

Interview: What does it mean to stop “canoeing the mountains?”

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When Lewis and Clark reached the Continental Divide, they expected to find a river that would allow them to paddle easily to the Pacific Ocean. What they saw instead were the Rocky Mountains.

That’s the type of challenge facing church leaders today — so daunting, so new and so unexpected that the old solutions won’t work, says Tod Bolsinger, the vice president and chief of leadership formation and an assistant professor of practical theology at Fuller Theological Seminary.

“It’s not going to do you any good to paddle harder,” he said. “You have to make an adaptation, and the key to adaptation begins with going back to your deepest core value.”

In his book [“Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory,”](#) Bolsinger draws upon leadership theory as well as his experience as a pastor and seminary professor and administrator to offer a “trail map” for Christian leaders navigating a rapidly changing world.

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