Paul's Missiological Mindset in Leadership in Ephesians 2

The complexity of today's world requires global leadership across multiple segments including politics, business, economics, religion, and society. Its interconnectedness has awoken an awareness that the leadership required to navigate the nuances of differing, sometimes opposing, cultural values to achieve goals must transcend competency-based models. Global leadership must be essentially transformational. Global leadership brings diverse people and resources together to unlock their latent potential to create solutions to the world's problems (Cabrera and Unruh, 2012). Certainly, global leaders must be visionary and solutions-oriented to tackle the multilayered nature of global issues (Cabrera & Unruh, 2012). They must develop new worldviews that overrule monolithic ways of viewing problems (Cabrera & Unruh, 2012). And they must possess an agility in cross-cultural engagement among different contexts, capable of unpacking their meanings sensitively and responding appropriately (Caligiuri, 2012). But competency in these areas, while necessary, does not complete the resume of a Christian global leader. Whether in sacred or secular pursuits, the Christian global leader's calling is not transactional, but transformational.

In his letter the church in Ephesus, the apostle Paul articulated that God, through his redeeming work in Christ, made known the "mystery of his will according to his good pleasure" (Ephesians 1:9, New International Version). Paul acknowledged that Christ is the revelation of God's purposes previously hidden: God intends to "bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ" (Eph. 1:10). This implies that Christian global leadership is inextricably tied to God's reconciling and unifying work in Christ. Global leadership, according to Paul's vision, requires a missiological mindset, not merely a global mindset. A global mindset contemplates

leadership within the complexity of worldviews and employs the competencies necessary to respond appropriately in the pursuit of organizational goals.

In contrast, a missiological mindset contemplates leadership in the context of creating a new community, one that emerges from the heart of the Triune God and that images this God by its unity-in-diversity that declares the "praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:12, 14). Leadership and intercultural scholar, Douglas McConnell (2018), argues that a missiological mindset understands cultural engagement as an ongoing dialogue between faith and culture that forms a community of trust and participation. Paul envisioned a newly created covenant community constituted by people formally bound to kinship groups based on family, patriarchy, ethnicity, ideology, or other obligating ties, often in hostility and competition against other kinship groups, but recreated by God for "good works" (Eph. 2:10). How can such diverse and even opposing people forge a common unity – a community – inhabiting together a new creation space characterized by love, peace, justice, hospitality, and wholeness? The missiological leadership mindset must be transformational.

In Ephesians 2, Paul explored the principles related to a missiological view of global leadership. Our analysis of this text underscores Paul's driving vision of global leadership with a transformational essence. That ideology sprang from Paul's own Jewish social and cultural location as well as his relationship to both the Jewish and Gentile communities that he addressed in the letter. The text reveals Paul's belief that the fundamental problem of cross-cultural engagement is not a lack of cultural agility, but sin that breaches the Creator's original design for human relations and is, in fact, inherently antisocial (Darko, 2015), and thus, anticulture. Against the rising tide of malevolent forces that sought to divide rather than unify, Paul employed a

transformational leadership strategy to address the cultural segregation of God's new community by declaring Christ as its countervailing kinship and peace.

Paul's Ideology in Ephesians 2

Paul's social and cultural location cultivates the ideology he forms for the Ephesian church. Paul was formerly a zealous Jewish Pharisee, discipled in the Torah by the respected rabbi and Sanhedrin leader Gamaliel (DeSilva, 2004; Acts 22). He persecuted the fledgling Christian movement out of deep concern for the purity of Israel and its acceptance before God (De Silva, 2004; Acts 22). Before his conversion, he perceived the Christians as a threat to Jewish identity and a cancer to Israel's covenant bond to God (De Silva, 2004). But Paul's perspective changed in Acts 9 through a transformational encounter with the resurrected and glorified Jesus (De Silva, 2004). From that moment forward, Paul understood Jesus to be God's plan for the true people of God (De Silva, 2004).

Through his converted sensibility of the Jewish people's heritage, Paul began to understand that through Jesus, the formerly excluded Gentiles were now included in the cosmic plan of God (Eph. 2:11-13). In Ephesians 2, Paul alludes to the Exodus and the Passover, two events that fundamentally shaped the historic identity of the Jewish people (Wright, 2004). The concepts of salvation (Eph. 2:8) and blood (Eph. 2:13) played heavily in the Passover (Wright, 2004). References to the Torah (Eph. 2:15) and the temple (Eph. 2:21) are reminiscent of the Exodus (Wright, 2004). Even references to the Spirit (Eph. 2:22) evokes images of the cloud and the fire that went with the people on their flight from Egypt (Wright, 2004). But these former symbols of Jewish privilege and covenant as God's people are now transformed in Jesus. Paul understood that God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were intended to extend the promises of God's salvation beyond their progeny and to the entire world (Wright, 2004). The

Torah, which was once an "impenetrable fence" of Jewish particularism and separation from Gentiles has now been set aside through the death, resurrection, and reign of Jesus Christ (Lincoln, 1987; Eph. 2:15). The temple, once a bastion of segregation within a strict understanding of purity, was now reconfigured in Paul's mind as a place of Jewish and Gentile unity that transcended a physical building or location (Keener, 2009; Eph. 2:21). According to Paul's new creation ideology, Christ is the new identity-marker for the people of God such that those who were once foreigners and aliens are now "fellow citizens with God's people and also members of God's household" (Goroncy, 2017; Eph. 2:19). Christ is the peace who has made the two groups one by destroying the former barriers (Eph. 2:14).

Paul's missiological ideology re-zones the map of honor within a first-century honor-shame cultural context. According to theologian Bruce Malina (2001), the organizing principle of the ancient world was kinship: a person's identity and value were directly associated with whom they were related. Honor was bestowed upon a person according to the kinship group to which he or she belonged as long as he or she observed the traditional rules of decorum and behavior that ascribed honor to the kinship group (Malina, 2001). In other words, the person was expected to reflect the image of the group. Individuals within a kinship group depended on fellow members to provide them with the meaning and purpose of their lives (Malina, 2001). The head of the group was especially responsible for the group's honor in relation to outsiders (Malina, 2001). Within this social context, the idea of a united Jewish and Gentile people was scandalously dishonoring to both groups, a disenfranchisement to the kinship identities each had previously called upon to define their own sense of belonging (Dunning, 2006).

In a first-century context, many preferred death over loss of citizenship to their kinship groups for it would have signaled a loss of honor, identity, and meaning (Dunning, 2006). Paul's

use of citizenry language resonated deeply within the value system of the Roman Empire. But he drove the point further with two arguments. First, without regard to ethnic, racial, or religious distinction, he unilaterally declared his readers, both Jews and Gentiles, "dead in [their] trespasses and sins" (Lincoln, 1987). Paul's use of the term "dead" is a reference to a culturally collectivist understanding of sin that separates humans from God and from one another (Darko, 2015). Essentially, Paul meant that they were "dead" in that their sin dishonored them before God and destroyed any sense of belonging to him or identity from him.

Secondly, New Testament scholar, N. T. Wright (2004), points out that Paul challenges the presuppositions of both Jews and Gentiles in the text. He described circumcision, the Jews' ultimate "badge of membership," as a work of human hands (Wright, 2004, p. 26; Eph. 2:11). This is phrasing that the Jews used to describe Gentile idols (Wright, 2004). Conversely, he describes the Gentiles as formerly "without God" (Eph. 2:12). They were "atheists," which was pejorative term that the Gentiles labeled the Jews because of their insistent belief in one God (Wright, 2004, p. 26). In both arguments, Paul eliminates any further claim to honor by either group through cultural, ethnic, or religious cliques. Formerly, these two groups were conflicting factions at enmity with one another and each dishonored in the eyes of the other (Robbins, 1996). Paul's interest was to overcome the competing ideology of both groups, to remove its power to hinder them from becoming a citizenry with membership constituted solely by kinship with Christ Jesus. In Paul's mind, community was no longer based on cultural or social uniformity, but rather on the grace of God in Jesus who was reconciling, and continues to reconcile, the whole cosmos to himself (Goroncy, 2017). Indeed, Paul is describing a new creation and not simply a merger of two entities (Lincoln, 1987).

Transformational Christian Global Leadership

The perspective of Paul, once so committed to the exclusivity of Judaism to Israel's privileges in the history of salvation as God's people (Eph. 2:12), was now convinced that the continuity of God's people rests upon the hope of the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ (Lincoln, 1987). In Jesus, the Gentiles and the Jews together form a new corporate identity as God's covenant people (Lincoln, 1987). Paul understood his mission as one of persuading people to leave their former social groups in order to belong to a new community that would restore their honor and dignity as God's redeem image-bearers (Last, 2011). His global leadership reflected the transformation of divergent groups becoming "built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). Transformational leadership attends to the full range of human experiences – emotions, values, ethics, standards, identities, cultural expressions, and dreams – to move followers toward maturity and achievement (Northouse, 2016; Cooper, 2006). It motivates followers beyond self-interest to the interests of a larger community to which they now belong (Cooper, 2005). To Paul, Christian identity was one of movement from alien-status to citizenship in a community, a living temple, where God dwells (Dunning, 2006). That temple is built upon the cornerstone of Jesus Christ and is raised up as diverse people from all parts of the world, like living stones, are joined together to form a holy new creation space where God is present and worshipped (1 Pet. 2:4-10; Eph. 1:10).

Paul wanted the Ephesian believers, who once were dead in their sins and separated from God and one another, to be "alive in Christ" through a reconstituted community "created in Christ Jesus to do good works" (Eph. 2:1, 5, 10). Beginning Ephesians 3, Paul worked out the implications of his transformational leadership ideology that is essentially missional: "For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles…" (Eph. 3:1). He

definitively establishes his authority to speak on behalf of, influence, and re-charter this new community based on the "administration of God's grace" given to Paul "for you," the Ephesians, which is the revelation of the mystery of Christ (Last, 2011; Eph. 3: 2-6). Paul's strategy, enacted within the honor-shame system of the first-century Roman world, was to establish his position as an apostle to bestow honor upon this new community by the authority granted him by God's grace (Malina, 2001). This would be an important tactic for Paul to take in establishing the fledgling Christian community in Ephesus where both Jewish and Gentiles believers had lost their previous honor ascribed to them by their former kinship groups. Paul's authority establishes them in a new kinship and, in Ephesians 4-6, articulates the rules of decorum and behaviors for this new community that reflect the honor of their God (Malina, 2001).

However, Paul carefully defines his authority as servanthood (Eph. 3:7). While such authority constitutes kinship and bestows honor upon the new community, he is clear that his authority derives from God's grace and not from his personal qualities: "Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people" (Eph. 3:8). Paul understood his mission to serve this multiethnic, multicultural people that God was forming to reveal God's "manifold wisdom…to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms" (Eph. 3:10). This community derives its name, and thus its honor, from God the Father, and not from Paul the apostle (Malina, 2001; Eph. 3:14-15). Therefore, Paul suffers and prays for the Ephesian believers so that they may be "filled to the measure of all the fullness of God" (Eph. 3:13-19). Paul endured all things to ensure that this new community was not based on cultural or social uniformity, but on the grace of God through kinship to Jesus Christ who is reconciling the entire cosmos to himself (Goroncy, 2017). His apostolic activities focused on incarnating the gospel within a people who were "rooted and

established in love" so that they were emboldened to live out the radical unity in their kinship to Jesus Christ (Goroncy, 2017; Eph. 3:17).

Implications for Christian Transformational Global Leaders

In Ephesians 2, Paul articulated his vision of transformation as Jews and Gentiles, who were both dead in their sins, formulated a new community alive in their kinship to Jesus Christ and animated by his love. Christian transformational global leadership is a mission of love. Christian global leaders, in both sacred and secular spaces, are involved in the transformation that God is enacting in the cosmos "to bring all things in heaven and earth together under one head, even Christ" (Eph. 1:10). The gospel that Christian leaders carry inhabit and find expression within a new creation space that challenges, confronts, and converts culture into ever new horizons of God's eternal and good reign where sin no longer segregates but where God's love ever reconciles (Goroncy, 2017). This requires a missiological mindset that drives Christian leaders to exercise authority through servanthood, not to accomplish a goal or task, but ultimately to build a transcultural community of Christ, a holy temple, that witnesses to the entire world the great things that God is doing (1 Pet. 2:9-10). Indeed, transformational Christian global leaders bring the secular into the sacred as they pursue the ultimate aim: a cosmos reconciled to God declaring his glorious and good reign.

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