

CO-MISSION: **PLANTING**

Painful Leadership

The irresistible allure of the path of least resistance

‘all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted’ 2 Timothy 3:12

‘to love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping in intact, you must give your heart to no-one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket – safe, dark, motionless, airless – it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable’.¹

Pain in gospel ministry is likely to come from one of three sources

1. Sharing the pain of others
2. Experiencing pain from others
3. Causing pain in others

Let’s take each one of those in turn.

1. Sharing the pain of others

1 Corinthians 12 ‘if one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it’.

2. Experiencing pain from others

3. Causing pain in others

‘Leadership is knowing where we are and where we need to be and doing whatever we need to do, for however long we need to do it, to get there’.²

¹ CS Lewis, The Four Loves, The much beloved exploration of the nature of love, Harcourt Brace, New York, 1960, p121

² Craig Hamilton, Wisdom in Leadership, p135

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'Leading is pain. It's part of the job. And if you're planning on not being hurt then you're planning on not being a leader. If you haven't already, you need to accept this fact, stop being surprised by pain and start expecting it'.

Don't defer the difficult stuff

Don't expect to be popular

In 1 Thessalonians 2, Paul writes

²We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition. ³For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. ⁴On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.

Galatians 1:10

¹⁰Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.