

Investment option

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Though churches go to considerable effort to arrange mentoring programs for seminarians and young pastors, crucial acts of mentoring still take place in unexpected ways and places. They occur whenever someone invests time and energy in another person and cares enough to challenge that person's behavior and encourage his or her gifts. For reasons that remain somewhat inexplicable, a particular relationship creates a moment ripe for learning and growth. When that happens, it's a moment of grace.

"Mentoring isn't something someone really does intentionally," commented Samuel Kamaleson, a Methodist leader in Asia and an executive with World Vision International who is known for mentoring mission leaders. "It is a compulsion that comes on you, that makes you weigh relationship as being the primary emphasis in all of life."

Kamaleson recently told the Faith and Leadership blog that as a youth he was a poor mathematics student and was turned over to a tutor. "I went to see him with fear and trembling. I thought he was going to bring the rod down on me. But he asked me to sit, and he brought me breakfast. Then he gave me my first lesson in geometry, and I have never forgotten that lesson. The man taught me that I was valuable, because he would spend time with me."

Over the recent years, this magazine has published an increasing number of articles that share personal reflections on ministry. That increase reflects in part a wider interest in memoirs of ministry and faith. It also reflects the realization that ministry is not for lone rangers. Ministry is an undertaking of the entire church, and ministers flourish when they share their experience and reflect on it with others.

Writing about ministry is one way of sharing that experience. Writing is not usually included among the central tasks of ministry, yet it is key to much of it. After all, behind every sermon is the craft of choosing words and deciding how to tell a story to make a point or enliven the imagination.

The ability of those at the front lines of ministry to reflect on their experience and write about it has always been crucial to the life of this magazine. That ability is displayed in a new way in this issue's essays on mentors (see ["Mentors"](#)), and we look forward to publishing more such essays in future issues.