LEADING TRANSFORMATION #63:

THE PRICE OF CHANGE

LEADING CHANGE AS CATALYST OR A CONSUMABLE

Catalysts accelerate chemical reactions. Inhibitors or Retardants reduce the rate of chemical reactions. In Change Leadership, leaders can serve as Catalysts or Inhibitors depending on how they influence the rate of change. Another characteristic of Catalysts is that they are not consumed by chemical reactions. Catalysts in change leadership are also not consumed by the change they lead. They would remain and be available for other change initiatives. However, there are instances where change leaders are consumed by the very change they lead. In such cases, instead of leading as Catalysts, they lead as Consumables. It is far better, whenever possible, to lead change as a Catalyst; accelerating the rate of change whilst remaining identifiable and available after the change.

In some cases, this is simply just not possible. Some changes call for the ultimate price; being consumed by the change. It is important to be aware of the price of a change initiative before venturing into it.

Here are examples of change leaders who were aware that their very lives could be consumed by the change they felt called to champion.

NELSON MANDELA

“I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. IT IS AN IDEAL WHICH I HOPE TO LIVE FOR AND TO ACHIEVE. BUT IF NEEDS BE, IT IS AN IDEAL FOR WHICH I AM PREPARED TO DIE.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING JNR.

“We’ve got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn’t matter with me now. Because I’ve been to the mountaintop. I won’t mind. LIKE ANYBODY, I WOULD LIKE TO LIVE A LONG LIFE. LONGEVITY HAS ITS PLACE. BUT I’M NOT CONCERNED ABOUT THAT NOW. I JUST WANT TO DO GOD’S WILL. And he’s allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I’ve looked over, and I’ve seen the Promised Land. I MAY NOT GET THERE WITH YOU, BUT I WANT YOU TO KNOW TONIGHT THAT WE AS A PEOPLE WILL GET TO THE PROMISED LAND. So, I’m happy tonight. I’m not worried about anything. I’m not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.” JESUS CHRIST “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and TO GIVE HIS LIFE AS A RANSOM FOR MANY.” (Mark 10: 45) “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” (Matthew 26: 39)

The “cup” was death. Between the Father and the Son, it was the only way to reconcile sinful humans with a holy God.

CHANGE BEGINS WITH YOU

The following is a quote from an unknown monk, around 1100 A.D.

“When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world. I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my nation. When I found I couldn't change the nation, I began to focus on my town. I couldn't change the town and as an older man, I tried to change my family. Now, as an old man, I realize the only thing I can change is myself, and suddenly I realize that if long ago I had changed myself, I could have made an impact on my family. My family and I could have made an impact on our town. Their impact could have changed the nation and I could indeed have changed the world.”

REMEMBER THIS: YOU HAVE NOT STARTED LIVING UNTIL YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO DIE FOR.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What change do you sense called to make great sacrifices for?

2. What is the ultimate price for the change?

3. What preparations do you need to make in order to make the necessary sacrifices for the change?