

How To Burn Out in 13 easy steps

a collection of thoughts from a blog post and comments

Staying strong is overrated. All this talk about avoiding the wall - Hooey. You were born to burnout. You were meant for serving weak. Want a quick way to burnout in ministry leadership? Here are 13 easy steps:

- 1) **Seek Unforgiveness.** Someone hurt you lately? Cool. Here's what you do: Hold a grudge. That's right. Don't give in to the temptation to be the weaker one. Keep steady. Better yet, give them the silent treatment. Yeah! It will teach them a lesson and you'll be well on your way to burning out.
- 2) **Pursue Passionlessness.** Ask yourself this question: "What ministry fuels my passion?" Got your answer? Good. Now do something (anything) that is the opposite of your answer. Do the thing that is a total drag for you. Give it your all. Seek the boredom. Revel in the difficulty. It will annoy those around you and you'll be well on your way to burning out.
- 3) **Engage In Prayerlessness.** Got prayer concerns? Want to touch the heart of God? Want to seek and sense His will for your life? Forget it. You're looking to burnout, right? Good. Then cut ALL prayer from your routine. Don't pray in the morning. Don't pray when you're stressed or sad. And don't pray when things are going well. Think of the time you'll save. It will grieve the Holy Spirit and you'll be well on your way to burning out.
- 4) **Be An Impostor.** Are you introverted by nature? Be extroverted. Are you methodical? Be spontaneous. Are you a people person? Then be a recluse. You have to understand that being yourself is simply going to keep you from burning out. So don't be yourself. Better yet, try to be just like someone else. It will irritate your loved ones and you'll be well on your way to burning out.
- 5) **Over-identify.** In your work with others, you will feel their pain. This is good. Dwell on it. Identify it so deeply that you begin to feel responsible for it. This will give you ownership of their pain, like you were the cause. You will sink in the quicksand of their misery. You won't be able to help them because you'll be so depressed yourself. This will help others become co-dependent and you'll be well on your way to burning out.
- 6) **Nurture a martyr personality.** This will help you feel sorry for yourself. Once that is in place you can really make your ministry "all about you" and every arrow, barb, misstatement, wrong look or nuanced sentence will hurt you and cause you to spiral downward at warp speed.
- 7) **Don't get any exercise** other than running in 16 different directions trying to please everyone. When the Dr. says try antidepressants along with some good counseling convince yourself that you are "not that sick" and dry-clean your Superman costume and go out there and fake it some more!
- 8) **Read nothing** other than the few goofy websites you waste your office time on. You may buy dozens of new books about everything from the early church fathers to the latest trendy church fad but do not read them. Don't go to any conferences or workshops that might challenge you and cause growth. And actually since you're no longer reading words just stick with websites and other materials with "pictures"...yeah that'll really feed you.
- 9) **Control Everything.** No matter how small, make sure everything crosses your desk before it can happen (or not happen). When interacting with fellow staff, let them know that the final decision is yours, and that you don't trust them to do anything on their own. When it is time for salary reviews, point out that the staff can't get anything done without your supervision, so that you'll be given more responsibility. When you are asked why the church isn't growing, tell people that you just can't get enough help. Then stock up on ulcer medicine...it'll keep you going...
- 10) **Believe that you can walk on water.** Just step out from that pedestal people want to put us pastor's on and walk. What could possibly happen? Just ask Peter.
- 11) **Focus on your own vision.** God's vision for His church is only a starting point. You know what the culture says. Little churches need to be big churches and big churches need to be bigger. It's all in the numbers. Focus on what you do not have in order to prep your head for the beating it will take while you smash it against the wall trying to figure out why you only have 30 people in regular attendance. Then try another idea that you come up with and get the same result while ignoring the original vision of God. You'll be well on your way to burnout
- 12) **Stop reading & meditating on/in God's word.** Just read lots of books by others who do. God's not going to say anything different to you that He hasn't said to them. It's a filter. It's osmosis. Works every time...every time you're asking to burnout.
- 13) **Have A Secret Sin.** Get one. It doesn't have to be anything "big" (addiction to porn, an affair, etc) It can be small, something that doesn't directly hurt anyone. It's like a little personal pet that I'm sure you deserve with all you're going through. It's not that big of a deal and heck, it's so small, I'm sure God doesn't really notice or mind. Hold it close, keep it warm and feed it only a little and you'll stay in complete control...right?