

# SCANNING YOUR DASHBOARD

WARNING LIGHTS  
& HOLY HABITS

=====*for*=====

A LEADER'S SOUL

ROWLAND FORMAN

## Dashboard Indicator #3

Am I Proudful, or Humbly Serving Others?

## Caring for Your Own Soul

Effective leaders care deeply for the souls of others. Yet this often comes at the expense of their own soul's well-being—and sometimes that of their family as well.

***Scanning Your Dashboard*** invites you to regularly attend to your inner life. Just as a driver watches the dashboard for warning lights and fuel levels, wise leaders learn to notice what is happening beneath the surface of their lives.

Each **Dashboard Indicator** in this mentoring resource pairs a Warning Light with a Holy Habit—helping you not only to recognize areas of vulnerability, but also to respond with practices that cultivate a healthy, Christ-dependent life.

A dashboard doesn't only warn you when something is wrong—it also reassures you when things are functioning as they should.

**Begin by processing Warning Light #3 and Holy Habit #3 on your own.** Then, if possible, meet with a mentor-friend or small group, to share what the Holy Spirit is bringing to your attention.

**Working with Warning Lights and then Holy Habits, helps you not only to see what you need to work on, but to step into a grace-filled response.**

## WARNING LIGHT #1

### **PRIDE: *Am I too Big for My Boots?***

Pride is elusive. It's far easier to spot in others than in ourselves. Just when you think you're humble, pride sneaks up again—like the case of the pastor whose congregation gave him a badge for being humble and then took it away because he wore it!

Leaders who have lived a lifetime of relative humility can still stumble into pride as they near the finish line. That's why 2 Chronicles 26:15-16 needs to be etched on the mind of every leader:

*“ ... he was greatly helped until he became powerful. But after Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his downfall.”*

King Uzziah enjoyed 52 years of wise and creative leadership. Then one day he presumptuously entered the Temple and acted as though he were a priest. Was it not enough for him that he was a king? At that moment, leprosy broke out on his forehead. He lived as a leper until the day of his death.

John Stott, the esteemed pastor and author observed,

“At every stage of our Christian development and in every sphere of our Christian discipleship, pride is the greatest enemy and humility our greatest friend.”

Why is pridefulness so dangerous—for leaders and for all of us? Proverbs 16:18 warns that pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. 1 Peter 5:5-6 intensifies the warning: that God actively opposes the proud but pours grace into the humble.

So how might pride be showing up in you? Here are some indicators to be aware of.

:

- You don't think you are prideful. Maybe others—but not you!
- You talk more than you listen.
- You fish for compliments and feel deflated when affirmation doesn't come.

Is the warning light of pride blinking on your character dashboard? One of the clearest signs may be what is happening—or not happening—in your prayer life. When prayer shrinks, self-reliance grows. What steps could you take to return to humble dependence before pride hardens in your heart?

**Reflect & Discuss:**

1. Would those closest to you describe you as humble or prideful? What evidence might they point to?
2. More importantly, how do you think God would describe your current posture—self-reliance or humble dependence?
3. Which of these three pride indicators resonated most with you?
  - Thinking you don't struggle with pride.
  - Talking more than listening.
  - Fishing for compliments

**Prayer:**

Gracious and holy God, You dwell with the lowly and revive the contrite in heart. Search my heart and show me where pride has taken root in my words and motives. Teach me again to listen, and depend, and pray. Clothe me with humility so that I will finish well by your grace. Amen

## **HOLY HABIT #1:**

### **HUMILITY: *Becoming More Like Jesus***

We are all infected with pride, to a greater or lesser degree. I know I am. How then can we become like Jesus, the “gentle and lowly” one (Matthew 11:30)?

Humility is elusive! It comes and goes when we least expect it. Just when you think you’ve reached a state of humility, a prideful attitude is very likely to pop up. Like King Uzziah, we may be relatively humble most of the time and be tripped up by pride as the curtain is about to go down on our lives (2 Chronicles 26:3-5; 16-22).

How long might it take to cultivate a habit of humility? The popular rule of three weeks is too short. Several studies suggest it can take around three months to embed a complex habit like humility. In my case it feels more like a lifetime! The 7 Holy Habits in this devotional plan can be embedded into our character and behaviors through a series of practices.

Scripture gives us several glimpses into what humility looks like. Consider these three metaphors: serving others, washing feet, and climbing down.

#### **Serving others**

Waiters in a café for example, are there not to be served, but to serve. When Jesus’ 12 disciples were quarreling about who was the greatest, he said that their rulers lorded it over them, but if they wanted to be great they must become servants, *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many* (Mark 10:43-45).

The following practices are not rules to follow, but postures to try—simple experiments that over time, may shape humility in you:

Practices that May Become Habits:

- When you meet leadership team members (or family members), pause and ask yourself— “How might I serve this person?”
- If an opportunity presents itself, choose a quiet or unseen way to serve, especially when no one will know.

## **Washing Feet**

In the Upper Room, before Jesus made his way to his crucifixion, despite being infinitely greater than every one of his Twelve disciples, he stooped down and washed their dirty feet. This included the feet of Judas who would betray him, and Peter who would deny him (John 13:1-17). What humility! Such grace!

In some cultures, to this day, literal foot washing is still appropriate. For the rest of us, finding ways to do the least enviable, but most refreshing acts of service, is a way in which we can wash one another's feet.

Practices that May Become Habits:

- Look for ways to encourage those you lead, especially if you find them difficult or draining.
- Practice one of the biblical one-anothers, such as praying, forgiving, or encouraging, as intentional acts of "foot-washing."

## **Climbing Down**

We live in a world where people try to climb the leadership ladder. In Philippians 2:5-11, Paul challenges people to be like Jesus who climbed down to serve others. He describes Jesus' steps downward: *He emptied himself* vv.6-7—although he was God, he became one of us and served us. *He humbled himself* v.8—By dying for us on the Cross.

Practices that May Become Habits:

- Notice when your position, title, or reputation influences how you relate to others, and lay them aside when they get in the way of loving service.
- Choose a less prominent place or role as a way of reminding yourself that your security comes from God, not status.

Jesus' Twelve argued among themselves as to who was the greatest. He showed them how to descend into greatness by serving as a humble waiter, encouraging those he led by washing their feet, and climbing down in the sure knowledge that God would exalt him.

## **Reflect & Discuss:**

1. Which of these three metaphors—serving like a waiter, washing feet, or climbing down—most challenges you right now?
2. Where might pride be quietly shaping your leadership decisions or relationships?
3. Which of the suggested “practices that may become habits” could you implement this week?
4. As you reflect on Warning Light # and Holy Habit #3, what has the Holy Spirit been saying to you? What steps will you take?

## **Prayer:**

Lord Jesus, gentle and lowly in heart, I confess that pride still finds a home in me. I want to be seen, affirmed and respected, sometimes more than I want to serve. Teach me the way of humility. Help me to notice where I cling to position. Give me eyes to see simple opportunities to serve. Make me gentler and lowlier like you. I trust you to shape me and lift me up in your time. Amen.

## The 7 Dashboard Indicators

- Indicator #1**      Am I Drifting, or Abiding in Christ?
- Indicator #2**      Am I Praying Less, or Praying More?
- Indicator #3**      Am I Proudful, or Humbly Serving Others?
- Indicator #4**      Am I Running on Empty, or Learning Unforced Rhythms of Grace?
- Indicator #5**      Am I Slipping Morally, or Guarding my Heart?
- Indicator #6**      Am I Isolated, or Investing in Others?
- Indicator #7**      Am I Pretending, or Leading with Integrity?



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