

Strengthen
Your Leadership
Journey

Chapter 8

ORGANIZATIONALISM

— A PERVERSIVE IDOL

Leaders are telling us,
everyone in ministry should,
at the very least, read
this one chapter.

This chapter
offers insight into
a subtle danger
that is in the air
all leaders
breathe.

My prayer is that
God will use this to
better equip you
for service in
His Kingdom.

Stacy T. Rinehart

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Chapter 8

ORGANIZATIONALISM

— A PERVASIVE IDOL

I approach this chapter with much fear. I am afraid that you will misunderstand or I will be misunderstood. I am concerned that the issues will be glossed over, the seriousness of the issues lost. I also approach this chapter with much thought, counsel and prayer. I am attempting to put in words what I've not read anywhere, but is in the air we breathe.

I was on Navigator staff from 1976 until 2000 with many responsibilities and ministry experiences. Throughout my Christian life, I've been mentored by some of the best mentors available to me – many of them senior Navigators. These were men I highly respected for their godliness, wisdom and experience. Without the input of these men, I couldn't or wouldn't be doing what I do. I stand on their shoulders and I am so deeply grateful for their love and patience with me.

While on Navigator staff, I lead a campus ministry and a community ministry, I was founder of the Glen Eyrie Leadership Development Institute and I participated in many US and some international projects. As a Navigator, I was tasked as Executive Director of The CoMission Training and Materials Committee (1992 – 1997) where The CoMission partnership of eighty-four denominations and mission organizations sent 1,868 missionaries for at least a year to sixty-eight cities in the former Soviet Union. The Lord expanded and honed my gifts of developing people, providing leadership, building teams and building organizations. As I write these words I see pictures of many people who are now champions of the faith in their careers, churches, ministries and families. I keep up with some of them and occasionally hear about others. I feel privileged to have had a small part in their growth and development.

What I am illustrating is the subtle, sneaky drift in our lives as leaders. We come to shape our identity around the group we are with and where we fit in the group. We fall in love with the system of ministry. The desire to be on the inner circles is a strong one.

In 1997, the US Navigators began a process to select a new US President. At that time the US Navigator President was responsible for twenty-five hundred staff. I was a candidate. There were thirty-nine members of a committee who would select the new president over two separate five-day meetings.

As the final week progressed, there were two of us remaining. Several votes were taken, but the results were about even, and neither of us had the 75 percent required votes needed. Late on day four, we held another vote, and there were a few more votes for the other man, but still less than the required 75 percent—we had run out of time and were scheduled to conclude our meeting by midmorning the next day.

That night was a sleepless one for me. Somewhere in the middle of the night, I knew God wanted me to withdraw my name. The other man was then the clear choice to be president.

The next morning I got up from my table and walked a short distance to the podium and spoke briefly to the other thirty-eight men and women in the room. I shared only briefly and said in essence, "I withdraw". As soon as I said these words, I broke down weeping on the verge of collapse. Some near me helped me to my seat.

I went home knowing I had done the right thing. But I've never been so broken, defeated, abandoned or felt so rejected. These thirty-eight other men and women respected me, loved me and did not reject me. It was nothing they did or didn't do. It was me and what God was doing in my life. Though I knew better, what I felt was deep rejection. The Navigators were my family. They led me to Christ. Where did I go from here?

Over the next year, I spiraled downward, losing both perspective and vision. I did little constructive. The new president graciously provided a resource person, who formed a “protection team” for me. The idea was that these people would be a sounding board for me as I journeyed through these deep waters. I look back now and realize the Lord used these men to rescue me.

The Lord orchestrated these events for many reasons—one was my growth. One of the hardest parts was that I lost my ability to sense what God was doing in my life. I remember saying, “I don’t trust myself to listen to the Lord anymore.” It seemed like God led me in the direction of leading this organization and then abruptly shut the door. I was lost.

I slowly began to see how I had fused my vision to a position and an organization. I saw my dependency on the significance of my position in the organization and my desire to be in the inner circle. I saw that my significance, my identity, came from being on the inside and on top. This dies slow.

I am grateful the Lord gave the responsibility to the other man. He did a great job for eleven years. I am deeply thankful to the Lord for the brokenness that He brought in me through this experience. I have no residual hurt or rejection. My identity in Christ has grown significantly. I am so thankful for the way the Lord used all of this to prepare me for the next chapter of my life and ministry, which began in 2000 when God called me to help form MentorLink.

The point in sharing this breaking experience in my life is to illustrate how much organizational cultures have been part of my life.

What I am illustrating is the subtle, sneaky drift in our lives as leaders. We come to shape our identity around the group we are with and where we fit in the group. We fall in love with the system of ministry. The desire to be on the inner circles is a strong one.

In the world of vocational ministry, we don’t drive company cars or get a yearly bonus. No one enters the ministry for the perks. A dangerous temptation is to wrap our soul around the job we do, the organization we are a part of, the position we hold, or the staff and budgets we control. C. S. Lewis calls this in his timeless essay, the longing to be in the inner ring.

Of all passions the passion for the Inner Ring is more skillful in making a man who is not yet a very bad man do bad things...The desire to be inside the invisible line illustrates this rule. As long as you are governed by that desire you will never get what you want. You are trying to peel an onion; if you succeed there will be nothing left. Until you conquer the fear of being an outsider, an outsider you will remain. (C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, “The Inner Ring,” p. 103)

Organizations

This is very important: this chapter is not about The Navigators or any other specific organization or church. It is about the organizational air we breathe and the temptation we all face to use organizations for our own fleshly desires. Like the polluted air in Beijing is hazardous to our physical health, organizations can be hazardous to our spiritual health.

Most of us in ministry organizations and churches have good hearts and are not seeking to undermine the kingdom. Perhaps

at times we know something is wrong or that what we do is not from the pages of the New Testament, but we are carried along by the momentum of the organization. Perhaps we don’t like how the organization treats people but “godly” leaders above us do it, other ministries and churches do it, and we just assume those people are right. Though our heart is good, our actions sometimes reveal we are organizationally focused and our organizational focus takes precedence over Jesus and His kingdom. This is idolatry.

Organizations are neutral—they are wineskins. They are containers or structures around some idea or activity. Wikipedia defines it this way:

An organization is a social entity that has a collective goal and is linked to an external environment. The word is derived from the Greek word organon, itself derived from the better-known word ergon which means “organ”—a compartment for a particular task.

“An organization is a social entity...” we build around a purpose or task. The key point is that it is a structure that helps people relate and work together.

Structure is needed to support life. We have skin and bones. Flowers have stalks, and trees have trunks and branches. The solar system has structure. This chapter is not about doing away with organizations.

Though our heart is good, our actions sometimes reveal we are organizationally focused and our organizational focus takes precedence over Jesus and His kingdom. This is idolatry.

As I write, we are in December and our home is decorated for Christmas. Soon all will be here for three to four days of joy and celebration of His greatest gift. I am sitting in front of our fireplace with the gas logs burning and the threat of the pending ice storm showing in the gray clouds through the window behind me. The fire is in the fireplace. This is right and safe. The fire has a purpose of warmth and ambiance and if in the right place, serves that purpose well. Warmth is produced and gentle sounds of the fire and dancing flames provide a great Christmas-like atmosphere I enjoy on this cold winter's day. If there were no container or fireplace, what would happen if there was a fire in our house?

Structure is part of the way our God holds creation together. It is what we do with ministry structures in the name of God that can become the issue. Ministry structures and systems can actually become idols.

Organizations in the Body of Christ can fall under the control of fleshly people who use it for their own ends. Manipulation, abuse of power, and control over people can be justified under the mandates of the organization. The organization becomes the centerpiece or focal point and takes authority away from Jesus. It is a way leaders get away with fleshly practices. This is what I call organizationalism.

Organizationalism Illustrated

Organizationalism is where the organization is the focal point. Rather than attempting to conceptually explain it, let's illustrate it.

Organizationalism as an idol was first seen in Genesis 11 with the tower of Babel. People said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth" (Gen. 11:4). God confused their speech from that experience and scattered them as peoples and nations over the earth. They focused on their structure with the motive to make a name for themselves.

Have you ever been in one of the beautiful church buildings in Europe? They represent phenomenal artistic and architectural accomplishments. They took decades to build. What were their motives? The Lord knows. People must have been proud of them. To this day they are beautiful. They are monuments of massive financial investments in their construction. But they were never the true church in that area. The true church, the Body of Christ, is the people. We lose sight of this and give prominence to buildings instead. The people are gone, but the monument remains with us. We often do a variation

of this when we place focus on our organization's name or logo. People come and go, yet the organization remains—we forget the original purpose of the building or organization and instead honor the building or organizational remnants.

I recently did an enlightening study looking at the strategies and practices of the Pharisees and Chief Priests in the Gospels. This is a worthy study if you want to see organizationalism in operation (see Appendix D for a list of references). Their power and authority was undermined when Jesus and His followers did not bow to their system of rules and regulations or their authority. So they attacked Him, tried to trap, shame and undermine Him using any means possible. Their system, role and power depended on their control. These 'spiritual leaders' in Jesus' day manipulated the crowds to get Jesus crucified. They were protecting their system and organizational status quo. This is organizationalism.

Jesus means to be the focus of people's attention. The Pharisees rejected this notion when they said, "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation" (John 11:48). They were solid in their positions and place in the system they built. They liked their identity. They were fearful at the possibility of losing it. This is the root of the problem they and we face. We desire a name for ourselves and the place we built. Jesus will challenge this in each of us. He will be the focal point and will not share His glory with another.

They guarded their positions. It was not about the good things Jesus did like the many He healed, the demons He cast out, the miracles He performed, or the lives He changed. It was about their system and control.

Jesus gives a strong word of warning: "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees" (Matt. 16:6). Each one of us in leadership ought to be sobered by this warning. The question is, "Am I like the Pharisees and Sadducees in any way?"

Current Examples

Let's look at some illustrations of organizationalism in action today:

1. Changing Strategy

A megachurch decided to change strategies of structure and ministry. Their move is toward only small groups because this is "the way (name) [a well-known pastor in the United States] has organized his church." Seems innocent to say there is a change of strategy. Also it seems innocent to build the church structure around small groups.

This change raises motivation questions: Are people actually being served by this change? Who do the leaders serve?

This change abandoned many effective ministries in order to incorporate the new strategy. “We want to eliminate all programs and go to small groups,” is what was said. What about the very fruitful men’s discipling ministry or other groups that were canceled?

When we announce a new strategy that is an effort to copy a “successful” ministry, we are in danger of succumbing to organizationalism. It is as though numerical growth was the sole goal, like a beast that must be fed. Where is the leading of God?

Behind this action is the assumption that organizational alignment, structural management, and conformity of people in small groups will grow the church. Is this assumption correct? Is this really true? What are the motives? Who wants this most of all? The pastor? Will organizational realignment really bring about growth in the heart, values, motives, and character of the people the leaders are supposed to serve?

Organizationalism can become the prominent paradigm of ministry, like the proverbial tail that wags the dog. It takes precedence over spiritual means given us. The path slowly but surely takes us away from what is central, what is important. It is vital to note here that the apostles delegated administrative tasks to spiritual men (Philip and Stephen, Acts 6–7) who did not lead with their administrative gifts and skills but rather from their prime focus on spiritual tools centered in Jesus.

It is also vital for us to note that Jesus severely rebuked the scribes and Pharisees for their organizationalism (Matt. 23 and other places). This ought to serve as a warning to each of us who lead existing organizations. If we are not careful, we can find ourselves opposing Jesus.

2. Protecting the Leader’s Turf

Leaders use organizations to protect their turf or empire. Two veteran missionaries are kept out of a large city because a leader was threatened by their presence. “They aren’t controllable,” he says. This man used this statement to keep many other national and expat missionaries out of “his area” over the years. But now his peers see that he has used this same strategy to remove others or prevent missionaries from coming in. “Deceptive and manipulative” are words that describes his control over the organization, but on the outside he kept up a good front, using all the right language. This is beneath our calling as leaders who are mandated to help fulfill the Great Commission in our world.

3. New Leader—New Conformity

There was a missionary who had proven effectiveness in a nation. A new leader was appointed to oversee the organization’s national ministry. This new boss came in, looked at the veteran missionary’s ministry, and said in essence, “You are not doing what we want, so you must leave.”

As soon as I heard this, I called him since he was a longtime friend. I asked, “What is your calling?” I said, “Find another wineskin that will allow you to do your calling.” In time he and his wife found another organization and returned to the nation with a very fruitful ministry.

This illustrates the issue. Some leaders are threatened when God uses a person outside their control and direction. This is organizationalism. We have put the organization ahead of what the Spirit is doing through a person, group, or ministry. This is the leader saying “I am lord,” “do what I say,” and “I am in control here.” In ministry we are not given company cars, expense accounts, or extended vacations. To compensate we fall to the temptation to feed our ego on position and control. But the cause of Christ suffers.

4. An African Perspective

I asked several ministry leaders from Africa about this issue. They said, “Leaders protect their empire. The name of the organization or church is more important than Jesus’s kingdom. They produce only leaders like themselves. There is a high level of corruption among these leaders because they have to grow their ministry. So they manipulate people and use the ‘prosperity gospel’ message to get people to come to their church and give money. People in the ministry see this and begin to do the same. Younger leaders observe and try to follow their model. The goal is to grow the leader’s ministry, not the kingdom of Jesus.”

The African scene is raw, but much the same happens everywhere. Paul addressed the carnal Corinthian church, which had divided into different camps. “‘I am of Paul,’ and ‘I of Apollos,’ and ‘I of Cephas,’ and ‘I of Christ’” (I Cor. 1:12). Paul rebuked this approach of dividing loyalties with Christ by focusing on well-known leaders. This is alive and well in our day with our organizational divisions. The focal point is not Jesus and his kingdom but rather man-made structures or charismatic leaders.

5. Handling Missions Giving in a Church

With the proliferation of mission organizations and ministries at local, national, and international levels, churches are tempted to focus only on the ones they own and control. Larger churches set up their own mission board and send

out their own missionaries. The message comes from many pulpits: “Give your money to us, and we will distribute it to the missions and ministries we authorize.” What are the motives? More churches than can be imagined have even reduced or canceled missions giving to redirect the funds to build bigger buildings and expand the organization and ministries to church members and attendees. What are the motives? What is in the heart of the decision makers? How will Jesus evaluate this?

6. Focusing on Market Share and Distinctiveness

Seeking a “competitive edge” for increased market share is a driving force in our economically driven world. In the business world, we gain market share by focusing on our distinctives; by marketing our products and services; and by cutting poor producers, including products, services, and people. In ministries we often do the same as we seek to grow our ministry. The focus is on organizational growth using business-world principles.

These principles work—just look at Coca-Cola, Apple, McDonald’s, and many other successful enterprises. We are not challenging their use in the business world. But what happens when these principles are applied to churches and ministries? What damage does this do to the weak, downcast, and marginalized?

The fellow citizens in the church are primarily a family. We are relationally connected. Leaders and influencers among His saints are called brothers, fellow workers, friends, servants, and a host of other relationally oriented words (see Appendix C for a graphic illustrating this). The driving values of a healthy family are love, building one another up, and cooperation among the members. This is not “competitive edge” thinking.

Ministries and churches that focus on themselves and their “competitive edge” and uniqueness will, by default, seek to build themselves up while putting others down either inadvertently or intentionally. The focus is on the organization and not Jesus. What does Jesus think of this?

Organizationalism Summary

Organizations apply form to function to get things done. Organizations allow us to maximize scarce people, money, and time resources. Segregation of duties, utilizing strengths of people, financial efficiencies of scale, and collective understanding of organizational goals can lead to maximizing people and resources. This can be of great value to the organization’s purposes.

Good things can transform into bad things. Organizationalism can have disastrous consequences. Organizationalism is when we cede power and allegiance to the organization run by its leaders. The leaders become pawns of higher leaders or of the historical system and end up doing things they question or feel uncomfortable with from a kingdom perspective. Leaders can use the organization for their own purposes, manipulating people and resources toward their own ends. First and foremost, the organization is key and at the center of activity and thought. Second, leaders, managers, or pastors subtly take control, eliminating threats to their agenda, power, or position.

Where is the Trinity in a practical day-to-day way? How does the Spirit move? Who is head of the Body? Who is sovereign over all the organizational goals?

There are false leaders, emotionally disturbed people, and secret disrupters. Jesus, Paul, Peter, Jude, and John inform us that they are there, and they want to disrupt a ministry, seek control of it, or undermine the work of Jesus in some way for their own dark motives. There are ways to handle these, but organizationalism is not the answer. Just letting them corrupt the work of God is not the answer either. Sometimes they need to be confronted by name. Sometimes they need to be removed from their positions and have their relationships severed. Things are not clean-cut, clear, or without emotional and sometimes financial costs.

Sometimes the effort to reorganize a ministry or streamline for effectiveness can be a clever means of consolidating power. We need to evaluate our motives and prayerfully consider what God is doing in our midst. Structure must follow what the Spirit is doing in and through people. Structures and organizations must serve Christ’s people not the other way around.

Most of us appreciate a smooth-running organization and people working together efficiently, but sometimes the Spirit pulls people away and does unexpected things with genuine fruit. We can’t control it—only serve those involved, and join in what the Spirit is doing. The ultimate goal is not a smooth-running organization but rather serving what the Spirit is doing. If we can’t serve it, perhaps the Spirit is breaking out a new ministry.

What can we do if we are in an environment of organizationalism? Here are some thoughts:

If You Are the Leader

- If at any point, you see that you are opposing Jesus by leading or living in the flesh, confess this sin.

- Review this book, and ask the Lord what actions He wants you to take.
- Take a number of leaders you influence through this book and after you finish, ask the group to seek the Lord for the actions He wants you to take.
- Ask the Spirit to hold you by the hand and lead you in the steps you need to take in courage, faith, and boldness.

If You Are Not the Leader

- Pioneer a new expression, but don't split the old wineskin. This may be perceived as rebellion by organizational thinkers. Sometimes pioneering is not rebellion but rather obedience.
- Do nothing but keep your distance from the center of the organization.
- Commit to reform the organization. This is a long-term project. You must be called to this because it will be very costly.
- Join another like-minded organization or church. Most will take this approach because in the short run, it will be a breath of fresh air. This is often why people leave one church or ministry and go to another.

If we've been wounded by organizationalism, we can learn much about God's sovereign watch-care over us by looking at Joseph. His jealous brothers sold him into slavery attempting to rid themselves of him and his status as their father's favorite son. We see Joseph's response when his brothers feared retribution for their actions: "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good..." (Gen. 50:20). Yes, even though leaders or organizations abuse or mistreat us, God can still use it in our lives for His purposes.

All we had were our values, vision, and relationships, yet the ministry continued to multiply. This is counterintuitive to the organizational mind (including mine at the time).

Antidotes to Organizationalism

My Own Journey

We made partnerships one of our key operating values and strategies when we formed MentorLink. We did this the best we knew how. We grew rapidly by serving as catalysts to help known leaders in a country form a mentoring network to develop leaders. We trained key leaders in a five-day-retreat

format, gave them initial materials, and told them these materials were not completely right for their context. We encouraged them to modify the materials as they felt needed. We also gave all the participants the electronic files of the materials on a CD so they could easily make the contextual modifications. Then we viewed them as partners in the overall MentorLink movement. This was going well. In seven years we were in over twenty nations.

As we grew, we started giving titles and looking more like an organization. Even though we called them partners, we began falling into management mode. They were kind and in some ways went along with this.

Then 2008 hit. We had just brought in my replacement to serve as the president of MentorLink International in February 2008 "to take the organization to the next level." I was to serve as chairman with a focus on fundraising, mentoring, and training. Things were going well. Our gift income was increasing, and our board and staff were excited. Then in May a potential donor slated to give a large gift suddenly died, one of our key staff abruptly resigned in July, and the economy crashed in August. Then my replacement unexpectedly resigned in September. So I came back to lead the MentorLink ministry. We had no money (a 66 percent decline in gifts in fifteen months because most of our large donors were connected to the real estate and financial markets) and no real organization to promote other than a few of us Americans. I

told the board that when I came back in, we would stay on the edge of innovation—this was the only way to keep me energized.

There were many dark nights during that period through 2011. I learned many personal, leadership, and ministry lessons in that three-year period. We struggled financially as a ministry. Organizational thinking goes like this: "I need to manage and create growth by allocating financial resources to the right people and programs." We had no money for people or programs. What were we to do?

There is something to be said for having too few resources. The ministry was forced to grow by values, vision, and relationships. It was humbling and amazing at the same time.

Through this dark phase (organizationally speaking), we continued praying for key people through our weekly e-mail prayer update. We continued to meet people from around the world in Skype groups. We also continued to create new resource materials to give away to any who would use them.

To our amazement the overall movement continued to grow and multiply.

I learned that movements can grow with little money and programs from a central source. All we had were our values, vision, and relationships, yet the ministry continued to multiply. This is counterintuitive to the organizational mind (including mine at the time). The fewer resources you throw at it, the more it grows. Who gets the glory? Not me or MentorLink.

Again, the issue is not “organization” per se. Organizations are only wineskins. They exist to serve a purpose, but they are not the purpose. As I look at the ways of Jesus and the early church, there is limited use of formalized wineskins. The Roman culture was extremely organized, yet the early church did not model its wineskins after the Roman model. This held true until Constantine married the church to the state in AD 313. Ever since then, clergy increased in power, structures increased in prominence, “lay people” diminished in power, and women lost ministry impact and influence.

If we long to see the Gospel of Christ reach the nations, we will have to de-emphasize our structures and empower average, called people to minister according to their gifts and calling.

4-M Chronology

Man, movement, management, and monument. Looking at a long-term perspective of church history, we see a general trend. Even looking at the last fifty years of church history, we see aspects of the general trend. It is this: God uses a person to create a ministry out of nothing or adopt a new form of ministry in a new way or to new people. Spontaneous spiritual growth happens and spreads rapidly and with little effort. Others pick it up and emulate it. This leads to multiplication. Then people run into problems, sense a need to bring order, structure or control to the growth. Management then becomes the focus.

Different kinds of leaders rise to the top of the movement who see the problems and attempt to solve them in an orderly way. This initially brings comfort to many people wanting order and structure. There is also an attempt to create formulas, programs, and materials to replicate the movement with other people. This goes on for years or decades, and new generations of managers come in. Things become routine and the spark is gone, but the ministry continues. Some managers try to renew the original spark through organizational change, management change, or programs attempting to bring revival to the ministry.

Over time people get worn out, and new generations of leaders and managers emerge who did not know the original man or movement. The only thing they know is the perceived effectiveness of the organization and point to management as the key. This goes on for years or decades. The result is a monument.

The management phase is most dangerous to the work of the Spirit in a movement. Many leaders start with the management phase. They ask these questions: What is your structure? Who are your leaders? What is your strategy? What is your vision? The attempt is to put together the best organization possible, and in doing so, they think they are expanding the ministry.

The management phase usually comes after first-generation leaders transfer the ministry to the second generation and then from the second to the third and fourth. Usually by the fourth, the ministry is in the hands of managers who are “hired” to preserve the forms and traditions of the past. The succeeding generations lose sight of the difference between function and form.

Managers celebrate the virtues of a smooth-running ministry machine and provide a continual supply of parts for the assembly line of ministry production. But a movement is like a living organism. Organisms defy outside management. If we try to organize a movement, we will kill it.

What Fosters Movements

We have talked at length about organizationalism, but what are some antidotes? I believe partnerships are a practical way forward. Our experience in MentorLink led us to work with partners who have a kingdom agenda larger than themselves and that seek to accomplish that agenda with partners. If a leader or organization is unwilling to partner in some aspects of their ministry, they are building their own “empire” and are not the kind of leader or organization we want to be associated with anyway. These partnerships can become a movement.

Movements are the way of the Spirit and antidotes to organizationalism. Movements happen when people, particularly gifted “apostles” are released to innovate and follow the Spirit’s lead in new ways or new places of ministry.

Movements are spontaneous, widespread manifestations, implemented in a variety of methods and leaders. Think of the Orality movement, which consists of people and ministries seeking to get the Gospel and the Scriptures to two-thirds of the world that does not read. Leader development, spiritual direction, and saturation church planting movements are all current illustrations.

There are three indicators of spiritual movements: they multiply spiritual fruit, they have many leaders, and their organizations and expressions are being used by God to change lives.

Spiritual movements grow by the work of the Spirit. Our role is to create environments that are conducive to spontaneous growth. But we cannot manufacture a movement. However, we can focus on meeting real needs and use spiritual tools of prayer, the Scriptures, and the love of Christ to serve people in need, but it is the Spirit that gives growth. Then we watch where the Spirit of God is moving, and we follow that trail.

Though we cannot manufacture movements, we can kill them through fearful or threatened leaders who desire to control outcomes and fruit. Another movement killer is the attempt to monetize the movement through charging for services. Leaders, organizations, or churches with cultures of control can kill movements.

These are decisions each leader must make:

1. Am I willing to submit to Jesus's rule in my leadership?
2. Am I willing to partner with other leaders and ministries for specific ministries?
3. Am I willing to let go of control?
4. Am I willing to not get the credit?
5. Am I willing to encourage other expressions of similar ministry?

Summary

Structures are a part of life. Functions need forms, and forms can become organizations. Organizations are created to serve the people in a ministry or church. But they can become dominant and reverse the purpose so that the people end up serving the organization. This is called organizationalism.

Everywhere, the pressure for leaders is to build their organizations. They are held accountable to this end. Ministry leaders and pastors have a difficult time seeing another way of leading. They are often imprisoned by their organizational mandates and roles. Organizationalism is pervasive in our day. An idol is anything we give allegiance to over Jesus and His kingdom rule.

The apostle John said, "Children, guard yourselves from idols."

Prayer

Lord, give me eyes to see how I have bought into organizationalism and the courage to realign myself with You and Your kingdom.
(1 John 5:21)

Questions for Thought or Discussion

1. How have you seen organizationalism expressed in your experience?
2. What movement have you been a part of or seen from a distance? What is happening to it now?
3. What is the Spirit saying to you from this chapter?

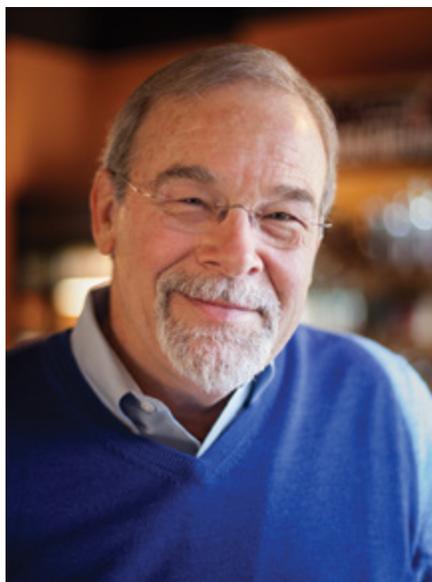
How you lead matters.

If God used this one chapter to "speak" to you, imagine what He can do with the entire book.

He can use it in your life and in the lives of those you influence.

“If you have been stirred or challenged or if you think this chapter is important, I invite you to send it via email to any leader you think will profit from it. You may also duplicate it to hand out to leaders in your ministry for thought and discussion.”

Stacy T. Rinehart



Stacy Rinehart is the founder of MentorLink International, a global ministry focused on multiplying Christ-like leaders. Stacy is a former Vice President of the Navigators and holds a Th.M. from Dallas Theological Seminary and a D.Min. from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He and his wife, Paula, reside in Raleigh, North Carolina.

More about the book:

A Look Ahead

In the pages that follow, we unfold the theme of leading in light of eternity. For now, here is a brief summary of each chapter.

CHAPTER 1

Jesus calls us to serve Him and His kingdom purposes.

CHAPTER 2

Each of us will be audited by Jesus—we are accountable to Him.

CHAPTER 3

We each have to choose whether we will lead in the natural ways of the flesh or follow Jesus’s ways.

CHAPTER 4

Jesus calls us to lead from the inside out, focusing on our heart, character, values, and motives.

CHAPTER 5

We look at the Leader’s Covenant as “aspirations” for living and leading like Christ.

CHAPTER 6

We delve into the principles of how Jesus took common people and made them into world-changing leaders.

CHAPTER 7

There is a subject we just don’t want to talk about—false leaders—but we will.

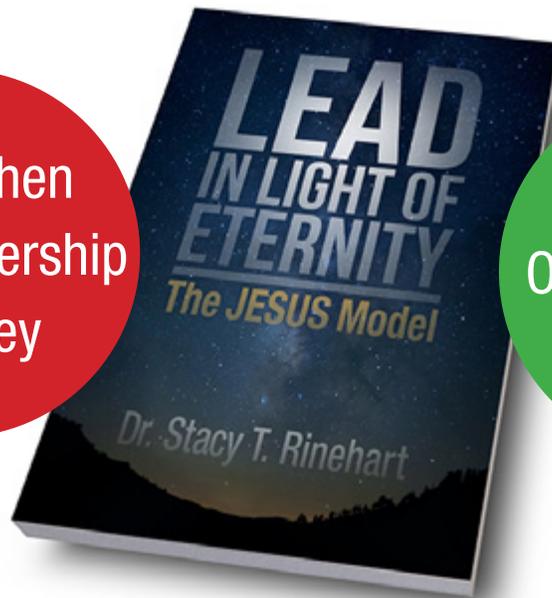
CHAPTER 8

Like the polluted air in Beijing, we are at spiritual risk with the idolatry of organizationalism.

CHAPTER 9

We summarize the book by looking at seven distinct realities of the kingdom.

Strengthen
Your Leadership
Journey



Strengthen
Others In Their
Leadership *

“Thank you for reading this chapter.

I encourage you to buy and read the book.
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Help those you lead
by sharing the book with them.”

Stacy T. Rinehart

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