



The Spiritual Leader

By Steven L. Anderson, Ph.D., MBA

To me the ultimate leader is a spiritual leader; one who has a rudder steadfastly connected to the Infinite. That is the person I most deeply want to follow. When I ask most leaders why they are in business they answer, "To make money". That's like saying that the reason you are alive is to breathe. Money is certainly necessary, but totally uninspiring, especially to anyone who has to follow you. I believe that if you really want to inspire people you have to have a higher purpose than finances.

Are you a spiritual leader? Here's a good way to find out. If you were to die today and you came face to face with your Creator, would you be able to tell him/her that you had done the best with your talents to serve your fellow man? If you think you would not be able to answer, "Yes" to such an encounter, then I urge you to do whatever is necessary to be able to answer in the affirmative when the appropriate time comes.

If you think about that meeting with your maker at the end of your life on a regular basis you have no choice but to become a spiritual leader. In the end we have to be working to make the world we live in a better place for our fellow-men and for our children that will follow us. The key is to do this in a way that is uniquely you and to make money doing it.

In order to understand your uniqueness you must delve into yourself for a spiritual answer. You are sacred. God does not make junk. How did he make you special? When you deeply understand this you will realize that there is no one as well equipped to serve others in a way that is fulfilling to you than yourself.

Once you understand your purpose, the next challenge is to find a need that your abilities can fulfill and then turn that into a business proposition, either for yourself and or for an employer. That process is challenging, but very manageable. In a sense, understanding your uniqueness is connecting to your heart. Making a business plan is connecting your head to the passion created by your heart. In my own case, I had to go back to school to turn my passion into a reality. I derive incredible satisfaction from helping others transform their lives from mundane to extraordinary. It was not easy to figure out how to do this, but once I understood my purpose, I simply had no choice. I also have a deeply held belief that the work that I do would be pleasing to the Creator.

Does being a spiritual leader make good financial sense? You bet it does. The fastest growing fast food chain in America is Chick-Fil-A, in spite of the fact that they are closed on Sundays to honor the Lord. Their founder S. Truett Cathy is a deeply spiritual man. He has built his empire on spiritual values and he has the lowest turnover in his industry to prove the dedication of his employees to these values.

Another example of the effectiveness of spiritual leadership is Max DePree. Max was the former CEO of Herman Miller Company. If you read his book, *Leadership is an Art*, you can see the deep sense of spirituality in his thinking. It is because of his leadership that the Herman Miller Company has been named one of the one hundred most respected companies in America.

Here are some things to consider in the process of becoming a spiritual leader:

1. Ask yourself if your ego is driving your career. If it is, you cannot be a spiritual leader. If your ultimate goal is recognition, you are not a spiritual leader. It's your soul, not your ego that should be driving the bus.
2. Write down your life's purpose. Why are you alive? In one hundred years will the world be a better place because you lived? Why?
3. Set goals that support reaching your final destination.
4. Make your team aware of your goals.
5. Ask your team what their goals are. Part of a spiritual leader's journey is helping others complete theirs.
6. Make sure you do something every day to work toward your ultimate purpose.

I believe if you do these six things you will be ready for your meeting with the ultimate being at the end of your life and you will be well on your way to becoming a spiritual leader and achieving the type of success you deserve.