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Summary and Response Ch. 3

Chapter 3 of Peter Scazzero's *Emotionally Healthy Leadership* is titled "Lead out of Your Marriage or Singleness." The second principle of living an emotionally healthy inner life as a leader is to lead first and foremost out of your vocation to marriage or singleness. However, there is a prevailing notion that leadership duties come first, even before one's marriage and family. Scazzero gives the example of Sam, a pastor who pushed his young son away when he asked him not to leave for his year-long pastoring duties.

Sam represents this common way of thinking—"How could we even think about withholding ourselves when the world is in such desperate need?" (Scazzero, 82). Yet, this way of thinking neglects God's relational design. Scazzero explains that our order of priorities are to nurture our relationship with God, then pour into our spousal or friend relationships, and finally, attend to leadership tasks.

How does one lead out of their marriage? Scazzero explains that marriage is meant to be a sign of God's wondrous love to the world. However, this takes cultivation. Just like it is important for us to sacrifice our time to get to know God and spend time with him, marriages need tending, even if it means that leadership opportunities are missed. In this way, leading out of marriage means that the passion one has for their spouse, through Christ, drives their decision-making, schedule, and overall heart behind how they live.

How does one lead out of their singleness? Those who are called to singleness lead from a place of close companionship with God and others, and self-care. Scazzero explains that singles are to lead out of their specific type of singleness. Two types of singles are vowed celibates and dedicated celibates. Scazzero professes that others may discredit singleness as a good vocation, but this is entirely false. Singleness powerfully testifies to the breadth of God's love. Singleness can be personally fulfilling and can touch many different lives.

This chapter was insightful for me. As I did the self-assessment, I found myself relating to both the married and single portions. I am in a relationship with the eventual goal of marriage but not married, so I personally learned from both sides. One statement particularly stuck out to me: "1. I see my marriage as a prophetic sign of God's love for the church and the world" (Scazzero, 88). The concept of marriage as a sign and wonder of God's love to the world is so helpful for me to learn. My focus is often on how we can serve God together, and I forget that marriage itself is a beautiful and wondrous sign to the world. If I am to be married, I would love for others to be able to see my marriage and see Christ's love for them. As I learned, this takes cultivation, so I am thankful to learn this now rather than later.

The other statement that caused me to reflect was from the singles section. It says, "8. I make what is important to my close friends and family important to me regardless of my leadership responsibilities" (Scazzero, 88). Wow. This statement is convicting to me. Do I spend enough time pausing and reflecting on what is important to those around me? What if I started my day like that? My day often starts with me immediately thinking of what I personally need to do. Yet, looking outside myself to those around me, along with my own goals, too, is a beautiful way to live that I want to implement. I will do this by writing down what is important to others

closest to me. This may require asking them, too, and an overall posture of noticing and empathizing, even when I am in the midst of my own leading/ministering.

Summary and Response Ch. 4

“Slow Down for Loving Union” is the fourth chapter in Peter Scazzero’s book titled *Emotionally Healthy Leadership*. Scazzero expands upon the idea that humans are human beings, not human doings, in this chapter. He explains that if we are so busy leading that we don’t have time to spend with God and loved ones and to rest, we need to slow down and rethink what it means to be in relationship with Jesus. Scazzero cites the following verses, “On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’” (Matthew 7:22-23).

The word for “knew” in verse 23 has a connotation of deep relationship and intimacy, of openly abiding with one another without shame. This “knowing” was absent from those in verse 22 who did works for God but not out of relationship with Him. Scazzero uses the example of Jesus to show what slowing down for loving union looks like. The gospels show that Jesus would often get up early or go out to desolate places to pray. It was a priority He didn’t neglect. Even in His busy days of ministry, He slowed down and desired to simply be with His Father. Jesus knew that this union was where His ministry flowed out of.

The author gives several examples of loving versus non-loving union. In sum, non-loving union usually involves a driven, works-based, and rushed approach. Non-loving union may involve neglecting time with God in order to get tasks done, saying that time with God can wait till later. Loving-union may involve placing an even higher importance on slowing down, meeting with God, and seeking the counsel of others in extremely busy seasons. The author ends the chapter with practical instruction on how to slow down for loving union, including making a

“rule of life”—a personalized plan for how to integrate spiritual practices into your daily life in order to be aware of God in everything.

This chapter was immensely helpful to me as I reflected on my own daily rhythms. After reading, I analyzed my average day and was honestly not happy with what I found. One of the statements Scazzero places in the self assessment is this: “My highest priority as a leader is to take time each day to remain in loving union with Jesus” (Scazzero, 121). When I get busy, my application of this statement falters. All I can focus on is the anxiety of getting a task done for school or ministry, rather than acknowledging God’s love and guidance through it.

This makes me realize that for me, my lack of slowing down for loving union reveals a focus issue. I often feel that I am more intimate with my anxiety and dysfunction than I am with Jesus! It seems I spend more time engaging this brokenness than engaging my Father. It is hard to admit this, but it is true. I wonder at how much more there is for me to experience with God amidst this brokenness. I try to avoid the suffering, but what if God wants to show me the depths of His compassion and care through it? I sense that God wants me to slow down and see who He is when my thoughts are racing with anxiety.

This statement from the self assessment also makes me wonder about the connection between slowing down and my foundation. Slowing down is not easy—it takes full trust in God. If I don’t trust God, how can I trust that He’ll provide when I take time to be with Him when it doesn’t make sense, schedule-wise? This is a challenge for me that I will work on. It reveals to me that my trust needs to be in God’s provision as my Father, not in my own works or understanding.

Works Cited

Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Leadership*. Zondervan, 2015.