Roadmap to Reconciliation 2.0 - Book Report

Daniel Ribeiro

PMN205: Introduction to Racial Reconciliation

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Racism has been a well-known issue for the nation of America, and that unfortunately has infiltrated the church found within the country itself. For a good number of years, people would use the name of Christ in order to conduct barbaric, racist attacks against people of color. Although yes, we have seen some progress made, it is still necessary to note that we are still a long way from experiencing complete racial reconciliation within the American church today. It is going to have to take a catalytic event.

In her book, Roadmap to Racial Reconciliation 2.0, one of the main points the author, Brenda Salter McNeil, talks about that all it takes for something radical to happen is something catalytic, "something to push out of our comfort zones and the isolated social enclaves that keep us alienated from other people and their differing perspectives."[1] And as we continue to see the current state of the church in America, that is evidently true, as we have seen the rise and fall of desires for people wanting to see change, but they do not put it into practice because the church here immediately squashes their desires to bring about change. As a church, we have grown pretty disinterested with change, because it would hold many people accountable, and it is going to bring a level of deep discomfort, confusion and pain to those who do not know how to deal well with those types of emotions.

I agree with McNeil in regards to a catalytic event to happen within the church of America. The year of 2020 was a catalyst for the church to begin adopting change into their congregations. It was a year that was plagued with a pandemic, with racial injustice, with political unrest; an abnormal year, and what I saw were plenty of churches that were really quick to come out with a statement on how they were going to be "agents of change" and "agents of reconciliation." However, as the weeks dwindled by, and plenty of other things caught their

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[1] McNeil, Brenda Salter. *Roadmap to Reconciliation 2.0: Moving Communities Into Unity, Wholeness and Justice*, READHOWYOUWANT, S.l., 2021.

attention, racial justice became the least of their concerns. How is it that big corporations have done a better job in fighting for racial justice than the group of people who are supposed to be modeling it to the rest of the world?

One thing that McNeils explains really well is that a catalytic event is going to bring confusion, it is going to bring questions, that it would not be "moments of clarity. They are not clear-cut and easy."[2] And the more that I noticed the church in America fight racism in speech, when it came to action, all they had were questions on how they were going to fight it with no clear next step. So instead of reaching out to different organizations, they would instead just fall back into isolationism, focus on the things that they were first preoccupied with, and would not fight for reconciliation.

What this book reveals to me is that if another event like this were to happen again, we are not ready. We have the weapons at our disposal, however, we are not offering our congregants the right means on how to use it, because we have grown accustomed to feeling as if we cannot do much to change. That is the reason why the church has the power and the Presence of the Holy Spirit, so that we can accomplish what is impossible on our own terms.

This book impacted me to stay mindful of when the next catalytic event is, and how God wants to use that to bring the church back into its pure state, truly loving God and one another. I learned that when it comes to ministry, just as how it did with the Apostle Paul at his conversion, I may not understand plenty of things at all, not even what my next step is. However, the catalyst was given by God in order for Him to take care of the body of Christ, and for Him to treat it well in order for us to become more like Him. The church is meant to bring heaven on earth, and heaven will be filled with diversity.

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[2] McNeil, Brenda Salter. *Roadmap to Reconciliation 2.0: Moving Communities Into Unity, Wholeness and Justice*, READHOWYOUWANT, S.l., 2021.

Bibliography

McNeil, Brenda Salter. *Roadmap to Reconciliation 2.0: Moving Communities Into Unity, Wholeness and Justice*, READHOWYOUWANT, S.l., 2021.