

Reading Report

The book, “The deeply formed life” by Rich Villodas was published in 2020 (Penguin Randomhouse.com) is a personal spiritual formation book. It talks about people in general needing to become closer to God so that the issues of hurriedness in our lives, racial reconciliations, self-examination, sexual and spiritual wholeness and Gods’ inner presence are practices and awareness helps us to get into “the deeply formed life.” This author is saying that the pace of peoples’ lives is not allowing them to have the right encounters with God and therefore “we will not be the people that God wants us to be...as long as we are enslaved to a culture of speed, superficiality, and distraction” (p, 2). He added that these things make our relationship with God and everyone superficial. Altogether, to achieve the goals toward racial reconciliations and crisis in general a spiritual formation must take place in Gods’ people. He broke down five values that can be used toward having the “deeply formed life.”

What Villodas argues that individuals need to come out of being superficial like relying on “our false selves, our families of origin, “manipulated social media presentations, “and worldly perceptions of how we should be for life’s successes all help to make us “shallow people.” In addition to his argument, what use does God have for shallow people? As a result, we need transformation and God needs to do a deep work inside us. This argument was backed by the authors’ own monastic experience and spiritual formation. He explains further that the deeply formed life is consisted of many aspects of spiritual formation. We need to be closer to God in the spiritual disciplines in order to come to reconciliations, and social justices.

This reading interacts with my ministry context in the discussion about contemplative rhythms. As I read that, I can testify that I am out of rhythm. For me, it is my daily confession that I don’t have enough time and too much to do. Reading this assures me that I need personal

Reading Report

spiritual formation if I'm going to continue in my ministry. Meaning, I certainly don't want it to be superficial especially with God. This book gives me a blueprint of how to get on track towards a deeper relationship with God so that he can use for what he needs me to do.

My worldview is trumped by the authors' discussion about contemplative rhythms. For some time now, speeding is what I do to make each day. I'm a multitasking individual; speeding is how I get things down. Still, I do question myself as I learn that spiritual disciplines with take time as well as efforts to perform. When Villodas says that "hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day" it answered the question that I ask myself which is when I am going to have more of a spiritual life.

Much of the reading is agreeable, however, taking the sabbath is good and is biblical. Even God took a sabbath and he is God the creator of all. I made this decision to do it on Saturdays. Yet, I'm almost there because it seems that too much do is running into that time. Consequently, what Villodas says about it being a gift from God forces me to put my foot down and claim it because God gave it to me. The section referring to Prince's philosophy about sexuality and spiritual is not easy to equate with Gods' idea of sexuality. Also, this author went through several experiences as he calls them "layers of reconciliation" to get where he is on his spiritual journey, yet I can't see myself having the time to do several layers of reconciliations if that is what is needed to achieve it.

This book will impact my current ministry because now I know what it takes or have an idea of what it takes to live in this world and make it. In this fast-paced world, a deeper closeness in relationship with God is inevitable. In all noise and confusion going on, you will need that relationship in order to hear what God is saying to you. The author has a valid point in respect to

Reading Report

again the contemplative rhythm. Yesterday, I was in a hurry to get transportation to get to the school. God spoke to me in a soft, clear voice check before you leave to see if your class is cancelled. The professor cancelled the class. I ended up wasting time that could have been spent with God in discipline, maybe stillness, or meditation.

Reading Report

1

¹ Villodas, Rich, the deeply formed life: Five transformative values to root us in the way of Jesus. Random house.com. 2020