

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### ***What Every Good Leader Knows*** - by Richard Rohr\*\*

*The children of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the children of light.* -  
LUKE 16:8

At times, spiritual wisdom does not harmonize well with the goals and practices of the world. But sometimes spiritual seekers take this truth too far, thinking that to be "spiritual" we have to be naive and simplistic and can't lead as well as others. At the same time, religious leaders often try to bypass the needed competencies because they believe their special status makes the training whether skill sets or the work of spiritual growth - unnecessary.

In fact, there is no greater training for true leadership than living in the naked now. There, we can set aside our own mental constructs and lead situations even more imaginatively - with the clearer vision of one who lives beyond himself or herself. This is surely why some of Christianity's great mystics, such as Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena, and Ignatius of Loyola, were also first rate leaders, motivators of others, and reformers of institutions.

Here are some insights into what every good, nondual leader knows and practices, whether in the workplace, at home, or in the classroom.

- Good leaders are seers of alternatives.
- Good leaders move forward by influencing events and inspiring people more than by ordering or demanding.
- Good leaders know that every one-sided solution is doomed ahead of time to failure. It is never a final solution but only a postponement of the problem.
- Good leaders learn to study, discern, and search together with their people for solutions.
- Good leaders know that total dilemmas are very few. We create many dilemmas because we are internally stuck, attached, fearful, over identified with our position, needy of winning the case, or unable to entertain even the partial truth that the other opinion might be offering.
- Good leaders search for a middle ground where the most people can find meaning; they work for win/win situations. (This is hard to do if you assume you are the higher, the more responsible, the in-charge, the senior, the more competent or once you have made a harsh judgment about the other.)
- Good leaders know that there is no perfect solution. That is the lie and false promise of the dualistic mind, polarity, and all-or-nothing thinking.
- Good leaders know that seeking exclusive or overly rapid recourse to the law is an easy way out, and often just a sign of laziness or fear of taking responsibility.
- Good leaders know that the rule of law and obedience can inform you only about what is illegal or immoral; it cannot of itself lead you to God, truth, goodness, or beauty (Romans 3:20 and 7:7).
- Good leaders know that rapid recourse to the law might be seeking the will of God, but it might also be seeking to avoid the responsibility, the necessary self-doubt, the darkness, and the prayer required to live in faith, hope, and love.
- Good leaders know that when done well, compromise and consensus-seeking is not a way of abdicating essential values, but very often a way of seeking - and finding - other values, especially community building, along with giving more people a personal investment in the outcome.
- Good leaders know that wisdom is "the art of the possible." The key question is no longer "How can I problem-solve now, and get this off my plate?" It is "How can this situation achieve good for the largest number and for the next generations?"
- Good leaders keep prayerfully offering new data, until they can work toward some consensus from all sides.

- Good leaders want to increase both freedom and ownership among the group - not just subservience, which will ultimately sabotage the work anyway.
- Good leaders let people know the why of a decision, and show how that is consistent with the group's values. In short, good leaders must have a certain capacity for non polarity thinking and full-access knowing (*prayer*), a tolerance for ambiguity (*faith*), an ability to hold creative tensions (*hope*), and an ability to care (*love*) beyond their own personal advantage.

**In your own life of leadership, whether in private or in public, meditate on this list from time to time. Ask yourself honestly which aspects of non dual leadership are your strongest, and make note, over time, of which ones become more natural for you as you grow in the contemplative gaze.**

**\*\*“*What Every Good Leader Knows*”** by Richard Rohr – “The Naked Now, Learning to see as the Mystics see” (The Crossroad Publishing Co. – NY) Chapter 23 - pgs 156-158