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BOOK REVIEWS

Alternative Medicine: A Christian Handbook by Donal O'Mathuna and Walt Larimore. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 2001 (503 pages).

Donal O' Muthuna, obtained his PhD in medicinal chemistry from Ohio State University and his Master's in Theology from Ashland Seminary. At the time of writing he was a professor of bioethics and chemistry at Mount Carmel College of Nursing in Ohio. He is also a fellow of the Center of Bioethics and Human Dignity in Chicago. He has published papers in the Journal of Nursing Scholarship.

Walt Larimore is a physician who is best known as the host of *Ask the Family Doctor* on the Health Network. He has appeared on NBC's "The Today Show," "CBC's Good Morning" and "CNN's Headline News." He was listed as "Distinguished Physician of America" and America's Outstanding Family Practice Educator by the American Academy of Family Physicians. He is the vice president of Medical Outreach Focus on the Family based in Ohio.

The sick always yearn for healing. Many spend billions of dollars trying to regain their health or to enjoy good health. In this book, the authors lead the readers to issues confronting many Christians with regards to different health care choices, including alternative medicine, which has become very popular in the twenty-first century. The authors begin with defining what constitutes alternative medicine and the role of the National Institute of Health in evaluating the efficacy of alternative medicine and its regulation. This explanation also helps the readers understand the place of conventional or Western medicine. The authors emphasize that Christians ought to understand the different causes of illness and suffering as a result of sin. Though the authors believe that illness and suffering are inevitable, they also acknowledge that adopting a simple, healthy lifestyle can not be improved on as the best measure to delay illness and death. Because illness can affect everyone, not only patients themselves, it can lead to desperation, causing people to seek remedies that are questionable without pausing to evaluate the remedy's objective. Hence, this book was written to help Christians understand that there is a need to be concerned about the source of healing and not the healing itself since healing does not always come from God. The authors point out some Bible characters who were

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condemned by God because they sought healing that was not endorsed by God. To help us avoid getting into the same situation, the authors categorically show biblical principles which should be considered when choosing to seek healing from alternative medicine. They warn that as a Christian, one should be wary of the impact that choosing an alternative medicine may have on others; to see that it does not damage one's witness of Christ's healing power.

In one section, the book identifies some of the proponents of alternative medicine such as Deepak Chopra and Larry Dossey and the philosophies behind their treatment modalities. Warning is also given to the readers that in many cases, proponents of alternative medicine may use Bible characters to support their philosophies and their claims, but this does not prove that they are seeking Christ's assistance.

The authors also discuss medical fraud and how it robs people of billions of dollars. Because of the economic, psychological and physiological harm it causes, the authors list the ways to spot fraud. They emphasize that anecdotal and testimonial evidence is not a reliable source of information. In addition, even research studies that companies claim to have done are not necessarily reliable if they have not undergone extensive studies or if they have only used a very small study population and their research has not been published in a recognized peer-reviewed journal. The book warns its readers that any cure-all modality does not cure at all; it only gives a placebo effect.

The last chapters of the book focus on identifying some popular remedies. These remedies are tested on the basis of how much scientific evidence they have. Studies using multiple, randomized controlled trials tend to establish their credentials. It is found that conventional, or Western, medicine still tops the list as the safest healing modality because it has been well studied as to what works and what does not, based on a careful study of the body's biochemistry and physiological functions. Moreover, it is biblically sound. On the other hand, fraud and quackery are considered to be the most unproven with their false claims, and therefore are not safe. Users of these methods should consider the issue of safety, especially when used by children, where the risks in using alternative medicine are particularly high.

This book helps us understand the importance of examining the claims each healing modality has before making choices about what is appropriate. Science values evidence over opinion. Therefore, the gathering of observable data and repeatable testing is very important. It is also necessary to investigate if the therapy involves occultism. The acceptance of a certain healing modality is not based simply on whether it works. One needs to ask the question of who makes it work. Study the practitioner's worldview. Some proponents of alternative medicine uphold philosophies or theories that go against scientific and biblical injunctions. They may base their healing power on nonphysical life forces.

This book is highly recommended for health professionals who are invariably confronted with questions and issues regarding alternative medicine and comparisons with Western medicine. This book also enables Christians to be aware of the impact of choosing a healing modality for themselves and others in order to make better choices.

One section of the book deals with diet. The authors argue that God did not intend that people should be vegetarians and advocated that God gave humankind meat as a food item. The authors mention that a total vegetarian diet is not supported by the Bible because of its potential harm. This I believe goes against scientific studies which indicate that the vegetarian diet is the best and carries less health risk than any other kind of diet.

In general, however, the authors of the book are commended for addressing the issues related to alternative medicine and for helping to inform the public about alternative medicine in a very practical way.

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Creative Curriculum Leadership: Inspiring and Empowering Your School Community, 2nd ed., by Dale L. Brubaker. Published by Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2004 (216 pages).

Many books are now available on various aspects of curriculum and instruction. *Creative Curriculum Leadership* goes into yet another aspect: using creativity to achieve the ideal in the field of teaching. Dale Brubaker writes as one who has “been there,” as having experienced and seen what goes on behind the scenes in curriculum leadership. From his view of actual events, he leads the reader to paths that will not only avoid pitfalls but also lead to the heights of effective leadership.

The book introduces the main contents with an interesting prologue, a cautionary tale. The word *cautionary* has a tinge of negative connotation. But the prologue has none of that. All the way through, it gives a positive picture of persons who taste the sweet fruit of success because they know the ropes and use them well. These ropes are what the book describes. Having whetted the reader’s appetite for success, the book launches into its main theme: personal growth and professional development. Logically, it begins with the self, underscoring the importance of developing one’s own curriculum because, as Brubaker says, “the curriculum leader’s conception of curriculum planning influences his or her curriculum-planning behaviors” (p. 20). A distinction is then made between the inner curriculum and the outer curriculum.

Burnout is something to be dreaded. But it can be avoided. In a section of the book, three chapters uncover the secrets of knowing what one’s calling is, how to love one’s work, how to look forward to being at work, and how to “keep the fire in your vocation” (chapter 5)—without being burned out. An inventory sheet is provided to help one evaluate one’s strengths and passions. Other charts are included, as well, for further self-discovery.

Having helped readers know themselves, the author brings the knowledge to use in the workplace. Creative curriculum leadership, though more difficult than its traditional, top-down counterpart, pays off in terms of the sense of curiosity, awe, and wonder that comes with the learning process. The leader as learner is able to create community. But it takes effort. Effective leadership must know civility. Brubaker refers to Roland Nelson’s idea of civility as “the table manners of leadership” (p. 109). Then he goes into great detail to show how a curriculum leader can be civil, and therefore effective, while performing the tasks of speaking, listening, writing, and dealing with people. The list of guidelines when one goes on television and another on miscellaneous “table manners” are also helpful.

Brubaker addresses the challenge of persons of this century who are estranged from family, friends, neighbors, and social structures, and he

advocates a revival of community, including learning communities. This is a noble endeavor. Schools and school leaders are in a position to bring about this important change. How to go about reviving community is also described in the book. Finally, other aspects of teacher leadership are discussed, including the role of teacher leaders and how they ca

n be developed, the different leadership styles they can assume under different situations, and how they can build morale, instead of tearing it down.

One extra feature of the book, which differentiates this edition from the first one, is the inclusion of case studies; usually three or four cases, at the end of each chapter. The reader is asked to choose one of three options for responding to the case. Then he/she may check his/her choice against the rationales given for the alternative responses. This might be good as an exercise for budding curriculum leaders to strengthen their decision-making skills. However, some of the cases were not directly on the topic of the chapter, which could be distracting.

Some of the materials are geared for schools in an American setting, but most of the underlying principles are applicable in any school situation. This book would make a valuable contribution to the library of any school interested in developing creative curriculum leaders.

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Conducting a Successful Fundraising Program, by Kent E. Dove. Published by Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, 2001 (963 pages).

Kent Dove is considered the preeminent fundraising practitioner in the United States and Canada today. In a 2000 campaign, he raised \$373 million, more than \$100 million over the goal for Indiana University, Bloomington. His career spans more than three decades, serving three terms on CASE's educational fundraising committee.

This book is divided into two parts. In the first part the author traces the origin of philanthropy in charity activities from a thousand years ago in the Middle East. Part One defines fundraising basics, roles of leaders, and outstanding volunteers in fundraising. This section shows ways to recruit, educate, and motivate volunteers.

The campaign model of fundraising is given special emphasis. Dove discusses the importance of having a campaign timeline, and constructing and using the standards-of-giving chart. He observes that most nonprofit organizations consider the annual giving or annual fund the mass marketing arm of the organization. It is the vehicle whereby their most supporters make contributions. Acknowledging this, the author gives advice on how to lay the foundation of the annual fund drive and the important measurements related to annual funds such as pledge or response rate, average pledge or gift and net income. Dealing with major gift prospects gets special attention, such as how to identify, research, rate individuals, and how to cultivate and solicit major gift prospects.

The author suggests that the development of a planned giving program should include marketing, promoting the campaign, applying the technology, developing lead gifts, structuring the planned gifts, approaching corporations and foundations, providing accountability, building lasting relationships, and expressing appreciation.

Part two of the book is a fundraising resource guide. In this part, Dove explains the importance of the Mission Statement and Strategic Planning, including the details of the program and an action plan along with the time frame, budget, progress reports, and evaluations. The author discusses details such as the volunteer's job description, the annual campaign volunteer's kit, solicitation letters, telemarketing scripts, special-events planning checklists, and nonprofit key word searches. He provides templates of gift agreements, trust drafts, and the rules regarding income tax charitable deductions. There are several samples of letterheads, proposal letters, monthly financial reports, public announcements, event invitations and pledge forms.

Many people consider this book the bible of conducting fundraising. It is recommended reading for anyone as a study guide for fundraising, no matter what program, project, vision, or dream the funds are being raised for.

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