Designed To Lead: The Church and Leadership Development

Authors Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck in their book *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* present a clear and compelling argument for why the local church should be engaged proactively in the development of leaders. In making their case, they focus on the need for a firm **conviction** for developing leaders, followed by the necessity of creating a healthy **culture** of leadership development. Finally, they zero in on the practicalities by providing a **construct** for how to develop leaders with intentionality.

Check out these Book Notes to get a feel for the depth of insight Geiger and Peck bring to the leadership discussion.

Title: Designed To Lead: *The Church and Leadership Development*

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Book Description:

Most churches merely exist.

Many churches do not develop leaders intentionally and consistently. When leaders emerge from some churches, it is often by accident. Something is missing. Something is off.

Authors **Eric Geiger** (author of bestselling *Simple Church* and *Creature of the Word*) and **Kevin Peck** argue that churches that consistently produce leaders have a strong *conviction* to develop leaders, a healthy *culture* for leadership development, and helpful *constructs* to systematically and intentionally build leaders. All three are essential for leaders to be formed through the ministry of a local church.

From the first recordings of history God has made it clear that He has designed creation to be led by His covenant people. More than that, He has decided what His people are to do with that leadership. Whether you are called to lead your home, in the marketplace, in God's church, or in your community, if you are called by God you are called to lead others to worship the glory of God in Jesus Christ.

God has designed His people to lead.

Book Quotes:

Your church should be a leadership locus. LOCATION: 211

The Church is uniquely set apart to develop and deploy leaders for the glory of God and the advancement of the gospel. The Church is designed by God to create leaders for all spheres of life. Your church is designed to lead, designed to disciple leaders who are, by God's grace, commanded to disciple people in all spheres of

life. LOCATION: 221

Notice we are not saying that the locus of the Church is leadership development, but that the locus of leadership development is the Church. Please do not miss the difference. The locus of the Church is and must be Jesus and His finished work for us. The center of the Church must be the gospel; for it is the gospel—His righteousness given to us in exchange for our sin—that created the Church, and it is the gospel that sustains the Church. LOCATION: 250

The center of the Church is the gospel, but the center of leadership development must be the Church—meaning, that the leaders who will ultimately transform communities and change the world come from the Church. LOCATION: 254

True leaders are servants who die to themselves so others may flourish. True leaders go forth, not for themselves, but for others. LOCATION: 268

No one should outpace the Church in developing leaders because no one else has the assurance that their contribution will last, that their leadership will eternally matter. LOCATION: 313

Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least. —Wolfgang von Goethe LOCATION: 343

For leaders to be developed consistently and intentionally, churches must possess conviction, culture, and constructs. LOCATION: 386

Churches that consistently produce leaders have a strong conviction to develop leaders, a healthy culture for leadership development, and helpful constructs to systematically and intentionally build leaders. LOCATION: 390

Constructs without Conviction = Apathy.

Constructs without Culture = Exhaustion.

Conviction without Constructs = Frustration. LOCATION: 416

In a healthy culture, people are continually reminded who they are, that they are His people, rescued by Him, a royal priesthood, and a people belonging to Him. If people are not reminded of their identity, they will be burdened with lists of tasks and responsibilities without their hearts being refreshed and renewed by the Lord who loves them. LOCATION: 503

Biblical leadership development is to “find the faithful who will be able. Not the able that might be faithful.” LOCATION: 547

Regardless the situation, when the role and responsibility outpace the leader’s character, disaster is inevitable. And more people than the leader suffer. LOCATION: 550

Without constructs, without systems, chaos and confusion always abound. LOCATION: 590

More than just offering a rebuke, Jethro instructed Moses to build a leadership system, to design and architect a structure that will distribute the responsibility to others so that the people will receive care. And if you do this, Jethro told Moses, the “people will go home satisfied”. Meaning, the motivation was not merely for Moses to have a lighter load, but also so the people would be better served. LOCATION: 597

These two problems are interconnected. The scarcity of healthy churches and the lack of passion and plan to train people for ministry are not unrelated problems. In fact—according to the apostle Paul—one is the result of the other. Quite simply, a failure to equip people for ministry results in an unhealthy church. A lack of conviction for equipping results in an immature body of believers. LOCATION: 663

In some sense, a pastor is to leave the ministry the moment the pastor enters the ministry. The pastor is no longer to "do the ministry," but instead is to "prepare God's people for ministry" to each other and to the world. Of course, in another sense, our identity as Christ-followers means we are always a servant and never above any task. But the role of pastor is divinely designed to prepare others for ministry, not to perform ministry. LOCATION: 784

In some sense, pastors are absolutely supposed to work themselves out of job. In another sense, if pastors will work themselves out of a job, they will always have one. There will always be a need for godly leaders who are committed to preparing others for ministry. LOCATION: 807

Think about it this way: Leadership is much like nuclear energy. It is able to warm a whole city or bring it to waste in death and destruction; it's all in how it is used. LOCATION: 1036

The first calling of every leader is to image God as faithfully and fully as a redeemed sinner can. This is the primary way we reflect the glory of God. When the world sees a Christian leader, it should be a showcase for the spectacular character of the immortal God. We represent His character and nature in our own. His loves, hates, ethics, passions, and purposes are expressed through us. Do not be deceived; God is far more concerned with the leader's personal sanctification than He is with the leader's ability to influence others. LOCATION: 1084

It is not what a man does that determines whether his work is sacred or secular, it is why he does it. —A. W. Tozer LOCATION: 1216

Charles Spurgeon put it this way: "Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter." The charge to our churches is to prepare the saints to be missionaries to this world, even as God calls some of them to lead in the world. While not every believer will lead in society, the Church must develop the ones God is calling to lead. Just as our churches flourish under great leadership, other organizations and communities are designed to flourish under godly leadership. LOCATION: 1306

Leaders, trained to lead like King Jesus, have the capacity to point men and women to the ever-present hope being conformed and promises of our eternal God. It is only these leaders, conformed to the image of God, who have the incredible capacity to connect ordinary people to the extraordinary power of God through the gospel. LOCATION: 1317

There is nothing more foolish or careless than to trust what is most precious into the hands of the unprepared. As we equip and encourage leaders for God's Church, we must develop leaders who are: Models of Character, Guardians of Doctrine, Shepherds of Care, Champions for Mission. LOCATION: 1477

As we train and assess leaders for service in our churches we must not assume character. Countless church governing boards and leadership teams are filled with men and women of excellent skill, significant influence, but untested character. If we are not deeply convicted that the wisdom of the Scripture must be obeyed in this regard, we are not building a church for the Kingdom. We are building a social club for our own interests and our own agendas. Without superlative character across the leadership teams of the local church, we can expect the opposition of God, "who opposes the proud" (James 4:6 esv). That's just plain scary. LOCATION: 1484

Our churches are suffering, as are our leaders. While the following statistics don't offer commentary as to why leaders are challenged in their character, they do provide a context for the necessary conviction for character. Thirty-eight percent of pastors said they were divorced or currently in a divorce process. Thirty percent said they had either been in an ongoing affair or a one-time sexual encounter with a parishioner. Fifteen hundred pastors leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout, or contention in their churches. LOCATION: 1489

Culture eats strategy for breakfast. —Peter Drucker LOCATION: 1572

Every gathering of people, every organization has a culture. Though a local church is much more than just an organization, every church has a culture. Some church cultures are healthy and some are unhealthy, but every church has a culture. Healthy church cultures are conducive for leadership development. They don't merely say they value leadership development; they actually believe the Church is responsible to develop and deploy leaders, and they align their actions to this deeply held conviction. LOCATION: 1944

While not everything that is articulated is really believed, what is really believed is always articulated. If something is really valued, it is declared. Language and words help create the culture one lives in. LOCATION: 1967

The artifacts of church culture are the visible, tangible expressions of a church's actual and articulated beliefs. Artifacts include common behaviors, informal rules for interaction, and other customs. Artifacts also include the formal behavioral management systems like policies, organizational structures, meeting formats, and required procedures. Church cultures even express their beliefs through artifacts that are nonhuman. Our buildings, technology, art, music, and other resources and tools constitute expression of our culture. Our programs and church calendars are expressions of who we are and are embedded in our cultures. Artifacts reveal a church's worldview and simultaneously shape the church to continue believing in. LOCATION: 1972

Leaders manage and change church culture most effectively and accurately when expositing the Word of God. God can, and does, change our presuppositions, our foundational beliefs, and our very core identities. He does it all the time. In the same way, if we want to develop cultures of leadership development in the local church, we will need to be renewed by the Word of God. We should not expect that the members of our congregation have any more capacity than we do to behave differently apart from the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. As we teach the text, we are utilizing God's means to conform the Church to His glorious image. LOCATION: 2217

The Church holds the conviction to develop others for the future. More than any organization, team, or institution, developing future leaders is in the people of God's DNA. God's people have always multiplied. The faith has always, by God's grace, been transferred from one generation to the next, from one person to another. LOCATION: 2331

Consumption and discipleship are very, very different. Jesus launched the Church with discipleship, and she drifted to consumption. LOCATION: 2373

There is some incongruent and inconsistent messaging occurring in many churches. You really can't say, "Anyone can be a small group leader," and, "If you want to be cared for and known in our church, get plugged into a group." Those two messages contradict one another at the most basic philosophical level. If the group leadership bar is lowered, then so should the promise of what the group can provide. Not just "anyone" can shepherd and care for a group of people. If the groups in a church are intended to provide care, accountability, and biblical community, then not just "anyone" can lead them. LOCATION: 2394

Discipleship is the only way to produce leaders that serve and bless the world. If leaders are created apart

from Jesus-focused discipleship, they are created without grace-motivated service, generosity, and mission. LOCATION: 2427

To view discipleship as distinct from leadership development is to propose that discipleship does not impact all of one's life. If a church approaches leadership development as distinct from discipleship, the church unintentionally communicates a false dichotomy—that one's leadership can be divorced from one's faith. Being a Christian leader must not be positioned as disconnected from living a godly life in Christ Jesus. LOCATION: 2429

If leaders are developed apart from Jesus, the emphasis is inevitably on skills and not the heart transformed through Christ. Divorcing leadership development from discipleship can leave people more skilled and less sanctified. And when competency and skill outpace character, leaders are set up for a fall. We don't serve people well if we teach them how to lead without teaching them how to follow Him. We don't serve leaders well if we develop their skills without shepherding their character. LOCATION: 2432

The sweet spot of leadership development is the intersection of knowledge, experiences, and coaching. LOCATION: 2483

If you and your church are going to develop leaders, you must deliver knowledge, provide experiences, and offer coaching. As people receive truth from godly leaders they trust and respect while they are in a serving posture, development is likely to occur. LOCATION: 2588

The authors and researchers behind The Leadership Code also sought to capture the essence of the 60 to 70 percent transferable aspects of leadership, so they distilled leadership down to five essential and transferable traits: strategist, executioner, talent manager, human capital developer, and personal proficiency. Personal proficiency is what we would call integrity, being a man or woman of character. LOCATION: 2668

You can tell what is important to a church by looking at their systems. Conversely, you can tell what is not important to a church—no matter what the messages are—by looking at the lack of systems. What many leaders say is in the culture and believe is in the culture is not really in the culture. What many assume is happening in their churches is not. The lack of a system reveals the value is not really embedded. Without a system, all you have is wishful thinking. LOCATION: 2763

Developing and implementing a leadership pipeline is not as overwhelming as it sounds. It really takes two disciplines: intentionality and intensity. You must intentionally think about how your church or ministry will develop leaders, and you must continue down that path with great intensity, intensity expressed in persistence and not just being loud. Building a pipeline is not easy. If it were easy, churches would be excelling in developing leaders. But many are not. It takes a deep-seated conviction that will keep your intensity for development burning. LOCATION: 2844

While we often imagine that declining and crumbling organizations begin to fall apart because they have grown complacent, Jim Collins, in his book How the Mighty Fall, states that complacency is not the issue: "Decline begins when the growth of an organization outpaces the organization's ability to have the right people at the table. LOCATION: 2930

There is a massive difference between offering people a menu and a map. Many church leaders offer the people in their churches a menu—a menu of all the programs, studies, activities, and events that the church programmatically offers. Essentially the message is: "Here is what we have; choose what you want." With this approach, churches have expanding menus as something can always be added. Churches with menus grow more and more complex and are likely to make less and less of an impact as energy and resources are divided in a plethora of directions. Churches who approach leadership development with a menu mentality merely

advertise a list of things they can do “to develop themselves.” LOCATION: 2956

Other churches, and sadly this is the minority, offer people a map. The map reveals how the church strategically and intentionally uses all she offers to move people toward greater maturity in the faith. Churches with maps have a theology and philosophy of discipleship beneath their programs. In other words, they are not merely winging it. They are disciplined in their approach to discipleship. And they are disciplined in their approach to leadership development. They have a plan for helping develop the leaders and potential leaders the Lord has placed under their care. LOCATION: 2961

For leadership development to take root in the culture you influence, a conviction to develop others must be continually stirred in your heart…Your conviction for developing others will be continually stirred as you gaze at the beauty of Christ and allow Him to continually give you a love and passion for His Church. His Church in your context is a community of gifted people, not a community of people with only a gifted pastor. As that truth continually grips your heart, you will lead with deep conviction. LOCATION: 3049

Wise ministry leaders will continually check the culture and, by God’s grace, seek to bring it into deep alignment with the theology and ministry philosophy of the church. How does one check culture and how can one reinforce values that you want bolstered in the culture? Here are three simple questions to ask yourself as you seek to lead the culture in your sphere of influence:

- What is celebrated? Plato famously said, “Whatever is celebrated in a country is cultivated there.” He was right. Whatever is celebrated in a church is cultivated there. Leaders are wise to be careful and strategic with what they celebrate. Celebrate and point to those who are living the values you want reinforced. If you celebrate the wrong things, you will get a culture you didn’t desire.
- What is prayed for? As you sit in meetings and other gatherings, listen to the prayers. You can learn a lot about the culture of a church by listening to the prayers of the leaders within the church.
- What is funded? Because culture is formed by the shared values tightly held by a group of people, it is helpful to distinguish between actual values and aspirational values. Actual values are values that are actually in the culture and clearly seen by newcomers because they are lived out. They are pronounced via people more than they are pronounced via paper. Aspirational values are values that leaders want a church to have but are not yet in the culture. They are often on paper but not in the hearts of the people. LOCATION: 3096