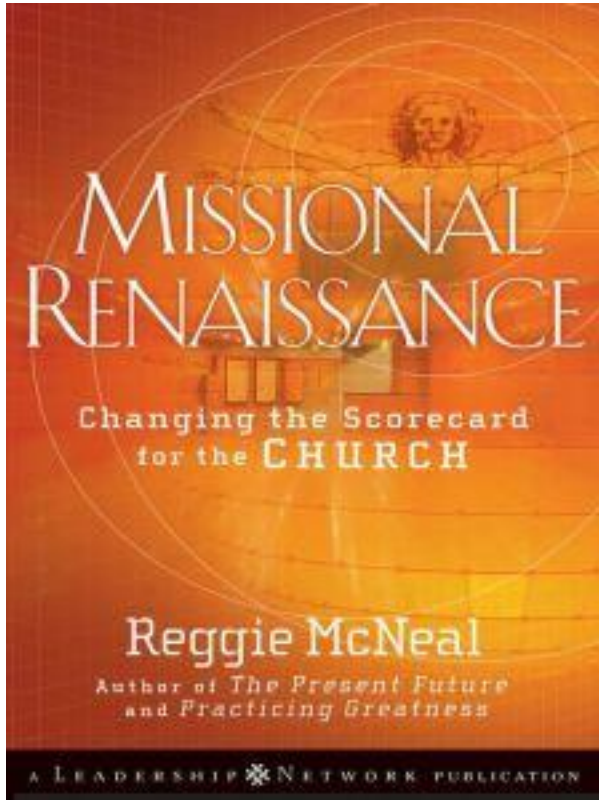


Missional Renaissance, A Leadership Network Book Summary



Reggie McNeal, currently serving as the Missional Leadership Specialist for the Leadership Network, identifies in this classic work three major shifts that must take place in the Church if it is to live into its God-given potential in the next century. This book is a must-read for all church leaders.

As Reggie puts it “The missional renaissance is changing the way the people of God think about God and the world, about what God is up to in the world and what part the people of God play in it”. He notes that there are three cultural phenomena that are fueling this renaissance:

- The emergence of the altruism economy: people’s determination not only to share their wealth but to make a difference with it
- The search for personal growth: the unprecedented pursuit of personal development...a pervasive sense of needing to grow, to learn, to adapt, and to change that has become part of the psyche of our culture
- The hunger for spiritual vitality: a spirituality robust enough to engage people where they live, work, and play

Reggie notes that in order for the church to engage these cultural phenomena, it must be on a mission, because God is on mission. Just as God sent his Son and his Holy Spirit into the world, God is sending his people into the world.

To be faithful to that calling, Reggie suggests three missional shifts that must occur in the church:

From an Internal to an External Focus:

- Church-centric to kingdom focused – recognizing that God is at work in the world and not just in the church
- Destination to Connector – the church is not a destination but a connector, linking people to the kingdom life
- From attractional to incarnational – focus on being involved in people’s lives where they are rather than getting them to church
- Member culture to missionary culture – the flow of energy and resources toward the community rather than the church
- From worship services to service as worship – the offering of obedience to bless others is considered an act of worship

From Program Development to People Development

The focus of this segment is the recognition of individual needs and how to support the development of each person. The church has for decades focused on fitting people into the program box as if everyone had the same needs, developed at the same rate, and lived life according to the same schedules.

Reggie points us to the ideas of customization and suggests tools like ‘life coaching’ as ways to support this process of personal development. At the heart of this shift is the movement away from an educational model to a behavioral model. He suggests that the educational model creates church customers rather than followers of Jesus.

From Church-Based to Kingdom-Based Leadership

This third shift challenges the ways in which churches often view leadership. Rather than encouraging, recruiting, training, and employing the talents of people in the traditional administrative structures of the church, personal leadership is developed and encouraged out in the world. This is a movement away from church jobs and toward kingdom assignments. Rather than direct the activities of church members these kingdom based leaders serve as producers: sharing great stories, recruiting talent, raising capital, and then hiring directors to bring ideas to life. It is all about releasing people to ministry. Central to this shift is the movement away from the traditional model of ‘train and deploy’ to ‘deploy and debrief’. Just as Jesus invited the disciples to observe what he did and then debriefed them, we are invited to model ministry, send people out to try it, and then talk about how it went.

This, of course, will necessitate a shift in the role of leaders – especially the clergy. For example;

- Teaching: the delivery of solid theological perspective in a variety of forms based on the technology available

- Life Coaching: proactive support for people seeking to improve the quality of their lives and live into God's calling
 - Missional Strategists: the brokering of ministry services between congregations and the community and the building of networks of churches to tackle issues that are bigger than one church can address
 - Training for missional leaders: equipping people to engage their communities in ways that transform lives and life together
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Include description for Mastermind Groups and link to website