



# Two Humility Reminders for the Highly Competent

Mark Carter & Gary Ricci

Welcome to BLP. Today, Pastor Carter interviews Gary Ricci, founding Pastor of New Hope Christian Community Church in Round Lake, Illinois.

In 2009, Gary was sent from his Associate Pastor position at NorthBridge church in Antioch to start New Hope. Coincidentally the same summer Carter planted his new church, about a block away.

In this episode, Carter and Gary discuss how to remain humble as a leader, keeping the focus where it belongs.

1) You need this.

- **Beware of blind spots.** // With success, it's all too easy to give yourself the glory. Everything may be going well and you're getting even receiving compliments over other pastors, but don't let the admiration of others go to your head. The draw to compete with, and 'win one over on', other pastors can lead a belief that your strengths are more important, inflating your ego. Pay attention and don't give in to the desire to be better than another person.
- **Illusion of self-sufficiency.** // You'll no doubt be supported by a team of other leaders, staff and maybe other pastors, all with different strengths than yours. Because your weaknesses are balanced and filled by the strengths of others, it doesn't mean you don't have weaknesses. When you think *your* strengths are the most important strengths and *your* weaknesses are the least important; it's all too easy to overlook the contribution of others and inflate your own worth to the organization/church. Don't focus only on what you do, but appreciate others' strengths and remember your strengths don't make you better than anyone else.
- **Face your weaknesses.** // There will be areas where you're less competent and need help, we all have weaknesses. When things aren't going well, and you're hit with on-going challenges, take time to acknowledge and be honest about how your own weaknesses contributed. Examine whether your confidence is built on what *you* can do versus what the *Lord* can do. When you rely and try to build success only upon your own skills and strengths, you'll find you fall short, we all do. Realize what you need is the supernatural, not natural. Unity and vision must be Holy-spirit led; Jesus needs to work through the church, it's foundational. Further, scripture is your ultimate guide, spend time with the Lord, in the word, and pray and listen for wisdom.
- **Character matters.** // Even if you have all the pre-requisites for your position, on paper, your character has to be there too. Failure is part of the humbling process. If you believe the successes you see are because of only you, alternatively you'll believe the failures are also because of you. This thinking can bring you down very quickly. Or, you may blame others that your plan wasn't carried out exactly according to your directions. Depend on Jesus and realize



none of us are competent, success comes from the Lord. He grows us through our failures. Acknowledging and valuing the gifts the Lord has instilled in others, aids in your humility journey. Ask yourself if, "Am I here to support others, and make it about them, or make it about me?" As you come to the end of yourself, pray for the Lord to bring people to the church. Let the Lord write his name on it, give Him the glory. This is the Lord's church, remember that He is planting it.

- **Allow others to speak into your life.** // Intentionally seek out wise mentors, put yourself around people who are smarter than you, better than you, people who will tell you the truth even if it's hard. You'll be humbled and you'll also benefit from their experience and perspective. God speaks through other people.
- **Grow through sanctification.** // The stopping points in the church may be due to stopping points in your own character. Work on areas of sin and blindness and when a trial comes, bring it to the Lord and ask, "How do I need to grow?" God says he will discipline us, and it's good. God gives grace to the humble.

2) God is strong.

- **Be people-supporting, not people-pleasing.** // Don't exist to impress people. Don't focus on complements, but instead, focus on people. It's not your church, it's God's church. Move from being self-focused: impressing and accomplishing, to others-focused: affirming and encouraging. God is strong, you are not, get your confidence in the right person. God will put the spotlight on Himself, where it belongs. The desire for excellence is right, but the direction can be wrong. Share in God's confidence and victory, after all, Jesus shares His resurrection with us! Keep your life within His life, it's God's life and glory, invite Him into your life to shape you. Don't focus on yourself, on being competent, Jesus has it covered. Colossians 3:1 (NIV) *Since then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, not on earthly things.*
- **Coaching needs to come from relationship.** // If you're a young leader, show grace to your older predecessors and allow them to make mistakes, allow them space to grow. If you're part of an older generation, know that most younger leaders are open to coaching, but only from those who love them, relationship needs to come first.



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