AN ANALYSIS OF TED ENGSTROM’S PHILOSOPHY AND
PRACTICE OF EXCELLENCE AND MENTORING

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AN ANALYSIS OF TED ENGSTROM’S PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE OF EXCELLENCE AND MENTORING

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To Julie,

with all my love
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PREFACE

I join the group of students who originally hoped their academic work would have a small impact on others, but now realize that I am the one who was impacted the most. I know the faithfulness of God in a way that I did not before this program: the PhD process is now an Ebenezer I raise to the Lord. Below is a list of acknowledgements, which is intended to express my deep appreciation to those who have invested so much in me. The acknowledgement of God’s acknowledgement of me in Christ is supreme.

Acknowledgments are due to my bride: Julie, you are the only one who truly knows this season and journey of my life—my heart trusts in you. I am the beneficiary of your excellent character and grace—you excel above them all. This project would not have been completed without you. I dedicate this dissertation to you, with all my love.

Acknowledgments are due to our sweet girls: Abigail, Emma, and Annie are filled with life and are life-giving to me each and every day. Also, I want to thank my family: Jon and Sarah Dockery, Tim and Andrea Dockery, Ben and Jenny Terry, and Reggie and Laura Holzer for their backing and encouragement. My mother has been a constant cheerleader through this process. Thank you, Mom. I love you. My father has believed in me, helped set the direction for my course of study, modeled excellence and mentoring long before I thought about studying them, and made possible so much of my education, including this final season of writing. I owe you more than I can give.
Acknowledgments are due to a host of Christian leaders who have invested in my life and shaped me during the PhD process: Greg Thornbury, in many ways, got this whole business started by inspiring me to see the value of ideas; Russell Moore saw something I did not and gave me the opportunity to work and study at Southern Seminary; Doug Walker taught me the value of relationships; Jason Allen expanded my capacity to work hard; Bruce Roberts challenged me to see every number as a person; Phillip Bethancourt motivated me to improve everything I worked on; Matt Hall forced me to focus on the mission; Jimmy Scroggins gave Julie and me the “coach’s talk” that kept us from giving up half way into this thing; John Powell regularly simplified the things I tried to make complex; Dan Dumas and Jeff Dalrymple showed me that the tiniest details inordinately contribute to our experiences with excellence; Jason Dees constantly made the horizons of my world bigger; Aaron Harvie did not let me take myself too seriously; Dustin Bruce let me verbally process this dissertation, church, and much more; Jonathan Pennington allowed me to engage my soul in my research, Kevin Ezell displayed the level of leadership I aspire to attain; and Jim Headlee taught me what genuine care can illicit in one’s leadership team. I am grateful for many more who I have not included in this list. Lastly, I was privileged to work with a group of all-stars who taught me the importance of team through our Admissions Team PLEDGE; thanks to Ed Stucky, Amanda Hayes, Kody Gibson, Blake Rogers, Rebekah Felcman, and Raymond Johnson.

Acknowledgments are due to my church and my friends: Vine Street Baptist Church was an unforeseen blessings during PhD work. Particularly, I want to thank Chandler Bainter and Joe Gross—who encouraged me throughout my schoolwork—
along with Wally and Betty Jeffries—who strike the tone of God’s kindness like no one else I have ever met. I also want to thank the men who taught me about friendship: Ben Bredow, Jonathan Berry, Zach Mabry, Ben Stubblefield, Barrett Fisher, Devin Maddox, Jed Coppenger, Ray Pettigrew, Yancey Pettigrew, Steve Tilleros, Michael Thomas, Blake Spann, Dow Davidson, Ross Priddy, Joe Garner, Marc Hatley, Clinton Donald, Casey Stafford, Chris Winter, and Dwayne Ewers. I appreciate you.

Acknowledgments are due to several people who helped me with research and formatting: I want to thank Steve Gray at World Vision International Central Records for his generous allotment of time and access. I want to thank Chris Bosson, Doug Hanna, and Marsha Omanson for their assistance with the style guide requirements—I am not sure I would have graduated without them. I am grateful to the following interviewees: Bob Andringa, Jon Wallace, Ron Jenson, Dean Hirsch, John Reynolds, and Bill Kliewer.

Acknowledgments are due to Southern Seminary: her story has entered my blood and I will be forever indebted to the work of this school and the leadership of R. Albert Mohler.

Finally, acknowledgments are due to my committee: I appreciate your guiding me during the writing stage of this dissertation. Beginning with my committee chair, Michael Wilder, each of you cared for me personally even as you guided and adjusted my academic efforts. It was a true privilege. Thank you, Michael Wilder, Randy Stinson, and Brad Waggoner. Soli Deo Gloria.

Benjamin Dockery

Louisville, Kentucky

May 2015
CHAPTER 1
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LEADERSHIP LEGACY OF TED ENGSTROM

“Ted Engstrom is a leader among leaders.”¹
- Adrian Rogers, Pastor Bellevue Baptist Church

Jesus explained to his followers that the Gentiles authorities dominated and exercised power over their followers. Then he told the disciples not to lead that way. Instead, Jesus said, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be a slave of all (Mark 10:42-44).² Christian leaders of all stripes point to Jesus as their model for leadership, yet they often have entirely different agendas when doing so. Popular arguments prioritize Jesus as a servant, teacher, shepherd or even CEO.³ In fact, one can find almost any number of key leadership traits or theories to support their favorite quality of Jesus’ leadership.⁴ In light

¹As quoted in Robert C. Larson, The Best of Ted Engstrom (San Bernardino, CA; Here’s Life Publishers, 1988), dust jacket.

²All biblical quotations are from Holman Christian Standard Bible.


⁴This includes larger worldview arguments that shape fundamental differences in the approaches to leadership. See Terrence J. Rynne, Gandhi and Jesus: The Saving Power of Nonviolence (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008); Sarah Bessey, Jesus Feminist: An Invitation to Revisit the Bible’s View of Women (New York: Howard Books, 2013); Owen Phelps, The Catholic Vision for Leading Like Jesus: Introducing S3 Leadership (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2009).
of the varied positions, one might ask if it is possible to argue for universal practices that every Christian leader must exhibit? Does the Bible really drive a stake into the ground over leadership issues? If so, how does one identify these behaviors? This dissertation attempts to answer a portion of that question by suggesting excellence and mentoring are non-negotiable practices for Christian leaders and both practical and theological grounds undergird that conclusion. It is not the intention of this study to produce an exhaustive list of necessary principles or practices for Christian leaders, rather, this study intends to demonstrate the need for excellence and mentoring and show how these elements worked themselves out in the life and writings of Theodore W. Engstrom.⁵

This dissertation does not provide a comprehensive treatment of either excellence or mentoring, for that would be a series of dissertations given the vast literature bases on both subjects. Rather, this work concentrates on the writings of Ted Engstrom and then analyzes his conclusions alongside introductory remarks from the field of theology. By way of introduction to these two themes, excellence can be understood as the antonym of mediocrity.⁶ It is a concept, like many, that is much easier to recognize than to define.⁷ Similarly, mentoring eludes simple definitions largely...

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⁵Theodore Engstrom, or more commonly “Dr. Ted,” is the principal figure of this dissertation. His life and writings occupy the large majority of this research, and his arguments and example helped formulate the central claim of this study.

⁶Engstrom thus understands excellence when he opens with a motivational call to excellence by driving readers away from mediocrity. He writes, “Give up your small ambitions. Believe a big God; remember that ‘God is greater!’ Get angry with your own mediocrity, and then do something constructive to get yourself out of the same old rut” (Ted Engstrom, The Pursuit of Excellence [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982], 18).

⁷This claim stems from a parallel argument that can be found in Engstrom’s quotation from St. Augustine’s attempt to define “time”: “For what is Time? Who is able easily and briefly to explain it? Who is able so much as in thought to comprehend it so as to express himself concerning it? And yet what in our usual discourse do we more familiarly and knowingly make more mention of than Time? And surely we understand it well enough when we speak of it; we understand it also when in speaking with another we hear it named. What then is Time? If nobody asks me I know; but if I were desirous to explain it to
because it overlaps significantly with other acts of Christian obedience such as discipleship, coaching, friendship, and counseling. But is important to note from the outset that Engstrom was not first and foremost interested in definitions. He was intent on making an impact as a leader—and excellence and mentoring were two tools in his belt.  

Although excellence and mentoring are the focus of this project, they are only two of the many traits Christian leaders must exhibit. The broader discussions on leadership have captured the American conscience and now flood the various categories of the publishing world. It is no less true within Christian publishing, which is evident by the exponentially growing number of publications during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Engstrom contributed to the burgeoning field of literature on Christian leadership at large, but excellence and mentoring remained predominant themes throughout his writings. For Engstrom, these two behaviors fit into conversations concerning the witness of all Christians in the workplace, but he applied them most

someone that should ask me, plainly I know not.” Ted Engstrom and Alec Mackenzie, Time Management (Waco, TX: Word, 1967), 23.

That distinction is significant distinction to keep in view throughout the argumentation of this dissertation. If readers consider this research to be formulating a new definition of excellence or a new wrinkle to mentoring, they will be constantly frustrated. This work is largely a descriptive analysis that includes a prescriptive element, namely the addition of doctrinal observations, and some general implications in the final chapter.

Kellerman, skeptically, calls this phenomenon the “leadership industry” and highlights the growth in publishing. She explains, “In the early 1980’s an average of three books on leadership were published each year; by the end of the decade that number was twenty-three. By now, of course, the number of leadership books (and other related materials) is somewhere in the stratosphere (a Google search of leadership books returns more than 84 million results).” Barbara Kellerman, The End of Leadership (New York: Harper, 2012). I was first introduced to Kellerman’s comments in David L. Starling, UnCorinthian Leadership (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014).


Key resources across Engstrom’s published collection will be discussed more thoroughly in chap. 2.
keenly to Christian in leadership positions. Furthermore, as will be argued, he saw them as faithful acts of service in response to God’s word.  

The Bible speaks definitively about leadership, yet it is not a primary theme developed across the Scriptures. Although one can find courageous, shrewd, humble, organized, inspiring models of leadership as well as prideful, immature, dishonest, and disorganized leaders, the supreme subject is not leadership. Similarly, work, or a theology of work does not qualify as a first order issue for theologians. Neither doctrines of work nor leadership make their way into historic creeds or confessions as a stand-alone category, yet most Christians spend the majority of their days leading and being led. Leadership is principally pragmatic. Hence, leadership remains a primary experience for Christians even if it is not a primary doctrinal consideration. One result is that leadership conversations tend to remain outside of theological inquiry. So the question follows: how does the Christian church need to think through leadership issues and prioritize the implications? Is there biblical warrant to thoroughly think through God’s

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12The reason these categories applied to all is because he saw them as Christian acts of obedience. See Engstrom, *The Pursuit of Excellence*, 90-91.

13Howell writes, “The Bible is not a textbook on the practice of leadership, but is a truthful record of the saving acts of God and his interpretive word.” Don Howell, *Servants of the Servant* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 1.


16The language of “primary experience for all Christians” does not imply that all Christians are leaders, but that all Christians experience leadership, the good and bad examples at home, work, school, government, etc.

17One group that is changing this tendency is the Theology of Work Project, energized by Haddon Robinson and Andy Mills. For group generated theological content at the following web address: www.theologyofwork.org.
instruction regarding leading and working? This dissertation aspires to contribute to the larger discussions on leadership as bedrock for concentrated thinking about excellence and mentoring. At the same time, this research aims to introduce a biblical and theological grid that frames the conversation and can enhance the practice of Christian leaders.\textsuperscript{18}

Recognition of the need for leadership studies, both sacred and non-sacred, is gaining momentum.\textsuperscript{19} Bass contends leadership is a subject of study that should be primary. He writes, “In industrial, educational, and military settings, and in social movements, leadership plays a critical, if not the most critical role, and is therefore an important subject for study and research.”\textsuperscript{20} Even the best insights of social science and psychological investigations of leadership continue to evolve,\textsuperscript{21} and non-sacred versions of leadership theory will ultimately fall short.\textsuperscript{22} Likewise, the growing theological


\textsuperscript{19}Banks and Ledbetter argue, “To one degree or another, every age has probably exhibited some interest in leaders . . . . But the current fascination with the subject (leadership) goes far beyond this. It involves not just leaders as such but wider concerns about leadership itself. While this is not the first time reflection on the nature, scope, methods, styles, goals, and outcomes of leadership has arisen, there is arguably a broader and more systematic interest in the topic today than in any time past” (ibid., 15).


\textsuperscript{21}Recent research on the role of the “follower” is altering common perceptions in the field of leadership studies. See Barbara Kellerman, \textit{Followership: How Followers Are Creating Change and Changing Leaders} (Boston: Harvard Business Review, 2008).

\textsuperscript{22}I hold to a Christian view of the world that understands all knowledge to emanate from a single source, that is, the God of the Bible, who created and sustains all that exists. All knowledge must ultimately align with God’s revelation, which centers on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Additionally, this view means both regenerate and non-regenerate men and women will uncover truths of the universe—thus Christians leaders should learn from all leadership investigations. John Calvin said it this way: “All truth is from God; and consequently, if wicked men have said anything that is true and just, we ought not to reject it; for it has come from God.” John Calvin, \textit{Commentaries on the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon}, trans. William Pringle (repr., Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1948), 300-1. I first saw this quotation in
attention directed toward an understanding of leadership and vocation cannot operate outside of the larger leadership conversations. The non-sacred and sacred urgently need each other in the world of precipitous change. Nevertheless, the mere combination of the two is not the answer either. Theoretical conclusions on leadership demand evidence in the field. Alongside cognitive identifications and understandings of leadership, leaders must embody, or commit, to their beliefs. Ted Engstrom did both, which is a further reason his contribution is unique and worthy of examination.

The contribution of biblical doctrines to leadership will be a direct focus of this research. Some of the best work is being done in the growing field of “theology of work.” This dissertation limits its attention to rudimentary areas of theology within the Protestant community. Moreover, this research will largely narrow its focus to the

Colin Brown ed., Christianity & Western Thought, vol. 1, From the Ancient World to the Age of the Enlightenment (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), 153.

23 As a caveat, not all “non-sacred” theories are created equal and should certainly be judged in light of orthodoxy. Particularly in view, for example, could be best hiring practices in business or innovative technology solutions or expansive sociological research that informs globalized thinking.

24 Engstrom recognizes that the best theories go awry during application. He championed the requirement for effective managers to pay attention to theory and practice. He exclaims, “The answer lies not only in hundreds of books on management practice and theory, but in a good deal of experience (!) that has to be lived.” Ted Engstrom, 60-Second Manager (Waco, TX: Word Publishing, 1984), 63.

25 The discussion on mentoring will be explored further in chap. 4 based on a distinction in cognitive knowledge and personal, or tacit, knowledge as prescribed by Michael Polanyi. He argues that basic epistemic functions transfer through an apprenticeship process of watching life application that are otherwise absent in a strictly information transfer.


27 It is beyond the scope of this project to compare and contrast the recent conclusions on these subjects between Protestant and Catholic writings, but both traditions have invested popular and academic resources in this direction. Many such Protestant efforts will be highlighted throughout the research that follows, but two noteworthy works in the Roman Catholic tradition should be mentioned: Pope John Paul II’s encyclopedic contributions in On Human Work: Laborem Exercens (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1981), and a recent volume by Michael Novak, which was a winner of the Templeton Prize, Business as a Calling: Work and the Examined Life (New York: The Free Press, 1996).
evangelical branch of Protestantism. One key question deals with the tension between sacred and non-sacred views of work. Throughout the history of the church the pendulum has swung from a view of full separation during the Middle Ages to a reactionary reconciliation as the Reformers championed the teaching of *vocatio*. This tension resurfaces in any study of Christian work today and works itself through Engstrom’s writings as well. Leadership positions invite tensions. In fact, Banks and Ledbetter’s research identifies three points of tension encountered by all Christian leaders:

1) The tension between professional competence and being salt and light: seeking to be highly competent as a professional and knowing when it is appropriate to speak directly about one’s faith in the secular marketplace.
2) The tension between calling and trusting God: Following the leading of God to serve as a leader and trusting God when situations do not seem to create the opportunity to follow one’s calling.
3) The tension between family and work: honoring multiple demands at home and pursuing integrity through and beyond the guilt many women feel at not doing enough for their significant others.

Great leaders find a way to navigate such theoretical tensions and untangle the concrete problems found in the workplace. They reconcile seemingly irreconcilable

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28Keller and Alsdorf comment on the growing field of literature: “Perhaps not since the Protestant Reformation has there been so much attention paid to the relationship of Christian faith to work as there is today. The number of books, scholarly projects, academic programs, and online discussions on this subject has grown exponentially in the past two decades.” Timothy Keller with Katherine Leary Alsdorf, *Every Good Endeavor* (New York: Dutton, 2012), 19.

29Placher traces the idea of vocation, or calling, in relation to Christian work through the history of Christianity to demonstrate the varying approaches and streams of thought that led into current investigations of the question. It is a helpful summary of the church’s thinking on calling and highlights the perspective changes from through key epochs of the church. See William Placher, ed., *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

30Engstrom aligned more closely with the Reformers, but he brings a collection of theological influences. He did not receive formal theological training, but during his time at Taylor University, his undergraduate school and place of conversion, he learned in a non-denominational context that had Methodist roots. Early in his career, he was influenced by the Dutch Calvinist brothers, Pat and Bernie Zondervan. Serving at Youth for Christ, he was surrounded by a broadly evangelical community focused on evangelism. As chap. 2 makes clear, theological essentials mattered greatly to Engstrom, but he did not divide himself from others over non-essentials.

31Banks and Ledbetter, *Reviewing Leadership*, 32.
issues. Leadership requires the type of problem solving and prioritization that resolves complex matters with a long-range, transformative perspective. For Christian leaders, clear ethical and doctrinal parameters mark the decision-making trail, but within those boundaries a treasury of questions still remain. Another troubling issue that concerns this study is the challenge Christian leaders face to lead an organization with excellence while remaining involved in personal mentoring. In other words, as the demand for twenty-four hour organizational and social responsibilities increase and as the pressures to select financial and administrative tasks over relational investments mount, can a Christian maintain an extraordinary level of production in the workplace and intentionally invest in younger leaders? Or, on the contrary, can a leader firmly committed to the personal and professional development of others truly establish a pattern of excellence that allows an organization to compete in today’s world? Is it possible for a Christian leader to have one without sacrificing the other? This dissertation

DePree suggests that leadership is more art than science and requires improvisation to manage the challenges. See Max DePree, Leadership Jazz (New York: Dell Trade Publishing, 1993).

Burns provided the taxonomic distinction between transactional and transformational leadership. Transformational leadership finds a way to raise the motivational and moral behavior of both parties and yields long-term change. See James Macgregor Burns, Leadership (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), 19-20.

Unlike Burns’ assessment noted above, a Christian evaluation of raised moral behavior is defined primarily in light of the person of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible. The Bible is the ultimate authority, but the Bible itself acknowledges disputable matters of moral judgment (Rom 14), and these matters regularly find themselves on the desk of the decision makers.

Brueggemann provides the following insight about expectations in the realities of the current marketplace. He writes, “Those requirements (fulfilling economic desires) concern endless predation so that we are a society of 24/7 multitasking in order to achieve, accomplish, perform, and possess. But the demands of market ideology pertain as much to consumption as they do to production. Thus the system of commodity requires that we want more, have more, own more, use more, eat and drink more. The rat race of such predation and usurpation is a restlessness that issues inescapably in anxiety that is often at the edge of being unmanageable.” Walter Brueggemann, Sabbath Resistance (Louisville: Westminster, 2014), xii.
argues it is possible, but it demands theological conviction, fierce discipline, and a model to show the way.

The challenges outlined above, among others, hit Christian leaders at all levels, and target Christian executives. Executive roles are pulled in more directions than ever and handed excessive expectations for their organizations along with preserving their personal and social well-being. This problem is not altogether new, but it is a heightened problem in today’s society. Furthermore, for Christians, standards of workplace excellence and mentoring are calculated in addition to, not as a replacement for, core Christian priorities such as personal spiritual growth, family investment, local church involvement, healthy friendships, and active evangelism. Some people are doing a great job of driving at excellence. Others are emphasizing the value of mentoring. But who has succeeded in both without implying an accidental dichotomy?

Great examples of Christian leaders abound. As noted above, the evangelical movement experienced a proliferation of leadership books, institutes, journals, training

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36Throughout this dissertation, the term ‘Christian executive’ will function as a near synonym for ‘Christian leader’ under Engstrom’s broad definition, “those who are leading Christian organizations.” By Christian organization, he simply means, “any organization that sees as its primary purpose giving glory to God.” It is not intended to refer to an alternative group of people than ‘Christian Leaders’ but a smaller subset at the top end of the proverbial organizational chart. See Ted Engstrom and Ed Dayton, The Christian Executive (Waco, TX: Word, 1979), 15.


centers, and popular speaking circuits. However, within this evangelical stream, Ted W. Engstrom’s name quietly rises to the top when considering writings on excellence and mentoring. Moreover, by leading two major Christian ministries and serving on the board of dozens of evangelical organizations, he entered the field tensions of businessman and churchman, of excellence and graciousness. He emerged as a respected, beloved, and influential author and practitioner.40 He called for excellence in all things and people followed him. In 2006 Christianity Today published a list of the top fifty influential books among evangelicals over the last fifty years. Amid the books on prayer, doctrine, church, evangelism and other topics one would assume influenced evangelical Christians of the late twentieth century is a book on time management co-author by Ted Engstrom and Alec Mackenzie. This two hundred page practical guide earned a place in the top ten of “landmark titles” that changed the way evangelicals think and live.41

Additionally, Engstrom and his colleague at World Vision, Ed Dayton, traveled around the country and conducted hundreds of seminars about the effective use of time.42 They struck a nerve with Christians who felt overworked and under-organized. It was a

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40 Bob Owen, *Ted Engstrom: Man with a Vision* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1984). This is the only published biography of Engstrom, but it does not include the last twenty-two years or so of his unwavering Christian service. For a more full story of Engstrom’s life impact, see his autobiography, Ted Engstrom, *Reflections on a Pilgrimage: Six Decades of Service* (Sisters, OR: Loyal Publishing, 1999).


42 Engstrom and Dayton had an accompanying free monthly newsletter in publication, *Christian Leadership Letter*, for nearly fifteen years. Each issue contained advertisements for the upcoming list of “Managing Your Time” seminars Engstrom and Dayton were conducting. Access to the entire subscription was granted for this research from World Vision International Central Records (Monrovia, CA).
Christian message that landed not just with those in ministry but all Christians in the workforce. In the introduction to a compilation of Engstrom’s writings, Robert Larson makes the claim that Ted Engstrom spent his life working and thinking about aspects of work that communicate to all Christians.\textsuperscript{43} He earned “credibility” by what Kouzes and Posner explain as attending to the dynamics of relationship.\textsuperscript{44} They argue, “Strategies, tactics, skills, and practices are empty unless we understand the fundamental human aspirations that connect leaders and their constituents.”\textsuperscript{45} Engstrom was an accomplished leader who recognized and valued the relationships of those he led. His practice and writing on excellence accompanied by the influence he continues to harvest through those he mentored recalibrates his relevance for a new generation and solicits further study.

**Thesis**

The three overarching goals of this dissertation are as follows: (1) to seek to ascertain if Ted Engstrom’s ministry is worthy of re-evaluation and replication, (2) to contend for the value of excellence and mentoring in the life of Christian leaders, and (3) to model the potential contribution of theological inquiry for the study of leadership. More specifically, this dissertation will argue that Ted Engstrom left a unique legacy of excellence and mentoring through both his life and writings that should be imitated by Christian leaders in the twenty-first century. Christian leaders must maintain both a standard of excellence for the groups they lead as well as a pattern of intentional

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\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{44}James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993), 1.
  \item \textsuperscript{45}Ibid.
\end{itemize}
investment in the lives of those they lead. These two qualities often pull leaders in opposite directions resulting in a de-emphasis in one or the other, yet they should remain inseparable for Christian leaders. So, in looking for a guide to navigate this tension, the research relies on a discernible evangelical model that neither backs down from excellence in large-scale executive responsibility or mentoring in personal and professional relationships. Engstrom not only exemplified excellence and mentoring with his life, but also paved a road map via his written corpus. To avoid abstraction of the concepts, this study will first assess Engstrom’s understanding of the two terms. Secondarily, excellence and mentoring will be examined in light of an abridged theological reflection. The hopeful result is a portrait of leadership that inspires imitation and reaches for a fully informed Christian approach.

The American evangelical movement of the second half of the twentieth century offers the immediate cultural context for Engstrom. The introduction in chapter 2 to the historical events and trends helps the reader to recognize what motivated Engstrom to write for his audience. Similarly, investigating six decades of Engstrom’s leadership affords a plausible case for why he is a trustworthy spokesman on these issues. The result of situating Engstrom in his cultural context also offers a better understanding of his approach to excellence and mentoring. In addition to shedding light on Engstrom’s influence, the cultural considerations underscore this project’s determination to find missiological applications of these principles for the next generation.

In each instance, four relevant theological categories have been selected to begin to demonstrate that the richness theological reflection adds to (not outright replaces) current leadership studies.

Drucker notes, “Every few hundred years throughout Western history, a sharp transformation has occurred. In a matter of decades, society altogether rearranges itself—its world view, its basic values, its social and political structures, its arts, its key institutions. Fifty years later a new world exists. And the people born into that world cannot even imagine the world in which grandparents lived and into which their
changed. Basic and necessary practices in Engstrom’s leadership repertoire like company memos, letter writing, Dictaphone messaging, and face-to-face meetings have evolved. Thus, a short exploration of the rapid cultural changes in the twenty-first century is necessary to set up the concluding comparison between Engstrom’s times and application for the next generation.48

Ultimately, the purpose of this research project is to provide a biblical vision that charges Christian leaders to execute with excellence and invest their lives in potential leaders. This purpose is addressed most systematically in chapters 3 and 4. To accomplish this, the chapters devoted to excellence and mentoring, respectively, will first examine Engstrom’s position on the subjects. Once his understanding is espoused, then this dissertation shows a gap in Engstrom’s writing and utilizes external theological support to build a more substantial foundation.49 Next, this study seeks to expand the biblical passages and arguments Engstrom employs.50 To further strengthen and diversify the research, chapter 3 (excellence) and chapter 4 (mentoring) include insights from

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49First, it is necessary to direct this critique toward his theological emphasis and not his theological conclusions. This dissertation does not seek to determine or debate Engstrom’s theological positions. Second, this criticism does not undermine the ultimate ends of his work, but highlights foundational matters that ultimately strengthen his position and allow his legacy to extend beyond his life’s work. Furthermore, it substantiates the need for this study. In The Essential Engstrom, Beals has already provided an excellent summation of Engstrom’s writings. This dissertation aims to buttress the essential matters of Engstrom’s work with an extended theological framework that is often implicit in his writings. See Timothy Beals, The Essential Engstrom (Colorado Springs: Authentic, 2007).

50Unlike the section of theological reflection, the biblical considerations are limited to references within Engstrom’s writings. Accordingly, the biblical conclusions of this dissertation are restricted.
related fields of study. Finally, the conclusions offer summative remarks that entwine the biblical and theological data with Engstrom’s view in light of changing cultural context. These two chapters form the heart of the arguments of this dissertation.

What follows is the reasoning for the approach of these two central aspects of the study. Basically, it answers the question: what benefit does each section of chapters three and four add to the project? First, examining Engstrom’s writings are rather straightforward. He is the primary figure of the research and his positions must be charted out first. Next, the inclusion of theological themes associated with excellence and mentoring add a new dimension to Engstrom’s work. These additions serve as a substructure underneath Engstrom’s ideas that allow for further applications to be drawn. The third section of both chapters 3 and 4 analyze the explicit biblical citations within Engstrom’s literature to bring more focused effort to his clear biblical convictions. In short, there are three reasons for including the next section “Supplementary Models” from related fields: (1) to give recognition to the broader conversation revolving around the subject of mentoring, (2) locate supplementary insights that strengthen the argument of this dissertation, and (3) open the door for further study and application of the research conclusions. Lastly, the research aims to bring Engstrom’s principles and practice through these biblical and theological filters in order to apply to the new realities of the twenty-first century context. Below is a chapter-by-chapter outline, beginning with chapter 2, of the content involved in defending the thesis and subsequent arguments.

Chapter 2 makes the case for why Engstrom is worthy of a re-evaluation. First, the research considers the six decades of Engstrom’s ministry in the context of American
evangelicalism, and, more specifically, demonstrates his influence at Zondervan Publishing, Youth for Christ, and World Vision, and in his work doing organizational consulting. Finally, this chapter discusses the key themes in Engstrom’s writings to endorse the credibility of his overall body of work. Comprehending his immediate context illuminates the arguments he sustains throughout his writings.

Chapter 3 outlines Engstrom’s understanding of excellence. As a supplement to Engstrom’s work, biblical and theological foundations of excellence are considered that reinforced the basis of this study for the next generation. Next, this chapter turns to the insights of the virtue tradition to shed a different light on excellence. In conclusion, chapter 3 begins to connect the dots from Engstrom to theology to current developments in Christian leadership.

Chapter 4 is organized identically to chapter 3. First, it outlines Engstrom’s understanding of mentoring. Then, key doctrines and biblical models are considered to further build a theological foundation for mentoring. The world of education is used as a supplemental voice to the discussion, and finally, the chapter ends by tracing leadership through the writings of Engstrom and theological observations to the current context.

Chapter 5 begins by synthesizing chapters 3 and 4. Seeing the two themes as tethered to the same argument is crucial. Then the chapter argues that Engstrom is a leader worthy of imitation by summarizing personal interviews with those Engstrom formally and informally mentored. It is really a verification of whether Engstrom’s life matched his writings. The conclusions supports an emphasis on excellence that requires

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51 It is beyond the scope of this work to investigate the implications for these fields. The hope is that by including virtue (chap. 3) and education (chap. 4) in the dissertation, later areas of research might surface that force direct connections outside the arena of leadership studies.
mentoring while simultaneously holding to an emphasis on mentoring that demands excellence.

Lastly, chapter 6 reintroduces the purpose of the dissertation, which is ultimately to contribute to the conversations regarding Christians in leadership. Chapter 6 summarizes the argument of this dissertation and points to further fields of research. Initial attempts are made to apply ten different implications from the argumentation of the dissertation to a new generation of Christian leaders. The outcome is a renewed emphasis on excellence and mentoring as hallmark traits of Christian leadership. Before pressing forward with context for Engstrom’s life and the bulk of the dissertation, this chapter will provide some context for how Engstrom became the central figure of this examination.

**Background**

College or graduate students who are brought up in conservative church communities commonly carry an unhealthy amount of curiosity for the lives and practices of those outside of the church.\(^{52}\) Often the safest access to these curiosities is through the intellectual in-roads that college and graduate school offer because one can maintain one’s moral reputation, but find a sense of rebelliousness by diverging from familial tradition. My experience echoes that above and resulted in a search for the boundaries of Christian liberty. One seemingly minor outworking of this pattern of my own life involved a trip to Oxford, England, where I eventually spent several days with a group of

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\(^{52}\)Thus, Prov 23:17 states, “Don’t let your heart envy sinners, but always fear the LORD.”
presidents from the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). Many of these presidents on the trip, unbeknownst to me, were personally influenced by Ted Engstrom. My intellectual curiosities and personal relationships from that trip led me to re-engage with this group several years later through their writings when I was given the book, *Christian Leadership Essentials*, which included chapters by multiple people from the CCCU board members.

The book’s dedication page reads, “*In Piam Memoriam* With Gratitude to God for the Life, Influence, and Legacy of Ted W. “Dr. Ted” Engstrom (1916-2006) Leader of Leaders, Leader among Leaders, and a Friend and Mentor to Many.” My interest in Engstrom’s life was a confluence of the experiences described above and a conversation I was having with my father about his excitement regarding a forthcoming book on leadership whose author was also mentored by Engstrom. It was then I too was inspired by the power of Engstrom’s influence and hoped a study of his life and writings would provide a model for twenty-first century Christians.

Though there has not been much academic attention to Engstrom’s writings, there are certainly adequate resources available to research the subject. The availability of resources was confirmed in my initial research on Engstrom for seminar papers and proved to be more than an abundant selection of books, articles, and other materials. I have the majority of the books he authored or edited for my personal library. Prior to

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53 At the time, my father, David Dockery, served as the President of Union University. He and my mother were a part of the Oxford excursion—and provided the opportunity for me to participate.


55 Ibid., viii.

56 This collection amounts to more than forty volumes and counting, including all the major works in this field of study.
beginning the project, I corresponded with several men who knew Engstrom well and considered him a mentor. Others, including his daughter, Jo Ann Bengel, and friends, Keith Jespersen and Richard Mouw, agreed to participate in this project to help put Engstrom’s life in sharper perspective. Additionally, a research request was granted by the World Vision International Central Records to access their collection of Engstrom’s materials. These personal components of the research project, though not crucial to the examination of his thought, were truly meaningful and added vivacity to the findings. Finally, Azusa Pacific University (APU) was fully cooperative with the research efforts of this dissertation. APU participated in the founding of the Engstrom Institute, LLC, which is a resource center that equips Christ-centered nonprofits and business with management principles.57

Finally, the background of this research is deeply personal. The wisdom required to emphasize both people (mentoring) and processes (excellence) has been a matter of learning by failing in my own ministry and the organizations I have served. I have been whole-heartedly invested in Christian organizations that emphasized and modeled ‘people’ ministry, to the neglect of good ‘processes.’58 These groups championed a Luke 10:38, Mary over Martha, biblical call to downgrade the priority of tasks for relational time investments. To say it piously, people were the priority; they were the end and not the means of the ministry. On the contrary, I have also been in

57Azusa Pacific University President Jon R. Wallace was on the trip in Oxford and was mentored by Engstrom. Wallace was kind enough to meet with me face-to-face and offer any help that he or his institution can provide to extend Engstrom’s legacy. Although the Engstrom Institute is still legally maintained as an LLC and housed as a component of APU Christian Leadership Alliance (formerly the Christian Management Alliance), it is currently not operational. More details on why this is the case will be provided in chap. 5.

58These terms are not representative of official studies, but were common language used in my own ministry experience and are only intended to convey the sentiment within those experiences.
Christian job situations where the task, the bottom line, was prioritized over developing people. People were functionally (not necessary intentionally) used as a means to accomplish organizational goals. These experiences focused on verses like Proverbs 21:5 that explains the plans of the diligent lead to profit. Both examples were effective at implanting their ministry values into their leadership teams and both did so with biblical justification. But, in the first scenario, a subtle but certain de-emphasis of excellence existed. The unintended result, unfortunately, was often frustration and ineffectiveness in ministry. Bad processes impaired the people ministry. Likewise, the excellence that resulted in organizational triumphs in the second type of situation mentioned above was often muted by the relational incongruity. It was as if excellence applied to everything in the organization but team morale and interaction between co-workers. As a result, task-oriented people would quickly leave scenario one and relational-oriented people would often leave scenario two. A key driver in my research is to help contribute to a vision for organizational life and ministry that allows both task-oriented and people-orientated workers to feel valued and flourish in their unique contributions.\(^5\) Engstrom provides such a vision and I hope this project supplies a clear rationale to do the same for a new generation.

\(^5\)A comparable conclusion is found in the vast research on leadership theories compiled in Bass and Stodgill. Although they use slightly different terms (with precise definitions), their research determines, “In general, the leader who is more highly rated by superiors and peers, who is most satisfying to subordinates, and whose approach results in the good performance of the group is likely to be both relations oriented and task oriented in an integrated fashion . . . . However, many situational contingencies have been found to moderate the effects.” Bass and Stodgill, The Bass Handbook of Leadership, 537.
Methodology

This dissertation is an analytical study that aims to distill the essence of Ted Engstrom’s writing and practice. Equally, it interjects positive biblical and theological affirmations that attempt to substantiate and strengthen Engstrom’s conclusions. The biblical analysis considers English and Greek renderings of the terminology, and considers the Bible to be the authoritative, inspired and inerrant word of God. To that end, biblical commentaries inform the exegetical work in this dissertation. Both historical Christian creeds and modern theological interpreters undergird the theological discussions, which are intended to be broad surveys rather than in-depth inspection.

Instead of starting by building on top of Engstrom’s teachings, this approach seeks first to build underneath his conclusions to reinforce them, and then move to the deductions. This includes commendations and critical reflection directed toward Engstrom’s writings, which are concentrated around a perceived gap in his broader theological infrastructure.

In addition to the biblical and theological analysis, this dissertation includes insights from the historical context of twentieth century American evangelicalism. Like a basic biblical hermeneutic that investigates the author, setting, and audience, this study aims to grapple with Engstrom’s context to better ascertain whom his writings were reaching and why he was motivated to write on certain topics. Additionally, this dissertation surveys recent leadership literature to highlight cultural phenomena that developed after Engstrom’s writings. In order to gather implications for the next

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60 The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (1978) conveys the premise for this dissertation’s approach to Holy Scripture.

61 The choice to include survey-level theological material is a result of space limitations and not significance. In-depth study of each of the theological topics discussed would further the research profile and specific examples will be discussed in the conclusions.
generation of leaders, these cultural descriptions demand some futurist projections to contextualize excellence and mentoring in the new workplace.

The final method of examination includes semi-structured interviews with leaders whom Engstrom directly deposited his leadership DNA through mentoring relationships. These interviews were conducted through face-to-face settings and over the telephone. Interviews were recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy.\(^6\) The content was analyzed as a point of evaluation to determine if Engstrom’s practice validated his writings. Five key themes across the interviews were deduced to better highlight Engstrom’s impact in their lives. The various methods of collecting data on Engstrom, though not comprehensive, are intended to produce a rich analysis of his work.

**Conclusion**

This study is not necessary because there is a lack of literature from an evangelical Christian perspective on leadership principles. In fact, one can find bountiful contributions in recent years that emphasize leadership principles, practices, and a growing number that stress theological axioms of leadership.\(^6\) Furthermore, it is not needed simply because Engstrom helped salvage World Vision through his insistence on best business practices or because he invested his life into a group of men and women who have gone on to be presidents and CEO of Christian organizations, although these

\(^6\)All of the interviewees considered in chap. 5 were phone interviews. The candidates were informed that the interview was being recorded prior to the interview.

accomplishments are quite remarkable. A multitude of good evangelical models of leadership in recent years have delivered an ever-expanding biographical bookshelf of healthy Christian heroes. Instead, this research is necessary to uncover a leadership model that not only produces a body of literature, but also exemplified Christian excellence and mentoring. This dissertation argues, like Engstrom, the Christian leader in the twenty-first century must find a way to make an impact in the accelerated environment of Christian organizations and that they cannot faithfully accomplish this without holding on to both excellence and mentoring.

As the details of this research make clear, it is challenging to overestimate Engstrom’s channels of influence. Yet, Larson writes, “Throughout a lifetime of successful leadership, Ted remains a man of quiet strength and humility.” Both Engstrom’s strength and humility are exhibited as he recounts his own journey in *Reflections on a Pilgrimage*. In this memoir, he summarizes his ministry this way:

> These have been four paths as led by God: religious book publishing, youth evangelism, world mission activities, and doing my own thing in identification with hosts of meaningful Christian enterprises. The pages that follow are simply a chronicle of reflections and observations over these sixty years as I have traveled to

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64 The list of individuals he influenced includes but is not limited to Bob Andringa (CCCU President), John Wallace (Azusa Pacific University, President), Ray Ortland Sr. (Pastor of Lake Avenue Congregational Church), Dean Hirsch (World Vision International, President), James Dobson (Focus on the Family, President), Bill Hybels (Pastor and Founder, Willow Creek Association), Jay Kesler (Taylor University, President), and Timothy Beals (Founder, CEO of Creedo Communications).


66 The list of close friends and colleagues includes but is not limited to Billy Graham, Bill Bright, Chuck Colson, Harold Ockenga, Carl F. H. Henry, Torrey Johnson, Ted and Bernie Zondervan, Chuck Colson, Donald McGavran, James Dobson, Bill Hybels, and Ron Sider. The influence of this short list alone is inestimable for the second half of the twentieth century.

136 countries, met and shared with literally thousands of God’s choice servants (many of who I will identify in this book), participated in scores of international conferences and congresses, shared with innumerable churches all across the globe, and met numerous U.S. presidents and heads of state in several nations.68

Ted Engstrom’s personal reflections, writings, and practice of over sixty years of life experience on the front lines tracking excellence and mentoring garner the time and attention of a new generation. His contribution to Christian leadership is clearly displayed as this dissertation examines his advice on leading with compassion and integrity in the manner of a servant. Furthermore, the personal testimonies from those in significant leadership roles across the evangelical community attest to his personal investment in the lives of others. These insights mounted on the foundation of a biblical and theological view of work provides a path to follow for the next generation.

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68Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 14.
CHAPTER 2
THE MAN IN THE ARENA:
THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF TED ENGSTROM

“Much of what I am today as a Christ-follower in leadership is because of his transparency, truth telling, and candor.”

- Jon R. Wallace, President Azusa Pacific University

Theodore Roosevelt said,

The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at best, if he wins, knows the thrill of high achievement, and if he fails, at least fails daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

It was this heroic quote from Theodore Roosevelt’s that Engstrom’s dearest friends chose to honor him (“Dr. Ted”) for his energetic life and ministry. Engstrom labored for six decades and embodied the principles he penned, which was evident to those he worked alongside and resulted in a host of platitudes and awards. The goal of this chapter is to provide a context for Engstrom’s life and writings. In so doing, this

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1As quoted in Ted Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage: Six Decades of Service (Sisters, OR: Loyal, 1999), dust jacket.


3Ibid. Owen’s work records the significant personal and professional highlights of Engstrom’s first four and a half decades of ministry.

4It is possible to overestimate the importance of any individual, thus the superlatives due to Engstrom go largely unstated besides those, like this one, that are thrust upon him in print by his peers. Furthermore, a concise biographical sketch of this nature is bound to leave out critical moments or emphasize something that is not to scale. The driving motive of this account is not to provide an exhaustive memoir, but rather to demonstrate the key moments in Engstrom’s life alongside some of the key moments in twentieth-century evangelicalism. A full argument detailing Engstrom’s place in American evangelicalism is beyond the scope of this chapter.
chapter will signal the underlying credibility attached to his writings on excellence and mentoring, which will be examined in chapters 3 and 4.

To begin, Engstrom’s efforts will be framed inside of the broader context of American evangelical Christianity—specifically the last six decades of the twentieth century. The introduction seeks to provide the narrative that helps to later demonstrate that Engstrom was a man of his day. Next, the immediate context of each decade of his ministry will be mentioned, with the most significant attention given to the formative days of his early career and his extended service at World Vision. The contextualization of Engstrom’s life inside the currents of evangelicalism helps clarify the values he affirms, the motivations he needs during personal trials, and the external forces that give rise to the subjects of his publications. In addition to Engstrom’s biography and context, chapter two will give brief attention to major themes across his writings. Finally, this chapter concludes by recognizing commendations to Engstrom that set the stage for the analysis of excellence and mentoring later in the dissertation.

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5 This discussion is a historically truncated examination of evangelicalism. Any substantial analysis of this movement should include factors from the last three centuries, if not all the way back to the Reformation. For an exhaustive overview, including over three hundred years of history told from a multi-national perspective, see the five-volume series Mark Noll and David Bebbington, eds., *A History of Evangelicalism: People, Movements and Ideas in the English-Speaking World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic).

6 Greg Thornbury has been influential in my own thinking on this matter. For example, in his discussion on understanding Friedrich Nietzsche, he writes, “The more I read the history of philosophy and theology, the more I become convinced that biography has a disproportionate—but all too often unacknowledged—effect on an individual's worldview” (Gregory Thornbury, “When Biography Shapes Theology,” accessed Jan 12, 2015, http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/when-biography-shapes-theology).

7 The organization of this aspect of chap. 2 follows the organization of Engstrom’s autobiography, which is delineated by decade and not place of employment.
An Introduction to American Evangelicalism: The Context of Ted Engstrom’s Life Work

American evangelicalism continues to have an indeterminate identity. The history of the movement, particularly during Engstrom’s lifetime, is at the same time multifarious and remarkable. In the longer history of evangelicalism, general agreement exists around David Bebbington’s description of four qualities of Evangelicalism that “have been the special marks of Evangelicalism religion.” These qualities include: “conversionism, the belief that lives need to be changed; activism, the expression of the gospel in effort; biblicism, a particular regard for the Bible; and what may be called crucicentrism, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Together they form a quadrilateral of priorities that is the basis of Evangelicalism.” During Engstrom’s day, these four qualities continued, but were eclipsed by reactions to fundamentalism including: the challenge to anti-intellectualism, the challenge to anti-social action, and the challenge to anti-ecumenism. Unlike the current state of affairs, Bebbington argues that evangelicalism carries a more cohesive heritage. When Engstrom was beginning his

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9David W. Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730’s to the 1980’s (London: Routledge, 2002), 2. Sweeney suggests that Alister McGrath provides the “best-known answer” among theologians. Sweeney provides a summary of McGrath’s “cluster of six controlling convictions, each of which is regarded as being true, of vital importance and grounded in Scripture” (Douglas Sweeney, The American Evangelical Story [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005], 18).

10Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, 2-3.


12Bebbington argues, “There can be no doubt the groups with these characteristics (the quadrilateral) on both sides of the Atlantic are outgrowths of a single movement (the Evangelical movement of the eighteenth century)” (David W. Bebbington, “British and American Evangelicalism Since
ministry, the word “evangelical” was not yet in vogue, but it would serve as the banner term for both his personal constituency and the organizations where he was employed. While the theological distinctives and emphases of evangelicalism are still debatable, the scope of the movement is more defined.

Following the arduous conditions of two World Wars and the Great Depression, the second half of the twentieth century experienced remarkable expansion in the United States as a result of the new post-war reality. New societal realities provided the ideal conditions for the global aspirations of evangelical leaders. The result of expansion took evangelicals beyond the boarders of America, which meant, “the story of evangelical Christianity became more diverse in terms of geographical distribution, cultural orientation and theological emphasis than it had been in any previous era since the origins of the evangelical movement in the early eighteenth century.” Undoubtedly, the long-standing evangelical commitment to obey the Great Commission took American

13 Bebbington suggests that “the very word ‘evangelical’ had gone out of fashion, crushed between the upper and nether millstones of modernism and fundamentalism” (ibid., 367).


16 Carpenter suggests, “Just when American political leaders and the secular press were becoming more attentive to the nation’s new role as a world power, fundamentalists and other evangelicals were developing a corresponding outlook, which the emerging young leaders were calling a ‘world vision.’” He continues, “It is hard to overstate the war’s role in reviving the idea of ‘global conquest’ among evangelical missions promoters.” Joel Carpenter, Revive Us Again (New York: Oxford, 1997), 177-78.

missionaries around the globe.\textsuperscript{18} These efforts correspond to the larger trends of “globalization” that transpired in the final decades of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{19} In a 2014 publication, Mark Noll notes that evangelicalism must now be understood in the global context if for no other reason than the statistical reality that the number of evangelicals in Africa, Latin America and Asia exceeds the total in Europe and North America combined.\textsuperscript{20} But evangelicals should likewise be considered global because of the sheer numerical influence. Noll writes, “At the start of the twenty-first century, evangelical Christianity constituted the second largest worldwide grouping of Christian believers.”\textsuperscript{21} But the global growth of evangelicalism is only part of the story of American evangelicalism. The postwar evangelical movement also experienced rapid growth among parachurch ministries.\textsuperscript{22} The entrepreneurial spirit in America, which was largely enabled by postwar economic surplus, got traction in new evangelical organizations as well.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{18} Rosell contends, “Since its beginnings in the Great Awakening, nothing has characterized American evangelicalism quite so clearly as its passionate commitment to spread the Christian gospel around the world” (Rosell, \textit{The Surprising Work of God}, 213).

\textsuperscript{19} Lewis notes the surprising reality, “The word \textit{global} is probably four hundred years old. The words \textit{globalization}, \textit{globalize}, and \textit{globalizing} were first used in English about 1960 and only became commonplace in the 1980’s.” Furthermore, Lewis says, “Many globalization theorists are virtually silent about the role of religion in globalization” (Donald M. Lewis, “Globalization, Religion, and Evangelicalism,” in \textit{Global Evangelicalism: Theology, History and Culture in Regional Perspective}, ed. Donald Lewis and Richard Pierard [Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014], 60-61, 67).


\textsuperscript{21} By comparison, Noll shares that “only the Roman Catholic church enjoys more adherents in today’s world Christianity than the evangelical churches” (Ibid., 17).

\textsuperscript{22} Carpenter, \textit{Revive Us Again}, 233.

\textsuperscript{23} Balmer explains one contributor to the rising popularity of evangelical groups: “Just as evangelicals had jumped on radio as a means of spreading their message in the 1920’s, so, too, they saw the potential for television, especially when coupled with increasingly sophisticated and computerized direct-
Many of these ministries were interdenominational and rallied around common beliefs instead of dividing beliefs for the sake of attracting and impacting as sizeable of a following as possible.  

24 These organizations blossomed faster than the infrastructure could be secured because they “took chances for God.”  

25 This is particularly applicable to Engstrom’s biography. New evangelical leaders also established simple patterns of organizational leadership.  

26 One of the patterns of behavior that developed into a core value for Engstrom (and others) was training up leaders through mentoring. Leadership, and discipleship for that matter, is often better “caught than taught,” and parachurch organizations caught and spread their ideas through relationships that produced lively evangelical subcultures.  

27 These affinity-based, autonomous organizations carried the innate challenge of garnering a collective identity. George Marsden observes,


“Evangelicalism was thriving more than ever and awareness of it was reentering the national consciousness . . . . As evangelicals gained some of the national prestige they had once only dreamed of, the neo-evangelical leaders could no longer agree among themselves as to what an evangelical was.”

While a type of central nervous system of leadership never formally materialized, there remained pockets of leadership that led their perspective tribes through various challenges, and Engstrom elegantly navigated his way through the power structures.

Still another evolving aspect of American evangelicalism was the priority of theological commonality over denominational distinctives. Arguably, the reaction to fundamentalism’s anti-intellectual posture, especially as associated with denominations during the Scope’s trial, helped forge doctrinal consensus. David Thompson summarizes the situation in America this way: “In the first half of the twentieth century, evangelicalism had been fragmented, often acrimoniously. In the second half, a greater


29 Noll suggests, “The impression that a well unified, coherent evangelicalism had returned—resembling in influence the Protestant revivalism of the nineteenth century—was, however, a mirage. It was a mirage, nonetheless, with great staying power, largely because of the impact of Billy Graham” (Noll, American Evangelical Christianity, 18).

30 Noll examines the convergence and divergence of doctrinal beliefs in evangelicalism as he takes a swath of evangelical denominations, parachurch organizations, and one “international movement.” He highlights the central role of the Bible in each statement of faith and concludes, “The convergence turns out to be surprisingly substantial.” Ibid., 59.

31 In light of the anti-intellectual criticisms, Worthen observes, “Evangelicalism is a far more thoughtful and diverse world than most critics—and even most evangelicals themselves—usually realize. Yet it does host a potent strain of anti-intellectualism, a pattern of hostility and ambivalence toward the standards of tolerance, logic, and evidence by which most secular thinkers in the West have agreed to abide.” Molly Worthen, Apostles of Reason (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2.
One of the key factors in the expansion of the evangelical movement came from the desire to move beyond the controversies that dominated the first half of the century. Wilbert Shenk explains,

> By the 1940s evangelical leaders were increasingly troubled by the fact that fundamentalism had produced a reductionist understanding of the gospel. The pressure to challenge the modernist-fundamentalist dichotomy came from three sources: attempts to read the Scriptures more faithfully, the challenge of responding to tragic human need as the result of war and natural disasters, and international mission conferences.33

As a result, new coalitions and celebrity evangelicals emerged that strategically gave attention to each of the challenges Shenk outlines, yet they did so with great charity.

The theological identity, swelling of the population, globalization, and common causes, among other variables, are significant to the context in which Engstrom surfaced as a national leader. Ted Engstrom is one of the discreet giants of the evangelical subculture who invested his life into others while serving at Taylor University, Zondervan Publishing House, Youth for Christ, and World Vision International. Engstrom’s life was a confluence of leadership opportunities and relationships that continue to this day through his writings, mentoring legacy, and board leadership. One sociologist who investigated the social networks in the last half century of the evangelical world lists Engstrom among a small number of elites in the “inner circle” of the American Evangelical leadership.34 The following account will examine

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Engstrom’s developing network of relationships alongside his increasing roles of responsibility.

**Ted Engstrom’s Life and Ministry within American Evangelicalism**

Engstrom begins his autobiography with a summary of four career paths that God led him down: religious book publishing, youth evangelism, world mission activities, and “doing my own thing in identification with hosts of meaningful Christian enterprises.”

Prior to his formal career, Engstrom completed a journalism degree and was eager to get to work. After graduating from Taylor University—where Engstrom was converted and introduced to his future wife, Dorothy—he played a short stint in semipro baseball to earn some money as he searched for a job. He secured a job as an editorial assistant for Highley Publishing Company, but quickly transitioned to become the assistant to Dr. Robert Lee Stuart, president of Taylor University. While there, he started the university’s first public relations department, a skill that would prove beneficial to Engstrom in every step of his ministry. Even with minimal pay in the recovering economic times of 1939, his position at Taylor afforded him the opportunity to marry the pretty young college girl who had repeatedly told him they could not even

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37 Owen describes Engstrom’s fascination with printing and publishing from an early age. While in high school, he covered sports news and worked in a print shop. He saved every penny before graduating, and then purchased his own equipment and opened his own printing press in the basement coal room of his parents home. Engstrom’s recalls that from the moment he entered that little shop, he said, “I realized I had printer’s ink in my blood” (ibid., 17-18).

38 Ibid., 31.
date until he became a Christian.\textsuperscript{39} Ted and Dorothy were happily married, and he served
at their alma mater until the prospect arrived to work for two brothers, Pat and Bernie
Zondervan, who started a fledgling publishing house and were looking for a book
editor.\textsuperscript{40}

Engstrom identifies this time period as the context in which he began his
career.\textsuperscript{41} Life in America during the 1940’s is captured well by George Marsden in the
1997 Fuller Seminary publication. Engstrom borrows Marsden description in his
autobiography:

Travel by train was much more common than by plane. Interstate highways were
two lanes and most cars were black. The South was solidly Democratic, not quite
sure it wanted to be in the Union, and not air-conditioned. Most Americans took
radical segregation for granted and enjoyed laughing at \textit{Amos and Andy}. The “better”
neighborhoods and country clubs banned Jews as a matter of course. Asian-
Americans were exotic. A woman in a leading profession was novelty . . . . They
(American Evangelicals) found themselves still very much shaped by the culture of
19\textsuperscript{th}-century revivalism. They were set apart by prohibitions of the classic vices of
the bar room and the city: drinking, smoking, dancing, card playing and theatre or
movie attendance. They had built in their own subculture a revival, where they sang
the gospel of Ira Sankey, or Fanny J. Crosby, and learned of their preeminent duty
to witness. They had also been shaped by fundamentalism. They knew their
dispensation charts, and they opposed Protestant “modernism.” Like most
Americans they feared Communism and valued American Freedom.\textsuperscript{42}

In 1940, Pat and Bernie Zondervan hired Engstrom to serve as a book editor—
a position that only paid him $30 a week, but introduced him to key influencers of the

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\textsuperscript{39} Owen, \textit{Ted Engstrom}, 22-27.
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\textsuperscript{40} Ruark describes the interview: “In Ted’s first meeting with Pat and Bernie, they gathered
around an old pot-bellied stove in the basement of the retail bookstore on Franklin Street. This was the
‘conference room.’ Every other part of the building was so crowded that when they wanted to get away for
an interview or to talk business, they went to the basement, which was nicely warmed by the coal-burning
stove in winter and had a damp coolness in summer” (James E. Ruark, \textit{The House of Zondervan:}
\textit{Celebrating 75 Years} [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011], 42).
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\textsuperscript{41} Engstrom, \textit{Reflections on a Pilgrimage}, 22.
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\textsuperscript{42} George Marsden, “Theology, News & Notes,” \textit{Fuller Seminary Magazine}, October 1997, as
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Evangelical movement. Engstrom was “supremely happy” and thrived at Zondervan both professionally and relationally. Pearl Harbor disrupted the world in 1941 and the result for Engstrom was a two-year tour in which he continued to write articles to encourage the soldiers and military families. Engstrom recounts, “This interlude in my publishing career was certainly ordained of God for it gave me a fresh desire to give my life to lay evangelism and instilled in me convictions about the importance of “marketplace” Christians sharing their faith.” Looking back, it is clear that Engstrom’s early days of publishing provided the skills, relationships, and instincts that propelled him to be such a prolific author.

Roark tells the history of Zondervan Publishing and recalls that by the time Engstrom left the company, he “left big shoes to fill.” Correspondingly, Zondervan prepared Engstrom for his next role. One demonstrable example of his preparation is evidenced in the publication of numerous missionary biographies.

Engstrom provides a list of examples who were “some of God’s giants who had books published by Zondervan with whom I worked as editor.” He includes H. A. Ironside (Moody Memorial Church, pastor), Robert G. Lee (Bellevue Baptist Church, pastor), William Culbertson (Moody Bible Institute, president), A. C. Gaebelein (Our Hope, magazine editor), William Ward Ayer (Calvary Baptist Church-NYC, pastor), and Carl F. H. Henry (Fuller Theological Seminary, faculty). See Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 22-23.

One uncertain aspect to his appointment at Zondervan was the dissimilar theological perspective. The Zondervan brothers, like most working from Grand Rapids, were clearly Calvinistic. Engstrom on the other hand, came from a Wesleyan background and was never convinced of Calvinistic conclusions. Owen notes, “The Zondervans had considered Ted’s Wesleyan viewpoint and believed his theological input would provide a fresh point of view” (Owen, Ted Engstrom, 34-35). The Engstroms remained lifetime friends with the Zondervans. Engstrom was even asked by Pat’s wife, Mary, to conduct Pat’s memorial service in 1993. See Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 157.

Owen, Ted Engstrom, 26.

Ruark, The House of Zondervan, 55.

Engstrom retold the stories of such missionaries as J. Hudson Taylor in China, William Carey in India, Mary Slesser of the Celebes, the martyred John and Betty Stam in China, and Adonirom Judson in Burma. See Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 27.
knowledge of these heroic Christian examples expanded the horizons of his own dreams and prepared him for a life of international evangelistic outreach. Roark describes, “In no small way, he had been well prepared for his new challenge because of his diverse roles in eleven years at Zondervan: head of the editorial, advertising, promotion, and production departments and for a time editor-in-chief of *Christian Digest.*” Zondervan needed Engstrom, but Engstrom also needed Zondervan.

In his reflections on six decades of leadership, Engstrom understood the 1940s to be “the most dynamic and significant decade of the 20th century for the church of Jesus Christ.” In support of Engstrom’s supposition, one can point to the 1940s as the birth of the “neo-evangelical” movement. Like Engstrom, Harold Ockenga, pastor of the influential Park Street Church and the first president of Fuller Theological Seminary, recognized the significance of the historical moment at the end of the 1940s and particularly the role of American evangelicalism within this moment. Ockenga believed the burden of reconstruction of the West rested with America. Further, he believed,

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49Engstrom, *Reflections on a Pilgrimage*, 19. Throughout *Reflections on a Pilgrimage*, Engstrom gives considerable attention to the cultural circumstances circling his life—the following section will divert briefly from Engstrom to further establish the context of his life.

50Strachan notes that Harold Ockenga coined the term “neo-evangelical” in 1947 in his first Fuller Theological Seminary convocation address. He explains that this new term “refers to the post-fundamentalist, post-war expression of evangelical Christianity that concentrated on a positive, more ecumenical doctrinal and social stance” (Owen Strachan, “Reenchanting the Evangelical Mind: Park Street Church’s Harold Ockenga, The Boston Scholars, and the Mid-Century Intellectual Surge” (Ph.D. diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2011), 3).

51In 1947, Ockenga’s inaugural address at Fuller Theological Seminary bore evidence of his view. Interestingly, Fuller “impounded” Ockenga’s address. Nelson does not identify Fuller’s reasoning, but explains that it was E. J. Carnell who gave the orders that copies of the address not be disseminated. See Rudolf Nelson, *The Making and Unmaking of an Evangelical Mind: The Case of Edward Carnell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 237.

“Evangelical Christianity then was truly the last hope for the world since it was the only hope for America.” Engstrom agreed. He recounts, “Since my early remembrances during the depression years and the sacrificial and momentous World War II years, evangelicals have shared a sense of destiny and call to reach their generation with the Gospel of Christ and communicate His love in practical ways.” Ockenga’s leadership at Fuller Theological Seminary helped propel the new seminary into the forefront of the theological conversations in American evangelicalism and established a seminary that would influence Engstrom directly over the coming decades.

The optimism among evangelical leadership in the 1940s resulted not only in allied sentiment, but also in the addition of structural organizations like Young Life (1941), National Association of Evangelicals (1943), Youth for Christ (1944), National Religious Broadcasters (1944), Fuller Theological Seminary (1947), and

53Ibid.

54Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 183.

55The headquarters of World Vision are only a short drive from Fuller Theological Seminary, explaining Engstrom’s close relationship with Fuller evangelism professor, Carlton Booth, and later seminary dean, Donald McGavern. Also, Engstrom attended church with many faculty members and served as Chairman of the Board of Advisors for the Institute of Christian Organization Development at Fuller Seminary. See Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 84, 153.

56J. Elwin Wright and Harold Ockenga convened a conference in 1942 that led to the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). In 1943, Engstrom represented Zondervan as one of approximately 350 invited delegates at the second conference in Chicago. He recounts, “Delegates gathered from across the country, representing thirty-four denominations, and were wonderfully bonded together in the task of uniting evangelicals nationwide . . . . I will never forget the experience of being with strong, godly personalities facing enormous challenges with a determination to reach a confused, searching nation with the Gospel of Christ” (Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 32-33).

57Carpenter edited a collection of the essential publications surrounding the founding of Youth for Christ, including the basic strategy seen in Torrey Johnson and Robert Cook, Reaching Youth for Christ (Chicago: Moody, 1944) and the essence of the movement’s style portrayed by Melvin Larson, Youth for Christ: Twentieth Century Wonder (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1947). Engstrom would have served as an editor on Larson’s project and the two of them later served together at Youth for Christ, where Larson became the organization’s chief publicist. See Joel Carpenter, ed., The Youth for Christ Movement and Its Pioneers (New York: Garland, 1998).
Evangelical Theological Society (1949). Evangelical expansion was alive and well, for example, The National Association of Evangelicals had grown to over one million members from thirty different denominations within only a few years. In 1947, Torrey Johnson, who was the first president of Youth for Christ, had a vision for what became the World Congress on Evangelism held in Switzerland in 1948. Engstrom, who was a part of the planning and was tasked with handling the press relations and daily news releases, called this event a defining moment in his life. He remarks, “I was challenged with and burdened by the need for world evangelization. It was at that conference that I committed my life to the task of evangelization, leaving smaller ambitions behind.”

Amid the promising structures and personalities of the 1940s appeared the impressive young preacher and first full-time employee of the Youth for Christ movement, Billy Graham. While editorial director at Zondervan Publishing, Engstrom volunteered as the crusade director at the first citywide Billy Graham Crusade in Grand

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58Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 29-32. Additionally, I was aided in this section by the recent research of John Harder, “‘Heal Their Land’: Evangelical Political Theology from the Great Awakening to the Moral Majority” (Ph.D. diss., University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2014), 56-96.


60Rosell remarks, “The gathering, held in Beatenberg, Switzerland, from August 10 through 22 of 1948, was certainly one of the most important youth gatherings of its kind ever to have been held. The list of delegates, representing forty-six nations, includes many key leaders of twentieth century evangelicalism” (Rosell, The Surprising Work of God, 124).

61It is readily agreed that Engstrom was first gifted as administrator and manager. Torrey Johnson describes, “Ted Engstrom, for instance, I would consider to have been a businessman although he was working for a Christian publishing house at the time in Grand Rapids. He was working for the Zondervan Corporation in the business end of it particularly. And I wouldn't have considered him a preacher per se” (Johnson, “Interview of Torrey Maynard Johnson by Robert Shuster, August 14, 1985.”)

62Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 35.

63Noll, American Evangelical Christianity, 45.
Graham and Engstrom became warm, personal friends—a relationship that endured throughout their respective ministries. In Harold Myra and Marshall Shelley’s study of Graham’s leadership secrets, they record Engstrom’s account of these early days of youth evangelism meetings. Engstrom told them, “In 1948 he (Graham) came to our city to raise funds for me to go and participate in the Youth for Christ World Congress on Evangelism. Billy was willing to personally make sure the vision was resourced.”\(^6^5\) As Graham’s influence spread, Smidt explains, “Graham helped to foster “a grass-roots ecumenism” that regarded denominational divisions as irrelevant rather than pernicious. Thus, whether it was due to the perceived moral decline of American culture or to Graham’s fostering of a Christian fellowship that transcended confessional boundaries, distinctions between fundamentalists and neo-evangelicals declined in importance.”\(^6^6\)

The growth of evangelicalism in the middle of the twentieth century continued into the 1950s, but some of the fault lines emerged as well. First, by way of growth, the institutional aspect of the movement continued to generate new organizations, like World

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\(^6^4\)Engstrom, *Reflections on a Pilgrimage*, 28. Engstrom retells the unforgettable experience that the first city-wide campaign (later to be called crusades) was for a young journalist like himself. Later, he shares, “In those days, no ministry made a greater impact upon me than that of Youth for Christ. It soon became synonymous with lively Saturday nights—for the glory of God!” (ibid., 33).


\(^6^7\)Another example of Engstrom’s unpronounced ecumenism was his participation in the first gathering of the 1948 World Council of Churches at “the famed Concert Gebau Hall” in Switzerland. This assembly was shortly after the war, and Amsterdam still showed the ravages of WWII bombings. See Engstrom, *Reflections on a Pilgrimage*, 36.
Vision (1950) and Fellowship of Christian Athletes (1954).\textsuperscript{68} Billy Graham, who was becoming the “archetypal neo-evangelical,” gained national and international audiences that spawned evangelical energy.\textsuperscript{69} Graham desired to see a national publication that would, in his own words, “plant the evangelical flag in the middle of the road, taking the conservative theological position but a definite liberal approach to social problems. It would combine the best in fundamentalism without compromising theologically.”\textsuperscript{70}

*Christianity Today* was founded in 1956, and provided the evangelical movement with a mouthpiece that competed and even surpassed the reach of the established *Christian Century*.\textsuperscript{71} Another evangelical luminary of the 1950s, Bill Bright, left a successful business career to establish an evangelistic ministry on college campuses.\textsuperscript{72}

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\item \textsuperscript{68}World Vision will be treated in more detail later in the discussion when it intersects more directly with Engstrom. Concerning the global expansion mentioned in the introduction, Engstrom comments, “The 1950’s marked an unprecedented surge in the number of North American missionaries stationed worldwide. The missionary population nearly doubled form 15,000 in 1951 to 27,000 by 1955” (ibid., 53).
\item \textsuperscript{70}Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 158. I first saw this quotation of Billy Graham in Smith, *American Evangelicalism*, 12. Marsden explains that when Carl Henry was first proposed by Harold Lindsell to serve as the inaugural editor of *Christianity Today*, Graham feared that Henry might be too conservative, specifically on the implications for inerrancy and science/politics. See Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 158-61.
\item \textsuperscript{71}Henry reports the impressive launch of the periodical: “At the May 28 Board meeting I reported that we were two-thirds of the way through the initial year of publication and had already surpassed the paid circulation of such long-established periodicals as the *Christian Century* and *Eternity*” (Carl F. H. Henry, *Confessions of a Theologian* [Waco, TX: Word, 1986], 173).
\item \textsuperscript{72}John Turner, an outsider to the ministry, sets out to provide a fair presentation of Crusade’s founder by disclosing the good and the bad. He introduces Bright as follows: “Bright was one of the most influential evangelical power brokers of the late twentieth century, able to mobilize large coalitions of conservative Christians for both evangelistic and partisan ends. He recruited an army of evangelists who gathered donations from increasingly affluent supporters and aggressively marketed the evangelical message in the United States and around the world” (John Turner, *Bill Bright and Campus Crusade for Christ: The Renewal of Evangelicalism in Postwar America* [Winston-Salem, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008], 1-2). For a more honorific biography of Bright, see Michael Richardson, *Amazing Faith: One Man Who Spent His Life Taking God at His Word* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook, 2000).
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remembers the highlight of spending several days with his beloved friend, Bill Bright, during the early years of Campus Crusade:

It was a memorable and defining moment in discerning God’s call on my life. Bill shared his dream of “world evangelization in our generation” with his prime emphasis at that time on college campuses. I shared with him my vision and dream of reaching a generation of high school teenagers with the Gospel. As we prayed together, jointly strategized and compared notes, it was for me one of those key benchmark encounters which cement friendships and determine directions.73

In the same year that Bright founded Campus Crusade, Engstrom reluctantly accepted an offer from Bob Cook to join the work of Youth for Christ.74 Though Engstrom would continue to be personally involved in publishing and writing editorials, his primary energies shifted to organizing and promoting evangelistic events and programs. In Revive Us Again, Joel Carpenter sheds light on the evangelistic efforts of Engstrom and his companions. He writes, “The fundamentalist movement had made a major comeback, and its leaders made this recovery possible through some amazing feats of religious creativity and imagination. They turned failure into vindication, marginality into chosenness, survival into an opportunity for expansion, and a religious depression into a prelude for revival.”75 Carpenter recounts Engstrom’s role at Youth For Christ as one such display of creativity: “Another key to successful revivalism, the Youth for Christ leaders believed, was good publicity. They created mountains of slickly produced advertisements and press releases, hand cards, mailing cards, posters and tracts. A number of them—Ted Engstrom of Grand Rapids, for example—had worked in printing, publishing or advertising.” He goes on to approximate the influence of the blossoming

73Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 51.
74Ibid., 54.
75Carpenter, Revive Us Again, 233.
organization: “Youth for Christ’s leaders could only guess its scope at the time, but their estimates ran to 300-400 rallies with a weekly attendance of 300,000-400,000. Youth for Christ had gone international as well, establishing new rallies, or ‘beachheads,’ among American military men and women in Paris, London, Glasgow, Frankfurt, Honolulu, Havana, Manila, and Peking.” Engstrom was directly in the middle of the expanding work and relished the travel.

One of the ministry’s promoters who regularly traveled for Youth for Christ was Bob Pierce. Engstrom describes one of Pierce’s life changing trips. He recalls, “As Pierce went to Korea in 1950, he encountered the ravages of war in that nation. He was moved by the suffering of the people and came home and organized scores of World Vision rallies across the U.S. and Canada to enlist support. This was the beginning of World Vision, Inc.” Little did Engstrom know at the time, but Pierce’s trip to Korea would eventually alter the course of his own life as well. Moreover, Shenk marks Pierce’s trip during the Korean War as “a crucial turning point in evangelical awareness.” Like Pierce and World Vision, Shenk explains that “numerous other evangelical agencies were established during this period dedicated to serving children, promoting community development, medical services and educational programs in many countries.” He goes on to explain that while Pierce and others shifted to humanitarian and relief efforts, the

76Ibid., 233.
77Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 69.
79Ibid.
fundamentalists’ criticisms of such programs subsided; however, this does not mean that the growing evangelical movement was free from trouble.  

As mentioned, the 1950s also exposed some of the fault lines of neo-evangelicalism. Marsden determines, “The tensions between the new evangelicals and the strict fundamentalists were mounting toward a major explosion. What long had been treated as differences in emphasis now were leading toward an irreparable breach. The open controversies surfaced at two levels, theological and practical, with the practical forcing the decisive break.”

Graham was central in the controversies, and he was on the offense against his critics, arguing that their “name-calling and mud-slinging” was not only problematic but also preventative of revival. Graham’s aspiration for a middle-of-the-road publication, Christianity Today, quickly involved itself in the disagreements. In January 1957, the magazine published a defense of Graham’s cooperative evangelism and through the labors of Henry, continued to draw distinctions between fundamentalism as a theology and fundamentalism as a temperament.

Grant Wacker discusses Graham’s comments on the eve of the 1957 crusade in New York City: “Graham told the annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals—the venue itself proved highly

80 Chapter 4 will address the latent tension in missiological efforts to meet physical needs while prioritizing spiritual needs.

81 Marsden, Reforming Fundamentalism, 162. Marsden purports, “In 1955 Graham finally repudiated effort to bring his crusade to New York City under strictly fundamentalist auspices and accepted instead an invitation from the Protestant Council of the City of New York to hold a crusade there in 1957. Working with the Protestant Council meant cooperating with a group that was predominantly non-evangelical and even included out-and-out modernists. It also meant sending converts back to their local churches, no matter how liberal those churches might be. Fundamentalist evangelists, such as Jack Wyrtzen, who had led the great New York campaigns of the 1940s, were irate” (ibid.)

82 Ibid., 163.

83 Ibid., 164. Henry also notes the controversy stirred on the “left side” of the magazine. He explains, “The Century saw fit to devalue Graham’s (1957) crusades, and this in turn divided Protestant ecumenists over the imperative of evangelism” (Henry, Confessions of a Theologian, 175).
significant—that the “one badge of Christian discipleship is not orthodoxy, but love. There is far more emphasis on love and unity among God’s people in the New Testament than there is on orthodoxy, as important as that is.” Engstrom sided with Graham and even spent several days with him during the significant New York City crusades that reached approximately two million in person and audiences of ten million-plus by telecast. During this controversy, and others, Engstrom remained focused on executing the task at hand.

In 1957, Engstrom followed Bob Cook as the third president of Youth for Christ. Engstrom records his extensive travels with the organization in his self-reflections: “From the very beginning of my tenure with Youth for Christ, I was privileged to share in literally hundreds of Saturday night YFC rallies, conferences, and various evangelistic events all across the U.S. and Canada. Reflecting back it seems that I was in practically every U.S. metropolis in that twelve-year span, from Portland, Oregon to Portland, Maine, and from Minneapolis to Miami.” In the pages that follow, he lists the following countries as part of his Youth for Christ International responsibilities: Germany, Ecuador, New Zealand, Australia, Hong Kong, Saigon, South Vietnam, Jordan, Israel, Russia, Vienna, and Guam. Although this is not an exhaustive list, it signals the

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86 Engstrom reminisces upon his delight when asked by the board to follow Cook as president. He also comments that “Bob’s care-filled mentoring” during the presidential transition was particularly helpful. Engstrom’s awareness of his need for guidance supports the claim discussed in chapter 4 that leaders need to both mentor and be mentored. See Engstrom, *Reflections on a Pilgrimage*, 67.

87 Ibid., 56.

88 Ibid., 58-65.
international and evangelistic convictions in Engstrom’s heart as well as his capacity to
lead a major organization. As president, Engstrom was also charged with funding and
managing the growing international organization. He recollects, “Keeping on top of the
finances for Youth for Christ International—salaries, mortgage payments, overhead,
etc.—was a constant challenge for us, as with almost all non-profit organizations.”
Engstrom’s natural strengths as an organizer, communicator, and motivator strengthened
the organization under his presidency and resulted in the continued growth of his
personal network.

As president of Youth for Christ, Engstrom moved the ministry’s headquarters
to Wheaton, Illinois, which allowed for more overlap with fellow evangelical leaders. It
also hoisted him into more national stages such as an invitation to sit on the platform the
afternoon President Eisenhower lit the White House Christmas tree and attendance at the
first Presidential Prayer Breakfast (now the National Prayer Breakfast).

Engstrom shared this conviction with Graham, who expressed it this way: “Something
happened which radically changed the entire course of Youth for Christ International. By the grace of God
and under His leadership we leaped the oceans, sped to the islands, spared no money or men to carry the
gospel as far as we could into as many lands as possible” (James Hefley, God Goes to High School [Waco,

Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 60. He tells the story of one of the mid-winter
conferences for donors and supporters that, through prayer, led to a substantial gift from the Pew
Foundation. During his tenure, Youth for Christ found financial assistance from the Lilly Endowment Fund,
the Crowell Trust, and the Kresge Foundation.

Engstrom continued the practice of cultivating vital relationships. On the occasion of his
death, a World Vision media advisory comments that Engstrom’s “scrupulously maintained Rolodex began
filling up with the names of evangelical leaders,” as quoted in “Dr. Ted W. Engstrom, Past World Vision

Engstrom referred to Wheaton as the “Evangelical Vatican.” In addition to the laudable
college, other organizations included Scripture Press Publications, Van Kampen Press, The Evangelical
Ibid., 68.
time at Youth for Christ took him into a new decade, the 1960s, which was filled with national upheaval. He remembers the 1960s leaving both a “legacy of a godless society and a spiritual vacuum” and Martin Luther King’s “positive rebellion against the social injustice of the decade.” King helped continue the overt connection of Christianity and social issues. Later, the 1960s witnessed the assassination of President John F. Kennedy followed by Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy. Randall Balmer concludes,

By the mid-1960’s the younger generation was becoming disillusioned with the war in Vietnam, with the burgeoning “military-industrial complex” of weapons production, with technology itself, and with their parents’ religion, which they saw as tied into everything that was wrong with American society: too big, too impersonal, too authoritative, too unresponsive.

The decade also proved to bring upheaval in Engstrom’s life as he transitioned leadership roles and faced intense challenges.

Early in 1963, Engstrom’s time at Youth for Christ came to an end as he felt he had given all that he could to the ministry. Simultaneously, Bob Pierce at World Vision had been praying and fasting about an open executive role and he sensed the Lord

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94Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 81.

95In his Pulitzer Prize winning work, Garrow records the initial formulation of King’s organized civil rights efforts. For example, he describes, “When well over one hundred persons assembled at Holt Street church, King was ready with some specific program proposals. First, he wanted to change the name of the organization to Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLS), to emphasize that most of its participants and its potential popular base came from the black church. Rustin had tried to dissuade King from the idea, arguing that the new word might discourage nonreligious supporters of civil rights, but King had held firm” (David J. Garrow, Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference [New York: Quill, 1986], 97).


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laid Engstrom’s name on his heart. They ran into each other at the annual Presidential Prayer Breakfast and Pierce asked Engstrom to consider leaving Youth for Christ. Engstrom did not give him an answer at the time, but he did let him know that he had just tendered his resignation to the Youth for Christ board—a reply that caused Pierce to weep with joy. By the summer of 1963, Engstrom started his work at World Vision, the final organization where he was employed in a full time capacity. From 1963 to 1984, Engstrom served as both executive vice president and later president. World Vision embodied three values aligned with prominent American evangelical sentiments and that animated Engstrom: (1) international scope, (2) evangelistic focus, and (3) humanitarian methods.

First, World Vision was a decidedly international operation. Like his days at Youth for Christ, serving at World Vision took him around the world. Pierce, the founder and president, established the pace for international travel with up to ten months on the road a year. His daughter published a telling biography of her father that describes him as possessing what Jack Hayford called “the evangelical syndrome”—the

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97 Engstrom, _Reflections on a Pilgrimage_, 83.

98 Ibid.


100 Engstrom records that during his career he traveled millions of miles in the air and visited a remarkable 136 countries during his ministry. Engstrom, _Reflections on Pilgrimage_, 180.

misconception that a full commitment to God prioritizes ministry over family.\textsuperscript{102}

Engstrom loved to travel and carried the conviction that privileged Americans were obligated to meet needs of other nations, yet he paid careful attention to the trauma in Pierce’s life that resulted from his constant absence from home.\textsuperscript{103} Paul Rees, a vice president at large for World Vision, wrote, “There was something remarkably unpremeditated about our origin. A vision of need in Asia! The passion to act in meeting that need! It was almost as simple as that. No long-range planning. No elaborate mechanisms of administration. Emergency by emergency, crisis by crisis, it was a summons from Christ to act, and act now.”\textsuperscript{104} The need determined the location, which meant World Vision went around the world.

Second, World Vision was unambiguously evangelistic. One highlight in the early years of World Vision was the 1966 the World Congress on Evangelism held in

\textsuperscript{102}Marilee Pierce Dunker, \textit{Man of Vision} (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2005), 136. She further reveals the justification for her father’s priorities: “How many times I heard Daddy quote Luke 14:26, ‘If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children . . . he cannot be my disciple.’ Daddy understood that Scripture to mean that he was obliged to put his ministry and the needs of the world before his own family” (ibid.).

\textsuperscript{103}In light of such abuses, Engstrom exhorts leaders to have a strategy and a time on their calendar to ensure “time with your spouse” and “time with your family” (Ted Engstrom and Ed Dayton, \textit{Strategy for Living} [Glendale, CA: Regal, 1976], 121-22). He also determines, “What good is a leader who steers the organization toward success but runs over friends and loved ones in the process? What good is a leader who propels the group to new heights of achievement and leaves the family behind? These possibilities are all too real. That’s why every arriving leader needs to consider the question, When did you leave your family?” (Timothy Beals, \textit{The Essential Engstrom: Proven Principles of Leadership} [Colorado Springs: Authentic, 2007], 269).

It was a grand event that was co-sponsored by *Christianity Today* magazine and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Graham’s introduction resounds the optimism of Ockenga and Engstrom from the 1948 World Congress. He declares,

> Today, in this year of our Lord, 1966, the world stands once more at the edge of crisis! . . . There is a universal feeling that history is running out, that civilization’s days are numbered, that the problems of the world are insoluble, that hope has reached its frazzled end. That would be true indeed were it not for one thing, and that is this: God plus dedicated men equals revival, renewal, and revolution.

According to Wolffle and Pierard, the 1966 Congress, followed by other globally oriented gatherings, “emphasized the importance of cooperative effort on a worldwide scale to reach men and women for Christ, and they involved non-Western leaders both in the planning process and as major speakers.” World evangelism had gripped Engstrom’s heart early in his life and he remained unwaveringly committed to the Great Commission throughout his years at World Vision. Engstrom’s love for evangelism manifested itself in his persistent preaching. Owen explains, “For a man who was never ordained,

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105 The 1966 Congress is a great snapshot of Engstrom’s blend of business and evangelism. In his address on strategies for the future, entitled “The Use of Technology,” Engstrom asserts, “Too few missionary organizations are engaged in research . . . If the Church does not use modern methods of research and development and disciplined planning, other men with other goals will! Into their computers they will feed sociological, cultural and other factors and with their findings and conclusion reach people for secular, materialistic ideologies and ends” (Ted Engstrom, “The Use of Technology,” in *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, ed. Carl F. H. Henry and W. Stanley Mooneyham (Minneapolis: World Wide, 1967), 1:318.


109 In Engstrom’s first column for the *World Vision* magazine, he expressed, “Although I have visited over fifty mission fields, this is my first trip as part of World Vision. One haunting impression: it is impossible for us who live in North America to grasp the anguish, horrors and emptiness of stomachs and hearts of millions in bleak areas of the Orient” (Engstrom, *Reflections on a Pilgrimage*, 88).
Ted Engstrom has preached and still preaches more than most pastors or evangelists. On an average, he is preaching somewhere every week, often several times during the week. He loves to preach, to open the Word and expound it.”

Thirdly, alongside the priority of evangelism, World Vision pulsed with mercy for humanitarian needs. Pierce signaled the heart of the organization when he scratched these words in his Bible: “Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God.” Pierce’s resolve was immeasurable, but he was not alone in his social awareness. As discussed earlier, the post-war international devastation and the social strife in America in the middle of the twentieth century helped advance the social consciences of evangelicals. “Growing numbers of evangelicals began to feel that their faith led them to a commitment to critique the existing economic and social order, both at home and abroad. Christians, they believed, must strive against all forms of injustice

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110 Owen, Ted Engstrom, 92.

111 For a more thorough investigation of Bob Pierce’s heart for poverty and children in need, see Richard Gehman, Let My Heart Be Broken...With the Things that Break the Heart of God (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960).

112 Pierce’s fervency for relieving the needs of victims of war, poverty, disease and famine eventually resulted in the establishment of a second major relief agency. Pierce established Samaritan’s Purse in 1970 in order “to meet emergency needs in crisis areas through existing evangelical mission agencies and national churches,” accessed January 2015, http://www.samaritanspurse.org/our-ministry/history/. Before his death to leukemia in 1978, he spent considerable time with Franklin Graham. Graham caught both Pierce’s compassion and vision. He became the ministry’s president and CEO, and as his father Billy Graham said, “His sensitivity to the needs of others now is his consuming passion. He is driven not only by humanitarian generosity and a real yearning to see people come to know Christ, but also by a trained and disciplined business sense for getting maximum benefits for people out of limited resources” (Billy Graham, Just As I Am [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997], 712).

suffering, hunger, and oppression,” writes Gonzalez. Engstrom certainly resonated with these convictions and even helped carry the banner for World Vision after Pierce transitioned out of the presidency. He later authored a treatise on missions that highlighted the physical and spiritual needs of the world population that was outstripping the growth of mission efforts. He charged,

In an age that gropes like a reeling drunk man obsessed with despair, we need to make it plain that we Christians have the unique and satisfying answer for our world. In light of the heavy weight and problems of humanity in our waiting world, Christians must continue to live, work, feel, hope, and pray in the midst of widely ranging conditions. To this end this book is dedicated, to encourage us to carry on the program that God initiated to redeem man from himself and the bondage of sin that brings sure ruin and final death. Our world awaits!

Furthermore, Engstrom championed a model of leadership that was copasetic with humanitarian efforts. In Compassionate Leadership, he describes the portrait of a compassionate leader as follows:

The kind of servant leadership to which our Lord has called us is unnatural—a paradoxical style . . . . Shortly before His death, our Lord gave us the following three principles (three non-negotiable commands) for compassionate leadership that is lived out through charitable service: 1) To become great, you must be a servant . . . . 2) To be first, you must be a servant . . . . 3) To be first, we must follow the example of Jesus.

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115 Engstrom writes, “Two elements combined make a carpet or tapestry strong: warp and woof. Each has its own function. Neither can survive without the other. Likewise, in coming to an understanding of the explosive issues relating to world hunger there are also two elements which must be interlinked or we risk presenting little more than half-truths. These two components are the irrefutable facts of hunger and the changeless truth of the gospel” (Ted Engstrom and Robert Larson, Hunger in the Heart of God [Ann Arbor, MI: Vine, 1989], 7).
Another example from Engstrom’s writings shows up in *The Making of a Mentor*, he argues, “A servant leader does not insist on his own way or demand recognition but is teachable and reliant on God.” It is a theme that permeates his instruction to Christian leaders and fueled World Vision’s expanding relief work around the world. Nevertheless, Engstrom’s theories of leadership were forged in the crucible of experience in his early days at the organization.

As mentioned earlier, the upheaval in America during the 1960’s reflected similar turmoil in Engstrom’s life. The achievements of World Vision were almost derailed due to financial issues the organization faced. Owen writes,

> When Ted came to World Vision, the board told him, ‘One of your first tasks is to look over the whole picture and give us some guidance.’ Before he had finished the investigation, he learned that World Vision was nearly one half million dollars in debt and more than 120 days behind on some ‘current’ bills. Suddenly Ted was faced with the fact that he had assumed a leadership position in an organization that was literally bankrupt.

Engstrom’s response was to lead the staff in regular prayer meetings, a lesson he learned from the financial predicaments at Youth for Christ. Pierce was granted a one year sabbatical after some difficult financial decisions were made, including the termination of his beloved but costly radio programs. The burdens fell on Engstrom and almost overwhelmed him on multiple occasions. In the next several years, following a year sabbatical, Pierce resigned from World Vision and the board searched for two years

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119 Owen, *Ted Engstrom*, 77. Later, Owen describes World Vision at the time of Engstrom’s arrival as “sinking rapidly in the seemingly inextricable sticky, clinging mud of insolvency. It was already axle-deep, and going deeper” (ibid., 80).

120 Owen recounts an episode where Engstrom called the board chairman, Dick Halverson, and professed, “I can’t handle it any longer. I’ve made up my mind. I’m going to resign.” As Halverson saw it, “You’ve got to stay, I’m insisting, because the organization will not survive if you don’t stay” (ibid., 81).
before locating Stanley Mooneyham, a former member of Billy Graham’s team, to serve as the second president from 1969-1982.\textsuperscript{121}

With Mooneyham as president, World Vision internationalized its operations and initiated publicity programs through new media outlets.\textsuperscript{122} Consequently, the ministry greatly expanded its reach and resources throughout the 1970s. The new ventures also opened up more national opportunities for World Vision and Engstrom, including appearances from Bob Hope, Julie Andrews, and then President Gerald Ford.\textsuperscript{123} The continued numerical expansion of evangelicals widened the base for donors and sponsors. Evangelical influence was most noteworthy at the election of America’s 39\textsuperscript{th} President, Jimmy Carter. Balmer writes, “In large measure because of Carter’s self-description as a evangelical Christian, Newsweek magazine declared 1976 ‘the year of the evangelical,’ drawing attention to a movement that encompassed somewhere between 25 and 46 percent of the United States population, depending on the poll.”\textsuperscript{124} By the time Mooneyham retired in 1982, World Vision’s work touched the lives of 8.6 million people, including 300,000 sponsored children through 2,993 projects in more than 30 countries.\textsuperscript{125} Engstrom, who was nearly a twenty-year veteran with World Vision at the

\textsuperscript{121}Owen explains that in “an admirable, selfless act,” Engstrom refused to accept the board’s request to serve as president to avoid the appearance that he had forced Pierce out of his leadership role. See Owen, Ted Engstrom, 79-84.

\textsuperscript{122}Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 111-16.


\textsuperscript{124}Balmer, “Religion in Twentieth-Century America,” 417. Balmer continues to explain that the true significance was not that an evangelical was running for President, but that for the first time several decades, evangelicals were participating in the political process.

time of Mooneyham’s retirement, assumed the presidency “with a great deal of fear and trepidation!” Leading the organization he came to love so dearly was highly rewarding. He exercised his gifts of management and discernment to move the ministry forward, a task he remained committed to as president emeritus after his own retirement a few years later.

To be sure, Engstrom’s experiences with financial disaster at Youth for Christ and more fully at World Vision correspond to his emphasis on management and holistic organizational excellence. These events shaped his legacy. Long days of anxiety about meeting payroll and staff memos calling for all-night prayer meetings characterized Engstrom’s action-oriented leadership. In the end, Engstrom clearly understood God to have heard the prayers of his team and looked on favor on their efforts. It is difficult to overestimate the role Engstrom played throughout this season in World Vision’s work. In fact, following his death at the age of 90, World Vision released this statement about Engstrom: “Dr. Engstrom was a giant in American evangelical circles for more than half a century. As executive vice president and later president and chief executive officer of World Vision, he helped turn a small Christian agency focused on war orphans into one of the world’s largest and most extensive relief and development organizations.”

126 Like Pierce, Mooneyhan’s personal life did not receive the same attention nor experience the same success as his presidency. He and his wife separated in the early 1980’s and the board asked for his resignation as the divorce was finalized. See Engstrom, *Reflections on a Pilgrimage*, 139.

127 Engstrom continued to travel extensively including significant trips to China, Africa, Cambodia, Poland, Egypt, and Korea, which are detailed in his autobiography. Ibid., 139-49.

Needless to say, his contributions helped save the organization and the lives of an unknown number of deprived children it has reached.\textsuperscript{129}

In addition to his leadership at World Vision, the decade of the 1980s was characterized by Engstrom’s copious publications and ensuing retirement at World Vision in 1987. As Engstrom stated above, the fourth path of his journey was “doing my own thing in identification with hosts of meaningful Christian enterprises.” Engstrom was already an ambitious author, but during this season he continued to publish on new topics like board leadership, mentoring, and making the most of retirement. As Timothy Beals explains, “As an author and editor, Dr. Engstrom combined his business acumen with his passion for Christian service . . . . Averaging a book a year for 50 years, he also wrote hundreds of magazine articles on subjects ranging from the pursuit of excellence to neighborhood evangelism.”\textsuperscript{130} Beals’ summation demonstrates how Engstrom was able to maximize his time and leverage his giftedness throughout his life.

In the final years of Engstrom’s life, his participation on trustee boards is certainly noteworthy. One of the most remarkable realities of his life was that he served on 22 boards simultaneously.\textsuperscript{131} In 1999 James Dobson, President of Focus on the Family, said this of Engstrom: “Dr. Engstrom has now served on our board as vice

\textsuperscript{129}Corwin attributes Engstrom’s success in managerial practices to have a significant influence on the larger world of missions, specifically the “professionalization of missions.” Corwin explains, “Probably no one was more instrumental in this process than Ted Engstrom. In addition to his own leadership roles with Youth for Christ and World Vision (which he is personally credited with turning from near bankruptcy to one of the largest Christian relief and development agencies), Engstrom had an enormous influence, particularly through his writings, on church and para-church agencies of all kinds to be more effective in their administrative operations using sound business practices and principles” (Gary Corwin, “From Roland Allen to Rick Warren: Sources of Inspiration Guiding North American Evangelical Missions Methodology, 1912-2012,” [a paper presented at the Southeast Regional Meeting of the Evangelical Missiological Society, Wake Forest, North Carolina, March 24, 2012], 13).

\textsuperscript{130}Beals, \textit{The Essential} Engstrom, 304.
chairman for 19 years, and in all that time, he has only missed two meetings—both for unavoidable health reasons. I wish I could explain adequately the enormous contribution Dr. Ted has made to our ministry. Time and again when we were uncertain about the best path to take, he pointed us in the right direction.” Not only did Engstrom serve on boards, but also—rather expectedly—he wrote on the subject. Engstrom also invested in ministry groups through more general consulting. He shares that it was a “special delight” to consult with Chuck Colson and Prison Fellowship as well as to step in as the interim president of Azusa Pacific University. He also recounts the more “rewarding” and “stressful experience” of serving as the chairman of the board at Youth for Christ International. These experiences enhanced his ability to publish on the topic of board leadership and much more. Engstrom’s writings will be the primary object in focus for the remainder of this chapter and much of the next two chapters.

An Introduction to Ted Engstrom’s Publications

The six decades of leadership outlined above provide a rather insurmountable argument as to why Engstrom is a credible source on leadership, but they do not tell the whole story. Engstrom’s writings fill in gaps, providing a larger picture of Engstrom’s past and present influence. Several threads run through Engstrom’s works that could be

131 Ibid., 2.

132 This topic will be discussed more thoroughly in the following section. His written works include Ted Engstrom and Bobb Biehl, Increasing Your Board Room Confidence (Phoenix: Questar, 1988); Ted Engstrom and Robert C. Andringa, Nonprofit Board Answer Book: Practical Guidelines for Board Members and Chief Executives (Washington, DC: National Center for Non-Profit Boards, 1997). Increasing Your Board Room Confidence was updated and republished as Ted Engstrom and Bobb Biehl, The Effective Board Member (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1998).

133 Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 170-71.

134 The stress came primarily from travel to Asia, Europe, Africa, and other sites.
summarized under the banner of Christian leadership, but for the purposes of this study, four major subjects will be identified in Engstrom’s writings: organizational leadership, time management, personal integrity, and board relations. An introduction to these four themes also provides a springboard for the more full treatments of excellence and mentoring in chapters three and four.

**Organizational Leadership**

Engstrom wrote most extensively on organizational leadership. It was the overarching category for nearly a dozen of his books.\(^{135}\) First, Engstrom always approached leadership and organizational management from an unapologetically Christian perspective.\(^{136}\) This was one his fundamental contributions to the American evangelical culture of non-profits, that is, he introduced standard business practices to Christian organizations.\(^ {137}\) He was not adamant about any specific definition. Rather, he preferred the simple reality that leaders lead.\(^ {138}\) Engstrom regularly started his advice by highlighting the importance of clear goals, detailed plans, and action steps.\(^ {139}\) This meant

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\(^{137}\)Beals, *The Essential Engstrom*, 304.


organizations needed meetings to get things done.\textsuperscript{140} Engstrom knew “good communication, not structure, is the cement that holds any organization together.”\textsuperscript{141} Although Engstrom was an action-oriented practitioner first and foremost, he also saw management as developing others: “A major part of the Christian manager’s job is to find the right people and match them to the tasks at hand. Management is all about people. Management has been defined as the art or science of getting work done through people. But management is not just getting people to do things. It is helping people to become things.”\textsuperscript{142} The leadership process refines both the individual and their followers.

Out of his vast experience, Engstrom was also able to advise practical habits and trusted litmus tests for making decisions. For instance, regarding the practice of delegating a task, Engstrom writes, “Whenever I delegate to individuals or committees, I follow up with memo and spell out what I have said. I keep a copy and tell my secretary to bring it to my attention at a certain date, so that I can check the progress. Delegation is not abdication. The memo and the copy make sure that whatever was delegated will happen.”\textsuperscript{143} Similarly, Engstrom advises organizational leaders to be ready to pay the

\textsuperscript{140}Engstrom defended the value of meetings. He saw meetings as “particularly human events” that are about helping “people discuss together how they can more effectively accomplish their task. They are worth all the attention we can give them” (Engstrom and Dayton, \textit{The Art of Management for Christian Leaders}, 240).

\textsuperscript{141}Ibid., 109.

\textsuperscript{142}Engstrom, \textit{60-sec Management Guide}, 44. Elsewhere, he affirms this position, noting, “My purpose is twofold: to help official leaders develop and strengthen their administrative gifts; to help gifted leaders become more thorough and effective in their official and administrative responsibilities” (Engstrom, \textit{Your Gift of Administration}, 17).

\textsuperscript{143}Engstrom, \textit{Your Gift of Administration}, 85.
price of leadership, something he lived and observed in others. He joined the many voices in the second half of the twentieth century writing on management, yet he was one of the first and leading voices to approach the subject from an explicitly Christian position writing to a Christian audience.

Engstrom was well aware that leadership often involved subjective judgment calls within an organization. He writes, “Too often there is a built in assumptions that we are choosing between ‘right’ and ‘wrong.’ This is seldom the case. If we are dealing with strictly technological matters, there may be a right way and a wrong way. But most decisions involve people. And when people are involved, there is seldom a choice that is right for everyone.” These judgment calls require divine wisdom and are often further complicated by the biblical exhortation to serve. As mentioned in the section on Engstrom’s humanitarian efforts, it is impossible to understand Engstrom on leadership without mentioning the role of service in a leader’s life. He contends, “The truly Christian leader has discovered that leadership begins with the towel and the basin—in the role of a servant.” Here, he is not primarily revising recent renditions of servant

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144 He provides specific categories of sacrifice and temptation for Christian leaders, including how to handle: criticism, fatigue, business, loneliness, unpleasant decisions, competition, abuse of power, pride, jealousy, and rejection. See Engstrom, The Making of A Christian Leader, 95-102.

145 Peter Drucker, who was a significant influence on Engstrom and wrote from implicit Christian categories, led the charge on leadership and management literature during Engstrom’s era. Engstrom relies on Drucker directly in his discussion on what type of leader it takes to inspire. Engstrom writes, “He (Drucker) observes that outstanding leaders differ widely in their temperaments and abilities. However, to achieve goals the leaders must be able to sustain action. To do this, loyalty must be kept, and it is necessary to communicate the view that in the final analysis the hard and the sacrificial way is the most rewarding and enduring” (ibid., 83).

146 Engstrom, 60-sec Management Guide, 12.

147 Engstrom and Dayton, The Art of Management for Christians, 27-28. Engstrom goes on to offer 6 character traits of a Christian leader: selfless dedication, courage, decisiveness, persuasiveness, compassion, and humility. Several of these categories correspond to the traditional Aristotelian categories of virtue presented in Nicomachean Ethics, a subject entertained in chap. 3 of this dissertation.
leadership, but rather considering the example of Jesus and his teaching that the one who longs to become the greatest must become servant of all (Luke 22:26). An example of his approach to servant leadership is seen in the way he advises a manager to treat his or her employees: “Don’t forget that your subordinate’s failure is primarily your failure. You probably were responsible for training him. You are responsible for tracking his performance well enough to see him through the troubled waters.” Engstrom exuded wisdom and his writings contain a tremendous amount of astute advice for the Christian and non-Christian working in organizational life. The next section contains a related, but distinct feature of Engstrom’s written contribution.

**Time Management**

Engstrom and Dayton’s book *Managing Your Time* ranked an impressive eighth place in the 2006 *Christianity Today* article “The Top 50 Books That Have Shaped Evangelicals.” This is a remarkable accomplishment for anyone, especially someone writing as an evangelical on leadership and productivity. Likely, the reason for the

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148 Although “servant leadership” is not a new approach to leadership, it has taken on a new form and meaning through the writings of Robert Greenleaf. In his seminal work, *Servant Leadership*, he reflects on Hermann Hesse’s *Journey to the East* and upholds that “this story clearly says that the great leader is seen as servant first, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness . . . . Leadership was bestowed upon a person who was by nature a servant” (Robert Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership* [Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2002], 21-22). Engstrom was familiar with Greenleaf’s work and references it, but does not rely on it.


150 Neff explains the rationale behind the list: “People and movements can be defined by the books they read and remember . . . . These are books that have shaped evangelicalism as we see it today—not an evangelicalism we wish and hope for . . . . Books that over the last 50 years have altered the way American evangelicals pray, gather, talk, and reach out—not books that merely entertained. We asked dozens of evangelical leaders for their suggestions, and they sent in their nominations. Then we vigorously debated as a staff as we ranked the 50 books” (David Neff, “The Top 50 Books That Have Shaped Evangelicals,” *Christianity Today*, October 6, 2006, 51).

151 Neff summarizes *Managing Your Time* this way: “Evangelicals have historically been entrepreneurs and mystics, so we have run into much personal burnout and organizational chaos. With this
extensive influence of this particular work stems from the fact that the topic applies to all followers of Jesus Christ. Engstrom had the ability to connect to all types of people and audiences, and since most Christians have spent their lives working in some aspect of the marketplace, that is where their lives intersect the teachings of Christianity. As questions arise in his readers’ lives, Engstrom is able to meet his readers at their questions. The introduction to The Best of Ted Engstrom reads, “Whether you are a pastor, homemaker, student, craftsman, athletic professional, retired senior citizen, realtor or businessperson, this book is for you.” Robert Larson makes that claim because Ted Engstrom spent his life working and thinking about aspects of work that communicate to all Christians, which recalibrates his relevance for the twenty-first century.

As a management wizard, Engstrom practiced rigid personal and organizational time management. He started with understanding the basic motivation for work as an outworking of God’s design: “Man’s true value will not be restored to him by deifying or denigrating work, but by helping him to rediscover its true human significance.” Summarizing Dorothy Sayers teaching on vocation in Creed or Chaos, Engstrom writes, “We should no longer think of work as something we hasten to finish in

book, Ted W. Engstrom gave evangelical leaders permission to organize their ministries rationally and efficiently” (Neff, “The Top 50 Books That Have Shaped Evangelicals,” 51).

152 It is beyond the scope of this project to work through various definitions of “marketplace,” so I will borrow from Chris Wright’s article, which suggests the following broad definition: “I am using the term ‘marketplace’ to mean ‘the public arena’ in the widest sense. That is, I am not thinking only of ‘the market’ in a purely economic sense, but the whole world of work—trade, professions, law, government, education, industry—wherever human beings engage together in productive projects. The Old Testament word was ‘the gate’—the public square where people met and did their business together, of whatever kind” (Chris Wright, “Following Jesus in the Globalized Marketplace,” Evangelical Review of Theology 31, no. 4 [2007]: 320-33).


154 Engstrom and Mackenzie, Managing Your Time, 17.
order to enjoy our leisure; leisure rather becomes the period of changed rhythm that refreshes us for the delightful purpose of getting on with our work.”

Later, he retells Sayers consequences this way: “Thus it is clear that in speaking of a Christian view of the management of time, we speak in reality not only of management of ourselves, but we speak also of managing our efforts and endeavors in whatever vocation we find ourselves as Christians.”

As noted earlier, Engstrom’s constant attention to the working Christian expands his relevance beyond those who, like him, are employed in Christian organizations.

Engstrom energized his readers and set the highest standard for personal responsibility. Addressing Christians in management positions, he remarks, “Time is not saved by multiplying devices. It is saved by manly discipline. It is the man, not the mechanics that will make the difference . . . . When we look into the matter of time and its management all roads ultimately lead back to the management of ourselves.”

This insight from Engstrom is a natural entree into the Christian categories of self-control (Gal 5) and training for godliness (1 Tim 4). Thus, time management is also life management. He regularly makes the parallel between the stewardship of money and the stewardship of time. He determines, “Every leader should consider how he estimates the worth of time. As an analogy we should treat it exactly as if it were money, for it requires the investment

\(^{155}\)Ibid., 18.

\(^{156}\)Ibid.

\(^{157}\)Engstrom and Dayton, *The Art of Management*, 211. Here is an example of the degree of specificity Engstrom offers in his writings. When interrupted by a visitor, he writes, “Welcome people with a positive indication of how much time you have . . . . Look for the need in your visitor, and attempt to take care of that. Near the end of the stated time, indicate that your allotted time is ending, and ask if there are some other things that need to be discussed before you have to draw the meeting to a close. Stand up as you do this, and remain standing until the final greeting” (ibid., 247).
of our energy to bring forth profitable results. It goes without saying that time spent improving personal procedures will reap great dividends.”\(^\text{158}\) He extends the analogy of stewardship to include organizing and distributing our time in light of fiscal terms such as budgeting and balancing. Through this analogy, Engstrom overlaps personal ethics, which transitions this research to the third major subject of Engstrom’s writings.

**Personal Integrity**

First, it is evident that Engstrom approached leadership as an ethical task. In his work with Robert Larson, *Integrity*, Engstrom writes, “What is integrity? Let’s keep it simple. I could give you a long, complicated dictionary answer about how *integrity* means ‘whole,’ ‘sound,’ and ‘unimpaired.’ But that’s so much academia. What I’d rather do here is try to breath some life into these empty syllables. Interact with me as we dress ‘integrity’ up in work clothes and send it out to earn its keep in our everyday world.”\(^\text{159}\)

Engstrom regularly contends that leadership, including personal integrity, is about reality and not theory.\(^\text{160}\) In *60-Second Manager*, Engstrom says, “It [integrity] begins with the technical aspects of our work, those things that don’t [appear to] have moral value, and then includes the values that control who we are and what we do . . . . Notice that if there are no commitments or promises, it will be very difficult to develop a reputation for

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\(^\text{159}\)Engstrom and Larson, *Integrity*, 10.

\(^\text{160}\)Ciulla contends that the scholarly aspect is also necessary. She writes, “Somewhere in almost any book devoted to the subject, there are either a few sentences, paragraphs, pages, or even a chapter on how integrity and strong ethical values are crucial to leadership. Yet, given the central role of ethics in the practice of leadership, it’s remarkable that there has been little in the way of sustained and systematic treatment of the subject by scholars” (Joanne Ciulla, “Leadership Ethics: Mapping The Territory,” *Business Ethics Quarterly* 5, no. 1 [January 1995]: 5).
integrity. One has to practice integrity.”\footnote{Engstrom and Dayton, \textit{60-Second Manager}, 50-51.} For Engstrom, integrity, like leadership, is action-oriented.

In \textit{Making the Right Choices}, Engstrom addresses integrity issues in a variety of scenarios that cause temptation and closes with a call to action: “Men, take the eternal view. Do not abdicate your responsibilities in the home. Do not allow promiscuity to tarnish your witness. Avoid the mad pursuit of riches and of power. Be angry and yet do not sin. Root out from your life passivity, prejudice, and the temptation to quit before your work is completed.”\footnote{Engstrom and Rohrer, \textit{Making the Right Choices}, 155. The opening words help to see the range and intent of this book, he writes, “The struggle of men against moral indiscretion is as old as Cain and as new as tomorrow morning’s newspaper. I have worked with men of many cultures around the world and their struggles are the same: to question God, to stray from commitment to their wives and children, to love money, to seek power, to vie for position, and to quit short of their goals” (ibid., xi).} One aspect of sustaining integrity is through group accountability.\footnote{The concept of “group” will be addressed in chapter four during the discussion on missiology and mentoring.} Engstrom discusses the role of accountability in his own life with a group of men he met with two times a month. He remarks, “Those meetings have literally changed my life.”\footnote{Engstrom, \textit{Integrity}, 112. Elsewhere, Engstrom refers to his group with Ray Ortland, his former pastor, who met for over thirty years. See Engstrom, \textit{Reflections on a Pilgrimage}, 179.} His life practice and writings on the subject showed his astuteness for the needs of the day.\footnote{Bernard Bass, one of the premier collectors of leadership writings, confirms the importance of integrity and shows Engstrom was on the front end of a trend in leadership. He writes, “Not until the last few decades has the ethics of organizational leadership become prominent subject of theory and research” (Bernard Bass, \textit{The Bass Handbook of Leadership} [New York: Free, 2008], 238).}

For Engstrom, however, the need for accountability extends beyond the individual. In order to protect the Christian donor, Engstrom, along with George Wilson of the Billy Graham Association, cofounded the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.\footnote{Engstrom and Dayton, \textit{60-Second Manager}, 50-51.}
Accountability (ECFA) in 1979. The ECFA established 12 criteria that potential members were required to meet in order to be granted approval. It was the story of Engstrom’s life, not just to complain or bemoan a problem, but also to act and offer a solution. ECFA, still in existence today, has not put an end to financial malfeasance among Christian organizations, but it has planted measures of accountability where they did not exist. The organization attained its original goal and helped reestablish the confidence of their financial supporters. Not only have the personal lives of Engstrom’s peers and those he mentored been strengthened, but also hundreds of organizations and millions of donors have been unknowingly impacted by his stance on organizational integrity. One of the ways he was able to emphasize this was through his participation in board leadership, which is the fourth and final subject highlighted from his writings.

**Board Relations**

Engstrom explains that his involvement in “boardsmanship” resulted in an intentional study of the process, which led to his two publications on the topic. He comments, “Both volumes have sold well and seemingly have had a significant impact upon those who render board service.”

Writing first with Bobb Biehl, they open by asking, “Have you ever wished you could sit down and chat with someone who had a wealth of experience on boards, a mentor who could answer your many questions, show

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166 Engstrom, *Integrity*, 112.

167 Today, ECFA still “provides accreditation to leading Christian nonprofit organizations that faithfully demonstrate compliance with established standards for financial accountability, transparency, fundraising and board governance . . . Collectively, these organizations represent nearly $22 billion in annual revenue. Each of the nearly 1,900 accredited members of ECFA is in compliance with ECFA’s Standards and has functioned for at least 12 months after receiving its 501(c)(3) ruling letter from the IRS.” See “About ECFA,” accessed January 2015, http://www.ecfa.org/Content/About.

you the ropes, and show you how to be more confident and effective in you position on
the board?" In short, they answer, “Now you have someone to help!” The book goes
on to detail the entire board process, including: member selection, new member
orientation, committees, fund raising, master planning, policy writing, and much more.

The authority of their efforts stand on the fifty plus years experience and 80 plus boards
they have served on between the two of them.

Although their advice applies broadly to non-profit organizations, they are
building their case on the “bedrock” of biblical truths. Unanimous agreement is vital to a
board’s health, and for Engstrom, that starts with agreement on the ultimate source of
authority. Insightfully, Engstrom writes, “Your board’s interpretation of what the Bible
says and your assumptions about what a term or phrase in business usage means may
differ considerably from the views of another organization’s board across town. But it is
critical that each of you not differ greatly from the member sitting next to you.”

The other “bedrock” reality needed for board success is character. He reasons this has
everything to do with the selection of board members. Still, the skills needed to be an
effective board member reach beyond the bedrock principles, which is why Engstrom and

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169 Engstrom and Biehl, *The Effective Board Member*, 1. This title was first published as

170 Engstrom and Biehl, *The Effective Board Member*, 1.

171 For a visual overview of the scope and sequence of the board process, see Engstrom and
Biehl, *The Effective Board Member*, 3.

172 Ibid., 1.

173 Ibid., 16.

174 Engstrom and Biehl catalogue a set of criteria that makes up the “ideal” board member
profile. See Engstrom and Biehl, *The Effective Board Member*, 23.

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Biehl include guidance for financial, legal, and other matters that they have come to learn cannot be safely assumed.

In his book with Bob Andringa, they provide an easy-to-use resource for board members. Part 1 of the volume answers basic questions like What are the fundamental roles of a nonprofit board? What are the major differences between nonprofit and for-profit boards? And what is the board’s responsibility to improve itself? These questions diagnose the very nature of an organization's authority and purpose, and help dispel untold false assumptions. The straightforward nature of this publication ends each chapter with “suggested action steps.” One of the unique contributions of *Nonprofit Board Answer Book* centers on the intended audience of this work. Unlike Engstrom’s work with Biehl, this title speaks to Christian and non-Christian groups alike—whoever is leading “in the trenches.” They cite Peter Drucker's motto that the product of nonprofit organizations “is neither a pair of shoes nor an effective regulation. Its product is a changed human being. The nonprofit institutions are human-change agents.” Much more can and should be said, but these highlight provided a needed summary to appreciate the vast reach of his life’s work. It is clear that Engstrom cherished his own responsibilities of board service and his excitement for the process is contagiously

175Engstrom and Andringa, *Nonprofit Board Answer Book*, 3-6, 7-9, 32-40. Later sections address the vital areas of board structures, processes, staff-relationships, committees, and a host of experience-laden issues.

176This format is yet another artifact of Engstrom’s unyielding insistence on avoiding the misinterpretations that comes with heavy theoretical works and instead addressing pragmatic concerns.


communicated in the pages of his manuscripts, which is a beautiful tribute to his long career.

**Closing Reflections: Ted Engstrom, A Life Well-Lived**

Bob Owen opens his biography of Engstrom with a scintillating retelling of a surprise birthday celebration in honor of Engstrom’s life and ministry. His friends, one after the other, recounted God’s grace through the various seasons of his life at the Los Angeles Hilton. This evening was a snapshot of how Engstrom was loved and admired. Art Linkletter spoke to the packed room of over 600 guests from around the country and even across the globe gathered to celebrate, he remarked, “I suppose only heaven knows the number of men and women who have been influenced by Ted Engstrom over the years.” Owen followed the order of the evening’s program to tell Engstrom’s life story, incorporating many of the above episodes, concluding with his own commentary: “It took a long time for the crowd to disperse. They milled around, greeting old friends. Pushing through the crowd to embrace Ted and Dorothy. Finally, the Pacific Ballroom was emptied of guests, and the waiters moved about, clearing the room for the next event . . . . I turned for a last look. That huge banner captured the essence of it all—Ted Engstrom: MAN IN THE ARENA.”

According to Owen, this pattern of impacting and developing others dates back to his early days of leadership. For example, he maintains that the leadership component to Youth for Christ was even greater than the evangelistic aspect. He claims, “As

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180 Ibid., 15.
effective as YFC was in reaching the youth, the bonus was the leaders it produced.

Without a single doubt, YFC has been the most effective Christian leadership training ground in the twentieth century.”\textsuperscript{182} It allowed Engstrom to apply his strategies for living, his emphasis on personal integrity, and his desire to prioritize church and family.\textsuperscript{183} Many of those Engstrom invested his life in have gone on to make significant impact in their own right and a group of them were contributors to a recent book, \textit{Christian Leadership Essentials}.\textsuperscript{184} The work was dedicated to Engstrom and provides a helpful introduction to his significance in the life of others. It reads, “\textit{In Piam Memoriam} With Gratitude to God for the Life, Influence, and Legacy of Ted W. ‘Dr. Ted’ Engstrom (1916-2006), Leader of Leaders, Leader among Leaders, and a Friend and Mentor to Many.”\textsuperscript{185} Gilbert echoes the gratefulness for Engstrom in a celebration piece near the end of Engstrom’s service to Christ. Gilbert writes,

\begin{quote}
Today Ted Engstrom is rapidly approaching his eighth decade on this earth with all the energy and productivity of a young man . . . . Ted Engstrom has taken his personal, inner faith in Jesus Christ and has put it to work in the world. He has not simply spoken of prayer; he has prayed. He has not just given lip service to forgiveness; he has given and received forgiveness. He has not only challenged
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{181}Ibid., 159. The “Man in the Arena” language on the banner comes from Theodore Roosevelt.

\textsuperscript{182}Ibid., 71. He goes on to list the leaders who point to YFC as crucial to their future ministries: Torrey Johnson, recently retired as the senior pastor of the Bible Town Community Church in Boca Raton, Florida; Frank Phillips, who was executive vice president of World Vision; Warren Wiersbe with Back to the Bible Hour; Kelly Bihl assistant to the president of John Brown University; Billy Graham, who has probably preached to more people than anyone in history. The list goes on to include Leighton Ford, Bev Shea, Cliff Barrows, and T. W. Wilson, all with the Billy Graham crusade. Whilbur Nelson, with Morning Chapel Hour.

\textsuperscript{183}Engstrom’s specifically notes the prioritization of family and church. See Engstrom, \textit{Reflections on a Pilgrimage}, 178.


\textsuperscript{185}Ibid., viii. Largely, it was this introduction and vision for a leadership legacy that inspired me to consider making Engstrom a focus of my own study in hopes that he might provide a model for twenty-first century Christians.
others toward excellence in thought, word, and deed; he has, first of all, required excellence of himself.\textsuperscript{186}

Although this is not an evaluative work on the evangelical movement or Engstrom’s role within the movement, it is notable to chart the development from the early years of Engstrom’s ministry to the final years of his work. Even as World Vision took root as a fledgling relief effort of one evangelist and flowered into a multi-national, billion-dollar organization impacting countries around the world, so too evangelicalism continued to spread astoundingly. The “global diffusion of evangelicalism” occurred on the watch of the last generation.\textsuperscript{187} To understand Engstrom requires understanding of the hard-working, coalition-building, global-expanding evangelical movement during his day. The evangelical movement helped “move-the-dial” in American Christianity by fostering numerical growth, charity, diversity, and new leadership—all of which are characteristic of Engstrom’s leadership.\textsuperscript{188} Engstrom, and his co-laborers, did not realize their vision of world evangelization, but they experienced enormous success and their examples are worth following.\textsuperscript{189}

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{187}This phrase recalls the title of Brian Stanley’s volume in Noll and Bebbington’s InterVarsity project, \textit{A History of Evangelicalism}.
  \item \textsuperscript{188}The American evangelical story is one of undeniable growth and strength of the movement. In 1998, Smith acknowledges, “Contemporary American evangelicalism is thriving. It is more than alive and well” (Smith, \textit{American Evangelicalism}, 20). Likewise, Michael Lindsey titles his concluding chapter, “Move-the-Dial Christianity.” He argues, “Evangelical leaders have gained access to powerful social institutions—the U.S. military, large corporations, and many others—and because their religious identities are so important to them, they have brought faith to bear on their leadership, changing the very institutions they lead in the process” (Michael Lindsey, \textit{Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite} [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007], 208).
  \item \textsuperscript{189}The evangelical story is one of triumph and defeat. Schaeffer remarks, “Evangelicalism is divided, deeply divided. And it will not be helpful or truthful for anyone to deny this” (Francis A. Schaeffer, \textit{The Great Evangelical Disaster} [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1984], 46).
\end{itemize}}
At the end of his life, Engstrom was not focused on basking in his victories but passing on the stewardship given to his generation. The following chapters of this research seek to uncover two key themes in Engstrom’s leadership, excellence and mentoring, which helped achieve a great degree of the noted personal and organizational accomplishment. The investigation of Engstrom’s view on excellence and mentoring, along with the supplementary biblical and theological contributions of this dissertation, are all moving towards the larger demand, which is a newly formatted approach to leadership for the next generation. Like Engstrom, will the next generation be found in the arena—faces marred by dust and sweat and blood, spending their lives for the worthy cause of the gospel?

\(^{190}\)This truth is evidenced most clearly in his volumes written after becoming President Emeritus at World Vision. See Engstrom and Larson, *Seizing the Torch*, and Engstrom and Cedar, *The Compassionate Leader*. 
CHAPTER 3

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS
FOR EXCELLENCE

“Ted Engstrom is a man who lives what he writes,
and writes what he lives.”
- Ed Dayton, World Vision International

“The adventure of excellence is not for the faint of heart,” write Tom Peters
and Nancy Austin. Everyone wants excellence, but few people achieve it. Engstrom
strikes a similar tone when affirming the tenacity required to achieve excellence. He
claims, “It takes action to achieve excellence—deliberate, careful, relentless action. There
upon the biographical account in chapter two, which affords Ted Engstrom the unique
credibility to write on the topic of excellence, this chapter aims to consider excellence
according to Engstrom’s writings.

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1 As quoted in Robert C. Larson, The Best of Ted Engstrom (San Bernardino, CA; Here’s Life Publishers, 1988), dust jacket.


3 In the foreword to this companion work Peters explains that though his number one national bestseller, In Search of Excellence, sold over 5 million copies in the first three years alone, he estimates that only five thousand or so read it and took detailed notes. His point, emphatically established by this statistic, is that most people do not ever reach excellence in their work because they do not figure out how to do it or they are not willing to do what it takes. See Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, A Passion for Excellence, vi; idem, In Search of Excellence (New York: Harper and Row, 1982).

Excellence was emblematic of Engstrom’s life and ministry. According to Timothy Beals, Engstrom’s book on excellence, *The Pursuit of Excellence*, was the most popular of all of his writings. Engstrom struck a nerve with his readers; a nerve that was first noticed by Pat Zondervan, who encouraged Ted to produce the book. Chapter 3 of this dissertation will begin by examining this key work on excellence. Next, it will borrow from his related writings to expand the parameters of the project and fill in some gaps left by the primary work. Before looking at a few biblical examples of excellence, the research will turn to the insights of theology, including the following areas: the doctrine of God, the image of God, the judgment of God, and the common grace of God. Next, a short examination of virtue reveals a parallel biblical concept that enhances our understanding of excellence. Finally, chapter 3 will conclude by assembling these perspectives together to point to a re-imagining of excellence for the next generation.

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8 *The Pursuit of Excellence* was published in 1982, over forty years after Engstrom began his career in Christian publishing. At the time of publication, he served as the president of World Vision. Interestingly, it was published the same year as Peters and Waterman’s bestseller mentioned above, *In Search of Excellence*.

9 These are not intended to be a comprehensive list of doctrines related to excellence, but a sampling of positions that (1) provide grounding for the Bible’s teaching, (2) enhance Engstrom’s conclusion, and (3) demonstrate the possibilities theological study can have in leadership studies. This research is delimited to these four doctrines to maintain the scope of the project and to keep the balance of the research with Engstrom’s life and work.

10 In order to accomplish one of the three overall goals of this dissertation, that is, to contend for the value of excellence, this research turns to a related field of study. Considering the insights from virtue studies and giving attention to the question of virtue in higher education, the overall project is substantiated. Furthermore, this section demonstrates the diversity of this topic of study and points toward the range of application that will be discussed in the concluding chapter.
Ted Engstrom’s Understanding of Excellence

In *The Pursuit of Excellence*, Engstrom does not attempt to formulate a new definition of excellence. Instead, he approaches the topic as a motivational speech. It is a tale of two paths: embracing a life of challenge or settling for the easy path of apathy. He calls people to action, creates excitement, and makes biblical connections to enhance the internal motivation for Christians. Although, he does not seek to build his case from any one biblical passage, Colossians 3:17 is Engstrom’s first biblical citation and offers the “highest standard of excellence.” In an earlier work, he offers more of a succinct description, or a short list of characteristics that demarcate his understanding of excellence. He asserts the following seven criteria: excellence is a measure, excellence assumes a goal, excellence assumes priorities, excellence is more of a process than an achievement, excellence has to do with a style of life, excellence has to do with

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11 In similar fashion, he approaches the subject of *time* in one of his most influential works, *Time Management*. Engstrom opens his chapter on the definition of time with this confession from St. Augustine: “For what is Time? Who is able easily and briefly to explain it? Who is able so much as in thought to comprehend it so as to express himself concerning it? And yet what in our usual discourse do we more familiarly and knowingly make more mention of than Time? And surely we understand it well enough when we speak of it; we understand it also when in speaking with another we hear it named. What then is Time? If nobody asks me I know; but if I were desirous to explain it to someone that should ask me, plainly I know not” (Ted Engstrom, *Managing Your Time* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967], 21). In line with Augustine’s observation, *excellence* is described but remains problematic to define within Engstrom’s written corpus.

12 Engstrom refers to the genesis of the book as the final lecture on the first day of his two-day “Managing Your Time” seminars with Ed Dayton. They delivered the seminars all across the world (an in many parts of the world) for over a dozen years, and the tone of the book fits the context of a motivational seminar. See Engstrom, *The Pursuit of Excellence*, 11.


14 I do think this lacuna is a weakness in *The Pursuit of Excellence* that could have easily been remedied by re-appropriating the list in the final chapter. See Ted Engstrom and Edward Dayton, “Christian Excellence,” *The Art of Management for Christian Leaders* (Waco, TX: Word), which was published eight years prior.
motivation, and excellence assumes accountability.\textsuperscript{15} Below, I will organize his teaching on excellence around the following themes: (1) action, (2) attitude, (3) process, (4) Christian, (5) comprehensive, and (6) wisdom.\textsuperscript{16}

For Engstrom, excellence was first highly action oriented. The titles of the early chapters in \textit{The Pursuit of Excellence} disclose his bent toward reaching for goals: “Don’t Just Stand There…Do Something” (chap. 2) and “‘Mistakes’ Are Important” (chap. 3). He advises his readers to decide to decide and to plan to plan.\textsuperscript{17} He expounds,

It may be difficult to choose a specific goal, but unless you do, you may find yourself forever frustrated, nonproductive, and eventually emotionally distraught . . . . The people who truly excel in their endeavors are invariably the ones who early on (1) determine clear-cut goals and (2) habitually direct all their energies toward fulfilling them. The decision to go after a goal is the key to success. The determination to stay with it is what brings out the quality of excellence.\textsuperscript{18}

Engstrom is aware that taking action, even with a plan, leads to disappointments and mishaps, but he understands these as part of the pursuit. He contends that excellence is based on failure, usually one failure after another.\textsuperscript{19} Engstrom

\textsuperscript{15}Engstrom includes a brief explanation of each of these marks. In another substantive work, published the same year, Engstrom provides this concluding thought that overlaps almost entirely with the criteria in the above list. He summarizes, “Excellence is a measurement, and that assumes a standard of accountability. Excellence demands a goal, and that is the willingness to take risks for others. Excellence demands priorities, and that’s telling other people or yourself what comes first in your life. Excellence is a process, and that means continually checking progress. Excellence has to do with style, and that means deciding what gifts God has given you and how to use them. Excellence has to do with motivation, and that’s what it’s all about” (Engstrom, \textit{The Making of a Christian Leader}, 207). See also Engstrom and Dayton, \textit{Art of Management for Christian Leaders}, 277-80.

\textsuperscript{16}These six marks are distilled from all of Engstrom’s considerations regarding excellence, beginning with \textit{The Pursuit of Excellence} but including his larger corpus of work.


\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., 25-26.

\textsuperscript{19}Engstrom drops in the highly motivational exchange between Thomas Edison and his assistants. He writes, “The genius inventor Thomas Edison was one day faced by two dejected assistants,
moves quickly from personal anecdotes to historical examples to biblical stories of failure and triumph. The energy of the chapter builds to the climactic example of Jesus’ action-filled, fearless ministry. He remarks, “It was said of Jesus, ‘Behold, He does all things well.’ A Jesus of mediocrity, a Jesus of average, is not the Jesus of the Bible. And if we want a model of one who took risks and lived a life of excellence, we can find none better than the life of our Lord.”

Excellence is never achieved by just standing there.

Secondly, excellence was not entirely action-based according to Engstrom. He viewed attitude as a core function of an excellent life. Engstrom was convinced that many peopled regularly failed at this aspect of excellence. Attitude was crucial to remain on the quest. He charges,

These diseases of attitude are always lurking, always ready to infest and infect the garden of your mind. So be on guard. Keep sowing attitudes that are constructive, that will bring you a step closer each day to the goals you have set for yourself. It’s part of the pursuit of excellence. And it will help keep you from being afflicted with the most dreaded of all diseases—the status quo (which someone said is Latin for ‘the mess we’re in’!).

He also warns against the mental mistakes of indifference, indecision, doubt, worry, and overcaution. Engstrom was a master motivator who linked attitude to action for the sake of reaching one’s goal. Although the individual’s motivation is in focus in The Pursuit of

who told him. ‘We’ve just completed our seven hundredth experiment and we still don’t have an answer. We have failed.’ No my friends,’ said Edison, ‘you haven’t failed. It’s just that we know more about this subject than anyone else alive. And we’re closer to finding the answer, because now we know seven hundred things not to do.’ Edison went on to tell his colleagues, ‘Don’t call it a mistake. Call it an education’” (Engstrom, The Pursuit of Excellence, 35-36).

20Ibid., 48.

21Ibid., 60.

22Ibid., 58-60. In the following chapter, he lists what might be seen as counter virtues to these vices. He suggests that the following qualities are exhibited by those who excel: personal discipline, optimism, vision, a sense of adventure, courage, humility, humor, confidence, anger (healthy), patience and integrity. Ibid., 64-66.
Excellence, elsewhere he places the responsibility on the leader. In *The Making of a Christian Leader*, Engstrom argues, “A leader is required to stimulate people to a feeling of dissatisfaction with the status quo. Because dissatisfaction creates an inner tension, the person must act to restore the imbalance to normal. Thus the leader has to touch the will in order to help the person and provide the proper steps for him to move from point A to point B.” Excellence results from the hard work of a contagious and creative attitude.

Although Engstrom drives toward immediate action throughout *The Pursuit of Excellence* (“Right now,” “Starting today,” “Give up small ambitions,” “Don’t Wait,” “Excellence can begin today”), he ends with excellence as a long-term proposition, or “process.” For example, he pictures the apostle Paul daily straining toward the heavenward prize. He recounts the story of Bob Pierce, founder of World Vision, who promised to pay for one needy Chinese child, which turned into 10 children, then 100, 1000, 10,000, 100,000 and over 300,000 needy children. Engstrom is pointing toward the long, arduous, and costly work of pursuing excellence. Then, in one of the dozens of powerful moments in the book, he tells of the exchange between a great artist and one of his admirers. Engstrom writes, “One night after he had given one of the greatest concerts of his brilliant career, Paderweski was greeted by an overeager fan who said, ‘Oh, I’d

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23 The final chap will offer further reflection on Engstrom’s connection between individual excellence and leadership excellence.


25 Charged phrases like this litter the pages of *The Pursuit of Excellence*.


give my life to be able to play like you do.’ Paderewski replied, ‘I did.’”

This epitomizes the third organizational principle of his work, or what Engstrom refers to as the process of excellence. He concludes The Pursuit of Excellence by asking, “Are you devoting your energies toward a pursuit of excellence in every area of your life?” He follows this question with the promise, “You can, and you can start today.”

Engstrom knew the first step was a necessary step to begin the process of excellence.

Fourthly, excellence was distinctly Christian in Engstrom’s view. As Engstrom and Dayton analyze a “Christian Philosophy of Management,” they ask why it seems Christian organizations come out second-best when measured against secular organization. Their response is that it begins with an approach to excellence: “If it is ‘the Lord’s work,’ and it is worth doing, then it is worth doing with excellence. Every standard we set should be set as high as we can possibly set it.”

Engstrom admits the serious tensions that exist among Christians over what qualifies as excellent, specifically when it comes to spending money. He provides an example that clarifies his position. He describes,

A few years ago, we at World Vision were strongly criticized for purchasing first quality plumbing for a new building (a long-term investment that has paid good dividends). But at the time, to some, it seemed “too good.” There’s also been occasional criticism for our having carpeting in many of our offices, instead of linoleum. “It looks too posh,” one said. “It doesn’t look Christian,” said another. (I’ve never quite figured out what a Christian carpet might look like!) Someone else offered, “It won’t be a good witness. It looks too nice.” Well, I couldn’t disagree more. Somewhere in my files I have the actual yearly costs breakdown of how much World Vision saved in linoleum was alone . . . . As far as Christian witness is concerned, we believe that appearance is important. We make no apologies for first-

28[Engstrom, The Pursuit of Excellence, 85.]

29Ibid., 92.

30Engstrom, The Art of Management for Christian Leaders, 41,
class appearance, because we as Christ’s people are called to excellence. Further, we believe we are to set the standards of excellence for ourselves and others.\(^{31}\)

As evidenced by the disagreement over the carpet and linoleum case study, the uniquely Christian component of excellence needs more unpacking.\(^{32}\) “Christian” finds greater clarity in light of Engstrom’s focus on the comprehensive nature of the task, which is the fifth organizing principle of his work on excellence. As described earlier, he starts with the need for goals and adds the need for plans. He then checks for joyful motivation, accountability and endurance. Finally, he concludes by calling for relaxation and life-balance.\(^{33}\) For Engstrom, there is no aspect of life that avoids the impact of excellence; it is comprehensive. Excellence is both an act of obedience to God and of testimony to the watching world (Christian and non-Christian). He attests, “Striving for excellence in our work, whatever it is, is not only our Christian duty, but a basic form of Christian witness. And our nonverbal communication speaks so loudly that people often cannot hear a single word we say.”\(^{34}\) Engstrom is quoted throughout Jon Johnston’s work, *Christian Excellence*, which seeks first and foremost to define ‘excellence’ from a Christian perspective over and against ‘success’ as defined by the world. Johnston

\(^{31}\)Engstrom, *The Pursuit of Excellence*, 20. The scriptural defense directly attached to this example is less than satisfactory. Engstrom quotes 1 Cor 14:40: “Let all things be done decently and in order.” This passage is clearly intended to orderly bracket the use of tongues in the context of corporate worship.

\(^{32}\)The following sections include theological and biblical considerations that attempt to put a finer point on this component of excellence.


\(^{34}\)Engstrom, *The Pursuit of Excellence*, 22. Chapter 6 will include further attention to the role of Christian witness. It will also be addressed later in this chapter during the discussion on the parallels of excellence and beauty.
highlights the uniqueness and comprehensive nature of Christian excellence by arguing that the most important dimension of excellence is *agape* love. For Johnston, this kind of love is defined by God’s word and is an all-encompassing notion that includes service, integrity, joy, perseverance, and risk-taking action. Engstrom, like Johnston, sees excellence as a comprehensive way of life for the Christian.

Engstrom’s view of excellence has been described above as action-oriented, attitude enriching, process-driven, distinctly Christian, and comprehensive. Finally, excellence requires wisdom. Wisdom is a direct implication from Engstrom’s comprehensive call to love and worship God by displaying excellence in personal, professional, social, and cultural aspects of life. He hammers home that there are no short cuts to quality while simultaneously elevating the moral standards, which requires the wisdom of God. Likewise, he informs the organization that pursues excellence in all things that it will face personnel decisions that force a decision between compassion and competency. Not only does excellence affect everything a Christian leader does, but it

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35 In addition to the frequent citations of Engstrom, the tone and emphasis of Johnston’s work seem heavily influenced by Engstrom’s writing on the topic.

36 The term “integration” is not intended to imply that Engstrom did not personally compartmentalize. His natural organizational skills and busy life often meant that he had to do one task at a time and keep spheres of life operating independently. He shares about the difficulties of trying to keep up these priorities and confesses to his mistakes in a chapter called, “Head of Gold, Feet of Clay,” in Ted Engstrom and Robert Larson, *Integrity* (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 87-102.

37 The challenges of integrating excellence with the other commands of God regularly cross the desk of Christian executives. In a Christian organization, people should not keep their jobs simply because they live righteously. Likewise, people shouldn’t keep their jobs if they are highly skilled but are openly practicing unrighteousness. Engstrom laments the pervasive practices in Christian organization on the one hand, to settle for status quo in order to avoid hurting individual’s feelings, while in other situations, use Christian manipulation to overwork and underpay people doing “the Lord’s work.” See Engstrom and Dayton, *The Christian Executive*, 19-20, 191.

38 He advises, “If the organization is to survive, ultimately the organization must have first priority. There will be times when the organization will permit itself to be diverted from its task for the good of an individual. However, if the leadership of the organization believes that what the organization is about is part of God’s purpose, eventually the sometimes tragic choice between the good of the
also forces prioritization and the wisdom to know which things to do and not to do. Simply because one does something with excellence does not mean it was the most excellent thing to do.\(^{39}\) For the Christian leader, this aspect of excellence includes wisely integrating family and friendships into work and work into one’s personal life.\(^{40}\) This observation includes the arena of leisure. Wisdom can mean playing golf, or at least that was Engstrom’s choice of recreational activity. Leisure is part of a life of wisdom even when not immediately productive. Ultimately, integrating excellence into all of life requires wisdom, which is a virtue \textit{par excellence}.\(^{41}\) This concludes the introduction to Engstrom’s vision of excellence and leads to the supportive work of theological reflection.

\textbf{Theological Foundations for Engstrom’s View of Excellence}

Engstrom argued for a \textit{Christian} view of excellence, but it was not in the scope of his writings to specify direct doctrinal support. Those who knew and worked with Engstrom, and those who were largely familiar with the work of his various organizations at the time he was writing, had the benefit of assuming some of his doctrinal assumptions.


\(^{40}\)He connects excellence and relationships by arguing, “A strategy for excellence in our relationships calls for goals which can be measured and accomplished, to which we can refer as benchmarks or guideposts along life’s path” (Engstrom, \textit{The Pursuit of Excellence}, 32). In \textit{The Fine Art of Friendship}, Engstrom provides a portrait for friendships that demand nothing in return, are nurtured by authentic concern, are committed to listening and presence, and offer loving encouragement. See Ted Engstrom and Robert Larson, \textit{The Fine Art of Friendship} (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985).

\(^{41}\)Engstrom was not explicitly working out of Aristotelian categories of virtue, but his admonitions find a long history in this tradition. For example, Simpson explains that wisdom is the virtue \textit{par excellence} of theoretical life for Aristotle. See Aristotle, \textit{The Great Ethics of Aristotle}, trans. Peter Simpson (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2014), 165.
However, if his work is going to provide a catalyst for the next generation of Christian leaders, those assumptions need to be expanded and made explicit. Below is an attempt to fill in that gap by focused attention on the relationship between excellence and the doctrine of God, the image of God, the judgment of God, and the common grace of God.

**Excellence and the Doctrine of God**

John Calvin is often credited with the idea that all proper studies of man, in his essence and being, should begin with the study of God, the Maker and Sustainer of man. He begins his systematized volume on theology with *The Knowledge of God the Creator*, which is exactly the place this dissertation will begin the theological reflections on excellence. The doctrine of God constitutes an inexhaustible foundation for the study of excellence. Gregory Jones and Kevin Armstrong derive their understanding of excellence from the triune God, whom they see as the referent, standard, and source of excellence. They sharpen this idea by arguing God’s excellence is manifest most clearly

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42 The theological positions argued throughout this assignment are not intended to be reconstructions of Engstrom’s thought, which stemmed from a more Wesleyan tradition. Instead, they are my perspective. They help fulfill part of the thesis of this dissertation: using Engstrom as a springboard to reimagine theological leadership for the next generation.

43 Calvin opens Book One, “Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But, while joined by many bonds, which one precedes and brings forth the other is not easy to discern. In the first place, no one can look upon himself without immediately turning his thoughts to the contemplation of God, in whom he lives and moves” (John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. John T. McNeil [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976], 35-37).

44 Bray provides a helpful summary to a study of the doctrine of God (including the Trinitarian reality that for the sake of space cannot be adequately addressed here). He notes, “The Christian doctrine of God contains two distinct, though obviously related, aspects. The first of these is concerned to answer the question: what is God Like? The second answers the question: who is God? To put it a different way, the first aspect deals with God’s *nature*. At this level, it is generally recognized that God is one Being . . . . The second aspect concentrates on his personal identity. In sharp distinction from the first, it insists that God is not one person but three” (Gerald Bray, *The Doctrine of God* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993], 53).

in “the hope and new life we discover in the power of the resurrection.” Likewise, Kostenberger offers a beautiful description of how and why excellence must begin with God. He explains,

The primary reason for this is bound up with the nature and character of God. God is the grounds of all true excellence. He is the one who fills any definition of excellence with meaning, and he is the reason why we cannot be content with lackluster mediocrity, halfhearted effort, or substandard scholarship. Excellence starts and ends with God and is first and foremost a hallmark and attribute of God. Without God as our starting point and continual frame of reference, our discussion of excellence would be hopelessly inadequate.

Kostenberger goes on to cement the foundation as an overarching, or all-encompassing, attribute that describes the distinct attributes of God, not as an individual attribute of God like grace or love. Engstrom’s charged call to sustain excellence is substantially buoyed by the sturdiness of God’s nature and character.

Jonathan Edwards submits a similar deduction, but comes at it from the opposite angle. He is not conducting a study on excellence and founding it in God, rather, he is investigating God and searching for ways to explain the goodness and greatness of

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46 Ibid., 3-4. Jones and Armstrong state, “The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are both the basis and the goal of our summons to excellence. We believe that the resurrection rightly focuses our attention on the hope to which we have been called and shapes our sense of excellence in the light of God’s glory as revealed in the crucified and risen Christ” (ibid.).

47 Kostenberger sets out to apply his study of excellence to an academic audience in pursuit of a life of scholarship. He grounds the claim above in Grudem’s discussion of God’s attributes, which positions excellence as a summation of God’s perfection, blessedness, beauty and glory. He expounds, “Perfection indicates that ‘God lacks nothing in his excellence.’ Blessedness points to the fact that ‘God takes pleasure in everything in creation that mirrors his own excellence.’ Beauty is a reflection of God’s excellence, and ‘God’s glory is something that belongs to him alone and is the appropriate outward expression of his own excellence.’ Understanding excellence as an all-encompassing attribute of God also means that the concept is not exhausted by the word ‘excellence.’ Other descriptions of the uniqueness, greatness, glory, of perfection of God are pertinent as well” (Andreas J. Kostenberger, Excellence [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011], 33-34). See also Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 211-21.

48 This starting point effectually grounds two of the above themes: (1) Engstrom’s emphasis on “Christian” excellence, and (2) Engstrom’s understanding of excellence as a “comprehensive” response of obedience to God.
God to his people. He lands on the language of “excellency” or “excellent.” The following selection comes from his sermon on “The Excellency of Christ” demonstrates his use of these categories. Edwards declares,

> And would you choose to have a friend not only great but good? In Christ infinite greatness and infinite goodness meet together, and receive lustre and glory one from another. His greatness is rendered lovely by his goodness. The greater any one is without goodness, so much the greater evil; but when infinite goodness is joined with greatness, it renders it a glorious and adorable greatness. So, on the other hand, his infinite goodness receives lustre from his greatness. He that is of great understanding and ability, and is withal of a good and excellent disposition, is deservedly more esteemed than a lower and lesser being with the same kind inclination and good will. Indeed goodness is excellent in whatever subject it be found; it is beauty and excellency itself, and renders all excellent that are possessed of it; and yet most excellent when joined with greatness. The very same excellent qualities of gold render the body in which they are inherent more precious, and of greater value, when joined with greater than when with lesser dimensions.

In his own way, Engstrom roots excellence in the character of God as well. He writes, “Never settle for anything mediocre or second best. God is the best and He expects His followers to be the same.” In another work, he exhorts his readers, “Will you choose to soar, to build a personal reputation for excellence . . . to live your life as God intended, knowing that He loves you dearly and that He wants the very best for you life?” He then anchors the exhortation in God, writing, “Give up your small ambition.

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49 These expressions rank among other common expressions in Edwards such as “glory” and “beauty.” For further study on these themes inside of Edwards, see Ralph Cunningham, “A Critical Examination of Jonathan Edwards’s Doctrine of the Trinity” Themelios 29, no. 2 (July 2014): 224-40. In his research, Cunningham notes that John Piper has been hugely influenced by Edwards and has, in turn, been hugely influential in taking these ideas to the popular level. See John Piper, God’s Passion for His Glory: Living the Vision of Jonathan Edwards (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998).


Believe a big God; remember that ‘God is greater’!⁵² In the concluding chapter of Engstrom’s book on management, “Christian Excellence,” he addresses the theological knot cause by the term “excellence” in light of God’s sovereign activity and man’s free activity. As he sees it, the common Christian reluctance (in his day) associated with excellence stems from the fact that winners and losers are created. He writes,

Part of our problem is just defective theology. Most of us cannot live with the biblical (paradoxical) truth that God is doing it all—he is in all and through all, and the parallel, and just as completely incomprehensible, truth—man is the one who has not only been given complete responsibility for his actions, but is commanded to act. All of this is part of our tension in theology and life. We constantly struggle with the concept of operating a business and a ministry. They do not conflict; both are vital.⁵³

One way to resolve the tension, which will be the focus of the next section, is to dissect the biblical teaching of the image of God in man.⁵⁴ Following Calvin’s admonishment to start with the study of God, this analysis derives the patent of excellence from the character of God and now moves to the qualities of excellence demonstrated in mankind.

**Excellence and the Image of God**

The following section provides the second theological inquiry in which the relationship between excellence and the image of God aims to assist Engstrom’s position. It is built on the theocentric case made above and gives direct attention to the *function*

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⁵²Engstrom, *The Pursuit of Excellence*, 18. Although he is not explicitly addressing excellence as an attribute of God, contra Kostenberger and Edwards, he is constantly connecting and contextualizing his appeal to God and His word.


⁵⁴Hammett maintains, “The most important fact one can state about any human being is that he or she is created in the image of God (*imago dei*). Many elements of our created nature are shared with animals, but only humanity was created with special deliberation (“Let us make” rather than “Let there be”) and with a special design . . . . Creation in the image of God involves being like God in some unspecified ways” (John Hammett, “Human Nature,” in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel L. Akin [Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007], 351-52).
and flourishing of the image of God in man. By way of introduction, Anthony Hoekema observes the tension mentioned by Engstrom above when explaining our human nature, he suggests, “The human being is both a creature and a person; he or she is a created person. This, now, is the central mystery of man: how can man be both a creature and a person at the same time? To be a person means relative independence. To be a creature means that I cannot move a finger or utter a word apart from God; to be a person means that when my fingers are moved, I move them, and that when words are uttered by my lips, I utter them.” As Calvin and Hoekema argue, our mysterious personhood must not be overly simplified, but first positioned in God as the creator, and second understood as created in the image of God. The image of God, or imago dei, makes possible human participation in the communicable attribute of God’s, including excellence. Kostenberger draws the same conclusion and emphasizes the functional expression of our creation in God’s image. He explains,

Our creation in Image, therefore, primarily relates to the fact that God placed humanity on the earth to rule it as his representatives. How can we best fulfill this role? It stands to reason that has beings created in God’s image, creatures who are called to exercise representative rule over his creation, we must do so with excellence. This is true even more so in a world that is falling in because of sin falls short of God’s glory (Romans 3:23). The world desperately needs to see a display of what God is like. This extends to everything we are and do—our own personal lives, our marriages and families, our moral and ethical standards, and the pursuit of our calling.


56 Kostenberger, Excellence, 37. Kostenberger discusses Waltke’s comments in a note to further explain the functional understanding of the imago dei. Waltke writes, “‘Image’ entails more than human form and the capability of social relationships; it confers the functional notion of duty and authority . . . . Genesis 1 confers this authoritative status of God’s image to all human beings, so that we are all kings, given responsibility to rule as God’s vice-regents over the earth . . . . In other words, human kind is created to establish the rule of God on earth” (Bruce K. Waltke and Charles Yu, An Old Testament Theology [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007], 218-19). See also Kostenberger, Excellence, 241.
The functional emphasis implies that God’s image bearers have a task to do as God’s representatives. That task, or mission, for the Christian is to be carried out with the same excellent character as their heavenly father’s acts. In other words, “We are commissioned as God’s image bearers, his vice-regents, charged with the task of ‘ruling’ and caring for creation, which includes the task of cultivating it, unfolding and unfurling its latent possibilities through human making—in short, through culture.”

Engstrom’s emphasis on action and achievement find a home in the theological prescription to bear the image of God on earth through work. Work reflects something of the functional image of God in humanity. N. T. Wright sketches out God’s plan for work in the creation account this way: “The garden, and all the living creatures, plants and animals, within it, are designed to become what they were meant to be through the work of God’s image-bearing creatures in their midst. The point of the project is that the garden be extended, colonizing the rest of creation; and Human is the creature put in charge of that plan.”

God’s character of excellence displays itself when men and women give

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58 Nelson explains, “Scripture tells us that the most bedrock answer to the question of why we work is that we were created with work in mind. Being made in God’s image, we have been designed to work, to be fellow workers with God. To be an image-bearer is to be a worker. In our work we are to show off God’s excellence, creativity, and glory to the world. We work because we bear the image of One who works” (Tom Nelson, *Work Matters* [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011], 22).


themselves to the task for which they were created. It is a picture of God’s people (image bearers) doing God’s work (image bearing) God’s way (excellently).\(^{61}\)

In addition to the functional quality of the image of God is the original goal (telos) of the image of God, flourishing.\(^{62}\) The first creation account affirms God’s creation as “good” while designating the sixth day creation of man and woman as “very good.”\(^{63}\) The image of God in man was essential to the picture of completeness and participated in the divine shalom (Gen 1:31).\(^{64}\) Wolterstorff claims that the Bible has a clear vision of what God wants for his creatures: “A vision of what constitutes human flourishing and of our appointed destiny. The vision is not that of disembodied individual contemplation of God. . . . it is the vision of shalom.”\(^{65}\) Shalom is a foreign concept to most American evangelicals today and comes with legitimate baggage, but that does not confine it to the sidelines, after all, the Bible uses the term (and its cognates) over five

\(^{61}\)Goldsworthy argues a similar three-fold picture of the kingdom of God. He avers, “The description of the Garden of Eden does not tell us everything about the Kingdom of God, but it does provide the essential framework for understanding the nature of the Kingdom as: God’s people (Adam and Eve) in God’s place (the Garden of Eden) under God’s rule (the word of God)” (Graeme Goldsworthy, Gospel and Kingdom [Crownhill, UK: Paternoster, 2012], 60).

\(^{62}\)N. T. Wright explains how the biblical account of flourishing is different than Aristotle’s notion of eudaimonia. See Wright, After You Believe, 33-36, 168.


\(^{64}\)Plantinga defines shalom as “universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight—a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creature in whom he delights” (Cornelius Plantinga Jr., Not the Way It’s Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995], 10). See also R. Stanton Norman, “Human Sinfulness,” in A Theology for the Church, ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007, 423).

hundred times. Adding to Wolterstorff’s vision of shalom as flourishing, Pennington goes a step further and surmises,

Human flourishing is in fact a key biblical theme woven through the whole canon, one which, when recognized, explains and enhances some foundational aspects of the Bible’s testimony, including the very nature and goal of God’s redemption for us in Christ, who, after all, promises us eternal and abundant life. That is, the Bible, across its whole Christian canon of both Old and New Testaments, is providing its own God-of-Israel-revealed-in-Jesus-Christ answer to the foundational human question of how to flourish and thrive.

This is a vision of life, or flourishing, anchored in the creation account, acquainted with sin, and clarified in the incarnation.

If Pennington and Wolterstorff are right about the way the world ought to be, what does all this mean for the residual image of God in man and more particularly what does it mean for Engstrom’s pursuit of excellence? Although it would have been a peripheral consideration for Engstrom, his pursuit language is immensely helpful to the vision of human flourishing coiled in the figurative DNA of man. The pursuit of excellence is part of the Christians pursuit of Jesus, who, according to Colossians 1:15, is

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67 Pennington, “Human Flourishing and the Bible.”

68 In a later essay, Wolterstorff credits his view to a deeply Kuyperian notion of Christian existence. He explains, “There is a strong emphasis within the Reformed tradition in general, and within its Kuyperian version in particular, on God the Creator. God created a world which God pronounced good—good, in particular, for human beings. God’s intent was that we would flourish, that we would find our shalom, in this world. And in spite of the incursions of evil into this created order, God has not abandoned the creation; on the contrary, Christ’s resurrection is the vindication of the created order” (Nicholas Wolterstorff, “What is the Reformed Perspective on Christian Higher Education?” in Wolterstorff, Educating for Shalom, 280).

the true image of the invisible God. Redemption in Christ is a pursuit, or progressive recovering of the image of God. The conforming to his image is a return to our true humanness. In conclusion, the New Testament speaks to the restoration of the image of God as an ongoing process that affirms (1) that the image of God “survived” the fall, (2) that men and women can achieve excellence as they increasingly fulfill the potential God has built into us, and (3) that the full measure of human excellence will not be evident until Christ return. Engstrom’s pursuit of excellence is in happy company with the vision of flourishing found in the image of God at creation and waiting for those who believe at Christ’s return. In the following section, this study attempts to shed light on the effects of the fall in the image of God in man and in the created order.

**Excellence and the Judgment of God**

What is the chief obstacle for living a life of excellence? Is it lack of education or lack of will power? Is it lack of economic resources or poor social order? The biblical answer to this question originates on the cusp of the creation storyline that shows God’s

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70 Grudem frames much of his discussion on the image of God around the biblical storyline of creation, fall, redemption, and return. He sees the goal of redemption to be a progression towards the exact moral character of Christ. See Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 445.

71 Wright, *After You Believe*, 168.

72 Hammett, “Human Nature,” 352. Hammett argues that the image of God is restored already (2 Cor 3:18; Col 3:10; and Eph 4:24) but that it is not yet realized (Rom 8:29; 1 Cor 15:49).


75 It is beyond the scope of this project to evaluate the ministry efforts of World Vision, but the Kuyperian vision enlisted by Wolterstorff above gives meaning to both the ‘justice’ efforts toward the world now and the “grace” efforts toward the world to come. World Vision did both and a vision of shalom supports such efforts.
image bearers receiving a command in the garden not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:16-17). With the command came a potential consequence: for when you eat of it you will surely die. Eating resulted in judgment. Adam and Eve’s disobedience brought on the holy wrath of God through the curse of God, which still governs temporal human activity and eternal destiny. The curse of God recorded in Genesis 3:17-19 includes consequences for humans and the whole of creation. Hoekema explains the impact on mankind this way: “After man’s fall into sin, the image of God was not annihilated but perverted. The image in its structural sense was still there—man’s gifts, endowments, and capacities were not destroyed by the Fall—but man now began to use these gifts in ways that were contrary to God’s will.” It is fair to

76 In his discussion on the nature of sin, Blocher acknowledges the priority of Genesis 2 over Genesis 3 to rightly understand human goodness and human evil. He writes, “We must maintain this priority strenuously. Original sin affects the good creature of God, and the creature is not annihilated” (Henri Blocher, Original Sin: Illuminating the Riddle [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004], 88).

77 Stott recognizes, “Death (both physical and spiritual) is seen as a divine judgment on human disobedience. Hence the expressions of horror in relation to death, the sense of anomaly that humans should have become “like the beasts that perish,” since “the same fate awaits them both” (Ps. 49:12, 20; Eccles 3:19-20)” (John Stott, The Cross of Christ [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1986], 65).

78 Motyer contends, “Judgment is a comparatively simple topic, but it bears upon every aspect of biblical theology: God (Deut. 32:4; Ps. 94:2; Mal 2:17), the individual (Is. 1:17; Mic. 6:8), the ordering of society (Amos 5:15), the way history operates (Is. 26:8-11; Jer. 1:16) and the moral realities of the last day (Ps. 96:13; Rev. 20:12)” (Brian S. Rosner et al., eds., New Dictionary of Biblical Theology [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000], s.v. “Judgment,” by J. A. Motyer).

79 A running theme throughout these theological reflections is a theocentric vision of the world. The judgment of God should be seen as an attribute of God alongside his righteousness. John Frame affirms this emphasis by placing his discussion on the wrath of God under the larger categories of God’s justice, which is part of His moral excellence. See John Frame, The Doctrine of God (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2002), 446-68.

80 Later, Rom 8:17-22 echoes the language of the Gen 3 curse and applies it to the whole creation. Moo comments, “In light of Paul’s obvious reference to the Gen.3 narrative—Murray labels these verses ‘Paul’s commentary on Gen. 3:17, 18’—the word probably denotes the ‘frustration’ occasioned by creation’s being unable to attain the ends for which it was made (Murray, Cranfield). Humanity’s fall into sin marred the ‘goodness’ of God’s creation, and creation has ever since been in a state of ‘frustration’” (Douglas Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, The New International Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996], 515).

81 Hoekema, Created in God’s Image, 83.
say that the first act of human rebellion was a departure from the moral excellence of God they previously exhibited, and now the judgment of God on humanity becomes the chief obstacle to returning to a life of moral excellence.\textsuperscript{82}

In his patience, God restrains his wrath, although He would have acted justly if He had destroyed the human race after the fall (Gen 18:25).\textsuperscript{83} Every effect of sin is justifiable via the holy nature of God.\textsuperscript{84} This includes the death of mankind mentioned above, the harming of relationships on earth, and the general disharmony within nature.\textsuperscript{85} Hammett suggests two ways that our created task, or work, is changed into labor after the curse. The first change is “in encountering resistance, rather than cooperation, in fulfilling our mandate.”\textsuperscript{86} There is pain in childbirth, which resists the mandate to fulfill the earth. There is also toil in work, which resists the attempts of men and women to subdue the earth.\textsuperscript{87} The second change is that “work, created as a blessing, becomes an

\textsuperscript{82}The Bible orients evil, suffering, disharmony, and inefficiency in work around sin and judgment as opposed to other Archimedean points of explanation. This is a uniquely Christian teaching. It distinguishes Christendom from other religions that originate evil in matter, a dispute between rival gods, or the denouncing of an explanatory origin of evil. For further study on social, political, theological, and philosophical projects that attempt to understand the effects of sin, see Norman, “Human Sinfulness,” 475.

\textsuperscript{83}Frame, The Doctrine of God, 431.

\textsuperscript{84}Norman strongly states, “Wrath is God’s appropriate displeasure and resistance to human sin. God intensely hates all sin, meriting his anger and displeasure. God’s disapproval toward sin is not arbitrary; rather, God's holiness ensures that he will always reject and despise sin. God’s reaction to our sin is determined by his holy nature. God’s anger should not be equated with being excessively emotional or uncontrollable. He exercises patience and longsuffering toward human sinfulness. The nature of God, however, demands that he respond with holy disapproval to that which is contrary to his very being” (Norman, “Human Sinfulness,” 466-67).

\textsuperscript{85}Gen 3:17 reads that God cursed the ground because of Adam and Eve. Thus, God’s judgment in the curse extends beyond the human characters to the rest of the cosmos. Hoekema calls this “the second curse: nature suffers along with humanity; it must share with humankind the results of sin. In this way human beings will be continually reminded of their transgressions against God, and of their need for repentance” (Hoekema, Created in God’s Image, 136).

\textsuperscript{86}Hammett, “Human Nature,” 365.

\textsuperscript{87}Hammett highlights the call for both women and men to subdue the earth as he brings attention to the term “them” in Gen 1:26 and 1:28 (ibid., 363).
occasion of temptation.” By implication, the original blessing of satisfaction in work becomes a temptation to worship work on one hand and avoid it altogether on the other. The original blessing of working alongside and colleagues becomes a temptation to envy instead of celebrating their work. The original blessing of the fruit of one’s labor becomes a temptation to hoard and oppress. In sum, the cosmic consequences of sin affect the functional and flourishing aspect of human work, the context of human work, and the practice of human work. All efforts toward moral and vocational excellence are stained by sin and need redeeming.

So what capacities remain in sinful humans? What is the residual image of God? The following section on common grace builds a positive case for the extent to which the judgment of God against human sinfulness has preserved the image of God, but to what degree has this occurred? For now, it will suffice to recognize with Abraham Kuyper that

[one] must not suffice with the general slogan, “darkening by sin,” but must account for how this darkening (by sin) works. Has sin resulted in our inability any longer to think logically? Has sin induced in us an inability to perceive what exists and occurs

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88 Ibid., 365. He details the particular temptations of laziness, idolatry, and oppression.

89 Block suggests, “Effects of the fall include human propensity to shirk responsibility, to view work as less than noble, to fail to grasp the honor of functioning as an image of God, and to refuse to work” (Daniel Block, For the Glory of God [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014], 133).

90 Consider the envy of work in the account of Cain and Abel in Gen 4, which leads to deception, murder, and judgment.

91 The book of Exodus introduces an oppressive Pharaoh in Egypt who brutally uses the people of Israel for his fame and fortunes.

92 Nelson claims, “This curse means that the very nature and context of human work has fundamentally changed. The topography of human work has been altered” (Nelson, Work Matters, 38).

93 Banks provides a theological schematic for redeeming work and everyday acts for ordinary people – beyond the pastors or theologians who receive most attention from theology. His goal is to connect all Christians’ deepest convictions with their everyday concerns and not just their ideas of salvation and church. See Robert Banks, Redeeming the Routines (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1993), 9-12.
around us? Does sin place a blindfold over our eyes so that we no longer see or observe? Absolutely not . . . Sin’s darkening lies in this, that we lost the gift of grasping the true context, the proper coherence, the systematic integration of all things. Now we view everything only externally, not in its core and essence, each thing individually but not in their mutual connection and in their origin from God.  

To unpack this more, including the remaining capacities within mankind, I will look to the root of sin. Fundamentally, sin “is not the failure to keep God’s law—as serious as such infractions are. The root sin is the failure to praise and worship and thank God, to glorify him as God (Rom 1:21),” explains Schreiner. Hence, the judgment of God is evident in the degree of idolatry to which one is given over (Rom 1:24, 26, 28). Also, it is clear that all mankind have made this idolatrous exchange of God’s glory for a lesser thing (Rom 3:23). As a result, God will punish all sin, either by punishing the offender or by placing his or her sins on Jesus, whose moral excellence is offered to sinful people by faith and repentance. Judgment was brought down in Eden, but God’s judgment on sin is mainly eschatological. However, the storyline of the Bible is moving not only toward judgment day, but also to the day when God will make all things new (Rev 21:5). Until that day, Engstrom’s signal to pursue excellence should be recognized as integral to God’s redeeming work for the Christian.

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95 Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 522. Schreiner has the Pauline literature primarily in view as he makes this claim.

96 Schreiner writes, “Paul also argues that sins flow from sin. Three times he says, “God gave them up,” referring to the sins that human beings commit as a consequence of their rejection of God as God. Since God is not worshiped as God, he hands human beings over to sins by which their lives and society are degraded” (ibid., 523).


Finally, the promise of God’s final judgment was made inextricably clear in Christ’s crucifixion. God’s righteous judgment displayed on the cross makes possible the declaration of righteous on the one who has faith in Jesus (Rom 3:25-26). Instead of only giving over to sin (Rom 1), God is also making His people new by transforming their hearts and minds (Rom 12:1-2) to become those who worship God as God. As Naugle suggests, “Reordered love reorders worship, and it also overhauls our character and conduct in virtuous ways.” Such personal overhaul is released out into the world in the form of cultural engagement and demonstrates of God’s character. In conclusion, God’s judgment from Eden forward results in pain and toil in this world. God’s judgment did not obliterate his image in man, but did entangle the hearts of all people even as it entangle the earth with thorns and thistles. It therefore strains efforts to work with excellence in the earthly realm and demands that all people deal with the coming judgment of God in the heavenly realm. In light of God’s judgment and continued work in the world, the following section focuses on the intersection of Christian and non-Christian acts of excellence. Investigating God’s common grace, or what could be

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100. Beale purports that this transformation is a “reversal from reflecting the image of idols to reflecting the image of God” (G. K. Beale, We Become What We Worship [Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008], 268). Later in the same discussion, he explains it this way: “One’s only hope in being delivered from reflecting the spiritually lifeless images of the world is to be recreated or reformed by God into an image that reflects God’s living image, which results in spiritual life” (ibid., 279).


102. Moore explains that many evangelicals have stopped arguing over the kingdom and have started seeking after the kingdom. He provides a substantive look at how such private beliefs (held in larger theological camps) have worked themselves out in evangelical political action. See Russell Moore’s entire explication of kingdom theology and evangelical engagement in light of Carl Henry’s The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism. See Russell Moore, The Kingdom of Christ (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 11-12.
described as God’s preserving of excellence, aims to add another dimension to Engstrom’s vision of leadership.

**Excellence and the Common Grace of God**

By way of introduction, consider Bacote’s inquiry: “How does the world go on after sin’s entrance and how is it possible that ‘good’ things emerge from the hands of humans within and without a covenant relationship with God?”

He proposes an answer according to Abraham Kuyper’s vision for God’s merciful activity to the whole of creation. Kuyper proposed a broad explanation for the intersection of special and common grace. Bacote summarizes Kuyper’s view of common grace as follows: “God restrains the full effects of sin after the Fall, preserves and maintains the created order, and distributes talents to all human beings (Ps 145:9; Matt 5:44-45; Luke 6:35).”

This Kuyperian conclusion is joined by the observation that despite man’s sinful rebellion and

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**Footnotes**


104 Kuyper is a seminal figure in the Reformed traditions thinking on common grace. In addition, the 1924 Reformed Christian Reformed Declaration is the key historical moment in understanding the last century on this issue. For a survey of common grace in the theologians of the Reformed tradition, see John Baek, “The Atonement as the Judicial Basis of Common Grace” (Th.M. thesis, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2009). See also Herman Kuiper, *Calvin on Common Grace* (Grand Rapids: Smither, 1928).

105 Van Til maintains that the underlying concern driving Kuyper (and he includes Herman Bavink) was “to press the catholic claims of the truth of Christianity” (Cornelius Van Til, *Common Grace and the Gospel* [Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972], 14).

106 Bacote, “Introduction,” 26. He explains further, “As a result of this merciful activity of God through the Holy Spirit’s work in creation, it remains possible for humans to obey God’s first commandment for stewardly dominion over the creation (see Gen 1:28). This is not saving, regenerating, or electing grace, but a preserving grace extended to the world God has made, and is seen in the human inclination to serve one’s neighbor through work, pursue shalom in broke social situations, and defend equity in all forms of human interaction.” Ibid.
God’s righteous curse, excellent cultural products are still being created.\textsuperscript{107} This includes the making of excellent products by non-Christians and Christians alike.\textsuperscript{108} Consequently, the image of God is still reflecting the character of God, though imperfectly, as people work and make things in the world (Luke 10:25-37).\textsuperscript{109} Helm rehashes Calvin’s argument and states, “Such grace, ‘common’ in the sense that it is universally distributed, is the source of human goodness and giftedness in people who do not necessarily experience the special and regenerating grace of God. The source of this goodness is not inherent in human nature, but in God’s freely given and underserved benevolence toward sinful humanity.”\textsuperscript{110} Common grace reveals God’s character and offers a theological category to navigate the tension of good and evil in all humanity in an already but not yet kingdom reality.\textsuperscript{111}

\textsuperscript{107} The term, “products,” is also intended to include immaterial creations such as meaning, a sense of satisfaction, humor, belonging, or ideas. For a fair-handed orientation to the broader idea of humans as cultural creators, see Andy Crouch, \textit{Culture Making} (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008), 17-29.

\textsuperscript{108} Not only do Christians and non-Christians both produce excellent work, they do it together, which creates complexity. Leithart addresses this complexity by borrowing from James Bratt’s recent biography on Abraham Kuyper. Leithart notes, “Kuyper’s scheme was not a simple common-special binary, but a ‘four-part typology’: “At the two ends lay the two graces pure and simple. In lands not (yet) evangelized, common grace operated alone, with no small record of accomplishment but no hopeful goal in sight either. In the institutional church, purely reformed, particular grace operated safe from the corruptions of the world. In the two middle segments the two graces overlapped with complex results” (James Bratt, \textit{Abraham Kuyper}, 202-3, as quoted in Peter Leithart, “Kuyper’s Common Grace,” \textit{First Things}, May 9, 2014, accessed November 19, 2014, http://www.firstthings.com/blogs/leithart/2014/05/kuypers-common-grace).

\textsuperscript{109} In Luke 10, Jesus utilizes a Samaritan—seemingly a foreigner to the covenants of promise (Eph 2:12)—to explain \textit{how} to keep the law by loving one’s neighbor. Jesus concludes, “Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” “The one who showed mercy to him,” he said. Then Jesus told him, “Go and do the same” (Luke 10:36-37).

\textsuperscript{110} Paul Helm, \textit{Calvin at the Centre} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 308. For a further look at Calvin on common grace, Helm cites John Calvin, \textit{Institutes of the Christian Religion} II, 2.12-17.

\textsuperscript{111} The key influences discussed in this section all work out of a Reformed perspective, but the Wesleyan tradition also holds a similar theological category to common grace. Rakestraw explains that John Wesley emphasized three aspects of God’s grace: preventing, justifying, and sanctifying. The first aspect of “preventing grace” (often called “prevenient grace” today) aligns most closely with the idea of
There is vast disagreement on this issue, including those in the Reformed tradition. In fact, fears exist concerning the blurring of natural and supernatural (the mistake of Catholic thought) or a disregard for the distinction of the church and the world (the mistake of Mainline Protestantism), which often keeps common grace conversations sidelined. As a point of connection with Engstrom, these distinctions get at the heart of what he observed as a poor reflection of God in too many Christian organizations. He admits his frustration that secular organizations regularly outperform Christian organization because they have higher standards for personal conduct, value of an individual, and good communication. Christian organizations should know better because they know the greatest standard, God, and are called to work for Him. Still, secular organizations and businesses contribute to the common good of society.

common grace. See Robert V. Rakestraw, “John Wesley as a Theologian of Grace” Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 27, no. 2 (June 1984), 193-203.


In the outset of his essay on common grace, Van Til begins to deal with arguments that deny common grace by approaching it from the angle of the Christian Philosophy of History. Richard Mouw also addresses opposing ideas on this issue. Specifically, he points out the argument of one retractor, Herman Hoekema, who insists that “the elect experience many evils in their lives, such as sickness, grief, and poverty; but surely these things are not to be take as visitations of divine wrath on the godly. Why, then, should we take the good things that visit the lives of the ungodly as evidence of grace?” (Herman Hoekema, Protestant Reformed Churches, as cited in Richard Mouw, He Shines in All That’s Fair [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001], 18). See also Van Til, Common Grace and the Gospel, 2-13.


Engstrom, The Pursuit of Excellence, 18

The 1924 Synod uses the language of “civic good” to explain these cultural. Furthermore, It is beyond the scope of this investigation to embark on any consideration of the common good, but for an introduction to the intersection of common grace and the common good, see Mouw, He Shines in All That’s Fair, 75-88. For further study from the same perspective, see Richard Mouw, Uncommon Decency: Christian Civility in an Uncivil World (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992).
Engstrom does not attempt to explain the *reasons* underneath these observations, but the doctrine of common grace does that very thing.\footnote{Van Til explains that though believers and non-believers hold to opposing philosophies (philosophies of fact, law, reason, and man), they remain united by common experience. He states, “It must be asserted that they have every fact in common. Both deal with the same God and with the same universe created by God. Both are made in the image of God. In short, they have the metaphysical situation in common” (Van Till, *Common Grace and The Gospel*, 5).} It helps us understand why a non-Christian can create something excellent and often times more excellent than a Christian.\footnote{In his lectures, Mouw cautions readers to be clear about distinctions between elect and non-elect, but suggests that man’s eternal state is not the only category for thinking through experience. He then contends that God’s favor (or *empathy*), though not atoning or effectual, rests on the works of non-believers. He gives the following example, “Let me be concrete: I think God takes delight in Benjamin Franklin’s wit and in Tiger Wood’s putts and in some well-crafted narrative paragraphs in a Salman Rushdie novel, even if these accomplishments are in fact achieved by non-Christian people. . . . I think God enjoys these things for their own sake” (Mouw, *He Shines in All That’s Fair*, 36).} In short, common grace reframes the issues by affirmation God’s judgment and God’s grace.\footnote{Hoekema explains that this is John Calvin’s insight and that his view of common grace was birthed out of his recognition of human depravity. See Hoekema, *Created in God’s Image*, 200.} Hoekema explains,

The doctrine of common grace recognizes *the gifts we see in unregenerate human beings as gifts from God*. This doctrine reminds us that, as Calvin said, we may appreciate the *truths* uttered by unregenerate philosophers even while recognizing that they do not know the *truth* as it is in Christ. We as Christian believers, therefore, may learn much from great works of literature written by unbelievers, even though we do not share their ultimate commitment. We may appreciate what has been produced by non-Christians in such areas of artistic endeavor as architecture, sculpting, painting, and music, since their gifts are from God. We may therefore enjoy the cultural products of non-Christians in such a way as to glorify God through them—even though such praise of God was not part of the conscious intent of these artists.\footnote{Ibid.}

Common grace makes sense of the restraint of individual sinful behavior and the restraint of God’s wrath against sinful actions, but for the purpose of this research I will focus on a third way common grace is manifested in the world. Common grace
bestows the physical and spiritual blessings of God on all mankind.\textsuperscript{121} Daniel Block contends, “God graciously withholds the full force of the curse so that we are actually able to accomplish tasks . . . . By common grace he lifts the curse and replaces it with blessing, enabling humans to succeed in their efforts.”\textsuperscript{122} Similarly, Abraham Kuyper argues that common grace is “the source of the good, the true and the beautiful which remain, in spite of sin, in human life.”\textsuperscript{123} By way of test case, Kuyper makes reference to the burgeoning developments of science. Kuyper supposes, “No one can deny that in the disciplines of astronomy, botany, zoology, physics, and so on, a rich science is blossoming. Although being conducted almost exclusively by people who are strangers to the fear of the Lord, this science has nevertheless produced a treasury of knowledge that we as Christians admire and gratefully use.”\textsuperscript{124} For the Christian, the result of such an exercise—observing God’s common blessing in all of culture—should be the praise and worship of his name.

Grudem details multiple reasons for God’s common grace concluding with the idea, like Hoekema above, that God’s glory is demonstrably displayed:

\begin{quote}
In developing and exercising dominion over the earth, men and women demonstrate and reflect the wisdom of their Creator, demonstrate God-like qualities of skill and moral virtue and authority over the universe, and so forth. Though all of these
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{121}Hugh Whelchel, \textit{How Then Should We Work} (Bloomington, IN: WestBow, 2012), 36.

\textsuperscript{122}Block provides rich biblical support for this supposition. He explains, “Successes are marked by advances in culture (Gen. 4:16-22), prosperity (24:35; 26:12; 31:3-10; 33:10), fulfillment of commissions (24:12-14, 27, 48), and delight in work itself (Eccles. 2:224-26; 3:13; 5:18-20)” (Block, \textit{For the Glory of God}, 133).

\textsuperscript{123}The quotation originates in Frank Vandenber, \textit{Abraham Kuyper} (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), as cited in Bruce Demerest, \textit{The Cross and Salvation} (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1997), 77. Van Til observes that this \textit{positive} view of common grace is a later development in Kuyper and really comes forth more in the second of three volumes of Kuyper’s \textit{De Gemeene Gratie}. See Van Til, \textit{Common Grace and the Gospel}, 15.

\textsuperscript{124}Kuyper, \textit{Wisdom and Wonder}, 53.
activities are tainted by sinful motives, they nonetheless reflect the excellence of our Creator and therefore bring glory to God, not fully or perfectly, but none the less significantly.¹²⁵

This should lead to a sense of responsibility and gratitude that recognizes every talent as on loan from God intended to be used for His purposes.¹²⁶ Hence, the glory of God is at stake in the pursuit of excellence (1 Cor 10:31).

Engstrom calls for this same God-glorifying life of excellence for the pastor, student in seminary, carpenter, executive, teacher, mom, young, and retired.¹²⁷ He exclaims, “Excellence is not restricted to sex, age, race, or occupation. This means a life of excellence is for you . . . J. B. Phillips paraphrases Philippians 1:10 as follows: ‘I want you to be able always to recognize the highest and best, and to live sincere and blameless lives until the day of Christ.” . . . The highest and best—this should be the goal of every man and woman of God.”¹²⁸ Engstrom’s already broad invitation finds even further extension in light of common grace, that is, excellence can serve as a centralizing refrain beyond his Christian audience. Appealing to the hard-wired capacity in all humans to excel is a framework Christians can take with them to work in every sector of society. For unregenerate people, excellence is an explanatory principle that makes sense of their experiences.¹²⁹ Accordingly, the regenerate Christian can frame excellence in

¹²⁵Grudem, Systematic Theology, 665. Other reasons for common grace include: to redeem those who will be saved, to demonstrate God’s goodness and mercy, and to demonstrate God’s justice.

¹²⁶Block, For the Glory of God, 138.


¹²⁸Ibid., 18.

¹²⁹Peters and Austin, who refer to the applications of excellence as “a blinding flash of the obvious.” In other words, their search for excellence is “common sense.” Evidence that “excellence” resonates with the original factory settings of humans shows up in the incredibly broad reach of In Search of Excellence. Tom Peters’s biography mentions these statistics: “In 1999, In Search of Excellence was honored by NPR as one of the “Top Three Business Books of the Century;” it was ranked as the “greatest
light of common grace as a way of recognizing a neutral playing field of gifting and even blessing. Beyond simply framing the issue, Christians can be ready to give a reason for the hope they have demonstrated in the excellence of their handiwork (1 Pet 3:15); they can share the person beneath the excellence—the most excellent one, the Christ.

In summary, the theological category of common grace reveals aspects of God’s goodness and patience. Common grace helps clarify God’s merciful and providential preserving of sin’s effect in both individuals and society. For the purposes of this study, common grace helps explain the overlap of excellence (or civic good) in both a Christian and non-Christian’s work. Finally, it provides a basis for the appreciation and value of ‘good’ work on earth that ultimately is glorifying to God. These conclusions establish the grounds by which this dissertation can extend the audience of Engstrom’s message to pursue excellence.

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130 A corollary conversation that provides significant insight to the idea of common grace is that of beauty. To demonstrate this, I have included “excellence” in parentheses every time beauty is mentioned in the quote below. Mohler grounds beauty—as argued above with excellence—in the transcendental nature of God. He suggests that beauty also holds evangelistic significance. He writes, “In The Brothers Karamazov, Dostoevsky put in the mouth of one of his characters this phrase: ‘Beauty (excellence) is the battlefield where God and Satan contend with each other for the hearts of men.’ And thus it is. In one sense, the evil one tempts with prettiness, and lies about beauty (excellence), and corrupts the good, the beautiful (excellence), the true, and the real, sundering them from each other and celebrating the confusion” (Albert Mohler, “A Christian Vision of Beauty” (a paper presented to Capitol Hill Baptist Church, Washington, DC, November 14, 2014), accessed November 19, 2014, http://www.albertmohler.com/2005/11/18/a-christian-vision-of-beauty-part-three/).

131 Nelson provides pastoral wisdom with regards to this application. He states, “Yes, we witness by our words, but we also witness by our work. The excellence of our work often gives us the credibility to speak of the excellence of our Lord Jesus and to share the good news of the gospel with our coworkers. When you stop and think about it, the sheer amount of time you work each week means you witness much more by your work than you do by your words. Com to think of it, God designed it that way” (Nelson, Work Matters, 96).
Biblical Considerations: Toward Excellence

The theological case above, though limited in scope, is easier to construct than the biblical considerations below. For starters, the key term in the Greek, ἀρετή (arete), is only used in three verses in the New Testament (Phil 4:8; 2 Pet 1:3, 5). Considering the frequency of arete in other genres of Greek texts, this is notable. Kostenberger explains that arete “has a considerable semantic range, which makes it difficult to determine the precise meaning of the term in a given context.” A sweep of the historical uses of arete demonstrates its flexibility from Homeric bravery to Platonic wisdom to Aristotelian prudence to Roman public virtue. Papademetriou’s detailed semantic study concludes that “the word ἀρετή recapitulates the whole issue of the difference between Hellenism, Judaism and Christianity, which is due to different theological concepts. The basic sense of the word is that of the excellence of a person or a

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132 A cognate form, ἀρετᾶς (aretas), is used in 1 Pet 2:9 and is translated “excellencies” (NASB, ESV) or “praises” (HCSB, NIV, KJV). While the research will be limited to a study of passages utilizing ἀρετή, English translations also include “excellent” from alternative Greek words such as κράτιστος (Luke 1:3; Acts 23:26, 24:3, 26:25), καλὰ (Titus 3:8), διαφέροντα (Phil 1:10; Rom 2:18; Heb 1:4; 8:6), and ὑπερβολὴν (1 Cor 12:31).

133 Papademetriou provides an in-depth study of ἀρετή (arete) including: etymology, Septuagint evidence, semantic relations, and more. She writes, “The Greek word ἀρετή, i.e. virtue, maintains a constant presence in the history of the ancient Greek language. It is attested in all periods and almost in every genre of Greek texts. Furthermore, the work ἀρετή possesses an even more significant quality; one could not that its semantic range content is closely related to and expressed the particular perceptions and values of every era that it is attested in” (Kyriakoula Papademetriou, “From Arete of the Ancient World to the Arete of the New Testament: A Semantic Investigation,” in Septuagint Vocabulary 58: Pre-History, Usage, Reception, ed. John Joosten and Eberhard Bons [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011], 45).

134 Kostenberger, Excellence, 45.

135 Papademetriou, “From Arete of the Ancient World to the Arete of the New Testament,” 46-49. Papademetriou also delineates a synchronic analysis around six common uses. She includes: (1) ἀρετή as common good (generosity and public good works), (2) ἀρετή as athletic virtue (strength and valor), (3) ἀρετή as rhetorical skill (poetics and philosophy), (4) ἀρετή as prudence (sharpness and wisdom), (5) ἀρετή as piety (the merits of the gods), (6) ἀρετή as female beauty and moral behavior (gentleness and prudent behavior). Ibid., 49-51.
thing, natural or mortal, and this sense is retained in every usage of the word.”  

She finds agreement in Kostenberger, who also notes that a basic core component of arete is excellence. Given such a wide-range of meaning, what are the implications for this study? To start, in The Pursuit of Excellence, Engstrom only invokes one of the three New Testament passages that include arête—Philippians 4:8. He also references Philippians 1:10 in the J. B. Phillips, which does not include the term “excellence” in the paraphrase, but as shown below, can be a helpful translation. In order to circumnavigate the biblical concept of ‘excellence,’ the remainder of this section will narrow in on arete in the New Testament and rely on exegetical commentary from Philippians 1:10, 4:8-9; and 2 Peter 1:3, 5. Then, in conclusion, the study will make some brief remarks about what this means for Engstrom’s project and the vision of leadership offered in this dissertation.

First, Philippians 1:10 is part of Paul’s prayer for understanding and experiencing ever-increasing knowledge and moral insight. This passage is fairly straightforward beginning with “And I pray this” (Phil 1:9). Paul’s desire, understood

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136 Ibid., 63.
137 He mentions that arete also connotes valor, moral virtue, power, and even glory. See Kostenberger, Excellence, 45.
138 Engstrom, The Pursuit of Excellence, 19. He also cites 1 Cor 14:12, which is the only other passage he uses that contains a form of “excellence” in the translation. There, Paul is calling the church to be zealous (ζηλωται - zelotai), which can also be translated to excel. This is the least clear connection and least consequential to the biblical evidence below, thus will not be considered in the same manner as the passages containing ἀρετή. Ibid., 31.
139 The ESV reads, “So that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ” (Phil 1:10). The NASB and KJV also include “excellence.”
140 Phil 1:10 is included in the list because of its role in Engstrom and not because of the common thread of ἀρετή in the other three passages.
from his state in prison (1:7) is that all the saints (1:1) will be able to discern and approve what is best, or most excellent (1:10). Fee writes, “The reason for an overflow of ‘knowledge and (moral) insight’ is so that they will ‘be able to discern what is best,’ that is, so that the faculty for making proper assessments about what is absolutely essential regarding life in Christ will increase as well. For truly Christian life, some things matter, and others do not.” Peter O’Brien adds that Paul is intentionally trying to distinguish for this church that one determines what is vital in light of the penetrating love and knowledge of Christ, not according to the law. The ability to make such an evaluation leads to final goal of Paul’s prayer: to be pure and blameless in the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness (1:11). In sum, the excellence Paul is praying for requires a deep well of the knowledge of Christ and accomplishes a spiritually fruitful crop for the glory of God.

Second, Philippians 4:8-9 is a bit more complex, but should be understood first as a call to wisdom and second as a call to imitate Paul. Paul would most certainly be fluent in the rich tradition of Jewish wisdom, and here, as he exhorts the Philippians to live in the way of Christ, he directs them to reflect on a list of virtuous things. 

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142 Silva comments on the possible translations from the Greek words: “δοκιμάζειν . . . διαφέροντα: Both of the terms are polysemous and so four translations are possible—“test/approve the things that differ,” “test/approve the things that are excellent.” “Approve what is best” is doubtless the correct idea here (similarly Rom. 2:18)” (Moises Silva, Philippians, The Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary [Chicago: Moody, 1988], 63).

143 Fee, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 101.


145 Fee, Paul’s Letter to the Philippians, 413.

146 Papademetriou shows that the Septuagint uses of arete interpret it in light of Jewish presuppositions. She explains, “From the Jewish point of view the supreme good for human beings is always associated with the one God of the Covenant and with the relation to Him; it is not the achievement
highly rhetorical fashion, Paul employs six parallel clauses of two words, each beginning with “whatever.”\textsuperscript{147} True, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and commendable (4:8) are followed by two conditional clauses that summarize the list.\textsuperscript{148} Fee suggests, “Take away the ‘finally, brothers and sisters’ and this sentence would fit more readily in Epictetus’s \textit{Discourses} or Seneca’s \textit{Moral Essays} than it would into any of the Pauline letters—except this one.”\textsuperscript{149} The first of the summary words, \textit{arete}, accompanies this rather unusual list of final exhortations in Paul’s letter.\textsuperscript{150} Fee proposes that the double proviso of “excellent” and “praiseworthy” follows the six adjectives to reinforce the moral nature of the admonition.\textsuperscript{151} Similarly, Silva argues, “These last two clauses are meant to reinforce the all-encompassing character of Paul’s exhortation, since no list could be complete (cf. Gal 5:21).”\textsuperscript{152} Hence, excellence is an overarching explanation of a Christ-honoring life.

\textsuperscript{147}O’Brien explains that the six uses of “whatever” (\textit{όσα}) are followed by six adjectives in the neuter plural. He states, “These six clauses in synonymous parallelism are grammatically unconnected and as a result very emphatic. Paul list each ‘virtue’ separately and thus gives each one individual attention” (O’Brien, \textit{The Epistle to the Philippians}, 499-500).

\textsuperscript{148}Ibid., 500.

\textsuperscript{149}Fee, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Philippians}, 415.

\textsuperscript{150}O’Brien remarks, “Many scholars have claimed that in cataloguing these ‘virtues’ Paul has taken over ‘a current list from a textbook of ethical instruction, and made it his own’ (F. W. Beare), using the material in much the same way as pagan moral philosophers of his day when instructing their adherents” (O’Brien, \textit{The Epistle to the Philippians}, 501).

\textsuperscript{151}Fee, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Philippians}, 419.

\textsuperscript{152}Silva, \textit{Philippians}, 228.
Throughout his writings, Paul locates the crux of Christian formation in the language of *in Christ* and *with Christ*, but here he employs traditional categories of ancient philosophy. Though a compelling case exists for direct overlap with Aristotelian categories, Paul’s main concern remains clear in light of the entire letter: the exalted Christ defines and animates all comparisons of excellence, and is therefore worthy of reflection. This is especially true in light of the supremacy of Jesus establish in Philippians 2. The excellent qualities (ἐἴτις ἀρετή) are to be the focus of the Philippians’ minds so that they can shape their conduct accordingly. The call to wisdom is enfolded in the appeal not to the Stoic’s “self-sufficiency,” but to a transforming “Christ-sufficiency.” This outline presents a uniquely Christian (and altogether legitimizing) wrinkle to the study of virtue.

Jones and Armstrong draw a connection between *arete* in Philippians 4:8 and the beautiful picture of Christ in Philippians 2:5-11 that establishes the pattern of our lives and ministries. They write, “Beautiful ministry both calls forth and demands the very best we can provide; it calls for excellence in all that we are and do . . . . This

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153 These phrases are part of the larger theological theme of “union with Christ” found throughout the New Testament. A more full analysis of this theme is discussed in chap. 4.

154 Holloway suggests, in the face of critical scholarship, Phil 4:6-9 is not a “redaction hodgepodge” but part of a single unit. Instead, he suggests, “The burden of my argument will be that 4:8-9a is an instance of the Epicurean techniques of avocation-revocation, consolation by burning one’s mind away from (avocation) what is painful and to (revocation) what is pleasant.” For a critical examination of Phil 4:8-9 in light of Epicurean philosophy, see Paul A. Holloway, “Notes and Observations *Bona Cogitare*: An Epicurean Consolation in Phil 4:8-9,” *Harvard Theological Review* 91, no. 1 (1998): 89-90.

155 O’Brien notes the supreme importance of Phil 2:5-11 for understanding the letter. He explains, “This magnificent passage (vv. 6-11) is an early Christian hymn in honour of Christ. It is the most important section of the letter to the Philippians and provides a marvelous description of Christ’s self-humbling in his incarnation and death, together with his subsequent exaltation by God to the place of highest honour” (O’Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 186-87).

156 Ibid., 503.

suggests that in Philippians, beautiful ministry is inspired by and inspires standards of excellence.”

In making their case for a theology of excellence from Philippians, they emphasize the role the pastor plays in instituting the standard to follow. In short, without making the direct connection, they are arguing Philippians 4:9, which reads, “What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things.”

Excellence in Philippians is first a call to a uniquely Christ-constructed wisdom and secondly a call to imitation. The standard for moral excellence, Christ, is now embodied in Paul’s manner of life. Fee maintains, “What he intends, of course, is that ‘virtue’ be filled with Christian content, exemplified by his own life and teaching.”

Virtue is best understood by following (4:9) and best appropriated by habit (4:8).

A biblical analysis of these two passages in Philippians produces ripe points of application that will be introduced here and returned to in the final chapter of this dissertation. First, Philippians 1:10 shows Paul praying for discernment as to what is truly

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158 Jones and Armstrong, *Resurrecting Excellence*, 20-21. They go on to qualify “excellence” as “an excellence that is not about our efforts or culturally defined expectations. Rather, it is an excellence shaped by God’s excellence, nurtured by the new life in Christ to which we are all called in the power of the Holy Spirit” (ibid., 21).

159 Ibid., 21-27.

160 Hendriksen explains that Paul (and the others) had taught the Philippians the matters summarized in 4:8-9, the learning and receiving connected by hearing and seeing, via daily conduct. See William Hendriksen, “Exposition of Philippians,” in *New Testament Commentary: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 200.

161 Fee, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians*, 419. Implications surface for mentoring, and will be discussed in the conclusion of the dissertation.

162 Wright shows the power of habitual behaviors in virtue formation. In a jump from ancient philosophy to brain science, he writes, “When people consistently make choices about their patterns of behavior, physical changes take place within the brain itself . . . Neuroscience is still in comparative infancy. But already the clear indications are that significant events in your life, including significant choices you make about how you behave, create new information pathways and patterns within your brain” (Wright, *After You Believe*, 37).
excellent. Engstrom uses this verse to call readers to the highest standard.\footnote{Engstrom, *The Pursuit of Excellence*, 18.} The “standard” of excellence in Philippians is occupied by knowledge and love for Christ. Second, Philippians 4:8-9 demonstrate the overarching nature of excellence as a virtue to be formed through meditation and imitation. Again, the heart of the issue is a Christ-shaped (cruciform) path of life that is developed by habits of thinking (4:8) and practicing (4:9).

Second Peter 1:3-5 is the final passage of Scripture under consideration. Although Engstrom does not incorporate this citation in *The Pursuit of Excellence*, it is the only other biblical passage that includes *arete*, and just happens to be the most challenging.\footnote{As a way of review for the English translations, ESV and HCSB translate *arete* (ἁρετήν) in 1:3 “excellence,” while the same form of the word in 1:5, *arete* (ἁρετή) and the ἁρετόν, is translated “virtue.” The NIV smooths out the translation out by using “goodness” in all instances. The NASB translates 1:3 as “excellence” and 1:5 as “moral excellence.”} In his study of excellence, Kostenberger calls this passage, the inspiration, model, and scriptural foundation for exploring excellence.\footnote{Kostenberger, *Excellence*, 43. Kostenberger provides two reasons why *arete* (ἁρετή) should be translated “excellence” in each verse. He writes, “First, choosing the same rendering in both instances maintains the lexical and logical connection between the uses of *arete* in these two verses . . . . Second, understanding the world as designating a particular virtue, ‘excellence,’ rather than as encompassing all virtues in the list, seems to make better sense of the location of *arete* in the list of virtues in 2 Peter 1:5-7” (ibid., 45-46).} The language, logic and context of this passage (1:3-11) are all debated, and the form likely corresponds to the structure of a succinct sermon in early Christian style or a formal decree honoring a benefactor.\footnote{Davids explains the inclusion of (1) a historical-theological section recounting the divine acts (2) an ethical exhortation and (3) an eschatological conclusion. Fredrick W. Danker’s formative argument that 2 Pet 1:3-11 follows the form of a “decree honoring a benefactor.” Sample decrees from Danker can be found here: Duane Watson and Terrance Callan, *First and Second Peter*, Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 149-50. See also Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 166.} The order, as Schreiner suggests, should be understood where verses 3-4

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165 Kostenberger, *Excellence*, 43. Kostenberger provides two reasons why *arete* (ἁρετή) should be translated “excellence” in each verse. He writes, “First, choosing the same rendering in both instances maintains the lexical and logical connection between the uses of *arete* in these two verses . . . . Second, understanding the world as designating a particular virtue, ‘excellence,’ rather than as encompassing all virtues in the list, seems to make better sense of the location of *arete* in the list of virtues in 2 Peter 1:5-7” (ibid., 45-46).

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are looking forward, not backward, and are thus crucial in interpreting the exhortations in verses 5-7.\textsuperscript{167} This means all three forms of \textit{arete} are interrelated and possibly a single sentence.\textsuperscript{168} If Peter’s main message is, as Schreiner contends, that God’s power and grace are the foundation for the call to a life of godliness, then \textit{arete} must be understood in that framework.\textsuperscript{169} The emphasis on God, and more specifically God the Son, supplying “everything” (1:3) enables a right interpretation of the couplet, or hendiadys: “glory and excellence” (1:3).\textsuperscript{170} “Glory and excellence” refer to the same reality, which is not a human virtue, but refers to God’s moral beauty and goodness.\textsuperscript{171} Peter proclaims Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the God who bears glory and \textit{arête}, and calls believers to salvation.\textsuperscript{172} Therefore, the first \textit{arete}, namely Christ’s excellence, is the basis for the second and third \textit{arete}, that is, the Christian’s virtuous excellence.

\textsuperscript{167}Thomas R. Schreiner, \textit{1, 2 Peter, Jude} The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 290.

\textsuperscript{168}By way of agreement with Schreiner, Green believes the preamble (vv. 3-4) is elliptical in the Greek and “should not, therefore, include a period at the end of verse 4 but rather a comma, leaving a construction that is awkward in English but mirrors the tone of the ancient decrees” (Gene L. Green, \textit{Jude & 2 Peter}, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008], 180).

\textsuperscript{169}Schreiner, \textit{1, 2 Peter, Jude}, 289.

\textsuperscript{170}For a discussion on the word pair or hendiadys and common appearances of “glory and excellence” in ancient Greek literature, see Davids, \textit{The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude}, 170. See also Green, \textit{Jude & 2 Peter}, 183-84.


\textsuperscript{172}Papademetriou explains Peter’s reliance on the Septuagint language from Isa 43:21. She suggests, “The writer explicitly repeats the Old Testament meaning of God’s ἄρετα. The formulation of the phrases as a whole, their vocabulary as well as their sense derive from the prophetic words, actually from Isaiah (compare 43:21…). A semantic modification, though, takes place through the reference of Jesus
Second Peter 1:5 commences a list of eight virtuous characteristics that accomplish the life and godliness God has made possible through Christ. The list is a literary form in Peter’s letter called a *sorites*, “in which we have a step-by-step chain that culminates in a climax.” The bookends of the virtues are faith and love. *Arete* falls second in the list and here, primarily connotes the moral excellence of the Christ-follower. This is a character quality that requires ‘making every effort’ in order to add to one’s faith. Similar to Paul in Philippians 4:8-9, Peter is not calling for idealist Stoic traits, but for a holistic commitment to a cruciform way of life—appropriated by faith, including (moral) excellence, and resulting in love. In fact, Papademetriou notes that Harrington and Keenan “argue that New Testament virtues are found ‘not in particular types of actions but rather in particular types of persons, Christ-bearers,’ i.e. not in guiding rules but through the mimesis.” Excellence (*arete*) is a way of life for those who follow the master of excellence (*arete*).

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173 Second Pet 1:5-7 reads, “For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with goodness, goodness with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with godliness, godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love” (HCSB).

174 Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 297.

175 Ibid., 299. An alternative interpretation is that instead of personal “moral excellence,” Peter intends to frame up an excellent (or eminent) church member in Christ. This relates to the public or civic virtues of the Greeks, which is more of a theological or ecclesial reading than a moral. See Papademetriou, “From Arete of the Ancient World to the Arete of the New Testament,” 63.

176 G. Green argues that ἀρετήν (1:5) is a virtue that demonstrates excellence of character and is worthy of public recognition. With Danker, he finds that ἀρετήν is social in nature and shows “generosity towards others, surpassing what normal constraints of duty demand (Danker 1978:72, 1982: 318)” (Green, *Jude & 2 Peter*, 192).

In conclusion, 2 Peter 1:3-7 delivers the main theme of Peter’s correspondence and begins the exhortation to make their calling and election sure by mimicking the virtues of their Christ, who by his divine power provides everything needed for life and godliness. Kostenberger summarizes it this way: “On the basis of God’s call extended to believers to (or by) his own glory and excellence (2 Pet. 1:3), they should respond by adding to their faith a variety of virtues, starting with excellence (2 Pet. 1:5).”

Accordingly, a biblical understanding of excellence is thoroughly theocentric and therefore must attend every application to life and work. Subsequently, the Christological lens present in Peter’s letter should further govern our efforts to apply excellence. To be clear, this does not fold up every conversation about excellence into a tidy syntactical or theological debate. Instead, it establishes the cornerstone (Eph 2:20; 1 Pet 2:6). From this cornerstone, Christians should begin to do the tough sledding of relating Christ’s excellence to every area and detail of life. One easy first step, as a test case, is the arena of moral excellence. Below, this study will briefly engage the field of virtue ethics as an extension of the principles discussed surrounding arete.

**A Supplementary Model of Excellence: Virtue**

As seen above, virtue is akin to excellence and even shares a similar etymology. Thus, there is a long history of thinking on “excellence” in the realm of moral philosophy. Arguably, one of the greatest cultural vestiges that made its way down the traditions of Western society are the teachings on virtue formation, or moral

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excellence. The Aristotelian tradition presents a picture of individual moral excellence that aims at a virtuous society. By way of immediate application from the preceding line of argument, this is best understood as God’s restraining common grace working in the image of God in Aristotle, bringing glory to God while serving society. Furthermore, the ideal of the virtuous life draws a straight line from flourishing (as associated with the image of God in the previous section) to excellence. For Aristotle, the ideal was a fully flourishing human being, or as he

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\(^{179}\) Russell provides a brief synopsis of the long stream of writers and thinkers in the field of virtue ethics. He describes, “Virtue ethics has a very long history—longer than any other tradition in moral philosophy—stretching back to the ancient Greek philosophers and, a world away, ancient Chinese philosophers as well. Its central concepts are the excellences of character, such as fairness, courage, and self-control, and it focuses on how such excellences help us live good lives, treat ourselves and others well, and share thriving communities” (Daniel Russell, ed., The Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013], 1).

\(^{180}\) There are noticeable contributions from the Platonic tradition and even traces of influence from the Eastern moral reasoning tradition, but Aristotle is the dominant figure. N. T. Wright summarizes the key marks of the tradition this way: “It was Aristotle, about 350 years before the time of Jesus, who developed the threefold pattern of character transformation . . . . There is first the ‘goal,’ the telos, the ultimate thing we’re aiming at; there are then steps you take toward that goal, the ‘strengths’ of character which will enable you to arrive at that goal; and there is the process of moral training by which these ‘strengths’ turn into habits, become second nature. For Aristotle, the goal was the ideal of a fully flourishing human being. Think of someone who has lived up to his or her full potential, displaying a complete, rounded, wise, and thoroughly formed character” (Wright, After You Believe, 33).

\(^{181}\) Browne writes, “Ethics, therefore, or the science of individual good, must be the groundwork of the rest; families and states are composed of individuals; unless, therefore, the parts be good, the whole cannot be perfect. The development, therefore, of the principles of man’s moral nature must necessarily precede, and be an introduction to an investigation of the principles of human society” (R. W. Browne, introduction to Aristotle, and R. W. Browne, The Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle [London: George Bell and Sons, 1889], 2).

\(^{182}\) Grudem catalogues examples of common grace that stretch from the physical realm to the intellectual realm, and from the society realm to the moral realm. He points to Rom 2:14-15 as evidence for saying, “This inward sense of right and wrong that God gives to all people means that they will frequently approve of moral standards that reflect many of the moral standards in Scripture” (Grudem, Systematic Theology, 660).
explained the goal of life, *eudaimonia*. For the apostle Paul, the ideal was a life conformed to the image of Christ that displays the glory of God.

The ancient notion of virtue was revived in recent years. In 1981, Alasdair MacIntyre authored *After Virtue*, which sounded a call to reconsider virtue as a basis for moral philosophy over and against the pragmatism and emotivism that materialized during the Enlightenment. It is difficult to understand the recent conversations regarding virtue in the English-speaking world without MacIntyre’s proposal. His discussion begins by addressing the formative reasons why virtue, and specifically the language of morality, is in a grave state. Then, he locates virtue in the deep cultural

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183 Jonathan Pennington, in an explication of virtue from the Sermon on the Mount, connects Aristotle’s *eudaimonia* with Jesus’ *makarios*: “The true people of God—Jesus’ disciples—are described here as *makarios*. *Makarios-*ness (my made-up English word for the notion of the Greek word *makarios*, usually translated ‘blessed’) is the headlining idea for each of the Beatitudes. ‘Blessed’ is a fine enough translation because it retains a God-consciousness, but the idea appears to be broader than our rather generic English word ‘blessed.’ . . . So right from the beginning of the Sermon we get a hint that Jesus’ way of teaching is emphasizing not duty or external purity but a way of being that will result in full God-directed *eudaimonia* or flourishing, key virtue ideas. To put it more simply, Aristotle’s “secular” *eudaimonia* becomes Jesus’ God-ward *makarios*” (Jonathan Pennington, “Be Ye Virtuous as Your Heavenly Father is Virtuous” [paper presented at the Society for Christian Psychology, Regent University, October 2012], 4-5, accessed November 19, 2014, http://christianpsych.org/media/be_ye_virtuous.pdf).

184 N. T. Wright understands Paul’s teaching to direct the church toward a human renewal project or, as he puts it, “It is about being remade in God’s image. It is, in other words, about becoming genuinely human. Where Aristotle had *eudaimonia* (flourishing), Paul has ‘the image of God’” (Wright, *After You Believe*, 168).

185 One example of the tension is demonstrated in his discussion of Aristotle’s account of virtue. MacIntyre writes, “According to Aristotle then excellence of character and intelligence cannot be separated. Here Aristotle expresses a view characteristically at odds with that dominant in the modern world. The modern view is expressed at one level in such banalities as ‘Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever’ and at another in such profundities as Kant’s distinction between the good will, the possession of which alone is both necessary and sufficient for moral worth . . . . So for Kant one can be both good and stupid; but for Aristotle stupidity of a certain kind precludes goodness” (Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* [South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984], 154-55).

186 Hauerwas claims, “Few dispute that Alasdair MacIntyre is one of the most important philosophers of our time” (Stanley Hauerwas, “The Virtues of Alasdair MacIntyre,” *First Things* 176 [October 2007]: 35).

187 MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2. The first half of the book offers a severe critique (though not a full rejection as some have accused him) of Modernity and the social and intellectual context it has created.
realities of Greek and Roman societies such as the heroic narratives of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. He also itemizes the contributions of medieval age thinkers, including their concern: “How is the practice of the four cardinal virtues of justice, prudence, temperance, and courage to be related to that of the theological virtues—faith, hope and charity?” These considerations lead MacIntyre to arrive at the positive formulation of a definition of virtue that forms the provision for his retrieval project of virtue within moral philosophy. The challenge acknowledged by MacIntyre (and others in the virtue tradition) comes when attempting to arrive at any one set of virtues. As a result, he is regularly charged as adhering to relativism. Hauerwas explains this common criticism: “MacIntyre certainly holds that it is undeniable that many culturally embodied systems of thought and action exist with their own standards of excellence. Moreover, adherents of these systems come to conclusions that are incompatible with other systems.” For the purposes of this study, two matters in MacIntyre are directly relevant. First, he re-

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188 Ibid., 121-45. Throughout the discussion, MacIntyre notes Homer’s use of *arete* (or *aretai*) to communicate the classic virtues. He suggests from the beginning that *arete*, “is in the Homeric poems used for excellence of any kind; a fast runner displays the *arete* of his feet (*Iliad* 20. 411) and a son excels his father in every kind of *arete*—as athlete, as soldier and in mind (*Iliad* 15. 642)” (ibid., 122).

189 He notes that by the 1300s, “this classification of the virtues is found in vernacular as well as in Latin writers” (ibid., 167-68).

190 He offers this preliminary definition: “A virtue is an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods” (ibid., 191).

191 MacIntyre highlights the contrasting catalogues of virtues in Homer, Aristotle, the New Testament, and medieval thinkers along with the modern examples of Jane Austen and Benjamin Franklin. He concludes, “They offer us different and incompatible lists of the virtues; and they have different and incompatible theories of the virtues” (ibid., 181).

192 Lutz takes up a defense of MacIntyre against his loudest detractors on this issue and others. See Christopher Lutz, *Tradition in the Ethics of Alasdair MacIntyre: Relativism, Thomism, and Philosophy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2009).

substantiates the inclusion of virtues into society’s vocabulary. In other words, he creates a playing field for discussing moral excellence, which is no small task. Second, MacIntyre provides a way forward at the seeming impasse of conflicting accounts of virtue. This is the same predicament that arises with discussion about excellence in general and a Christian understanding of excellence in particular. The challenges and benefits of understanding virtue parallel those of excellence. Virtue and excellence, then, are allies and both profit from theological reflection.

The relationship between excellence and virtue is accentuated in Kostenberger’s exhortation for Christian educators, specifically those working in scholarship, to become holy.  

Previously, he defines excellence as “the quality of standing out or towering above the rest, being eminent or superior (though not feeling superior, which is the essence of pride), and distinguishing oneself in some extraordinary or special way.” He returns to this definition to associate excellence and holiness, and explains both terms are best understood in light of uniqueness, otherness, and being set apart. Building upon MacIntyre, Kostenberger shows virtue prioritizes being over doing, and as a result, he agrees with the argument made in virtue ethics: “A person’s actions reveal his or her character, while character produces actions.” The university setting has been a laboratory for this premise and virtue formation in general throughout

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194 Kostenberger, *Excellence*, 55. Starting with the biblical reference, “Be holy, for I am holy” (1 Pet 1:15-16), he proceeds to explain the New Testament teachings that we now share in the holiness of Christ (1 Cor 1:2, 30; Heb 12:10).

195 Ibid., 35.

196 Ibid.

197 Ibid., 47.
the Christian tradition and the secular tradition. Briefly, this study will investigate the connection between virtue and excellence in the world of education.

Harry Lewis, former Dean of the illustrious Harvard College, authored *Excellence Without a Soul*, which bemoans the loss of moral development in the Harvard student experience. He points to the “hollow excellence” that constitutes one of America’s most historic and pace-setting universities. Institutions of higher education like Harvard create a petri dish of sorts for the cross-section of excellence and virtue formation. Lewis is not alone in his observation of the moral modifications within society at large and the collegiate setting in particular. John Henry Newman advocated for such a university over a century ago: “Greatness and unity go together; excellence implies a centre.” In a more recent critique, Steve Garber, a former scholar in residence for the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities, detects what he calls an intellectually

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198 Pelikan describes the university in the Catholic Middle Ages using John Henry Newman’s phrase, “the very age of Universities.” He goes on to explain educations’ deep roots in the monastery and the church, he writes, “The medieval university was the foundation of the university as we know it, and many of the most eminent modern universities—Bologna, Oxford, and Prague among others—can trace an unbroken, continuity to the Middle Ages, from which large parts of the customs (and costumes) and prerogatives of the modern university are also derived” (Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Idea of a University: A Reexamination* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992], 45). For a brief investigation of American morality, including historical sketch of the role of virtue, see also Peter Kreeft, *Back to Virtue* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1992), 19-58.

199 Pelikan proposes, “There would be considerable merit to the thesis that the history of the process of secularization in the West can be traced more thoroughly through the history of education than through that of any other area of society (except perhaps family life)” (Pelikan, *The Idea of a University*, 46).

200 Harry R. Lewis, *Excellence without a Soul: How a Great University Forgot Education* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006), 1. The following chapter will spend extended time investigating the assumptions of knowledge (rules of epistemology) at play that contribute to the dichotomy of fact/value and how mentors can play a role in bridging these back together. Furthermore, this problem that surfaces in both chapters on excellence and mentoring will be addressed in the applications of this research for Christian leaders (chap. 6).

dishonest and educationally impoverishing experience in the academy. These competitive centers of intellectual privilege should serve as bastions of true, virtuous excellence, but often prove to deracinate the already thin moral base of the students in their care. What does all of this have to do with Engstrom? Well, Engstrom was not first and foremost an educator or a philosopher, but he did love Christian higher education and served on several university boards appointments and even filled in as interim President of Azusa Pacific University for two years. But primarily, he was deeply concerned with achieving excellence without diluting one’s integrity in the slightest. Engstrom championed a practice of excellence that set the best apart from the status quo and necessitated the pursuit of virtue. Like MacIntyre and other critiques of the Enlightenment distinction, Engstrom retained a moral component to excellence.

Engstrom watched as other Christian leaders with significant platforms had public moral failures and brought shame on the name of Christ. In response, he wrote a

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203 Recently, Anthony Kronman, former Dean of Yale Law School, also attempts to restore life’s driving questions (“what one should care about and why”) to the arena of the academy. See Anthony Kronman, *Education’s End: Why Our Colleges and Universities Have Given Up on the Meaning of Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).

204 According to Engstrom’s own account, he says, “I have always had a high interest in Christian higher education, and have been pleased to serve on the board of trustees at Taylor University, George Fox College, Azusa Pacific University and The International School of Theology.” Engstrom gave commencement addresses at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Northwestern College in Minneapolis, Crown College, Marion College, St. Paul Bible College, Seattle Pacific University, John Brown University, Sterling University (Kansas), and Tabor College. He also received honorary doctorates from five of the schools listed. See Engstrom, *Reflections on a Pilgrimage*, 151.

work with Robert Larson, *Integrity*, to combat what appeared to be an epidemic among the leaders and their organizations. Engstrom was chiefly concerned that the picture of Christ in the message matches the picture of Christ in the messenger. The necessary correspondence between claims and actions is a vital component of integrity, for there is no denying people’s lives bear witness to that which they love the most. Engstrom didn’t use the same formula, but it is helpful to consider integrity in terms of greatest love or reverence. Beale explains, “People resemble what they revere, either for ruin or restoration. God has made all people to reflect, to be imaging beings. People will always reflect something, whether it be God’s character or some feature of the world.”

Reverence for God will result in the prioritization of excellence in every sphere, beginning with moral wholesomeness. Naugle affirms, “Virtues are the signature strengths of an authentically reordered Christian life.” The reordering of life will be the necessary step for all Christians aiming to lead with excellence in the next generation. For surely, the globalization of the twenty-first century will experience rapid and unimaginable variations of cultures core components: communication, travel, technological advance and more. In the final portion of this chapter, this research will

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206 The discussion on the fact/value distinction in Enlightenment thought is developed further in chap. 4.

207 Engstrom demonstrates this in the citation of a 1987 poll that 42 percent of Americans doubted the honesty of some, if not most, appeals for religious donations. See Engstrom and Larson, *Integrity*, 5.

208 In addition to the aforementioned work, *Integrity*, this concern is also demonstrated as a primary theme in *Making the Right Choices*. See Ted Engstrom and Norman Rohrer, *Making the Right Choices* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993).

209 Beale, *We Are What We Worship*, 284.

anticipate such alterations to the fabric of society, thus attempt to anticipate the re-
composition of a Christian leader’s pursuit of excellence.

Re-imagining Excellence for the Twenty-
First Century Christian Leader

In conclusion, chapter 3 will consider some of the forthcoming cultural
challenges alongside the above theological building blocks. The goal of this section is to
stand on the biblical and theological footing and point forward to the requisite
responsibilities of Christian leaders that channel Engstrom’s key themes in The Pursuit of
Excellence. First, this study grounded excellence in the doctrine of God, however, the
loudest cultural voices calling for excellence in the twenty first century are not Jonathan
Edwards or Andreas Kostenberger. For example, the business community publicly values
excellence,\(^{211}\) although the basis for excellence is often anchored in profit over God.\(^{212}\)
Engstrom recognized the innate challenges within the Christian community in his day to
agree on the source of excellence and therefore what qualifies as excellence. The
disparity is likely to grow as national, political, and socio-economic values collide in the
new globalized world.\(^{213}\) A richly orthodox doctrine of God can catalyze efforts to
prescribe excellence amidst globalization.

\(^{211}\) The Peters and Waterman study instigated a litany of publications on “excellence” within
the business community. This includes the founding of centers of excellence and awards for excellence. For
one perspective on the development and public recognition of business excellence, see Les Porter and

\(^{212}\) This does not imply profit is inherently evil, but merely that it cannot uphold the weight of
the biblical teaching on excellence, only God can. For a short examination of profit as a good creation but
not an ultimate goal of God, see Jeff Van Duzer, *Why Business Matters to God* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP
Academic, 2010), 169-201. For a more thorough look at the themes of profit, common good and business,
see Kenman Wong and Scott Rae, *Business for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic,
2011).

\(^{213}\) For an academic, textbook introduction to globalization, see Matthew Sparke, *Introducing
Second, if one aspect of renewing the image of God stems from meditation and imitation (Phil 4:8-9), then how will the coming generation nurture such virtues when they are constantly conveying their own filtered image and following the social-media-constructed versions of others? Distraction rules the day and the habits appear to be spiraling. Culture declares, “Talk about anything and everything,” while Scripture states: “reflect on the greatest things” (cf. Phil 4:8). Culture screams, “Express yourself by yourself,” and Scripture whispers: “be involved in observing the lives of those who walk with God” (cf. Phil 4:9). The knee-jerk reaction to such a cultural climate is to champion the Luddite approach, but such a position will not accomplish the ultimate goal. The challenge is compounded when considering Engstrom’s overall proposal, and the proposal of this dissertation, to lead and even lead the leaders through excellence. Leadership will involve the risk of trial and error.

Leaders exhibit the opposite values of distraction to accomplish excellence: vision, focus, self-discipline, and careful

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216 The opportunities for new technologies are unfathomable, for good and evil. These specific cultural analyses are largely observations of Western society, but apply to developing nations where new forms of media are rapidly saturating society.

217 The same “Luddite” claim was lofted twenty years ago against those who showed reservations against George Washington University’s splitting of human embryos for the purpose of cloning. See David Carlan, “For Luddite Humanism,” First Things 42 (April 1994): 9-10.

218 This is case in point as to why Engstrom insists, “That is why it takes courage to be a good leader. The effective leader accepts the fact that the future is unknown, attempts to reduce uncertainty by choosing between a number of alternatives, makes a decision and then takes the risk to move out” (Ted Engstrom, 60-sec Management Guide [Waco, TX: Word, 1984], 68).
attention to detail. Leadership cannot shrink back from the developing channels of communication and technology, yet there is a biblical picture guiding all attempts to remain on the bleeding edge, namely, alignment with the chief cornerstone. Herein lies the great need to possess a robust theology of the image of God, including no less than (1) the functional aspect of God’s design seen in the cultural mandate to work, (2) the charge to bear the image of God with excellence in one’s work, (3) and the pursuit of the goal of flourishing until Christ’s return.

Third, not only are the habits of moral maturation eroding, but Western culture’s definition of morally acceptable behavior and the church’s definition are drifting apart. In Engstrom’s day, the moral alignment—at least on the surface level—was much more intact. This is no longer the case. However, it is much more like the

Daniel Goleman proposes an “Anatomy of Attention” that requires focusing abilities in the following three areas: big-picture view, pattern recognition, and systems thinking. He writes, “The challenge for leaders goes beyond having strengths in all three kinds of focus. The key is finding balance, and using the right one at the right time. The well-focused leader balances the data streams each offers, weaving these strands into seamless action. Putting together data on attention with that on emotional intelligence and performance, this triple focus emerges as a hidden driver of excellence” (Daniel Goleman, *Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence* [New York: Harper Collins, 2013], 235-36).

Mohler addresses the developing digital realities of leadership. He argues, “The digital world did not exist a generation ago, and now it is a fundamental fact of life . . . . Leaders who talk about the real world as opposed to the digital world are making a mistake, a category error. While we are right to prioritize real face-to-face conversations and to find comfort and grounding in stable authorities like the printed book, the digital world is itself a real world, just real in a different way” (Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead* [Minneapolis: Bethany, 2012], 175).

This is certainly not to imply that America had a morally pristine history. Many jeremiads have been offered to cure the moral plight of America. For a history of such lamentations, see Andrew Murphy, *Prodigal Nation: Moral Decline and Divine Punishment from New England to 9/11* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).


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219 Daniel Goleman proposes an “Anatomy of Attention” that requires focusing abilities in the following three areas: big-picture view, pattern recognition, and systems thinking. He writes, “The challenge for leaders goes beyond having strengths in all three kinds of focus. The key is finding balance, and using the right one at the right time. The well-focused leader balances the data streams each offers, weaving these strands into seamless action. Putting together data on attention with that on emotional intelligence and performance, this triple focus emerges as a hidden driver of excellence” (Daniel Goleman, *Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence* [New York: Harper Collins, 2013], 235-36).

220 Mohler addresses the developing digital realities of leadership. He argues, “The digital world did not exist a generation ago, and now it is a fundamental fact of life . . . . Leaders who talk about the real world as opposed to the digital world are making a mistake, a category error. While we are right to prioritize real face-to-face conversations and to find comfort and grounding in stable authorities like the printed book, the digital world is itself a real world, just real in a different way” (Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead* [Minneapolis: Bethany, 2012], 175).

221 This is certainly not to imply that America had a morally pristine history. Many jeremiads have been offered to cure the moral plight of America. For a history of such lamentations, see Andrew Murphy, *Prodigal Nation: Moral Decline and Divine Punishment from New England to 9/11* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

culture in which Peter and Paul composed their pastoral letters calling for arete.\textsuperscript{223} There is a demonstrative courage that shapes the kind of excellence a Christian leader must embody amid cultural pressure. The reality of the judgment of God should guide a leader’s cultural diagnosis and a leader’s internal moral compass. Reflection on God’s judgment should lead to personal accountability and motivation to reach those who do not know the safety of Christ.

The final theological theme, God’s common grace, augments a Christian understanding of excellence. As Andrew Peterson pens, “Isn’t it love, this rain that falls on the sinners and the saints. Isn’t it love, this well that won’t run dry.”\textsuperscript{224} A middle space, or common space, encircles the conversation regarding excellence. Common grace also helps explain, with admittedly different values, the joint pursuit of excellence.\textsuperscript{225} If sin fractures both the doer of work and the materials of the work (physical or theoretical), then the pursuit of excellence must be understood with both limitations and graces. However, these defects are not the final mark of the story. In the middle of God’s restoration process of all creation, he gives common grace even while rescuing his people and equipping them with natural and spiritual gifts. Though limited, the four areas of doctrine establish and stretch the impact of excellence for Christian leaders.

\textsuperscript{223}For context of the apostles’ lives and ministries, see F. F. Bruce, \textit{Paul Apostle of the Heart Set Free} (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1977); Pheme Perkins, \textit{Peter: Apostle for the Whole Church} (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994).


\textsuperscript{225}Armstrong and Jones explain the common desire in believers and non-believers: “It is a yearning that searches for new life, that longs to experience a sense of flourishing intrinsically linked to excellence. It is a yearning that Paul takes up with the Philippians, and also with us. It is a yearning for beauty and excellence that has the Triune God as its referent, standard, and source” (Jones and Armstrong, \textit{Resurrecting Excellence}, 21).
Likewise, the biblical considerations provide a navigational device to traverse the complexities surrounding excellence. Paul’s hope for the church is to have the discernment to approve what is best (Phil 1:10). Christian excellence is forming Christ’s people into the cruciform way of Christ (2 Pet 1:3). Excellence, in the New Testament, is also shrouded in the context of Christian wisdom and virtue (Phil 4:8; 2 Pet 1:3-5). The following statement by Jones and Armstrong encapsulates the biblical concerns and provides a laconic summary:

Resurrecting excellence in Christian life and ministry finds its referent, standard, and source in the excellence of the Triune God. The horizon of God’s excellence is the glory of the creation given to us by the Father, the redeeming and healing love manifested in the life, death, and resurrection of the Son, and the sustaining and transforming work of the Holy Spirit, who is ever conforming us to Christ and making all things new. We are called to participate in God’s “still more excellent way” in lives that both bear witness to, and contribute to, the telos of God’s creation.  

In conclusion, Engstrom’s tone on excellence is captured in the following quotation on his disgust for mediocrity and his desire for God’s glory in work. He insists,

No one should be more earnest than the Christian leader in the pursuit of excellence. I have a feeling that often this is a missing note in our evangelical Christian milieu. You will agree with me that God’s work demands from us the very best that we have to offer Him, but too often we come to an assignment poorly prepared, or we continue to have sloppy work habits, or we are careless in the handling of our various Christian responsibilities . . . . We cannot escape it—in Christian service we are called to excellence.

Engstrom’s complete commitment to excellence inspires in others a pathway to achieving excellence (Phil 4:9). Excellence is not for the faint of heart, and Christians pursuing excellence cannot be faint of heart or faint of faith—it demands one’s complete

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energy, focus, theology and integrity. In the next chapter, Engstrom’s case for excellence is strengthened when coupled with his other writings on mentoring.\textsuperscript{228} 

\textsuperscript{228}Mentoring will be the focus of chap. 4, which will be organized in a parallel fashion to chap. 3: Engstrom’s view, theological foundations, biblical foundation, a supplementary concept, and the re-imagining of leadership in light of the research.
“Ted Engstrom was a role model, encourager, mentor, and leader for more than sixty years.”
-Frank Lofaro, President Christian Management Association

Christian leaders aspire for life-changing impact and achieve it by employing all the resources at their disposal. Like the servant in Matthew 25 who worked to earn an increase with his master’s resources, Christian leaders seek the optimal return on their investment to know the favor of their Master in heaven. One strategy for maximal life-change is mentoring. Mentoring is an investment that employs the resource of one’s accumulated wisdom and skill into the life others, or as Engstrom’s says, “passing on to others what God has given you.”

Engstrom introduces The Making of a Mentor with these words, “Jesus ministered to many, but he focused on a few.” If Jesus, the infinite and omnipresent one, descended into time and space and focused on a limited number of people for a limited time in a limited region of the world, what are the implications for

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1As quoted in Timothy Beals, The Essential Engstrom (Colorado Springs: Authentic, 2007), i.

2According to Carson, Matt 25 speaks to increased responsibility and sharing in the master’s joy (chara) in this lifetime, but also “guarantees that the consummated kingdom provides glorious new responsibilities and holy delight.” D. A. Carson, Matthew, in vol. 8 of The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, ed. Frank Gaebelein and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 517.

3This language is borrowed from the subtitle of his first book on mentoring. See Ted Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1989), iii.

his followers? Why only a few? What does that tell us about the methods of developing people and transforming the world within God’s rescue story? Like chapter three, the proposal in this chapter seeks to frame mentoring as understood by Engstrom and then filter his conclusions through the bifocals of theology and contemporary mentoring practice.

It is important to narrow the scope of this undertaking from the outset because there are several fields of study that emerge throughout these observations. The goals of this chapter are (1) to arrive at Engstrom’s teachings on mentoring, (2) to offer some theological reflections that continue the legacy he left, and (3) to begin to re-imagine an Engstrom-like model of mentoring undergirded by contributions from the field of theology for the challenges of the twenty-first century. In order to accomplish this, the research begins with the main sources of Engstrom’s writing on mentoring to provide both a working definition and a sense of the urgency with which he wrote. Then, this chapter will extend outside Engstrom’s written corpus to examine some insights from Christian anthropology, epistemology, Christology, and missiology that provide support for Engstrom’s conclusions. After these foundational observations, the research will turn to look at two New Testament models of mentoring used throughout Engstrom: Jesus and

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5For authors who have addressed this questions primarily through church discipleship and evangelism, see Rebecca Pippert, Out of the Salt Shaker and into the World (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979; Robert Coleman, The Master Plan of Evangelism (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1993); Brad Waggoner, The Shape of Faith to Come: Spiritual Formation and the Future of Discipleship (Nashville: B&H, 2008); and Eric Geiger, Michael Kelley, and Phillip Nation. Transformational Discipleship (Nashville: B&H, 2012).

6The conclusions in this chap. are highly limited, but point forward to the final chap., where more attention will be given to what these observations means for Christian leaders.

7This will largely be accomplished through direct quotations, including punctuation, which often surfaces the energy and expectancy with his writings.
Paul. Next, this chapter will make a brief departure from the explicit biblical and theological responses to learn from the field of education, which is one field in the larger body of literature that interacts with mentoring. Finally, this chapter will begin to point beyond Engstrom’s life and writings toward the re-imagination of a mentoring ministry that operates as a vital aspect of Christian leadership for the twenty-first century.

**Mentoring: Engstrom’s Range of Meaning**

Prior to establishing theological foundations or biblical examples, it is necessary to draw some parameters around Engstrom’s use of the term mentor or mentoring. Like many other terms that slosh back and forth from Christian tradition to the public secular marketplace, mentoring can be a slippery concept. Edward Smither traces out an early Christian model of mentoring; he explains, “Although no exact equivalent for the term mentoring exists in the New Testament and early Christian texts, there are, however, some associated words that work together to express the concept. For

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8Engstrom referenced more than only these two biblical figures, but they were prominent examples in his work on mentoring.

9Like chap. 3, this chap. will depart from the rudimentary theological discussions to listen to a voice from a related sector of the world. Instead of surveying professional fields that have also written on mentoring, this portion of the argument installs some basic insights from the field of education (a world close to Engstrom’s heart) to strengthen and diversify the role mentoring plays both in learning and developing leaders. Finally, the educational angle of reasoning leads to areas of further study listed in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

10In the introduction to The Fine Art of Mentoring, Gordon MacDonald comments on the need to focus on mentoring in our generation due to the massive cultural assumptions that made it a normative part of society in past generations. He writes, “I have a hunch that a book on mentoring would not have been necessary one hundred years ago, and an eighteenth century publisher might have muttered irreverently, ‘What’s the fuss all about?’ That’s because, up until recently, mentoring—the development of a person—was a way of life between generations. It was to human relationships what breathing is to the body. Mentoring was assumed, expected, and, therefore, almost unnoticed because of its commonness in human experience” (Gordon MacDonald, in the introduction to Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, ix).

11Bobb Biehl acknowledges, “Mentoring does not mean the same thing to everyone. Today, mentoring is a buzz-word. Today it has come to mean everything from a primary professor for a Ph.D.
example, we find verbs like “make disciples” (*matheteuo*), “teach” (*didasko*), “train” (*didasko*), “be sound” (*hugiaino*), and “follow” (*akaloutheo*), as well as nouns like “disciple” (*mathetes*), “teacher” (*didaskolas*), “imitator” (*mimetes*), and “training” (*didache*). So what exactly is mentoring? It is not the task of this assignment to provide a new definition of *mentoring*, rather to simply acknowledge the challenges surrounding the term and zero in on how it was used in Engstrom’s life and writings.

Engstrom, writing with Ron Jenson, explains it this way:

> For the Christian, mentoring has objectives in the real world that go beyond success and advancement, to personal significance and healthy relationships with God and others. . . . A mentor provides modeling, close supervision on special projects, and individualized help in many areas-discipline, encouragement, corrections, confrontations, and a calling to accountability. . . . Mentoring is a broad term describing the process of assisting a man or woman to develop his or her maximum potential in Jesus Christ regardless of vocation.  

> The baseline for mentoring, in Engstrom’s estimation, is following in the example of Christ’s life and work. Beyond that, three key ingredients in Engstrom’s work include (1) a qualified and interested mentor, (2) a mutual desire for holistic guidance, and (3) a common pursuit of character development. These three factors provide the core components for mentoring and yield maximum impact in the long-view. These themes will be briefly explored in the section on theological foundations and then returned to in the concluding remarks on the need for mentoring in the twenty-first

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14 These three summary refrains are not original with Engstrom, but have been distilled across his writings and will serve to organize this chap.
century Christian leader. But first, it is necessary to look beyond the summary citation above to the broader range of meaning Engstrom employs in his call to mentor.\footnote{His perspective on the “long-view” comes from a seasoned life of experimentation and leadership experience. Engstrom developed young leaders his whole life, but did not choose to write a dedicated volume on mentoring until 1989 (age 73) and 2005 (age 89).}

First, mentoring, by nature, requires someone who has proven ability to lead and is attentive to the development of the other person(s).\footnote{Engstrom does not lay out a typology for mentors, but in Clinton and Clinton’s work, \textit{The Mentor Handbook}, they attempt to account for the spectrum of mentoring experiences. There, they detail nine “types of mentors” along with the key mentoring function, or “central thrust of empowerment”: (1) Discipler (enablement in basics of following Christ), (2) Spiritual Guide (accountability for spiritual disciplines for growth and maturity), (3) Coach (skills, motivation to use), (4) Counselor (timely advice; correct perspectives on viewing self, others, and ministry), (5) Teacher (knowledge, motivation to see), (6) Sponsor (career guidance and protection as leader moves upward in an organization), (7) Contemporary Model (a personal model for life or ministry that not only exemplifies but commands emulation), (8) Historical Model (dynamic principles and values for life and ministry), (9) Divine Contact (timely guidance or discernment perceived as divine intervention). See Robert Clinton and Richard Clinton, \textit{The Mentor Handbook} (Altadena, CA: Barnabus, 1991), 2-23.}

Engstrom list several qualifications, including that “a mentor is a person who has achieved superior rank on an organizational or professional ladder; is an authority in his or her field as the result of disciplined work, study, and experience; has a certain measure of influence in his or her chosen field.”\footnote{Engstrom explains, “To be a mentor is to use one’ higher position to help someone else move up—even if they “pass” the mentor.” Ted Engstrom and Ed Dayton, “On Being a Mentor,” in \textit{Christian Leadership Letter} (World Vision International, April, 1981), 1.} For Engstrom, possessing a level of expertise is essential.\footnote{Engstrom, \textit{The Fine Art of Mentoring}, 4.} He goes on to explain that mentoring does not mean having a new ‘buddy’ and the mentor might have limited time, but the mentor should be “genuinely interested in a protégé’s growth and development.”\footnote{This is not intended to sanction only the elite to the practice of mentoring. The title of his second chapter reveals quite the opposite, it is called, “Anyone Can/Everyone Should.” See Engstrom, \textit{The Fine Art of Mentoring}, 15-27.} This means that the mentor will be doing the type of work that is worthy

\begin{center}
\textit{Ibid.}
\end{center}
of imitation (qualified) and provide avenues of personal observation or personal reflection for the individual or group of protégés (interested). The frequency and the degree of invitation into the mentor’s life and work will vary, but the basic desire to involve others and guide others is non-negotiable in Engstrom’s view.

Secondly, a mentor is not only qualified and interested, but both parties need to have a mutual desire for holistic guidance.\textsuperscript{21} Engstrom clarifies what he includes as mentoring by contrasting it with discipleship. He suggests that a disciple is primarily, “one who helps an understudy to (1) give up his own will for the will of God the Father, (2) live daily a life of spiritual sacrifice for the glory of Christ, and (3) strive to be consistently obedient to the commands of his Master.”\textsuperscript{22} These characteristics are intended to highlight the boundaries of discipleship and make room for the unique contribution of mentoring, which is a more holistic life development. There remains significant overlap of the two terms and there are several clear examples where Engstrom uses discipleship and mentoring interchangeably. One such example comes in the concluding chapter of \textit{The Fine Art of Mentoring}, where Engstrom provides commentary on Luke 14:26. He writes, “Following the divine mentor is costly. It begins with a willingness to renounce all other loyalties in preference to Jesus Christ. To be a disciple of Christ, I must follow Him and do His bidding even when it appears that it will cost me my mother and my father, my wife (or husband), and my children.”\textsuperscript{23} Jesus, as a mentor, made disciples who in turn, made disciples. The significant denotative and connotative

\textsuperscript{21} As noted above, this more technical descriptor results from the coalescing of various emphases within Engstrom, not from Engstrom himself.

\textsuperscript{22}Engstrom, \textit{The Fine Art of Mentoring}, 4.

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid., 156-63.
overlap between mentoring and discipleship in Engstrom provide freedom for the Christian to catch a vision for being a type of leader without worrying about following a list of technical steps that can encrust a knotty, academic definition. Still, based on Engstrom’s comparisons, it is fair to say that all Christian mentoring involves an aspect of discipleship. That is, the spiritual life of the mentee cannot be overlooked. Engstrom’s use of the term also allows for overlap with the definitions and current practices such as counseling and consulting. The parallel could even extend to the role of friendship in a Christian leader’s life. Although the range of meaning extends to other ventures beyond discipleship, Engstrom uses it most readily in relation to our call to make disciples. The figure below helps visualize the broader overlap of terms.

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24 Engstrom’s writing is extremely accessible. A reoccurring theme throughout Engstrom’s writings is the emphasis on the pragmatic effects of a position or argument. He concerns himself with the big picture outcomes and is less interested in scholastic or abstract matters. This also includes theological matters, which is why the following section will largely rely on outside sources to provide a theological basis.


26 Engstrom wrote a companion volume to *The Fine Art of Mentoring* called *The Fine Art of Friendship* that outlines how to build and maintain friendships. Both works paint the portrait of the type of person fit to be a friend/mentor and then provide practical advice and motivation to pursue this role in life. Ted Engstrom and Robert Larson, *The Fine Art of Friendship* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985).

27 In the last few decades, the term “coaching” has emerged that can often overlap with mentoring. Gary Collins explains, “Some writers talk about coaching-mentoring, implying that they are one. Others use coaching, mentoring, and discipleship interchangeably . . . . Whatever term you prefer, all involve a relationship in which at least one person is further along in the journey of life and willing to guide others—often as a trusted role model.” Gary Collins, *Christian Coaching* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2001), 16-17.

28 Engstrom did not use the image above, but it helps the full range of meaning and application as understood by this research. Although an imperfect graphic, it is an attempt to translate Engstrom’s language to some contemporary practices and show the overlapping spectrum of meaning these terms imply. It overlaps most strongly with discipleship, but carries both the professional elements of coaching and consulting as well as the personal elements of counseling and friendship. The concentric circles are intended to picture the flexibility and broad application of Engstrom’s understanding of mentoring.
Gordon MacDonald, pastor and author, comments on Engstrom’s broad approach to mentoring compared to the narrower focus of discipleship. In the forward to *The Fine Art of Mentoring*, he remarks,

I’m delighted that he chose to write about mentoring and not about discipleship. For much of the emphasis on what is called discipleship in Christian circles (while helpful) has tended to center on a rather narrow segment of personal spirituality . . . . But my special friend, Ted, has reminded us that the development of people (for that is what mentoring is) is much more holistic. It includes the “sculpting” of people-values, the shaping of response patterns to crisis and opportunity, the acquisition of habits of work, the enlargement of one’s hunger for God, and the expansion of our view of creation. And much more!29

Engstrom expresses this holistic approach when he borrows a quotation from Mal King, the founder of Mentor Consulting Group in Santa Paula, California. He explains, leadership can be “nurtured and honed by influencing the whole being. And it is precisely this influencing of the whole being that no course, no seminary, no book can

29Engstrom, *The Fine Art of Mentoring*, xii.
satisfy. It takes life, it takes experience, it takes contact with a human soul, it takes example, and it takes emulation. In sum, it takes mentoring.”

Mentoring, for King and Engstrom, transfers meaning and skill beyond what one can even formulate with language. The potential for impact through holistic mentoring is extraordinary and involves both who humans are and what they do.

Professional and skill advancement is another aspect of holistic training.

Engstrom refers to the skill transfer and development aspect of mentoring as “vocational mentors.” He envisions a mentor in a professional setting to include all of the following: passing on a passion for developing others, encouraging cross-cultural agility, flaming a pursuit of excellence, instilling a strategic use of time, modeling a biblical view of management, and nurturing a deep appreciation for life. Engstrom makes a wide-ranging argument for the value provided by mentoring in the workplace, asserting, “Studies show that mentoring on both informal and formal levels can increase job satisfaction, job performance, and employee loyalty and result also in a decrease in

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31 Later in this chap., I will return to the idea of transferring a way of life and vocational skills that extend beyond language.

32 Michael D Vessey testifies, “For nearly forty years, I have had the privilege of being mentored by Dr. Ted Engstrom. Through him, I have learned that mentoring is not simply the imparting of new skills or a program by which to lead life. Rather, it is the imparting of character and wisdom that the mentor has gained through experience.” Engstrom and Jenson, The Making of a Mentor, 126.

33 Vocational mentors is a separate category (and addressed in a separate chapter) from “Mentors in the Home” and “Mentors in the Church.” In all three situations, the craft or expertise gained through extended labor is what needs to be transferred from the mentor to the mentee. See Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, vii.

34 These are summary statements taken throughout chap. 6, “Vocational Mentors.” See Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 99-134.
turnover.” Later, he argues, “In the corporate world, mentoring is never a liability. It converts the chain of command into an instrument for developing, enlightening, and inspiring leadership. . . . One on one, the head of the organization shares insights, values, and visions with understudies so they can catch the things that cannot be taught.” The case is clear in Engstrom’s mind that mentoring, including all the dynamics involved in the work environments, benefits a business or organization’s overall goals. Not only is it good for the organization, but also for the individuals involved—including for their personal lives.

The third, and final, ingredient of mentoring that needs underlining in Engstrom’s work entails the pursuit of character development. He reaches back to Greek mythology to educate his readers on the unlikely source of the buzzword “mentor.” He explains, “Ulysses asked a wise man named Mentor in Homer’s Odyssey to care for his son, Telemachus, while Ulysses was fighting in the Trojan War. Mentor taught the boy “not only in book learning but also in the wiles of the world.” The wiles of the work

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35 Ibid., 100.
36 Ibid., 101.
38 Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring. 3. Parker shows that this is a common starting point for the discussion. He explains, “Many treatments of mentoring point out that the term originated in Homer’s epic poem The Odyssey. In the narrative, the hero, Odysseus, has a son named Telemachus who is cared for, guided, and tutored in his father’s absence by the character Mentor. Based on this primary literary-historical foundation of the term, the contemporary usage of the expression appears to find its closest chronological and philosophical corollary in François Fénelon’s Les Adven- tures de Télémaque (c. 1699), which was intended as a continuation of the Homerian epic. Fénelon (1651-1715) was a Roman Catholic priest and missionary who rose to the position of Archbishop of Cambrai, which also led to his installment as the royal tutor to the Duke of Burgundy, the future king of France. As tutor, Fénelon sought to give the young royal an example to follow in his character Telemachus and in the wisdom offered to the young man by his guide, Mentor” (Shane Parker, “The Supervisor as Mentor-Coach in Theological Field Education,” Christian Education Journal 6, no. 1 [2009]: 52).
place require the type of integrity that was paramount in Engstrom’s view of a leader.\textsuperscript{39} This includes the personal integrity of the mentor and the willingness to play a role in the character development of one’s protégé. In his chapter, “Calling Protégés to Account,” he argues that accountability to God should be paired with accountability to a brother or sister in Christ. Elsewhere, Engstrom insists, “Your character, not your curriculum or programs, inspires the mentoree to become more Christ-like. . . . It is your character that can literally shape your mentoree’s character.”\textsuperscript{40} This includes vulnerable matters of one’s heart as well as professional matters of one’s proficiency.\textsuperscript{41} Personal mentoring requires integrity and produces a credible standard by which a protégé can judge their life.

Integrity is a non-negotiable qualifier to be a mentor, yet Engstrom provided a more comprehensive list of character qualities. At its core, this is a call to follow Christ’s example. He emphasizes nine core leadership traits from the Scriptures that shape and transform lives today as they did two-thousand years ago.\textsuperscript{42} Engstrom puts it this way: “The same qualities that characterized his (Christ) perfect life can also mark our own. We will be most like Christ—and most effective as mentors—when we develop the following nine traits: encouragement, self-discipline, gentleness, affection, strong communication, honesty, servanthood, godliness, and the willingness to confront.”\textsuperscript{43} Character and integrity constitute a key aspect of Engstrom’s vision for mentoring. In sum, the generous

\textsuperscript{39}In the midst of several moral failures of prominent television evangelists and public Christian personalities, Engstrom penned his work, Integrity, to call women and men to moral excellence publically and privately. See Ted Engstrom and Robert Larson, Integrity (Waco, TX: Word, 1987).

\textsuperscript{40}Engstrom and Jenson, The Making of a Mentor, 141.

\textsuperscript{41}Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 30.

\textsuperscript{42}Engstrom and Jenson, The Making of a Mentor, 2.

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., 9.
range of meaning bracketing Engstrom’s understanding circles back to the three key ingredients: a qualified and interested mentor, a mutual desire for holistic guidance, and a common pursuit of character development. In the next section, I will temporarily divert from a focus on Engstrom’s writings to address some rudimentary theological sub-questions that undergird the path he lays out for mentoring.

**Theological Foundations of Mentoring**

As stated in the introduction, one of the hopeful contributions this research can provide is a more robust theological infrastructure to bolster Engstrom’s more practical conclusions. In the following section, four areas of study will be discussed in so far as they implicate a Christian view of mentoring. In short, this section helps to defend how and why Engstrom leaves us a theological trajectory worthy of following by making explicit doctrinal observations that Engstrom leaves implicit.44 The theological foundations provided below stem from the areas of anthropology, epistemology, Christology, and missiology.45

**Anthropology and Mentoring**

Any effort to consider the role mentoring plays in leadership should involve, at least at some level, the basic questions about what it means to be humans. Millard

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44This dissertation does not claim that Engstrom would entirely align with each detail of doctrine below. Neither is this an attempt to reconstruct his theological positions from the fragments of theological commentary he provides. Rather, it is an independent look at theology that wraps back around to supplement Engstrom’s writings.

45It is noteworthy that these are not the only four areas of doctrine that come into direct contact with mentoring. Moreover, all four areas of doctrine are extremely limited in the treatment of the doctrine and the implications for mentoring. A comprehensive analysis of any one of these areas would be significantly beyond the scope of this present work. Instead, the multi-pronged approach is an abridged attempt to (1) demonstrate the fundamental role doctrine can play in formulating a Christian view of leadership, (2) deal with some questions that these four theological categories force upon the discussion on mentoring, and (3) begin to draw some lines between Engstrom and the field of theology.
Erickson suggests the doctrine of humanity is important today because of the present crisis in human self-understanding. He highlights current interest regarding the fundamental questions about humanity and the bewilderment regarding the answers.\textsuperscript{46} A starting place for unpacking the question of what it means to be human is found in the opening chapter of Genesis, as God says, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness . . . So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female” (Gen 1:26-27). In light of Genesis 1, the church has historically affirmed that God created human beings in his image.\textsuperscript{47} One of the systemic causes of the confusion today around humanity, according to Allison, dates back to the rise of new academic disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and (nontheological) anthropology.\textsuperscript{48} He claims, “These disciplines, with their nonbiblical foundations, antisupernaturalistic presuppositions, evolutionary leanings, empirical methodologies, and the like, presented strong challenges to the church’s traditional understanding of humanity.”\textsuperscript{49} He continues, “In part, the church reacted to reaffirm its position, but many within its ranks capitulated to these secular influences and reconstructed—even deconstructed—the doctrine.”\textsuperscript{50} When one’s view of humanity is altered, one’s view mentoring is also altered.

\textsuperscript{46} Millard Erickson, \textit{Christian Theology} (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 484.

\textsuperscript{47} Gregg Allison, \textit{Historical Theology} (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 321.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 334.

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 335.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
Erickson makes a further connection between anthropological theory and what churches practice in their mission.\textsuperscript{51} He explains, “This doctrine also affects how we minister. Our conception of human beings and their destiny will greatly affect how we deal with them and what we seek to do for them. If we think of humans as primarily physical beings, then the most important consideration, and perhaps virtually the only one, will be the satisfaction of physical drives in the most effective fashion. If we think of humans as primarily rational beings, then our ministry will appeal chiefly to their intellects.”\textsuperscript{52} The church has long struggled to agree on the exact nature and constitution of human beings.\textsuperscript{53} The early church’s perspective on the doctrine of humanity, though influenced by Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Origen, was marked most significantly by the teachings of Augustine, over and against Pelagius. Augustine described human dignity as reflective of the Trinity and perfected in Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{54} An Augustinian perspective on the image of God in man makes clear the origin of unblemished creation and the true cause of personal, familial, and societal deficiencies, namely sin, or man’s volitional rebellion against God. Therefore, a primary consideration for Christian mentors should be the protégé’s standing before God and continued renewal into the image of Christ (Rom

\textsuperscript{51}The right practice of the church, or orthopraxy, would be of primary interest to Engstrom.

\textsuperscript{52}Erickson, \textit{Christian Theology}, 485.

\textsuperscript{53}Specifically, the exact patricians of human nature are regularly disputed. Colwell insists, “According to Genesis 2, any conception of the soul as a separate (and separable) part or division of our being would seem to be invalid. Similarly, the popular debate concerning whether human nature is bipartite or tripartite being has the appearance of a rather ill-founded and unhelpful irrelevancy. The human person is ‘soul’ by virtue of being a ‘body’ made alive by the ‘breath’ (or ‘Spirit’) of God” (Sinclair Ferguson, David Wright, and J. I. Packer, eds., \textit{New Dictionary of Theology} [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988], s.v. “Anthropology,” by J. E. Colwell).

\textsuperscript{54}For more on Augustine’s Trinitarian imprint on the church’s understanding of mankind, see the conclusion to the discussion on “The View of Humanity in the Early Church,” in Allison, \textit{Historical Theology}, 322-27.
8:28-29; 2 Cor 3:18; Col 2:9-10). This certainly does not exclude Engstrom’s emphasis on vocational and skill development, rather it echoes his great evangelist heart in every dimension of life. Such a view of man, indicted by God and in need of a savior, has never been and will never be embraced by the world to the degree that Engstrom’s larger mentoring project can be embraced.

Nancy Pearcy shows the unpopularity of this long held theological position for the culture today, she contends, “The Christian view of sin may seem harsh, even degrading, to human dignity. That’s why in modern times, many influential thinkers have dismissed the idea of sin as repressive and unenlightened. They have proposed instead a utopian view that asserts that humans are intrinsically good and that under the right social conditions, their good nature will emerge.” An approach to mentoring that starts with intrinsic human worth alongside the recognition of a sinful human heart is categorically different than leadership development that starts with man’s well-intentioned heart. Carl Henry captures this depraved component of man and the depth of impact sin brings to the image of God in man, he remarks,

The fall of man was a catastrophic personality shock; it fractured human existence with a devastating fault. Ever since, man’s worship and contemplation of the living God have been broken, his devotion to the divine will shattered. Man’s revolt against God therefore affects his entire being; he is now motivated by an inordinate will; he no longer loves God nor his neighbor; he devotes human reasoning to the cause of spiritual rebellion. He seeks escape from the claim of God upon his life and

55Engstrom explicit evangelism runs unbroken through his ministry and is evidenced again in the conclusion of his autobiography. On the final page, he closes, “My hope is that the dawn of a new millennium in our mind-boggling, complex world will lead us to re-discover the few truly essential simple truths, and their Author Christ Jesus, that a new generation will need for both quality of living and eternal life. . . . God’s desire is that when His Son returns to earth He will find a deep, active faith among His Church—people abandoned to the King of the kingdom and deriving their lifelong hope form the imminent return of Christ to earth” (Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 185).

blames his fellow man for his own predicament. His revolt against God is at the same time a revolt against truth and the good; his rejection of truth is a rejection of God and the good, his defection from the good is a repudiation of God and the truth.  

The Scripture calls us to a very different starting point from today’s secular assumptions, and therefore leads us to a very different vision of what personal progress looks like. Henry and Pearcy, like Augustine before them, diagnose the root problem as sin and the curse, which opens the door for Christians in secular work opportunities to walk with their mentee through the challenges outside the work place. Furthermore, even the difficulties within the work environment that are not explicitly moral in nature, understood through an Augustinian view of sin, contain echoes of the effects of the curse on the human condition in the world. As discussed in chapter three, Hoekema points out human beings are continually reminded of their transgression against God, and of their need of repentance as they experience the effects of the curse on nature (Gen 3:17-19). There is a reason our vocations encounter complications, and wise mentors will frame such impediments as requiring the constant creativity of God in this cursed world.

57Carl F. H. Henry, vol. 2 of God, Revelation, and Authority (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1999), 134-35. Whether Engstrom would have agreed with Henry on this is uncertain, but he was a contemporary with Henry and mentions their friendship in his autobiography, including the fact that Engstrom edited Henry’s first book on religious journalism. See Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 23.

58Engstrom would appreciate the emphasis on opportunity. For many Christians in leadership, the application of this underlying truth will involve evangelism inside of their mentoring relationships. As alluded to above, Engstrom did not identify with any one theological camp in his writings, but he did offer glimpses that could lead to the assumption he held a more Arminian theological position on man’s sinfulness than Henry’s assessment in the above quotation. For example, in What in the World Is God Doing, Engstrom motivates his readers to respond to the incredible population growth by emphasizing “new receptivity” in parts of the world and a general “capacity to receive the gospel.” He writes, “One of the basic assumptions underlying the thrust of this book is the concept that man has the ability to change—and be changed: his thinking and behavior may be altered. It would be senseless and useless to send out people to proclaim Christ’s love if mankind were unable to respond.” Ted Engstrom, What in the World Is God Doing? The New Face of Missions (Waco, TX: Word, 1978), 23.
Another critical aspect of the doctrine of humanity for mentoring is our creation as *embodied* people (Gen 2:20-23). In general, the Catholic Church has invested more study and resources into what this means than the Protestant Church. This will likely be a more important tenant to the mentoring process in an ever-advancing technological society that cannot calculate the repercussions of expanding non-physical social relationships. When one can program a drone or robot with the right information to perform satisfactory tasks, it becomes tempting to think of the leadership process as a similar formulaic calculation; however, human being are more than data chips or engineering materials. In short, humans are not merely informational or rational creatures seeking the right intelligence (or education) as the path to enlightenment. In fact, Scripture teaches that even if technology advances to the point where it can download volumes and volumes of biblical and theological information into one’s mind, that does not accomplish God’s intention. Paul recognizes this when he explains knowledge puffs up and love edifies (1 Cor 8:1). Later in the same letter, he writes, “If I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge . . . but do not have love, I am nothing” (1 Cor 13:2). Scripture reveals that God values more than understanding.

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59 Allison offers a definition of human embodiment and outlines various elements within his view: the creation of the body, the gendered body, the sexual body, the disciplined body, the sanctification of the body, the clothing of the body, the body and the worship of God, the suffering and healing of the body, the death of the body, and the future of the body. See Gregg Allison, “Toward a Theology of Human Embodiment,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 13, no. 2 (2009): 4-13.


Knowledge must have a companion, namely, love. And love, by its very designation, cannot be exercised without relationship with another person, which points to a more holistic view of mankind.

Not only are the limitations of mere information transfer under consideration, but also the need to introduce further inferences that result from being fashioned as embodied human beings. Anthony Hoekema observes, “Human beings have often been thought of as consisting of distinct and sometimes separable “parts,” which are then abstracted from the whole. . . . Both secular scientists and Christian theologians, however, are increasingly recognizing that such an understanding of human beings is wrong, and that man must be seen in his unity.”

Hoekema attempts to avoid the overly sharp distinctions between “body,” “soul,” and “spirit,” and points to a new heavens and new earth that includes a new body and not just a soul. Christian mentors recognize both the temporal nature of the body and the eternality of our future bodies in the new creation or in hell.

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62 James K. A. Smith offers a view of human nature from the Augustinian tradition that points to the human person as a lover. He explains that “we are what we love.” He does this by emphasizing our embodiment and desire-based orientation. In good Aristotelian fashion, as seen in chapter three with N. T. Wright’s comments on excellence and virtue, Smith describes how our habits form us into virtuous, or unvirtuous, people. For our purposes here, Smith contends that our embodiment is crucial. He writes, “Alongside emphasizing that we are affective, noncognitive, desiring animals, I have also emphasized that we are embodied creatures. We’ve even suggested that the picture of human persons as creatures of desire requires shifting the center of gravity of human identity from the head to the heart, which is more closely tethered to our sensible, affective nature . . . . The result is a much more holistic picture of human persons as essentially embodied. Hence, it should be no surprise that the way to our hearts is to our stomachs, the way to our hearts is through our bodies” (James K. A. Smith, Desiring the Kingdom [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009], 57-58).

63 For further study on properly loving others holistically, see David Naugle, Reordered Love, Reordered Lives (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 133-41.

64 Hoekema, Created in God’s Image, 203.

65 Matt 10:28 reads, “Don’t fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; rather, fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”
physical body help affirm the tangible elements of God’s ultimate plan for his creation. By application, mentors value the role of the body, whether that means health, rest, sexuality, or physical development needed to accomplish a vocational task. I will return to more implications of human embodiment in chapter six when the challenges to personal, face-to-face mentoring are addressed. In summation, these clues from the doctrine of humanity lay the groundwork for some counter-cultural considerations in the mentoring task. Relatedly, the discipline of epistemology addresses knowledge at its most fundamental levels. The goal of the following section is to build on the view of humanity argued above by further establish a footing (often below the surface of Engstrom’s proposals) that makes possible a robust appraisal of mentoring.

**Epistemology and Mentoring**

At the root of the quest to identify leadership development theories lays an intimidating philosophical problem: How do humans know anything at all? This ancient puzzle has divided systems of cultural, plagued collegiate learners, and split hairs in the halls of esoteric philosophy lectures. Questions of epistemology transport the heavy freight that makes up the building blocks of a cultures understanding of the self, the world, and the divine. Admittedly, this is not a question addressed in Engstrom, nor is it a common emphasis of leadership literature, however, the corollaries for Christians in

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67 There are also direct connection between embodiment and the model of epistemology outlined in the next section that decries the approach of scientific detachment and promotes a view of knowledge that requires indwelling, or kinesthetic—embodied knowledge.

leadership are immense.⁶⁹ An unattended or fissured foundation of knowledge opens the door for considerable challenges to the view of mentoring argued in this dissertation. Epistemology matters, and the view of knowledge espoused below aims to strengthen the call to mentoring.

By way of introduction, Gene Edward Vieth’s work, *Postmodern Times*, provides an accessible overview of the epistemological presuppositions latent in modern and postmodern cultures.⁷⁰ He traces the changes in epistemological thinking in recent centuries alongside the cultural shifts that have transpired in the Western world. By way of introduction to the abstruse subject matter, the pervasive view in the West moved away from a premodern view that assumed God and derivative divine explanations for reality. This view was called into question and eventually replaced with a modern view that trusted empirical fact and rational suppositions.⁷¹ Not only do these requirements provide an impasse for auxiliary theological teachings, it also requires a response and a re-securing of the very footing Christians need to give a reason for the hope they maintain.⁷² During Engstrom’s lifetime, postmodern propositions arose as a response to the modernist dismissal of revelation and tradition.⁷³ Many of these new formulations

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⁶⁹Thornbury argues a parallel thesis for the discipline of theology in a day when evangelical theologians are bypassing prolegomena, he writes, “When Henry (Carl F. H. Henry) took his post at Fuller Seminary, he assumed the position of professor of philosophy of religion. He and his colleagues were of the opinion that the future of evangelical theology would never rise above its foundations” See Gregory Thornbury, *Recovering Classic Evangelicalism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 34.


⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²If modern criteria of empirical evidence or sheer rationality are necessary to understand the miraculous acts of God recorded in the Bible, then Christian arguments are largely defeated before they can even be formed. The intellectual shrapnel caused by this shift is vast and often devastating.

⁷³Engstrom comments briefly on these challenges, he remarks, “As a result of this humanistic, secularistic philosophy, we find more and more evidence of the disappearance of vitally important, basic
further fragmented the basis of knowledge leaving the culture treading for a firm floorboard to call ground zero.\textsuperscript{74} The disparity among (1) starting with God and divine explanations, (2) starting with no God and empirical explanations, and (3) starting with a thorough skepticism about all truth claims, is nothing less than shocking. In a Western culture that now routinely rejects starting points like the Bible says or Jesus says, Christians need a way to create meaning out of the malaise for the essential ingredients of a Christian view of the world to seem credible. To help re-pour the footings of knowledge, this portion of the argument will appeal to Michael Polanyi’s work alongside the popular level proposal found in the writing of Esther Lightcap Meek.\textsuperscript{75}

Meek undertakes the task of rebuilding our confidence in the basic questions of epistemology. She, following the seminal works of Polanyi, aims to cast a model of knowledge that accounts for all of the human experience. Instead of the amoral, detached approach of the Enlightenment, their scheme requires personal, moral involvement in knowledge.\textsuperscript{76} For Polanyi and Meek, participation is required because they refuse to

\textsuperscript{74}There is no agreed “postmodern” epistemological view and evangelical scholars have offered sweeping criticisms as well as affirming accommodations to the gamut of postmodern contributors. For substantive essays on evangelical responses to postmodernism, see Myron B. Penner, ed., \textit{Christianity and the Postmodern Turn: Six Views} (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005). See also Millard Erickson, Paul Kjoss Helseth, and Justin Taylor, \textit{Reclaiming the Center: Confronting Evangelical Accommodation in Postmodern Times} (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004).

\textsuperscript{75}This extended section on epistemology, although seemingly tangential to Engstrom’s focus, not only aims to support Engstrom’s context and conclusions, but also points forward to the final chap. where this dissertation addresses the forthcoming cultural challenges of impersonal information acquisition and the possibilities in the technological age.

\textsuperscript{76}Michael Polanyi was an acclaimed European chemist turned philosopher in the middle of the twentieth century. His seminal works in epistemology, \textit{Personal Knowledge} and \textit{The Tacit Dimension}, laid the foundation for Meeks’ proposal. Meek is translating Polanyi for the untrained reader and offering Christian application. Polanyi’s preface to \textit{Personal Knowledge} introduces his thesis and providing a glimpse of the degree of philosophical expertise with which he writes. He espouses the core idea of knowledge as, “the personal participation of the knower in all acts of understating.” Polanyi is regularly
divorce the subjective and the objective elements of knowledge. Meek prefers to talk about knowledge as human acts of knowing because the knower is an irreducible part of a truth claim. Later, she borrows from the great British missiologist, Leslie Newbigin, who claims, “The confidence proper to a Christian is not the confidence of one who claims possession of demonstrable and indubiating knowledge. It is the confidence of one who has heard and answered the call that comes from the God through whom and for whom all things were made: ‘Follow me.’” Meek recognizes that Newbigin forges the connection between epistemology and mentoring by suggesting that one truly know when one experiences and follows the one who made us.

The solution, as outlined above, is not a full pendulum swing away from reason to experience as the new verifiable basis of knowledge. Instead, Polanyi claims, “I shall reconsider human knowledge by starting from the fact that we can know more than we can tell.” By knowing more than we can say, he installs the concept and coins the phrase: the tacit dimension of knowledge. He explains further, “This fact seems obvious listed in the postmodern camp although he does not qualify as a relativist or subjectivist. He expounds on personal participation by saying, “This does not make our understanding subjective. Comprehension is neither an arbitrary act nor a passive experience, but a responsible act claiming universal validity. Such knowing is indeed objective in the sense of establishing contact with a hidden reality; a contact that is defined as the condition for anticipating an indeterminate range of yet unknown (and perhaps yet inconceivable) true implications. It seems reasonable to describe this fusion of the personal and the objective as Personal Knowledge” (Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962], vii-viii). See also Michael Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

77Esther Meek, Longing to Know (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2003), 55-59. As she expounds on the need for personal involvement, she writes, “Have you seen yet that we’re knowing knowing? Learning about learning? One very fun feature about talking about knowing is that you are unavoidably engaged in the very act of doing what you are talking about! Talk about immediate application of what you are learning!” (ibid., 56).

78Leslie Newbigen, Proper Confidence (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 105; and Meek, Longing to Know, 187.

79Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension, 4.
enough; but it is not easy to say exactly what it means. Take an example. We know a
person’s face, and can recognize it among a thousand, indeed among a million. Yet we
usually cannot tell how we recognize a face we know. So most of this knowledge cannot
be put into words.80 This reintroduces the role of intuition, creativity, commitment, and
belief, which were considered unreliable elements of knowledge. Building on this claim,
Polanyi argues that all skills require an intuitive knowledge, not just the machine-like
recipe mixed with precision that science posits. Ken Meyers, in an audio biography of
Polanyi, illustrates this with the example of making violins. He interviews a master-
craftsmen family, the Moose family, who align with Polanyi’s view of highly developed,
deeply personal knowledge that resists formalization.81 In the interview, Meyers asks, If
this knowledge cannot be fully formalized or articulated, how can it ever be transmitted?
He claims that Polanyi thought deeply about these questions, and his answers stressed the
role played by close mentoring relationships.82 This type of knowledge, Polanyi claims,
goes beyond book explanation to the power of intuitive, or tacit, knowledge that is highly
personal and even relies on faith.83 Polanyi proposes,

An art which cannot be specified in detail cannot be transmitted by prescription,
since no prescription for it exists. It can be passed on only by example from master
to apprentice. This restricts the range of diffusion to that of personal contacts, and

80Ibid.

81Meyers explains, “Peter laughs at the suggestion that an inexperienced newcomer, even one
armed with a copy of the Peter Moose checklist for good wood, could ever replicate his purchasing
decisions. In such matters, a checklist, however detailed, is completely inadequate. Peter’s knowledge, like
that of all skilled craftsman, is tacit. Even those maxims that could be included in a checklist are imbedded
in an awareness he cannot put into words.” This is elucidated through personal interviews with the Moose
family, who make exquisite violins. See Ken Meyers, Tacit Knowing, Truthful Knowing: The Life and
Thought of Michael Polanyi, Mars Hill Audio (Charlottesville, VA: Berea, 1999).

82Meyers, “Tacit Knowing, Truthful Knowing,” CD. Part 2, min. 32.

83Polanyi is relying on the Augustinian maxim, “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand”
(nisi credideritis, non intelligitis). See Polanyi, Personal Knowledge, 266.
we find accordingly that craftsmanship tends to survive in closely circumscribed local traditions. . . . To learn by example is to submit to authority. You follow your master because you trust his manner of doing things even when you cannot analyze and account in detail for its effectiveness. By watching the master and emulating his efforts in the presence of his example, the apprentice unconsciously picks up the rules of the art, including those, which are not explicitly known to the master himself. These hidden rules can be assimilated only by the person who surrenders himself to that extent uncritically to the imitation of another. A society which wants to preserve a fund of personal knowledge, must submit to tradition.\textsuperscript{84}

Polanyi’s argument rebuts the fact/value distinction enveloped in scientific modernism, and by implication reaffirms a holistic view of the world that utilizes personal guides to understand reality.\textsuperscript{85} Actually, Engstrom offers a parallel insight when he argues, “Christ’s teaching went beyond pouring knowledge into the heads of His disciples. It encompassed values as well.”\textsuperscript{86} In \textit{Fabric of Faithfulness}, Steven Garber also picks up on this bridge in Polanyi and Engstrom. Garber’s project weaves belief and behavior back together in the context of education.\textsuperscript{87} He offers a vision for forging the connection in an integrated life that knows what one believes and why one behaves the way he or she does. As Garber sees it, this understanding of the world is an alternative to what Walker Percy described as “getting all A’s but flunking life.”\textsuperscript{88} This existential predicament that Garber finds apparent in college students often leads to moral

\begin{footnotes}
\item[84]Ibid., 53.
\item[85]This holistic view aligns with both Engstrom call for holistic mentoring and the theological affirmations above concerning the \textit{psychosomatic}, or holistic, view of man.
\item[86]Engstrom, \textit{The Fine Art of Mentoring}, 156.
\item[87]Garber references Polanyi, but seems to see himself more in line with the similar project of Alasdair MacIntyre’s \textit{After Virtue}. See Steve Garber, \textit{The Fabric of Faithfulness} (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2007), 56-67.
\item[88]Garber, \textit{The Fabric of Faithfulness}, 57.
\end{footnotes}
bankruptcy. It is this paper’s contention, based on the theory of knowledge posited in Polanyi, that mentoring is just the antidote needed. As Garber contends, “True education is always about learning to connect knowing with doing, belief with behavior; and yet that connection is incredibly difficulty to make for students in the modern university. The historical context of university life in the early twenty-first century, with all that we now know of the post-Enlightenment challenge facing those who labor as student and professors, offers a huge challenge.”

The challenges outlined by Garber have the ability to debunk the thesis of this chapter. For example, if the only reliable view of knowledge disinvites virtue to the table, then the portrait of a mentor as explicated by Engstrom is inadequate and should be dismissed. On the other hand, if the epistemological argument of Polanyi introduced above is accurate, then mentoring becomes a vital part in how humans learn anything and Engstrom’s proposal should not only be considered, but also expanded. Additionally, if trusted knowledge allows for more than just pure reason or empirical facts, then humans are learning from those they are watching and following, even beyond what they are consciously comprehending. Their bodies and minds are working together, psychosomatically. With an epistemological foundation that calls for the reinstallation of values and behaviors we are left with the need for more than simple scientific, or quantifiable, knowledge. We need personal interpreters of reality, or as Richard Baukham

89 This head knowledge/life behavior predicament parallels the angst in Polanyi’s own life that projected him from the field of chemistry into the field of philosophy. Living through the worst of World War II and the Nazi regime, he was searching for an answer to how some of the most well educated people on the planet could do such horrific things. Eventually, this led him to the field of epistemology and set him on the trajectory to reconcile facts and values.

90 Garber, The Fabric of Faithfulness, 57.
reasons, testimonies. We need involvement and responsibility in the task of leadership. We need models to follow. We need invested, flesh-wrapped bodies with alert minds and full hearts to navigate the knowing process and become partners in the processes of following Jesus. The church, organization, or business trying to produce leaders must be concerned with more than reading the right books or downloading all the right podcasts. There is a wrinkle in the foundation of knowledge that calls for personal involvement to produce indwelling knowledge. Training leaders through personal mentoring accomplishes more than sheer accumulation of non-relational information, not less.

Access and involvement with the heart, mind, and physical presence of a model leader provides a transfer of knowledge unequaled by mere materials. This transitions to the

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91 I stumbled on to this epistemological connection to the role of testimony in a section titled, “Rediscovering Our Epistemological Grounding” (Jonathan Pennington, Reading the Gospels Wisely [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012], 98-103).

92 Engstrom stresses that the key to mentoring is not so much how you pour your life into people but that you are a person worth following. See Engstrom and Jenson, The Making of a Mentor, 1.

93 Polanyi’s emphasis on indwelling corresponds to the Christian view of human embodiment discussed above, Jesus’ teaching to abide in Christ (John 15:4), and the apostle Paul’s explanation of the Spirit dwelling in us to cause us to know God (Rom 8:9-11, 1 Cor 6:19).

94 These strong affirmations are not a dismissal of the value of non-personal training guides such as the written word, auditory training, or video curriculum. On the contrary, Engstrom even contends for the value of books and compares their function to that of a mentor relationship. He remarks, “Worthy books are like mentors—available as companions and as solitude for refreshment” (Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 56).

95 Although some forms of this argument are a direct attack on propositional truth in general, or the inspiration of Scripture in particular, neither of those are in view here. For example, Newbigin is a potential guide away from inerrancy. According to Keller, “Though many evangelicals have appropriated his ideas, Lesslie Newbigin himself never claimed to be an evangelical. He openly repudiated the evangelical doctrine of Scripture and held to the Barthian idea that God’s sovereign election of people was not to salvation but only to service” (Keller, Center Church, 252). Although this discussion is beyond the scope of this project, it is notable that the doctrine of the church helps undergird the emphasis on personal presence in knowledge transfer. In other words, the fact that God fills Christians with the Spirit to work out of their faith in communities with one another (based on the “materials” of Scripture), underlines both the need for relational involvement in our knowledge and leadership development.
third piece of the doctrinal scaffolding that supports Engstrom’s view of mentoring, the study of Jesus Christ, a mentor who surpasses all human wisdom and knowledge.

**Christology and Mentoring**

While Engstrom spends little or no time addressing anthropology or epistemology proper, he does engage with some themes in the next two areas of theological focus beginning with Christology. For example, he introduces *The Making of a Mentor* with the assertion that to the Christian believer, Jesus is the model mentor.\(^\text{96}\) Without discussing details, he constructs his leadership foundation on the forgiveness of sins offered in Christ, and fastens the urgency and motivation for his mission to the lostness of the world. Engstrom is not establishing these building blocks along traditional theological categories, but they are latent in the expression of his leadership at large and mentoring in particular.\(^\text{97}\) This section aims to reinforce his conclusions by borrowing insights from the church’s classical Christological formulation of the person and work of Christ and the resulting union we have in Christ.

First, Christology provides clarity regarding who Jesus is and who Jesus is not. Oliver Crisp and Fred Sanders say it this way: “There can be no Christianity without Christ. There can be no Christian doctrine without Christology.”\(^\text{98}\) For the purpose of this study, one could add, there is no Christian mentoring without Christology. Thus, attention

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and accuracy concerning the person of Christ is priority if this project will remain a Christian endeavor. The historic belief of the church, which has withstood disputes on every side, affirms the two natures of Christ: fully God and fully man in one person. The Council of Nicea upheld the full deity of the Son and the Council of Chalcedon further endorsed the two-natures, one-person formula. But what does this have to do with mentoring? It is possible to agree wholeheartedly with Engstrom that Jesus is the ultimate mentor, but to redefine Jesus in such a way that the statements carry altogether different meanings and outcomes. Allison delineates recent reconstructions of classical Christology (impactful during Engstrom’s lifetime) that, if true, would radically alter Engstrom’s thesis. He writes,

In his *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, Walter Rauschenbusch applied higher critical methods to discover the “revolutionary” Jesus. Marcus Borg re-envisioned Christ as a Spirit-filled, wise countercultural reformer. John Dominic Crossan presented Jesus as a “peasant Jewish Cynic.” . . . John Hick, in *The Myth of God Incarnate*, insisted that to affirm “that the historical Jesus of Nazareth was also God is as devoid of meaning as to say that this circle drawn with a pencil on paper is also a square.”

These more radical projects are highly distinguishable from Engstrom’s work, but have no doubt infiltrated the Christian community in which Engstrom served. More

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100 This creed stands over and against the errors of Arianism, Apollinarianism, and Nestorianism. For a quick overview of these heresies and the creedal language used in response to these errors, see Allison, *Historical Theology*, 372-77.

101 In the same way the above observations regarding biblical anthropology needed to be made explicit in a day filled with false understanding of personhood, so too the rudimentary teachings of Jesus need to be made explicit as culturally confusing accounts of Christ persist. For further work on popular cultures influence on American’s understanding of Jesus, see Stephen Nichols, *Jesus Made in America* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008).


103 There are a tremendous number of young Christians who have attended college and been
nuanced and popular projects surface all the time that slightly adjust the trajectory-shaping center of the mentoring project, that is the person of Christ, and profoundly move the target.\textsuperscript{104} As John Stott says, “The biblical portrait of Christ is seen to be normative. He is the authentic Jesus by whom all fallible human pictures of him must be judged . . . . There is nobody like him; there never has been, and there never will be.”\textsuperscript{105} It is the duty of the Christian mentor to know and portray the historical Christ of the Scriptures.

The second major segment of Christology in view is the work of Christ.\textsuperscript{106} To begin, Jesus assignment from the Father was to accomplish redemption for people from every tribe, tongue and nation through his atoning death on the cross and resurrection from the dead (Luke 22:42; Gal 4:4-5; Rev 7:9-10). Jesus was the propitiation for our sin (2 Cor 5:21, 1 John 3:5; 4:10). The cross was the central work of Christ.\textsuperscript{107} Although Christ is our model, this is not the work for Christian disciples to imitate today. It was only achievable by the divine-human Christ and was accomplished once for all.\textsuperscript{108}

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\textsuperscript{104}In my own work in the para-church world of mentoring, the early teachings of Rob Bell and Brian McLaren on Jesus were course altering for many people in our ministry who now, years later, have landed in an entirely different destination than others who were attuned to the underlying Christological implications. See Rob Bell, \textit{Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith} (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005); Brian McClaren, \textit{A New Kind of Christian} (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008).

\textsuperscript{105}John Stott, \textit{The Incomparable Christ}, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 17.

\textsuperscript{106}For a discussion on the work of Christ organized by Calvin’s recognition of the offices of prophet, king and priest, see Paige Patterson, “Work of Christ,” in \textit{A Theology for the Church}, ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2007), 545-602.

\textsuperscript{107}John Stott ably argues for the central role of the cross in the mission of Christ. See John Stott, \textit{The Cross of Christ} (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1986), 17-46.

\textsuperscript{108}This does not diminish Christ’s call to take up our cross, but merely recognizes the uniqueness of the crucifixion and resurrection (Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 3:18).
Therefore, Christ’s primary mission was not merely to come to mentor a group of men concerning the best way to live so they might inspire the next generation, consequently changing the world through his example. A wrong view of Christ’s central work can lead to a diminished view of Christ, hence a diminished view of Christian mentoring. Similarly, a Christian’s primary mission is not to lay down their lives (mentoring or otherwise) and function as the savior—such efforts will be misguided no matter how sacrificial or expansive. Instead, Christian mentoring first points to the Savior’s finished work, which has reconciled man to God by satisfying his wrath and reconciled man to man by destroying the dividing wall of hostility (Eph 2:11-22). The order matters, sacrificial living must always down stream from the fountain of Christ’s sacrifice; then, mentors can sacrificially lay down their lives to make disciples and teach them all that Christ commanded.

Finally, Christology teaches that Jesus, in his human nature, fully obeyed his father’s commands and through faith we are united in Christ. Robert Letham explains the comprehensive nature of this aspect of Paul’s theology: “Paul describes the Christian life as lived ‘in Christ’ from beginning to end. This is clear in Ephesians 1, where the whole panorama of salvation from eternal election via redemption by the blood of Christ

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109 In his famous trilemma, C. S. Lewis dispels the notion that Jesus was only a great moral teacher to follow. See C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1952), 55.

110 Jesus looks to his disciples and tell them they cannot drink the cup he is going to drink. See Matt 20:22.

111 This is a particular temptation in the world of humanitarian aid that Engstrom and World Vision faced while literally saving the earthly lives of thousands and ministering to millions of hungry families.

112 The most exhaustive resource on the biblical and theological teachings on union with Christ can be found in the recent work of Constantine Campbell. In the theological section of this monograph, he devotes a chapter to, “Union with Christ and the Work of Christ.” See Constantine Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 327-52.
to our future inheritance is received in union with Christ. . . . The whole tenor of Scripture points to such union. God has made us for this. He created us in Christ, the image of the invisible God. Following sin and the Son’s redemptive work, mankind is being remade in the image of Christ.”113 Letham applies the work of Christ to the internal transformation of Christ’s followers.114 This multi-faceted doctrine strikes at the heart of what Christians mentors are called by the New Testament: holy, and what they are called to: holiness. It is an earned holiness, as the author of Hebrews says, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tested in every way as we are, yet without sin” (Heb 4:15). As discussed in the portion on anthropology, this does not infer ability in human beings to live without sin, but highlights the active obedience of Jesus and what was accomplished for those who put their faith in him. Christians are mysteriously clothed in Christ’s perfection (Gal 3:27; Col 3:1-14; Rom 13:14). Accordingly, Christ’s bid to follow him and be like him is rooted in the righteousness he earned on our behalf (Matt 5:48). Engstrom, as noted earlier, speaks to the cost of discipleship. It demands a willingness to renounce all other loyalties, including family, to follow one Lord.115 The only way to follow such demands is that Christ is in us as the apostle Paul teaches, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal 2:19-20). Understanding union with Christ, accomplished by the work of Christ, revolutionizes one’s self-understanding and frees them from guilt to obedience.116

114 Ibid., 85.
115 Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 163.
116 Letham contributes, “We have died; sin and death can extract nothing more from us since
By extension, these truths provide the groundwork to follow in the way of Christ and follow in the way of mentoring. One short application is highlighted as Engstrom discusses the role of accountability between mentor and protégé. As he sees it, “Calling someone to account is an act of love beautifully suited to a mentor. No one can ask the hard questions and demand answers as effectively as a trusted mentor. Forcing a mentoree to open his life to a confidant who has earned the right to be heard can save marriages from divorce, churches from division, organizations from financial disaster, and careers from ruin.”\textsuperscript{117} With a biblical understanding of the atoning work of Christ, Engstrom’s portrait of a mentor with Christ’s character finds solid anchoring and avoids all forms of self-righteousness. In that perspective, the imperative to be Christ-like and hold others to account remains properly at the forefront of the mentoring project. The standard for Christ-like mentoring is to dwell in Christ and live in the promises that find there yes and amen in Jesus (2 Cor 1:20-22). In summary, a proper understanding of Christ will (1) establish if this is a Christian enterprise or not, (2) shape the trajectory of mentoring efforts, (3) allow proper understanding of one’s identity in Christ, and (4) provide a standard for Christ-like mentors who call protégés to account. The person and work of Christ flow chronologically into the coming of the Spirit of God, who works through people of God to continue the \textit{mission} of God. Then, and only then, Christian

\textsuperscript{117}Engstrom, \textit{The Fine Art of Mentoring}, 30.
mentoring accurately takes steps towards its proper mission, which is discussed below in the fourth area of theology: missiology.

Missiology and Mentoring

The final foundational element used to construct an approach to mentoring revolves around Christian mission, or the mission of God.\textsuperscript{118} First, this portion of the research acknowledges the significance of this discipline and the direct relevance in Engstrom’s ministry. Second, it will zoom out and touch the major themes in the field, and then conclude with a methodological application of the type of question wrought in missiological discussions. To begin, it must be recognized that Engstrom’s extended service at World Vision placed him directly in front of thorny missiological questions, specifically the constant concern for social and spiritual needs.\textsuperscript{119} In Engstrom’s attempt to bring a focal point to this balancing act, he borrows from John Stott, who concludes, “The word ‘mission’ is properly a comprehensive word, embracing everything which

\textsuperscript{118}The mission of God, or mission Dei, relates directly to the mission of the church, or mission ecclesiae. Ashford provides historical context for the resurgence around this discussion. Pointing to the categories of Scott Moreau, he explains, “Three competing streams of thought dominate the evangelical landscape. The first stream equates mission with evangelism, while the second—represented by John’s Stott’s work—offers a more holistic view of mission, including both evangelism and advancement of social justice but giving priority to evangelism. The third stream also offers a holistic view, but, unlike Stott, makes no distinction between evangelism and social justice in terms of centrality or priority. Each stream represents an attempt to locate the church and her mission within the framework of God’s mission.” Bruce Ashford, “The Church in the Mission of God,” in The Community of Jesus, ed. Kendall Easley and Christopher Morgan (Nashville: B&H, 2013), 238-39. As explained below, Engstrom would align with the center stream represented by Stott.

\textsuperscript{119}Richard Halverson, former pastor of Fourth Presbyterian in Washington D.C., commends Engstrom’s experience in this field. In the introduction to Engstrom’s book, What in the World is God Doing, Halverson writes, “His [Engstrom’s] passion to evangelize all peoples everywhere and his participation in the great ecumenical evangelism congresses in Berlin, Singapore, and Lausanne have given him mature insights and sensitivity to the problems of culture, politics, economics and non-Christian religions which hinder or prevent the spread of the gospel, as well as those which encourage and promote it. He has had to deal with most of the situations which confront the Western Church in its outreach. Coming through in page after page of this book is a brilliant optimism concerning missions” (Engstrom, What in the World Is God Doing?, 8).
God sends his people into the world to do. It therefore includes evangelism and social responsibility, since both are authentic expressions of the love which longs to serve man in his need.\(^{120}\) Engstrom goes on to agree with Stott’s “primary” concern for the most “acute” need, which is eternal alienation from God without minimizing the requirement to simultaneously meet social needs.\(^{121}\) He points to Jesus as the exemplar, who commanded and carried on both kinds of ministry.\(^{122}\) Jesus expressed to the apostles God’s desire to transform the world through baptizing and teaching others to obey all that He had commanded (Matt 28:16-20).

While articulating basic tenants of missiology, it is noteworthy to remember with Christopher Wright that mission is more than a plan or a program the church or parachurch organization promotes. He suggests, “Mission is what the Bible is all about; we could as meaningfully talk of the missional basis of the Bible as of the biblical basis of mission.”\(^{123}\) The *mission Dei* is first and foremost about God, and then it is conveyed explicitly to the church in the Matthew 28 imperative, known as the Great Commission.\(^{124}\) In agreement, Timothy Tennant writes, “Mission is far more about God and who He is than about us and what we do.”\(^{125}\) This God-centered mission is about an


\(^{122}\) Ibid., 52.

\(^{123}\) Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 29. For Wright, mission is built first on the indicative, God, and then the imperative, Great Commission.

\(^{124}\) The term *missio Dei* also carries theological baggage. Keller explains, “The phrase was originally coined to convey the teaching of Karl Barth about the action of God in the world. According to Lesslie Newbigin, the term *mission Dei* became prominent after the 1952 world mission conference in Willingen, Germany” (Timothy Keller, *Center Church* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012], 251).

\(^{125}\) Timothy Tennant, *Invitation to World Missions* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 55. In
entire life of learning and being renewed by the word of God through the power of the Spirit among the people of God. God’s mission unfolds across the biblical narrative and according to Ashford, is ultimately fulfilled when God has glorified himself by redeeming his image bearers and renewing his good creation, restoring them both to their intended shalom. God the Creator is God the Redeemer who redeems humanity so that they can glorify him and extend his mission through their whole human lives—in their spiritual, moral, rational, creative, relational, and physical aspects.  

The mission of the church stems from the mission of God and includes no less than the worship of God, the edification of the church, and the evangelization of the world accomplished through a life on life transferal of wisdom about what God has done in Christ. In order to accomplish the mission given to the church, missiologists recommend varying strategies to make disciples who live in Christ and as Christ in every context of the world. Mentoring, especially positioned as Engstrom did—directly overlapping with discipleship—is a versatile and cross-cultural strategy. 

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128 Mission agencies regularly employ leadership training programs as part of cross-cultural adaption efforts that, even if they do not use the language, amount to mentoring relationships according to Engstrom’s designation. For example, the ‘Training for Trainers’ (T4T) method for optimizing church plants, which has also been used by the International Mission Board, has documented 1.7 million baptisms and 150,000 new church starts since 2001. The movement calls for every disciple to “train” others and includes a specific mentoring component of nine to eighteen months for group leaders. See Steve Smith and Ying Kai, *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution* (Monument, CO: WIGTake Resources, 2011), 15, 169-81.  

129 In addition to the pastoral and theological mentoring that takes place in international church planting efforts, new advances in business as mission studies open the door for Christians in the West to use the cultural and economic leverage they have to mentor young men and women in underdeveloped nations. See Tetsuao Yamamori and Kenneth Eldred, eds., *On Kingdom Business: Transforming Mission through Entrepreneurial Strategies* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002). See also C. Neal Johnson, *Business as Mission: A Comprehensive Guide to Theory and Practice* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009).
between local and global expressions of missionary activity are always in view, and mentoring brings a point to that tension.\footnote{130} By way of application, I will make some extended remarks about a methodological question regarding how mentoring intersects with a theology of missions by examining a cultural consideration of increasing importance: who should be the focus of one’s mentoring efforts? More specifically, is mentoring best practiced with a single individual or with a group, and will globalization of the twenty-first century amend the answer to that question?\footnote{131} To begin, it must be recognized that it is common to enter into an elite or individualistic reading of the call to mentor, however, both ancient and current models contend for the value of group mentoring.\footnote{132}

The accent on communal, or group, mentoring below is not an indictment of individual mentoring, but rather a unique insight missiological questions uncover.\footnote{133} Missiology is a theological discipline that is unabashedly practical—it seeks to show

\footnote{130}This is evidenced even in a premier academic publisher’s call for further study. The Brill Studies in Christian Missions series of over forty volumes “particularly welcomes proposals that position the study of so far unexplored episodes of mission within wider discussions of the social and cultural factors within missions, of colonialism and post-colonialism, of nationalism and transnationalism and of the tensions between localized and global forms of Christianity” (Heleen Murre-van den Berg, Studies in Christian Missions, accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.brill.com/publications/studies-christian-mission).

\footnote{131}The unique challenges of the communal element of mentoring for the next generation will be addressed in the final chap. of this dissertation, but it suffices to say here that communication and technological advances are opening up radical opportunities for crossing contexts and averting localized relationships.

\footnote{132}It is beyond the scope of this project to develop a more full theological framework for mentoring inside and outside of the context of the local church. Ecclesiological concerns are neither primary in Engstrom nor will they be treated thoroughly in this examination of missiology. Ecclesial matters, insofar as they relate to church and parachurch relationships, are a hopeful area of further research beyond this dissertation.

\footnote{133}Paul’s mentoring relationship with Timothy is a supreme biblical example of one on one mentoring that extended beyond the first missionary journey (Acts 16) where the context included at least Paul, Silas, and Timothy.
believers how to live. Dallas Willard maintains that everyone learns to live from someone else. He writes, “There are no exceptions to this rule, for human beings are just the kind of creatures that have to learn and keep learning from others how to live.” He goes on to explain that

in Western cultures, we prefer to think that we are “our own person.” We make up our minds. But that is only because we have been mastered by those who have taught us that we do or should do so. Such individualism is part of the legacy that makes us “modern.” But we certainly did not come by that individualistic posture through our own individual and independent insight into ultimate truth.

Biblical examples of “group mentoring” beyond Jesus and the apostles include:

Moses’ command for Israel to model obedience to the law of God by one generation teaching the next generation (Exod 10:2; 12:24-28; Duet 6:7), and older women teaching the younger women how to live and love God (Titus 2:4-5). The church fathers, as demonstrated in Augustine’s life, also practiced and emphasized the dynamic of group discipleship in his teachings. As confirmed below, Augustine based his model on his understanding of the Trinity, a group, and delineated certain rules and practices to support his view.

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134 The missionary-orientation is even prominent among a diverse, even conflicting, set of missiological approaches. David Bosch, a regarded missiological thinkers of twentieth century, outlines the various centralizing messages, or purpose statements, within missionary efforts. Each branch pulses with a pragmatic, life-transforming goal. Gerald Wright summarizes Bosch’s findings as follows, “This variety has ranged form the embodiment of agape, to the ‘Christianizing’ of culture, to the expansion of Christendom, both in terms of government and orthodoxy. Bosch concluded his impressive survey with a summary of what he called ‘emerging paradigms’ which further enlarged the potential scope of missions purpose, encompassing missions as mission Dei, enculturation, liberation, and ministry by the whole people of God to name a few” (Gerald Wright, “The Purpose of Missions,” in Missiology, ed. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson [Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1998], 18).


136 Both passages imply a family or community project over and above an individual task.

137 Smither, Augustine as Mentor, 220-21.
Smither records three reasons Augustine believed that the group was a means of growth. First, he believed that disciplines were essential to Christian faithfulness and those occurred best in communal living. Next, he believed the group nurtured its member in pursuing intimacy with God. Thirdly, Smither argues that Augustine saw the group context as crucial to challenging and sharpening its members intellectually and spiritually. Michael Crow shares Augustine’s emphasis on group mentoring, but comes at it from the perspective of a displaced Westerner who now believes he infused an individualistic reading on the great commission. Crow argues that mentoring within the context of group dynamics was the view Jesus’ apostles would have had and must be an important dimension of any mentoring methodology.

Given their group-oriented culture plus their group experience under Jesus' tutelage, the Eleven would not have heard Jesus' command as “make [individual] disciples who make [individual] disciples who make [individual] disciples.” They would have heard this command with a group orientation: “make [groups of] disciples who will make [groups of] disciples who will make [groups of] disciples.”

These efforts of discipleship and mentoring in group settings are an example of a theological insight contained within the larger conversation of the mission of the church. They also complement Engstrom’s willingness, with Stott, to campaign for social aspects of the mission without flinching on the spiritual realities. In conclusion, the method of the mission of the church begins with God, involves mentoring (and discipleship) that is

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138Ibid., 217-18.


140Ibid., 90.
centered in Jesus the Christ, and is preserved in a community of word and deed. In the next section, this research will turn to specific biblical examples of mentoring found in Engstrom.

**Biblical Considerations: Toward Mentoring**

The Scriptures deliver diverse examples of mentors who are worthy of examination. So who are the best mentors recorded in the Bible worthy of imitation? It is common to hear that Jesus was the best teacher or best leader, but was he the greatest carpenter, greatest singer, or greatest mentor? Although an argument for who is the greatest mentor would be fascinating, the following section will instead focus on the two prominent models held up in Engstrom’s writings, the Lord Jesus and the apostle Paul. The goals of this section are to (1) highlight the imperative in Engstrom’s writings to follow the biblical pattern of mentoring, (2) demonstrate specific moments of mentoring in the lives of Jesus and Paul, and (3) forge connections between the theological observations above and the biblical models of Jesus and Paul to signal a way forward for Christian leaders of the next generation.

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142 Popular examples of Jesus as the “greatest” include Gary Bredfeldt, *Great Leader, Great Teacher* (Chicago: Moody, 2006); Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005); Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus’ Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values & Empowering Change* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993). The question of extension rises here: did something in the divine nature of Christ qualify him as the premier model in every skill or practice? As an extreme example, singing is a category only implied by the New Testament authors’ accounts—was Jesus the best vocalists? The Last Supper account in Matt 26 (Mark 14) speaks to singing a hymn after dinner and are the only explicit citations of what was likely a frequent practice of Christ, but there is never an attempt from the biblical authors to evaluate Jesus’ singing voice. So the consideration revolves around that nature of mentoring as a skill, attribute, calling, or mixture of all.
Although the question of who is the superlative mentoring model is not in view here, Engstrom does contend Jesus was the supreme example of a mentor. He writes, “To the Christian believer, there is no greater ‘mentor’ than the Lord Jesus Christ. How he fashioned his meek-spirited followers into an invincible company of over-comers is a display of divine mentoring to which we can only aspire.” This is an aspirational appeal to follow Christ’s example within one’s own capacity and context. Engstrom begins by first featuring the group of twelve humble men who were called by Jesus after he spent time of prayer. It was this small group, although not in equal proportions, who received the majority of Jesus’ time and attention. Next, Engstrom emphasizes the value of observation and on-site training Jesus modeled: “His [Jesus’] modus operandi was to immerse His men in the life and work of the Kingdom of God. He did it by inviting them to be with Him for the daily object lessons. . . . He taught His mentorees by His life.” Even when others were the primary recipients of Christ’s ministry, the unimpressive group of close followers observed his extraordinary miracles and teachings in close proximity.

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143 Engstrom and Jenson, The Making of a Mentor, 8.
144 Ibid., 8-9. See also Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 5.
145 Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 155-56. See also biblical accounts of the calling of the disciples: Matt 4:19; Mark 1:17; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27.
146 It is commonly recognized that Jesus spent more time with Peter, James, and John that the other nine disciples. See the transfiguration as one example (Matt 17:1).
147 Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 156.
148 The concentration on observation in Engstrom’s findings is reinforced by the sub-structural work of epistemology. These comments will be returned to in the chap. 6.
Engstrom points to Christ as the touchstone and measure of a mentor while demonstrating how he taught by example.¹⁴⁹ His contention finds support in authors like Chuck Lawless, who also points to Jesus as a mentor and shows the disciples’ opportunity to observe Christ in the world. He states, “Jesus mentored the men who followed Him. We don’t always talk about it in those terms, but it’s true. He taught them how to carry on His work. He journeyed through life with them and taught as He went, both by what He said to them and what He did with them.”¹⁵⁰ Similarly, Dallas Willard writes, “If I am to be someone’s apprentice, there is one absolutely essential condition. I must be with that person. This is true of the student-teacher relationship in all generality. And it is precisely what it meant to follow Jesus when he was here in human form. To follow him meant, in the first place, to be with him.”¹⁵¹ Mentoring, in the pattern of Christ, includes presence and observation. Lawless and Willard, like Engstrom, are using Christ as the model and working in conjunction with the assumptions discussed in the above material concerning our embodiment and our hard wiring for personal knowledge.

Engstrom sketches out several characteristics of Jesus’ mentoring practice beginning with service: “Unlike mentors who are considered successful today, Jesus did not organize His team in order to be served. He never asked them to make Him look good. They were never required to wait on Him. Just the opposite was true: He served them.”¹⁵² Engstrom goes on to point out that Christ’s sense of service did not constrict his ability or

¹⁴⁹Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 5.
¹⁵¹Willard, The Divine Conspiracy, 276.
¹⁵²Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 156.
willingness to lead. The terms *service* and *leadership*, seemingly dissimilar, were reconnected in the popular account of Robert Greenleaf and echoed throughout Engstrom.\(^{153}\) Engstrom frames service as first and foremost to God and then to others. He says it this way, “A mentor is not primarily a servant of people, but of Christ. Unless we get that clear, we’re always going to be on pins and needles, because we can’t please everybody.”\(^{154}\) He completes his instruction on service by quoting Mark 10:43-45, John 13:15, and Philippians 2:3-11 and calling the reader to follow Christ’s example.\(^{155}\) In summary, he writes, “May [Jesus’ example] be our example as we serve our mentorees! An attitude like Christ’s, a willingness to serve, a sacrificial life, and humility, will allow us to become great biblical mentors.”\(^{156}\) It is evident that Engstrom’s ambition was to encourage and produce leaders who followed the biblical model of leadership development.

Another New Testament example, the apostle Paul, frequents Engstrom’s writings. Jesus was not the only noticeable New Testament character who invested a large part of his life in a smaller group. Paul also sought out future leaders and traveled with them, coached them, and ministered alongside of them. For example, Paul invites his followers in the Corinthian church to follow his example as he follows Christ (1 Cor


\(^{154}\) Engstrom, *The Fine Art of Mentoring*, 86.


\(^{156}\) Ibid., 128.
11:1). Paul did the same thing with his young disciple, Timothy. Lawless writes, “Timothy and Paul’s mentoring relationship provides a model for us. First, Paul as mentor took the lead in establishing the relationship.” Later, Paul calls Timothy to establish a pattern of mentoring in the churches he ministers to. In a letter to Timothy, he commands, “And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will also be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2). Paul was personally and professionally—in the vocation of ministry—raising up younger leaders through spending time with them and instructing them.

Engstrom examines the way Paul, Timothy, and Silas spent their time with the Thessalonian church and uses it to cast vision for his project on becoming a mentor, he suggests,

Paul described their mentoring plan in I Thessalonians 2:7-12: But we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become dear to use. Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

The deeply personal aspect to Paul’s investment opens the door for the vast record of personal letters he issued to churches and individuals contained in the New Testament. The relational aspect, though paramount, is not the only avenue to receive

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157 Acts 16 records the calling of Timothy and his subsequent accompaniment of Paul’s missionary journeys. See also 1 and 2 Timothy for the most fatherly and personal communication between the two.

158 Lawless, Mentor, 51.

159 Engstrom and Jenson, The Making of a Mentor, 2-3.
mentoring. ¹⁶⁰ Engstrom recognized the Lord has used Paul to serve as a mentor through his writings and followed Paul’s example in his own life. In his writings, Paul reiterates several of the themes listed above that Engstrom notes as characteristic of Jesus’ mentoring. For example, in his letter to the Philippian church, Paul portrays Jesus *becoming* a servant, not just as acting *like* a servant (Phil 2:5-11). ¹⁶¹ It is worth noting again that the range of meaning of the word “mentor” carries significant overtones of “discipleship,” which should be seen as the primary command that Paul is obeying. Still, Paul functions as a mentor personally and vocationally to those aspiring to be pastors in both his immediate audience, such as Timothy, and those who for the last two thousand years who have read his letters and patterned their life and ministry after him. ¹⁶²

Engstrom also contends the best mentors also have their own mentors, which included the apostle Paul. ¹⁶³ It is not as common to consider Paul as a protégé, but he was

¹⁶⁰ Maddix and Estep address this question as they recognize the shifts in theological education. They explain, “Spiritual formation is one of the recognized benchmarks of higher education that is Christian. A communal commitment to spiritual formation is indeed part of the Christian higher education community’s DNA, and is in fact reflected in the criteria for accreditation in both the Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE) and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). However, as many Christian institutions of higher education begin to engage in online instruction, even offering entire degree programs online, how can they affirm their campus’s commitment to the spiritual formation of students?” Later they posit that ‘mentors/spiritual directors’ as well as ‘learning communities’ are viable options and can assist the educational process to ensure spiritual formation occurs. See Mark A. Maddix and James R. Estep, “Spiritual Formation in Online Higher Education Communities: Nurturing Spirituality in Christian Higher Education Online Degree Programs,” *Christian Education Journal* 7, no. 2 (2010): 423.

¹⁶¹ Engstrom highlights this aspect of service. See Engstrom and Cedar, *Compassionate Leadership*, 23.


mentored. His formal training in the Jewish law from Gamaliel is recorded, but Acts also records the aid Barnabus offered Saul after his dramatic Damascus Road experience and mentored him in the faith. The impact of Barnabus’ investment in Paul’s life cannot be measured. It was a trajectory-setting moment in his life and ministry. Likewise, the elders and leaders Paul met on his missionary journeys seemingly carried on his legacy and multiplied his investment in their lives by devoting themselves to the same practice. In conclusion, while the biblical narrative unearths the mentoring model throughout, Engstrom focus’ on Jesus and Paul as leading examples. The intense years of personal investment and observation resulted in decades of faithfulness and inspiration for their followers. In the next segment, the attention of the research will move outside of the direct biblical and theological material to acknowledge one area, education, of the broader conversations about mentoring.

**A Supplementary Model of Mentoring: Education**

Mentoring is a model that is not only common in the Bible, but also in the larger work force today. Many in education, healthcare, business, and social work have thought extensively about the benefits of mentoring and offer helpful insights toward a

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164 Paul provides a legal defense for himself and traces his educational roots back to this prominent Jewish rabbi. In Acts 22:3, Paul tells us, “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today.”


167 As stated above, the three goals of this section are to give recognition to (1) the broader conversation revolving around the subject of mentoring, (2) locate insights that strengthen the argument of this dissertation, and (3) open the door for further study and application of the research conclusions.
Christian understanding on the subject. In this section, the dissertation will focus on a few outside voices from the educational literature on mentoring that offer further support to Engstrom’s position. I will seek to uncover a few basic connections between the literature in this field and the above biblical and theological considerations. To start, the goals of education will be considered along with how mentoring align with those goals.

Learning is a primary goal of education. Lois Zachary opens the Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series, *The Mentor’s Guide*, with a clarion call for mentoring to center on learning. She asserts, “Learning is the fundamental process and the primary purpose of mentoring. One of the principal reasons mentoring relationships fail is that the learning process is not tended to and the focus on learning goals is not maintained.” For Zachary, experience is the lens that drives the interrelationship in the learning process, yet the mentor’s experience should always be differentiated from that of the mentee’s. She continues, “Mentors who are able to reflect critically on their own experiences and learn from them are best able to model critical reflection in their mentoring interaction.” This combination of learning-focused, experientially driven, and personally interactive fits nicely into the themes that undergird a Christian approach to learning.

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168 The bibliography provided in Biehl’s work on mentoring includes both Christian and secular works and is a tremendous resource for understanding the best sources written during Engstrom’s lifetime. See Biehl, *Mentoring*, 185-96.

169 This section, like the work on doctrine above, is highly limited in its scope due to the capacious writings on mentoring within educational systems.


171 Ibid., 16.
As Zachary mentions, critical thinking is an aspect of learning that stands out as another common goal of education, especially in liberal arts settings. Edie Goldenberg agrees with this second goal of education and suggests “the goals of a liberal arts education are to provide students with a solid foundation for problem solving; to help them understand others and interact effectively with them; to help students examine their own assumptions and avoid being taken in by specious argument. . . . Inside and outside the classroom, liberal arts students should learn how to learn and develop a zest for learning that will last them a lifetime.”172 Here, Goldenberg is not just concerned with acquiring knowledge but possessing a skill to filter and appreciate knowledge. In Ken Bain’s *What the Best College Teacher’s Do*, he writes, “Our subjects realize that learning doesn’t just affect what you know; it can transform how you understand the nature of knowing. . . . They become aware of the implications and applications of the ideas and information.”173 Although Bain does not press these observations about critical thinking and responsible learning toward a Christian worldview, they align themselves with the participatory learning values discussed earlier. By implication, the function of a classroom teacher overlaps with the function of a mentor in a group setting.174

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174Mullen affirms the direct connection between education and mentoring at the college level in his study on the role of “e-mentoring.” He explains, “In recent years, the practice of faculty mentoring students has emerged on college and university campuses. A mentor can be described as a “readily available person to a novice or unskilled practitioner” (Hewing and Knapczyk, 2006, 5). The number of colleges offering mentoring programs is on the rise (Haring, 1997), and mentoring is increasingly being viewed as a tool for promoting student retention (Walker & Taub, 2001), particularly the retention of first-year students (Johnson, 1989). Studies of student mentoring programs have been favorable and have indicated a positive effect on student persistence and/or a student’s grade point average (Campbell & Campbell, 1997).” See Steve Mullen, “An Integrative Model For E-Mentoring Christian Education Students,” *Christian Education* 9 (2012): 386.
Furthermore, these observations beg the question: are teachers practicing Bain’s “awareness of the implications and applications of ideas” that they impart to their students? What do teachers owe the students in terms of practicing, inside and outside the classroom, what they teach? A Christian worldview offers a theologically informed response that syndicates the stewardship of all learning into a holistic gospel framework. Still, voices within secular education also speak to this concern.

For example, educational best practices also point to the concept of teacher as model. Stephen Brookfield sites Paulo Freire, who claims, “Education is above all the giving of examples through actions.” The method of mentoring is learning by following a model. This “modeling” can be group oriented as with a master teacher or it also allows for customized learning. Bain suggests that all of the best teachers they studied grasped the message: every student requires something special. He quotes Paul Baker, who says, “My strongest feeling about teaching is that you must begin with the student. As a teacher you do not begin to teach, thinking of your own ego and what you know... The moments of the class must belong to the student—not the students, but to the very undivided student. You don’t teach a class. You teach a student.” Baker’s educational admonition, although highly aspirational and even idealistic, synchronizes perfectly with the structure of mentoring relationships. Similarly, Richard Suinn suggests,

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175 This is an identical concern to the questions raised in chap. 3 of this dissertation—is virtue formation in the American educational system even possible?

176 This is certainly a larger conversation concerning the relationship between the personal morality and qualification of a position of leadership. American culture deals with these questions at the most public levels, for instance, consider the call for impeaching President Bill Clinton on moral grounds or more recently the saga surrounding professional football player Ray Rice’s eligibility after the assault of his fiancé.

“By matching your teaching method to a student’s learning style, you enhance that student’s ability to grasp the information and to remember the material.”

Again, mentoring relationship model learning and naturally foster modification to one’s learning style because of the personal nature of the audience and the allowance for interaction. Individualized learning is certainly desired in many settings and while not cost effective, can shape the life of a learner forever because of the degree of customization and attention.

This section will close by returning to the one of the questions that drove this entire chapter: Why did Jesus choose to invest deeply in a few? Do secular prophets of education have a valid point that true education starts with the individual students learners are and shapes and forms them from that place? Even more, do Christian educational models demand small classrooms and high relational impact? With James K. A. Smith, we ask if even the best evangelical models of Christian education have been more focused on information than formation? Is Smith right to say the Christian education should aim “to form radical disciples of Jesus and citizens of the baptismal city who, communally, take up the creational task of being God’s image bearers, unfolding the cultural possibilities latent in creation—but doing so as empowered by the Spirit,

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180 Benjamin Bloom’s research on *mastery learning* as a step up from *conventional learning* and a step down from one-on-one learning tabulates these challenges in school systems. See Benjamin Bloom, “The Search for Methods of Group Instruction as Effective as One-to-One Tutoring,” *Educational Leadership* 41 (May 1984): 4-17.

181 Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 219.
following the example of Jesus’s cruciform cultural labor.”¹⁸² If so, the wrinkle of mentoring within educational practices can enhance the formation of students and provides both a strategy and an assessment point for Christian educators. These questions and more will drive the conclusions of this dissertation, but until then, this chapter closes by beginning to rethink Engstrom’s teachings through theological lenses in hopes of coalescing these insights for the raw materials needed to cast a renewed vision of Christian leadership.

**Toward a Re-imagining of Mentoring for Christian Leaders**

In the final analysis, the above observations will be incorporated with Engstrom’s thought to begin crafting a way forward. The first layer is the theological foundation, which is predicated on the doctrines of anthropology, epistemology, Christology and missiology.¹⁸³ Though limited, these provide sturdy footing to begin a fully orbed Christian approach to mentoring. Next, clear models of ministry seen in Jesus and the apostle Paul provide guiderails to navigate the practice of mentoring. With a foundation and a guiding model, Engstrom then provides a modern day advocate and practitioner who embodied what it means to focus on a few in one of the most expansive eras in American history. Engstrom was also well aware that the next generation would have to stake out its own convictions and strategies in a different world than he and his colleagues had worked.¹⁸⁴ After he became President Emeritus at World Vision, he

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¹⁸²Ibid., 220.

¹⁸³To reinforce the intended function of these doctrines within this study, I will refer to them below as the four “planks” of a theological foundation.

¹⁸⁴Engstrom referred to the second half of the nineteenth century as a new epoch in a bright new world of hope and ambition at the end of World War II. He describes that world this way: “A civilized
coauthored a book for leaders in this new world, *Seizing the Torch: Leadership for a New Generation*. In it, he writes,

> The choices are harder today. At the close of WWII, we all knew who the enemy was. We shared the same experiences—the victories and the defeats. We all belonged to the winning team. Somehow it was easier to face the new missionary challenges with confidence. Today the Western world cannot agree on who the enemy is. And no one really feels like an international winner. No wonder many young people find it difficult to commit to Christian leadership.\(^{185}\)

His assessment rings true over two decades later. Engstrom believed the best strategy to ensure a good handoff of leadership from one generation to the next was through mentoring.

> The first plank of the foundation is a proper view of humanity. Christian anthropology recognizes the goodness of God’s creation, the image of God in man, and the sinful human heart. The biblical account is categorically different than leadership development theories that start with a well-intentioned heart or a neutral moral starting point that can be formed toward goodness. The congruency with Engstrom is seen in his holistic approach that deals not just with professional coaching but personal accountability and character development. The image of God in men and women infuses inherent worth and dignity as well as challenges Christian mentors to work towards the renewal of the image of God, seen most clearly in Christ. Lastly, Christian anthropology sheds light on the reality that humans are not merely informational or rational creatures.

world had marched home triumphantly with the realization we had physically conquered the forces of darkness; and a great number of us wanted to march back and conquer that same world spiritually.” Engstrom then lists the ministries that were born and blossomed in that sentiment, including Dawson Trotman and Navigators, Torrey Johnson and Youth for Christ, Billy Graham and the publishing enthusiasts supporting him. See Ted Engstrom and Robert Larson, *Seizing the Torch* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1988), 10.

\(^{185}\)Ibid.
seeking more intelligence, but are embodied creatures who learn by observation and physical presence with their mentor.\footnote{186}{Although it is beyond the reach of this research to examine the emerging data in neuroscience, it will be a growing field of study that impacts the claims of this dissertation. Moll investigates these advances in neuroscience to establish the argument that our bodies are collecting information through observation that informs who we are. He explains, “The process works like this. Specific neurons in our brains mimic, or mirror, what we see another person doing. This mimicry provides the basis for our conscious interpretation—our thoughts—about what we are seeing or hearing. Like a person who watches herself waving in a mirror, we are able to decode the words and actions of others only as we reflect them. These kinds of feelings are a fundamental source of our conscious thought” (Rob Moll, \textit{What Your Body Knows} [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014], 52).}

The second foundational plank centers around a Christian view of knowledge. Mentors, at every level, are transferring skill, wisdom, and experience to their protégés. The epistemological reflections above show the unmatched value of learning by observation and participation.\footnote{187}{Specifically in view here is the personal, participatory way of knowing presented by Polanyi and supported by Meek, Newbigin, Smith, and Garber.} It was Engstrom who explained that Christ’s teaching went beyond pouring knowledge into the heads of his disciples, but included \textit{values} as well. Such values cannot be substantiated in modern or postmodern approach to epistemology that exclude subjectivity on the one hand or objectivity on the other. Christian mentoring, according to the biblical models of Jesus and Paul, and in agreement with Engstrom’s appraisal, transports a coherent value system that shapes the way we live. Finally, the personal view of knowledge espoused by Polanyi helps to affirm Engstrom’s claim that no classroom or book can offer what the experience of mentoring affords. Mentors pass on more than they can articulate and mentees acquire more than they are ever conscious of learning, often for good or ill.\footnote{188}{Terri Scandura, “Dysfunctional Mentoring Relationships and Outcomes,” \textit{Journal of Management} 24 (June 1998): 449-67.} Mentoring is further braced by the concerns voiced in the field of epistemology.
Thirdly, the area of Christology provides another foundational plank for a truly Christian view of mentoring. Pausing to apprehend the meaning of the person and work of Christ keeps Christian mentoring from a shallow and stunted view of a Jesus who came primarily to be a model for life. Comprehending the way the incarnation reveals the character of God and the rightful image of God in man is vital. Understanding the atoning work of Christ on the cross is central. Furthermore, an awareness of the union with Christ accomplished through his death and resurrection is the remedy required by mentors seeking to avoid self-righteous moralism and hopeless-defeatism. Finally, these rich truths do not replace Engstrom’s call to accountability in mentoring, but form the substructure for accountability that conforms both mentors and protégés to the image of Christ.

The fourth plank of the foundation is missiology. The basis for understanding missiology is seeing that all Christian missionary efforts are theocentric. The *missio Dei* and *mission ecclesia* unite to form a mature view of the great commission. Mentoring is pivotal to every aspect of cross-cultural missions efforts, from language learning and culture adaption to longevity on the field and diagnosing ‘local’ contexts. One of the pressing missiological concerns Engstrom confronted was the overwhelming physical

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189 Anthropocentric views of mentoring, clamoring first after worldly success and seeing Christian values as a means to accomplish this, make the mistake of pointing to Jesus as model without entering through the true way of Christ, which is the cross.

190 Engstrom reiterates the comfort and hope God provides *for the purpose* of giving it to others. See Engstrom and Jenson, *The Making of a Mentor*, 16-18.

191 Sills opines the recent ‘need for speed’ in missionary and church planting efforts that have left a void of fruitful churches in its wake. These missteps often stem from an underdeveloped view of the great commission and an inadequate view of God. See David Sills, *Reaching and Teaching* (Chicago: Moody, 2010), 15.
need due to titanic population growth through his work with World Vision.\(^\text{192}\) These alarming statistics swelled throughout his life, but instead of abandoning the model for a mass appeal, Engstrom reaffirms the model of mentoring a few.\(^\text{193}\) Missiology, alongside the other three “planks” of theology construct a strong platform that can sustain cultural fluctuation and can acclimate to the unknown societal viruses. Atop this platform, it takes intentional personal investment to shape and form someone with the values and acumen requisite for Christian leadership.

Engstrom emphasized qualified mentors who were interested in investing their collected experiences and wisdom in others. Similarly, Michael Card, a songwriter and recording artist, published his story of discipleship and opens with a quote from his mentor, Bill Lane, who said, “When God gives a gift, He wraps it in another person.”\(^\text{194}\) For a handful of men and women, Ted Engstrom is their gift from God. He served as a their mentor. Engstrom testifies to these relationships while reflecting on the pilgrimage of his life, he shares,

I have felt that every leader needs to have a Timothy or Timothy’s. The Apostle Paul had his son in the faith to whom he wrote two magnificent letters of guidance and instruction. I’m certain that Paul and Timothy learned from each other; it was a beautiful relationship. God has allowed me to have numerous “Timothy’s” over these past decades for who I am most grateful.\(^\text{195}\)

\(^\text{192}\)Engstrom adds to the urgency of missionary efforts in light of the world’s astounding population growth. He records, “At the time of our Lord’s presence on earth, the world population was estimated to be 250 million people. This number barely doubled by the year 1600. . . . [By] 1850, it had increased to one billion. In just 100 years, by 1950, the population doubled again… If we continue to increase at the present rate, by the year 2000 there could be as many as seven billion of us on planet earth!” (Engstrom, What in the World is God Doing, 19).

\(^\text{193}\)Engstrom and Cedar, Compassionate Leadership, 63-68. The emphasis remained to the end as evident by the publication date of 2006, the same year of his death.


\(^\text{195}\)Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 178.
Engstrom’s legacy, like a calculated financial investment, is still producing compounding growth among those with whom he shared his life. He practiced the fine art of mentoring about which he wrote, and for that, we should be most grateful. The following chapter details those relationships from the perspective of those who received the investment that was Ted Engstrom’s mentorship.
CHAPTER 5
TED ENGSTROM’S MENTORING LEGACY

“Ted was a mentor and friend, whose service on 40 boards, authorship of more than 50 books, and both formal and informal leadership in so many ministries leaves us breathless.”
- Robert C. Andringa, President Emeritus, Council for Christian Colleges & Universities

If Ted Engstrom were an outside observer to this project (and his life’s work was not the fulcrum of the argument), one might question if he would be unconvinced by the theoretical assertions provided thus far. He was the type to demand evidence, not just ideas. He was such a pragmatist that he would want to know if the author of the books on mentoring had actually been effective in mentoring. He would ask: Did he or she practice what they preached? The same principle should be applied to his life. His public leadership stands up to the pragmatic questions of accomplishment. However, this chapter aims to examine the question: did Engstrom’s personal life meet the same


2Engstrom asserts, “The task for the executive is to know what 20 percent to focus on….But how does one do this? The answer lies not only in hundreds of books on management practice and theory, but in a good deal of experience (!) that has to be lived.” Ted Engstrom and Ed Dayton, *The Christian Leaders 60-Second Management Guide* (Waco, TX; Word Books, 1984), 63.

3Chap. 2 of this dissertation outlines the results of Engstrom’s leadership contributions to Zondervan, Youth for Christ, World Vision, and various organizational boards.
standard of excellence? Borrowing one of the common models in Engstrom’s work, this chapter will press together the main themes of excellence and mentoring by sharing stories from Engstrom’s personal life via interviews with six of his former protégés.

Mentoring was a recognized hallmark of Engstrom’s life. His ministry continued to be a training ground for leaders as he scheduled early morning meetings for the purpose of investing in the lives of others. Gordon MacDonald, who acknowledges his indebtedness to personal mentors, commends Engstrom as a leader who has done the mentoring he writes about. He continues, “Men and women all over the world will gladly

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4 This assessment was based on qualitative personal interviews with a group of Christian leaders who were mentored by Engstrom. A list of the common questions is provided in the appendix.


6 Several other interviews were conducted with individual who knew Engstrom well through work, but did not consider him to serve as a mentor in their lives and therefore will not be included in the interview section below. These include Richard Mouw (former president Fuller Theological Seminary), Timothy Beals (president of Credo Communications), Steve Gray (Director of Central Records, World Vision International), David Dockery (president of Trinity International University), and JoAnn Bengel (Ted Engstrom’s daughter). Additionally, interviews were unsuccessfully attempted during this research with several other key Christian leaders who were Engstrom’s colleagues, including: Bill Hybels (pastor of Willow Creek Community Church), Ken Kemp (founder of LEADER Focus), Bob Larson (Co-Author with Engstrom and edited a compilation volume of Engstrom’s writings), Keith Jespersen (former CEO of Russ Reid Co.), and James Dobson (former president of Focus on the Family). These additional interviewees assisted the author in his attempt to grasp Engstrom’s strengths and weaknesses, place Engstrom in American evangelical life, and understand the indirect influence Engstrom had on individuals and organizations who were one or two steps removed from his realm of responsibility.

7 When asked, “What do you think your dad perceived as his key contribution?” Engstrom’s daughter replied, “(Part 2) Dad’s ability to mentor and disciple was like no one I knew. His wisdom and discernment was apparent to all who spent time with him. He saw the need to meet with younger men to help build them, encourage them and challenge them to grow in their faith, marriages, family, and the church. He was an outstanding correspondent with the men he met with. He listened to their concerns, challenged them to grow and then followed-up with a letter of encouragement and a reminder of what they discussed, in order to be prepared for the next meeting. When he closed his meetings, he always asked the men to pick one thing they wanted to focus on to grown in. For example, if they wanted a stronger marriage, he would ask them to rate their marriage between 1-10. If they said, 6.5, he would then ask, what they needed to do to increase that number to 7. He never asked them reach too high too fast, just grow. When they met the following time - he always started with asking how they did to achieve their higher rating. Dad was a man of integrity and expected nothing less from his co-workers and the men he mentored. Jo Ann Bengel, email to author, February 21, 2012.
and thankfully attest to that . . . . The mentoring leader (and that is what Ted Engstrom has been) is a scarce human commodity.”

Excellence was equally a trademark of Engstrom’s leadership. And before moving into the highlights of the interviews, which implicitly bring the two major themes of the dissertation together, excellence and mentoring will be woven together in a more explicit fashion. This is foundational to construct a clear argument from the interview sessions.

The Wedding of Excellence and Mentoring

Excellence is not the silver bullet for leadership, and neither is mentoring. Striving for excellence can, among other dangers, lead to overwork and neglect of priorities. Likewise, a (negative) version of mentoring is still operating when someone conducts unjust business behaviors or practices fraudulent financial activities. To guard against such dangers, this research has hedged the terms as provided in Engstrom’s definitions and then reinforced each concept with biblical and theological observations. Still, this dissertation argues that excellence and mentoring are best practiced when functioning in tandem. The clearest evidence for this exists in the ensuing comments from those Engstrom mentored. Prior to that, however, some further theoretical connections should be made. In light of the research, three key reasons emerge that support the need to wed excellence and mentoring.

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8 MacDonald’s foreword in Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, xii.


10 The public financial scandals of the 1970’s, especially among TV evangelists, spurred Engstrom to found the ECFA. This was discussed further in chap. 2.
First, combining excellence and mentoring provides Christian leaders with balance.\textsuperscript{11} It is possible to mistake excellence and mentoring as counter virtues, that is, they can be characterized as opposing strengths exhibited by leaders with different leadership orientations.\textsuperscript{12} Actually, these are helpful considerations, along with the followers’ strengths and the situation that brings the leader and followers together.\textsuperscript{13} Engstrom regularly categorized leaders by their natural bent.\textsuperscript{14} Still, this dissertation maintains that all Christian leaders should employ excellence and mentoring precisely because they complement each other. As argued in chapter 1, the allurement of one principle without the other leads to imbalance and takes root in a leader’s life, which can travel through the entire organization. As a result, one organization will be focused on investing in people, but excuse things like attention to detail. Conversely, another organization will metaphorically—dot every “i” and cross every “t”—with an eye to the bottom line that uses people at the expense of developing people. Both are incomplete models of leadership.

\textsuperscript{11}Timothy Keller’s consistent push for “balance” in ministry has greatly shaped the view of this author. His discussion on “middleware” is valuable and is comparable to what this dissertation seeks to argue with Engstrom’s dual emphasis of excellence and mentoring. See Tim Keller, \textit{Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City} (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 13-25.

\textsuperscript{12}For example, Bass discusses task-oriented leaders, which aligns nicely with excellence, and relationship-oriented leaders, which aligns nicely with mentoring. For definitions of these terms, see Bernard M. Bass, \textit{The Bass Handbook of Leadership}, 4\textsuperscript{th} ed. (New York: Free Press, 2008), 498.


\textsuperscript{14}Temple lists Engstrom’s five leadership styles and comments, “These leadership styles are most useful when connected with followers and organizations that complement or display similar styles. The style used will be determined by the nature of the responsibilities assigned to the job or leader.” Troy W. Temple, “An Analysis of Youth Ministers’ Perceptions of Character Qualities, Leadership Competencies, and Leadership Flaws That Facilitate or Hinder Effective Youth Ministry” (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008), 43.
Instead, Christian leaders should aim to find equilibrium with mentoring-work alongside excellence-work, even when they appear to be colliding values. Furthermore, these two aspects of leadership must remain united even as they maintain distinctive identities and are emphasized individually.\textsuperscript{15} That is to say, it is certainly possible and helpful (even as Engstrom does) to emphasize excellence without connecting it to mentoring.\textsuperscript{16} Similarly, mentoring can and should be emphasized for it’s own sake.\textsuperscript{17} Still, a leader should constantly assess if both themes are operating to keep an organization moving forward. Excellence plus mentoring equals a balanced leadership approach.

Second, the principle of excellence is transferred in a heightened way in the context of intentional mentoring. In a clarifying summary statement, Engstrom writes, “Above all, a mentor seeks to instill in his charge the pursuit of excellence in service as unto Christ.”\textsuperscript{18} This is the collision of the two formidable themes of Engstrom. He sees the chief end of personal investment in another as service to Christ, and he understands the chief charge as the installation of excellence. Engstrom retains strong convictions on this matter because he sees excellence as core to the Christian life in general, thus central to a Christian mentor’s efforts. He declares, “I believe that striving for excellence in one’s work, whatever it may be, is not only the Christian’s duty, but it is a basic form of Christian witness.”\textsuperscript{19} The epistemological groundwork introduced in chapter four points

\textsuperscript{15}The goal of this section is not to create two new terms such as “excellent mentoring” or “mentoring excellence.” Instead, it is focused on keeping both unique habits functioning in a leader’s life.

\textsuperscript{16}Excellence outside of its relationship to mentoring was the thrust of the argument in chap. 3.

\textsuperscript{17}Mentoring apart from its relationship to excellence was the central concern of chap. 4.

\textsuperscript{18}Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 115.

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., 116.
to the intersection of excellence in mentoring in Polanyi’s comments on “connoisseurship.” He contends, “Connoisseurship, like skill, can be communicated only by example, not by precept. To become an expert wine-taster, to acquire a knowledge of innumerable different blends of tea or to be trained as a medical diagnostician, you must go through a long course of experience under the guidance of a master.”20 This principle converts to matters of leadership, especially when considering excellence. Like connoisseurship, the goal in leadership is to identify and create the best of the best: the best people, the best practices, the best strategies, and the best culture. Leadership lessons, like other skills mentioned in Polanyi, are truncated if only conveyed by precept. They must be observed, lived, and guided by a master to truly develop into expertise, or excellence. Mentoring, therefore, can heighten one’s grasp of excellence.

Third, each element guards against the weaknesses of the other. This requires defined Christian boundaries for each term.21 If it is true that excellence and mentoring provide a healthier leadership environment when combined (equilibrium), it is equally true that they are unhealthier when apart. Exclusive attention to processes (excellence)

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20Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 54. Polanyi lists skills like riding a bicycle, swimming, diagnosing medical syndromes, and maneuvering the political arena that involve a level of achieved performance with a set of rules which are not known as such to the person following them. They are observed and lived, creating a tacit dimension of knowledge that extends beyond articulation.

21The key conceptual components of excellence and mentoring need to be stated in order to distinguish them from competing definitions—as Engstrom demonstrated. Further efforts to this end are seen in Jones and Armstrong, who argue for service and love as features of “excellence.” They maintain, “This way of life is very different from the world’s way, in which excellence is gauged by competition and achievement. Excellence for Paul does not focus on what “I” can do over against others, thereby creating “winners” and “losers.” Rather, Paul calls us – as he did the Corinthians – to a way of excelling by embodying God’s love manifest in Jesus Christ.” Gregory L. Jones and Kevin Armstrong, Resurrecting Excellence (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 1.
can hurt the morale of teams. In return, this lowers their desire to achieve excellence.\textsuperscript{22} As a result, both the organization’s people and processes end up weaker. Equally, exclusive attention to the relational development (mentoring) without an eye to excellence results in misguided mentoring. The individual might be known and even highly likable, but without excellence, they remain underdeveloped. The goal, as stated by Engstrom and others, is to move one’s mentee forward in the personal and professional capacities, which demand attention to people and process. In conclusion, these three reasons support the proposition that excellence and mentoring should be dual foci for Christian leaders. The following section will continue to show the need to combine these two practices as well as introduce the candidates who participated in the interview process.

\textbf{Interview Introductions:}

\textbf{Bob Andringa, Jon Wallace, Ron Jenson, Dean Hirsch, John Reynolds, and Bill Kliewer}

Engstrom’s mentoring influence branches off in all sorts of directions, which is arguably one of his most important long-term contributions.\textsuperscript{23} He challenged his readers to “envision their protégés’ future” and possessed a gift of believing in other people when

\textsuperscript{22}This observation helps avoid some of the key mistakes leaders are given to make. For examples, three of Hans Finzel’s top four ‘mistakes leaders make’ include (1) the Top-Down Attitude; (2) the Putting Paperwork before Peoplework; (3) the Absence of Affirmation; and (4) No Room For Mavericks. See Hans Finzel, \textit{The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make} (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1994).

\textsuperscript{23}This concept is captured in Leighton Ford’s comments about Engstrom and his co-author, Paul Cedar. Ford writes, “An old Indian proverb says that ‘nothing grows under the banyan tree.’” That huge tree towers so high and spreads its branches so wide with such thick foliage that the sun cannot filter through to nurture the tiny seedlings below. The same thing, unfortunately, can be said of many visible and strong human leaders. Their reach goes high. Their influence goes wide. They are seen by many as leaders. And yet they do not create space within their circle of influence to permit younger leaders to put down their roots and spread their branches . . . . They (Paul and Ted) are not ‘banyan tree’ leaders. Rather, they have sought to lead others to Jesus, like Jesus, for Jesus.” Leighton Ford, in the foreword to Ted Engstrom and Paul Cedar, \textit{Compassionate Leadership} (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006), 10-13.
they could not see it themselves.\textsuperscript{24} The goal of the interview section is three-fold: (1) to provide a second perspective (beyond Engstrom’s writings) on the themes of excellence and mentoring, (2) to uncover the personal side of Ted Engstrom, and (3) to demonstrate that Engstrom’s leadership principles continue beyond his life through those in whom he invested his time and wisdom.\textsuperscript{25} Additionally, the participants include committed Christian leaders who hold or have held significant positions of responsibility.\textsuperscript{26} Each interview was conducted by phone and recorded to ensure accurate quotations.\textsuperscript{27}

By way of introduction, brief biographical remarks will be made about each participant along with a footnote about how they first met Engstrom. First, Robert Andringa served previously as the president for the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities and currently serves as the managing partner for The Andringa Group LLC, a consulting group based out of Scottsdale, Arizona.\textsuperscript{28} Second, Jon Wallace is the president of Azusa Pacific University, a role he has held since 2000.\textsuperscript{29} Next, Ron Jenson

\textsuperscript{24}Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 107.

\textsuperscript{25}The consideration of Engstrom’s habits carried on in the life of those he mentored was the final aspect of the set interview questions, the results of which will be shared throughout this chap.

\textsuperscript{26}This is a known bias of the research. As a result of their success and their favorable experiences of Engstrom investing in their lives, the interviewees were prone to provide positive responses.

\textsuperscript{27}Each interview was recorded with expressed consent of the interviewee. All interviews were transcribed and along with the full audio, will be kept for at least one year after the approval of this dissertation. The comments of the interview will not be released or used in any other format beyond this dissertation without written approval of those involved.

\textsuperscript{28}Andringa recalls that he first met Engstrom on the board of the Christian Management Association (CMA). He explained, “There was an annual meeting and Sylvia Nash was executive director and there was an annual CMA, now CLA (Christian Leadership Alliance), meeting and Ted and I ended up doing some workshops on non-profit board governance.” Bob Andringa, interview with author, phone interview, Scottsdale, AZ, January 8, 2015.

\textsuperscript{29}Wallace briefly explained he and Engstrom became acquaintances at Azusa Pacific University when Wallace served as a young staff member for the university. Jon Wallace, phone interview with author, February 4, 2015.
is the Co-Founder of Future Achievement International and is also the President of Life Coach International. Fourth, Dean Hirsch is the former president of World Vision International and currently travels doing consulting for non-profit organizations. Fifth, John Reynolds was the CIO for World Vision International and currently serves as the Executive Vice President for Azusa Pacific University and the chairman of the board for the Christian Leadership Alliance, which houses the Engstrom Institute. Sixth, Bill Kliewer served as Executive Vice President at World Vision International and currently does consulting through the Bill Kliewer Group LLC.

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30 Jenson explains that he and Engstrom were first connected through Engstrom’s Time Management Seminars. He shared, “Well we actually first met back in the 70’s when I was working on my doctorate on discipleship, a DMin student at Western Baptist Seminary. I was doing research on discipleship of the church and part of that involved a management course. I was testing some management courses that were out there . . . . Campus Crusade had one and then Ed Dayton and Ted had another management one. So I went through all three of those and kind of got exposed to Ted. Then and subsequently we became friends . . . . I was applying a lot of what I learned from Ted—read a lot of his books—then Bill Bright invited me to become president of his graduate school and seminary. I did that and I leaned into Ted because I went down there to become president of the seminary when I was 29 years old. I was 2 years younger than my average student we had 3 campuses and many more since and we oversaw the training for Campus Crusade on bible and theology and leadership and all of that 10’s of 1000’s of people around the world—so I leaned into Ted as an advisor. He was always a great friend who championed me along with Bill Bright, of course, who was my direct boss. And then when I started a board there, he (Ted) became my first board member and then for many years we were just friends.” Ron Jenson, phone interview with author, January 22, 2015.

31 Hirsch first met Engstrom during his job interview for a computer engineering position with World Vision in 1976. He explained, “On a Wednesday, I had lunch with them (computer team) and at lunch they offered me the job. And they said, ‘You are going to have to see Dr. Engstrom.’ So that Friday, two days later, we never discussed whether or not I was qualified because I had been involved in Youth for Christ and I knew all the people he was involved with at Youth for Christ. So as soon as we had that discussion, he said, you’re hired.” Dean Hirsch, phone interview with author, February 5, 2015.

32 Reynolds remembers meeting Engstrom at a World Vision training session for new area directors. He shared, “The first time was in probably 1981. I was starting to work in World Vision S. Africa and I came across to the U.S. for a conference with World Vision and he was the president of World Vision US.” John Reynolds, phone interview with author, January 28, 2015.

33 Kliewer describes his first interaction with Engstrom: “It was in my sophomore year in college (maybe before) and I was a YFC youth director in Tulsa, OK . . . . While I was attending Tulsa University—I believe at the time it was about 1957. I believe he was the YFC International President, and he would come through and we would talk and meet.” Bill Kliewer, phone interview with author, February 2, 2015.
Elements of Engstrom’s Mentoring Legacy

The remarks in this section are highlights from the interview sessions and are organized in the following five categories: (1) an Excellent Executive, (2) an Encouraging Executive, (3) a Stewarding Executive, (4) a Mentoring Executive, and (5) a Networking Executive. Although there is necessary overlap in some of the selected comments, these five categories were selected because they capture the major themes that emerged during the interviews. Correspondingly, these five topics served as refrains in the biographical account in chapter 2 and will help inform the implications in the final chapter. The outcome of the interviews returned a great deal of congruency between his life practice and the messages in his writings. Finally, each element is couched in terms of serving as an “executive” because that was one common denominator of each of the interviewees and something highlighted as a unique perspective Engstrom possessed.

Wallace puts it this way:

He developed a really remarkable and insightful way of speaking into the places that CEO’s of Christian organizations get stuck. He would talk about making decisions quickly and making decisions, sometimes, by faith—not necessarily holding back if God wanted you to risk it all. Then he would also hold the board responsible for how they, and the COO, honored the suppliers and paying their bills on time. I think it

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34The approach of this chapter is not to provide a comprehensive account of the interview sessions, but rather to place emphasis where the interviewees placed emphasis. The great challenge in this section of the research was to narrow down the invaluable first-hand materials offered by these individuals.

35The criterion for selection of these five categories, along with the number of categories, was established after the interviews were conducted. Each element was selected because it appeared in a majority of the interviews, most of which surfaced in all six interviews. “Excellence” proved to be the predominate theme and therefore is given the most attention in this chap.

36For a full listing of the primary interview questions, see the appendix.

37Engstrom was formative in starting a ministry called “CEO Dialogues,” which is still an active part of the work of the Christian Leadership Alliance. His tact for speaking into the life of a CEO, from the perspective of a former CEO, also earned him credibility as he served on various boards. See Ted Engstrom and Bobb Biehl, Increasing Your Boardroom Confidence (Phoenix: Questar Publishers Inc., 1988), 193-211.
was both/and. And I think Ted felt that all of us needed to be disciples who reflected the excellence of God, and I also think that he had a specific, unique and special insight for CEO’s and Christian organizations because he had helped so many get past some challenging times.  

**An Excellent Executive**

Based on Engstrom’s written arguments, chapter 3 laid out an extended case for why Christian leaders should pursue excellence. The topic of excellence was directly in the interview questions. Specifically, the goal was to determine if there was alignment between his writings and his life. Secondarily, the interviews sought to determine if and to what degree Engstrom’s view of excellence impacted his practice of mentoring. The responses overwhelmingly affirm the role of excellence in Engstrom’s life and are evident in the following synopsis. First, Jenson summarizes Engstrom’s view of excellence this way:

Philippians 4:9 says whatever things are true, lovely, wonderful and if anything is worthy of excellence…. Excellence is really like a masterpiece. I would say Ted's life was like that. I think his life was very much a biblical masterpiece…. His love for his family (his devotion to them), his love to every organization—he wanted excellence. (You know how Peter Drucker talks about the difference between efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency is doing things well, or rightly, and effectiveness is doing right things. Ted had the ability to do right things and do them rightly—so to be effective and efficient.) He wanted things to be holistically excellence, so he wanted relationships to be excellent, he wanted to be treated with excellence, and to him that was grace and love and honesty. He was good at speaking the truth, but in love. He really personified this with his life—the way he lived. The integrity of his life was so excellent it was efficient and it was effective and that is a model to follow. 

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38Wallace, interview with author.

39Question 4 reads, “How did you see Engstrom practice excellence in his own work? How did he call others to do the same?” See the appendix.

40Jenson, interview with author.
Similarly, Andringa speaks about Engstrom’s drive for excellence this way:

He believed that God equips us and intends for us to do work of excellence—so that was a worldview. That was a philosophy he would share with us. In the parachurch world and in the church world—he was active in Lake Avenue Church—I think he knew that there was a tendency to be less committed to excellence than perhaps many were in the business or corporate sector. And, of course, he rubbed shoulders with a lot of people in the corporate world and his message to the nonprofit parachurch world was: We can do better. We are called to do better. We are called to excellence.41

One of the threads that ran through the responses was a connection between Engstrom’s view of excellence and the biblical support he attached to his view. Wallace provided a helpful summary in response to the question that was seeking to understand the biblical and theological motivations for excellence Engstrom passed down to his mentors.42 Wallace notes,

I believe that Ted viewed life by seconds, minutes, hours, weeks, months, years that make up our life as being one of God’s great gifts. There was a sense of urgency around everything we were called to. And Ted helped rescue World Vision, but he really saw this greater need for Christian organizations to not waste the resources that God had given them, including time. Take that a step further; it is not just ‘not wasting time,’ but it is maximizing what God has put into your hands. And so we serve a God of excellence. To face excellence is to turn your back on mediocrity. And I really believe that if you look at the books Ted wrote and the leadership he gave to so many boards and the support he brought to so many organizations and people and how they thought about time management and strategic planning. I think, clearly, that every aspect of Ted’s life, personal and professional, was a sense of urgency to align with excellence that honored God.43

Hirsch also remembers Engstrom tying excellence to Scripture and suggests his early days at Zondervan helped form his values on this issue. Hirsch replies,

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41Andringa, interview with author.
42Question 6 reads, “Did Engstrom explicitly address theological issues related to excellence? If so, discuss. If not, do you have any assumptions as to what theological values drove him to pursue excellence?” See the appendix.
43Wallace, interview with author.
He would talk about being kingdom people. And he felt, I remember him saying one time, kingdom people are not second-class. They need to be out on the cutting edge, they need to be on the forefront. I think the other thing he firmly believed, as I do, is that this world is God’s creation and everything belongs to him, and therefore harvest it - bring it in and use it for the glory of God and to help people. He was very strong on that. He was always sharing Scripture. If you ever had a question, he would have a scripture verse for it. He just didn’t think that as Christian or as a Christian institution. I think some of it came from his experience at Zondervan - they are publishing books, they had to be exact, had to be perfect, they can’t have errors in them or they won’t sell. I think Zondervan impacted him in terms of being a professional organization.44

Later in the interview, Hirsch provided further explanation for exactly what he believed the Zondervan influence looked like in the culture of World Vision and the trajectory Engstrom helped establish for the organization. He describes,

He was a perfectionist in grammar and spelling. He knew when documents weren’t right, or there were spelling errors or tense errors—he caught them. That is just one sign of excellence: things with errors should not go out. Even though he did not believe we should squander money or be excessive in overhead, he did not want things done on the cheap. He wanted things done professionally. And as I’m sure you know the history of World Vision, rather than having in house marketing and things of this sort that might not be at professional standards. He then partnered with Russ Reid and the Russ Reid Agency and brought huge changes to World Vision through television, through direct mail, and things of this sort. Where some agencies did it internally and looked like a mom-and-pop organization, Dr. Engstrom bridged out and went professional. You could see that in the mid 70’s (75, 76, 77) when he ventured World Vision into television. That was cutting edge. No other agency was really into television at the time.45

Hirsch’s explanation of hiring the Russ Reid Agency is a tangible example of how Engstrom’s emphasis on excellence affected his decision-making. Other specific

44Hirsch, interview with author.

45Hirsch, interview with author. He provided another application for excellence that clearly evidences the challenging and cultural realities that swirl around definitions of excellence. According to Hirsch, Engstrom understood one’s dress was an indicator of excellence and professionalism. He shared, “He always said, Dean—you’ve got to where a suit and tie. He thought that was part of being professional. Even when we had dress down days and relaxation at world vision, I was always in a suit and tie. And whenever I had a meeting with Dr. Engstrom, I was always in a suit and tie. I would always put on a coat as a sign of respect for him and who he was. If you were having a meeting with Dr. Engstrom, you needed to be in a suit and tie. Unless it was international—if he was in the Philippines, he would wear a ‘Barong’, he would be sensitive to cultures and do what was appropriate in different cultures.” Ibid.
standards of Engstrom’s practice of excellence were revealed throughout the interview process. For example, Kliewer mentioned this practical aspect of Engstrom’s understanding of excellence: “I remember him telling me, on the professional side: a phone call is returned on the same day. A letter or (not email) memorandum is answered no later than the following day. Period, that was it.”

Reynolds also described a practical way Engstrom showed excellence in their mentoring sessions. He says Engstrom would move toward action steps as they would conclude a mentoring session. He writes,

There was always an ending conversation where you say that if we had to move that (point of discussion) one point up the scale to develop excellence, what might they look like? So we would raise how would we develop professionally or how we were trying to solve an issue or strategy or something like that. How would you move from a 4 to a 5 on a scale—that was always his ending assimilation of it: how do we move this forward? And then he would basically coach based on what my response was.

Kliewer connected excellence with Engstrom’s regimented commitment to starting and ending meetings on time. He saw integrity as one of Engstrom’s key contributions. He said, “He was always on time. You never walked into Ted’s office at 5 after 10am if the appointment was at 10am. And he was very, very disciplined, very regimented in that fashion. And he was known for that all over the world.”

Kliewer also connected this practice of promptness to Engstrom’s insistence on integrity, or keeping one’s word, in every situation. Kliewer suggested: “He always did what he said he was going to do. If you said something to Engstrom or told him something, you could forget about it . . . . It would happen.”

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46Kliewer, interview with author.

47Reynolds, interview with author.

48Kliewer, interview with author.
Engstrom. Jenson noticed this connection as well and explained it this way: “He was very conscientious. He was very excellent—had a lot of integrity—his word was his bond. He wanted to do things very fair and appropriate on it (their joint book project).”

Wallace also affirms Engstrom’s emphasis on integrity as an aspect of excellence in this poignant anecdote:

Honesty, I would show up with questions when I had breakfast with Ted. One day, I asked Ted, “What do you want on your tombstone?” He said, “A Man of Integrity”

Now imagine, asking Ted Engstrom that question (I don’t even know where that question came from). I often, think about that in my own life—that what he wanted on his tombstone was a statement of integrity. I have used that in my own life for decisions I make. For motives that move me forwards or backwards in my own life, and for the promises I want to keep no matter what. That’s a pretty cool thing to think about—you know, your tombstone. That was really profound to me.

Finally, Hirsch addressed the issue of Engstrom’s integrity and connected it to Engstrom’s constant reliance on the Bible. Hirsch says it this way:

The other thing is that he believed in total integrity. We need to live lives that would honor God—he would use Scripture all the time on that. There was excellence in the company that came from Scripture, but also that we needed to be people of Christ. We needed to protect ourselves form the attacks of the evil one. He would talk about that quite a bit. He would always be sharing what his favorite scriptures were. One of the things he did at World Vision: he always put out a little card, a 4x6 or something, that had the verse of the year and it went out to all the World Vision offices in the world. So Scripture was very, very important to him in his life.

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49 Jenson, interview with author.

50 Wallace, interview with author. Later in the interview, Wallace showed how Engstrom applied his personal devotion to a life of integrity applied to others. He said, “I think Ted saw that the pillars of integrity and pillars of commitment: as in your marriage, or your finances or others, or your commitment to your organization. If those pillars develops cracks, you are in trouble as a leader—and he would often speak to that.” Ibid.

51 Hirsch, interview with author.
In a way, integrity is a needed guardrail to avoid common mistakes associated with excellence.\textsuperscript{52} One of the great challenges for Christian leaders who hold standards of excellence like this is that “excellence” becomes an idol. Reynolds takes note of this potential danger while still affirming the balancing act that Engstrom (and World Vision) maintained. Reynolds declares,

You can put the idol excellence before God, but I never felt that way. I always felt we were serving in our special way and in our special gifts and talents and that excellence (you may have heard the term from John but it I think it could really be attributed to Ted) that excellence really honored God and so therefore God would honor excellence. So if you were going to do it—if you loved God and respected God, and he is sovereign, and he is your Lord and Savior, why would you not serve your Lord with the absolute best of what you have—in terms of what he has provided in terms of your gifts and talents? And I think that he always managed to keep that in tension. It was not one or the other but it is actually something that was more fused in how it happened.\textsuperscript{53}

Integrity was not the only healthy guardrail in Engstrom’s understanding of excellence the interviewees mentioned. As evidenced in Hirsch’s statement above, the participants also confirmed biblical references, not theology, were central to Engstrom’s formulation of excellence.\textsuperscript{54} Jenson comments, “Well, I would say he wasn’t a systematic thinker but what I call a practical theologian. I think he thought biblically very deeply—he was in the Word quite rigorously all the time.” Andringa’s comments agree with this assessment. He

\textsuperscript{52}Engstrom addresses abuses of excellence such as demanding to wear only expensive clothes, only fly first class, or only eat at the finest restaurants. See Ted Engstrom and Ed Dayton, \textit{Christian Leadership Letter} (Monrovia, CA: World Vision International, 1981), 1.

\textsuperscript{53}Reynolds, interview with author.

\textsuperscript{54}The one exception to this was in a response from Jon Reynolds, who provided a more theologically oriented response to the question that attempted to distinguish Engstrom’s use of theological materials vis-a-vis Engstrom’s use of biblical examples. Reynolds suggested, “I’m speculating, but I do remember him saying to me once when you feel like you have lost all hope—you just go back to Genesis 1. And in the beginning God created, and you stop there because if you really believe that in the beginning God created everything—and everything has been created by God, then everything else becomes subsidiary in terms of thinking because God wouldn’t create junk—God wouldn’t create mediocrity etc.” Reynolds, interview with author.
states, “Well I never saw Ted as a theologian. He was in the word at World Vision, so he knew scripture. He was in the word.” Kliwer emphasizes that Engstrom saw things fairly plainly in regards to the Bible and behavior. He says Engstrom saw a Christian leader’s behavior “coming right out of the straight and narrow scriptures. If the Scriptures said do this, he did it, if it didn’t—he didn’t. He was really a straight arrow.” Hirsch also mentions Engstrom’s regular practice of citing Scripture. He provides this account:

He was very versed in Scripture. He could have a meeting and off the top of his head recall passages of Scripture that would apply to situations…. let your organization be professional - and that it couldn’t do anything less, or be diminished by, the fact that they were not a for-profit. He felt the organization should be among the best and lead by excellence and be an example to others. Let’s take the organization and the business side. He felt very strongly that World Vision, as a Christian organization, should excel at excellence, professionalism and that we should be as good and strong with any secular, profit organization. He would back up his ideas with Scripture. And he was very strong about that in terms of running the business.

Kliwer further emphasizes the distinction between a theological approach and Engstrom’s approach. He suggested, “He (Engstrom) was as far from being a theologian as you can get . . . . Other than following whatever the Scripture said. The Scripture is right, one hundred percent right, this is what you do. This looks like its evil, therefore, you don’t do it. He gave World Vision every year its scripture of the year. Every year, we would have a scripture—he never explained it theologically.”

Lastly, Jenson addresses

55 Andringa, interview by author.
56 Kliwer, interview by author.
57 Hirsch, interview by author.
58 Kliwer, interview with author. Kliwer elaborated that in general, Engstrom was not an emotional or contemplative guy. He said, “He based his life on the simple things with very little interpretation—this is black and white—and therefore how you live. Because of his discipline, because of his personality, that was the way he operated.” Ibid.
the same issue when he expounds on the distinction between Engstrom’s emphasis on primary issues versus secondary issues:

I think he was quite a rigorous practical theologian in the sense of being a biblical, practical thinker—but systematics—no. Because Ted was such a relational guy too (and a lover of people), I think of the Great Commandment, which is a great way to stay parked. Love God and love others the way you love yourself—he tended to live like that. He tried to stay away from issues that would divide…. He preferred to identify consensus and hold people together, not to cut off a particular theological specificity. If it was eschatology, we didn’t really talk about issues like that and he would not be one of those guys who would get into a debate on whether you were pre-mill or post-mill. He honestly wouldn’t care because those weren’t the things that drove him.⁵⁹

Another insight associated with excellence that surfaced during the interviews was Engstrom’s accessibility. His practice of excellence included meticulously scheduled days, which included time for himself as the leader, nevertheless that did not mean he was inaccessible as an executive. This is another example of balance in his life.⁶⁰

Hirsch’s comments capture the balance well and show Engstrom’s accessibility as an executive. He explains some of the practices he gleaned from watching Engstrom:

He said, “only look at a piece of paper once.” I still remember that. Look at it once and deal with it. Delegate it, toss it, or make a decision. I use that principle throughout that presidency. He was the one who helped me refine to the point where I would only accept a 1-page presentation on any issue. People would talk about that. I would say that if you can’t succinctly put the problem, the analysis and the resolution on one page, then something is wrong . . . . Another thing he shared with me: On an airplane, don’t be watching movies. You should be working, reading and things like that. So I would take stacks of reading that I needed to do…. When I was in World Vision, I went into the office every morning and the door was closed for 30 minutes. I took time for myself. I still do that. Dr. Engstrom helped me do that. Also, I had an open door policy. And I learned that from Dr. Engstrom. He had

⁵⁹Jenson, interview by author.

⁶⁰It is helpful to reiterate the idea of balance during this section of interview. The interview comments support the underlying notion that both people and processes, excellence and mentoring, balanced Engstrom’s approach to leadership.
an open door policy—you could come up and see him at any time. He would drop things and he would get you in.\textsuperscript{61}

Kliewer made a similar comment about the intentional accessibility in Engstrom’s leadership at World Vision. The dual stress on people and processes shines through in Kliewer’s illustration. He observes, “He prided himself on walking around and saying “Hi” to everybody. He did this one or two times a week. When he did that, he realized there was a patch on the wall or he would notice someone’s office and say: You need to get on that. In terms of excellence, he would involve himself in the nitty-gritty as well as making sure that World Vision was the best of the best.”\textsuperscript{62}

Reynolds was also marked by Engstrom’s intentional efforts to get to know people at all levels of the organization. When he was reflecting on practices or habits in Engstrom’s life that he has adapted in his own life, he came back to this concept of Engstrom connecting with even the lowest level of his colleagues. He explains a practice Engstrom had while he was CEO of World Vision:

He used to have “Brown Bags” with Ted at World Vision. He would go through the telephone list at the time he would just pick out 12 names and have them bring their brown bag lunch. He would just listen and talk and a week later at lunch time the next 12 and basically once in the next 18 months you actually had a brown bag lunch with the president. It didn’t matter who you were you basically just had to be on the telephone list for World Vision to do that. I found that really useful and that really impressed me as a 22 year old trying to work at what life was about. To know I am actually sitting—at least twice I remember sitting with him—and you just brought your lunch with you and he brought his sandwich and he asked how are things going? What do you think about this or that?\textsuperscript{63}

\textsuperscript{61}Hirsch, interview with author. Later, Hirsch said that Engstrom changed his tone on the airplane comment and encouraged him, instead of production, to steer toward reflection. Hirsch recalled, “I’ve come to the realization that you should just sit back and do some thinking. You should just sit back and do some thinking . . . You need to take time for thinking, thinking about where are you going, what about your relationships, how is it going, just don’t be in action all the time.” Ibid.

\textsuperscript{62}Kliewer, interview by the author.

\textsuperscript{63}Reynolds, interview with author. During my time at the World Vision archives, the director of Central Records, when he found out I was doing research on Engstrom, mentioned this practice to me.
One final example of Engstrom’s “humble” willingness to initiate relationships with those who were not in his level of the organization arose in another of Kliewer’s account. He shares,

And what was interesting to me—and my wife reminded me of this even this morning when I told her that you and I were going to talk—she said, you know, Ted was such a humble guy. He would see anybody at any time. And I remember this at World Vision. I would say to Ted - you know, that person is not even an executive and here you take all this time to sit there and chat with one of the new recruits and new hires . . . . But I remember as a kid in college I remember thinking I had his 100% attention. He treated me like a big wig.64

One final aspect of Engstrom’s practice of excellence as an executive that became evident during the interviews was his endurance. His standard of excellence and diligence carried him all the way to the end of his life. This attests to Engstrom’s remarks earlier that positioned excellence as an act of worship. Worship does not stop when people clock out or retire.65 Andringa highlights Engstrom’s endurance:

When he was in his earlier years, he would say, Bob lets adopt the model “Peak at 80” (I have adopted the model with many of my friends now it keeps us alert, learning, alive, active, and serving). And then on his 80th birthday, I remember he called me and he was with another mutual friend. Ted said, “Well, I’m 80. Now maybe we should make it 90! He was still going to the office his daughter Jo Ann who was driving him. He couldn’t see well enough to drive, but he kept active right up until the day he died.66

He remembered when he used to work in the mailroom and was invited to bring his lunch to the president’s office and give Engstrom an update on his life and work.

64Kliwer, interview by the author.

65Like other themes explored in this chapter, Engstrom edited and contributed to books on the topic of retirement—so it should not be surprising that he continued to work hard after his official duties were lifted. See Ted Engstrom, The Most Important Thing a Man Needs to Know about the Rest of His Life (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming Revell Co., 1981); Ted Engstrom and Norman B. Rohrer, Welcome to the Rest of Your Life: A Guide to Worry Free Retirement (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994).

66Andringa, interview by author.
Kliewer affirms Engstrom’s tireless determination near the end of his life and provides an interesting insight into Engstrom’s final days. These words will serve as the conclusion to this section on Engstrom as an excellent executive. Kliewer writes,

I remember my last lunch with him; he always prided himself in letting me know that every hour of the day was booked. He has lunches booked forever. About three weeks or so before he died, at lunch there at Royal Oaks, he took out his calendar and told me, Bill, my calendar is clean—I have no more appointments. I’m ready to go. There was a sense that he seemed to know that was it. I have had a couple of other people tell me that same story who he had been with . . . and in a way, he sort of bragged about his book being empty at the end. But if you knew him, you knew that was a very big deal.67

An Encouraging Executive

Engstrom wrote much about encouragement, but he practiced it even more.68 Encouragement is not always the first word one associates with those who hold executive positions, but the theme of encouragement was present in every interview. This is even more important in light of John Stott’s assertion to Christian leaders: “Discouragement is the greatest occupational hazard of a believer, as it can lead to loss of vision and enthusiasm.”69 The following section will provide practical examples of what this looked like in Engstrom’s life. To start, Andringa explains Engstrom’s enthusiasm during their process of co-authoring a book together: “I would send him drafts and learn that Ted is a terrific encourager. He is a cheerleader, and basically he would send a chapter back that said, “That is wonderful, Bob—this is terrific, I think we’ve got it.” . . . He basically was

67Kliewer, interview by author.

68To understand Engstrom’s emphasis on encouragement, see Ted Engstrom and Ron Jenson, The Making of a Mentor (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2005), 11-28.

69Stott suggests the “antidote” to discouragement is first and foremost the “power of God.” John Stott, Problems of Christian Leadership (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014), 16-17.
motivation for doing the book. He was the encourager.”

Later in the interview, Andringa circles back around to this idea:

Ted would always accentuate the positive. He would always encourage the best—it was very hard to get him to articulate a critical view . . . He seemed to adopt a leadership strategy of affirming and encouraging and not making weakness or mistakes an issue that he wanted to address. I think that is why he was invited to be on so many boards and to speak because, who didn’t like Ted? He was just the guy who was always encouraging and affirming.

Similarly, Jenson enthusiastically remembers, “He was there to advise, counsel, encourage, and connect me up with the right people. Boy, he was a champion.” Later, Jenson accounted for Engstrom’s support and encouragement this way: “Whenever I was grappling with projects I would pass them by Ted. He was one of my go-to-guys. He was just a believer. He just believed in me and was a champion of me.

The clearest proof of Engstrom’s gift of encouragement, and the most common observation during the interviews, was in the letters, or memos, he wrote. Engstrom relied on encouragement, as was noted in his relationship with Dr. Carlton Booth in chapter 2, but he also exercised his gift of encouragement to hundreds and even thousands of fellow Christian leaders. The participants in these interviews were certainly among those who were impacted by Engstrom’s written encouragement. Andringa explains, “We all know he was famous for writing letters and memos. His letters to me would be addressed, ‘My dear Bob.’ He would do that with lots and lots of people. He

70Andringa, interview by author.

71Ibid. When considering the comment on his lack of criticism, it is important to note that Andringa’s interaction, unlike some of the interviewees who worked for or reported to Engstrom, was limited to consulting for organizations and boards. Andringa suggested that it would be fascinating to compare his remarks on Engstrom’s lack of criticism with those who worked for Engstrom.

72Jenson, interview by author.

73Jenson, interview with author.
was very generous with affirmation and various people I have run into over the years have kept his letters because they were so meaningful. That was another tool.”

Hirsch remembers Engstrom’s copious letter writing as well:

One of the things he did, which I do—which I did as president and still do—he would write notes to everybody. I mean it was incredible. He would write notes to everybody, words of encouragement. When something happened in the world he would write notes and say what is happening here and there. But he was a prolific writer to different people. He had an assistant named Polly and she would type it. He sent notes out all the time to people. He was an encourager—that probably came from the Barnabas example. He was an encourager to people so he definitely wrote to people all the time. I bet he wrote four or five letters everyday to different people. It was big. I was a recipient of a lot of those. And I do that now. I send emails out to different people and encourage them and ask how they are doing.

Reynolds echoes the impact of Engstrom’s written memos as he recalls a conversation he had with another one of Engstrom’s mentees:

I had lunch with Steve Douglas last year and he was talking about the strong mentoring (in Engstrom’s practices), not just through conversations, but through encouragement notes and phone calls just to ensure he could do all he can to support you to be successful. Obviously, I think all of us that were mentored wanted to carry on (Engstrom’s practice) in terms of who we mentor and how we actually support the next generation. So the writing of notes is something I learned from him and that I have continued.

Finally, Wallace testified to the same practice in Engstrom’s life that impacted him and has transferred into a habit of his own leadership. Wallace remembers,

One of those habits is that Ted modeled what it looked like to write notes of appreciation. To stay connected to others through affirming words and words of appreciation. Just about anyone you talked to will talk about Ted’s hand written letters. I have some in a box somewhere that I cherish. I often think about how I felt

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74Andringa, interview with author. Andringa estimates, “He used to dictate his letters to his assistant—even in retirement—he must have done 10-20 a day. He would sit and dictate these memos and letters—that was before email came into popularity.”

75Hirsch, interview with author. Hirsch shared further about his own practice of letter writing. He explains, “I did that when I was president. I would send letters to every national leader every year to encourage them and ask how they are doing. I learned all that from Dr. Engstrom (there are about 100 national directors of World Vision).”

76Reynolds, interview with author.
so I may do it differently than Ted, and as a matter of fact, I do. But when I text or email or stay connected to those, I often think this is what Ted did for me.  

A Stewarding Executive

Engstrom understood that God entrusts mankind with the duty to rule over the earth according to Genesis 1:26-30. He summarizes, “We call this delegated accountability ‘stewardship.’” Stewardship is a word that gains the most traction in Engstrom’s writing on time management, but it was a predominate theme in how he approached all of life. The interviews made this very clear. Wallace identifies this impulse in Engstrom in the following comments:

Ted’s commitment to speak to holding Christian organizations accountable to best business practices - that was a huge contribution. That is really what he did at World Vision. That’s how he spoke to the board at APU. That’s why he was key in founding ECFA. That was gigantic . . . . If you look at much of what Ted accomplished early—both in the Christian publishing world and in the Christian relief world—it really is asking organizations to steward what people are giving them. And he did the same thing in his own life . . . . The leveraging and multiplication of followers who he would mentor—they would mentor others. He would give examples and lessons in stewardship and they would in turn practice stewardship in their own leadership and their own organizations. I truly believe that Ted saw that as a responsibility that he had from God to those that he mentored.

Hirsch said that stewardship was clearly a guiding perspective in how Engstrom viewed his role at World Vision. He says, “The other thing that was very clear unto all of us, that World Vision was God’s ministry and we needed to acknowledge that.” Because Engstrom was an effective manager and communicator, his thought on stewardship

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77Wallace, interview with author.

78Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 112.

79Ibid.

80Wallace, interview with author.

81Hirsch, interview with author.
permeated the organization. Reynolds affirmed the culture of stewardship that Engstrom helped establish at World Vision. He explains,

The culture and the culture always follows the leader and the culture when I started World Vision was that we were serving the poor and we were serving Christ but we didn’t have to do it without professionalism and excellence—and that is actually one of the reasons why I was attracted to the organization twice. I went there I felt like being a Christian wasn’t being a second class professional. I was an IT officer by profession and I finished as the chief information officer for world vision globally, but I always felt I could hold my own with any other CIO or any other major corporations because we were encouraging technology, encouraging professionalism, and professional development. We were always good stewards, but it wasn’t like let’s go down to the cheapest store and pick up something because we have to do that because we are a Christian organization.

Reynolds continued with his explanation of the culture at World Vision and specifically, he explained how he saw Engstrom develop the concept of stewardship in the organization. He remarks,

I think the form of excellence (that Engstrom promoted at World Vision) was what I would call Christ-centered stewardship. It was something that always impressed me. I know he did take some criticism for it. It was more the idea of how do we witness for Christ and be salt and light—so that was at least one area where excellence came through the organization that would probably be highlighted most for me.

Christian conversations commonly associate stewardship with finances, and rightfully so—Engstrom certainly did this to help explain his approach to stewardship. But it should not stop there. Engstrom’s understanding of stewardship extended to all the gifts God gives his people, including the gift of the gospel. Christians are stewards of the good

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82 Reynolds, interview with author.

83 Reynolds, interview with author. Examples of the criticism Engstrom endured at World Vision include: installing first class plumbing (Standard Co.), purchasing the best typewriters, or tastefully decorating the lobby and polishing the floors. See Engstrom and Dayton, Christian Leadership Letter, 1.

84 Engstrom determines, “Every leader should consider how he estimates the worth of time. As an analogy we should treat it exactly as if it were money, for it requires the investment of our energy to bring forth profitable results. It goes without saying that time spent improving personal procedures will reap great dividends.” Ted Engstrom, The Making of A Christian Leader (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 108.
news, he argued.\textsuperscript{85} Hirsch affirms Engstrom’s view of stewardship as both spiritual and physical in these remarks:

First of all, remember he came out of YFC, and he believed, as I do, that the greatest poverty in the world is not knowing Christ. He didn’t buy into that poverty is just economic. He was very strong that the greatest poverty is spiritual poverty. And we had a responsibility as an organization—we might not be an evangelistic organization like Billy Graham—but we should be demonstrating and living out what Jesus taught. We should be bringing people closer to Christ or actually leading them to Christ.\textsuperscript{86}

Engstrom’s focus on stewardship certainly impacted the way he organized the budget at World Vision and how they viewed fundraising. Kliewer, who was the chief fundraiser for a time, explains,

He (Engstrom) was obsessed with stewardship and using the Lord’s money at World Vision in the way that it was intended. I traveled for almost fifteen years with Stan Mooneyham overseas (I started off as his assistant to the President). Mooneyham was a great fundraiser. But Ted wanted that fundraising percentage and that admin percentage really carefully monitored . . . . One of the assignments that I got when I became executive vice president—Engstrom said—it is your job to make sure we keep the Russ Reid agency. They are the best fundraisers around and they know what they are doing.\textsuperscript{87}

Kliwer expounds on Engstrom’s role in fundraising and how it fit cleanly into his view of stewardship. Kliwer submits, “He wasn’t afraid to ask anyone for a gift. He really believed he was doing people a favor by giving them the opportunity to experience the joy of giving. And that was part of the ministry. Raising money was in-and-of-itself a

\textsuperscript{85}Engstrom offers perennial word of caution: “It is easy to get caught up in the socio-economic plight of human beings. But let us constantly remember that the spiritual needs of our world are as great and diverse as our physical and material needs. This thought has to burn within us if we are to be properly motivated to reach the waiting world with the message of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Ted Engstrom, \textit{What in the World Is God Doing? The New Face of Missions} (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1978), 24.

\textsuperscript{86}Hirsch, interview by author.

\textsuperscript{87}Kliwer, interview by author. Kliwer noted that Russ Reid is today the biggest ad and marketing agency in the world for non-profits, affirming Engstrom’s inclination.
As evidenced throughout the interview sessions, stewardship principles constructed a significant portion of the framework that drove Engstrom’s life.

**A Mentoring Executive**

Mentoring looked different in each of the scenarios considered in the interviews. Some were more formal (Wallace and Reynolds), some were more collegial (Andringa and Jenson), and some seemed like a mix (Kliewer and Hirsch). The following accounts provide very practical examples of what mentoring looked like in Engstrom’s life and provide an insight into the ways that his influence has continued through the lives of these men. First, Engstrom’s use of the examples of Paul, Timothy and Barnabas were the most common descriptions used by the interviewees. For example, Wallace says,

> He would point to Paul and Timothy and Barnabas. He would say that all of us are called to be Paul to mentor Timothy, called to be Timothy to be mentored by a Paul . . . . We need a Barnabas and need to be a Barnabas to others. He would pull from Scripture those three examples of godly Christ followers who were accountable to others in a specific way that made discipleship and mentoring more robust.\(^89\)

Although Paul was clearly the mentor to Timothy, the relationship was built on trust and the common goal of the gospel. Kliewer explains how Engstrom exhibited a common trust in their mentoring relationship as well: “He provided a way for us to talk about anything. I trusted him and he trusted me. He confided in me.”\(^90\) Hirsch references Engstrom’s rally cry to involve both older and younger leaders in one’s life. He replies,

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\(^{88}\)Kliewer, interview by author. Kliewer’s consulting group focuses on fundraising techniques and relationships for non-profit organizations. He includes this concept of providing donors the opportunity to experience joy as a key part of a fundraisers understanding of their job. See Bill Kliewer Group, accessed January 1, 2015, http://billkliewergroup.com.

\(^{89}\)Wallace, interview by author.

\(^{90}\)Kliewer, interview by author.
“I am sure you have heard this, but he always said, everyone should have a Barnabas in their life. That was a big thing and he would always talk about that—Timothy and Barnabas.” Likewise, Jenson explains why they chose to use Paul, Timothy, and Titus’ relationship as a framework for talking about mentoring.\(^1\) Jenson comments,

Paul starts off by saying: We were gentle among you like a nursing mother gently cares for her own children (I Thess 2:7-12). So he starts it off with a metaphor of a nursing mother, a gentle nursing mother, and he ends it up by saying fathers encourage, admonish and warn you to walk worthy of your calling in Christ Jesus. So the metaphors of a gentle, nursing mother and a disciplining father—and they said we were like that all the time—so they lived the extremes of that and the authenticity and transparency and affection and hard work and godly model and servant leadership. It is a classic example of a great mentor. We kept using illustrations that reflected those principles so we would come back to the kind of a framework people could use to be more effective mentors.\(^2\)

Jenson continues his explanation of how this model of mentoring worked itself out among Paul, Timothy and Titus, but also how those principles apply to Engstrom:

The beginning of that passage with Paul, Timothy and Titus were the models. They were only in Thessalonica a few months, yet had created the only church in all of the New Testament that modeled the qualities of maturity, faith, hope, and love. And Paul says, we were this way among you and Timothy, a teacher, and Titus, the more administrative type, and the more dominant type, Paul, the natural leader, yet all 3 of them lived out according to Paul consistently these same qualities. Not only what they said but by the dynamic of their life. The modeling of those principles together through their mentoring and discipling created the healthiest church we know in the New Testament. I would say Ted lived out all of those qualities—he had tenderness to him and a gentleness to him—grace, compassion—he could be tough when he needed to be—he could be a velvet-covered brick. He was transparent. He was affectionate. He was hard working. He was disciplined.\(^3\)

The interviews also raised practical ways Engstrom poured his life into the lives of these men. To start, Kliweer recalls, “He would send me, literally, blue copies of all his

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\(^1\) Jenson was the co-author of Engstrom’s second book on mentoring, which focused more on the type of person one must become to be a Christian mentor. See Engstrom and Jenson, *The Making of a Mentor.*

\(^2\) Jenson, interview by author.

\(^3\) Jenson, interview by author.
memorandums and all of his letters. He mentored me by showing me how he communicated with people. It would be like fifteen a day. And I got his reading file. And his secretary (in the early days) Lorraine - made sure I got all the information about his stuff.” Wallace recounts, “Mentoring has played a key role in my life. And when the conversation with Ted began, I easily leaned into that and he was gracious to receive me. Beyond that, Ted invited me into his life. We would meet at least monthly and sometimes twice a month.” Similarly, Reynolds explains, “He actually mentored me every Thursday at 10 am. I probably spent about an hour with him every second Thursday. Then I would take him down to his office at world vision because he couldn’t drive.” Next, Jenson captures the spirit and generosity with which Engstrom gave his time to others. He explains,

I think he had a number of people with whom he had more formal relationships (scheduled relationships or routine relationships). His motive modus operandi was always: What can I do to help? That is just how he lived—he helped a whole bunch of us. I got a lot of space and time from him, unduly at times, but he was just always there.

Hirsch notes that his mentoring opportunities with Engstrom progressed as he transitioned in World Vision:

In the early years, it was probably more, well, it was full business when I was with him and Bill because I was negotiating government grants. I would walk in and share what was happening there — It wasn’t personal. Then we would have these monthly or weekly staff meetings where he would focus on/be more personal with the whole group. He would talk about he and Dorothy, where they were going, and where they were in their life. Then as I progressed and became at the Vice President level . . . . Then, he would always ask how Wendy was doing, how Ryan was doing.

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94 Kliwer, interview by author.
95 Wallace, interview by author.
96 Reynolds, interview by author.
97 Jenson, interview by author.
He would always be checking on me to see how I was doing . . . the other thing is that I attended Dr. Engstrom’s church and became chair of the church. He was very involved so he saw me a lot.\footnote{Hirsch, interview by author.}

The inclusion of family life was a common theme that not only surfaced in Hirsch’s comments above, but also comprised most of his mentoring relationships. Reynolds remembers their time together this way: “I would definitely say it was formal; there was a structure to it and basically it was what was happening in my life professionally, what was happening in my life personally, and I would say the bulk of the time was more the leadership piece.” In terms of what this looked like in Engstrom’s time with his protégés, a key insight emerged in Wallace’s interview. Wallace shared that they would meet every other week for breakfast or lunch and then described a typical mentoring conversation this way:

Those conversations were about absolutely everything. He would often start the conversation after we would go through the line in the retirement home or they would serve us at the table, and often the first question he would say to me was, “Do you still love your wife?” or “Tell me about the last disagreement that you and Gail had.” And it was absolutely transparent. You could be transparent because Ted was not in anyway threatening. He just wanted to help stress your accountability. Let’s say we would talk about a disagreement that Gail and I had. More often than not, he would help to uncover that that was a legitimate point of view for Gail and that I needed to pay attention to that with Gail and that my responsibility as a covenant partner with Gail required that. He was really good on all that.\footnote{Wallace, interview by author.}

Equally, Engstrom would delve into professional matters—he desired to help improve the skill set and instincts of younger leaders. Hirsch explained how Engstrom continued to give his time after he retired from World Vision. He remarked, “He and I met. As I was president, we met all the time. If I was in town, I would meet with him every other week. Even at the end when he was at his retirement home, I would go there and have lunch
with him or breakfast. He continued to invest in me.”

Kliewer said his mentoring relationship with Engstrom included both personal and professional elements, but at different seasons. He comments,

He never made the distinction whether this was a professional thing or a personal thing because he was the kind of person that lived his life in the same way at home (or with his kids or with his family) as he did at the office. He did always say that family was first—and of course, Dorothy worshipped the ground he walked on . . . . Ted loved her to the very end.

Jenson saw his mentoring relationship with Engstrom to be less official. He explained, “I think with Ted and me it was more informal. He would lean into me on different things as well over time, although I was substantially younger.”

Andringa, like Jenson, saw his relationship with Ted as an informal mentoring relationship: “He was learning from me in areas I had a focus and interest—mainly governance—and I learned a lot from him. And when we were together it wasn’t like a young person at the feet of an older person—although he was 16, 18 years older—it was more like giving our best to one another.” The diversity of formats and formalities accords with Engstrom’s own advice to constantly be involved with someone who is further along, someone who is by one’s side, and someone who is a little behind.

100 Hirsch, interview by author.

101 Kliewer, interview with author. Several interviews included commentary regarding how they accompanied Engstrom to the nursing home as he cared for his wife Dorothy at the end of her life. This personal model of how to love at the end of one’s life further exemplifies the power of presence in mentoring.

102 Jenson, interview by author.

103 Andringa, interview by author.

104 In his lucid remarks to a room full of new World Vision staff members, Engstrom referred to these three relationships and identified the second category, or colleague(s) who walks beside you, as one’s “Epaphroditus.” This was still part of his leadership training session in his 89th year of life as he
Another common thread that appeared throughout the interviews was a continual practice of mentoring in the lives of those Engstrom mentored. Wallace explained how the various investments in his own life, nonetheless Engstrom’s, have fostered a desire for him to make the most of those investments by giving to others. When asked if he continued to invest in other young leaders, he replied,

I have mentored a number of new college presidents. I have a group of local pastors that I meet with who are a part of a mutual mentoring and accountability. Right now, Dr. Deana Porterfield, president at Roberts Wesleyan is someone I have mentored over the last 15 years and more specifically over the last five or six year. She stepped into this presidency and my mentoring was a part of that, it wasn’t all of that, but it played a role. And right now, I feel really called to mentor and prepare that next generation of men and women into leadership in Christian organization.\footnote{Wallace, interview by author. At the close of the interview, he supported this idea once again: “I would have to say, that my commitment to discipleship and mentoring is an offshoot of Ted’s encouragement. I was committed to that before Ted, but I was significantly more committed to it after Ted. And especially to other rising leaders who will one day sit in my chair or a similar leadership chair.”}

Andringa also continues to mentor others: “I am 74 now, Ben. I just had lunch with a young guy, 22 years old. I am mentoring maybe a dozen people and I am learning as much from them as they are from me. I use the phrase co-mentoring, whether Ted would agree with that term, I don’t know.”\footnote{Andringa, interview by author.} Likewise, Reynolds mentioned his continuing efforts to invest in the younger generation by copying Engstrom’s group sessions:

I still continued to do listening groups . . . . We had people coming in groups of about 15. In fact I'm going through a series right now, basically asking: How do you think we are doing? What are we doing that we can do better? What should I know? Give me 2 things I should continue to do and 2 things I should stop doing as a leader—that kind of conversation.\footnote{Reynolds, interview by author. The impact of those Engstrom invested in is also bearing fruit in the world of publishing. Reynolds mentioned in this section of the interview that he is currently in the draft form of a monograph entitled, “Excellence and Mentoring.” (This work will not be released prior to the completion of this dissertation.) He explained that the book on mentoring is a follow up to an earlier project in the area of excellence and management.}
Jenson, whose full time employment is to serve as a life coach, which overlaps with mentoring, also continues to carry out the practice of investing in a few to impact many. He recalls his strategy with Engstrom in writing *The Making of a Mentor* together:

> Our big idea with that book we did was multi-generational multiplication and its impact . . . . [For example,] four touched Ted, then four I touched, and the four of each of them, etc. The idea was to show how millions of people were touched and influenced though formal and informal mentoring by focusing on a few and not trying to have this massive impact.\textsuperscript{108}

### A Networking Executive

The final theme surfaced is one that receives little attention in Engstrom’s written corpus. Engstrom was a “door opener” for those he mentored, and because of his long and varied career, he had access to a lot of doors.\textsuperscript{109} The ground work for this aspect of Engstrom’s life was outlined in chapter 2, including the who’s who list of associations and World Vision’s description of Engstrom’s “meticulously kept rolodex.” Still, the testimonies offered in the interviews offer a new perspective on how Engstrom’s massive network was woven into his practice of mentoring and was highly kingdom-minded. Jenson made a clear connection between Engstrom’s mentors and how he would facilitate a solution to their problem through his network or provide opportunities for them. Jenson shares,

> He was mentoring the qualities we talk about in the book, and he was a personal meeting kind of guy—or a contact kind of guy—or over the phone, of course, but he was really a human connection guy. So most of those he mentored were human connections and he was good at connecting people up too. He would always put

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\textsuperscript{108} Jenson, interview by author.

\textsuperscript{109} Engstrom describes a mentor as someone who is committed to the success of another. He said mentors serve as “a coach, a door opener, a way shower, a corrector, an encourager, a guide.” Engstrom and Dayton, *Christian Leadership Letter*, 1.
people up together to help find resources to solve an issue. He did that with me a
number of times and he did that so well. KliWER observed engstrom’s network first-hand, specifically in their fundraising efforts. He, rather unashamedly, remarks, “Ted Engstrom was a professional networker. The reason why Ted knew everybody is because he reached out to everybody. He reached out and told them he was praying for them, praying for their spouses.” One formal component to Engstrom’s leadership that fostered a network of Christian leaders was through his time management seminars with Ed Dayton. KliWER, who did a lot of the day-to-day management of world vision at the end of engstrom’s tenure as president, noted the role of these seminars in Engstrom’s ability to meet new people:

He was obsessed with the idea of traveling the world and doing time management seminars, meeting with people, and giving them guidance. He loved being on boards of directors, I don’t know how many he was on—I would say it is almost countless. At world vision, I really believe he probably spent half of his time on things other than world vision.

Engstrom applied the same principle of connecting with new people to his colleagues at world vision. Reynolds recollects a memory from his early days at world vision when he was “low on the totem pole.” Reynolds describes,

I remember during that period my wife became pregnant with our first child and within days he actually came, it was open office, he came down from the second floor to the first floor and over to my cubicle to congratulate me. And I remember thinking he must have an excellent network and he must have touchstones all over the place. But again it showed his concern and his desire to know where he served.

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110 Jenson, interview by author.

111 KliWER, interview by author.

112 Ibid.

113 Reynolds, interview by author. Later, Reynolds explained how crucial Engstrom was in introducing him to the world of organizational board service.
Wallace first shared about how Engstrom used his connections to help change the course of his life through key relationships. Wallace recounts, “Ted and I had just begun a mentoring relationship. Shortly after that, he would arrange for me to have a conversation with Bill Hybels that led the two year sabbatical in Chicago—because, I believe, Ted and Bill were serving on the board of World Vision together. Pretty quickly, he [Engstrom] had decided that I needed to have a time away from here at the University.” Later, Wallace shared how Engstrom used his mentoring group to make connections with other young leaders who were seeking a mentor: “Ted opened the door as one of the “Sons of Barnabas” to mentor others who were in a professional position similar to the one I held. Although I had done that occasionally, I did it much more intentionally.” Reynolds expressed a similar sentiment that speaks to the network that coalesced around Engstrom’s mentoring efforts:

I think there was a joke once that every time you meet somebody who is a mentor they are a mentee of Ted Engstrom. He had a group just before he passed away because I remember we had a lunch . . . I think Ken Kemp was the person pulled it together at the time, and basically, he would pull together a group of all these folks who had been mentored by Ted or who were being mentored. There were probably 30 people—as the stories went around everybody knew at least 10 other people who could have attended.

Engstrom’s perpetual instigating of relationships resulted in a group of those who loved him wanting to establish a mechanism to honor his legacy. In 2006, the idea for an institute was presented to the board of the Christian Management Association (CMA),

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114Wallace, interview by author.
115Ibid.
116Reynolds, interview by author.
117Robert Andringa provided an unpublished history of the Engstrom Institute to me. The notes he recorded inform the brief narrative that follows. Robert Andringa, email to author, January 2012.
which Engstrom was actively involved during his life, and the motion was affirmed. Later, David Gyerston, former president at Taylor University, assumed leadership of the undefined concept to help recruit partners and determine a strategy for attaining content on leadership. In 2008, at the board meetings of the Christian Leadership Alliance (CLA), a single parent LLC was established called Engstrom Institute. The “Engstrom DNA” included excellence, encouragement, and enthusiasm. The goal was to “nurture effective, responsive, accountable, energetic, entrepreneurial Christ-centered ministries and leaders for God’s pleasure and purposes in the 21st century.” Today, the Engstrom Institute has been folded into the larger work of the Christian Leadership Alliance. Reynolds, who serves as the chairman of the board, explained some of the future challenges to making the institute a viable organization, namely brand awareness. He concluded:

It [The Engstrom Institute] is still an incorporated LLC. We still have to pay taxes and all of that. The challenge as you would imagine is that the name “Engstrom” is becoming less and less prominent in the Christian leadership of this country as it (his generation) matures and actually dies away. We have a place at APU called Engstrom Hall that if you stopped and polled students to ask them why is it named Engstrom Hall they would have no idea (I’d say 95% or maybe 100%) . . . . For leadership content to come out of the Engstrom Institute would not mean a lot to a lot of people—so that is the issue the name doesn’t actually have the value proposition anymore.

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118 During this time, the Christian Management Association (CMA) became the Christian Leadership Alliance (CLA), which is now an entity of Azusa Pacific University. Andringa records that the Engstrom Institute was to be “closely linked with the work of CLA, since their missions and constituencies were so closely overlapped.” Andringa, email to author, January 2012.


120 Ibid.

121 Reynolds, interview by author.
Although the Engstrom Institute is not currently active and flourishing, the group of men and women Engstrom influenced are carrying on his legacy all around the world. Engstrom understood that the very nature of networking is cooperation and mutual benefit. And due to the complexity of the world’s economy, working through networks is more necessary today than ever. Networking can get a bad name, and rightfully so when abused for personal gain, but in general the idea of partnering together for a common cause resounds with Engstrom’s style of leadership. Hirsch explains one of Engstrom’s philosophical approaches to leadership that clearly foster healthy organizational partnerships and networks. According to Hirsch, Engstrom believed that World Vision should be a “leader in thought”, but at the same time should have a kingdom mindset about the best ideas. Hirsch states,

He always said we should share everything with everybody . . . . He would share and say we should share things because this all belongs to God and so he felt World Vision should share everything in terms of our learning. That philosophy still exists in World Vision today. We partner with other agencies. We partner with Christian and non-Christian agencies in marketing. Our lawyers, our legal society is both secular and Christian, our HR people. That came right from Dr. Engstrom. In the work that we are doing, we shouldn’t be protecting or hiding anything, we should be sharing so that others should be better too.

Still, Engstrom was relentlessly competitive, and even encouraged that to leaders. The same kingdom focus that instilled unshakable integrity into Engstrom’s

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122 Authors of “In Praise of the Incomplete Leader” observe, “Corporations have been becoming less hierarchical and more collaborative for decades, of course, as globalization and the growing importance of knowledge work have required that responsibility and initiative be distributed more widely.” Deborah Ancona et al., “In Praise of the Incomplete Leader,” in On Leadership (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2011), 179.

123 Hirsch, interview by author.

124 Engstrom instructed, “In a Christian organization, unless it is involved in product sales, competition should be played down because a rival spirit is contrary to strengthening the body of Christ. We are told that in honor we are to prefer or exalt the other person (Rom. 12:10). With this one exception, the leader must keep his competitive edge sharp. Only in this way can he lead effectively to achieve the goals.” Engstrom, The Making of a Christian Leader, 99-100.
leadership fostered a kingdom-minded approach that benefited others. Although Jenson never worked for Engstrom or World Vision, Engstrom’s humility and collaboration impacted him greatly. He concludes his interview with this explanation:

If I had one word to describe Ted, it would be the word that marked me the most about his life and that would be the word, gracious. Ted was just a very gracious man and by that it was a combination of being humble (I think Grace is God’s riches at Christ’s expense—it is being rich with people—it is being abundant with people—it is going the extra mile with people—it is being a giver not a taker) and Ted was that kind of guy with me but with others rather universally. I remember Ted with the World Vision board and Bill Bright and I and the Crusade top executive leaders—about 30 of us met in Switzerland, Australia, Austria, and Oberammergau. We went to the big passion play together. We had a week together and we talked about what can we do together and how can we help one another. Now these are all very humble people: good, godly and strong leaders . . . . It was really impressive to see that Bill was a very gracious guy and watching these two guys being so gracious, so giving. Not trying to stake turf—not asking what can I get, but what can I give. And to see that attitude has just profoundly influenced me.¹²⁵

In conclusion, one of the neglected aspects of a Christian leader’s life is the local church, especially among those who like Engstrom lead large Christian organizations and travel and preach broadly. Churches, like networks, are composed of people who are committed to common goals and need each other to be faithful to those goals. It can be challenging at best and impossible during seasons to remain actively involved in congregational life. The following quotation from the interviews will serve as the final word in this section of interviews—it shows the priority of church in Engstrom’s life and the impact that commitment can have on others. As Wallace reflected on lessons he learned for Engstrom during there mentoring relationship, he offered this compelling anecdote:

Ted taught me, you have probably already discovered this, but Ted was absolutely one hundred percent committed to the Church. Here is a guy who traveled the

¹²⁵Jenson, interview by author.
world, when he was out with both World Vision and Youth for Christ, and he rarely missed church. He told me once about a time period, one of the busiest time periods in his life, that he failed to be at church on Sunday at Lake Avenue less than ten times in ten years. You think about that. I know that up until Ted went to heaven, going to church every Sunday, living that commitment and modeling for others was a huge part of his life.  

**Conclusion**

Engstrom passed on to these individuals (and others) the wisdom he accrued throughout his career. He accomplished his goal of following Jesus’ model by focusing on a few. In particular, the interviews surfaced five notable values of an executive that Engstrom implanted in those he mentored: (1) An Excellent Executive, (2) An Encouraging Executive, (3) A Stewarding Executive, (4) A Mentoring Executive, and (5) A Networking Executive. These characteristics serve to integrate the biblical and theological concepts discussed in chapters three and four with Engstrom’s leadership practices. Furthermore, these five characteristics, supplemented by concrete examples in Engstrom’s leadership, assist the research efforts to properly apply the theoretical aspects of Engstrom’s leadership for the next generation. Additional efforts to apply these concepts are signified in the ten implications found in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

Engstrom’s emphasis on passing leadership to the next generation fits in line with the cycle witnessed in the biblical narrative: Moses leaving Israel in the hands of Joshua, David passing the kingdom to his sons, and Jesus giving authority to the twelve apostles. The New Testament signals that Jesus relegated his leadership to his followers.

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126Wallace, interview by author.

They inherited his mission and the methods of his ministry during his time on earth as evidenced when Jesus sends the disciples out to the lost sheep of the house of Israel in Matthew 10:7.\textsuperscript{128} This is a budding form of the authority he would bestow on them as he departs from his work on earth and commissions them to go into all the earth and make disciples.\textsuperscript{129} One generation after another, biblical leaders pass off authority and send out a new wave of mentor-making believers.\textsuperscript{130}

Chapter 5 provides an intimate component to this study through the use of personal interviews of those Engstrom mentored. Their affirmations and alterations of the findings of this research propel the inquiry to the final chapter, which summarizes the arguments of this dissertation and provides some implications for Christian leadership in the twenty-first century.

\begin{itemize}
\item[129]\textsuperscript{129} The basis of Jesus’ command to “go and make disciples” in Matt 28:19 is in 28:18, which reads, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.” Pennington argues, “The point is that Jesus’ earthly authority—easily discernible by all who witnessed his ministry—has now been completed with the addition of his authority in the divine realm by nature of his death and vindicating resurrection. At the same time, his earthly authority has been expanded, hence the commissioning of the disciples.” Jonathan Pennington, \textit{Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew}, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 126 (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Publishing, 2007), 205.
\item[130]\textsuperscript{130} Jay Kanagaraj reiterates the necessity for leaders to make leaders. He writes, “It is imperative for a leader to set an example . . . and only then can they command others to imitate them (I Cor. 11:1; Phil. 4:9; cf. Rom. 15:7; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 12:2-3; 1 Pet. 2:18-25) . . . The leaders’ job will become incomplete, if they do not equip others to become leaders.” Kanagaraj, “Johannine Jesus,” 21-22.
\end{itemize}
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: PASSING THE TORCH
TO THE NEXT GENERATION
OF CHRISTIAN LEADERS

“Ted Engstrom taught many of us what it means to be a Christian leader.”
-Richard J. Mouw, President, Fuller Theological Seminary

Introduction

When Engstrom taught on leadership he always emphasized clear purposes and clear goals. As stated in the introduction, the three primary purposes of this dissertation are as to show that Ted Engstrom’s ministry is commendable for further study, to indicate the importance of excellence and mentoring for Christian leaders, and to model the value of theological inquiry for the study of leadership. Each chapter was constructed with those goals in view and builds toward the implications of the final chapter. First, the concluding chapter will begin by reaffirming a premise of this entire investigation, that is:

1As quoted in Timothy Beals, The Essential Engstrom (Colorado Springs: Authentic, 2007), i.

2For the most extended discussion of these two principles, see Ted Engstrom and Ed Dayton, Strategy for Leadership (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1979), 51-68.

3In Gardner’s discussion of the nature of leadership, he contends, “Leadership is such a gripping subject that once it is given center stage it draws attention away from everything else. But attention to leadership alone is sterile—and inappropriate. The larger topic of which leadership is a subtopic is the accomplishment of group purpose, which is furthered not only by effective leaders but also by innovators, entrepreneurs and thinkers; by the availability of resources; by question of moral and social cohesion . . . . All human institutions must renew themselves continuously; therefore, we must explore this process as it bears on leadership.” John Gardner, On Leadership (New York: The Free Press, 1990), xii-xiii.
new leaders are needed in every generation.\textsuperscript{4} One obvious reason for this is simply the need to fill the leadership roles vacated by the previous generation (presidents, CEOs, union leaders, military chiefs, entrepreneurs, teachers, etc.). But equally important, are the changing cultural values and societal realities that demand new thinking.\textsuperscript{5} New times call for new leaders. Engstrom remained on the cultural edge of communication and technological advances in his day, which leaves an adaptive model to follow in his footsteps.\textsuperscript{6} This final analysis serves as a metaphorical “seizing the torch” of leadership passed by Engstrom and his generation.\textsuperscript{7}

\textbf{First, the crisis of leadership is a perpetual reality.}\textsuperscript{8} This dissertation commenced with a discussion concerning the particular need for Christian leadership and noted some of the efforts toward that end. Even though the field of study is relatively new,

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{4}Bennis and Nanus explain the vacuous nature of leadership today. They contend, “The need was never so great. A chronic crisis of governance—that is, the pervasive incapacity of organizations to cope with the expectations of their constituents—is now an overwhelming factor worldwide. If there was ever a moment in history when a comprehensive strategic view of leadership was needed, . . . this is certainly it.” Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, Leaders, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (1985, repr.; New York: Harper Collins, 2007), 2.

\textsuperscript{5}Gardner recognizes the significance of changing cultural trends, specifically changing values in America, in his diagnosis of the need for future leaders. He posits, “Suppose that fragmentation and divisiveness have proceeded so far in American life that we can no longer lend ourselves to any worthy common purpose. Suppose that our shared values have disintegrated to the point that we believe in nothing strongly enough to work for it as a group. Shared values are the bedrock on which leaders build the edifice of group achievement. No examination of leadership would be complete without attention to the decay and possible regeneration of the value framework.” Gardner, On Leadership, xii-xiii.

\textsuperscript{6}For more on how to adapt and diagnose the changes inside an organization, see Ronald A. Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky, The Practice of Adaptive Leadership (Boston: Cambridge Leadership Associates, 2009), 49-112.


\textsuperscript{8}Pulitzer Prize winner James MacGregor Burns highlights the crisis of leadership in his generation, which was also Engstrom’s generation. He determines, “One of the most universal cravings of our time is a hunger for compelling and creative leadership . . . . The crisis of leadership today is the mediocrity or irresponsibility of so many of the men and women in power, but leadership rarely rises to the full need for it.” James MacGregor Burns, Leadership (1978; repr., New York: Harper and Row, 2010), 1.
\end{flushright}
the need remains constant for men and women to take responsibility and yield influence for the sake of others. In many ways, the need for excellence in leadership overlaps with non-Christian notions. For example, in *A Passion for Excellence*, Peters and Austin recommend an additional element to the wildly popular business model of excellence charted in the book, *In Search of Excellence*. They propose,

That is the model: care of customers, constant innovation, turned-on people. Yet one thing is missing, one element that connects all the others. It was a shadow over the pages of *In Search of Excellence*, but was seldom labeled, as many subsequently pointed out. It is leadership. Leadership means vision, cheerleading, enthusiasm, love, trust, verve, passion, obsession, consistency, the use of symbols, paying attention as illustrated by the content of one’s calendar, out-and-out drama (and the management thereof), creating heroes at all levels, coaching, effectively wandering around, and numerous other things. Leadership must be present at all levels of the organization. It depends on a million little things done with obsession, consistency and care, but all of those million little things add up to nothing if the trust, vision and basic belief are not there.

As successful as these theories and practices have been, even the best leadership theories need constant evaluating. Furthermore, Christian leaders need to filter all leadership studies through biblical and theological mesh-nets to strain out

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9 Fuller explains that the lack of explicit “leadership” language in history results from the fact that “the question of leadership is often embedded in a larger context of political and moral philosophy of military heroism or religious fulfillment, or sweeping philosophies of focused history such as Hegel’s.” He continues to explain the self-conscious shift in thinking on leadership. He notes, “In the twentieth century, the idea of leadership increasingly became a separate topic of discussion in its own, even an academic field of study.” Timothy Fuller, ed. *Leading and Leadership* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), 199.


12 Kellerman, for one, is skeptical of much of the leadership industry. She “takes issue with America’s relentless leader-centrism, with America’s obsessive fixation on leaders at the expense of followers and at the expense of the context within which both necessarily are situated.” Instead, she sees leadership as “a system consisting of three moving parts, each of which is equally important and each of which impinges equally on the other two. The first is the Leader. The second is the Follower. And the third is the Context.” Barbara Kellerman, *Hard Times: Leadership in America* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), 2.
ungodly thinking. The result of biblical reflection often exposes deep incongruity. For instance, Langer identifies materialism as a common conflict between biblical leadership and contemporary leadership studies. He argues, “Biblically, one always looks out the windshield at spiritual, moral and relational destinations, and material things are seen through the side window on the way to these goals. Almost all the leadership literature has the exact opposite orientation. It looks out the windshield at materialistic, bottom-line outputs and uses them for navigation while it glances out the side window at the ethical, relational and spiritual landscape as it goes by.” Christian leaders are needed, and they should seek to lead Christianly.

Finally, the premise that Christians should pursue leadership demands one last consideration. Research indicates global trends of Christianity are shifting radically. One of the ensuing questions is how quickly the American evangelical leadership force will reflect the changing demographic, or, will they adapt? The evangelical leadership of the twenty-first century will look different than the evangelical leadership of the twentieth century because the demographics are changing. Rah suggests, “While the

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13 For an example of this type of reflection, see David I. Starling, *UnCorinthian Leadership* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014).


16 Jenkins research is reliant on the work of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity and indicates that Latin America, Africa and Asia are the future of Christendom. He concludes, “The era of Western Christianity has passed within our lifetimes, and the day of the Southern churches is dawning. The fact of change itself is undeniable: it has happened, and will continue to happen.” Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom* (2002; repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3.
demographics of Christianity are changing both globally and locally, the leadership in American evangelicalism continues to be dominated by white Americans.”  

He references an article in Time magazine that catalogued the twenty-five most influential American evangelicals, noting that twenty-three of the twenty-five are white. This statistic poses a significant challenge. But ethnic demographics are only one change amid swirling alterations in the fields of technology, communication, and transportation. Engstrom remained watchful of these types of developments in his day, but all the while, he returned to the lasting truths of Scripture to guide him. In his mid-80s, after six decades of ministry, Engstrom reflects,

> The growing complexities of our world seem also to require a new search for the profound, simple, foundational truths that bring clarity of purpose and hope for the future . . . . A lifetime of serving Christ and knowing thousands of His choice servants has merely served to deepen my conviction about how unshakable His kingdom is, how true His Word is for practical living, and how faithful God will be to impart a fresh mantle of Spirit-led power, creativity and sacrificial service to a new generation.

The next generation of Christians will—as Engstrom commends—need to adapt to the globalized revolutions by returning the unchanging Word of God (Ps 119:89).

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20 Engstrom’s international relationships through World Vision and his friends at Fuller Theological Seminary kept him apprise of the criticism, speculation and disagreements surrounding the evolving global trends, and global missiology in particular. For essays from the World Evangelical Fellowship during Engstrom’s final days, see William D. Taylor, ed., Global Missiology for the 21st Century (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000).
21 Ted Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage Six Decades of Service (Sisters, OR: Loyal Publishing, 1999), 185.
Reviewing the Arguments

The goals of this dissertation will be re-emphasized in this final chapter by recapitulating the primary aspects of the thesis in a summary of the arguments. The first five chapters make the case for Engstrom’s leadership in the areas of excellence and mentoring supplied with biographical context, theological reflection and personal interviews. By way of review, the arguments of each chapter are summarized below, beginning with the introductory chapter. Chapter 1 raises the questions surrounding a distinctively Christian approach to leadership and introduces the thesis of the dissertation. The main subjects of excellence and mentoring are established and shown to be commonly clashing virtues. Next, Ted Engstrom was presented alongside his initial contributions to the field of leadership. This is followed by some preliminary remarks about the opportunity for this research to add explicit theological elements to Engstrom’s writings. Before concluding, chapter 1 notes the personal background and research methods involved in the study. Finally, the chapter closes with the hopeful impact of the implications from the research.

Chapter 2 outlines Engstrom’s biography and argues that the larger trends of American evangelicalism are characteristic of his life. In other words, he was a man of his day and his writings should be understood as highly aware of the events and sentiments of the second half of the twentieth century in America. Particularly in view, are the narratives of Zondervan Publishing, Youth for Christ, World Vision and his relationships with major evangelical leaders and organizations. In light of these factors, chapter 2 makes the case for why Engstrom is worthy of a reevaluation. Moreover, it supports why his leadership resume and network qualify him as a noteworthy contributor.
to the practice of workplace excellence and mentoring then and now. The combination of historical accounts and cultural analysis affords more clarity for Engstrom’s conclusions and forecasts more accurate implications for the future.

Chapter 3 reviews Engstrom’s understanding of excellence. Then, the research adds doctrinal reasoning and biblical support for his positions on excellence. The resulting theological framework and deductions are largely amiss in Engstrom’s writings, but they are aimed to strengthen his argument and confirm his written conclusions. The additional perspective of theology undergirds the hopeful contribution of this dissertation designed to find more theologically deft application for the next generation.

Chapter 4 follows the order and logic of chapter 3, but the focus is on mentoring. Engstrom’s arguments are summarized and then supplemented with four short doctrinal studies. Additionally, efforts are made to connect insights from the field of education with mentoring before making some final applications.

In chapter 5, the project traces Engstrom’s influence through the lives of key Christian leaders who provide concrete examples of Engstrom’s leadership. Through the channel of personal interviews, these leaders serve to evaluate the thesis of the dissertation through first hand accounts with Engstrom’s leadership. First, however, chapter 5 attempts to validate the synthesis of excellence and mentoring in Engstrom’s work. The argument supports an emphasis on excellence that requires mentoring while simultaneously holding to an emphasis on mentoring that demands excellence.

In conclusion, chapter 6 attempts to distill ten implications that are germane to the thesis of this dissertation. They consider Engstrom’s life and writings in light of the historical and cultural contexts in chapter 2, the biblical and theological issues raised in
chapters 3 and 4, and the subsequent experiences of the key leaders highlighted in chapter 5. The purpose of the ten implications is to begin to demonstrate how one might prepare the next generation for new needs in Christian leadership. The hopeful result is a renewed emphasis in the twenty-first century on excellence and mentoring as hallmarks of Christian leadership. Engstrom is left to inspire and direct a new generation who faces new challenges. Finally, this chapter points forward to further research that could impact the contemporary discussions on the nature of Christian leadership in light of the three relevant concerns: stewardship, the cultural mandate, and epistemology.

Implications for Christian Leaders

The following section introduces ten implications that follow from the proposals in this dissertation. They are “ought” statements, that is, they are principles or practices that should play a role in a Christian leader’s life. Each implication stems from the combination of Engstrom’s insights, material from the preceding theological discussions, and adjoins comments from prominent writings on leadership. There is not a suggested priority to this list; the order is non-consequential. It is written with the

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22 Further implications were mentioned at the conclusions of chap. 3 and chap. 4. Like those suggestions, these final remarks should not be considered comprehensive in their scope or depth of application, but rather are intended to demonstrate the value for the everyday decision-making and priorities of Christian leaders. Engstrom would have emphasized the implications of a study like this. Thus, it seems appropriate to include more than just a few brief remarks about application when conducting an analysis of his work—that is why there are ten suggestions.

23 Each implication presupposes the validity of the premises argued throughout the dissertation. The addition of external leadership voices is not an attempt to further expand or substantiate those claims, but rather draw conclusions based on their truthfulness and demonstrate how common grace led others to the same conclusions.

24 Engstrom would likely be most interested in this section of the research—the practical application. Engstrom’s pragmatic bent led Andringa to conclude, “He was a collector of what works. Some of his ideas were original, but most of what I heard him say—and what I saw he wrote—were really wisdom collected through the ages from watching others and from testing his own experience as to what worked. He was a collector, a synthesizer, and then a producer of literature of what worked. Very practical, not very much theory.” Andringa, interview with author.
understanding that each leadership position (during different cycles and situations) allows for distinctive applications and requires different emphases.\footnote{Northouse provides a helpful overview of leadership approaches. See Peter G. Northouse, \textit{Leadership: Theory and Practice}, 5\textsuperscript{th} ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2010).}

**Implication 1**

Christian leaders ought to understand excellence and mentoring as bearing witness to the character of God. As chapter 3 discussed, excellence is rooted in the doctrine of God’s character and evidenced in the capacity for his image bearers to reflect the excellence of God. Given these starting points, Christian leaders witness to the true character of God as they work and live with excellence.\footnote{Engstrom, \textit{The Pursuit of Excellence}, 22.} Similarly, as chapter 4 concludes, Christian mentoring is both personal (spiritual and family life) and professional (work and public life). Mentoring displays the action of God—it comes under the banner of the mission of God, which involves “the primary and acute concern” of proclaiming the good news of God’s rescue through Jesus Christ.\footnote{John Stott, \textit{Christian Mission in the Modern World} (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1975), 35; Engstrom, \textit{What in the World is God Doing}, 55-56.} Excellent work plus intentional investment in others yields credible evangelistic efforts.\footnote{Garber argues that common grace is intended for the common good. More directly, he argues that Christian vocation “is integral, not incidental, to the \textit{mission Dei}.” See Steven Garber, \textit{Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good} (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014), 18.} It is important to reiterate, this does not infer that excellence and mentoring are only a means to an end—they are both a mean and an end.\footnote{Engstrom and others held the glory of God as the motivation and goal, or end, of excellence. See Ted Engstrom, \textit{The Making of a Christian Leader} (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 199-200; Daniel Block, \textit{For the Glory of God} (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 138; Andreas Kostenberger, \textit{Excellence} (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 45.}
The implication for Christian leaders to remain cognizant of their witness to God’s character is underscored when connecting excellence and beauty. Jones and Armstrong submit that beauty “may offer the richest understanding of the true measure of Christian excellence.”

Excellence, expressed through the creation of good and beautiful things, calls away from individualism into a community for shared enjoyment. The gospel—with its call to repent—is on display in both excellence (work) and mentoring (community). This provides Christians the opportunity to witness, or explain the character of God and his creation of men and women as his creative, flourishing image bearers on earth. Correspondingly, excellence provides an opportunity to engage with non-believers around a common experience such as an art gallery, musical concert, or even a sporting event to discuss where beautiful creations originate and find meaning.

Christian leaders who practice excellence and mentoring bear witness to God.

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31 Mohler explains, “Beauty (Excellence) is for us an evangelistic mandate, a missiological purpose. We are the people who know what beauty is—not that we have seen it yet with our eyes, but we have seen it in a foretaste, and we have been promised it with an assured promise. In this life, we live amidst the pretty, the corrupt, and the artificial. We live among those who do not believe beauty (excellence) exists, and among those who think beauty (excellence) can be manufactured. In such a context, we are the ones who have to say we know beauty (excellence), and it is none other than Jesus Christ the Lord.” The parenthetic additions are not original to Mohler’s article, but have been added to emphasize the connection between beauty and excellence. See Albert Mohler, “A Christian Vision of Beauty,” accessed April 27, 2015, http://www.albertmohler.com/2005/11/18/a-christian-vision-of-beauty-part-three/.

32 Reynolds shared that Engstrom lived by a two-word mission statement. His life was fueled by the desire to “populate heaven.” Reynolds, interview by author.

33 Excellence is certainly found a home in the hyper-competitive world of American sports. Performing and practicing with excellence is common jargon in almost any locker room across the country. Another way to see this from the Christian worldview is to see athletes as participating in beauty. See Michael Novak for a connection between beauty and sport. He writes, “Athletic achievement, like the achievements of the heroes and the gods of Greece, is the momentary attainment of perfect form—as though there were, hidden away from mortal eyes, a perfect way to execute a play, and suddenly a player or a team has found it and sneaked a demonstration down to earth. A great play is a revelation. The curtains of ordinary life part, and perfection flashes for an instant before the eye. True lovers of sport respond to beauty.” Michael Novak, *The Joy of Sports* (Lanham, MD: Madison Books, 1994), 5.
Implication 2

Christian leaders must press excellence beyond external behaviors (personal or organizational) to their own hearts. The fact and value distinction latent in modern thinking allowed for personal lives and professional lives to proceed with different rules. For Engstrom, excellence was a way of working and a way of living. This was not the result of some obsession with maintaining a consistent reputation, but was understood as a duty before God (Col 2:23; Col 3:17). So the question remains: how does one move beyond the behaviors of excellence to a way of being that is excellent? It begins with receiving a new heart based on Christ’s moral excellence. Furthermore, as argued in chapter 3, excellence is formed by habits, including the motivational habits for one’s entire life. This means excellence has everything to do with the virtues formed in the life of the leader. Wright explains that learning a second language provides a clue to how virtue is formed. He explains eventually through repetition one begins to think in the new language, which is now “second nature.” He adopts a passage from C. S. Lewis on learning ancient Greek that captures the complexity of character formation. Lewis writes,

Those in whom the Greek word lives only while they are hunting for it in the lexicon, and who then substitute the English word for it, are not reading Greek at all; they are only solving a puzzle. The very formula, “Naus means a ship,” is wrong. Naus and ship both mean a thing, they do not mean one another. Behind

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34 Chap. 3 utilized the term “comprehensive” to describe this aspect of Engstrom’s view of excellence.


36 Schreiner confirms Engstrom’s identification of the problem and the solution. In his explication of 2 Pet 1:5, Schreiner asserts, “He (God) creates the moral excellence he demands. Hence, it follows that the moral excellence of believers can only be attributed to God’s grace. And yet New Testament writers never polarize divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Those whom God has effectively called to virtue are also to practice virtue with energy and intensity.” Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, 299.

37 N. T. Wright, After You Believe (New York: HarperOne, 2010), 41.
Naus, as behind navis or naca, we want to have a picture of a dark, slender mass with sail or oars, climbing the ridges, with no officious English word intruding.  

Therefore, if one reverse engineers the process described above, then excellence of the hands (right repetition) flows out of the excellence of one’s motivation (right virtue), which is ultimately only granted by faith, which is based on the excellence of Jesus. It is not enough for Christian leaders to only demonstrate excellence in their work environments; they must exhibit hearts that are changed and constantly being changed toward the heart of Christ.

Implication 3

Christian leaders should emphasize high performance while giving encouragement to those they mentor. Leaders must strike the right chord between optimism and realism. Jim Collins frames his call for hopeful realism within the valiant life of James Stockdale, or what he calls the “Stockdale Paradox.”  

Borrowing his analogy, there is a parallel in what could be called the “Engstrom Paradox.” That is, Engstrom wanted to face the hard facts—evidenced by his first board report at World Vision and his effort to establish the ECFA. Still, he was simultaneously a relentless encourager. He always looked for the opportunity in a situation. By way of application for mentors, Engstrom’s stalwart cheerleading of the present and vision casting for his

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39Vice Admiral Stockdale’s story includes imprisonment and torture, but it ends in hope. Collins credits the victory to “the unwavering faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties, AND at the same time have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be.” See Jim Collins, *Good to Great* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 83-87.

40Elsewhere, Engstrom explains, “It’s a little like being a loving Dutch Uncle or Dutch Aunt—someone who will take you aside on occasion and tell you frankly things you need to hear but don’t want to hear.” Engstrom, *The Fine Art of Mentoring*, 104.
protégés’ future deserves imitation. First, Engstrom’s practice included a realistic assessment by asking for his protégés to score the current reality and chart a path forward. And at the same time, as the protégé would set to work on that issue, Engstrom was writing encouraging notes and giving his endorsement via phone calls. Leaders who advocate for those they mentor release enormous potential into the world. Hear the paradox conveyed in Engstrom’s own words:

Look into the eyes of your mentoree and see what he feels in his heart but has never thought yet in his head. He might feel like he has tremendous potential but won’t allow himself to think that yet. He places limits on himself that the mentor has to eliminate. Help your protégé to see what you feel is his potential, even though he might not yet see it . . . . Don’t hype a person. If he can’t carry a tune, don’t tell him he will be the star of the Metropolitan Opera some day. There is no substitute for objectivity and honesty.

**Implication 4**

Christian leaders must seek to inlay a theological framework for organizational goals and priorities. Max DePree famously resolved, “The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between the two, the leader must become a servant and a debtor.” DePree is right to frame the leadership conversation from this macro perspective. A right goal with an unrealistic starting place results in confusion and blame. Similarly, a right motive with an unrealistic beginning breeds misperceptions and false outcomes. To follow the leader, one must know where they start. One starting point for a Christian leader should be a theological framework for reality.

Premises like the existence of God, the creation of a good world, the inherent value of

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41 This practice was noted in chap. 5 interviews with John Reynolds, JoAnn Bengel, Jon Wallace, Dean Hirsch, and Bob Andringa.


men and women as a result of the image of God, the volitional rebellion of sin and its effects, the salvation offered in Christ and a view of history that ends with justice and eternal dwelling with or without the presence of God are necessary to define reality.\textsuperscript{44} Other narratives of the world are deficient for Christian leaders. Theology also forces Christians to include a second starting point, namely, culture (location, environment, communication channels, cultural customs, etc.). Locating the starting point in today’s swiftly fluctuating society is not easy. Heifetz and Laurie describe the twenty-first century reality this way: “Changes in societies, markets, customers, competition, and technology around the globe are forcing organizations to clarify their values, develop new strategies, and learn new ways of operating. Often the toughest task for leaders in effecting change is mobilizing people throughout the organization to do adaptive work.”\textsuperscript{45} Therefore, the task of defining and creating reality amidst change requires the ability to adapt. A robust theological understanding should inlay the thinking of every Christian leader so they can rightly acclimate to the cultural realities of their generation.

\textsuperscript{44}Hirsch described the way in which Engstrom understood reality, and maintained this emphasis within World Vision’s work, to include physical and spiritual poverty: “He believed, as I do, that the greatest poverty in the world is not knowing Christ. He didn’t buy into that poverty is just economic. He was very strong that the greatest poverty is spiritual poverty. And we had a responsibility as an organization—we might not be an evangelistic organization like Billy Graham—but we should be demonstrating and living out what Jesus taught. We should be bringing people closer to Christ or actually leading them to Christ. Hirsch, interview with author.

Implication 5

Christian leaders should utilize mentoring as a means of partnership. Engstrom quipped, “Share everything, it is all God’s anyway.” In his day, he saw partnerships as necessary for advancing World Vision’s mission and crossing cultural landmines. A key ingredient to twenty-first century leadership will be collaboration, which necessitates Engstrom’s emphasis on relationships. Mentoring relationships create a bond that depends on common goals. Common goals, most especially among Christians, allow for partnerships. In Noll’s explanation of the “imperative of partnerships,” he claims, “It is increasingly clear that all true expressions of Christianity, like politics in the famous American expression, are local . . . . Agents from outside that culture may play important roles in assisting, or hindering, Christian maturation, but Christianity has to be local or it can barely be called Christianity.” In order to partner around the world, one must achieve local leadership. An incredible mechanism for accomplishing that is the hard work of listening, learning, and sharing that takes place in mentoring relationship.

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46 Hirsch, Interview with author. Hirsch maintained that World Vision still function under that philosophy today, that partnership and sharing are necessary to grow the kingdom of God and avoid building an organizational empire.

47 Engstrom concludes, “The Bible considers our relationships as being more important than our accomplishments. God will get His work done! He does not demand of us that we accomplish great things. He demands of us that we strive for excellence in relationships.” Ted Engstrom and Ed Dayton, Christian Leadership Letter (Monrovia, CA: World Vision International, 1975), 3. See also Engstrom and Jenson, The Making of a Mentor, 7-8; Lawless, Mentor, 51.

Implication 6

Christian leaders should alert themselves to issues of epistemology and recognize how vital mentoring is to learning.⁴⁹ Bobb Biehl argues that mentoring is the way knowledge will be transferred, or what he calls the “linchpin” of Christian leadership development.⁵⁰ Shifting trends in ethnic demographics in American evangelicalism are one small factor in the new world order. Several years ago, James Davidson Hunter investigated the coming generation of evangelicals, specifically looking at college students from the point of view of religion as a cultural system, and traced the manifold changes in society that “provide reasonable grounds for pessimism.”⁵¹ In his explanation of “the decline in Protestant hegemony,” he determines,

The process is hardly isolated from the push and pull of change in economic, political, and cultural realms. To be sure, the decline of Protestant hegemony accompanies a major shift in the structure and cultural ethos of the contemporary world order. It is, in some respects, dialectically related, that is, both in part a cause and an effect of these changes. Commonly (though inadequately) referred to as a shift from modern to post modern society, the changes entail a certain intensification of rationalistic principles and tendencies dominant in the West through World War II.⁵²

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⁴⁹This implication also stands as an area that needs further research. The comments in chap. 4 on epistemology along with these brief remarks only seem to break the surface of the possibilities that lie in this area of research.

⁵⁰Biehl writes, “Our current generation of Christian leadership could easily forget the linchpin and leave the potential of the next generation behind. But through mentoring, we can groom the next generation of leaders, and they can do more than we dared to dream.” Bobb Biehl, Mentoring (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 144.


⁵²Ibid., 194.
Since Hunter’s groundbreaking research, there have been some reassuring signs. One fundamental adaptive feature of the next generation of Christian leaders will be the ability to acclimate to new epistemological changes.

Ignoring the fundamental issues of knowing can lead to dangerous dichotomies. For example, Meek writes, “I embody my knowledge of God by trying to do what he says. That’s why the Bible makes short work of those who claim to know God and don’t do what he says.” The opposite of this *lived* knowledge is what Randy Reese and Robert Loane refer to as “the pressure to be spectators of Jesus.” To draw out the contrast they turn to the words of Soren Kierkegaard, who wrote, “What, then, is the difference between an admirer and an imitator? An imitator is one who strives to be what he admires, and an admirer keeps himself personally detached, consciously or unconsciously does not discover that what is admired involves a claim upon him to be or least to strive to be what is admired.” For Reese and Loane, the intonation of mentoring truly occurs when it is experienced, not studied. They write, “A critical discovery in the apprenticeship with Jesus is that there is absolutely no substitute for seeing the gospel lived out by another.

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53Penning and Smidt followed Hunter’s research with nearly identical samples almost two decades later and conclude, “This study should provide reassurance to many in the evangelical world, particularly leaders of evangelical institutions of higher education, in that it finds considerable stability in student attitudes over time. The theological views of evangelical college students today are virtually identical to those expressed by evangelical college students nearly two decades ago.” James M. Penning and Corwin E. Smidt, *Evangelicalism: The Next Generation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 165.

54Esther Meek, *Longing to Know* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2004), 94-95. Meek continues, “Knowledge is lived, bodily. Obeying God’s commands is bodily living the truth. I can give you one guaranteed way to know God: obey him. As you live the truth, you are most likely to come to know the focus of your epistemic act.” Ibid.


No amount of personal Bible study or sermons can replace our need to experience and envision up close the gospel incarnated in a person’s life.” To come full circle, this is exactly the immersion demonstrated in Engstrom’s life and supported by theological anthropology and theological epistemology in chapter 4.

Implication 7

Christian leaders ought to demand integrity without retreating from the front lines. With Richard Mouw, it is crucial to ask, “Can a Christian really lead with integrity in an environment where her values and beliefs seem to be regularly compromised?” Are there institutions that are too “far gone” for Christians to participate or remain employed? Should evangelicals retreat? What happens if Christians step out of culturally influential positions altogether? Mouw, in his own Kuyperian way, suggests that Christians should embark on the struggle to find balance and maintain a Christian witness amid these cultural tensions. Leadership was not a hat or a badge that took Engstrom out of the cultural mainstream. Rather, it propelled him into a dark and hurting world. He possessed what Kouzes and Posner call “the best-kept secret of successful leaders,” which is love. Love propels one toward another. Love initiates. Kouzes and Posner write, “Staying in love with leading, with the people who do the work, with what their organizations produce, and with those who honor the organization by using its products and services. Leadership is not an affair of the head. Leadership is an affair of the

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57 Reese and Loane, Deep Mentoring (188).


59 Mouw, Uncommon Decency, 110-16.
heart.” One of the easiest ways to lose one’s luster for leading is to compromise one’s integrity. Saying one thing, and doing another is the first step toward a disingenuousness that is evident to followers. Engstrom loved leading, demanded integrity, and inspired others to maximum effectiveness by “being in the arena.” Christian leaders should seek to do the same.

**Implication 8**

Christian leaders should try to replicate their standard and pursuit of excellence. DePree is right again to say, “Leaders are also responsible for future leadership. They need to identify, develop, and nurture future leaders.” Engstrom’s impact at Zondervan and Youth for Christ are certainly notable, and his sacrifices at World Vision are somewhat legendary, but his greatest impact remains to be seen. Support for this claim originates in Engstrom’s own understanding of his investment. Writing with Jenson, they argue that the apostles were “living forward” because they knew the secret to “spiritual multiplication through intentionally influencing a few people at a time.” They extend the argument further when they write, “they knew that by concentrating on a few faithful men and women they would leave behind them a legacy of people whose influence would extend beyond a generation or two; in fact, a legacy that would continue to multiply until

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the return of the Lord.” The formative principles Engstrom passed on when training and mentoring other leaders will continue to have a ripple effect for generations to come.

The future of excellence is immeasurably influenced by the investment of the former generation. Engstrom saw mentoring within a given context as crucial to answer the questions of the future. He stresses, “If an organization is to have a future, it must develop its manpower. The best method of doing that is through the mentoring of its key personnel.” Additionally, he has the awareness to recognize that young leaders are asking if organizations are investing in their younger personnel. Organizations with the reputations for developing leaders attract the best leaders. Christian leaders must seek to hone their understanding of excellence, all the while, seeking to replicate it in the lives of younger leaders.

Implication 9

Christian leaders are implicated to see their work as worship. Thankfully, as chapter 3 indicated, there have been a number of advances in the field of theology of

64Ibid.

65In their study, Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell explain, “Mentors generally defined the ripple effect as not only the human investment made in helping their mentees, but also the long-term, multiplying investment that they and their mentees would continue to make in others throughout their lives.” Tammy Moerer-Urdahl and John Creswell, “Using Transcendental Phenomenology to Explore the “Ripple Effect” in a Leadership Mentoring Program,” International Journal of Qualitative Methods 3 (2004): 4, accessed February 1, 2015, http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/3_2/pdf/moerercreswell.pdf.


67Engstrom lists the contexts of business, the arts, education, finance, politics, military, and the trades play an important role in the success of every vocational endeavor. Engstrom, The Fine Art of Mentoring, 99.
work, but too many churches and lay leaders still live in the dichotomy of Sunday worship and Monday through Friday work.\textsuperscript{68} Nelson claims,

\begin{quote}
I do believe that many times the reputation of Christians and their work is a sobering indictment on our inadequate understanding, as well as our day-to-day application, of the transforming truths of vocation. A great deal of the shabbiness and shadiness of many Christians’ work is directly related to an inadequate and often distorted theology of vocation.\textsuperscript{69}
\end{quote}

Christian leaders must help correct this misperception.

In an address investigating the dedication and success of Communist leaders, Douglas Hyde tells the story of an old man in the Southeast Asian jungle who had a breakthrough moment. He realized his daily work involved participating in God’s work. Hyde explains that the man’s Christianity simultaneously became relevant to his work and his work was now linked to his beliefs, which could no longer be isolated to Sundays. He offers this critique:

\begin{quote}
That, of course, is how any Christian should see his work . . . . If they did, the so-called ‘Christian West’ would be very different from what it is. The values of the Sunday Mass or Service would be taken to the Stock Exchange, the board meeting, the marketing campaign office, the factory, but quite evidently, they normally are not. For the Christian, and for most others, work is divorced from belief. This is not true of the Communist.\textsuperscript{70}
\end{quote}

He goes on to explain the unwritten rule in Communist circles, that is: every member should aim to be the best man at his job.\textsuperscript{71} It is difficult for an American,

\textsuperscript{68}This problem is addressed in a book by successful lay leaders, who seek to break down the understanding that separates “secular” 9-5 jobs from “full-time Christian ministry” jobs. See Mark L. Russell, ed., \textit{Work as Worship: How the CEOs of Interstate Batteries, Hobby Lobby, PepsiCo, Tyson Foods and More Bring Meaning to Their Work} (Boise, ID: Russell Media, 2012).

\textsuperscript{69}Nelson, \textit{Work Matters}, 95.

\textsuperscript{70}Douglas Hyde, \textit{Dedication and Leadership} (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. 2005), 96.

\textsuperscript{71}Hyde, \textit{Dedication and Leadership}, 98-99.
especially an evangelical, who likely carries a deep suspicion for all things related to Communism, to hear this challenge. However, if Christian leaders are to infuse their work with the meaning provided by the motivation of worshipping God, then they will echo the unwritten sentiment to be the best. Or, as Engstrom says, “My style of life should be one of excellence. The Christian can adopt nothing less as a goal.”

**Implication 10**

Finally, Christian leaders should seek to employ the best business practices of their day in order to achieve biblical definitions of excellence. Adjoining American business and Christian ministry, especially in church practices, is not straightforward. Still, Christian leaders regularly find themselves at this crossroads. The focus of these applications has been geared to Christians who are not serving in the church but in the marketplace, or like Engstrom, in the world of Christian organizations. As noted, Engstrom understands the tension, but calls leaders to press through the theological paradox and life gridlock. He contests, “We constantly struggle with the concept of operating a business and a ministry. They do not conflict; both are vital.”

Taking action in the midst of an apparent stalemate is one of the daily challenges of Christian leadership.

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73There seems to be an undefined continuum of application from local church to local business. In general, this author contends the closer the conversation gets to the life of a local church, the more hesitant one should be to involve non-sacred business practices. For criticisms of the use of “big business” and “effectiveness” in Christian leadership, see David E. Fitch, *The Great Giveaway: Reclaiming the Mission of the Church From Big Business, Parachurch Organizations, Psychotherapy, Consumer Capitalism, and Other Modern Maladies* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), 71-94.

74Engstrom writes, “There will be no easy answers. On the one hand, the people cannot be sacrificed for “the good of the organization.” On the other hand, if the goals and purposes of the organization are sacrificed for the good of the individuals, then the organization will cease to function.” Engstrom and Dayton, *Christian Leadership Letter*, 3.

During the interviews, Dean Hirsch summarized Engstrom’s ability to do exactly what he called others to do. Hirsch asserted, “He had the ability to move very easily from looking at the bottom line of the organization, skipping into Scripture real quick and then coming back, and discussing business ideas, he mixed it all together and he did it all elegantly.”

Locating the wisdom of God that is required to breakthrough such impasses takes serious preparation. In the following section, this dissertation elevates possible areas of further study that would hopefully advance the implications of excellence and mentoring for Christian leaders.

**Areas of Further Study**

In this section of the dissertation, three areas of further study will be discussed: stewardship, the cultural mandate, and epistemology. First, further research on excellence and mentoring could tighten the connection to the biblical theme of stewardship. A few initial observations regarding the relationship between these topics will hopefully point to the need for further research. First, what does it look like to connect excellence and stewardship? Engstrom saw excellence, among other values, as a stewardship issue. Others have seen this connection as well. For example, Keller writes, “I believe the main biblical model for leadership is the ‘steward leader.’ The ‘steward’ was both a ruler and a slave, and this model provides us with a unique way to think out what it means to lead others.”

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76 Kliewer, interview with author.

77 This area of further study results from the prominence of this theme in the interview sessions.

78 This theme was most pronounced in Engstrom’s writings on “time management,” but it was a theme that had broader reach in his writings. See Engstrom and Mackenzie, *Managing Your Time*, 205-6.

79 Timothy Keller, “The Steward Leader: A Biblical Model for Leadership,” accessed May 16,
often associated with leaders.\textsuperscript{80} It is an approach to leadership that points away from the leader instead of focusing on the leader.\textsuperscript{81} Christian leaders, who identify first as stewards of God’s resources, as Engstrom suggests, understand their authority as delegated authority, not earned authority.\textsuperscript{82} Steward leaders, according to Scott Rodin, are the opposite of “owner-leaders.” He explains, “This leadership (owner-leader) does a terrible disservice to people, leaving them uninvolved and underdeveloped. It wastes resources and limits ministry, all under the guise of strong leadership and the use of God-given talents for ‘getting things done.’”\textsuperscript{83} One result of viewing leadership as stewardship is that a call to excellence can only be defined by God’s purposes.

Similarly, further research could ask what it looks like to connect mentoring and stewardship? Many of the principles above would directly apply to mentoring as well and the results could be compared. For example, further study in this area could involve

\textsuperscript{80}Laniak explains God’s preference to involve human agency in His divine plan that He both originates and empowers. Thus, human leaders are merely inheritors of leadership, not achievers of leadership. He remarks, “The God of Scripture chooses regularly to engage humans in the tasks of leadership. Appointment by God implies calling, stewardship, and accountability.” Timothy Laniak, Shepherds after My Own Heart, in New Studies in Biblical Theology, ed. D.A. Carson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 22.

\textsuperscript{81}Interestingly, that might be one reason why many people do not know a lot about Engstrom. Rodin reflects on the counter-virtue of leadership as a steward (answering the “who” question, not the “what” question) and suggests, “It [Phil 2:7] does not say that Jesus became a man of bad reputation or of questionable reputation, but simply of no reputation. That is, reputation, image, prestige, prominence, power and other trappings of leadership were not only devalued, they were purposefully dismissed . . . . It was only in this form that he could serve, love, give, teach, and, yes, lead.” R. Scott Rodin, The Steward Leader: Transforming People, Organizations, and Communities (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 12.

\textsuperscript{82}Langer writes, “The theological roots of any biblical understanding of leadership must grow in the soil of God’s authority. There is no authority that is not from God (Rom 13:1). Therefore, human authority is always delegated authority . . . . Leadership is a sacred gift given for a purpose, and like every other gift, God will demand an accounting for how well that purpose was fulfilled (Matt 25:14-30).” Langer, “Toward a Biblical Theology of Leadership,” 68-69.

\textsuperscript{83}Rodin, The Steward Leader, 16.
comparison of two different qualitative studies: (1) leaders who exhibit task-orientation alongside Engstrom’s emphasis on excellence, and (2) leaders who exhibit relationship-orientation alongside Engstrom’s call to mentor.\textsuperscript{84} Results could provide strengths and weakness of each orientation and point to how to best steward one’s leadership orientation for the organizational objectives.\textsuperscript{85} Additionally, further research would need to ask how leaders pass those gifts (skills, wisdom, position etc.) on to other people? By inference, leaders must steward their employees by demonstrating the value of their protégés (followers or employees); one such way is to develop them through mentoring.\textsuperscript{86} In order for any employee, follower, or mentee to maximize their potential as Engstrom suggests, they need a mentor, or some voice from the outside.\textsuperscript{87} Finally, examining stewardship might also address the common misunderstanding that a leaders’ success is

\textsuperscript{84}The study could aim to answer: (1) What are the common traits of task-oriented leaders and do the correlate to Engstrom’s depiction of a leader practicing excellence? (2) What are the common traits of relationship-oriented leaders and Engstrom’s portrait of a mentor? For an example of such a study, see Carmen Tabernerom, M. José Chambel, Luis Curral, and José M. Arana, “The Role Of Task-Oriented Versus Relationship-Oriented Leadership on Normative Contract and Group Performance,” \textit{Social Behavior And Personality} 37 (2009): 1391-404.


\textsuperscript{86}I was first introduced to this concept through Andy Mills’ personal testimony about his business success and personal failures. While CEO of Thompson Financial, the company revenue grew to exceed $3.5 billion. He argues that all successful businesses must demonstrate that they value their employees by developing them and training them. Andy Mills, “Climbing the Ladder of Success,” \textit{Marketplace Network Forums}, accessed January 2015, http://www.theologyofwork.org/resources/climbingtheladderofsuccess/.

\textsuperscript{87}As Stanley looks to the future of leadership, he supports this supposition. He writes, “You will never maximize your potential in any area without coaching. It is impossible. You may be good. You may even be better than everyone else. But without outside input you will never be as good as you could be. We all do better when somebody is watching and evaluating.” Andy Stanley, \textit{Next Generation Leader: Five Essentials for Those Who Will Shape the Future} (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah, 2003), 104.
gauged entirely by the individual leader’s skill and accomplishments.\textsuperscript{88} This assessment is too narrow and does not consider the overall good of the organization or cause. A strong gust of “stewardship” might correct this. As DePree suggests, “The measure of leadership is not the quality of the head, but the tone of the body. The signs of outstanding leadership appear primarily among the followers.”\textsuperscript{89} Engstrom stands in agreement with DePree, but highlights the act of serving one’s followers:

All Christians live under the mandate to develop their lives to their utmost. The apostle Peter urges us to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” This calls for sanctified ambition, with a strong drive to forge ahead and achieve. For centuries Christian mystics and others have written and spoken disparagingly of ambition, in the ordinary sense of the word, thinking it to be sinful. However, ambition when used to the glory of God is praiseworthy… Ambition is to be clothed with humility (Mark 10:42-44). It is not the number of one’s servants that count, but the number whom one serves.\textsuperscript{90}

Ultimately, to understand stewardship one must also investigate the eschatological repercussions. The stewardship narrative reaches a new era of salvation history, in a new city where believers “will reign with Christ and rule in full accordance with his intentions,”\textsuperscript{91} writes Langer. He continues, “We will be faithful stewards; we will embrace our boundaries and pursue our tasks with zeal.”\textsuperscript{92} Investing one’s talents in light of the eschatological context of Matthew 25 could further enhance a biblical vision of excellence and mentoring.\textsuperscript{93}

\textsuperscript{88}This serves as a complement to the emphasis on excellence.

\textsuperscript{89}Depree, Leadership Is an Art, 12.

\textsuperscript{90}Engstrom, The Making of a Christian Leader, 39.

\textsuperscript{91}Langer, “Toward a Biblical Theology of Leadership,” 71.

\textsuperscript{92}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{93}For more on the context and meaning of Matthew 25, see D. A. Carson, Matthew, in vol. 2 of The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, ed. Frank Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 517.
Secondly, further study could include an examination of excellence as an outworking of the cultural mandate. The conclusions in chapter 3 allude to the cultural mandate in Genesis 1:28 as necessary to understand the image of God in man, yet the major concern at that time in the study was not to answer how humans should fill, subdue, and rule with excellence. Further work could be done that narrows in on (or adds) excellence to the work some have already done to show how Genesis 1:28 informs a Christian understanding of work. For example, Hammett concludes, “Work is part of God’s will for humans. The most important truth about work in these verses is that it is not an evil thing thrust upon us by the necessity of earning a living, but it is part of God’s will for humanity . . . . The goodness of work is implied by its presence before the fall, and is made explicit in later biblical revelation.” Adding a layer of excellence to Engstrom’s imperatives could yield fruitful insights for the Christian leader. For example, Hammett goes on to explain: “Even nonbelievers can find a sense of satisfaction in their work and can contribute to the good of others through it.” For a Christian man or woman in business, this awareness, combined with an emphasis on excellence, could alter his or her company’s culture. In other words, obedience to the cultural mandate with an eye toward excellence results in true human flourishing, or shalom. Conversely,


95 Ibid.

96 Plantinga defines shalom as “universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight—a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creature in whom he delights.” Cornelius Plantinga Jr., *Not the Way It’s Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 10; R. Stanton Norman, “Human Sinfulness,” in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Danny Akin (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007), 423.
further research could examine how not fulfilling the cultural mandate with excellence leads to personal discontentment.  

Another aspect of this potential research shows up in Gene Veith’s examination of the cultural mandate. Veith shows how Genesis 1 emphasizes that human work follows the pattern of God “working” in the creation narrative. He writes, “Human work is an imitation of God’s work, a participation in God’s creation and His creativity. Ruling, subduing, multiplying, causing plants to grow, making things—these are what God does, and yet God gives them as tasks to human beings.” Further research could tease out how God’s work and rest in Genesis 1 establishes the pattern for work and rest with special attention to how rest is needed to achieve excellence.

Finally, a third area of further research could be done on the intersection between mentoring and epistemology. For example, one dimension that surfaced in this research, and would pertain to further research, is the role of the “group” in mentoring. Although the communal aspect of mentoring was not an emphasis in his writings, Engstrom tells about his practice of participating in a group, the “2/4/6 Club.” It was a group of six men who met together on the second and fourth Fridays of every month for

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97 Engstrom writes, “One of the mysteries of living is that the goal which is achieved easily brings little inner satisfaction or reward.” Engstrom and Dayton, Christian Leadership Letter, 3. Likewise, Block explains that work is fundamental to our humanity because it was designed with dignity to bring glory to God, benefit others, and serve society. By implication, he shows that “this explains why unemployment and underemployment are so dehumanizing.” Block, For the Glory of God, 138.

98 Gene Veith, God at Work (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002), 62.


100 Engstrom and Larson, Seizing the Torch, 158. This group is also mentioned in his autobiography. See also Engstrom, Reflections on a Pilgrimage, 181.
personal sharpening by developing a strategy for spiritual effectiveness.\textsuperscript{101} They developed a plan and held each other to it for over a decade. Engstrom credits the power of the group as the key to the overall effectiveness.\textsuperscript{102} At the heart of Engstrom’s method, including the routine established in the 2/4/6 Club, was thoughtful question asking. One of his protégés explains, “Ted could compete with Socrates when it comes to asking questions. This is his main method of teaching. He is a master at pinpointing just the question that needs to be asked. He has asked me thousands of questions about my life, my relationships with other people, my relationship with God, my work, my clients, my vision for my future, and most importantly, about my wife and kids.”

Presence is an unmistakable factor in learning.\textsuperscript{104} Groups diversify experiences and enrich one’s perspectives. Similarly, sincere questions can illicit vulnerable responses, which produces deep epistemic realities.\textsuperscript{105}

Furthermore, as social networks continue to redefine the way the next generation interacts and understands its identity, the group aspect of mentoring could offer a unique platform of formation. In Waggoner’s research and analysis on the spiritual formation of twenty-five hundred Protestant churchgoers, he found that the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{101}Ibid., 158-60.
  \item \textsuperscript{102}Ibid, 160.
  \item \textsuperscript{103}Engstrom and Jenson, \textit{The Making of a Mentor}, 94.
  \item \textsuperscript{104}“The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer, \textit{Life Together} (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 29.
  \item \textsuperscript{105}Carson provides a more thorough and nuanced approach to epistemology that would not reinforce all of the suggestions in this dissertation, but serves to augment the introductory remarks on epistemology offered thus far. Naselli summarizes D. A. Carson’s epistemological approach this way, “Carson recognizes both positive and negative elements in the epistemology of premodernity, modernism, and postmodernity. He aligns himself, however, with none of them in its entirety, opting instead for a chastened foundationalism.” Andrew David Naselli, “D. A. Carson’s Theological Method,” \textit{Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology} 29, no. 2 (2011): 245-74.
\end{itemize}
A relational element was identified as the weakest. He notes, “We should be deeply concerned that of the seven domains of spiritual formation measured in this study, ‘building relationships’ received the lowest score. Spiritual leaders must pray, think, and strategize to provide an environment and process that will facilitate one another’s . . . Life together is vital and essential to God’s plan for spiritual formation.” In Regi Campbell’s work, *Mentor Like Jesus*, he believes he has stumbled on to “the secret sauce” of mentoring. He writes, “All my life, I’ve thought of mentoring only as an individual thing . . . one-on-one, life on life. But Jesus started—and ended—with a group.” He reasons that the group context sets the individual relationships in motion and speeds up the process of developing trust.

Another champion of this approach was Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He realized the role of spiritual mentor in Christian maturation that is needed to move past Modernistic epistemologies. As he taught on the Christocentric nature of discipleship that demands one’s whole life, he explains, “Discipleship is commitment to Christ. Because Christ exists, he must be followed. An idea about Christ, a doctrinal system, a general religious recognition of grace or forgiveness of sins does not require discipleship. In truth, it even

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107 Ibid.
109 Campbell’s insight becomes increasingly important in a day of globalized leadership that interact with cultures that land in different places on the “low-trust” to “high-trust” spectrum. For an assessment of how a societies skepticism impacts their willingness to partners, see Lewis, *When Culture Collides*, 145-51.
110 Bonhoeffer’s personal experiences mirror those of Michael Polanyi, which were noted earlier. They both witnessed the horrors of a highly educated German society that was able to divorce facts and values, and produce a life paradigm that justified the atrocities of the Holocaust.
excludes discipleship; it is inimicable to it.”111 Bonhoeffer is not looking for intellectual assent or individual agreement with a creedal statement. In contrast, he is calling for involved belief and indwelling faith.112 A detached, modernistic approach fails and it often takes other believers to recognize this. At first read, one could understand this to be an individualistic spiritual journey, but Bonhoeffer clarifies this later in a section dedicated to the role of the Word of God in the visible church community. He contends, “The Word of God seeks out community in order to accept it. It exists mainly within the community. It moves on its own into the community. It has an inherent impulse toward community.”113 The connection between indwelling knowledge and mentoring could yield significant outcomes for Christian leaders in a rapidly individualistic society.114

Conclusion

This dissertation has been an attempt to contribute to the future of Christian leadership by first turning to a past Christian leader. The locus of dissertation involved the themes of excellence and mentoring in Engstrom’s life and writings. Though imperfect, Engstrom modeled what it looked like to live with excellence and invest in others. Additionally, this dissertation aimed to join the efforts of others who are infusing

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111 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Discipleship (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 59.

112 Again, the overlap with Polanyi’s context and conclusions is fascinating and would be a great place for further research.


114 For more on individualist verse communitarian perspectives, see James M. Penning and Corwin E. Smidt, Evangelicalism: The Next Generation (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 98-108.
theological inquiry into the field of leadership studies. The intersection of these two fields delivers a promising arena for future study. Theology and leadership studies stand to learn from each other, and hopefully the plunders of Egypt can be transported from secular leadership theories without bringing the Pharaoh.

The purpose of the implications in this chapter was to demonstrate the need for reformulating leadership principles from a past generation to a new generation. Financial analysts report the current generation will see the greatest transfer of wealth in the history of the world.115 A similar argument, with more complicated metrics, could be made for the transfer of responsibility within Christian leadership positions in the West. Engstrom saw this transfer coming and tried to address head on in a chapter entitled, “The Future: A Scenario for the Twenty-First Century.” He draws from the image of the Olympic torch crossing America in 1984 by the hands of over four thousand runners and turns the analogy to his readers. He wrote, “Look at the torch. It is yours to carry. Though at times you may stumble and fall, we who hand you this prize are confident you will snap the tape at the finish line with a great and triumphant burst of victory. May God be with you always.”116 More than offering a prophetic word of caution and optimism, Engstrom acted and called others to act because of his belief in a great God.117


116 Engstrom and Larson, Seizing the Torch, 213.

117 Fittingly, Engstrom closes The Making of Christian Leader with these words: “Amidst all leadership problems we need to understand and know that we have a great God . . . . Christian leaders must ever press on to the high calling and the tasks that lie ahead. Too many of us are willing to settle for ‘good enough’ instead of ‘good,’ and ‘good’ instead of ‘excellent.’ Let each of us, in the responsibilities God has given us, fulfill them in such a manner that people will
The opportunity for investment, and likewise the avoidance of squandering great potential, drove Engstrom to remain fully engaged into his final years of life. Engstrom transferred his wisdom. He passed his torch. He was the man in the arena.\(^{118}\)

More significantly, he invested in men and women who were enthusiastic and equipped to enter the arena and do more collectively than he could ever imagine. In a very personal and poignant moment in his writings, Engstrom shows his optimistic and motivational heart for ministry:

Practically my entire adult life has been devoted to the propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Whether I have been in youth evangelism, publication of Christian literature, or administration of a large mission organization, the overwhelming, consuming passion of my life has been to make known the riches of God’s grace to all men everywhere. In all these years, having been in close touch with Christian missions the world over, I believe the most thrilling movement is found in Third World missions today. And the future prospects are even brighter. We are discovering that more and more people around the world are crossing cultural, political, and language barriers to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ.\(^{119}\)

In closing, Engstrom writes the following prayer for the reader in Robert Larson’s compilation volume, *The Best of Ted Engstrom*, and it captures the essence of his heart and ministry. He prays,

I pray you will pursue an *uncommon excellence* in your dealing with your congregation, your community, your family, your students, your teachers and friends… And from the bottom of my heart, I pray you will keep exhibiting your leadership, management and administrative skills as your worthy service to a God who expects from you your very best.\(^{120}\)

\(^{118}\)Owen, *Ted Engstrom*, 159.


Ted Engstrom embodied an *uncommon excellence* in leadership, and through his investment in the lives of others continues to inspire the next generation to attain even greater outcomes in the name of Jesus.
APPENDIX

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did you first meet Dr. Engstrom?

2. Would you consider him to be a mentor in your life and how often did you meet with Engstrom? (Was it formal or informal, group or individual, what did that time look like?)

3. Did your mentoring time focus on your professional life or did it also include your personal life (including family, spiritual life, etc.)?

4. How did you see Engstrom practice excellence in his own work? (How did he call others to do the same)

5. How did you see Engstrom practice mentoring in his own life? (How did he call others to do the same)

6. Did Engstrom explicitly address theological issues related to excellence? If so, discuss. If not, do you have any assumptions as to what theological values drove him to pursue excellence?

7. Did Engstrom explicitly address theological issues related to excellence? If so, discuss. If not, do you have any assumptions as to what theological values drove him to practice mentoring?

8. Have you continued to mentor others? If so, how many/how often?
9. What do you see as Engstrom's key contribution(s) to the world of Christian leadership?

10. Finally, is there one practice/habit in your work or personal life that you can tie directly back to Engstrom?
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ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF TED ENGSTROM’S PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE OF EXCELLENCE AND MENTORING

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015
Chair: Dr. Michael S. Wilder

The research begins by raising questions surrounding a distinctively Christian approach to leadership. Specifically, this dissertation introduces the challenge of emphasizing both leadership excellence and leadership development in the life of a Christian leader. Next, Ted Engstrom is introduced as the key subject under analysis who provides a gateway into these leadership challenges. The thesis of the dissertation argues for the necessary wedding of these two leadership principles, excellence and mentoring, as evidenced in the life and writings of Engstrom and supported with biblical and theological argumentation.

In order to make this case, the research considers the six decades of Engstrom’s ministry in the context of American Evangelicalism, and, more specifically, demonstrates his influence at Zondervan Publishing, Youth for Christ, World Vision, and organizational consulting. Additionally, Engstrom’s written contribution to the areas of excellence and mentoring are framed within his broader contributions in the following fields: organizational leadership, time management, personal integrity, and board management.
Next, this dissertation outlines Engstrom’s understanding of excellence and builds out a supplemental account of excellence using biblical and theological support. Similarly, this dissertation provides an extended analysis of mentoring that starts with Engstrom’s account and extends to the biblical models and theological foundations. Before concluding, this research also argues that Engstrom is a leader worthy of imitation by summarizing personal interviews with those Engstrom formally and informally mentored. The conclusions supports an emphasis on excellence that requires mentoring while simultaneously holding to an emphasis on mentoring that demands excellence.

In conclusion, the argument interacts with recognized experts in the field of leadership to draw implications for Christian leaders in the twenty-first century. The hopeful outcome is a renewed equilibrium between excellence and mentoring as hallmark traits of Christian leadership.
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