

courageous leadership

by Bill Hybels

Reviewed by Ruth Hassall

This isn't a new book, but if you haven't yet come across it or read it I would highly recommend doing so. It's a book that I return to on a regular basis when I'm in need of inspiration, when I need encouraging in vision casting, or when I simply want to be challenged again on the way that I lead and the kind of leader that I am.

The book is Bill Hybels' reflection on thirty years of leadership at Willow Creek Community Church and the lessons he has learnt about leadership, vision casting and what it means to lead well. It's full of solid leadership principles that are taught through personal stories and years of experience.

At the heart of all his teaching and writing is his key belief:

'I believe that the local church is the hope of the world. I believe to the core of my being that local church leaders have the potential to be the most influential force on planet earth. If they "get it", and get on with it, churches can become the redemptive centres that Jesus intended them to be.'

He then goes on to unpack how

the Church is able to fulfil its redemptive purposes, by having leaders who are listening closely to where God is leading and able to communicate that to others in a way that is compelling.

Amongst other leadership lessons, Hybels talks about:

- Finding leaders who have chemistry and who fit with your current team.
- Establishing clear goals for everyone and making them tangible.
- The vitality of vision and recasting that vision.
- Emulating the tenacity of Christ and the Apostle Paul.
- The importance of saying no to certain things and ideas in order to use your energy on what God really wants in your life.
- The importance of staying focused and cleaning up our own secret, inner problems first and foremost.
- The crucial importance of building a team that is big on character, competence and chemistry.

I think one of the strengths of this book is that nowhere in it does Hybels ask leaders to

emulate Willow Creek's worship style or vision methodology. What he does do, however, is to ask leaders to emulate his own dependence on God through different forms of prayer, team-building, accountability and discovering what our gifts truly are.

If you're looking for a resource that will help you reflect on your own leadership, and what you are modelling to those that you lead, then this is a great book to read, re-read and dip into on a regular basis. It's an invaluable tool for Christian leaders of any sort not just those in overall leadership roles.

