

CULTIVATING YOUR ADAPTABILITY LEADING WHEN THE PLAYING FIELD IS ALWAYS CHANGING

I. Introduction:

A. One of the things I felt the Lord wanted me to learn in this pandemic season is adaptability. Adaptability = the ability to thrive in any situation even in chaos (Paul shipwreck and prison).

Some observations:

1. We are in a time of radical uncertainty; what we counted on at the beginning of the year is so much different as we come to the end of this year.
2. Chaos is where leadership is needed most. When people hurt the most, they need people who can help them the most.
3. In chaos good management is not enough, there is a need for creative leadership. Management depends on predictable systems that you can build and depend on. In unpredictable and uncertain times, it is the insight to be able to adapt and respond that's needed. In storms true leaders stand out because though everyone is going through a storm, people notice and want to follow those who are being led by God through the storm.

In the middle of chaos, the ones who win are not those who know the most but those who know how to be led by the Spirit the best!

It is one thing to read a map; it's another thing to guide a sailboat through a storm.

4. Adversity is always an environment of opportunity. Deprivations and desperations produce innovations. Redirections often lead to the greatest discoveries (Columbus was looking for India).

Psalms 18:11 says, God makes darkness His hiding place.

It is the glory of God to conceal a matter but the glory of man to search it out (Proverbs 25:2).

5. Winners are almost always the leaders who make the best half-time adjustments. It often requires more than one battle to learn and realize what it takes to win the war.

B. Adaptability is something that we, as Christians, have a special advantage because we have been given the Holy Spirit, and when we came to Jesus, we learn to give up control of our lives. He gives us the ability to walk in absolute clarity even in the middle of absolute uncertainty.

“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.” (John 16:13 NIV)

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV)

C. Adaptability is the ability God gives us to:

1. Be flexible and roll with the punches by the grace Holy Spirit provides within us. Spirit-filled Christians bounce; they don't break. “Blessed are the flexible for they shall not be broken.”

2. Adaptability means knowing we can trust that God is taking us to a good place even when we feel like we're in a bad place.

3. Adaptability is the ability to set aside or adjust our plans to respond to unexpected challenges and lay hold of unexpected opportunities.

Throughout history God has done unexpected things, at unexpected times, in unexpected ways, through unexpected people because they anticipated change and interruptions and were willing to lay aside their previously scheduled lives for God ordained assignments.

This is the churches' Kairos moment. Are we willing to move with God in season and out of season? Are we willing to make the most of every opportunity? While most people are waiting for a season like this to end, a few are asking God to show them how He is at work in this season.

“For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14 NIV).

4. Adaptability means that we are not just present but prophetic. Prophecy is not primarily about foretelling what God is going to do in the future; it is mostly about letting the Holy Spirit open our eyes to see how God is at work in the present.

II. Ten keys to being an adaptable leader in this time of chaos.

1. Walk in a spirit of faith. People need the calming presence of a person who is totally confident in God's sovereign control and leadership in the middle of the storm.

“Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or death” (Philippians 1:18b-20 NIV).

2. Humbly admit your uncertainty while at the same time receive and communicate the clarity of the steps God is leading you to take. In times like this, people don't need certainty but they do need clarity. There is a huge amount of need for leaders to not only know and communicate that there is a lot they don't know and to be gracious towards those who have different convictions about how to see and respond. Pride gives place to the enemy to bring confusion and division.

3. Stay clearer than ever about the mission God has given you. Leaders easily can change the methods because they are so clear in their heart about the mission.

4. Risk change. When problems are the biggest, change is often the easiest. Try fast, fail fast, learn fast, and improve fast.

5. Stay focused on helping others. Let God show you new ways and new wineskins He is giving us in a time of crisis.

6. Use times of setback to learn to prepare for setbacks and problems in the future. God uses this time to prune our lives. Don't hold on to sacred cows.

7. Make listening and learning the first step and priority in leading.

8. Learn to make the most of small opportunities. While others are waiting for this season to end and better days to come, victors are taking small steps forward and making progress in ways that will have a great impact in times to come. Redeem the time for the days are evil (Eph. 5:16).

9. Refuse to get stuck or look back. When you are walking through the valley of the shadow of death the most important thing you can do is to keep walking.

10. Let the time in between be a runway for what is ahead. Worry is imagining the future without God; faith is imagining all of the ways the future can be better and different because of God. Faith always prepares for better days. “When opportunity comes it’s too late to prepare.” -John Wooden