

5 Questions to Ask During a Season of Marathon Ministry

Marathoners often describe hitting the wall as they run. It's a stretch of time when everything in their body hurts and everything in their mind screams, "Stop!" They press through, and the pain lifts. But is "no pain, no gain" a good mantra for Christian leaders?

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- 1. Presence.** Am I actually aware of God's presence? The presence of God isn't an ethereal notion. It's a tangible reality—simultaneously comforting and strengthening—that comes from being with Him. And it's essential to God-ordained progress. Moses wasn't willing to go into the Promised Land without God's literal presence. God said to him, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest" (Ex. 33:14).
- 2. Pause.** Are you pausing in the midst of your work? Did you catch the tail end of God's response to Moses? When God is present, so is His rest. Intentionally pausing with God is one of the most restful and consequently productive activities you can engage in, especially when the heat is on. Open the Word. Pull up a worship YouTube. Get outside in nature. Sit silently with God.
- 3. Pace.** Are you moving along at God's pace? I'm not saying that God operates at one speed. He knows the course and the progress needed for each leg of it. Sometimes He's sprinting, other times He's jogging. And sometimes He's standing. The key is to be in step with Him. It's the only way to be assured that you're functioning in His presence and at His pace.
- 4. Peace.** Are you experiencing God's peace? I don't think any of us actually enjoy stress. We might enjoy the rush of adrenaline that accompanies kingdom-advancing projects. But we don't relish the ongoing pressure. Ongoing peace, by contrast, is deeply satisfying and the chief indicator of a soul anchored in God.

- 5. Priority.** Is your connection with God still your top priority? None of us embrace an important project hoping to lose our workplace intimacy with God. But if you're pressed, in pain, and have no time to be with God—something's gravely amiss. Pull the plug on the project, at least for the time being, and realign yourself with God. No project's accomplishment is worth the diminishment of your abiding relationship with God.

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-Lisa Hosler*

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