**9 Ways Leaders Make Themselves Vulnerable to Spiritual Attack**

**By Author Unknown**

New Testament writers warn us again and again about the reality of spiritual attack (Eph. 6:11, 2 Cor 2:11, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8). Based on years of my studying spiritual warfare, here are nine ways I’ve seen leaders allow themselves to be vulnerable to the enemy’s arrows:

We focus on others, often to the neglect of ourselves. We are caregivers, rightly recognizing our responsibility to watch over the souls of others (Heb. 13:17). When we neglect our own spiritual and physical well-being in the process, though, we make ourselves susceptible to the enemy.

We replace spiritual disciplines with ministry activity. Church leaders can always find something else to do. So many are the ministry hours we put in that we’re tempted to remind others of our sacrifice. Too little time is left for personal spiritual disciplines—and the enemy’s target is on our back.

We do ministry in our own power. We know how to do ministry, so we just do it with little praying and less dependence—and few people recognize we lack the power of God. In this case, we’re not only vulnerable to attack; we’re already losing the battle.

We think failure will never happen to us. I know few leaders who readily admit their susceptibility to falling. When our confidence overshadows our recognition of the enemy’s schemes, though, we may be in trouble.

We ignore our “little” sins. Sometimes we give ourselves permission to cross the line into sin. “That joke really isn’t that bad.” “It’s no big deal if I tell a white lie.” When we, in the paraphrased words of Charles Spurgeon, venture into sin where we think the stream is shallow, we soon find ourselves drowning in the enemy’s waters.

We see people as the enemy. To be honest, church people are often problematic. When we see “flesh and blood” as the enemy, though, we open ourselves to the principalities and powers who are the real enemy (Eph. 6:12).

We give too little attention to strengthening our own marriages. Too often, we take our spouses for granted and almost view them only as “resources” to help us do ministry—then we blame them for our own bad choices when we succumb to the enemy.

We minister in the secret places of others’ lives. Ministry is often confessional and personal—intimate, actually. The counseling room is especially private, where sins are admitted and secrets are revealed. The setting is ripe for the enemy’s arrows of pride, immorality, and even more hiddenness.

We have few real friends. We become loners even while we preach relationships and unity in the Body of Christ – and we thus fight spiritual battles alone. That kind of vulnerability can lead to disaster.

If you want to study more about how the enemy attacks leaders, I invite you to check out the new book that Bill Cook of Southern Seminary and I have recently released: Spiritual Warfare in the Storyline of Scripture.

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This article may not be written by an Apostolic author, but it contains many excellent principles and concepts that can be adapted to most churches. As the old saying goes, “Eat the meat. Throw away the bones.”