

10 Ministry Lessons I've Learned

Catalyst Talk Summary: Chuck Swindoll

Chuck Swindoll of Insight for Living discussed 10 things he has learned in almost 50 years of ministry during Catalyst Conference's 8th session. Here is what he said:

Fifty years ago, I was a first year student at Dallas Theological Seminary. I was scared, unsure of myself, and fresh out of the Marine Corp. I did not know much about seminary.

I remember sitting in chapel, and a minister told me, "When God wants to do an impossible task, he takes an impossible person and crushes him." I am so proud of everything you are dreaming of and doing that I hope that you remember to leave room for the crushing.

10 Things Chuck Swindoll Learned in 50ish Years of Ministry:

1. **It's lonely to lead. Leadership involves tough decisions.**
The tougher the decisions, the lonelier it is.
2. **It's dangerous to succeed.**
It is dangerous to succeed while being young. rarely, does God give leadership that young because it takes crushing and failure first.
3. **It's hardest at home.**
Nobody at home is applauding you. They say, "Dad! You're fly is open."
4. **It is essential to be real.**
If there is one realm where phoniness is personified it is leadership. What I care about is that you stay real.
5. **It is painful to obey.**
There are rewards, yes, but it is painful nevertheless.
6. **Brokenness and failure are necessary.**
7. **My attitude is more important than my actions.**
Some of you are getting hard to be around. And your attitude covers all those great actions you pull off.
8. **Integrity eclipses image.**
What you are doing is not a show. And the best things you are doing is not up front but what you do behind the scenes.
9. **God's way is better than my way.**
God is going to have His way.
10. **Christ-likeness begins and ends with humility.**

2 Corinthians 4:5-7 tells us that we must be willing to leave the familiar message without disturbing the Biblical message. We get that backwards. This was written in the first century, and now we are in the 21st century. The message stays the same. Don't miss the message. As you alter the methods, don't mess with the message.

Traditionalism is the dead faith of those still living. You will defend those things that don't need defended.

Three Important Observations:

1. **With every ministry a special mercy is needed.**
2. **In every ministry the same things must be renounced and rejected.**
That is hiding shameful things, doing deceitful things, and corrupting truthful things. Guard against deception. Guard against deception.
3. **Through every ministry a unique style should be pursued.**
We don't preach or promote ourselves (it isn't about us). We declare Christ Jesus as Lord (it's all about Him). We see ourselves as bond-servants for Jesus Christ.

Five Statements Worth Remembering During Your Next 50 Years of Leadership:

1. **Whatever you do, do more with others and less alone.**
It will help you become accountable.
2. **Whenever you do it, emphasize quality not quantity.**
3. **Wherever you go, do it the same as if you were among those who know you the best.**
It will keep you from exaggerating. it will help keep your stories true. Your good friend will tell you things that others will not. They will hold you close to truth.
4. **Whoever may respond to your ministry, keep a level head.**
5. **However long you lead, keep on dripping with gratitude and grace.**
Stay thankful. Stay gracious.

This summary created by Kent Shaffer at ChurchRelevance.com