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Editor's Notes

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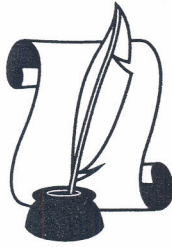
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Editor's Note

Bob Chisholm

A significant difference can separate two individuals with the same years of experience. Both have put in the same amount of time. Both may have had the same kinds of experiences. But one has found depth, and the other has not grown beyond the surface of life.

Our western culture produces large numbers of books and materials designed to help us organize our outer lives — our calendars, our careers, our homes. Seminars teach us how to save time, work faster, combine tasks, and increase productivity. Technology has provided lap-top computers, personal phones, project planners, beepers, calendars, tickler files, and voice mail. Our world is good at equipping our outer lives. But very little speaks directly to the inner life. Ironically, keeping pace with the flood of self-help books and high-tech equipment is a growing epidemic of depression and personal emptiness. The more we aim at organizing our outer lives, the less it seems our inner lives are nurtured.

“Burnout” or “rustout” are frequent consequences of living in such rapidly changing times. “Burnout” brings to mind activity, speed, busyness. “Rustout” pictures apathy, laziness, and boredom. They are clearly at opposite ends of the scale, but they are nevertheless connected. They share a common origin. Both extremes suffer from the same inner decay. Nothing is growing inside.

For too many Christians, the outside can be thoroughly in order while the inside is on the brink of ruin. On the other hand, there are Christians whose outer worlds are falling apart. Health is failing, business is slow, and finances are tight. Outside, the body is wrinkled, the voice is cracked, and the joints are worn out. But inside, they are strong and renewed. There is a text that describes such a life — fragile and uncertain on the outside, but mighty in spirit on the inside.

*Therefore we do not lose heart. Though **outwardly** we are wasting away, yet **inwardly** we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary,*

but what is unseen is eternal (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

Our desperate need is not greater intelligence or more skillful technique. Our greater need is depth — to move beneath the surface to deeper living.

Through the centuries, Christians have used various principles, disciplines, and practices to move beneath the surface. This issue of **Leaven** explores several of these spiritual tools. We appreciate the consideration and reflection given to each article and book review. May God root our inner selves deep in the soil of his life.

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers (Psalm 1:1-3).