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BOOK REVIEW

Windsor, Marshall M. *L.E.A.R.N. Evangelism Handbook: Giving Away the Greatest Gift*. Rolla, MO: Chalfant Eckert Publishing, 2019.

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The famous words from Christ, “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19), challenge every follower of Jesus. Those committed to this command have found themselves in one rejection, embarrassing situation, or disappointing interaction after another as they have tried to live out the Great Commission. While every Christian may desire to share the good news that is the Gospel message of Christ, being able to do so often takes

hard work, understanding others, and the focus that Marshall Windsor outlines in his book, *L.E.A.R.N. Evangelism Handbook: Giving Away the Greatest Gift*.

Windsor's book encourages transparency and openness to the Holy Spirit in relational evangelism as he shares effective ways to spread the life-changing message of the Gospel. The greatest lessons learned come through time and experience, and he illustrates this through his own trial and error examples as well as historical examples such as John Huss (14-31). His book is theologically sound and biblically rooted using both Scripture and scholars to support his thesis that all Christians should be engaged intentionally in sharing the good news of Christ.

Yet, Windsor also acknowledges the difficulties of evangelism, noting that every person must learn how to overcome a sense of fear and insecurity to get to a place of freedom in evangelizing. He states, "As a matter of fact, evangelism in any culture demands overcoming our fears by taking a step of faith to help someone escape the coming judgment of Christ (2 Timothy 4:1)" (9). No one is immune to some of the inherent challenges of witnessing for Christ, whether on a small scale of rejection or the larger scale of martyrdom.

Moreover, Windsor believes that relational evangelism is the key, acknowledging that he is not a specialist in the aggressive evangelistic method. Rather, he encourages dialogue and conversation in which anyone can take part. However, he does attempt to redeem the word "confrontational" in evangelism, indicating that confrontational evangelism, at its core, is merely an opportunity to reach out to someone whom one does not know and share the Gospel message with that person. His emphasis on relationships is outlined in the L.E.A.R.N. acronym and starts with *Listening*—both to the Holy Spirit and others in prayerful attention, *Engaging* others, *Asking* questions, *Relaying* the message of the Gospel through living like Christ, and to *Never* stop growing and sharing the good news of Christ. The emphasis upon listening, both to the other person and to the Holy Spirit and asking questions that invite conversation and dialogue with others show that even the most introverted and shy person can find ways to connect one's story to others. Through these five actions, Windsor lays out a step-by-step and other-person focused method

for witnessing to others.

Windsor also reminds the reader that it is not up to him or her to convert others; we are to merely plant the seeds, and “God alone reserves conversion and regeneration to Himself” (87). This is an important distinction. Paul himself says in 1 Corinthians 3 that it is only God who causes the seed to grow; we can plant and water the seed, but only God can make anything come from our efforts (1 Cor. 3:7). Additionally, this serves as a reminder that we are not in control of others’ responses. Our sometimes misguided yet zealous attempts to convert people through fear or scare tactics often do little but prompt an emotional response from others who then might live in fear of the very God who is trying to save them. While hell is real and we want to save people from it, John 3:16-17 clearly tells us that it was out of love, not condemnation, that Jesus came to die and save us. Putting our “best foot forward” in evangelism, then, is to remind people through relationship and conversation that God loves them, desires to save them, and has something better for their lives.

Further, Windsor illustrates that the smallest act of intentional evangelism can make the biggest difference through the life of John Huss (a.k.a. Jan Hus), whose passion for preaching the truth cost him his life but who influenced the Christian church for generations to come. This reference to Huss and his impact on Christianity is a powerful reminder of the ripple effect of our actions and the influence we have on eternity for generations to come. An example of a ripple effect was the pamphlet given to Huss’s father that “seemed meaningless to many” but “became a vital link to restoring a young boy’s relationship to God” and “charted a course that continues to impact generations” (30). The impact of our faithful commitment to sowing seeds for eternity is illustrated well in Windsor’s work.

Windsor’s book is both instructional and inspirational, reflecting the simplicity of sharing Christ along with its challenges in an easy-to-follow manner. *L.E.A.R.N.* also illustrates depth through interacting with and connecting to church history and theologians along with Scripture as the book defines the essence of evangelism and how to live it out today. *L.E.A.R.N.* can be used by individuals or groups as an aid in effective evangelism and is a helpful resource for every Christian.