reflection

- Where is my soul today - really?
- Where am I resisting solitude, silence, or slowness?
- What might God be inviting me into in this season?

Sharing

- What is one insight, phrase, or next step that emerged for you?

Summary

- Leadership grounded in the soul is not optional - it’s essential.
- God cares more about who we are becoming than what we are producing.
- Rhythms of silence, solitude, and discernment are the ways we return to our identity in Him.

Looking Ahead to October - Self-Awareness & Emotional Health

Suggested Reading

- The Emotionally Healthy Leader - Peter Scazzero
- Leadership: The Power of Emotional Intelligence - Daniel Goleman
- The Emotional Intelligence of Jesus - Roy Oswald