

GOOD ADVICE FOR LEADERS

June 2025

For the past two years there has been an avalanche of church leaders of prominent churches and ministries that have been exposed for sexual abuse, spiritual abuse, financial greed or even serious doctrinal deviance. Apostle Paul gave good advice to young leader Timothy:

'Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because of you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. - 1 Timothy 4:16

HOW TO STAY SCANDAL FREE *Charisma magazine (from early 1990's)*

While prominent American evangelists have experienced moral failures at a record rate in recent years, Lester Sumrall has been quietly managing his ministry according to the timeless biblical principles he discovered decades ago. He says he has no secret formula for maintaining integrity. His rules are simple: stay away from pride, keep free from the love of money and flee sexual temptation. Sumrall recently shared those rules with Charisma in his folksy style.

I tell young ministers they have three basic enemies. The first is pride. Sad to say, common folks can hardly reach a pastor with a church of 300. And if he has a congregation of 3000, you can meet the President of the United States quicker than you can meet him. But my door is always open. I am determined to give my life to the 'little people' because I don't need the praises of men. When someone tries to exalt me, I just grin and say, "Son, you're too little to do that." What I want to do at the end of this journey is to hear God say. 'Well done, good and faithful servant'. I believe the way to spiritual success is to keep pride out of your heart.

The second thing I warn young ministers about is material gain. Money has been involved in the problems of many ministers who have fallen into sin. I don't get any salary at Cathedral of Praise. I get two offerings a year - and that's all. I don't get anything from Feed the Hungry or the TV stations. I live exactly like I did when I was a teenager. I just pray to God for what I need, and the Lord has to send it in.

There are no frills at the Cathedral of Praise. The main conference table is chipped, and the furniture is outdated. If the IRS ever investigated this ministry, I thought it would be good that they would find somebody who wasn't just out to make a lot of money. I feel sorry for these pastors who walk around with big gold chains around their necks. They think that speaks of prosperity, but it doesn't. It's just a lust for gain. I warn pastors not to own too much. Though I could, I don't personally own a house, a car or a piece of ground. My church would be just thrilled to death to give me a big salary, but I keep telling them I don't need it. I've got enough until I get to heaven.

The third thing I warn them about is adultery. I tell ministers: Don't go into a room alone with another woman and close the door.

R. T. Kendall, well respected church leader for many decades, has this as his lifetime Bible verse. **How can you believe, who receive honor one from another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God? - John 5:44 NKJV**

God has told his followers to **reign as kings** **not live like kings.** - Romans 5:17. Disciples of Jesus are to live like soldiers, just like Jesus and Paul did. - 2 Timothy 2:3.

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