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Introduction to Global Engagement

ICS224

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November 17, 2020

“What Can I Do”

The Diseases, economic imbalances, human trafficking, child labor, unsafe waters, lack of electricity, pollution and war. According to Livermore, these are just a handful of the plethora of global issues plaguing our world today. Livermore's goal in this book to show Christians how they can make a global difference on both a small and large scale. To do so, the author breaks down the book into three main parts: (1) A Big Picture (2) A Small Contribution (3) Your Next Step.

The author begins by describing the different atrocities that goes on in the world by making it more relatable. He does so by translating the world into a global village of 1,000 people so we can gain a thorough understanding of the different factors that affect the world we live in today. Livermore explains that making a difference does not necessarily need to begin on a global scale but can begin on the current level you're on and in the current career or field you're working in. He gives numerous examples on both an individual and global level. He even picks a few career paths such as science and technology, art, healthcare and teaching to specifically address work that can be done in these fields to reflect change. These examples raise awareness and introspection of how others can implement change in their respective jobs. Livermore then explains what our next step can be and refers to this section as a "guidebook" (pg. 133) where he talks about our personal journey to making change and the necessary things we need to think about and do to get there. Throughout all of this, he constantly reminds us to involve and embrace God in all that we do.

Livermore touched on many good points, but there were a few that stood out to me which I agreed with. For example, ditching the question, "What are you going to do when you grow up" and asking, "Who are you becoming" (pg. 115). With this question it allows us as individuals to identify ourselves in the image of God no matter what work we do rather than our job defining

us. Another point is when Livermore states that, although we may have the best intentions to make a big difference in the world, we must be careful of labeling ourselves as a “world changer” (pg. 127). Instead, we need to understand that only God can change the world but we are called upon to join him and do our part. This was very important because it can be easy for many people to lose sight of this and do good deeds to be revered or praised instead of transmitting that praise back to the rightful owner. Lastly, another major point that I agreed with is Livermore’s description of the seven strategies (pgs 47-54) we can currently do and practice in order to help others on a global scale. These strategies include global awareness, informing and recruiting others, work it into work, give (donate), shop responsibly, invest/divest and influence government and media. These strategies are important because they can affect many people on a global scale even while we are home, at work, church or hanging with friends. In a sense, it’s the least we can do while also changing a lot.

Although Livermore does a great job, he rarely touches on **evangelism**, which is a large part of ministry. When describing the global community, Livermore himself states that 400 people have never heard of Christ (pg. 21) which translates to 40% of the population on a global scale. With this being said, I disagree with Livermore’s reluctance to identify gospel and evangelism as a major part of touching people lives and making change. He addresses this in the FAQ portion of his book (pg. 191), however, it should have been included throughout the major parts of the book. This would allow us as Christians to understand how to integrate it in our everyday lives, especially our career paths, where evangelism and gospel is not always openly welcomed.

Livermore offers a “reflect” and “act” section at the end of each chapter which compels you to think about questions you wouldn’t normally ask yourself. It allows for you to actively

incorporate your own feelings, experience and future intentions. This was a bit challenging for me as it made me think about topics that weren't necessarily at the forefront of my mind before. What's also challenging is this book forces you to take responsibility and eradicates the excuse of "what can I do?" because he outlines all the things that we can do on a small and individual level. Also, Livermore discusses things we need to look into when going on our journey such as our personality, skills and the causes that are most important to us. It becomes a struggle to pick a cause when they are all atrocities. It makes you have to wonder what causes are more important to you and why so you know where to begin.

Altogether, Livermore forces you to reflect and look at what we can do to make a difference. He offered a number of examples I can proactively begin to use in my field. He noted that the most important contribution health care professional can make to the world is to provide excellent health care for the mind, body and spirit (pg. 100). Although I already include this into my career, I will make sure I continue to pray for God's healing and miraculous power over patients as well as peace for the families while also providing them with the best services possible. Also, Livermore discusses the importance of bedside manner (pg. 102) and cultural intelligence (pg. 127). He describes cultural intelligence as the capability to function effectively across a variety of cultures. This is extremely important as a nurse because my bedside manner and ability to be culturally competent can affect the patient's mood, anxiety and stress levels which can ultimately affect their issue at hand. With that being said, I will be more mindful of making patients feel comfortable in my presence and understanding and respecting their cultural differences.

All in all, Livermore's work is profound and offers extensive examples of little things we can do to make a change. We don't have to feel defeated if we can't pick up and go to Africa to

eradicate hunger because there are a number of small steps we can take while we are here. It is important to find what cause is meaningful to you, the skills you have to live it out and God's purpose in using you to help change the lives of others. My mind transformed to "What Can I Do?" to "I will do what God has blessed me to do."

Work Cited

Livermore, David A., and Terry Linhart. *What Can We Do? Practical Ways Your Youth Ministry Can Have a Global Conscience*. Zondervan, 2011

