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Leadership Pain: The Classroom for Growth. By Samuel R. Chand

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providing at the end of each chapter self-coaching actions to guide readers in reflection and practice. Leadership makes a difference. Everyone has a leadership story to tell; because of this, *Learning Leadership* describes five practices that tell it well—model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable and encourage others (p. 26).

Learning Leadership reminds professionals that education does not stop with graduation:

The very first step to become a better leader is to acknowledge that I can improve my leadership skills and remind myself that I can make a difference. All I need is a positive mindset to look for opportunities and a willingness to take initiative. (p. 39)

One of the benefits of the book is described in the preface:

[It provides] great value to leadership developers, internal and external trainers, and coaches who are focused on building the next generation of leaders in their client organization—as well as those who have a responsibility to help people be the best they can be. This includes supervisors and managers at all levels. The next generations of leaders need your wisdom and experience if they are going to excel and take your organization to the next level. (p. xxi)

Learning is a cyclic process with a formula: TRY—FAIL—LEARN—REPEAT. “As weather shapes mountains, problems shape leaders” (p. 107). There is no such a thing as learning without failing. The truth is, the best leaders are the best learners.

This book will not just provide insights regarding leadership; it will also shape/enhance readers’ leadership view and along with it, change their lives. Kouzes and Posner adopt a perfect combination of facts and anal-

ysis, resulting in a conversational and optimistic tone. For example, “You have to believe in yourself” (p. 35).

Mastery of the art of leadership comes from the mastery of self. Leadership development is self-development. “Authentic leadership flows from inside out” (p. 55). It does not come from the outside in. Inside out leadership is about discovering who you are, what values compel you to do what you do, and what gives you credibility to lead others. Readers are urged to take initiative in their own development and start connecting to a network of resources to further their progress with support and helpful feedback.

Learning Leadership is a jewel, a fabulous book that responds to the needs of those who are committed to becoming better leaders, to staying positive and influential during difficult times, and to leading people in a way that brings out the best in them. I give this book my highest recommendation.

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LEADERSHIP PAIN: THE CLASSROOM FOR GROWTH

By Samuel R. Chand
Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson (2015)
Kindle edition, 250 pages

Reviewed by MELISSA SILVA

Samuel R. Chand communicates a beautiful, and sometimes difficult, spiritual leadership truth: a leader can only grow to the threshold of his or her pain. Since God uses painful situations to help us grow (Rom. 5:3; Jas. 1:3), if we shrink from the pain we—and consequently the organiza-

tions we lead—will stagnate in growth. If we are able to endure the pain, there is no limit to what God can do through us (by His grace). Since Chand’s theory originates in the Bible, this book caters primarily to spiritual leaders, though its principles can be applied by any Bible-believing leader, whether working in the church or secular circles.

The concept is not new. As already mentioned, it originates in the Word of God. Chand, however, applies its principles in a very practical way to modern leadership. First, he looks at the main causes of pain in leadership—namely, external sources, personal unrelieved stress, and a growing organization. But he does not stop there. He spends a good deal of time looking at how to analyze and recognize the painful experiences that we have and how they help us grow. This is important because, without it, a lot of pain we suffer can be in vain. Finally, the author encourages leaders by reminding them that there are privileges that come with leadership in spite of the pain. Most spiritual leaders will acknowledge that God uses trial to refine us, but few will stop to really analyze their hardships in a way that allows God to maximize them for personal growth and the growth of their organizations. Even fewer will see this pain as a blessing and privilege.

For example, a church that has been thriving for years with a wonderful team makes plans for expansion. As the church grows and prospers, the leader realizes that the team that had done so well in a small setting cannot handle the task of a larger congregation. New people need to take their place, but it’s very painful to remove people, especially in a volunteer organization. “The price is the figurative blood of leadership . . . the pain of hard conversations and

replacing people (many of whom are friends) who no longer fit the larger scope of responsibilities . . .” (loc 93). If you are not willing to endure the pain caused by replacing people, your organization will never grow. It’s a blessing to need to make changes because of growth. Chand helps us identify in practical ways why certain things hurt and how the Lord can use the pain for our growth. This brings great encouragement to leaders, aiding their ability to cope with more pain once they understand its benefits.

As Chand points out, we don’t have to endure it alone, or even just with the Lord. God often permits that we have “pain partners” (loc 203)—friends who go through pain with us or simply help us deal with the hardships.

This volume is very educational in its approach, having included thought-provoking questions at the end of each chapter. The reader must know that the author uses stories extensively throughout the book. Each chapter begins with a story, and additional stories are included in addition to that, possibly to a fault. The principles found in the book could have been presented in a more concise way if less storytelling was done. The stories, however, do illustrate the points made and inspire the reader. The content could have been broadened to include more Christian leaders who work in secular circles, both in the stories chosen and the applications made.

I highly recommend *Leadership Pain* for Christian leaders who, feeling called by God, want to grow to their full potential. This growth takes place not in spite of pain but through pain. “You will only grow to the threshold of your pain. To grow more, raise your threshold” (loc 21). This book can also greatly encourage any leader who has felt ready to give up because of pain, or who has begun to question

the Lord's leading. To be called by God to leadership does not mean that your path will be a bed of roses. On the contrary—expect pain. Learn to see the pain as a blessing. “At some point we need to radically reframe our concept of happiness, realistic expectations, and the purposes of God. You've got to learn to appreciate the lessons you learn from pain” (loc 169).

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LEADERS EAT LAST: WHY SOME TEAMS PULL TOGETHER AND OTHERS DON'T

Simon Sinek
New York, NY: Portfolio/Penguin
(2014)
Hardcover, 244 pages

Reviewed by WILLIAM K. KOOMSON

There exists an unambiguous difference between an “authority” figure and a “leader.” For example, throughout most of his life, Mahatma Gandhi did not hold any official position (authority), but he led his people through a nonviolent struggle to achieve independence. In India, he remains revered as the father of the nation. Nelson Mandela spent most of his adult life in prison, yet he achieved freedom for his people while behind granite prison walls. These leaders, among many, understood that uniting the people to bridge diverse interests also meant creating opportunities for others, not for themselves alone or a chosen few. Based on this backdrop of “others,” Simon Sinek's book, *Leaders Eat Last*, offers both a stimulating and an inspiring assessment that strong leaders ought

to provide a wider circle of safety to all. “Weak leaders are the ones who only extend the benefits of the Circle of Safety to their fellow senior executives and a chosen few others” (p. 23). That is, “only when the Circle of Safety surrounds everyone in the organization, and not just a few people or a department or two, are the benefits fully realized” (p. 23).

Leadership practices have gone through a perpetual cycle of change from kings, rulers, and lords as the anointed leaders (Great Man Theory) to behavioral theories that taught that people could learn the art of leadership through teaching and observation. Management theories assume the transactional style of leadership. There are two competing models, “Theory X” and “Theory Y.” The first model employs strict supervision, with external stimuli through rewards and punishments. The second model emphasizes motivation and job satisfaction. Simon Sinek's book extends the motivation and job satisfaction of this second model into considering every worker “more like a family” member. Thus, by simply “changing the environment in which people worked, the same people started acting differently toward each other. They felt like they belonged and that enabled them to relax and feel valued” (p. 11).

In the church organization, some leaders see themselves as “the anointed to lead” type, relegating all others to the classification of “the employees.” When pastors and other church workers are classified as “employees,” they truly exhibit employee-type behaviors. Employees come to work, clock in and clock out, and do their tasks according to their job specifications. Trust is marginal. “Unfortunately, too many of the environments in which we work today do more to frustrate than to foster our