

The Soul of Ministry: Forming Leaders for God's People. By Ray S. Anderson (Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 269 pages.

Anderson offers an inspiring call for Christian leaders to view Jesus as a model for their own ministry today. *The Soul of Ministry* explores the idea of ministry across denominations and discovers its soul in God's love for the world. Anderson defines three aspects of that soul: First, the theological soul, which grew from that formation of God's people under the leadership of Moses. Second, the spiritual soul embodied in the ministry of Jesus by the power of the Spirit and released to His people after the resurrection. Lastly, the human soul, which is the calling of men and women to lead God's people in the continuing ministry of Jesus.

Anderson also looks at God's activity—from the exodus backward to creation and forward to the new covenant. In examining the past, he lays the foundation and then points the way toward a ministry of leadership based on biblical theology, empowered by the Spirit, and instituted with regard for human dignity and the worth of all people.

There are several “stand-out” chapters that are worthy of special consideration. In “Pentecost as Empowerment for Ministry” (ch. 13), Anderson suggests that pastors are often guilty of equipping people without first empowering them. This would explain why we have so many well-equipped lay people but very little ministry going on. He writes, “Before we attempt to load people up with methods and equip them with concepts and theories of ministry, we need to empower them by having them learn spiritual empowerment in their daily lives” (p. 116). Anderson's theology of Pentecostal empowerment is not intended to scare conservatives. On the contrary, he motivates the reader to recover both a theology of Pentecost and a new understanding of the experiential purpose and power of Pentecost as it occurs in community. This is grounded in his emphasis on the phrase “the power of the Spirit” (more than two dozen references) rather than the oft debated “filling of the Spirit” or baptism of the Spirit.”

In “The Ministry of Servant Leadership” (ch. 22), Anderson states that an effective servant leader must possess three things: a creative vision that inspires, a delegated power that enables, and a spiritual gift for ministry. His development of these three areas is outstanding. This chapter (and book as a whole)

is chalked full of quotable material and thoughtful perspectives. Anderson writes, “[Jesus] He was not the servant of the people, but of God (p. 203). . . . To say ‘the Spirit of the Lord is upon me,’ is to hold before the people of God the character of Christ and to subdue one’s own spirit to that of the Lord” (p. 205).

Other helpful chapters include: (1) Leaders Who Abuse: The Misuse of Power; (2) Churches that Abuse: Domestic Disorder in the Family of God; and (3) The ministry of the Church as an Apostolic Community. Yet, this is just a sprinkling from the twenty-four chapters. Each chapter is a mini-treatise of its own and is worthy of comment.

It is rare that a book is designed for pastors of all denominations and still combines solid biblical theology with numerous real-life anecdotes in a concise and powerful fashion. This book is very well written. It is both scholarly and personal in its approach. This writer especially enjoyed being invited into Anderson’s seminary classes, life, and ministry.