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Mentoring with Common Sense, by Roy W. Harris and Alton Loveless

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keep their eyes firmly on the bigger picture of the Lord's kingdom and eternity—which does not minimize our hurt but puts it into perspective.

Finally, each chapter ends with a crisp summary under the headings of “Know This,” “Do This,” and “Think About This.” These good summaries drive home the key points of the chapter and also facilitate further reflection and discussion. This book is structured in a way that can be very useful for reading together as a leadership group or team and then having worthwhile open discussions. But it is to be cautioned that a certain level of trust will be needed within the group to really be open about the pain, hurt and life lessons of leadership.

Chand's book ended too quickly and left me wanting to hear and consider more about the various messages in the chapters. I believe it could benefit from a more comprehensive conclusion or final chapter that tries to weave the previous chapters' key messages together under the central themes of the book. That said, this book is extremely useful for leaders in business, nonprofit, or churches. Any and all leaders can benefit from the timeless lessons in the pages. Pain, hurt and disappointment are an inevitable part of the leadership journey; *Leadership Pain* can help us to reflect and be inspired to keep moving forward, to keep raising the threshold of our pain level by consistently looking upward at the bigger picture. This book is equally useful for anyone who is going through, or has gone through, dark times in their life. That will happen to all of us at some point in our lives. We are all leaders in some part of our world, and pain is a part of the process of leadership!

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MENTORING WITH COMMON SENSE

*By Roy W. Harris and Alton Loveless
Ashville, OH: FWB Publications (2015)
Paperback, 140 pages*

Reviewed by PHILIP TSE

The author of *Mentoring With Common Sense*, Dr. Roy W. Harris, introduces the concept of mentoring as a ministry that is well worth the investment of our effort and time. Based on his personal experience, he gives practical, biblical, and helpful advice on mentoring others. Dr. Harris, who is an ordained minister, is a veteran pastor, having served at many churches in various states. During his tenure as staff, faculty, and administrative member, he has mentored many students at Welch College in Nashville, Tennessee. Herein the author describes the many benefits of being mentored.

Although the concept of mentoring has been around since the beginning of mankind and emerged with emphasis during the mid-1700s, mentoring has become a hot topic only in recent years. In view of the importance of a mentor and the benefits to the mentees, this book illustrates the steps to becoming a good mentor and the ins and outs of mentoring. The author points out that most of us have been mentored at some point in our lives; he strongly encourages us to become mentors so that we can also influence and impact the lives of others who might learn from our experience.

Mentoring, according to Dr. Harris, is to help mentees find and achieve their potential. The mentor has the opportunity to serve as a role model in helping and preparing mentees to successfully seek, attempt and complete what they are called to be.

Among the benefits to those who are mentored are encouragement, wise-counsel in decision-making, and the trusted friendship of the mentor.

Mentoring With Common Sense can be divided into three components. The author starts with Scripture, which provides ample examples of mentoring. These examples serve as a guideline in developing a mentoring relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Also, Dr. Harris points out at the beginning that the job of the mentor is to help the mentee become a mentor once he/she has gone through the mentoring process. The steps to accomplish such a transition are elaborated upon throughout the book. One example is the case of Moses, who was mentored in the royal court while growing up and then later by his father-in-law, Jethro, a desert herdsman. Later in his life, Moses transitions to becoming a mentor to Joshua.

Secondly, Dr. Harris talks about the steps in mentoring. For example, he presents guidelines for how to begin the mentoring process. He shows that the mentor must have a healthy interpersonal relationship with the mentee before opening up his or her life to the mentee, because a healthy relationship promotes and allows for lasting engagement in both parties. The author continues to discuss how to conduct effective and meaningful meetings with mentees. This involves preparing for the meeting, setting the agenda, asking questions, learning how to listen attentively, and giving appropriate responses. All these steps are important in making sure the mentoring experience is productive and efficient for both the mentors and mentees.

Finally, according to Dr. Harris, five characteristics of good mentors are (1) to know and learn from their Divine mentor, (2) to have integrity,

(3) to understand their limitations, (4) to be able to relate to others with humility on a personal level, and (5) to possess a giving spirit with a sense of openness and transparency. Good mentoring begins with the mentor praying, selecting someone to mentor, adopting a mentoring plan, and finally, commissioning new mentors. The author emphasizes the importance of being obedient to the Word of God in mentoring. This includes but is not limited to having a close relationship with our Lord and a faithful practice of spiritual discipline.

The main strength of this book is that it details each practical step in helping pastors or church leaders to be good mentors. It further elaborates on the process of beginning to mentor, starting from scratch. Readers will find it easy to follow each step. Dr. Harris points out that the most important aspect is acknowledging God as Divine mentor. Then, using his experience as a mentor and a pastor, he draws upon the two somewhat independent experiences in defining mentoring as a meaningful and worthwhile ministry. In other words, successful mentoring is not a stand-alone endeavor. It requires continuous effort to keep one's external and internal spiritual discipline sharp so that the relationship helps both the mentor and the mentee to grow, mature, and be successful over time.

While the author is very effective at mapping out the comprehensive steps of the mentoring process, the main weakness of the book is that it fails to illustrate the volatile aspect of human dynamics. Since mentoring is a relational process and involves two individuals, the dynamics between them may change during the process. For example, there may be a loss of interest in either the mentor or the mentee to continue with the process. There may be life changes in the

midst of the process that prevent either party from continuing. There may be disagreement between the two parties, or one party may simply decide to stop the whole process. These unforeseeable events may occur at any point during the mentoring process. Since Dr. Harris did not address any of these issues in the book, it is not clear how he would advise a mentor to handle the breaking up of the relationship so that the breakup does not lead to any hard feelings in either party.

It is important for Christian leaders to adopt Jesus' model of mentoring. Jesus selected his twelve mentees at the beginning of His ministry. Throughout His ministry, He taught His disciples about bringing others to the Kingdom of God. Jesus taught them through His actions, rather than mere words. He set the example in praying, preaching, healing the sick, and comforting those in sorrow so that His disciples could carry on His mission when He was no longer with them. Likewise, church leaders ought to mentor members of the congregation to step in when they are no longer around to carry on the responsibility of shepherding the flock. Such mentoring will also help to empower church members to be a part of the ministry. Through these steps, a good mentor is rewarded with the blessing of knowing that there will be a successor in continuing the job.

I recommend this book not only because it is well-written and easy to read but also because it provides a road map for good mentoring. As the title of the book (*Mentoring With Common Sense*) indicates, Dr. Harris draws on the biblical disciplines to define "common sense." His book contains valuable information, particularly for readers who are new to the relational aspects of mentoring in

leadership. The stories, illustrations, and real-life experiences help solidify the concept of mentoring. Additionally, Dr. Harris's honesty and realistic writing style help readers see and understand the importance of mentoring.

All in all, Dr. Harris has written a book on mentoring that is worth reading. I highly recommend it to anyone who is interested in developing others through mentoring.

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LEARNING FROM THE GIANTS: LIFE AND LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE BIBLE

By John C. Maxwell
New York, NY: Hachette Book Group
(2014)
Paperback, 160 pages

Reviewed by PAUL WILMOT

Ever wish you had the opportunity to sit down with leaders who have been through the mill and who have learned leadership lessons in the cauldron of life? In *Learning From the Giants*, John C. Maxwell simulates this experience by speaking to the heart of the aspiring leader who would appreciate a few hours with several of the biblical giants of the faith. His purpose is to ascertain what these leaders of old considered to be important leadership qualities, together with the life and leadership lessons that they would wish to pass on to us.

Maxwell claims that what he has learned about leadership has the