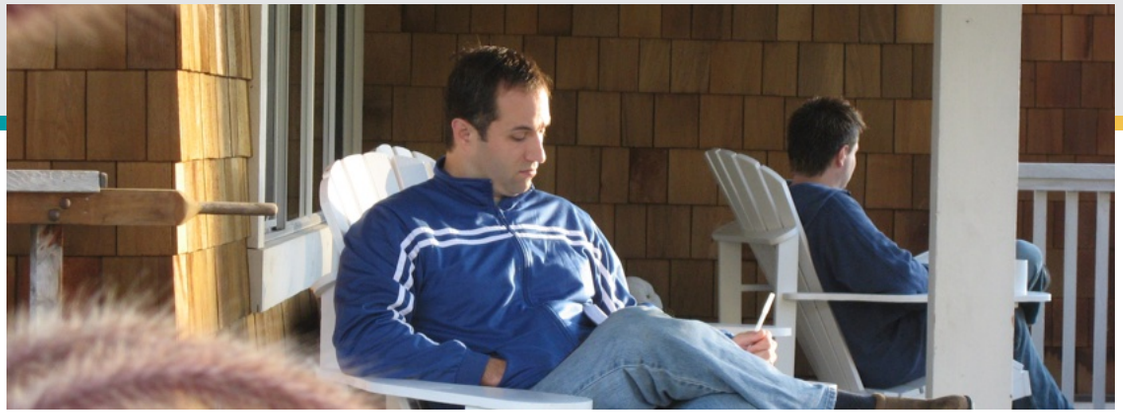
Dr. Steve Brown - An Organizational Resource

Five Choices to *Lead Different*



Leadership Is Hard

Leading was even hard for Jesus. He faced incredible resistance. There were endless and needy crowds, traps and temptations. His disciples were slow learners and frequent on-the-job sleepers. He endured loneliness and profound internal anguish. He had little time to eat or rest. Eventually, everyone deserted him and fled. His death was the public and humiliating spectacle of crucifixion.

If it was hard for our Master, who promised challenges (John 16:33), we can expect that leadership will be hard for you and me. So, how do you respond? How can you Lead Different?

Five Choices To *Lead Different*

1. Choose to embrace the gifts.

Hard leadership opens the door to gifts. Lean into the gifts that Jesus has for leaders. These include:

- Stirring your utter dependence on the Lord (John 15:5).
- Uniting you with Christ (1 Peter 4:13).
- Forging your character (Romans 5:3-4).
- Bonding you with others (Philippians 1:8).
- Stirring joy in the midst of suffering (Acts 5:41).
- Reminding you of the very real spiritual battle (Ephesians 6:12) astonishing others by pressing on (Acts 4:13).
- Bringing you closer to maturity (James 1:2-4).
- Demonstrating where our real strength comes from (2 Corinthians 12:10).

2. Choose to fix your eyes on Jesus.

Where do your eyes focus when difficulties arise? It's easy to focus on your own failures, the shortcomings of others or on "Goliath-sized" problems. But there's another way. You can Lead Different by choosing to fix your eyes on Jesus who has endured and overcome (Hebrews 12:2).

3. Choose to lean into community.

Leading alone is dangerous at the best of times. When you are in crisis times, you can choose to lean out of community or lean into community. Leaning out of community leads to isolation and vulnerability. That's why Jesus chose to live, love, lead, serve and suffer in the context of community. He chose to do so even when his community was far from perfect.

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4. Choose to care for yourself.

Every pre-flight safety announcement tells you to put on your own oxygen mask before trying to help others. Otherwise, you may not have the oxygen you need to help them. By neglecting yourself, you may experience significant damage and/or seek out unhealthy ways to escape the pain. Though Christian leaders focus almost exclusively on serving and helping others, there's great wisdom in caring for yourself in healthy restorative ways.

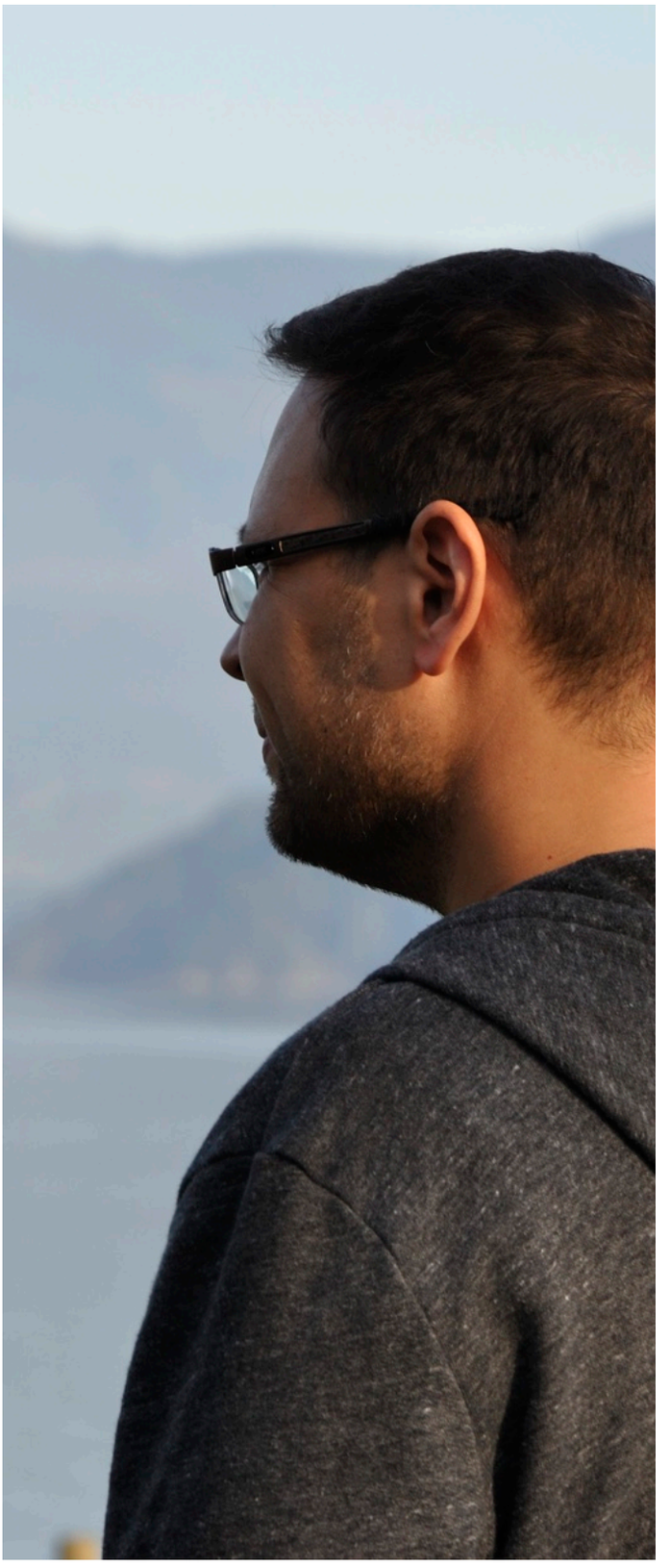
5. Choose to trust God.

You can't fix everything. You can't wear every challenge. Instead, you need to choose to entrust every challenge to God. He can bear your every burden (Psalm 55:22). Regularly pray: "Awesome God, I choose to entrust _____ to you."

Jesus knows what you are going through. He offers the comfort of his experience and the promise of his presence as you navigate the challenges in front of you. If we as leaders choose to make some of these choices when navigating the challenges of leadership, we will find ourselves leading differently.

Reflection Questions

- If leadership was hard even for Jesus, does that reframe your perspective on your challenges?
- What gifts might be available in this midst of difficult leadership?
- What can you do today to fix your eyes on Jesus?
- Leading alone is dangerous, whom can you lean into for support?
- How can you care for yourself in healthy and restorative ways this week?
- What do you need to entrust to God? (Pray: "God, I choose to entrust you with _____.")



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