

# Are we encouraging the New and Younger Leaders?

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It has been good to feel a sense of urgency from around the world and from across cultures for the development of New or Younger Leaders. I have attended many conferences on this topic and on the one hand I have been encouraged but on the other, deeply concerned!

When my colleague and I released our little book, 'Culture Craft', at the last Lausanne conference in Malaysia, it went around the world very quickly with the captive audience from so many countries.

After a couple of weeks the comments came pouring in from the prospective New and Younger leaders. They were very desirous of the suggestions that we were making but felt hugely blocked by older and more senior leaders. They felt that there was a rock face in the way of healthy change that made it very difficult for them to develop. The little book goes some way to addressing this but let me make some statements and invite conversation from you all:

Leaders often merge their personal identity with their role and demonstrate that particularly Western concept of, - 'I am what I do'. Conversations between strangers in the West will often turn to - 'and what do you do??' The focus is on the 'what?' and not the 'whom?.'

If a Christian leader is defined by their role then any questioning of decisions made, skills and abilities is perceived as personal criticism and an assault on their identity and security. Often leaders will keep themselves in the rarefied air of being above contradiction.

When such insecurity is manifest then these leaders will go to great lengths to build an impenetrable wall around their own understanding of their function and this results in a, 'keep your hands off?', attitude.

New or Younger leaders are then perceived as a threat and are held back in their development and are given limited opportunities to use their gifting. In short, insecure senior leaders are, 'in the way?', of forming New and Younger leaders.

The process of Mentoring works well when the Mentor has sufficient maturity and security to be able to Mentor another to their own highest potential even if that means their gifting surpasses one's own.

The security issue is huge and global and originates in the fall. The cross of Christ restores us to that place of Sonship and Daughterhood which is for us the new identity. If we identify with and in Christ then there is a freedom available to us that separates our identity from our role. Of all the peoples of the earth, Christians can be the most free from such distorted idioms.

I invite your comments and wisdom regarding this issue :-