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Review of The Response Leadership Sequence: Empowering and Improving your Leadership Before, During, and After a Crisis, by Mike McKenna

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facilitate this process with mutual responsibility, truth-telling, commitment, acceptance, compassion, and understanding.

The authors explore the issue of shame related to addiction and provide several helpful ways in which it can be deprogrammed. They suggest finding ways to normalize the experience of the addiction; validating the feelings of shame while removing the notion that their shame is warranted; creating safe, confidential settings for honest group sharing; making yourself available for confession; always keeping confidentiality; modeling vulnerability by being honest about your own imperfections and addictive behaviors; connecting recovering addicts with people who are on the same path; and finally, always extending hope.

The one chapter in the book that did not provide a comprehensive or completely accurate overview was chapter three. This chapter examined myths of addiction, including addiction as demon possession. The authors do not provide an accurate biblical understanding of this content, nor do they provide information available regarding how to appropriately/effectively approach this aspect of addiction recovery. In fact, there were several conclusions drawn that are totally inaccurate. This section of the book should be read with this awareness. More is needed in this chapter to provide church leaders with a sound biblical understanding of these myths.

In conclusion, *The Recovery-Minded Church* offers church leaders a good resource for evaluating if their church is ready to “enter into another’s pain, anoint it as holy and stick around no matter the outcome” (p. 142), as Jesus has done for all His lost sheep. It offers practical and appropriate tools to assist the church in

becoming a place where individuals can be accepted just as they are, recognizing that all fall short of the glory of God and need of God’s redeeming love to bring us back into a right relationship with Him.

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THE RESPONSE LEADERSHIP SEQUENCE: EMPOWERING AND IMPROVING YOUR LEADERSHIP BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER A CRISIS

By Mike McKenna

*Lexington, KY: TEAM Solutions (2017)
Paperback, 352 pages*

Reviewed by JORGE A. ZELAYA

Leadership is needed in all realms. However, not every leader can be expected to act responsibly unless s/he has first learned the basics of leadership. Crises are not about *if* they will occur, but *when*. Responsible leaders must be trained and ready to respond to any crisis. The attitude and response of a leader will directly impact the people, place, and items subsequently affected by the crisis. Moreover, how a leader is prepared beforehand and the kind of team he or she leads will be crucial.

Mike McKenna is an authority on leadership. He has participated in leading positions and responding to planned and unplanned crisis events for more than 20 years. With all the experience he has acquired, McKenna is now promoting programs to instruct and develop capable leaders, particularly when times get tough.

McKenna first identifies the basic

descriptions of leadership, the mentality true leaders have, and the understanding that leaders must have about their influence on other people. He develops these concepts by sharing some of his personal experiences in crisis events since he and his team have responded firsthand to various tragic events. He has learned from his and others' positive and negative experiences. This assures me that McKenna and his experiences are a reliable source of inspiration and information regarding leadership.

Next, McKenna moves on to mention the attitudes leaders have regarding how they relate to people. First, leaders must possess competent social skills. This competency will allow leaders to be more effective, regardless of the size or type of group. Second, leaders must have the correct motivation to lead. Their perception of their leadership position will determine the behavior leaders develop; nurturing a higher level of emotional intelligence, as well as feeling ownership regarding the objectives of their organization and the support they receive from others, will help such leaders face and overcome crisis obstacles. Third, only when leaders understand that they extend influence on others will they exercise care regarding their impact upon others—people tend to “mirror” the leader’s emotional behavior.

McKenna moves to talk about how leaders develop their action plans. They set priorities, objectives, strategies, and tactics. Also, leaders plan to care for themselves, stabilize problems from getting worse, and guard their final goal of bringing the community affected by the crisis back to health and harmony.

The book establishes the process of determining command controls necessary to deal with the crisis,

organizing the different responsibilities of teams, and defining how to accomplish the mission. McKenna also addresses the need to prepare detailed plans for diverse situations (contingency planning) before the crisis.

Finally, McKenna presents how response leaders benefit by writing reflective reports following their crisis intervention experiences. This process also reflects proactive preparation before a crisis event.

This book holds value for any person holding a leadership position in an organization. McKenna presents a series of organizational aspects that range from building response teams, training personnel, preparing forms, delegating responsibilities and authority, presenting evaluation forms after the events, preparing improved plans for future events, etc. Even though it is written for a secular audience, I believe that if these principles were to be applied contextually in a church setting, they could provide great insights and useful techniques regarding planning for a crisis.

In conclusion, I believe this book has excellent and sound advice for any person in a leading position. I better understand how I might effectively lead a crisis intervention team and would recommend this book to other leaders.

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