A Year with Andrew Selley – Part 2

Lukas Nakos 13 June 2019



In **Part 1** of this article, I shared about how I had felt the Lord's leading to move from the Isle of Man to Cape Town to serve Andrew Selley, having seen the positive changes in Living Hope Church as a result of Andrew and the Four12 team's input. I was in business for 16 years on the Isle of Man, serving Jonathan and the other IOM elders part-time, and I've now had the privilege of being Andrew's PA and want to share some of the things I've learned from him to encourage and inspire you, as I have been.

Living a Wisely Balanced Life

I've seen that despite having a huge vision, and great responsibility, Andrew is not 'driven'. He's neither success nor growth orientated. Of course he's joyful when the church is healthy and when people come into the church family, but he's primarily following God's heart, morning by morning, and walking out of the passion of the vision and purpose that God has given – the health of the church in the nations.

He's living out of the overflow of his relationship with Jesus. I've seen him working hard, as unto the Lord, enduring, persevering, being all things to all men, to win them, BUT I have also seen him 'finding oxygen' again. Like when you are about to get hit by a set of huge waves while surfing, trying to find where your next breath of air will come from is vital. I once read a book about balance, which started with the story of the author speaking to the father of a famous acrobatic/tight rope-walking family about how to achieve balance, and he says, 'There is no such thing as perfect balance.' You are always leaning one way for some time and then turning to lean the other way in order to stay on the tight rope. It is all about purposeful 'over balance'

one way, and then the other. I have seen this lived out in an amazing way in Andrew's life.

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What does this look like for him practically? Time working (hard), both day and night, often with little or no rest – through camps, conferences – sacrificing fellowship, meals, family, personal preferences etc. to bring something that will take the church forward, in a way that they can grasp, and in a way that persuades and captures their hearts. There is also the constant weight of responsibility of carrying the church (JoshGen) and a movement of churches (Four12) and FORSA, which does mean sleepless nights of prayer, thinking and considering various needs. Andrew's work life is a combination of time with the Lord, mediating, persuading, selling, teaching line upon line, encouraging, rebuking, praying, building, and also administration time.

Then this work and effort is balanced with 'down time', family time, surfing, exercising and resting. Time enjoying God in His creation, sometimes alone, sometimes with family, and sometimes with friends. These 'down times' are regular and planned. Seasons of work are followed necessarily by seasons of rest and play. I have learned from Andrew that we need to learn to pace ourselves and those we lead, at home and in ministry.

Dedication to Sound Doctrine

We live in a culture and a world that is constantly throwing lies at us. The enemy seeks to sow lies and confusion in us, in the hopes of distracting or disabling us in our walk with the Lord and with each other.

I have seen that one of Andrew's priorities is to train people how to think correctly. In doing so, he is often anticipating their thoughts and arguments that may arise, helping them see the truth and to take their erroneous thoughts captive, to the knowledge and wisdom of Christ. This is critical, because our thinking shapes our feelings and, in due course, our actions.

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So often the enemy takes us captive through wrong thinking. The thing about false doctrine is that it often has some truth in it – just enough to make it sound plausible. But that is the most dangerous, because it is deceptive and inconspicuous in its error. Thus the importance of our

daily time in the Word, allowing the Holy Spirit to use it to highlight areas in us and our thinking that are 'off course', before we travel too far down that wrong road with its consequences.

It's like bending a tree back the right way in a windy land – it is difficult, patient and consistent work that requires hearing from the Holy Spirit and teaching people to take every thought captive to the knowledge of Christ.

Humility and Teachability

Andrew is the leader of JoshGen, Four12 and FORSA, and yet he lives a life of great humility and submission. I've seen him submitting what he feels God says to him for the church to a strong team of directing elders. I've seen him submitting what he sees, by the grace God gives him, to the lead elder and local elders of each congregation. I've seen him walking in team with other men, like Jonathan, Jack and many others, allowing them to take the lead in different contexts.

I have seen Andrew ask people, even me, for input, modelling how to live in submission to one another for the sake of the gospel, and that many might be reached. He has an eagerness and willingness to be audited – he has even offered on more than one occasion to step down from leading if he is found wanting. He often says that he'd be more than happy for another person to lead, if that is what God desires and if God graces that person to do so. He often says, 'This is not my church – it is Jesus' church'.

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It is important to adopt the posture of submission and listening to the apostles and other elders. We need to realise that any authority that we have is in fact delegated authority. The Lord Jesus has all authority, and He delegates it, with responsibility to under shepherds, who then delegate it in turn. As leaders, we should keep the right perspective, realising that we are under authority too.

Authenticity

I have seen no 'airs and graces' in Andrew and his team. Nothing is 'put on' or rehearsed or a facade. Rather, there is a deep integrity – they are always the same, in every situation. They are the same with all, rich and poor, influential or not, big and small. There are no fancy clothes or fancy programmes. There is no focus at all on trends, fashions or on what's going to draw a crowd. There is no pandering to the flesh or honouring where it is not due.

In fact, just the opposite. As Jesus said to His disciples, the message is a hard one: ‘Come die, to find your life’.

I’ve seen Andrew asking guys to step out of their default strengths, to expose themselves to heart surgery for the sake of their own, greater fruitfulness. I’ve seen men serve with willing hearts in areas that they find hard, and grow by doing so.

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And yet, because it is authentic and Jesus is at the centre, signs and wonders follow. I’ve seen demons manifesting and being cast out while Andrew is preaching on ‘speaking in tongues’. There is a strong flow of the prophetic in every forum; consistently, accurately, full of the life and encouragement of God. Gifts of the Spirit are in operation, for example the gift of faith, where Lance and his team, Martin and Jo, HJ, and many others, step out in difficult situations to lay down their lives for Jesus and His church.

Not only has the Lord added people (there are many examples), but he has also added resources for the work. As an example, Andrew asked the church for R12m to build a new church venue for the Durbanville congregation, and pledges of R36m came in.

Finally, another beautiful, practical result of this authentic walk is unity. There is little or no internal striving, little or no competition, but a loving and willing recognition of the grace on each leader, and a mutual submission and honouring. Certainly, there is pruning, where these things are found, but in large part there is a beautiful oneness of mind, heart and purpose throughout JoshGen as a result.

I am so grateful, so blessed. I’ve seen such beauty and experienced such joy in this year. I pray that this will both encourage and inspire you as to who Jesus is and that to which He has called us, as well as who Andrew is, the leader that God has given us to follow and serve, and the vision God has of healthy churches in the nations.

Read Part 1 here: A Year with Andrew Selley – Part 1