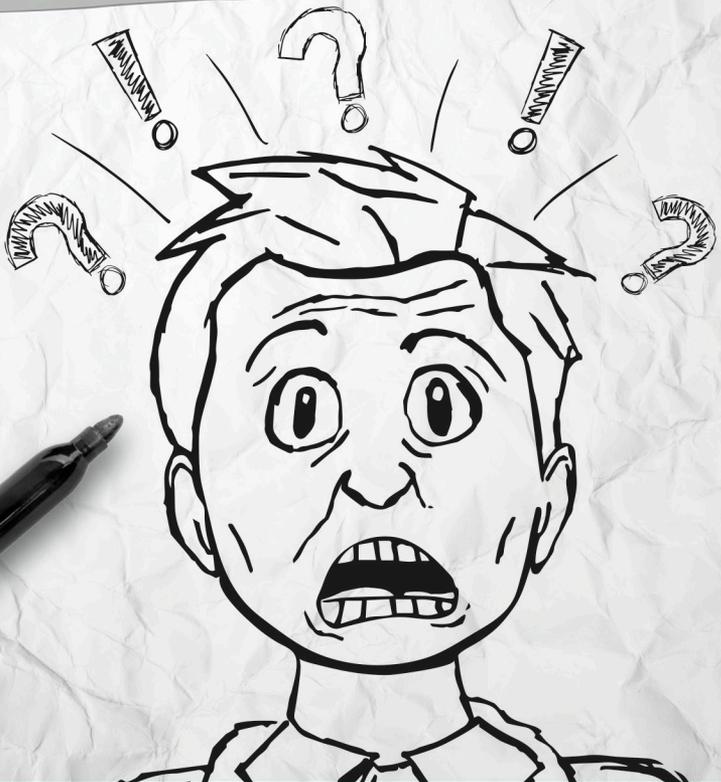


HELP!

I'M IN CHARGE

Stuff Leadership Experts Didn't Tell You



Rod Loy

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with Becca Winslow

Influence[®]
resources

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Are You Willing to Pay the Price?

One of the questions people often ask me is, “How can I succeed?” That’s quickly followed by several other questions:

“Why do some people seem to get all the breaks?”

“Why can’t I accomplish the things I want to?”

“Why do some people accomplish remarkable things, and other people don’t?”

I generally answer those questions with two questions of my own. First, “Are you doing what you love and loving what you do?” When you meet someone who’s a success, most of the time you’ll discover they love what they do. A gifted pianist practices the piano five hours a day, because they love to play the piano. A pastor who is making a difference in the community loves working with people and leading the church. A skilled artist loves painting.

Here’s a powerful principle: *You’ll never fulfill your destiny doing something you despise.* When you love what you do, your chance to do it well is much greater. Not only will you do it well, but your passion will make you a contagious leader. When you love what you’re doing, God will bring other people around you who will love working alongside you.

On the other hand, if you continually do things you dislike, there’s a risk you’ll eventually compromise your integrity. Why? If

you don't like what you're doing, you'll be tempted to take shortcuts and take the easy way out.

Are there parts of my job I don't enjoy? Sure. There are moments in pastoring and leading people that bring frustration instead of satisfaction. There are parts of the job that make me tired and angry. But, for the most part, what I do makes my heart sing. I look forward to getting up in the morning and going to the church. I look forward to weekend services with great anticipation. I enjoy leading and working with a team. I love working with people as they progress through their spiritual journey.

The second key question I ask people is, "Are you willing to pay the price of success?" It may seem like some people get all

the lucky breaks, but that isn't true.

Over the years, I've learned a key to doing great things for God: *You must be willing to pay the price.*

**Everything worth
having costs you
something.**

This is the part of leadership and success people don't like to talk about. This isn't the fun part. We all

enjoy the rewards. We look forward to the payoff. But this is the hard part: What's the cost associated with pursuing your vision? The question is not, "What do you want to do?" The question is, "What will it take for you to do it?" Any vision worth pursuing demands sacrifice and risk.

Doing great things for God will always take you outside your comfort zone. There are many unknowns associated with leadership and pursuing a vision. There are countless things that can go wrong. For a leader, risk and sacrifice are always associated with a vision. If God has birthed something in your heart, the day will

come when you must sacrifice to achieve it. You'll have to make that sacrifice with no guarantee of success. If the cost and the risk cause you to become uncertain in your commitment, you'll fail. Furthermore, uncertainty in a leader is always magnified in the heart of a follower. If you aren't sure if the sacrifice is worth the vision, the people around you won't be willing to sacrifice for that vision.

We don't like to talk about paying a price. We like to talk about receiving rewards. It's much more popular to focus on what we'll get, what we'll accomplish, and what victory we'll experience. But the fact is, there will be a price to pay. If you want to make a difference, if you want to fulfill God's calling for your life, if you want to be a leader, you have to be willing to pay the price. This is the difference between changing the world and living your life without impact.

Some Basic Principles of Sacrifice

Everything worth having costs something.

There's a price to pay for everything you do. If you refuse to work, you'll go hungry. If you want to be the leader, you'll have to work more than other people. Nothing is free.

You might be thinking, *That's not true. Not everything has a cost. Salvation is free.* Not true. While salvation is free to you, it came at a high price! "You are not your own; you were bought at a price" (1 Corinthians 6:19–20).

The better the desired result, the higher the price.

My dream car is a Porsche Cayenne Turbo with 550 horsepower, 567-foot-pound of torque, and an 8-speed Tiptronic transmission. It's a wonderfully practical SUV that starts at \$125,650.

You'd think for that price I would get all the options, but I recently went on the Porsche website and configured it exactly the way I want it and discovered that the price was just over \$168,000! If you want the Porsche Cayenne Turbo with all the great options, that's what you must pay.

If you want to spend less money, you can buy a Smart Car.

If you aren't willing to pay the price, you must adjust your expectations.

The Smart Car looks like one of those things you buy your three-year-old to pedal around the living room. It's not going to attract attention or win any races, but you can buy a Smart Car for just under \$15,000.

There's no doubt the Porsche is a much better vehicle than the Smart Car. But the Porsche will cost you much, much more. In fact, you can buy eleven Smart Cars for the price of the Porsche Cayenne Turbo! The nicer the car—or the better the desired result—the higher the price.

The more you want to achieve, the higher the price you'll have to pay. The bigger your dreams and visions, the higher the price tag. Do you have big goals? If so, the price will be high. That's true no matter what you want.

- Olympians train for a lifetime.
- A surgeon spends over a decade in training.
- A concert violinist practices hundreds of hours every month for years.
- A pastor must live a life of integrity—under constant scrutiny—regardless of the circumstances.

The better the desired result, the higher the price. If you aren't willing to pay the price, you must adjust your expectations.

Those around you must understand the price and be willing to pay the price.

It isn't wise to assume others will automatically understand the price you're willing to pay. Those around you must understand clearly why the price is worth paying, and it's your job to help them understand that. You have to sell the results, the vision, and the dream.

When I hear a spouse complain about the time-commitment their spouse's dream requires, I know the spouse either doesn't understand the price or isn't willing to pay the price. If the people closest to you aren't willing for you to pay the price, you won't be able to pay it. I've watched many people fail to achieve their dreams simply because their spouse wasn't willing to pay the price.

I thank God for my wife, Cindy. I'm not willing to sacrifice my family for the ministry, but my family has always understood that there will be sacrifices in the ministry. We pay the price together. Cindy has never complained about what my ministry requires. Not once. Because she decided the price is worth paying, she's an invaluable partner and a powerful ally in achieving the dream. What we gain for the Kingdom is worth the price we pay together.

Never desire someone else's accomplishments until you first discover the price they paid.

Before you say you want to accomplish what someone else has accomplished, first determine the price they paid to achieve those accomplishments.

It's foolish to desire something without knowing the price. If you want a Porsche Cayenne Turbo, find out what it costs and decide if it's worth it to you. If you want what someone else has, it's likely you'll have to pay the price they have paid.

I've had people tell me, "Rod, you were just lucky. You had the right relationship with key mentors. Without that, you wouldn't have learned everything you've learned."

I wasn't lucky. At the age of sixteen I was attending Calvary Temple in Irving, Texas. I wanted my pastor, J. Don George, to be my mentor. Pastor George was leading an extremely large church. There was no reason for him to hang out with a sixteen-year-old kid! I knew that, so I looked for a way I could serve him so he would want to invest in me. When I discovered that he took all three of his family cars to the car wash every Saturday, I volunteered to do that for him. From the time I was sixteen until I was twenty-one, I took all three of his cars to the car wash—every Saturday. I never told him, "Sorry, I just can't make it today." Every week for six years, I took responsibility to see that his cars were clean.

It took several hours every Saturday. Often when I returned from the car wash with the last car, Pastor George would say, "Hey Rod, come in here and sit down." He would be doing the final edit on his sermon for the next morning and would talk about it with me. Other times, he took me to basketball games and football games. I spent hundreds of hours being mentored by a great leader, but I wasn't lucky! I paid a price for that relationship. I paid a price for the mentoring. It's foolish to desire someone else's accomplishments, unless you first discover the price they've paid.

High ambitions and low commitment equal foolish ambition.

In Luke, chapter 18, we find the story of the rich young ruler. As Jesus started on His way, a man ran up to Him, fell on his knees, and said:

“Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

“Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: ‘You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.’”

“All these I have kept since I was a boy,” he said.

When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. (Luke 18:18-23)

That’s one of the saddest stories in the Bible. The rich young ruler could have become a close follower of Jesus. He could have been an eyewitness to incredible miracles and become a leader in the Early Church . . . but none of that happened. He’s included in the Bible only to serve as a negative example of someone who wasn’t willing to pay the price.

The rich young ruler had lofty ambitions, but he wasn’t willing to pay the price to achieve those ambitions. It’s foolish to think you’re smart or special enough to accomplish wonderful

things without paying a great price. No one ever has. You won't either.

Your dream may be exciting, but if you aren't willing to pay the accompanying price, it's not a dream . . . it's a fantasy. If you want to have a great marriage, there's a price to pay. Are you willing to pay the price? If you want to be a doctor or play in the NBA, there's a price to pay. If you want to be a missionary whose ministry changes the world, there's a price to pay. The higher your goal and the greater the commitment required, the more intensely you must be committed to pay the price.

You can detect a person's destiny by the price they're willing to pay.

We once had a staff member who complained about how hard our team worked. That let me know he wasn't destined for greatness unless he changed his willingness to pay the price. You can spot this early in life. Thousands of little boys say, "I want to play in the NBA." But only a few of them practice six hours a day. Those are the ones who have a chance to fulfill their dream. You can detect their destiny by the price they're willing to pay.

Recently, I spoke at a large conference. At the end of my first session, I had a line of people ask me to mentor them. So, at the start of my second session, I said, "I won't mentor anyone unless they first commit to read twenty-four books a year. Because if you won't read (or listen to) at least two books a month, you're not willing to pay a high enough price for me to invest in you." At the end of that session the line had vanished. No one was willing to pay the price. You can detect someone's future by the price they're willing to pay.

The Bible uses a flattering term for people who aren't willing to pay the price for their dreams: They're called "sluggards." I know that sounds harsh, but it's not my word! Not only does Proverbs describe these individuals as so lazy that they turn on their beds "as a door turns on its hinges" (26:14), but it also points out that because of their unwillingness to work, the sluggard's dream actually becomes their downfall: "The craving of the sluggard will be the death of him, because his hands refuse to work" (21:25). On the other hand, those who are willing to pay the price will reap the rewards: "A sluggard's appetite is never filled, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied" (13:4). Do you want your dream "fully satisfied"? Be diligent. Pay the price—and keep paying the price.

Your dream may be exciting, but if you aren't willing to pay the accompanying price, it's not a dream . . . it's a fantasy.

If you complain about the price, you won't pay it for long.

Not only must you be willing to pay the price, you must be willing to continue paying the price. When I hear someone complain about how hard they work, I think, *Most likely they'll never accomplish wonderful things.*

I recently watched an episode of *Shark Tank*. One of the sharks, Robert Herjavec, told an entrepreneur that he only slept four hours a night because he would rather be rich than rested. While I may not think his goal is admirable, his commitment to it certainly is!

At our church we have a group of volunteers who make an eight-year commitment to be class pastors. They lead and pastor one class from sixth grade until their first year of college! Being a class pastor is the longest and most difficult commitment anyone at our church makes. It's spiritually, emotionally, and physically demanding, but you never hear our class pastors complain. They knew hard work was part of the deal when they agreed to be a pastor, and their desire to see young people grow into mature, life-long followers of Jesus makes all the work worth it. That's the price they're willing to pay.

Everyone who has accomplished great things for God has paid an extraordinary price.

Paul wrote much of the New Testament and was the key missionary who launched the Early Church. Under his leadership, the gospel spread across the known world. Paul did amazing things for the kingdom of God, but he paid a high price.

Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without

food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. (2 Corinthians 11:24-28)

Esther was an orphan during the Persian Empire who—contrary to the Hollywood version of her story—was crowned queen after being forcibly taken from her home as a young woman and trafficked to the king as a concubine. In the middle of this hardship, God asked her to take a stand for her people, the Jews, because the king's decree threatened to annihilate them. Esther would have to confess that she, herself, was a Jew and approach the king, unbidden—an offense punishable by death. Talk about a high price! But Esther looked beyond herself to the hardship of her people and took the risk, not only saving herself but her people.

Moses gave up everything he knew and did things that stretched him entirely out of his comfort zone to obey God and lead the Jewish people out of slavery.

Mary—young and unwed—gave up her good name and reputation to become God's instrument to bring His Son into the world.

Many years ago, a South African missionary couple went to work among the Somali people of northern Kenya. They went to a town named Garissa where they lived and worked among the people. After living there several years, their baby son, Hendrick, was born.

Gradually, Hendrick developed a mysterious illness. He became sicker and sicker, and finally died at the age of two. Through a series of events the parents discovered Hendrick had slowly been poisoned to death by people in the Somali community

who were opposed to the church and wanted the missionaries to leave. Their son was killed by the people to whom they ministered.

At Hendrick's funeral, his father said to the Muslim leaders in the community, "You think we're going away, but we're not. Every time you walk by this grave, it will remind you there was a father who loved you enough to let his son die here so you can know the love of Jesus."

A couple of years ago I stood at that grave. Tears poured down my face as I thought about the sacrifice that family made to share Jesus. They paid an incredibly high price. As I wept and prayed, I was challenged and convicted by the question: "What is Jesus worth to *me*? What price am *I* willing to pay?"

Rachel is twenty years old. Last summer she spent two months in an incredibly dangerous place, living among an unreached people group who are known as terrorists who hate Americans. Rachel lived in a slum, walked through dangerous streets every day, and shared Jesus with people who had never heard about His love.

I interviewed Rachel in our Wednesday night service for students. I asked her, "Why? Why would you go to a difficult, dangerous place where people hate you?"

Her reply was powerful. "What's the worst thing that could happen to me? They could kill me? If they did that, I'd be in heaven with Jesus for all eternity. But if they die, they won't have that privilege—unless someone is willing to go and tell them."

The room was silent. Then Rachel added, "Jesus is worth it."

Rachel is willing to pay a high price. Now you may think she's just young and reckless, or you may think that as her spiritual leader I have a responsibility to discourage such an extreme perspective. What you don't see, and what Rachel understands, is that

her willingness is merely a refusal to limit God by shrinking back from the high price of obedience.

Everyone who has accomplished great things for God has paid an extraordinary price. You won't accomplish great things without paying a great price.

The people who work with you will never pay a higher price than you.

Don't expect the people in your organization to be radically committed when you're not. Don't expect your kids' commitment to be any higher than yours. Don't expect your family or your followers to pay a price you're not willing to pay.

I work the most hours in our organization. Why? Because the leader pays the highest price. Your children, your coworkers, and your followers are watching to see what price you pay. If you want to lead, you must be willing to pay the price—and pay it first.

When we needed to open more parking at our church, I moved my parking spot. I put up a "Reserved for Pastor" sign at the farthest spot in the most remote lot. I paid guys to come paint over the reserved spaces close to the building, and the other pastors joined me in parking half a mile away. We did that because we knew we had to pay the price if we were going to ask others to pay it. If you want to lead, there's a price to pay. Leaders who pay the price produce followers who pay the price.

You'll be rewarded according to the price you're willing to pay, not just according to your ability.

Think of the famous Bible story of David and Goliath. Could other people have killed the giant Goliath? There were probably

better marksmen who were more skilled at the slingshot than the shepherd boy David. Someone else probably could have killed Goliath, but no one else did. Why? Because they weren't willing to take the risk. David was willing to pay a price no one else was willing to pay.

Do you want to get promoted on your job? Do you want to receive a raise? Do you want to accomplish great things? Pay the highest price!

I started working at my church when I was eighteen years

old. One of the first things I did was figure out what time the pastor arrived at the church. As soon as I learned it, I made sure to get there at least five minutes before him every day—including Sunday. For all he knew, I got there two hours before him! I didn't care. I just wanted to be there first. I wanted him to see my willingness to pay the price. I was surrounded by far more talented people,

There are lots of talented people who never accomplish anything because they're simply not willing to pay the price.

but no one was more willing to pay the price. My reward was great! I earned the trust and respect of my leader. It was well worth the price.

The price you pay is more important than the talent you possess.

Ability isn't enough. There are lots of talented people who never accomplish anything because they're simply not willing to pay the price. I could introduce you to a lot of talented failures.

In ministry, I can introduce you to incredibly talented people who are doing very little for God. They simply aren't willing to pay the price required for success—whether that's time, effort, or simply getting out of bed.

Years ago, I sat at a restaurant with a friend of mine. He was the most phenomenally talented guy I've ever met. He could do anything . . . absolutely anything. He was smart, witty, funny, talented, and charismatic. He had it all. I looked at him and said, "You've got more talent in your little finger than I have in my whole body, but you'll never achieve what I'll achieve because you're not willing to pay the price." Sadly, I was right. His life has demonstrated that. Twenty years later, he still has extraordinary talent, and he's still not willing to pay a high price. He's an incredibly talented failure. Talent may open the door but paying the price will keep you there.

Those who are willing to pay a high price will always be criticized by those who are not.

Why? Because it makes the critics feel insecure. Your willingness exposes their unwillingness, so they look for things to criticize. The higher the price you pay, the more opposition you can expect. People don't want you to be an extraordinary world-changer. They want to limit your vision and limit your dream. They want you to be just like them: average. They don't want you to achieve great things because they haven't achieved them. Pay the price anyway. Dare to be more than average!

Take a hard look at the negative, critical people you know. Have you got one in mind? Good. Let me ask you a couple of questions about them.

What have they done for God?

What have they accomplished?

What degree of success have they achieved?

I've never met a negative person who's made a significant impact for good. Your critics are exactly that—critics. Instead of making a difference, they look for ways to talk you out of making a difference. Why would you let foolish critics discourage you from making a difference? Do great things for God—in spite of the critics!

Always determine the price you are willing to pay.

Would you go to a car dealer, pick out car, and say, "I'll just pay whatever you want me to pay. You pick it. I don't even need to see the price." You would never do that. If you're smart, you go to the showroom with a maximum price in mind. Then all you have to do is determine if the dream car is worth the price. If it's not, then you adjust your car selection to match the price you're willing to pay.

Years ago, Cindy and I went to the Olympic training center in Colorado Springs. It's an amazing place. We weren't on a tour; instead, we just walked around the facility with a couple of friends. (Wow, security sure is different now!) We stood at a window and looked in the gym where the women's gymnastics team was practicing. One of the coaches came to the door, opened it, and said, "You can come in if you promise not to make any noise. You can't talk or ask questions. You can just sit there and watch."

We sat just off the edge of the mat and watched one gymnast work on her floor routine. She was working on one position:

the angle of her foot when she landed at the end of a run. For one hour that was all she did. Over and over and over again she worked on the angle of that foot. I'm not a gymnastics enthusiast, but I was amazed.

When we were done we walked out of the Olympic training center and there in front of us was a countdown clock to the next Olympics. It showed 1,008 days. That gymnast's event was 1,008 days away, and she was working all day on the angle of her foot. I was awestruck at the extraordinary price she was willing to pay to achieve her dream.

Over two-and-a-half years later, Cindy and I watched on TV as that gymnast won an Olympic medal. Her routine looked effortless and natural—and the angle of her foot on the landing was perfect!

Always determine the price you're willing to pay. What is it worth to you to be the best? What price are you willing to pay to take the gospel to people who have never heard or to build a business that makes a difference? Decide in advance what sacrifices you are willing to make.

Bless those who pay the price with you and keep them in your life.

Along the way God will send people who will willingly join you in paying the price. Bless them, don't ever forget them, and do everything you can to keep them in your life.

As a young leader, I foolishly thought there would be an unending supply of these people, that there would always be others willing to pay the price with me. I've learned differently. There have been those I thought would pay the price, but it didn't turn

out that way. There were others I should have kept in close relationship. Bless those who pay the price with you and do whatever it takes to keep them in your life.

Don't disdain or be frustrated with the rare leader who candidly communicates the price.

Jesus was an amazing leader. When He gave the marching orders to His disciples, He communicated the price in a powerful way:

“Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.” (Matthew 24:9–13)

Understand, these were the guys Jesus recruited to start the church. This was their pep talk! Jesus clearly identified the price for them.

You can almost imagine the disciples saying, “Whoa! Hold on! Persecuted and put to death? You haven't really mentioned that before!” Jesus communicated the price, but then He let His followers know what would happen because they were willing to pay it:

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” (Matthew 24:14)

There are rare leaders who candidly communicate the price. They know what it takes, and they communicate the price others will have to pay. Ultimately, that kind of leader attracts incredible followers. They may not have the biggest group, but they have an incredibly committed team!

Do you want to follow a great leader? Follow one who doesn't sell you on false optimism but instead says, "This will be the hardest thing you'll ever do in your life. You'll be criticized. People are going to turn their backs on you. You're going to be hurt. Your feelings will be hurt. This will be hard. It's going to take a huge amount of time, energy, and effort. But when you finish, you'll have changed the world. You'll have made a difference for eternity."

The greatest leader in the history of the world was Jesus. He selected a handful of misfits who didn't have any track record of speaking or leading: tax collectors, fishermen, and common people. Those were the people Jesus chose to mentor, and the people who changed the world. We still read their stories today!

The most incredible leader of all time, Jesus paid the ultimate price. The price wasn't a surprise to Him. He determined ahead of time the price was worth it. He determined you were worth saving, that your salvation was worth His life.

If you want to do amazing things for God, if you want to make a difference, if you want your life to count, if you want to reach your friends for Jesus, you'll have to pay a price. You can do it with God's help. The question is: Will you? Your willingness to pay the price will determine the answer. The price you pay will determine the greatness you achieve.

Stuff to consider . . .

1. What is your dream? What will it cost you? What price are you not willing to pay? Why/why not?

2. Is there a dream in your heart that hasn't caught traction? Chances are, you haven't identified a price you would pay to move toward that dream. Make a list of the personal sacrifices you could make, information you could learn, skills you could refine, gaps you could fill in the life of a mentor around you in exchange for access—anything and everything you could do right now to move forward.

3. If you're a team leader, consider whether you've adequately sold your vision and dream to your team. What could you do to reestablish the dream?

About the Author

Rod Loy has been in full-time pastoral ministry for thirty-two years. He is currently senior pastor at First Assembly of God in North Little Rock, Arkansas, a 106-year-old church. In the last fifteen-plus years, under Rod's leadership, the church has grown to over 5,500 in average weekly attendance on nine campuses and over twenty thousand attending through their online campus every week (Firstnlr.tv).

Rod is also the director of Strategic Initiatives for Project Rescue, a ministry that rescues women and children from human trafficking.

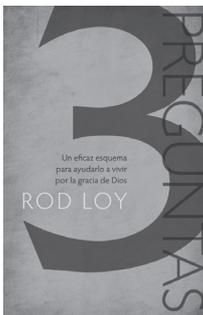
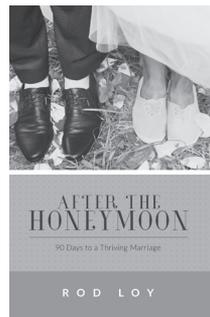
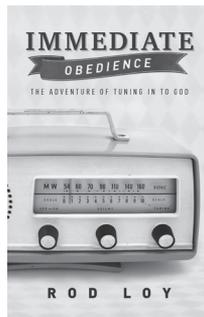
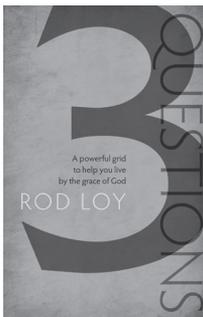
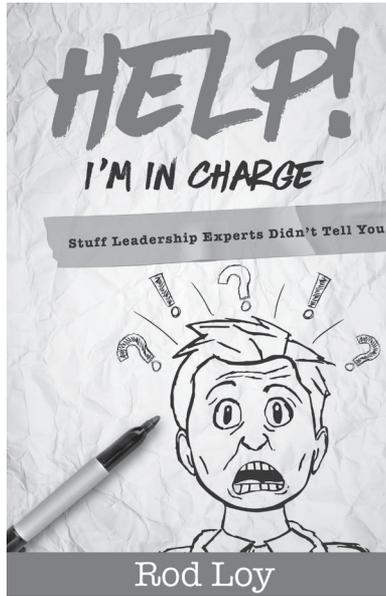
His passion for missions has taken him to over forty different countries. First Assembly gives over a million dollars to missions every year and has helped to plant more than 1,100 churches in sixty-three nations.

He is the author of *3 Questions*, *Immediate Obedience*, and *After the Honeymoon*.

Rod's unique approach to leadership has led him to adventures in the real world, including working as a volunteer lifeguard at a water park. A former children's pastor, Rod has helped develop the Faith Case® curriculum for children and is still actively involved with kids. In fact, his office is in the preschool department!

He and his wife, Cindy, have been married for thirty years and have two sons: Tyler and his wife, Emilie, and Parker and his wife, Meredith. On February 21, 2018, Tyler and Emilie blessed Rod and Cindy with their first granddaughter, Evie Brooke Loy. Rod's social media is filled with pictures of her!

The Loys live in North Little Rock, Arkansas.



For more information about this book and others by Rod Loy, visit MyHealthyChurch.com

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Rod Loy has been in full-time pastoral ministry for more than thirty-two years. He is currently senior pastor at First Assembly of God in North Little Rock, Arkansas, which has grown to over 5,500 in weekly attendance on ten campuses plus more than 25,000 joining in through their online campus. First Assembly gives over one million dollars to missions every year and has helped to plant more than 1,100 churches in sixty-three nations. Rod is the author of *Immediate Obedience*, *3 Questions*, and *After the Honeymoon*. He and his wife, Cindy, have two sons and daughters-in-law, and one granddaughter, Evie Brooke. Rod and Cindy live in North Little Rock, Arkansas.

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