

# **Level 1-Fix**

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## **Serving Power**



## **Handbook for Spiritual Leaders**

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the Institute for  
**Spiritual Leadership Training**

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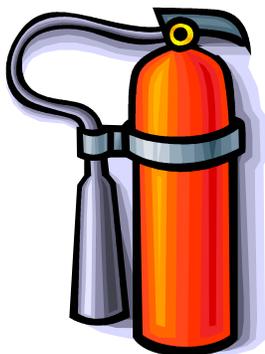
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# Handbook for Spiritual Leadership Training

## Serving Power

### Level 1 - Fix



The pursuit and use of power is at the heart of every effective ministry and is at the core of every effective spiritual leader. Sadly, the reverse is true as well.

#### **Power – How Do We Get It?**

History books are full of the exploits of kings, tyrants, politicians and spiritual leaders who went after power, seized it, created it, hoarded it and eventually saw it run through their fingers like dry sand.

- The Pursuit of Power So, how do we get this elusive capacity to influence others? We don't. We let it come to us. Here is a truism: There is not a power in heaven or on earth we humans can properly manage without it corrupting us and us corrupting it.

The last thing a Christian should seek after is power because power is or becomes an idol. Yet you argue, effective Christian ministry needs influential leaders, deep thinkers and what ministry doesn't need money so it can be given for great humanitarian and evangelistic causes. How in the world will we see the gospel preached in every land unless there is power behind the movement?

The point? You want power, prepare for it and then let it come after you; don't go chasing after it. You chase after it, and it will bite you every time. Guaranteed.

- Preparation How do you prepare for power? Do you go out and get books on power? That's a step. Becoming a disciplined spiritual leader is a step too, but in the end those are only enhancements. If you miss an even more basic concept, the whole lesson may be missed.

It's as simple and as complex as this. You want to be a steward of natural power? Learn to live without depending on it. You want to be wealthy? Learn to live without material needs. You want to be a person of influence. Learn to be humble. You want to have friends? Give your friendship away as a "no strings attached" desire for relationship. You want a life? Lose it. You want to live forever? Die to self.

As Christians we need to prepare for power but only after we have sufficiently experienced humility so as to not be swayed by corruptive influences and the dark side of power. The only person able to handle human power is the person who has no need for it and someone who has truly learned how to be the recipient and conduit of God's power. We need to be fearful of power, to regard it in the awe of what it can do for good and evil. We are agents of God and His righteousness. By that very definition we are people of power. But, what kind of stewards are we?

To not prepare to be an instrument of righteousness, i.e., power, is to deny the promise of the power of God to reside within our tent. We have to be careful we don't equate nothingness with humility and set power as an enemy of God's work in this world. If we do that we fail to understand the very nature of God is power.

A critical step in the development of a spiritual leader is to know and understand the difference between pursuing power and preparing for it. In getting power remember one other thing. If you ever seek after power, you will be first consumed by it and then eventually left empty. If you chase after power and catch it you will become addicted to it—guaranteed.

## **Power Inventory Worksheet**

On the following sheets is a power inventory worksheet. It is intended to help you assess where and how you are exercising the power that has been given to you. This inventory will help you see what power you do have, what potential power is available and begin thinking and seeking insight into whether these sources are the root of your problems or the root of your effectiveness.

This worksheet is most effective if you fill it out as an electronic file. It is formatted in MS Word. Type in your answers in the blank boxes. When you are finished be sure and save it to your personal folder for future reference and printing.

Place your cursor over a form or variant of power in the Power Inventory Worksheet and specifically over the footnote number. You will see a window pop up window appear giving more information about the power element.

## Power Inventory Worksheet

**Instructions:** Look at the Form or Variant of power and write in the appropriate box how that form or variant of power influences the way you do ministry. Next write down your thoughts about what you do (positive and negative) with that power and how you can utilize that power for good.

Four Sources of Power	Forms of the Sources of Power	Variants of the Forms of Power	How does this influence my overall sense of power in ministry?	What do I do with this power?
Natural or Sheer				
Institutional	Family			
	Church			
	Political			
	Mercantile			

Four Sources of Power	Forms of the Sources of Power	Variants of the Forms of Power	How does this influence my overall sense of power in ministry?	What do I do with this power?
Human	Constituency			
	Resource	Money <sup>7</sup>		
		Land		
	Information			
	Legitimate			
	Influence	Referent <sup>8</sup>		
		Character and Integrity <sup>10</sup>		
		Personality <sup>11</sup>		
	Free Will or Willful <sup>12</sup>			

Four Sources of Power	Forms of the Sources of Power	Variants of the Forms of Power	How does this influence my overall sense of power in ministry?	What do I do with this power?
Supernatural	Absolute Power of God			
	Omnipotent Active	Community <sup>13</sup> <i>ekklesia</i>		
		Incarnate <sup>14</sup> <i>paraclete</i>		
		Servant or Anti-power <sup>15</sup> <i>tapēinōphrōsunē</i>		
		Word & Prayer <sup>16</sup> <i>logos, rhema, proseuchomai</i>		
		Self-Control <sup>17</sup> <i>egkrateia</i> <sup>18</sup>		
Limited Evil Power of Satan				

## Reflection:

What does this worksheet tell me about my effectiveness in ministry?

What does this worksheet tell me about my blind spots and where I've failed to live up to my mission or the expectations of myself and others?

## Power – How to Hold It

Anyone who has a special skill can easily get impatient with a person who holds the implement of that skill in an amateur way. We can hold power as a weapon to exercise control, punishment and compliance. On the other hand, we can use power as a tool to carefully and craftily fashion what we want by its skillful use. Or we can play it like an instrument of music or work it like a piece of art intending it for no other purpose than to create joy in the ears or the eyes.

In Romans 6:12-13 Paul exhorts us to not allow our bodies to be used as instruments of evil, but instead to use them as instruments of righteousness. The word he uses is *hoplon* and while it is most commonly translated instrument, the word is used elsewhere and rendered as weapons and tools.

- **Power as a Weapon** When power is used as a weapon people usually get hurt. That's the intention of a weapon. When used against another one of God's image creatures it is too often used to knock down and destroy. In that capacity it has no place in ministry. We know that. Then why do we continue to see evidences and the wreckage of people who have been harmed by the weapons of power of spiritual leaders? I believe it's because in most cases, those spiritual leaders who caused harm did not adequately prepare themselves for the stewardship of such great power and as a result, quickly, and in most cases unintentionally, turned themselves into self-serving weapons.

However there are circumstances when power can be used as a weapon for the sake of goodness. In the same letter to the Romans Paul uses the same word, *hoplon*, to put on the defensive armor of light (Rom 13:12). In his second recorded letter to the Corinthians Paul exhorts us to put on the offensive weapons of righteousness (2 Co. 6:7) and reminding us these are not the weapons of the world but have supernatural-absolute power to demolish satanic powers (2 Co.10:4).

So, the power as a weapon point is:

- Power in the hands of man is self-serving and potentially destructive
  - The weapons of power are only to be used against the enemy of God.
  - God's power is made manifest in love; love cannot be a weapon to objects of his love, even those we perceive as our enemies. (Prov. 25:21-22).
- Power as a Tool A couple of basic things about tools we already know: Tools give me the ability to grow, enlarge, expand, and increase so I can become more secure and powerful, faster than ever before. Tools enable me to build better tools, faster tools which can increase my power considerably.

In ministry we see power as a tool when it leads to more “nickels and noggins,” greater influence and visibility in the larger community, strong reputation and capacity to materially, emotionally and spiritually bless people in the community, and significant reach in the ministry's ability to stretch beyond normal boundaries of relationship. Power is used as a tool in ministry to accomplish evangelistic purposes and goals. It's used to create programs and processes to help people live more successful lives.

In a Christian community, using power as a tool is certainly better than using it as a weapon as long as, and only as long as, it remains a subordinated tool.

When ministry uses power as a tool, it is essential to remember that the purpose of a tool is to channel the force of power into a useful intention and when that intention is accomplished, what's left is the purpose, not the tool.

- Power as an Instrument An instrument is a tool of exact craftsmanship and the word implies precision, complex workings and most importantly, skilled and practiced application. Scientists in laboratories use instruments. Surgeons in operating rooms skillfully wield instruments and of course musicians play instruments of music.

A musical instrument is purposed to be used by a skilled musician to bring joy to the ears of a listener. The listener is blessed by how the musician has chosen to use the instrument. Music has no other purpose than to be given away to delight the musician and others with the joy of rhythmic tones. After an inspiring concert or an art exhibition, what do you remember the most—the artist or the art?

So the instrument is designed to make music and not merely noise. With a lack of practice the unskilled player can make noise that offends the listener. Think of the first week your child brought home an instrument for band. It was pure noise. On the other hand, the practiced musician whose skill is in playing music rather than making noise blesses the listener. Likewise, power in the hands of Christians should be skillfully used like an experienced musician or an artist who has spent years mastering the subtleties of form, perspective, lighting, shading, color tones and strokes. To be a gifted musician or artist requires years of practice and for what purpose? To hoard the music? To let the art gather in an attic for no one to see? To be the recipient of power requires preparation.

Power can never be possessed, owned and retained like a birthright. Monarchs through the centuries have found their Kingship (institutional power) is only as effective as their financial

reserves (resource power) are sufficient to amass armies for conquering or protecting or the good will of the people and aristocracy they serve.

So, in review:

- Power for the Christian is only useful if it is given away.
  - Power, if it is to be used as an instrument, requires preparation.
  - Power is meant to be a source of joy.
  - Power for the spiritual leader is only useful if it blesses (empowers) others.
  - When you exercise power for yourself it's called practice. Performance requires an audience.
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