



SPIRITUAL STORMS OF THE HEART  
*“Five Internal Tests for Today’s Leader”*  
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“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellsprings of life.” (Proverbs 4:23)

There are five tests that every leader eventually faces. Although some struggles can be perceived publicly, they all begin deep inside the soul a leader. It is in the heart and the conscience that we pass or fail these test.

For some, the tests come early in our career....for others, the trials stalk us into our old age. For some, the same tests occur over and over like sheets of rain in a hurricane that seem to never go away. For others, the tests are more isolated events that drop out of nowhere like a raging tornado and randomly wreak havoc of anything in its path. They come at different times and in different doses. But make no mistake; they are storms of dire consequences.

These tests are very dangerous matters of the heart and are as prevalent to today’s business landscape as accounting is to tax season. They are just part of doing everyday life. There is no where we can go and escape them. Why? Because we carry them with us in our soul. These Blizzards, Tornados, Droughts, Hurricanes and Tsunamis are swirling in the inner man. They are like natural disasters waiting to happen. Weathering them is not automatic and a favorable outcome is never guaranteed.

The five tests mentioned below all require the same winning strategy. Success with any of these storms requires a counter intuitive... anti gravitational response. In other words in order to survive these five storms of the heart I must do something other than what feels normal and comes natural to me. When a white water rafter is caught in a suck hole on the backside of a rock he must act counter intuitive. To survive he must remove his life vest and allow the rushing foaming water to thrust him to the river bottom. Only then can he get a firm footing to shoot through the death loop all the way to the surface. Any other move will render the swimmer dead.

These tests are for keeps.

1. Greed- “The temptation to have and hold more and more stuff that I don’t really need.”

Survival Plan-- “*Let Go*”

I must open my hand up and move to a posture of giving and releasing what I own and want and have. Instead of clutching more tightly the stuff that is or could be mine I choose to do the opposite. In one word... I need to *Give*.

Inspirational Role Model—“Mother Teresa”

2. Lust- “The temptation to wander with emotional and physical activity outside my covenant with God and/or my spouse.”

Survival Plan-- “Run Fast”

I must hit the road. We will NEVER be successful coddling lust in our lap. Proverbs says it will always burn us, every time. (Proverbs 6:27). Instead of thinking I can defeat lust or manage my level of involvement, I choose to do the opposite. In one word... I need to *Flee*.

Inspirational Role Model — “ Joseph”

3. Revenge- “The temptation to settle the score or balance the injustice done to me.”

Survival Plan-- “Stand Still”

I must not retaliate and strike back. I must allow God the right of way to settle wrongs done to me. Instead of lashing back or scheming to get even I choose to do the opposite. In one word... I need to *Forgive*.

Inspirational Role Model — “ Job”

4. Independence - “The temptation to fly solo. The feeling that no one can really identify with my world and that I am all by myself to sort and navigate life.”

Survival Plan-- “Lean In”

I must risk leaning in toward someone else with transparency and vulnerability. Instead of leaning out away from others find a person or two that I can open my kimono with and reveal my heart and mind. In one word... I need to *Engage*.

Inspirational Role Model — “Moses”

5. Pride- “The temptation to think that I am the sole cause and source of success, significance and security. The mindset that the world revolves around me.”

Survival Plan-- “Promote Others”

I must acknowledge that I am not the sole cause of my success and I must learn to lift others up as a key part of my success. Instead of sliding into self focus and arranging all of life around me as the center point I choose the opposite. In one word... I need to *Share*.

Inspirational Role Model — “Paul”