

Book Review

# The Nature of Leadership

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John Antonakis, Anna T. Cianciolo, Robert J. Sternberg (eds.). (2004).

the nature of reality, stakeholder perceptions, and levels-of-analysis issues.



challenges leaders to understand our current world as itself a crucible from which better leadership can emerge. According to Bennis, such leadership requires the highest involvement of the adaptive capacities of individuals who are leading in order to navigate through an increasingly hostile yet opportunity-rich world. Leaders are required to move rapidly, without having all the facts and without certainty. Contextual demands invite leaders to engage the imagination and creativity of the people whom they lead. Bennis also suggests two areas where more research is needed: (1) the relationship between globalization and leadership, specifically the forces of tribalism reappearing throughout the world, and (2) the relationship between leadership and the media. Regarding the second issue, greater scrutiny must be given to “how the competitive pressures of the media affect the reputations and the behavior of public officials” (p. 341). Governmental response to Hurricane Katrina substantiates the question.

For readers who are interested in the question of ecclesiastical leadership, from either the standpoint of the practitioner or the researcher, *Leadership in the 21st Century* makes four contributions to improving the practice and knowledge-base of leadership. The first two points are somewhat general in nature; the second two, more specific.

First, if Christian leadership is to advance, serious research and study within the confines of different Christian environments must be done. Educational, medical, missional, and denominational of Christianity, for example, must be examined. *Leadership in the 21st Century* makes it apparent that although leadership-oriented research has occurred relatively recently, it has been strong. *Leadership in the 21st Century* is work, which contains more than twelve hundred references, attests to the amount of the research being conducted within the non-Christian world. Such research is largely absent within ecclesiastical structures. If those of us who profess Christ are committed to leading within ecclesiastical environments, it is vital that we begin to investigate the contribution that the Christian community makes toward the understanding and practice of leadership.

Second, it may be argued that perhaps our greatest contribution not only is the philosophy of servant-leadership but also is the practice of it. As is demonstrated in Flaniken’s article, the Christian influence of Robert Greenleaf cannot be extricated from his understanding of servant-leadership. Biblical images support his philosophy and likely guided him as he engaged the questions of leadership within the marketplace (see Frick, chapter 4). Although the work of the Greenleaf Institute seeks to advance both the practice and study of servant-leadership, it also can be useful for a wider study of how servant-leadership can become increasingly effective within ecclesiastical models. *Leadership in the 21st Century* demonstrates a bold attempt to further servant-leader-

ship in the wider community. But how can we study and advance servant-leadership within the context of a professedly Christian environment?

is an important step in

this endeavor.

Beyond the general contributions that Antonakis et al. make toward leadership, two specific elements are applicable within global ecclesiastical communities. At the core of leadership stands the relationship between leader and follower. Within the context of leading in Christian environments, we must address the issue of how the socialization processes within professedly Christian environments influence the development of leadership prototypes. Chapter 6 helps to answer this question by examining the structure, content, and activation of what are known as

, or ILTs. ILTs are constantly-changing imaginative prototypes that leaders and followers carry with them throughout life. ILTs begin early in a person's life, and they are infl

ecclesiastical structure affect leadership processes? The framing of such a quest serves as a primary contribution from this work to both the practice and understanding of leadership within ecclesiastical contexts.

Beyond the immediate Christian environment extends the question of the regional and national culture in the formation of an ILT. The increase of multiculturalism within the West, the nano-connectivity of an emerging global village, and the heightened post-911 anxiety all intensify the

## References

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