



Dealing with Disloyalty
and Betrayal in Ministry.

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Introduction

Many people have been hurt or betrayed by those they have loved and trusted. Many times this causes people to put up walls and never learn true faithfulness and loyalty. When you have been hurt and betrayed, you must confront it and deal with it. You cannot run from it. You must receive healing.

REMEMBER: The way you leave a relationship or church is the way you will enter another.

Disloyalty is not a new problem among God's people. The Bible tells us many stories of Godly people who became disloyal.

All too often people who once served God with a whole heart became disloyal and committed acts they never before would have dreamed of.

The history of Israel shows their disloyalty – generation after generation turned their backs on such great leaders as Moses, the prophets, and even God Himself. In the New Testament, even Y'shua (Jesus) had to contend with one of His most loyal friends.

Maybe you have invested many years into raising up a strong ministry leadership team. The thought that one of your closest supporters could turn on you may be far from your mind – you share a common vision – no disharmony in the ranks – nevertheless, without warning, disloyalty can plunge into your ministry and disintegrate what you have worked so hard to build.

You will then experience hurt and profound disappointment of seeing and hearing the very people you love, pastored, and trusted, turn with venom, disrespect, dishonor, contempt, and insolence towards you.

This is going to cost you friendships of precious co-labourers in ministry ... your motives and principles will be questioned ... you will be accused of doing things that are so far from the truth ... you will be laughed at and mocked. Those to whom you gave your life and anointing now call you a hypocrite!

It is so important that in this very painful place you have to learn to keep your heart soft and tender; to reach out once again, to make a connection with those He wants me to love and pastor; and to receive their love and support as well. You need to stay in love with God and His people.

Hear ABBA Father say ... *"I have new and precious people to bring into your life to bless and honour you, and you in turn will honour and speak into the lives of countless people. I, your ABBA, will call you blessed."*

Our prayer is that through this article, you will be truly blessed and your heart and your ministry will be forever free from the spirit of disloyalty.

*God's Design
for Friendship*

God wants us to have friendships that endure times of triumph and times of crisis. In fact, until a crisis occurs, we do not know the quality of our friendships. It is at this point that we become aware of just how close and supportive our friendships are.

Over the last few years I have lost very dear friends during crisis. Men and women have withdrawn their companionship and fellowship from me. This has been very painful and I have learnt some very precious and important lessons that have protected me from losing my joy and allowing my heart to disintegrate into small pieces of bitterness, bewilderment, confusion and profound pain.

God wants to teach us ... *“You do not qualify for a relationship until you have passed the test of friendship.”*

You need to ask a question ... *the friendships you have lost in the past that you thought were “covenant relationships”, did they actually pass the “test of friendship”?*

You do not qualify to become disloyal until you have passed the test of faithfulness!



Healing a wounded heart that suffered betrayal ...

God cannot heal your wounded heart until you place your heart at the Feet of Y'shua (Jesus) and not at the feet of the person that has wounded you.

There are only two times to say you are sorry – when it is your fault and when it is not!

Truths about relationships ...

Disloyalty comes from faithful, as well as unfaithful people. It hurts the heart so much after one has expended the time, the effort, the strength, the struggle, and the finances to fortify a friendship. Sometimes this building process takes years to accomplish, and then the person confidently believes that the relationship has become a covenantal friendship.

It is very painful when you believe that you and your friend are at a common place of trust – only to find out that your friend does not share your level of loyalty.

Your friend did not/could not share/communicate with you about how they felt about your friendship – this then will result in you losing all the ground you had gained over the years of your friendship.

What you felt was that you had shared your heart so much with those with whom you thought you had relationship – they knew everything about you – good and bad – BUT YOU KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THEM!

The pain is so deep and every time someone mentions his/her name or you happen to see them, its still there – that nagging pain manifesting all over again!

It is so difficult to stop the pain of disloyalty – to completely forgive the person who was disloyal to you, and to stop their influence in your life!

This is what we call a spirit-wound. It is deeper than a soul-wound because of the level of involvement with the person.

You have to stop concentrating on the other person and turn the spotlight onto your own heart. Place your motivations on the table to be inspected by the Holy Spirit.

As you quiet your heart before our ABBA Father, you may be surprised to see the insecurity in yourself. You will then be able to see the same in others.

Abba Father will help you to begin to make allowances (not excuses) for others and the way they did things. Disloyalty comes from faithful people (not only unfaithful people) because faithful people, in their human frailty, sometimes respond out of their own insecurities instead of seeking the Father for the way He wants them to respond.

You will learn that when you can totally forgive from you heart – irrespective of whether they come to say they are sorry or not – your HEART is what is important to God. God has wonderful plans for you, and your responses when you get wounded are crucial to your fulfilling your destiny before Him.

You may need to deal with your lost friendship at the communion table – once and for all! It is not easy to accept that your friend no longer wants your friendship any more!

The KEY is – do not hold his disloyalty against him – that is VICTORY! Stop the pain from disloyalty from growing and taking a foothold in your heart.

We live in a disloyal world ...

We live in an age where the fruit of disloyalty abounds. Many people in this present era disrespect the principles and values that our forefathers upheld for the sake of their families, communities, and countries.

Disloyalty is the violation of allegiance. To violate is to fail to show the requisite respect for; treat or handle in a disrespectful or high-handed manner.

Disloyal also indicates lack of complete faith, loyalty, and adherence to a person, cause, or country.

We are witnessing a decline of faithfulness to obligations and promises, especially in friendships and marriages. Every day children observe the breakdown of the sense of importance in holding to commitments and responsibilities. We have bred a generation of people who no longer see the necessity of obeying and honouring authority.



We should not be surprised to see disloyalty and faithlessness in our communities when they are so alarmingly evident in the local church. Our children are seeing disloyalty role-modeled in front of them by church leaders and parents. They do not see examples of loyalty, allegiance, faithfulness, or truthfulness. As a result, they cannot model these characteristics to their own generation or the following generations. This will result in a faithless generation.

Today we have few leaders with strong convictions and principles. We have accepted compromise and sin as the norm ... "If our leaders are doing it, then it must be okay."

Today, more than ever, we need to be aware of the divisive spirit of disloyalty so that we can stop it from entering our own lives and the lives of those we mentor. We need to know how God intended all of our relationships to function and, most importantly, how to walk in the LIGHT of His Will for our relationships.

*A Word Study
on Disloyalty*

D) ABSALOM

Disloyalty begins when the enemy sows his seed and it takes root in a person's heart.

2 Samuel 13: Absalom had a sister named Tamar. They lived together with their many half-brothers and half-sisters from their father David's marriages, in the royal place in King David's City.

One of these half-brothers, Amnon, had an incestuous lust for Tamar and plotted with one of his cousins to lure Tamar into his room. The plan worked, and Amnon sexually assaulted and humiliated his half-sister.

Under Jewish law, Tamar was now unable to marry and therefore shamed for life. In response to this tragedy, Absalom offered to take care of her.



The Bible does not record whether David disciplined his son Amnon for his serious offense. This apparent inability to administer justice caused a rift in his family that had far-reaching consequences.

Absalom hated Amnon and he wanted revenge. This condition in his heart went on for two years before Absalom hatched his plan. Disloyalty becomes more and more destructive with time. It grows and festers with each day that goes by.

In 2 Samuel 13:28-29, we read how Absalom murdered Amnon and then he ran to hide. He was a man filled with hate, anger, bitterness, and fear. In the beginning he simply wanted justice. When it didn't happen, he took things into his own hands, and that is where his problems began.

David made no attempt to forgive Absalom or ask him to return home. Absalom's heart was loaded – hate, anger, bitterness, and fear – he now also had feelings of rejections, humiliation, shame, and complete disrespect tearing his heart apart.

When David eventually allowed Absalom to return he announced his punishment on his son: *"Let him return to his own house, and let him not see my face ..."* 2 Samuel 14:24.

After two years of being an outcast in his own land, Absalom asked an audience with his father. This was refused and Absalom set fire to the general's farmland to force a response.

Eventually David agreed to see him – the son he had not seen in four years. Absalom did not see this as an act of restoration but instead took this as a sign of approval to start acting out a new role as a pretender. He was now even more vehement than before, and he had a new passion – to steal the throne.

It began ever so innocently and was allowed to continue for four years while he secretly built up a private army and won the hearts of the common people. Then, with military precision, he struck.

It took ten years from the time that Tamar was raped to the time he stormed into Jerusalem and pronounced himself king. He became such a proud and evil person, that in **2 Samuel 17:1-4**, it is recorded that he even agreed to the murder of his own father, King David.

Just taking all the riches, the throne and becoming a very powerful man was not enough – his father had to die. Years of anger and a hunger for revenge motivated him to rebel against his father.

Many in the church have experienced this same frustration and anger within the ranks of church leadership. Working with people from all walks of life, in numerous trying circumstances, has caused some leaders to forget how Jesus would respond. Consequently, like Absalom, they take matters into their own hands, and tragedy is the result.

Absalom had no one to speak into his life. He had no one in whom he felt confident to the extent that he would allow the person to correct and adjust his heart and attitude towards his own father.

Isolation is a terrible thing – when David put Absalom into isolation the seeds of disloyalty grew day by day. Absalom also suffered from fear because he could not see the way out of a predicament. The spirit of fear causes the person to become irrational, illogical, unreasonable, and difficult.

Absalom got so frustrated with not seeing justice that the spirit of fear compelled him to take things into his own hands and ultimately lost everything.

Many times people fall into the trap to focus on issues that are not worth their energy, and ultimately lose the things that really matter. We must be sure to continually keep our hearts and minds set on those things that really matter and not on those matters that could cost us our peace, health, family, and ultimately our destiny.



BEWARE! If you see that your leader is not always doing things the way you think they should – where you are continuously judging and criticizing and discussing them with the other people in the ministry group – **BEWARE!** This is the start of a disloyal spirit. If you do not guard your heart and mind but keep on focusing on the mistakes of your leader – the things YOU regard as mistakes because he/she is not doing things according to your standards – **BEWARE!**

2) THE DISLOYALTY OF A CLOSE FRIEND

Not everyone has experienced the betrayal of a very close friend. Some have lost employees, associates, and sub-leaders, but very few have felt the merciless sting of betrayal and conspiracy at the hands of a close and familiar friend.

Imagine the devastation of witnessing an intimate friend change his or her heart towards you. Even worse would be the resulting pain if that friend wanted to help the other team members of your ministry usurp your authority, destroy everything you had worked for, and assist in having you killed – or having your ministry destroyed and shut down!

King David found himself in just such a dilemma when his friend Ahithophel, his counselor and best friend, someone whom David, a king, considered to be his “equal”, his “guide”, joined Absalom’s conspiracy against him.

2 Samuel 15:30 *“But David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their heads too and were weeping as they went up. 31 Now David had been told, “Ahithophel is among the **conspirators** with Absalom.” So David prayed, “O LORD, turn Ahithophel’s counsel into foolishness.”*

NOTE: Ahithophel was not a servant, not another son, and not a commander – he was someone whose counsel to David, and it was the same with Absalom, was of such reputation that it was treated as if God Himself had spoken!

2 Samuel 16:23 *“The advice of **Ahithophel**, which he gave in those days, was as if one inquired of the Word of God; so was all the advice of Ahithophel regarded by **both** David and Absalom.”*

You would think such a man would understand the importance of covenant friendship, but Ahithophel abandoned David's friendship in pursuit of his death!

David had thought highly of this man Ahithophel. The two must have spent many hours together discussing the Word. They were likely close enough to share their hearts – their weaknesses, their joys, and their sorrows – with one another.

Listen to the heart of David when he shares about Ahithophel in the Psalms:

Psalm 55:12-14 *“12 For it is not an enemy who reproaches and taunts me—then I might bear it; nor is it one who has hated me who insolently vaunts himself against me—then I might hide from him. 13 But it was you, a man my equal, my companion and my familiar friend. 14 We had sweet fellowship together and used to walk to the House of God in company.”*

In this passage, we can sense the brokenness of a man who has been betrayed, let down, and deceived. We sense his absolute devastation, abject sorrow, and utmost disbelief and astonishment as he pours his heart out onto the page.

Right in the middle of the grief David was experiencing from the betrayal of Absalom, the news came that his trusted friend Ahithophel had abandoned him. In the very hour when he was needed most, Ahithophel broke David's heart.

It is quite clear that from David's point of view Ahithophel was a very close friend and companion.

Psalm 55:20-21 *“20 [My companion] has put forth his hands against those who were at peace with him; he has broken and profaned his agreement [of friendship and loyalty]. 21 The words of his mouth were smoother than cream or butter, but war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords.”*

The Message *“And this, my best friend, betrayed his best friends; his life betrayed his word. All my life I've been charmed by his speech, never dreaming he'd turn on me. His words, which were music to my ears, turned to daggers in my heart.”*

When David announces that Ahithophel has broken and profaned their covenant, we know it is a very serious matter to him. To profane something is:

- To treat with irreverence ... or contempt,
- To “blaspheme” – to be disrespectful and insolent about it.

This is how David describes Ahithophel's response to their covenant agreement.

Psalm 55:22 "22 Cast your burden on the Lord [releasing the weight of it] and He will sustain you; He will never allow the [consistently] righteous to be moved (made to slip, fall, or fail)."

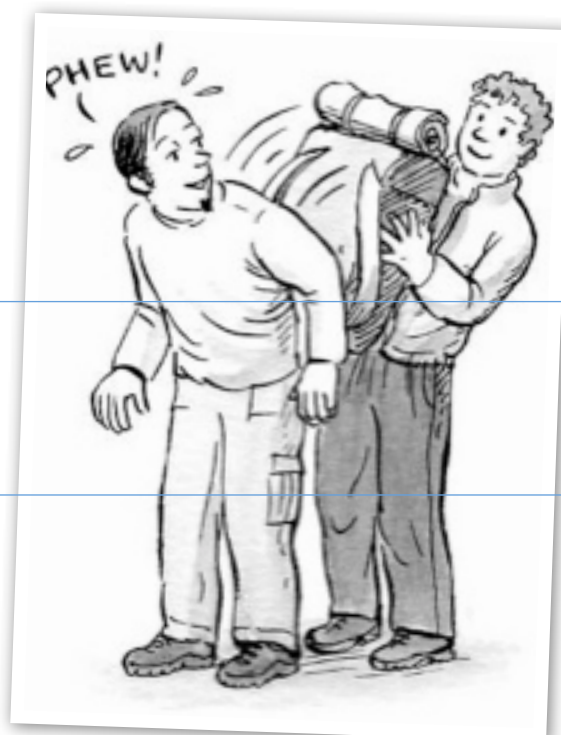
The Message "Pile your troubles on God's shoulders—He'll carry your load, He'll help you out. He'll never let good people topple into ruin."

Forgiveness ...

True power lies in the wonderful gift God has given us in the ability to forgive. David practiced forgiveness. Y'shua (Jesus) says in:

Luke 7:47 "47 Therefore I tell you, her sins, many [as they are], are forgiven her—because she has loved much. But he who is forgiven little loves little."

If you have suffered much by the wounds of betrayal, then you have been given a great capacity to forgive and to be forgiven – therefore you must also have a great capacity to LOVE!



Because David let go of the offense of Ahithophel's disloyalty, his heart was healed.

What was the end of Ahithophel?

2 Samuel 17:23 "23 But when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey, went home to his city, put his household in order, and hanged himself and died, and was buried in the tomb of his father."

What a heart-breaking end for a man who had experienced the delight and pleasure of genuine friendship!

Psalm 55:23 "23 But You, God, will throw the others into a muddy bog, Cut the lifespan of assassins and traitors in half. And I trust in You."

If you have been guilty of the sin of betrayal and you have been disloyal to a leader that God has placed over your life, PLEASE learn from this lesson. There will be a curse over your life that you will not live out your full destiny!

Please go and make right with that friend who once was a leader in your life! Never put aside years of friendship and walk away as if nothing happened!

It is easy to talk yourself into offense, but the major characteristic of a person of faith is walking in LOVE. WE must resolve to walk in love with those who hurt us and who we also hurt; do not let your PRIDE stop you from making right your wrongs of the past.

Get on the phone with the person who used to be very close to you – someone who trusted you – but because of all the issues in your own heart and mind, you allowed the spirit of disloyalty to possess you – and you betrayed your best friend!



*The Danger Signs
of Disloyalty*

A team of any kind must run smoothly together in order to produce maximum results. This is especially true in church and ministry leadership. We must keep our minds clear of anything that would turn our leadership against itself.

Disloyalty is a state of mind. We have the ability to decide what goes into our minds, we can reject the spirit of disloyalty. It simply requires that we continually purify our thoughts, our motives, and our attitudes by the Word of God.

1) STEALING HEARTS

One danger sign is that disloyal leaders try to steal the hearts of the people. In 2 Samuel 15:2, Absalom stood in a convenient place to turn the hearts of the people against his father.



Absalom used this position of authority to begin spreading disloyalty; he spoke out against his father. He created a power base to support his plans for the future.

Your leader may not be handling things properly – to use this as an excuse to usurp the influence of one's leader is to follow the spirit of disloyalty. Be alert to the tactics of the disloyal person who will go behind the leader's back and break him/her down in passing remarks, dropping seeds of

division and strife, and trying to build up a power base of getting the other team members on their side. The disloyal person will try to steal the hearts of the other team members by doing all sorts of things for them, winning their favour at every possible chance – showing how “bad” the leader actually is – and how “good” they actually are! (The disloyal person can even go as far as to tell the family members of the leader how bad their spouse/father/mother actually is!)

2) PROMOTING SELF

Another danger sign of disloyalty is self-promotion. In the passages we have studied, it is interesting to note that in order to attack the reputation or integrity of someone, Absalom was fixing the spotlight firmly on himself.

Clearly, pride, ego, and selfishness eventually expose themselves when a person's heart is increasingly consumed by disloyalty.

Driven by a desire for their idea of justice, retribution or retaliation, disloyal people intentionally defame people of authority who might stand in their way. They become wrapped up in their own importance and enter the self-promoting phase of disloyalty.

In this phase, people desire to attract attention. They want a pat on the back, for example, in front of the group/church body. Members of any leadership team need to remind themselves that they are there to help build the ministry and to make sure the vision is being fulfilled, not to receive the praises or admiration of men and women, and most certainly not to take over!

3) BEING PRIDEFUL

Pride, another danger sign of disloyalty, is a mighty weapon of the enemy. God warns us so many times in His Word against this destructive force. With pride, satan can charge right through a person's defenses and stir up ill feelings of disunity.

Pride will cause a person to pursue personal ambitions regardless of the mission or vision of the leadership team. It will cause a person to focus on one's own plans – and the ministry will come second. The phrase "hidden agenda" certainly relates to people in the growing stages of disloyalty.

4) BEING EASILY THREATENED

Disloyal people think highly of themselves and are threatened when their ideas are not used. Absalom perceived that his father was a weak leader. He seemed to think that if King David couldn't run his own home properly, he himself could govern a nation better than his father could. This belief in his own abilities over those of the king helped turn him into a rebel and a traitor.

In ministries, God gives the vision to the leader, and it requires faith to believe the leader is hearing from God. At the same time, there is no reason why people under leadership cannot share their ideas – however, that is where it should be left.

If their initiatives are not taken up, they should not become threatened or hurt. When rejection of an idea is taken personally, disloyalty can step in.

5) HAVING AN INDEPENDENT SPIRIT

Another danger sign of disloyalty is an independent spirit. God calls us to work together and be a team – not to be independent, self-reliant, self-sufficient, unconstrained, or detached.

Independent people do not want fellowship. They separate themselves. They are hungry for position and recognition.

They want to be treated just like the leader, enjoying the same courtesy, respect, and honour.

They want to enjoy the same comfort and perks as the leader – for example, sleeping arrangements in a hotel / guesthouse, etc. This will definitely be a point of contention to break the leader down by gossiping behind his/her back – JEALOUSY MAKES YOU NASTY!

However, respect is earned, not handed out. Consumed by their own ambitions, disloyal people cannot see that it is God who promotes. When He decides to raise someone up, it is the best time and for the right reasons, and it produces good results. **Genesis 41** teaches us about Joseph went from being a prisoner to being the prime minister in one day because God was in control.

However, self-induced promotion (usurping the leader's authority) is always for the wrong reasons and can only produce confusion, division, fear, hurt, and death to any ministry.

6) JUDGING GOD'S ANOINTED

Another danger sign of disloyalty is judging God's anointed. Disloyal people not only fail to submit to leadership, but they judge and criticize them.

We can see from the Scriptures that it is very dangerous to affront God's anointed. For example, Jezebel's attempts to kill the prophet Elijah led to her violent death (**1 Kings 19:1-3; 21:23; 2 Kings 9:30-37**).

Similarly, after King Saul spent years trying to destroy God's anointed, he suffered a gruesome death, along with his sons, his armour-bearer, and all of his men (**1 Samuel 31: 1-6**).



7) NOT BEING ABLE TO TRUST

Another danger sign of disloyalty is the inability to trust. Absalom knew before he could act that he had to secure one important response from his potential followers – complete trust.

This is why he invested so much time standing in the city gates, probably shaking hands and kissing babies. He had to build a bridge of confidence that would cause ordinary Israelites to turn away from their faith in the man who had led them from victory to victory and ushered in a time of prosperity and peace.

Even though Absalom had disloyal motives, he understood a very important leadership principle, one that is true even today.

Whether it is in heading up a team or leading a church, a leader must have trust. Without it, he or she can achieve nothing as a leader.

Nowhere is this more apparent when a pastor or church leader is in the midst of a decision-making process over the future direction of the ministry. Growing ministries face decisions daily. This is often a time when people's trust in their leadership is tested. It is not uncommon for change to spark fires of disloyalty.

When complete trust is demonstrated, the congregation/ministry acknowledges that the leaders do not have to share the whole picture with them. They do not demand to know all the details from which the pastor has drawn his conclusions.

However, in order for a ministry leader to gain trust from his people, he must be able to show towards them the same quality of trust he requires from them.

8) BE WATCHFUL

The danger signs of disloyalty are important to know and to recognize – in yourself and in your leadership team. It's important to watch for them and deal with them as soon as you see them. Left to grow, the spirit of disloyalty will only consume and destroy. Therefore, be watchful – not suspicious, but watchful in the spirit – of the danger signs of disloyalty.

*Some closing
remarks ...*

Handling disloyalty in your midst ...

Lucifer demonstrated the first act of disloyalty, and his actions led to his excommunication from Heaven.



Isaiah 14:12-14 “**12** How have you fallen from heaven, O light-bringer and daystar, son of the morning! How you have been cut down to the ground, you who weakened and laid low the nations [O blasphemous, satanic king of Babylon!] **13** And you said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit upon the mount of assembly in the uttermost north. **14** I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.”

Lucifer’s example shows us that an organization born of strife can only produce strife. What is born of God will remain, and what is born of Satan and strife will be destroyed. The New Testament teaches us the principle of sowing and reaping (Galatians 6:7).

In light of this truth, critics of ministers should never believe that they can take over a ministry from its rightful leader and then start anything with a pure motive. A ministry born of strife, breeds strife. On the other hand, a ministry born of loyalty breeds loyalty, and such a ministry will produce good fruit in its community, city, and nation.

It is important for leaders to remember that team and congregation members are imperfect, just as leaders are imperfect. As leaders, we will always be able to find fault in those we lead. However, we must remember that God chose our teams and ultimately wants them to be part of His Plan.

Be honest ...

Do you have the patience and tolerance to ignore unjust criticisms and simply continue with the vision and goals that the Father has given you?

If the criticism is coming from a ministry leader under your authority, it may be necessary to remove such a person from a position of responsibility.

It is never easy to do this, especially if the person is a friend. It is even more difficult if the person in question has been a high profile role and others are more supportive of the person than they are of you.

Depending on the circumstances surrounding the dismissal, you will not necessarily gain support for doing what you believe to be right. However, it is important that you follow your heart and not allow disloyalty to infect more people.

IN CONCLUSION

Leaders need fathers ...

One reason why ministry leaders are disloyal is simply that they have no accountability, which comes not from peers but from spiritual fathers.

“Peers compete, but fathers correct and discipline.”

God’s Word is designed to produce freedom and joyful abandonment.

James 1:25 *“25 But whoever catches a glimpse of the revealed counsel of God - the free life! - even out of the corner of his eye, and sticks with it, is no distracted scatterbrain but a man or woman of action. That person will find delight and affirmation in the action.”*

In order to experience “liberty”, one must be made accountable to the Word. This is why Biblical principles are so vital and imperative.

1 Peter 5:1-3 *“1 I have a special concern for you church leaders. I know what it's like to be a leader, in on Christ's sufferings as well as the coming glory. 2 Here's my concern: that you care for God's flock with all the diligence of a shepherd. Not because you have to, but because you want to please God. Not calculating what you can get out of it, but acting spontaneously. 3 Not bossily telling others what to do, but tenderly showing them the way.”*

Leaders should take this principle to heart and be sure to connect with spiritual fathers – this will nullify any chance of disloyalty creeping into our lives.

Accountability ...

“It’s not for IF you get off track – it’s WHEN you get off track,” that you really need a father to come alongside to protect and minister to you. We need spiritual fathers because they instruct us in order to build us up inside. They assist us in the development of our character – of our integrity and honour.

Because they have experiential wisdom with which to offer us guidance, fathers train us how to respond to various life situations with the right course of action.

Spiritual fathers are not interested in their own agenda but only want to see their sons succeed. On the other hand, a disloyal leader wants all the credit for all the successes in his establishment. He does not genuinely want to help with the requirements for achieving these accomplishments. He seems to think leaders have been promoted from getting dirty anymore.



A spiritual father will demonstrate by his actions the diligent effort it takes to make an establishment work.

A person will follow a father who gets down with him in his mess in order to help him get out.

1 Corinthians 4:14-16 *"14 I'm not writing all this as a neighborhood scold just to make you feel rotten. I'm writing as a father to you, my children. I love you and want you to grow up well, not spoiled. 15 There are a lot of people around who can't wait to tell you what you've done wrong, but there aren't many fathers willing to take the time and effort to help you grow up. It was as Jesus helped me proclaim God's Message to you that I became your father. 16 I'm not, you know, asking you to do anything I'm not already doing myself."*

Do NOT try to build a ministry without the covering of a FATHER! You will always have authority if you are under authority!

Sons honour their fathers ...

Spiritual fathers have the duty and privilege of speaking into their son's lives, and spiritual sons immediately respond with an attitude of respect, honour, admiration, high esteem, and appreciation.

We learn a very good lesson from the life of Joshua and Elisha. Joshua sought Moses' heart because he wanted the spirit that was on Moses.

Elisha had the same desire to be like Elijah, whom he actually called his father (2 Kings 2:12).

These spiritual sons wanted their fathers' compassion, their heart for God, their love for the people, and their driving desire to please God. Leaders of today need to learn what it means to honour their fathers.

- The word **honour** means:
 - *“Respect and esteem shown to another ... the recognition of one’s right to great respect or to any expression of such recognition”.*
- **Homage**, which:
 - *“Adds the implication of accompanying praise”.*
- **Reverence**, which:
 - *“Implies profound respect mingled with love, devotion or awe”.*
- **Deference**, which:
 - *“Implies a yielding or submitting to another’s judgment or preference out of respect or reverence”,*
 - *“A display of courteous regard ... for one to whom respect is due”,*
 - *By yielding to the person’s status, claims, or wishes ...”*

To honour someone is to think highly of the person – to show respect in acknowledgment or appreciation of the person’s high character, position, or achievement – to put the person’s wishes and opinions above your own.

The dictionary definition above does not go far enough because when it comes to honouring our fathers, belief, trust and faith must be added. In order to honour our spiritual fathers, we must believe in the vision God has given them; trust in their faithfulness, righteousness, integrity, and ability to carry out the call on their lives; and have faith in their anointing.

Honour comes from, and is directed back to, God. It has little to do with the person himself. We do not honour our father’s personality but the reflection of God in him. Our honour is actually being bestowed upon the righteousness of God, as it manifests through the one sent to minister to us.

Failing to honour our fathers according to the Word is an act of disobedience that will produce doubt, strife, and unbelief in us. Ultimately, it will result in preventing Biblical covenant blessings from coming to us.

Each of us needs to make a quality decision to begin to honour our fathers in thought, word, and deed, as well as with our prayers, finances, and service.

When we do, we will receive the benefits of their wisdom, their prayers, and their anointing in our lives. Not only that, but we will prevent disloyalty from penetrating our hearts and our ministries.

Loyal to GOD first ...

While it is important that we not be disloyal toward people, especially our pastors and leaders, we must be even more guarded against disloyalty toward God. When God instructs us to do something, by His Spirit or in His Word, and the outcome of our obedience is different than we would expect, we should not question God's ways of doing things and become disloyal towards Him.



Nowhere do we read in the Scriptures that if we do what the Word of God tells us to do then all will be well. In fact, in many of the stories of both the Old and New Testaments, the opposite appears to be true.

Jeremiah was called to preach a message that would never be received. Would you be able to do that?

Would you let go of your own sense of accomplishment or human affirmation in order to follow God in such a seemingly hopeless endeavor?

Ministers of the Gospel know that following the call is not a simple task. It is not easy to keep a tender and soft heart and to keep from questioning God during tough times. However, it is vital that we remain loyal toward God whether the circumstances appear to validate the call or not.

The Scripture do not say that if we do God's Will, all things will work out as we think they should. However, in the greater scheme of things, God will have His way with those who are willing to follow His Plan, not their own.

Be careful not to let things you don't quite understand fester and rankle in your spirit and grow into huge trees of disloyalty. Instead, keep your heart loyal toward God, and you will increasingly see His loyalty and faithfulness in your life and ministry.

DO NOT BE OFFENDED WITH GOD!

Loyalty-Protection Scriptures

The way to protect loyalty in our own hearts is to regularly meditate on the Word of God and His Instructions for our lives.

As we do the Word corrects us, comes alive inside of us, and reveals to us where we need to make changes.

✓ **DON'T FIGHT BACK**

Romans 12:16-21 *"16 Get along with each other; don't be stuck-up. Make friends with nobodies; don't be the great somebody. 17 Don't hit back; discover beauty in everyone. 18 If you've got it in you, get along with everybody. 19 Don't insist on getting even; that's not for you to do. "I'll do the judging," says God. "I'll take care of it." 20 Our Scriptures tell us that if you see your enemy hungry, go buy that person lunch, or if he's thirsty, get him a drink. Your generosity will surprise him with goodness. 21 Don't let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good."*

When you have been hurt and betrayed by someone you have trusted, this Scripture stands up and says, "Don't fight back".

Allow the Spirit of God to do what is best according to the condition of the other person's heart.

✓ **GAIN WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING**

Isaiah 11:2-5 *"2 The life-giving Spirit of God will hover over him, the Spirit that brings wisdom and understanding, The Spirit that gives direction and builds strength, the Spirit that instills knowledge and Fear-of-God. 3 Fear-of-God will be all his joy and delight. He won't judge by appearances, won't decide on the basis of hearsay. 4 He'll judge the needy by what is right, render decisions on earth's poor with justice. His words will bring everyone to awed attention. A mere breath from his lips will topple the wicked. 5 Each morning he'll pull on sturdy work clothes and boots, and build righteousness and faithfulness in the land. A Living Knowledge of God"*



Meditating on key words and phrases from these Scriptures will give you a heart that seeks the best and sees the best in every person you meet. When the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding indwells you, you make better and more informed decisions on a daily basis.

When you have a fair judgment, you will not judge by what you see or hear but by righteousness. As a result, you will become a faithful person.

✓ **HANDLE ANGER PROPERLY**

Ephesians 4:26 “**26** Go ahead and be angry. You do well to be angry - but don't use your anger as fuel for revenge. And don't stay angry. Don't go to bed angry.”

It is a manifestation of maturity to not let anger reveal itself. The Scripture clearly tells us that there is a place for righteous anger; however, this is not an excuse to vent our own personal anger on someone.

Confess this Scripture, and be sure that you do not hold on to anything against any person after the sun has gone down.

✓ **BE UNFAZED BY RUMOUR**

Psalms 112:6-8 “**6** No shuffling or stumbling around for this one, But a sterling and solid and lasting reputation. **7** Unfazed by rumor and gossip, Heart ready, trusting in God, **8** Spirit firm, unperturbed, Ever blessed, relaxed among enemies,”

Turn to this Psalm when you hear negative words spoken or more subtly implied, about you. As leaders we must be sure to remain solid and levelheaded during the times when we are verbally assaulted and discredited. In such times, read these verses and confess aloud that you will not be moved by unpleasant words.

In those times, ask the Lord to maintain your heart before Him, and He will always take care of every situation for you.

✓ **WALK IN LOVE**

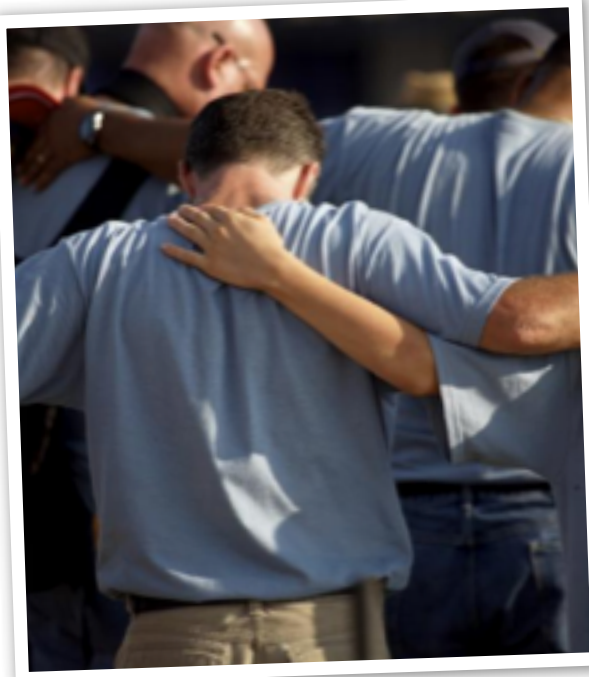
1 Corinthians 13:4-8 “**4** Love endures long and is patient and kind; love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy, is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily. **5** It is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) and does not act unbecomingly. Love (God's love in us) does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong]. **6** It does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail. **7** Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything [without weakening].”

“8 Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end]. As for prophecy ([a]the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose), it will be fulfilled and pass away; as for tongues, they will be destroyed and cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away [it will lose its value and be superseded by truth].”

The truth in this passage of Scripture has great power to take care of not only you, but the other person who is being used to bring pain to your heart. Walking in the love of God will turn your situation around more rapidly than any other action that you could take.

In the middle of controversy, it is not easy to still your heart and do what these verses suggest. It is very difficult to think the best of every person when one of them has just verbally assaulted you! However, the love of God in you can do it.

We have to practice the love of God when negative things are said and done against us. When we keep our hearts soft and tender, we will be able to seize the opportunity when God publically restores our honour and integrity.



During challenging periods, perhaps of public disgrace, never forget how important it is to be accountable to a spiritual father.

Be found among the fellowship of believers every Sunday. This will stop pride and revenge from festering in your heart and life.

Remember that love pays no attention to a suffered wrong. You are not alone – God is with you. Keep your heart open before Him and continue to walk in His LOVE!

The best is yet to come!

The best is really still to come for you. When you have been going through a difficult time and you feel as though everyone is giving you a wide berth, it is important that you begin to meditate on the Scriptures. They will give you the courage to believe that God loves you and has not forgotten you, and other people of whom you are not even aware care for you also.

You do have a future and a purpose. Never allow the enemy to persuade you to take your eyes from the destiny that God has called you to fulfill.

Proverbs 3:3-4 “**3** Let not mercy and kindness [shutting out all hatred and selfishness] and truth [shutting out all deliberate hypocrisy or falsehood] forsake you; bind them about your neck, write them upon the tablet of your heart. **4** So shall you find favor, good understanding, and high esteem in the sight [or judgment] of God and man.”

Jeremiah 29:11 “**11** For I know the thoughts and plans that I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome.”

Psalms 5:12 “**12** For You, Lord, will bless the [uncompromisingly] righteous [him who is upright and in right standing with You]; as with a shield You will surround him with goodwill (pleasure and favor).”

Ephesians 1:4-5 “**4** Even as [in His love] He chose us [actually picked us out for Himself as His own] in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy (consecrated and set apart for Him) and blameless in His sight, even above reproach, before Him in love. **5** For He foreordained us (destined us, planned in love for us) to be adopted (revealed) as His own children through Jesus Christ, in accordance with the purpose of His will [because it pleased Him and was His kind intent]—”

You and I were not a mistake or a blunder! God purposely created us and gave us a destiny on this earth so that we would be constantly fulfilled while completing our assignment for Him.

Do not let anyone tell you, as I have also heard, “*You are finished. You can no longer preach the Gospel. You have lost all your friends, so just accept it and get on with life.*”

God is not finished with you or me. If we allow Him to have His way with us, we will accomplish and complete all that He has called us to do. There is much to be done. Let’s forget the disloyalties of the past and look toward the great future that lies ahead when we remain in our ever-loyal God!

*Summary of the
Absalom Spirit*

The Absalom Spirit¹

Scripture References Based on 2 Samuel 13:20-29; 14:23-33; and 15:1-12

An Absalom Spirit is rooted in a basic distrust and resentment of one's authority – either justifiable or exaggerated (13:20,21).

An Absalom Spirit is rooted in a basic independence and self dependence – especially as it pertains to honest communication, problem solving, sharing of honest feelings, needs, wants, and so forth (13:20).

An Absalom Spirit is rooted in camouflaged bitterness – unresolved disappointments, fear, anger, impotence, and so forth (13:22).

An Absalom Spirit is rooted in irrational secrets – that appear totally rational and justified to "the Absalom" (13:20,22,23).

An Absalom Spirit is rooted in hidden agendas, hidden strategies and hidden alliances (13:22-29).

Basic Beliefs of the Absalom Spirit:

- Most authority is not to be trusted.
- Most authority is incompetent.
- "I know the right way to handle this".

An Absalom Spirit is rooted in hidden contempt, hidden hatred and hidden revenge – of authority and those under that authority (13:22).

An Absalom Spirit is rooted in pride (14:23-26).

An Absalom Spirit is rooted in rebellion that will grow and grow and become unquenchable (14:27-30).

An Absalom Spirit is rooted in a deep-seated desire to be close to, next to, in a place of favor with the one in authority, but not with purity of heart (14:30-33).

An Absalom Spirit is rooted in impressing and stealing the hearts of the people who are under authority in order to eventually "dethrone" and replace the one in authority (15:1-12).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in self-promotion (15:1).

¹ Taken from www.victorylifechurch.org

An Absalom Spirit manifests in a carefully constructed and carefully projected image – one that is designed to impress (15:1).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in manipulation (15:1).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in selfish ambition, disguised to appear as service to others (15:2).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in opportunism, self-advancement at the expense of others (15:2).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in divisiveness, antagonism, and negative criticism of authorities to promote self (15:3).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in rebellion and/or insurrectionism (15:4).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in false humility (15:5).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in thievery, stealing the hearts and loyalty of the people away from their true authority (15:6).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in treachery. This is no innocent disagreement. Absalom is dangerous (15:7-10).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in subtle seduction (15:11).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in religious hypocrisy and hype (15:12, “while offering sacrifices”).

An Absalom Spirit manifests in betrayal (15:12). Later, Ahithophel joins Absalom's rebellion. Ahithophel means “a brother/kindred” and “to smear, plaster, slime”. Warning! Absalom is not your friend!

Healing for Ahithophel ...

- Those of us who have the trust of our leader(s) are targets for an Absalom spirit.
- Stay loyal to leaders who are putting their trust in you even if they are not perfect or adequate. Either be loyal or quit.
- Confront any Absalom who tries to manipulate you and use you.
- Go straight to your leader and tell them about “Absalom” before it is too late for them and for you (15:1).

Discerning the Spirit of Absalom in the Church:

- Absalom Hurts the Most (2 Samuel 14:19-15:6)

Psalm 55:12-14 For it is not an enemy who reproaches me; Then I could bear it. Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me; Then I could hide from him. But it was you, a man my equal, my companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in the throng.

2 Samuel 15:12 Then Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city--from Giloh--while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom continually increased in number.

- What caused Absalom's sin? Offense, hatred, unforgiveness and bitterness.

Matthew 24:3,10 What will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" ...10 "And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Motive: Revenge, discredit and ruin. 2 Samuel 15:6 In this manner Absalom acted toward all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

How did David fail?

1. His feelings almost destroyed him ...

2 Samuel 13:39 And King David longed to go to Absalom. For he had been comforted concerning Amnon, because he was dead.

2 Samuel 14:1 So Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was concerned about Absalom.

2. Feeling he has to prove his compassion to others to the point of ruining his own kingdom.
3. He tolerated his antics and didn't confront him.

Why is it difficult to deal with this spirit?

1. People are emotionally attached to them through relationships.
2. Absalom is nice, lovable and popular. Everyone loved Absalom (even David).

3. To deal with them appears as unloving. The only way to deal with him is to cut him off. Had David not let him back into the kingdom he would not have had a problem.

Many times those who operate in an Absalom spirit will leave a church out of rebellion, but want to stay a part in fellowship. "We are still apart of the kingdom of God even if we are not in the same church" is the spiritual reasoning. The logic sounds good, but the past history and the fact that they are causing division are the indicators that their true motive is not for fellowship.

4. It appears as if the pastor/leadership is paranoid.

Characteristics of the Absalom Spirit to be aware of:

1. They seek an audience.

2 Samuel 15:2 Now Absalom would rise early and stand beside the way to the gate. So it was, whenever anyone who had a lawsuit came to the king for a decision, that Absalom would call to him and say, "What city are you from?" And he would say, "Your servant is from such and such a tribe of Israel."

2. Love, kindness and favor are their tools. Who can resist that?
3. Absalom caused division by sweetness, "stealing the hearts of David's followers".

2 Samuel 15:5 And so it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him.

4. Tells people, "You are special to me and my friend". "I love you more than the pastor; I will spend the quality time with you he doesn't".
5. Special treatment: Coffee, Tea, fellowship, trips, gifts, favors. Everyone likes to be treated special. Everyone wants to feel special.
6. Nothing the pastor/leadership does is good enough for Absalom. Even if most of Absalom's ideas are implemented it will never be good enough. Fault will always be found.
7. They plant doubt concerning leadership. They find faults in leaders usually not related to spiritual qualifications, and minor things are made major issues; such as what kind of car the pastor drives, how long he takes to receive offerings, and so forth.

2 Samuel 15:4 Moreover Absalom would say, "Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice."

8. They have a hidden agenda. His motives were not known until they manifested and it was too late. You know where you stand with Jezebel and Korah, but Absalom is sneaky, and does things behind your back.
9. Absalom tells you what you want to hear. A pastor's job is to speak the truth in love; sometimes that truth hurts and requires change, but it is always for our good.
10. They eventually come forward with open disloyalty and division. He later came to a place of such brazenness as sleeping openly with his fathers wives.

The deception of continuing in fellowship with Absalom takes the form of:

- "I can handle it". Even Superman had his kryptonite. Charm is powerful and deceptive (Proverbs31:30)
- "I am special to them". They prey upon our insecurities and need for acceptance.

2 Samuel 15:5 And so it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him.

- "They are my friends. Your problem is not my problem with them. Being their friends will not affect my relationship with my church".
- "They love God. You should not judge them".

2 Samuel 15:11 And with Absalom went two hundred men invited from Jerusalem (to worship), and they went along innocently and did not know anything.

- "I can help them" Those operating in this spirit think they are helping you. We have false notion that we can love Absalom back into the kingdom. He exists on that sentiment, and it gives him a greater inroad to influence, take advantage of, and shipwreck you. Their main purpose is advancing their agenda.

Titus 3:10 Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition,

How to deal with this spirit:

- Deception means you don't know you are being deceived.
- We think we have more discernment than we do. We forget this is a demonic spirit we are dealing with.
- Their involvement is coming against the God's established authority and seeking to divide His kingdom.

- Discerning of spirits needed from leadership. Proper role modeling. If the rest of the sheep see you hobnobbing with Absalom, then they will think it is okay also. Have a sheep-dog mentality. Protect the sheep from being kissed (bitten). Wolves don't come dressed as wolves, but sheep.
- Stop tolerating their antics. Put an end to the Absalom spirit.
- Don't give them a place in the life of the body.

2 Samuel 14:21 And the king said to Joab, "All right, I have granted this thing. Go therefore, bring back the young man Absalom."

- Avoid promoting people until the true character is proven.
- Mark those who cause division and avoid them.

Romans 16:17-18 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

- Pray for them.

Luke 6:26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets. 27 "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 "bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

- Leave vengeance to the Lord. Their own pride will bring them down.

2 Samuel 18:9, 14 "His head got caught in the terebinth tree; so he was left hanging ... Joab ... took three spears in his hand and thrust them through Absalom's heart.

Proverbs 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.

- Absalom's downfall ended like that of Jezebel, Korah and Judas. They fell through pride and their lives ended prematurely and tragically. It is dangerous ground to sow strife and cause division in the Body of Christ.
- The Lord hates ... one who sows discord among brethren (Proverbs 6:16-19).