

Threads of Wisdom

By Caroline A. Mendez, PCC, CCF (WestBow Press, 2017) | Reviewed by LeAnn Trimmer

In *Threads of Wisdom*, Caroline Mendez responds to a vacuum that exists for Christian women in business. There is little opportunity for them to engage with other Christian businesswomen about how to use their God-given abilities in the workplace while at the same time giving expression to their faith.

With her own story of coming to faith as backdrop, Mendez recounts how she formed “business discipleship” groups for Christian businesswomen, designed to “provide support to women who wanted to integrate their faith and work, share their business experience, learn from one another, and grow as godly business leaders” (viii). *Threads of Wisdom* was born out of the shared stories and struggles that Christian businesswomen face.

Each of the first chapters focuses on an individual businesswoman and is structured in the same way: the woman’s story; thoughts on leadership framed out by five questions; faith-at-work practices; what she wants other Christian businesswomen to know; and what she would have liked to know at the beginning of her career (xi-xii). The women all ended up in business through different paths, and they all have a unique motivation. There were some that I would have liked to hear more from. It is clear that they have been purposeful in developing the totality of who they are as women of God who are actively engaged in the business world.

The women are engaged in different kinds of business activities; some lead start-ups, some are heads of division of national corporations, and some are in charge of non-profits. They manage staff of varying sizes and businesses with diverse budgets. Each one has something to share from her journey and expertise. Because of their stories *Threads of Wisdom* offers encouragement for businesswomen who feel alone and unsupported. Having said that, it also feels like the author stopped shy of providing Christian businesswomen with a valuable resource to help them grow both in competency and in rightly integrating their Christian faith in their business practices. Mendez’s background in coaching is evident in her style and the content of the book, pieces of encouragement and insights that can be helpful toward ongoing success, threads of wisdom that can be gleaned and applied.

But there is room for greater depth and for more substantial advice and instruction.

Mendez chose to use chapters 12 through 19 to restate the words of wisdom gathered from the 10 stories, but outside of the original context they lose some of their impact and power. These pages might have been better used sharing the stories and insights of other women in business and broadening the context.

When I received the book for review I was somewhat surprised by the title, *Threads of Wisdom*. It does not immediately make one think business or leadership. As I looked through my bookshelves and considered all the books I have read on leadership and business it occurred to me that no male author would write a book on leadership principles with such a non-descript title. There is no shame in speaking and writing from a position of strength and communicating strength and competence, even in the midst of the balancing acts that are sometimes required. Christian businesswomen who take their place in the business world and their faith seriously need never apologize for their skill or the place God has given them to serve God and others.

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She served, with her husband, in Salvation Army congregations for 23 years until taking appointments in The Salvation Army's Adult Rehabilitation Centers Command. She now oversees the Center in San Francisco, California which provides a Christ centered rehabilitation program to 135 men and women without cost to them, as well as coordinating the efforts of the 3 ~~Centers~~centers in the Bay Area, and absolutely loves it!

LeAnn is married to Darren Trimmer and is the proud mother of Zachary, Joshua, and Noah and smitten grandma to Madeline.
