

does “spiritual” mean in this unique ministry form? “‘Spiritual’ is everything in life associated with God’s relationship to persons and a person’s relationship (or lack thereof) to God.... Thus, spiritual care is the Spirit-led, skilled ministry provided to those afflicted by the challenges and sufferings of life” (ix). It is individual and intentional focus on one person. How is it different from other ministry forms? It aims to go deeper and be more intentional to need.

Is spiritual care biblical? Soul care is as old as Scripture. It has met the spiritual needs of people for millennia. The author believes that Paul captures spiritual care in the clause, “equip his people for works of service” (Eph 4:12). More specifically and critically, “Spiritual care is not only for working with hurting people who are dealing with individual issues; it is also for helping people identify where they are in their faith journey and what God wants them to do with their lives” (xvii). This dual aim addresses the complete needs, physical and spiritual, of people with disabilities well. They may not get soul care in any other way. Many cannot go to church.

What ministry activities does spiritual care include? With deep pastoral concern, the author’s list includes “admonishing sin, declaring forgiveness, promoting spiritual growth, facilitating healing, and communicating God’s demand for justice and God’s astonishingly generous and ever-present mercy” (3). In practice, it entails listening in silence, praying for and with, encouraging, comforting, even instructing, whatever the need might require. Soul care workers address specific needs, that which is expedient to the moment. They assess needs in the moment and address them.

Although the author takes an integrationist approach to counseling theory, his focus throughout on practical care makes the book a well-spring of good practices for those who use spiritual care, particularly in non-church contexts. Soul care can mobilize ministry to effectively serve the spiritual needs of God’s people. Churches will benefit from its practice in home visitation and other forms of outreach. The reviewer recommends this book to any Christian interested in doing spiritual care, especially disability caregivers in health, education, and disability services.

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Redeeming Productivity, by Reagan Rose. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2022. ix + 158 pp. \$15.99.

Reagan Rose is the founder of Redeeming Productivity, an online teaching ministry aimed at recapturing personal productivity for the sake of Christ. The problem with modern productivity is that—to a great degree—it works. Many people read self-help books and improve

their lives, get promoted, or get a raise, but “often hiding behind practical tips on time management, decision-making, or goal setting is a whole spectrum of worldly philosophies” (11). “The promise of secular productivity is a life of financial prosperity” (127). Productivity-minded Christians can often begin to adopt many worldly ideologies that drive modern productivity. So, what can be done? Reagan argues that Christians need to realize that productivity ultimately belongs to God and is done for him, and it needs to be redeemed. He says, “Productivity has been hijacked, and it is time we take it back” (11). Christians can use some of the practical tips on time management. Often, these are very effective, but they cannot accept the underlying ideologies behind them. So, Reagan organizes his book into five pillars and practices. Each pillar is paired with a practice that best corresponds to that pillar.

The first pillar and practice lay the foundation for the whole productivity system in *Redeeming Productivity*. Pillar one is “you belong to God” (13). Reagan says that “‘it’s my life’ is a radical and often rebellious mode of thinking.... And ‘it’s my life’ is the fundamental assumption behind the spirit of our age” (13–14). Reagan shares a bit of his own journey in this chapter. He first got into productivity in an effort to reinvent himself and improve his life. However, the downside was that the primary motivation was selfishness. He says: “The focus was always *me*. This is the origin of all unchristian productivity. It is a selfish desire for self-improvement for self’s sake” (15–16). So, redeemed productivity flips the script on this kind of thinking. There are only two choices, Reagan says. “No matter how you slice it, we want to be productive either to serve ourselves or to serve God” (18). Among Christians there is no sovereign individual. Christians are not the captain of their own destiny. They belong to God.

Having established that productivity exists to serve God, Reagan also takes a section to define productivity. He says that, when most people talk about productivity, they mean “how efficiently and consistently an individual can complete important tasks. This is how I plan to use the word in this book. Productivity is about efficiently accomplishing the right things” (17). Many productivity authors will tell their readers how to accomplish many things. Few focus on the *important* things. Reagan’s focus on what is important is a core strength of the book. Speaking of what is important leads nicely into the first practice, morning routines.

Practice number one gives the reader an excellent framework for crafting a morning routine. The morning routine is the cornerstone of the productivity system. Reagan calls it a keystone habit. “‘Keystone habit’ is the term Charles Duhigg uses to describe ‘small changes or habits that people introduce into their routines that unintentionally carry over into other aspects of their lives’” (26). Reagan roots the concept of a morning routine in the firstfruits principle found throughout Scripture. Solomon tells us, “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce” (Prov 3:9). Reagan says, “By giving God the first and best of what you had produced, you were acknowledging

that it all belongs to Him anyway” (29). Remember this practice is paired with the pillar “you belong to God.” He continues: “In the same way, when you spend the first moments of your day praying, reading Scripture, and doing other activities that prime you to be productive, you are offering God the firstfruits of your day” (30). Reagan uses the acronym “POWER” to help the reader remember the steps for a productive morning (30). The five steps are: (1) prayer, (2) organization, (3) Word, (4) exercise, and (5) reading and writing. On their own or done haphazardly, these are not very effective, but a key point in this chapter is that “big change comes from simple daily habits” (31). Note that these five steps are not in chronological order. Redeemed productivity is all about doing the right things, not just getting many things done. These habits done consistently will result in spiritual growth and a productive walk with God, not for self-improvement’s sake but to serve God effectively because “you belong to Him.”

This is only the first of the five pillars and practices. So, why should a reader pick up this book? There is very little negative to say about it. *Redeeming Productivity* is consistently biblical. Reagan works hard to cite Scripture and draw on biblical wisdom. It is short: so much truth and wisdom is packed into 150 pages. The chapters are organized well, usually one pillar of productivity followed by a corresponding practice in productivity. *Redeeming Productivity* is an excellent resource to give to any Christian wanting to be more effective in life and ministry. Reagan has done well in writing a concise yet thorough introduction. Productivity books today are so full of false ideology that reading them is like looking for a steak in a garbage can. A scavenger might find a steak, just as a reader might find nuggets of truth in many secular books. But is it worth digging through and spitting out all the ideological garbage? On the other hand, read *Redeeming Productivity*, where you will be served a steak in a five-star restaurant.

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