BOOK REVIEWS

CHURCHES, CULTURES AND LEADERSHIP: A PRACTICAL THEOLOGY OF CONGREGATIONS AND ETHNICITIES

By Mark L. Branson & Juan F. Martinez, Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press (2011)
Paperback, 275 pages
Reviewed by GEORGINA MILLER

This book is an artful integration of theology and cultural anthropology to introduce churches the complexity of the intercultural realities of contemporary churches. The authors who teach at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, CA, are aware of the fact that this is not an easy journey for most churches. For this reason they set out to encourage church leaders to create an environment that makes God's reconciling initiatives apparent in church life and in the missional interactions with the community at large. The book is well written and full of resources that support the goals of the book.

The authors emphasize that the social and missional identity of the church has often been shaped by an ethnic heritage and cultural scripts.

Our ethnic heritage brings narra-

tives, habits, vocabulary and mental frameworks to our spiritual formation as we seek personally and corporately to pay attention to God. Our social (congregational) formation is influenced by the relational, organizational and care-giving modes of our ethnic and cultural background. And our missional formation draws on the strength and weaknesses of how our cultural narratives have shaped the ways we interact with strangers or seek peace and justice. (p. 63)

Knowing these ethnic and cultural realities can help churches develop a missiological framework that embraces their identity and be receptive of God's work in the community. In the authors' mind it is the work of church leaders to shape an environment so that God's missional vision can be recognized and integrated. Throughout the book, Branson and Martinez artfully pose thought provoking theological questions to challenge readers' thinking and broaden their perspectives. An example of this type of question reads, "How would participants respond if they engaged Scripture, neighbors and Spirit with the expectation that God would reveal a missional life right in their context?" (p. 71). Reader are encouraged to engage in intentional thought about how they relate to others with this context in mind. Another question posed by Branson and Martinez is this: "How can a church's leader help people throughout the congregation see Scripture, their context and themselves in a way that is congruent with God's love for them and for the world around them?" (p. 74). Readers are encouraged to process their own leadership experience. In engaging in these theological questions, readers are assisted, guided and strengthened as they reflect on their own leadership journey.

When the church does not under-

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stand the "lifeworlds" of its people and those in the community (p. 101) it has difficulties to move forward cohesively. To facilitate the exploration of such "lifeworlds" the authors suggest asking questions like: "Tell us your autobiography of worship," "What biblical, historical and cultural forces have shaped your practices?" and "What biblical, historic and cultural resources are available for us to experiment with new practices?" (p. 101).

As a church attempts to reach out it has to learn to communicate more effectively across cultural and linguistic boundaries. In a fascinating chapter the authors help readers understand that language is "a complex system that weaves perceptions, meanings and imaginations into a 'system of representation.' Language is a means of sorting out reality at the boundary between objects (out there) and concepts (constructs in our mind)" (p. 115). We all tend to unconsciously assume that the language we speak is an accurate representation of what is "out there" and we assume that the language maps of others are the same or similar to our own. However, this can be a false assumption. "In multilingual, multicultural environments," say Branson and Martinez, "the leader needs to be particularly sensitive to the complexities of the communication so that he or she can strengthen relationships across these differences" (p. 123).

Realizing that working in multicultural contexts requires skills in handling social complexity the authors borrow Heifetz, Grashow and Linsky's (2009) phrase, that leaders need to "get on the balcony," to discern the adaptive challenges and engage in interpretive, relational and implemental activities to facilitate necessary change.

This is a comprehensive book that masterfully communicates the complexities of a multicultural church as well as providing relevant and practical solutions leaders can use to prepare their congregations to represent God's intentions more faithfully. The authors have successfully accomplished the purpose for writing the book and have provided a wealth of insight as to the skills and competencies needed to lead in multicultural contexts and create environments that make God's reconciling initiatives apparent in church life and in missional interactions with the community at large. Throughout the book the authors provide relevant Biblical examples useful for group studies and real life testimonies that apply the concepts taught. A special feature of each chapter is also a list of movies that deal with the issues raised in the chapter. This book should be used as a must-read handbook for all leaders, pastors and teachers who are concerned about the mission of the church in an increasingly multi-ethnic and multicultural world.

Reference

Heifetz, R., Gashow, A., Linsky, M. (2009). The practice of adaptive leadership. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.

A FIRST-RATE MADNESS: UNCOVERING THE LINKS BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND MENTAL ILLNESS

By Nassir Ghaemi
New York, NY: Penguin (2011)
Hardcover, 330 pages
Reviewed by JOHN GRYS

A First-rate Madness was recommended by a sociologist friend of mine, and though the title and general thrust of the book intrigued me, I'm not sure I was prepared for the opening salvo:

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"In times of crisis, we are better off being led by mentally ill leaders than by mentally normal ones" (p. 2). The rest of the book unpacks this statement in a way that not only makes sense, but becomes very convincing.

Currently specializing in academic psychiatry, Nassir Ghaemi serves as a professor at Tufts Medical Center in Boston as well as being a Clinical Lecturer at Harvard Medical School (www.nassirghaemi.com). His specific area of expertise is mood illnesses, especially bipolar disorders. He brings these weighty credentials to bear on his study of eight great political, military, and business leaders: W. T. Sherman (bipolar), Ted Turner (bipolar), Winston Churchill (depression), Abraham Lincoln (depression), Mahatma Gandhi (depression), Martin Luther King, Jr. (depression), Franklin D. Roosevelt (mild manic), and John F. Kennedy (mild manic).

Three ingredients contribute to the selection of these leaders. First are the various aspects of mental health that each leader contributed to the overall understanding of the specific illness. Second is the significance of the particular contribution to their respective domains of leadership. The final ingredient included is the strong documentary evidence. Ghaemi then identifies the comparison "homoclite" leaders, that is, those who would be considered normal. The book then organizes itself around these comparisons in relationship to specific elements.

Four key elements involved with manic and depressive illnesses can serve leaders well, especially in a time of crisis: realism, resilience, empathy, and creativity. Specifically, the professor points out that depression can assist in making leaders more realistic and empathic, while mania can contribute to creativity and resiliency. Indeed, it is the abnormality of the moods that defines the mental disorders in these cases, not their ability to intellectually stay in touch with surrounding reality.

The author persuasively argues his case in this work. He utilizes primary sources, where possible, while keeping his promise not to make it a psychohistory. His attempt to connect the discipline of psychiatric study with leadership study helped me to realize why it might have been that, according to many, Winston Churchill could serve as a great wartime prime minister but suffer tremendously as a nonwartime leader. He also reinforces the notion that suffering in the formative years of a person's life can lead him or her to become a strong leader in the adult years: "the absence of early hardship often has a later negative effect; when difficult times arrive, one is vulnerable. Early triumph can promote future failure" (pp. 52, 53).

In a religious context, the stigma attached to this kind of discussion may still be very strong, especially in more fundamentalist circles. The emphasis on "crisis" leadership cannot be understated. To fully utilize this kind of study would require a several things of a faith community: first, to admit that these kind of people exist in our midst; second, to discover how this kind of mental health relates to the spiritual core of a person; and third, that the community find value in this kind of a leader. Would a faith community trust this kind of leader? Of course, if we examine our most sacred text, Scripture, we would discover that what the mental sciences describe can best be found in the role of the "prophet." If, indeed, Ghaemi is correct, God can use any person.

An insightful interview with the author is at: http://www. colbertnation. com/the-colbert-report-videos/ 394151/ august-08-2011/nassir-ghaemi

HBR'S 10 MUST READS ON LEADERSHIP

By Harvard Business Review
Boston, MA: Harvard Business
Review Press (2011)
Paperback, 217 pages
Reviewed by TONNIE KATSEKERA

HBR's 10 Must Reads on Leadership, a compilation of arguably some of the best writing on leadership, discusses ideas and skills that differentiate great leaders from merely good ones. The first chapter places Daniel Goleman's discussion of emotional intelligence at the top of the list. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a term that refers to a combination of five skills that "enable the best leaders to maximize their own and their followers' performance" (p. 3) (Review, 2011, p. 3). These skills include self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The good news about these skills, which are key to successful and effective leadership in any organization, is that they are not innate; rather, they can be learned.

In Chapter 2, Peter F. Drucker asserts that successful and effective leaders also have one thing in common: they get the right things done in the right ways by following eight simple rules. They ask themselves questions about what needs to be done, and about what's right for the enterprise. They develop action plans, take responsibility for decisions, take responsibility for communicating, and focus on opportunities as opposed to problems. They run productive meetings, and they think and say "we" and not "I." In addition, great leaders listen first and speak last.

In the next chapters, John P. Kotter differentiates leadership from management, and Ronald A. Heifetz and Donald L. Laurie argue that leading in doing adaptive work is also critical in successful and effective leadership. Leadership is different from management. Successful leaders always make sure the difference is clear; otherwise, they may spend their time and effort doing the work of a manager. While management is about "coping with complexity—bringing order and predictability to a situation, leadership is about learning how to cope with rapid change." (Review, p. 39) While management involves planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, control, and problem solving, leadership involves setting direction, aligning people, and motivation. A company or organization needs both skills in order to succeed(Review, p. 39). Also, because of the challenges companies and organizations are facing today "due to shifting markets, stiffening competition and emerging technologies" (Review, p. 39) (p. 39), it is critical that they adapt their behaviors if they are to thrive in such new business environments. Getting people to do adaptive work is the work of leadership in a competitive business world, and this requires the skills of a successful leader.

According to Robert Goffee and Gareth Jones (Chapter 5), leaders who inspire other people to follow them also share another four qualities: they selectively show their weaknesses, they rely heavily on intuition to gauge the appropriate timing of their action, they manage employees with tough empathy, and they reveal their differences. Jim Collins (Chapter 7) adds to this discussion by arguing that most effective and successful leaders fall under what is termed as the category of "Level 5" leadership. He defines Level 5 leaders as those who synthesize the paradoxical combination of profound personal humility with intense professional will. Great transformations cannot take place in a

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company or organization without Level 5 leaders on the wheel (p. 117) (Review, p. 117). Are these "Level 5" leadership qualities not the same with what in Christian leadership is known as "Servant Leadership," which also is based heavily on humility?

The role of leadership, like many other roles, is not without trials or tests (crucibles), but how the leader views the crucibles and reacts to them is what makes the difference. According to Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas (Chapter 6), leaders who move from good to great view crucibles as transformative events from which they learn. There are four skills which will enable leaders to learn from hardship: engage others in shared meaning, have a distinctive and compelling voice, have a sense of integrity, and have an adaptive capacity.

It is the combination of hardiness and ability to grasp context that, above all, allows a person to not only survive an ordeal, but to learn from it, and to emerge stronger, more engaged, and more committed than ever. These attributes allow leaders to grow from their crucibles, instead of being destroyed by them—to find opportunity where others might find despair. This is the stuff of true leadership (Review, pp. 112-113). (pp. 112-113)

Another quality that differentiates great leaders from good ones is what most developmental psychologists call their "action logic"—how they interpret their own behavior and other people's behavior, and how they react when their power or safety is challenged. According to David Rooke and William Torbert (Chapter 8), seven developmental action logics function as a leader's dominant way of thinking. These include opportunist, diplomat, expert, achiever, individualist, strategist, and alchemist. Alchemist is the best action logic a leader can have, but very few leaders have this quality. Next to the alchemist is the strategist. These two are highly effective change agents.

The *Harvard Business Review* has done a good job in developing this book. It is written in clear and easy to understand language. After each chapter's introduction, there are two sections called idea in brief and idea in practice. The first section gives the overview of the chapter while the second gives an elaboration of the main points of the chapter. These help the reader to better understand what the chapter is all about, and to follow the facts easily as he/she reads. The strength of the book lies in the fact that all the ideas discussed in it have been tested and proven effective by research, and that the ideas and the skills discussed have a universal application. The weakness of this book lies in the fact that it has no introduction or preface. Although the ten collected articles could each stand alone, the editors still ought to have introduced the book to the readers to give them a glimpse of what is inside. Nevertheless, the book is a masterpiece summary on leadership, one that I recommend to all who lead or aspire to lead.

LEADING WITH CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE: THE NEW SECRET TO SUCCESS

By David A. Livermore
New York, NY: American
Management Association (2010)
Hardcover, 220 pages
Reviewed by UGOCHUKWU ELEMS

In *Leading with Cultural Intelligence,* David Livermore states that about 70% of cross-cultural ventures end up in failure. Any statistical report with such a percentage of failure obviously commands attention. It is upon this

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backdrop that Livermore highlights the significance of leading with cultural intelligence from the outset. After all, leaders generally harbor a desire to lead their people or organization toward enhanced performance, better decision making processes, international expansion, reduced stress, personal fulfillment, and flexibility. In this book, he endeavors to illustrate how an individual or corporate organization can thrive across ethnic, national or international boundaries. He contends that cultural intelligence can be acquired through training and practical experience by anyone who perceives the need and is willing to learn. Therefore, he believes there is always room for improving upon one's ability to function across multicultural boundaries. Livermore combines the results of empirical research and professional experience to show how cultural intelligence (CQ) can facilitate success in cross-cultural transactions and associations. He identifies four steps: (1) Cultural Intelligence drive, the motivational dimension; (2) Cultural Intelligence knowledge, the cognitive dimension; (3) Cultural Intelligence strategy, the meta-cognitive dimension; and (4) Cultural Intelligence action, the behavioral dimension, all of which are crucial for success in cross-cultural ventures.

The book is comprised of nine chapters, subdivided into three major parts. The first part (Chapters 1 and 2) provides the rationale for cultural intelligence, its efficacy and a synopsis of cultural intelligence. Part 2 (Chapters 3-7) explores the heart of cultural intelligence by providing a detailed explanation of the four-dimensional model of cultural intelligence, which Livermore perceives as a basic tool for engaging in any cross-cultural or multicultural assignment. Part 3 (Chapters 8 and 9) introduces

practical applications of cultural intelligence.

Cultural heritage is inherent in every human being; no one is without some form of cultural background from which he or she engages others and the environment. Unfortunately, everyone tends to be blinded toward their own cultural heritage and influences. Often we regard our individual cultures as the norm that norms all other cultures. The question "Can we please eat something normal tonight?!" posed by David Livermore's daughter is not unique to her, for we often display similar attitudes and expressions. The problem is that such an expression assumes that whatever is done or accepted in another culture (in this case food) is not normal, because it is different from the culture of the one passing the judgment.

From the onset of the book, Livermore seeks to provide a basic understanding of cultural intelligence to successfully guide his readers. He concurs with Soon Ang and Linn Van Dyne that cultural intelligence is "capability to function effectively across national, ethnic, and organizational cultures" (p. 24). Cultural intelligence is the tool that facilitates effective leadership and relationships across cultures. As noted above, Livermore believes that cultural intelligence is attainable via a four-dimensional model. The CQ drive entails intrinsic and extrinsic motivations and self-confidence that sustain a leader in a cross-cultural setting. This CQ knowledge enables a leader to understand cultural systems, norms and values. Cultural intelligence helps a leader utilize cultural knowledge in planning, interpreting situations and double-checking expectations, while cultural action enables the leader to act appropriately.

Livermore provides five reasons for

which cultural intelligence is critical: (1) it provides understanding of culturally varied customers, which is a common reality for most corporate or nonprofit organizations in the new global context; (2) it offers the tools needed to manage diversified teams locally and internationally; (3) it helps in the recruiting, developing and retaining of cross-cultural talent for local and international responsibilities in a world that has become global; (4) it helps with adapting leadership style; (5) it signifies respect for cultures that are different from our own.

Fortunately for readers, Livermore also gives advice for how to develop cultural intelligence. He proposes that readers be sincere with themselves, evaluate their self-confidence, eat and socialize with people of different cultures, count the benefits of cultural intelligence (such as career advancement, expansion of global network, profit and salary, creativity and innovations), focus on human welfare and environmental friendliness, take a taxi ride, stroll to the grocery store, go to a movie, visit a place of worship, learn a new language, go to a museum, role-play, and travel.

In order to effectively communicate and associate with people of a culture different from ours, we need knowledge of the cultural systems and the cultural norms and values of the culture in question. However, the reader is cautioned that "there are situations where the best option is not to adapt at all" (p. 155). This catches the reader by surprise, given Livermore's strong passion for cultural intelligence and its adaptive nature. In addition, while he dwells heavily on the value and advantages of cultural intelligence, Livermore is honest to observe that acquiring cultural intelligence can be challenging in some situations. He does assure the readers, though, that

despite the challenges, the benefits always prevail and serve as motivation for engaging in cross-cultural endeavors (p. 59).

In conclusion, suffice it to say that *Leading with Cultural Intelligence* is logically coherent and Livermore remains focused on the purpose of the book throughout. He addresses the fundamental issues of cultural intelligence by providing a concise understanding of it and of why it is crucial. He offers some practical examples of how it functions. His basic framework (the four-dimensional model) for developing and understanding cultural intelligence is strikingly simple, comprehensive and practical. Livermore is persuaded that, if followed, these steps can improve one's ability to function in any cross-cultural setting. And it is consistent to say that in this book, Livermore accomplished his goal, namely, "to show you how to lead with cultural intelligence" (p. xiii-xiv). I strongly recommend this book to anyone (professional, leader or academician) who is involved or will be involved in any form of cross-cultural leadership, especially in today's multicultural world.

CONTEMPORARY LEADERSHIP AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE: EXPLORING THE CROSS-CULTURAL DYNAMICS WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS

By Michael A. Moodian (Ed.)
Thousand Oaks; CA: Sage (2011)
Paperback, 312 pages
Reviewed by MICHAEL ADOMAKO

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This book deals with two principal aspects of leadership and cross-cultural competence. The book focuses first on the understanding of the role of cultural diversity and intercultural issues in the modern workplace; secondly, the text demonstrates how cultural diversity can be used as a tool to build successful organizations. Though too often diversity is viewed as a liability within organizations, according to the writers the ability to embrace and adapt to diversity will pay dividends for the leaders of the 21st century.

Since organizations have shifted to a global context, learning about cultural differences, and embracing them and adapting to them, is imperative for international leaders or managers. The writers posit that any behavioral mistakes and misattribution can lead to dysfunctional relationships and can be a cause of poor organizational performance. The behavioral friction arises as organizations expand globally and embrace new cultures, hence, diversity. Diversity when managed well provides benefits that increase success. However, when ignored, it brings challenges and obstacles that can hinder the organization's ability to succeed (pp. 35-36).

While many leaders are making efforts to become culturally aware culture is not a static phenomenon. Culture changes as people from other areas come into contact with different norms, beliefs and values. It contributes to personal belief systems and worldviews, which help foster values, create common bonds, and influence perceptions of and behavior toward others. By becoming aware, leaders can have foreknowledge of what to or not do in a particular culture. A complicating factor is that "today, only 10% of the countries in the world are racially and ethnically homogeneous" (p. 4). This means that cross-cultural dynamics are an increasing phenomenon also in the same country.

Intercultural communication competence is vital in order for organizations to survive in multicultural environments. Perhaps the greatest attribute of intercultural communication competence is that it makes it possible for employees who are culturally different to work together effectively (p.139). Diversity affects people differently. One individual will be energized with positive feelings when they encounter diversity, while another will have negative feelings of overstimulation, unpredictability, helplessness, uncertainty, lack of situational control, or a threat of self-esteem. Only leaders who are competent in cultural communication can only foresee these signs of someone being under stress. Organizations would do well to consider all aspects of diversity, including methods to reduce stress (p.144), as part of cultural communication competence.

The writers also caution leaders about religious and spiritual diversity in the workplace. "Individuals bring their religion and spirituality, or lack thereof, with them to work" (p. 46). How the organization chooses to manage this aspect of diversity is vital. The authors speak against faith-based organizations which honor one religious or spiritual perspective and leave little room for other's beliefs; rather, faith-friendly organizations should be commended for having the ability to manage and utilize a fuller array of religious and spiritual workplace traditions for the strategic benefit of their organization.

Finally, the writers gave their candid opinion on legal implications of cross-cultural leadership and trade. For them, "those who function across cultural milieu must be mindful of the

cultural perspective of all players. When focusing on transcultural legal activities, from contract to litigation, that mindfulness becomes obligatory" (p. 61). Though organizational leaders face hazards of operating across differing legal and cultural systems, I agree with the writers that their only safety is to choose the domain of rule of law nations. The writers posit that operating within the rule of law nations will differ markedly from those in non-rule of law nations; hence, operating in the rule law nations is more predictable and reliable.

As much as I agree with the writers in their candid stance on diversity, I sensed some bias. Though some authors hailed from other countries, most if not all are living in the United States or have lived here before. As a result, their writings emerge from an American perspective. The following assertion was made in the book, which I believe is not wholly true as far as Africa is concerned:

> Difference between Western, Asian, African and Arab leadership: Western leadership theories place a high value on empowerment, coaching, performance management, rationality, delegation, vision and strategic direction. In contrast, Asian, Arab and African countries place more emphasis on directive and authoritarian leadership styles. Respect and obedience are expected from subordinates and harmony is a key value of leadership in Asian, Arab and African leaders (p.117).

As an African myself (I'm from Ghana), I think this strong assertion lacks credibility. If they had talked about some Asian, Arab and African countries, they would have been accurate enough. But this broad statement is as inaccurate as it is unfortunate.

One of the key issues in integrating cultural awareness into a leadership curriculum design is that the leadership curricula is built on Western leadership models, based on Western research and examples, and focuses primarily on Western leaders (p. 117). This creates the impression that the indigenous values of non-Westerners render them unsuitable for leadership. This conveys to international students that the West is best, and, if they conform to the Western paradigms, they will be successful leaders (p. 117). This mentality is faulty. The author stated that "there is a heavy reliance on US leadership literature due to lack of material published by non-US sources" (p. 117). Could not the authors have searched more carefully for more information from places other than the United States alone?

In conclusion, despite my reservations, I believe Contemporary Leadership and Intercultural Competence is logically coherent and that the contributors remained fully focused on the purpose of the book which was to explore "the role of diversity and intercultural issues in the modern workplace and how diversity can be used to build successful organizations" (p. 3). They appear to have done justice to the fundamental issues of cultural diversity and cultural competence by providing a concise and pragmatic analysis to support their work.

RESOLVING EVERYDAY CONFLICT

Ken Sande & Kevin Johnson
Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books (2011)
Paperback, 220 pages
Reviewed by NATAL GARDINO

Resolving Everyday Conflict, by Ken Sande and Kevin Johnson, deals

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competently with the common and often difficult issue of interpersonal conflicts. The lead author, Ken Sande, an attorney and a Christian, has succeeded well in dealing with this line of expertise, having authored best-selling books and founded The Peacemaker ministry (www.peace-maker.net). His book The Peacemaker has been translated into a dozen languages. His co-author, Kevin Johnson, also an author (see www.kevinjohn-sonbooks.com), pastors Emmaus Road Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Acknowledging that "conflict is a normal part of life" (p. 7), the authors target Christians with the purpose of helping any person who might face an interpersonal conflict to have the knowledge and the skills to be stronger than their impulses and emotions and resolve the conflict in a way that may "please and honor God" (p. 8).

The focus of the book may be summed up in one statement: conflicts must be faced, resolved and healed by the power of God through peacemaking rather than escaping to either of two extremes: fleeing, which is actually "peacefaking," or attacking, which is actually "peacebreaking." This statement, beyond showing at a glance how creative and communicative the authors are in transmitting their message, also shows that they present God as the only Enabler who can transform us into His healing and peacemaker agents.

The authors show that peoples' responses to conflict resemble a hill, a "slippery slope" whose top, though more difficult to achieve, is the ideal place upon which to stand—the peacemaking approach. However, it is actually easy to slip and fall toward one of two extremes of conflict: fleeing or attacking.

Many people will agree that attacking is generally not the best answer to an interpersonal conflict. But contrary to what many may think, fleeing (avoiding) is not the best solution for a conflict. In doing so, the healing of the parties is avoided as well. The book shows how fleeing is abandoning the problem and leaving it with someone else, even though we too are part of the conflict.

I appreciate the simple manner in which the book is presented, even while it goes deep on the importance of forgiving and healing when it comes to interpersonal conflicts. Another enjoyable aspect is use of the Bible in specific contexts in a manner that allow it to shine new with significant meaning for the Christian who is facing conflict. The Christian life is not, as they say, only a "ticket to heaven" (p. 27) without any power to transform that life. The authors affirm that "we miss God's great plans for us if we think of the Gospel only as the key to eternal life" (p. 28). The Christian life is experienced now, on earth, and includes forgiving and maintaining healthy relationships.

Also interesting is the manner in which the authors present their arguments with logical appeal and with impactful intelligent phrases, promoting a brainstorm of reflection along with the reading and convincing the reader of the deep importance of the issue of conflict resolution. For example, on the issue of forgiveness they write that "forgiveness is the opposite of excusing" (p. 89), meaning that it does not diminish the ugliness of the offense, simply saying something like "it was not such a big issue" (pp. 88-89). Also, "forgiveness isn't a feeling. It's an act of the will" (p. 88). Furthermore, on forgiving and forgetting, they say that "forgiveness isn't a matter of whether we forget, but of how we remember" (p. 89). Forceful yet effective phrases like this appear

naturally throughout the book, dealing with the most different issues regarding conflict and resolution.

I concur with the caution that we cannot fix ourselves suddenly as "peacemakers" just because we know "what" to do. We actually need a "power source" to enable us to accomplish the heavenly ideal. This shows the Godward direction of the book, confirmed by use of Scripture that shines in a special way in their specific contexts. This is evidenced in their observation that the peacemaker approach has "four G's" to be followed in order to reach the goal which is the healing of the conflict: 1) Glorify God, 2) Get the log out of your eye, 3) Gently restore, and 4) Go and be reconciled. Such steps are fully based on the tried and true instructions that are found in the Bible but for some reason seem to be hidden from Christians when it comes to "who will win the conflict."

Being experienced as an attorney, Sande says that even if a person rejects litigation in a court, it can still be pursued apart from court in how we deal with relatives or friends. A person may establish his position on a conflict and try to pull everybody to his side, making them "understand" his correctness or the damage he has suffered in the situation and finally "resolve" the problem. The result is that "while litigation might resolve a problem, it never achieves reconciliation" (p. 41). Reconciliation, as a healing of the conflict, is the real solution.

The book made me think in a new light on the necessity of resolving conflicts rather than avoiding them by fleeing. It convinced me to experience climbing the difficult slippery slope to reach that godly ideal of peacemaking, which will glorify God and represent His own attitude toward conflict.

In the end, I believe the book

achieves its goal: to instruct Christians who face interpersonal conflicts—be it in churches, families, or workplaces—on how to find resolution by the word and power of God. Instead of using labored words or difficult theological or psychological terms, it was written brilliantly, in such a way that anyone can understand it, with high-impact phrases and well-developed arguments that go to the point. Thus Resolving Everyday Conflict successfully fulfills the main purpose announced in its introduction, which is to teach the reader "God's way of resolving conflict" through reconciliation and healing. The reader will come away striving to be a peacemaker rather than a "peacefaker" or a "peacebreaker."

THE MOUNTAIN WITHIN: LEADERSHIP LESSONS AND INSPIRATION FOR YOUR CLIMB TO THE TOP

By Herta von Stiegel
New York: McGraw-Hill (2011)
Paperback, 229 pages
Reviewed by ERHARD H. GALLOS

Herta von Stiegel's monograph, *The Mountain Within,* is based on an expedition she led in July 2008 to climb Africa's Mount Kilimanjaro. A group of 28 multi-national climbers, including seven disabled people, set out on the tour. Against incredible odds, nearly 60 percent of the group made it to the summit. Though this expedition was recorded on film and has become an award-winning documentary, in her book von Stiegel narrates not just the expedition but also the invaluable leadership lessons she learned, all within the context of preparing for the expedition, failing to accomplish the goal a decade ago,

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building a team, hanging on to the vision of conquering the Kilimanjaro, and knowing when it was time to come down from the mountain. Von Stiegel gives her reason for writing the book:

> [We] need leaders who can relate spiritually and humanely to their fellow human beings.... They must be leaders who know not to stay too long at the top, because the rarefied atmosphere in the upper echelons causes us to lose perspective, to become intoxicated with power, status, and wealth and to lose touch with what matters. (p. xi)
> This book is a call to create a framework for leadership based on integrity, transparency, and the power of teamwork (p. xi).

In *The Mountain Within,* von Stiegel chronicles two attempts to climb Mount Kilimanjaro. The first one ended in a disappointing descent from the mountain at 4,200 meters from the Barranco Wall. This failure gave the author the necessary motivation to begin afresh, but this time very much better prepared than the first time. Von Stiegel openly describes her personal feelings, which range from enthusiasm to anger to emotional breakdown. The whole rainbow of emotions is displayed.

Out of these two attempts to conquer the mountain, von Stiegel draws leadership lessons applicable in business, community, church, and state politics. Beginning with the quality of resilience, she assures the reader that even those who do not possess the quality of persistence can learn it by following the guidelines outlined. Next, she discusses the issue of career vs. calling. Von Stiegel confirms that "executives who say they have a calling also report less job stress, longer tenure, more career satisfaction, and higher salaries overall" (p. 22). Third,

the author helps leaders not to be overwhelmed by the project set in front of them but break a big project into smaller steps, which are more manageable. Needless to say, this requires a lot of discipline (p. 38).

Further, von Stiegel elaborates on the attraction of preparation. Preparation means assessing the situation with the people surrounding you, as well as planning for contingencies. Never should a leader lose sight of a backup plan, since flexibility in case of an unexpected scenario is vital. Likewise, failures are part of any journey. For von Stiegel, "each failure breeds more learning" (p. 59), deserving a brief look but not long navel-gazing attention.

Team selection, inevitable for any leader, should not involve choosing a group of yes-men, but choosing the best-qualified team in which skills are complemented and a winning attitude unites. Over and over again, von Stiegel emphasizes in team members integrity and strong work ethics (p. 87). And this team, according to research done by Lynda Gratton at the London Business School, should include both men and women, because "equal gender representation can help to unlock the innovative potential of teams" (p. 88).

Von Stiegel admonishes leaders not to settle for the good in place of the excellent. Even in the business world, the author admits that high quality helps carry out transactions faster and more economically (p. 101). But high quality does not necessarily breathe high expenses. A leader should know when to make drastic decisions, such as walking away from a deal, though this should not be done lightly, because of personality clashes, or before the leader has done everything possible to change the situation (pp. 124-125).

Handling criticism is an art leaders

need to learn, since the amount of criticism a leader receives will increase as he or she becomes more visible (p. 135). In addition to handling criticism, leaders also have to face their own ego. The mission of the enterprise must supersede the leader's ego. Von Stiegel exemplifies the opposite by pointing out the recent history of megamergers in the banking industry, driven by unfettered egos of the CEOs. Some of these financial institutions ended up on the brink of collapse and needed to be bailed out by their respective governments (p. 150). Meanwhile, leaders have to overcome obstacles such as habits of short-term thinking. The author urges her readers to fight against thinking myopically (p. 184).

Finally, von Stiegel gives several suggestions to help leaders lead a winning team. First, leaders must value the contributions of each team member (p. 199). Second, they must communicate their intentions. Third, they need to give the team space to replenish their emotional, spiritual, and physical reservoirs (p. 201). Fourth, they must celebrate successes (p. 202). In summing up, von Stiegel saves probably the most important leadership lesson to the end: "Don't stay at the top too long" (p. 217). She cautions leaders that the "world is full of people who stay too long in positions of power; at best, they tarnish their legacy, and at worst, they can cause untold damage to themselves, their organizations, or their countries" (p. 215).

Throughout the book, von Stiegel reinforces the leadership lessons by recounting conversations she had with notable leaders, people such as Al Gore, former U.S. Vice President and Nobel Peace Prize winner; Kay Unger, American fashion designer; Sam Chisholm, Australia's leading media executive; and Christie Hefner, former CEO of Playboy Enterprises.

The Mountain Within is written in a smooth, logical, and easy-to-follow manner. Every lesson is cemented by real life applications from either the expedition or the author's abundant life and business experience. In a follow-up edition the author may want to provide the reader with concrete sources for such general statements as: "The best psychological research in the world. . . ." or "Studies show that the. . . ." or "The brain, scientist have discovered. . . ." (pp. 7, 8, 31).

Herta von Stiegel has brilliantly succeeded in her goal to communicate invaluable leadership lessons through the matrix of an expedition. I highly recommend this book to any reader who is a leader or aspires to the ranks of leadership.