"Steadfast" by Andy Pettigrew
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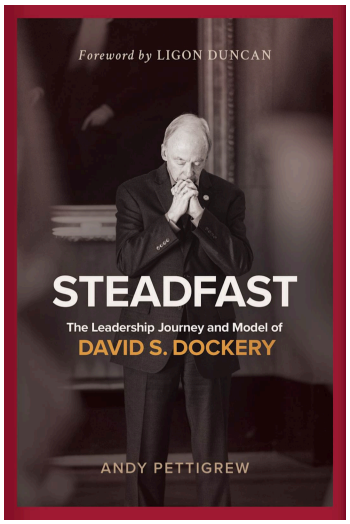
New Leadership Biography Shines Light on David S. Dockery's Four Decades of Influence in Christian Higher Education

A timely portrait of faith, conviction and character in an era of cultural and institutional pressure



BRENTWOOD, Tenn., May 15, 2026—What does it take for a leader to endure? As Christian institutions face increasing cultural, theological and organizational pressure, that question has never been more urgent.

A new biography "Steadfast: The Leadership Journey and Model of David S. Dockery" (B&H Publishing Group, June 2026) by Andy Pettigrew offers a portrait of a leader whose influence spans more than four decades. Through seasons of institutional change, challenge and renewal, Dockery's leadership in Christian higher education has remained grounded in faith, marked by intellectual rigor and guided by a clear commitment to mission.

Dockery has contributed extensively to Christian scholarship, authoring or editing more than 40 books and contributing to over 80 others. Rather than focusing only on accomplishments, "Steadfast" examines the convictions and character that sustained Dockery's influence across four decades. It offers a timely framework for leaders in an era of uncertainty, equipping educators, ministry leaders and organizational decision-makers with a vision that is theologically grounded and strategically wise.

"Dockery's work demonstrates that leadership is not merely about strategy or management; it's about shaping lives through biblical truth," Pettigrew writes. "His story includes seasons marked by injustice, doctrinal conflict, natural disasters and financial strain, each one testing the depth of his convictions. At every turn, his leadership faced a test, making resilience under pressure a central theme of his journey."

Drawing from years of research, personal writings and interviews with those who know him best, Pettigrew presents a model of leadership rooted not in charisma, but in character.

"Dockery has often said that Christian leadership means loving God with all your heart, soul and mind, and serving others with grace and truth," writes pastor and scholar Ligon Duncan in the book's foreword. "His life has embodied that calling. My hope is that every reader of this book will be encouraged to lead, teach and serve with the same steadfast faith that has marked his remarkable journey."

To request an interview, please contact Jill Waggoner at jill.waggoner@lifeway.com or 615.330.6821.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andy Pettigrew (PhD, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary) has served in global ministry for over 25 years, primarily in his current role with the International Mission Board, including many years with his family in sub-Saharan Africa. He is the author of "Steadfast: A Leadership Journey and Model of David S. Dockery," an elder at River City Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia, and speaks internationally on missions, theology and leadership. Andy and his wife, Laura, have three children who share a love for travel and good books.

TALKING POINTS & INTERVIEW ANGLES

Christian higher education under pressure: What it takes to stay grounded amid cultural tension, theological shifts and increasing complexity

Why some leaders last—and others don't: What Dockery's story reveals about the power of character, conviction and consistency over platform or personality

The role of conviction in lasting influence: Why deep theological grounding is not a limitation, but a foundation for long-term vision and leadership

Leadership under pressure: How to navigate crisis, conflict and uncertainty without losing mission

A model beyond academia: Why the principles that shaped Dockery's leadership apply to ministry, nonprofit and organizational leaders in any setting

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SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What first drew you to tell the story of David S. Dockery?
- In your research, what most surprised you about Dockery's approach?
- What distinguishes Dockery's leadership from others in Christian higher education?
- Why is the idea of "steadfast" leadership especially needed right now?
- What are some of the biggest pressures leaders are facing today that Dockery navigated in his own time?
- If you had to summarize Dockery's leadership in two or three defining qualities, what would they be?
- When leadership is tested by conflict, criticism or uncertainty, what does Dockery's example show about how to respond?
- Do you think leadership culture today has drifted from the kind of character-centered leadership Dockery represents?
- What do you hope leaders, both inside and outside academia, take away from this book?
- For someone early in their leadership journey, what's one practice they can start today to build this kind of long-term faithfulness?

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