

Book Review/Summary: Mentoring Leaders

Book Review: Carson Pue, *Mentoring Leaders* (Baker Books, 249 pages)

Posted by Bob Young

[This review includes information expanded and edited from a review by George Barna]

Many individuals and organizations claim to be experts in the area of leadership development. Jesus said you will know people by the fruit they produce. Carson Pue, former minister and parachurch executive, has led the Arrow Leadership program which develops young leaders for more than a decade. The proof of his wisdom as a mentor of young leaders is visible in the lives of those whom he has mentored.

The Arrow process that Carson employs is based on the idea that Christian leaders must develop in several dimensions: character, leadership skills, evangelistic passion and the desire to pursue and advance God's kingdom through their leadership efforts. Empowering an individual to lead effectively involves individual assessment, creation of a developmental plan, teaching and interaction that bring clarity and growth, personal mentoring by experienced leaders, relationships within a peer group, and shaping experiences.

This book describes how those procedures work in practice. The process is organized around five critical functions. The first of those is developing self-awareness which includes understanding one's perceptions of and relationship with God. The objective of such soul searching is to achieve inner peace, which Pue describes as a sign of personal maturity. Inner peace comes through the development of integrity, wisdom and reflection. The book addresses some problems common to leaders—sensuality, spiritual excess, pride, spiritual lust, fatigue, laziness, and compromise.

The second function involves identifying and overcoming personal barriers to spiritual maturity. Every leader walks a different path, so the barriers differ. Barriers generally relate to the commission of particular sins, inappropriate vows that have been made, addictions that control the individual, distortions derived from power, and relationship issues.

The third function is discovering vision. Carson makes clear that grasping vision starts with God and must be consistent with the Bible. He notes that there are several different types of vision. He differentiates vision and mission and says that unless the leader is passionate about pursuing the vision, little of value will occur.

The fourth function is the implementation of the vision. The related chapters discuss such subjects as communicating the vision, organizing around the vision, developing a team to pursue the vision, planning, budgeting and evaluation, and prayer.

The fifth function involves sustaining leadership. Since a leader must finish well, this portion of the training explores such matters as reorganizing one's team for continued growth, understanding the developmental stages of an organization and how to maximize each stage, having the understanding and courage to introduce necessary change, and expanding the

leader's capacity to help people move ahead. This last topic includes the ability to persevere, making good decisions, achieving balance and a healthy family experience, having supportive friends and mentors to assist with accountability and evaluation, and releasing people for continual spiritual growth.

If you are involved in the process of helping people develop into better leaders you will find this book helpful and practical.