

Analysis of leading congregational change by herrington, mike bonen and james fur...

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Leading Congregational Change

Introduction

The book titled *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* was authored by Herrington, Mike Bonen and James Furr. The purpose of the book was to offer leaders of different churches the basic principles and guidelines that can be followed when carrying out congregational change. After their vast experience of over ten years, indulging actively in transformational change in various churches defined by a high level of diversity, the authors published the book in 2000. Notably, the book has various chapters which define different aspects of transformational change in a church setting. The authors intended to help other church leaders who are venturing into a transformational journey. This paper will present a critical review of the book highlighting its strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths of the Book

One of the outstanding strengths of the book is the fact that the authors present their ideas in all honesty. Unlike many authors who only reveal their successes, the guidelines provided in this book have a basis on both successes and failures of the authors registered in the ten years of experience. They embark on a vivid description of the evidence struggle towards transformational change informing the reader of the conflicts that emerged and eventually the victories that resulted. Such an honest depiction gives this book a firm basis for its ideas. Notably, the authors also use an appropriate style of presentation of their ideas. They seem to develop a master plan suited for the transformational journey and presented step wise

in the book. They are keen to mention the critical aspects that define any form of transformation within the church setting. The mentioning of Gods will in this case, is an integral part of the relevance of the book as it applies to churches (Herrington, Bonem & Furr, 2000).

A close analysis of the book reveals its extensive use of scriptural references as well as other related texts and studies. Effective use of references in developing any text is a critical aspect that determines the validity of any work. Being a religious book on leadership, the use of scriptural references serves as a foundation for the ideas presented. Worth noting is the fact that the authors present a realistic view of congregational transformation. They highlight that the process of transformation needs adequate preparation, which involves planning and proper coordination (p. 98). Therefore, the book warns church leaders against rushing ventures of transformation.

Weaknesses of the Book

Although the book has multiple strengths as highlighted above, it has a few notable weaknesses. One of this is the fact that it does not give sufficient credit to the role of the Holy Spirit and the mission of the church as expected. The role of the Holy Spirit in any church setting and congregational transformation should not be underestimated. This book only mentions the role of the Holy Spirit on a single page. Consequently, the book does not acknowledge spiritual gifts as critical aspects in the transformation process. In addition, the book promises to offer principles and not defined formulae. However, the presented material appears to be more of formulae developed using modules and not principles as the authors had highlighted (p. 111).

Conclusion

As highlighted above, the book is a worthwhile read for church leaders planning to engage in a transformational venture of their congregations. The book presents stepwise ideas and guidelines that can form a practical basis for the transformational journey in any church. Considering the fact that the authors have vast experience in transformational change, the book is a rich source of ideas concerning these issues. Despite such strengths, the book fails to adequately regard the role of the Holy Spirit as well as spiritual gifts in the transformational process.

Reference

Herrington, J., Bonem, M. & Furr, J. H. (2000). Leading congregational change: A practical guide for the transformational journey. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.