

## SELF-LEADERSHIP

### Responsibilities

*'Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because, if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers'* (1 Tim 4:16).

I was recently asked to outline **how I manage my life and time in view of my growing responsibilities**. I hope the following reflections will be helpful!

I recognise **three significant areas of responsibility in my life** – home, King's Church and within Newfrontiers.

- **Home:** includes spending time with Deb, time with the boys, family nights, rest and holidays. I have particular responsibility for the budget.
- **King's:** leading the church, bringing overall vision and direction, preaching responsibilities, planning, preparation, study time, major budgetary decisions and oversight, key staff, e-mails, communications and blogs etc.
- **Newfrontiers:** UK team meetings, Team Leaders, Prayer & Fasting, weekends away, the 11 churches that I oversee and all the teaching that is connected with my involvement with these specific areas.
- Any **spare time** that's left is for golf and taking it easy!

Each of these requires **prioritising** and putting in my diary. I have a **framework of working – a daily pattern, weekly pattern, monthly pattern and an annual pattern**. In order to get the big picture, during the six-weeks over the summer when I take my break (including two weeks planning and preparation) I would put into my diary an outline for the next twelve months.

#### - Home Responsibilities

When it comes to **priorities at home**, these would include days off with Deb, family nights and all holidays. If I can see particular pressure points in my diary, then I will try to include some rest and recovery time. I always have a study week at the beginning of each term – usually the first week in January and a week in April/May.

Deb and I have talked through a pattern for the week which would include at least two evenings in together – one with the boys for a family night (usually Saturday night at the moment) and Monday evening, which is our night. We also have Monday together. Deb works three days a week and we employ a cleaner and a gardener to help us run the house. I see this as a good investment! I also take responsibility for 'big picture' financial matters.

#### - Responsibilities at King's Church and for Newfrontiers

During my study weeks I look at my responsibilities at King's. **Apart from planning for near dates I look at the longer term**, up to 18 months ahead. I also look at my **preaching engagements for the coming term**. I have recently pulled together a team of researchers to help me with **preparing for preaching**. They are given the Bible passages and contexts in which I will be preaching for the term ahead and I hope to receive from them an A4 sheet summary of the passage with key quotes and ideas. So, when I sit down in January and look at my preaching programme through to Easter I will have not only the Bible and my own background

reading and thoughts, I will also have 4 or 5 A4 sheets summarising the key points as these selected researchers see them. That gives me a good resource from which to work. **My aim is to have outlines of all the messages I will preach in that particular term by the end of my study week.**

At King's we like to have the **topics for our preaching series** well in advance – **sometimes up to a year ahead**. Apart from those already mentioned who support my preaching preparation, I have recently set up a new **theological team** to provide me with papers at regular intervals. Creation, the Cross and the end times are currently being prepared and will roll out on the blog in coming months.

As much as possible I try to keep **Wednesdays and Thursdays each week** for my **Newfrontiers' responsibilities**.

### – E-mails, Elders and my diary

**E-mails:** I have taken Driscoll's idea of delegating the filtering of my e-mails to Carol, my PA.

**Elders:** I meet with the Elders **once a month for two hours** and at other occasional meetings when required. We have **two days together once a term** and once a year that time is extended to a **four day retreat** in France when we look at the coming two or three years ahead. Deb and I meet with the **Elders and their wives** for a meal about **once a term**. And on **Tuesday mornings** I meet with **Phil Varley, our Executive Pastor**, who has the responsibility of running King's on a day-to-day basis.

Once I have looked at the year, I **put all my prioritised responsibilities into my diary** so I know that they will not be neglected. Firstly home responsibilities, secondly all those at King's (all Sundays at King's, All Elders' meetings, Trustees' meetings, meetings with key staff with husbands/wives) and thirdly Newfrontiers. This would include coaching days and any teaching and training dates. I list all the churches I am working with and I get some dates that work well for them and for me. Some of these churches I meet with 3 or 4 times a year and others only once – this depends on where they are, how much they need my input and also how much they think I should be involved!

Normally, once all those items are in the diary it's pretty full and I find it easy to say no to other invitations!

### – Typical patterns and my support team

A **typical week** would generally look like this for me:

- **Monday:** day off
- **Tuesday:** King's day. I get up at 7am, have breakfast, pray or read for half an hour and walk to the office. I meet with Phil Varley for half an hour, then lead the staff prayer meeting and may have a follow-up meeting. Increasingly I am not involved in any further meetings and can get onto planning and preparation. In the afternoon I meet people. Tuesday evening could be at home or I might have a meeting to do with my local leadership responsibility.

- **Wednesday and Thursday** are primarily spent in Newfrontiers' activities.
- **Friday:** preparation. I finish at 1pm now on Fridays as we have three meetings on Sundays.
- **Saturday:** I keep free as much as possible
- **Sunday:** three meetings – 9.30, 11.30 and 5.30 – and I attend all of them.

**Monthly pattern:**

I like to look at my diary from a monthly point of view as I find that the weeks tend to run into one another! **It's important to see what's coming up before and after a week otherwise your diary can lose shape quickly.**

**Annual pattern:**

Apart from my **yearly planning in the summer break**, I also **review my planning** in my study weeks in January and April/May.

I recognise that I'm only able to live like this because I have **the support of a fantastic team!** Firstly, **my PA, Carol** is full-time and works just for me. Then the **Eldership Team** – particularly **Phil Varley**, our **Executive Pastor**, who leads the team in my absence. And I also have a writer (**Val Taylor**) who helps me with the blogs.

I have lots of support - essential for all Lead Elders! I would heartily endorse the words of John Maxwell – '**Those closest to the leader determine the success of the leader.**' (from *'Developing the Leader within You'*)