



Theology of
Leadership

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Moriah Olmstead, a student at Toccoa Falls College, created the cover artwork. She explains that a wave is like a Servant Leader. Both are constantly changing with new tides of influence and resurfacing from depths that life passionately brings forth. Always seeking new horizons and growing in strength, Servant Leaders empower others by setting the example of what it looks like to remember hope. In the same way, a wave is powerful and graceful by its gesture of drawing its onlooker into its beauty. Life can become overwhelming when focused on the ever-present waves of chaos, but the very essence of becoming a Servant Leader is to hold fast and stand firm while focusing on, “whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, and whatever is admirable” (Php 4:8). There is a horizon to every ocean and there is a God whose greatness calms the sea. It is in this center of chaos that the Servant Leader displays a calm in the midst of the storm.

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FOLLOW THE LEADER: AN INTEGRATED THEOLOGY OF LEADER DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT: This article works toward an integrated theology of leader development by examining the intersections between Trinitarian theology, Christology, and leadership studies. Trinitarian theology points to a leadership style that prioritizes relationship, mutuality, and diversity. A look at the historical Jesus reveals that healthy leadership will intentionally embrace followership, cultivate internal identity, emphasize wisdom over knowledge, practice servanthood, embody authentic humility, empower those on the margins, balance self-sacrifice and self-care, reproduce oneself by investing in a few, constantly contextualize, and strategically disrupt the status quo. Leader development is essentially focused on the character growth of the leader through identity formation, moral formation, and epistemic formation. Effective leadership development will be social, psychologically safe, multilayered, and ongoing.

KEYWORDS: *Leadership, Authentic, Adaptive, Trinitarian, Christology, Growth*

Follow the Leader: An Integrated Theology of Leader Development

God calls leaders. Most Christians accept this as both a theological and sociological truism. But what does that simple statement mean? If we are not going to wear leather sandals or ride a donkey into Jerusalem, what does it actually mean to lead like Jesus? Are all people leaders in one way, or is there an elite “leader” class? Furthermore, how does all of this theological language mesh with the burgeoning body of scholarly work in the field of leadership studies or with the superabundance of secular leadership books, articles, blogs, and workshops? If one is to read the Bible, as well as books, blogs, and journals, one must make sense of these divergent and convergent streams.

An academically integrated theology of leadership development is deeply necessary. Toward this end, this article will begin with a theological examination of leadership through the lens of both the Trinity and Christology. Next comes a pause to define important terms such as leadership, leader, and development. Then, the what (content) and the how (method) of leader development will be explored. Finally, these thoughts will be synthesized into a compact theological statement of leader development. This article will proceed within the framework of Christianity, but hopefully it will be both accessible and valuable to those who may not share that perspective. Methodologically, the approach will be theory development through an integration of biblical sources, theology, leadership and organizational studies, as well as some popular literature from practitioners.

START WITH GOD

Any theology must begin with the Theos, God. For nearly two thousand years, Christians have understood God to be Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Mystery abounds, and defining what is actually happening within this Three-In-One is like walking a tightrope above heresy. However, what seems essential within Trinitarian doctrine is that God is fundamentally relational (Flores, 2018). An important essence of the Divine is loving and interdependent relationship. Within the Trinity, there is a beautiful give-and-take dance (historically referred to as *perichoresis*) of love and grace (Manganyi & Buitendag, 2017). Similarly, the Trinity evidences a beautiful unity amid diversity. Father, Son, and Spirit each have unique characteristics and roles, and neither can be subsumed into another. However, the mystery of the Trinity is that these Three, without lessening their diversity, are also One unity (McGrath, 1988).

Leadership modeled after the Trinity will prioritize relationship, mutual interdependence, and diverse unity. Cladis (1999) argued that Trinitarian-style leadership will be *perichoretic*, “in the round,” or “team-based,” rather than hierarchical or top-down. Trinitarian leadership recognizes that each of us has important contributions to give to the tasks at hand. This is the theological echo or prequel to the recent discussions of distributed, shared, or team-based leadership (D’Innocenzo, Mathieu, & Kuenberger, 2016; Spillane, 2005; Zaccaro, Rittman, & Marks, 2001). In one situation, person A may step into the foreground because of particular expertise, while in another, person B may step forward. All the while, person C (the positional leader) may simply hold the space and facilitate the interchange of gifts, knowledge, and skills. However, in the midst of the work, or sometimes taking time outside the work, a Trinitarian leader will prioritize the process more than the product and the relationships more than the outcomes. This is the very-long-term view. If the relationships and processes are healthy, the interdependent team will produce better outcomes. Working on the relationships is an inescapable part of the work. In summary, Trinitarian leadership is team-based, mutually affirming, and relational.

Christology helpfully narrows the focus of our theological lens, bringing us even closer to application. In looking at the Trinity, we see God as loving relationship, but in looking at Jesus, we get a clearer picture of God as an individual interacting with other individuals and groups. The relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament can be confusing for understanding God, and looking to the Old Testament for leadership examples can easily be misleading. Therefore, it is important to have a Christological lens through which to view both the Bible and theology, both life and leadership (Hays, 1996). Sterneke and Tebbe (2018), two missional theologians, summarized a foundational theological axiom: “God is just like Jesus, and there is no ‘unChristlikeness’ in him at all.” Any healthy Christian theology (including a theology of leader development) naturally centers on Christ, who is not only the clearest picture of God (Col 1:15) but also possibly the single greatest leader who has ever lived.

Although an article of this length cannot do justice to the implications of Christology for leadership, the following are ten distinct intersections of Christology and leader development.

FOLLOWING IS THE FIRST ACT OF LEADERSHIP. Jesus explicitly followed the Father (through the Spirit). He claimed that he did not do anything unless he saw the Father doing it first (Jn 5:19). In fact, Jesus’ fundamental claim to authority was that of being God’s Son, a distinctly following relationship (Breen & Cockram, 2017). Healthy Christian leaders follow Jesus and the Spirit, just as Jesus followed the Father. Notice this twofold nature of followership. Christian leaders model their lives after Jesus of Nazareth, the human being who lived, died, and was raised - translating or reembodying that life and lifestyle in our own lives. Also, in this modeling of Jesus, Christian leaders look for what the Spirit is doing in the world and try to join in (Blackaby, Blackaby, & King, 2008). Following the patterns or attitudes of the historical Jesus is insufficient; truly Christlike leaders will also cultivate spiritual antennae for spiritual realities and flow with the present-day work of the Spirit. In a very real sense, then, leaders are primarily first followers (Toler & Fairbanks, 2008).

INTERNAL AUTHORITY COMES THROUGH IDENTITY. As Jesus was baptized at the beginning of His ministry, a voice from heaven said, “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy” (Mk 1:11, NLT). This identity as God’s well-loved child was an anchor for Jesus’ soul, giving him the internal authority to withstand the external pressures of disruptive leadership (Breen & Cockram, 2017; Heifetz & Linsky, 2017). Similarly, Christian leaders must understand that their identity and value resides in God’s unfailing love for them as His children, rather than in their successful performance, or in their acceptance by peers (Nouwen, 1994). Without this grounded identity, a psycho-social insecurity will plague, poison, and weaken all leadership (Nouwen, 1996). With this settled identity, leaders are able to engage as a non-anxious presence, bringing calm amid the turmoil of crisis and conflict (Heifetz, 1994).

WISDOM IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN KNOWLEDGE. Jesus demonstrated that depth of wisdom trumps scope of knowledge. Despite the intense learning of his rabbinically trained peers, Jesus spoke with an authority birthed from depth of character and internalized wisdom that simply memorizing particular knowledge banks could never bring (Yancey, 1995). Jesus did not just know facts; he knew what to do with them and why they mattered (Yancey). Along the same lines, character formation is the foundation of leader development (Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009). Experientially lived knowledge is qualitatively different from merely comprehending concepts.

SERVE THE FOLLOWERS. Jesus rebelled against typical hierarchies and power structures. Instead, he said, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others” (Mt 20:28). Greenleaf (1977) popularized Jesus’ servant leadership, noting that healthy leaders take up the mantle of leadership primarily to serve their community. Toler and Fairbanks (2008) argued that the success of a leader is measured through the growth of her followers.

HUMILITY IS THE AUTHENTICATOR. The Hebrew prophet Isaiah predicted the Christ “will not shout or raise his voice in public. He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle” (42:2-3). Through his service, gentleness, teaching, solidarity with those on the margins, withdrawal from positional power (like refusing to be crowned king), and dramatic signs (like riding on a donkey's colt), Jesus demonstrated an utter lack of a felt need to prove himself or his own power. Ironically, this humility authenticated his internal power and security. In similar ways, a humble leader - one who walks and talks gently, who is open to disagreement, who invites meaningful feedback, who shifts the praise to others or to the team, who puts the organization above selfish gain - proves the inner quality of being a leader worth following (Standish, 2007).

PAY ATTENTION TO THOSE ON THE MARGINS. Jesus famously included those others excluded: Samaritans, women, children, Gentiles, deviants, manual laborers, and a wide variety of ‘sinners.’ Not only did Jesus recognize that God's circles of love are much larger than our circles of exclusion and purity, but Jesus also seemed to value the input of the marginalized for the Kingdom program. Jesus repeatedly commissioned surprising leaders: a woman between her fifth and sixth marriage (Jn 4), a traitor to his own people (Matthew, the tax collector), a recently insane demoniac (Lk 8:39), a former terrorist (Simon, the zealot), and a human rights abuser (Acts 9). Christlike leadership involves listening to, learning from, and empowering those on the margins of our society and organization. Heifetz (1994) identified this as a critical skill for adaptive leaders.

BALANCE SELF-SACRIFICE AND SELF-CARE. Jesus’ self-sacrifice by dying for humanity on the cross is both iconic and the centerpiece of the entire Christian enterprise. However, Jesus’ self-care is often overlooked. Jesus rested when he was tired (Jn 4:6). Jesus practiced the spiritual disciplines of prayer and solitude (Lk 5:16). After a particularly challenging season, Jesus took his Twelve on a retreat (Mk 6:31). One of Jesus’ foundational commandments, “Love your neighbor as you love yourself” (Mk 12:31), demonstrates this balance of self-sacrifice and self-care. Prioritizing another's needs as much as one’s own needs is a radical form of sacrificial regard. However, the often-missed component of this teaching is that loving care for oneself is assumed. The sub-textual reality is that without caring for one’s self, there is no ‘self’ left to love others. Healthy leaders give deeply, but they also know when to withdraw to their own sanctuaries to recharge and recoup (Heifetz, 1994).

REPRODUCE BY INVESTING IN A FEW. Jesus toggled between teaching large crowds and investing in just a few disciples. Jesus understood that he needed a broad reach to the crowds for overall influence, but for his ministry to have enduring impact, he would have to reproduce himself by investing deeply in just a few key leaders (Breen & Cockram, 2017). Jesus empowered the Twelve to go and replicate his ministry (Lk 9:1). Later, when Jesus sent out the 72, the implication is that each of the Twelve had already begun to reproduce by investing in six others (Lk 10:1). A good leader produces results during his/her own tenure, but a great leader initiates a legacy of fruitfulness that endures in future generations of leaders (Maxwell, 1998; Toler & Fairbanks, 2008).

ADAPT TO THE NEEDS OF THE SITUATION AND THE INDIVIDUAL.

Jesus invited Matthew the tax collector to leave his account books and follow him (Mt 9:9). On the other hand, instead of allowing the man from the Gesarenes to follow, Jesus sent him out to preach right away (Lk 8:39). Jesus responded to questions with answers, further questions, riddles, stories, strange miracles, doodling in the dirt, or silence. In each situation, Jesus was reading the context and the people involved. In sensing the movement of the Spirit, he rode the wave of the moment, rather than responding with canned actions or pat answers (Blackaby, Blackaby, & King, 2008). Here Jesus embodied both situational leadership and the individualized consideration of transformational leadership (Northouse, 2016). Leaders who walk in Jesus' path will resist one-size-fits-all solutions and will customize their responses to the ever changing needs of the context.

DISRUPT FOR ADAPTIVE TRANSFORMATION. Jesus came to bring sword and fire (Mt 10:34; Lk 12:49). He came to upset all the dysfunctional and ossified apple carts without being an anarchist. His disruption was strategic and purposeful. Jesus gathered a coalition of followers to participate in a subversive revolution of the political-religious-social institutions, transforming them from the inside out with the ever-present loving Spirit of God reigning as King in and through God's children (McLaren, 2007). Jesus-like leaders will also strategically disrupt the status quo by gathering a coalition for change (Kotter, 1996), identifying the adaptive challenges (Heifetz, 1994), and empowering people to become more and to do more together than they could have been or done on their own or in their old ways (Toler & Fairbanks, 2008).

Beginning this theology of leadership development with the Trinitarian God embodied in Jesus Christ, we see that healthy leadership is mutually interdependent, rooted in God's loving Spirit, humbly service oriented, reproducing, and strategically disruptive. Healthy leader development will move people toward the God who moves in these ways.

DEFINING TERMS

In order to connect this Trinitarian and Christological foundation of leadership more directly with the wider body of leadership studies, it is necessary to pause to define the terms at hand more clearly. First, leadership and leader deserve more distinction than they are typically afforded. Leadership is more broadly understood as the tasks involved with influencing, guiding, organizing, and/or empowering a particular people toward a mutually desired end (Mensch & Dingman, 2010). On the other hand, a leader is the individual who leads, the self, people, or organization from which leadership emerges (Day, et al., 2009). This seemingly minor distinction becomes critical when we begin speaking of development. Leadership development has a focus primarily on the skills of applied leadership: communication, strategy development, visioning, people, and management (Day, et al.). However, leader development is focused more narrowly and more deeply on forming the internal character of the leader, particularly their identity, morality, and epistemic judgment (Day, et al.). Leader development prepares the person who will exercise leadership to do so in healthy and ethical ways (Mensch & Dingman).

Unfortunately, most development investment is currently either in technology or skills development with very little deep understanding of or investment in leader character (Mensch & Dingman, 2010). This is shortsighted. Particular leaders must exercise the leadership that will guide

the strategic and moral use of all technological developments. Logically, the foundation of long-term success lies in the formation and strengthening of the inner worlds of these leaders who stand at the core of the process.

However, one question remains outstanding. When we speak of leaders or leadership, are we referring to an elite class of particularly gifted individuals, or to those who hold positional authority, or to some other selective criteria? If every individual exercises some influence, then every individual is a leader in some way. On the surface, such a broad assignment of leadership to all risks diluting the term to the brink of meaninglessness. However, understanding that a measure of leadership actually brings a helpful nuance and complexity to our understanding of leadership that is missing from many of the Great Man theories which dominated the first era of leadership studies and still haunt much of the Church.

Distributed leadership theory holds that leadership is shared and passed around the team situationally (Spillane, 2005). This theory actually fits well with the Pauline understanding of diverse spiritual gifts. Everyone has a role to play, a gift to exercise, and the whole organizational body needs each part to work to the fullest extent. As each part contributes uniquely, that is a push of leadership. According to the first follower theory, until someone follows, a potential leader is only walking alone (Atwater, Roush & Fischthal, 1995). The first follower affirms the leadership and the leader, and thereby transforms the potential leader into an actual leader. The first follower and all subsequent followers influence others to follow in specific ways. Therefore, even followership is an act of leadership.

Of course, this works in both positive and negative ways as well. For example, when group members go along with an unhealthy aspect of organizational culture, they are exercising a very subtle form of leadership by affirming: 'This is how things are done here,' or 'This is OK with me.' Each of these followers sends others the unmistakable message that resisting the status quo is not worth the risks. This, too, is a form of leadership exercised by countless individual leaders (even if unwittingly). In fact, everyone is a leader, but not all leaders are conscious of their own leadership. Some leaders engage their leadership tasks more overtly, more intentionally, and more potently. Still, leadership is not only available to all, but is inherent in all, at least to some degree. Therefore, leader development is of critical importance for every organization and individual to understand, to explore, and to invest deeply in.

THE WHAT OF LEADER DEVELOPMENT

Leader development is essentially focused on the internal growth and strength of individual leaders (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014). Day, et al. (2009) helpfully subdivide this internal growth into three categories: identity development, moral development, and epistemic judgement development.

For Christians, identity development centers on owning our position as a well-loved child of the Father (Nouwen, 1994). Lew (2019) picked up this thought in a secular blog: "The closer we tie our sense of self to how we lead, the harder it is to improve. Instead, can you view your leadership as a product - not an extension of your identity?" (p. 1). Heifetz (1994) referred to this as separating self from role. Having a solid self-worth and internal identity strength improves leadership by

making the leader more secure and open to feedback and adaptation (Balswick, King, & Reimer, 2016; Day, et al., 2009; Lew, 2019;). Internal awareness and strength are critical to emotionally intelligent leadership (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002).

According to Day, et al. (2009), “nearly every decision a leader makes has ethical implications” (p. 79). Unfortunately, mere religiosity or pious devotion are insufficient to cultivate ethical leaders. Argyris (2010) pointed out that leaders’ claimed values are often different than their practiced values. Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, and Walumba (2005) posited that authentic leadership and an organizational climate that is inclusive, ethical, and caring work in a mutually reinforcing cycle. Furthermore, authentic leadership is essentially the outcome of the interplay between self-awareness (in terms of values, identity, emotions, motives, and goals) and self-regulation (internalization, balanced processing, transparency, and authentic behavior) (Gardner, et al.). A Christian leader may claim to follow Jesus, but doing so in practice requires uncommonly deep reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation.

Day, et al.’s (2009) third foundational category of leader development is essentially a catchall for complex thinking. When dealing with wicked problems that defy easy solutions (Buchanan, 1992), leaders must be able to view entire systems (Senge, 2002) and process their thinking through double-loop problem solving (Argyris, 2002). This kind of reflective judgment empowers leaders to make wise decisions in complex situations with uncertain or incomplete data (Kitchener, King, & DeLuca, 2006).

Hence, the content of leader development is essentially character formation through identity formation, ethical actualization, and complex thinking. In a sense, leader development is essentially about the ongoing sanctification of the leader (as in making him/her more like Christ). Therefore, the old maxim holds true: Whatever we want God to do through us, we must first allow God to do in us. Of course, effective leaders will also need to add other skills, knowledge, and tactics. However, these are tools of leadership that the leader herself must use with her own person. Character focused leader development grows the mechanic rather than simply adding tools to his toolbox.

THE HOW OF LEADER DEVELOPMENT

If the what (content) of leader development is character formation, then the how (method) must be something far richer than the passive intake of information through lecture or reading. Mensch and Dingman (2010) reported that organizations in a wide variety of contexts are learning that these traditional methods are ineffective at actually producing the deep development of the kind of leaders needed in today’s complex world. Because the fundamental problems that leaders face are subterranean, surface level approaches to leader development will be ineffective at transforming these underlying mental models (Argyris, 2010). An effective leader development program will necessarily be complex, multilayered, and patient because the work of transforming the inner workings of a leader is both deep and slow (Mench & Dingman). Effective leadership development must be social, psychologically safe, and multilayered.

Leader development is inescapably social (Senge, 2006). Bandura’s (1986, 2003) social cognitive theory helps explain how knowledge is actualized internally through the interplay of dialog, feedback, mentors, social support, and modeling. Deliberately developmental organizations will cultivate social relationships that support individual and group learning amid the fires and wounds of

leadership. “Pain + Reflection (in a sufficiently safe and trustworthy community) = Progress” (Kegan, et al, 2014, p. 9). According to Petrie (2014), the future of leadership development will include both leadership coaching and extensive peer networks. A preponderance of researchers and practitioners point to peer networks (preferably guided by a skilled facilitator) as the most effective mode of leader development (Backer & Smith, 2011; Bell, 2010; Galbraith, Downy, & Kates, 2002; Hoyt, 2015; Kesler & Kates, 2011; Kinman, McFall, & Rodriguez, 2011; Schnase, 2014).

Within this social learning environment, the overarching necessity for deep leader development is a context of psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999, 2002; Schein, 2010). Conceptually, psychological safety is a precondition for learning that challenges deeply held views (Schein). A deliberately developmental organization will cultivate psychological safety to “create the conditions for individuals to overcome their own internal barriers to change, to take stock of and transcend their own blind spots, and to see errors and weaknesses as prime opportunities for personal growth” (Kegan, et al, 2013, p. 1).

Finally, because of the complexity involved in developing leaders to engage the deep change required to lead effectively in a volatile and ambiguous world, leader development programs must be multilayered and ongoing (Mensch & Dingman, 2010). Leaders still need content-based input, but this must be matched with apprenticeship-type guided practice (Breen & Cockram, 2017). Content-based instruction will be most effective when paired with real-world practice and reflection (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2015). This kind of development happens best in an environment rich with role models, challenges, and support (Day, et al., 2009). Leaders need both formal and informal coaching relationships (Galbraith, Downy, & Kates, 2002; Petrie, 2014), as well as counseling options, peer learning groups, and professional networks (Harper, 2015; Hoyt, 2015; Kesler & Kates, 2011). A single teaching or learning style will always be insufficient, but a fully orbed program can prepare leaders for effective service to their organizations and communities.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

One excellent model is 3 Dimensional Movements (a.k.a. 3DM), a para-church leader development organization. After guiding a church in Sheffield, England to becoming the single largest church in Europe, Mike Breen established 3DM as a coaching network to spread their leader development method for others interested in missions in post-Christian contexts (Breen & Cockram, 2017). The fundamental goal of 3DM is missional discipleship. They aim to coach Christian leaders in living a missionally effective lifestyle, which includes these leaders coaching others leaders to do the same (3DM, 2018).

3DM's fundamental development program is the two-year long learning community is a multilayered experience-including workshops every six months (for the senior pastor and key leaders), weekly virtual coaching groups (usually only the senior pastors and a coach), "huddles" (discipleship groups led by local pastors), a variety of in-house books, and occasional special events (3DM, 2018). After completing the learning community process, many pastors choose to remain the 3DM network for many years to continue participating in coaching or special events.

In 2018, the Northern California District of the Church of the Nazarene initiated a partnership with 3DM to help provide additional leader development to local pastors. In 2019, this

author conducted an interim evaluation of 3DM on theoretical and practical grounds, utilizing an informal participant survey. What follows is a brief summary of each point of theoretical application and a quote or summary of participant feedback.

First, 3DM provides a safe environment for pastors to explore and reevaluate core beliefs about themselves and their ministries. Such psychological safety is fundamental to identity development (Knowles, et al, 2015), shifting paradigms (Kegan & Lahey, 2001; Schein, 2010; Senge, 2006), learning and innovation (Edmondson, 1999, 2002), as well as self-efficacy and motivation to grow (Day, et al., 2009). One pastor who has experienced tremendous growth in the past year said that 3DM has been his first experience of truly safe space in a Christian context.

Second, 3DM's coaching groups facilitate experiential learning and peer support. Brinkerhoff (2006) estimated that as much of 80% of actual learning occurs after the primary training event. 3DM's ongoing coaching provide accountability, reinforcement, and support to improve implementation (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016). After event reviews facilitate learning and shifting mental models (Cannon, Feinstein, & Friesen, 2010; Ellis & Davidi, 2005). One church planter commented, "I think my confidence has grown quite a bit this year. I think [the coach] has helped me live out of a sense of identity and the authority that comes from that."

Third, in an increasingly complex world, one fundamental act of leadership is sense-making (Schwandt, 2005). This involves a shift in mental models (Senge, 2006) or double-loop learning (Argyris, 2002, 2010). 3DM facilitators guide such mental adjustments for their students (Knowles, et al, 2015). One pastor expressed his own significant personal learning:

This has been paradigm shifting. This gives me a whole new approach to ministry. It seems like I have advanced light years in such a brief time. I am more confident and hopeful than I have ever been before in ministry and in my own personal journey.

Finally, 3DM offers several tools that have helped pastors make sense of their own lives and the world around them. These graphic representations of concepts (in simple shapes or diagrams) function as simplifying mechanisms, which help make sense of the world and aid recall of information (Cannon, et al, 2010; Fiore, Cuevas, & Oser, 2003). One simplifying mechanism - The Learning Circle - has been so helpful for Northern California leaders, that the district superintendent incorporated the core concepts into his annual report (Hung, 2019).

CONCLUSION

In summary, a theology of leader development begins with the Trinity's interdependent loving team, which is embodied and exemplified in Jesus of Nazareth. Healthy leader development will focus primarily on the growth of the leader as a person and only secondarily on the tools of leadership. Therefore, leader development programs should be multilayered, prioritizing both social learning and psychological safety. Finally, wise organizations will prepare for sustained investment because true leader development is long work. However, more theory development and research are needed to understand more fully the intersections of theology, Christian ministry, leadership theory, and leader development studies.

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