

## 2010 Leadership Learning Community Reading List

### January

*Leading With a Limp: Turning Your Struggles Into Strengths* by Dan Allender.

Why read the book? The primary reason is to acknowledge that every leader struggles with weaknesses. Better to employ these as allies rather than overcompensate for them, or deny them. He encourages pastors to acknowledge their deep wounds, lifelong limps, and inner weaknesses, and in so doing allow God to use these to strengthen our walk with Him, and ultimately our character. One caution: The book should not be used to excuse immaturity or passive leadership. (Note: There is a paperback version of the book with a different subtitle: “*Take Full Advantage of Your Most Powerful Weakness.*” It appears to be the same book, same edition.)

### February

*I Once Was Lost: What Postmodern Skeptics Taught Us About Their Path to Jesus* by Don Everts and Doug Schaupp

Why read the book? This book emerged from real world experience on college campuses as these two InterVarsity leaders started having success in reaching students for Christ. They observed a pattern of journeying towards faith that has helped others as they talk to Post-moderns about faith in Christ. They organized their insights into five thresholds:

- From distrust to trust. (Somewhere along the line, they learned to trust a Christian.)
- From complacent to curious. (They become curious regarding the Christian faith of their new friend.)
- From being closed to change to being open to change in their life. (The hardest threshold to cross.)
- From meandering to seeking. (At this stage, they begin actively, purposefully seeking God.)
- The Kingdom itself. (Trusting in Christ for salvation and confessing him as Lord.)

The authors then devote a chapter to unpacking each of these thresholds and showing the theological and biblical underpinnings for each one.

### March

*Top 25 Factors for Insuring Your Church Will Exist Ten Years from Now* by George Bullard

Why read this article? First, it is short, only 24 pages in an electronic format. Your gift during a busy pre-Easter season. Second, you will not pay for it, the Region pays the freight. Third, it is

succinct and to the point. Bullard does an excellent job identifying the top 25 factors related to church vitality. Each of the 25 presentations consist of roughly one page of material followed by a coaching question, or two. This writing, although brief will provide an excellent fly-over for much of what the LLCs have been studying since their inception. Suggestion: Have everyone in the LLC promise to read the whole article prior to the next meeting, no exceptions. Each participant agrees to compare their individual church with the 25 descriptors, identifying the top three and their bottom three. Lead the group in a discussion centered on how they will make progress in securing more of the 25 factors for their church.

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## **April**

*Church Unique: How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, and Create Movement* by Will Mancini [PART ONE: pages xvii – 107]

Why read the book? Besides the fact that Tom Lipsey constantly referred to it at the Ministers Conference, it's a practical, weighty, hands-on volume that is written to help churches discover their own unique, God-given mission. The book flap describes it accurately, "The practices and ideas outlined in *Church Unique* will help leaders develop missional teams, articulate unique strategies, unpack the baggage of institutionalism, and live fully into their vision." Written from the perspective of someone who is consulting with many effective churches it is not only practical, but refreshing in perspective.

## **May**

*Church Unique: How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, and Create Movement* by Will Mancini [PART TWO: pages 108 – 235]

## **September**

*Mad Church Disease: Overcoming the Burnout Epidemic* by Anne Jackson

Why read the book? Every pastor wrestles with maintaining a healthy spiritual, physical and spiritual life. On average pastors are losing this wrestling match. This book grabs the reader's attention through drawing a parallel between the slow deterioration of a cow's health when afflicted with Mad Cow Disease and that of a pastor's decline as the result of Mad Church Disease. It would be best to read this book over the course of the summer, from June through August, and to do so prayerfully, allowing it to change one's habits. An excellent companion book is *Leading on Empty* by Wayne Cordeiro. (We considered reading Cordeiro's book, but Jackson's has more material. Plus, it recognizes that in many churches there are difficult people

who add to the pressure that a pastor feels. It adds a level of honesty about certain negative church situations and how they can have adversely effect the pastor's life.)

### **October**

*Take Your Church to the Next Level*, by Gary McIntosh

### **November**

*Fusion*, by Nelson Searcy

### **December**

*In the Name of Jesus*, by Henri Nouwen