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Reframing Transition

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GEORGE FOX SEMINARY

REFRAMING TRANSITION

**A WRITTEN STATEMENT SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY**

BY

JIM REGEHR

PORTLAND OREGON

CONVOCATION SPRING 2010

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Preface

Over the years of ministry I have come to love the Church of Jesus Christ and have counted it a great pleasure to serve Him and His bride. The congregations that I have been a part of and those I have served have all contributed to my walk with the Lord and my sense of purpose in this world. The Gospel Chapel in Westlock, AB provided me with the biblical foundation that has served me well throughout my ministry. Beulah Alliance Church in Edmonton AB set my feet on the road of ministry to young married couples and it was there that I met my life partner and best friend, Brenda. Intervarsity Christian Fellowship taught me the significance of youth for the health of the church and Terrace Alliance Church in Terrace BC showed me that my ministry for life was in the Church of Jesus Christ. Avalon Alliance in Saskatoon SK nurtured me in the ministry of the Holy Spirit and Fort McMurray Alliance in Fort McMurray AB taught me about grace and the power of a community working together. Thank you to all the congregations and individuals who have helped me to become the person I am.

Specifically, I want to thank my life partner and best friend, Brenda for her unfailing faith in me and her energetic support of my many dreams. Without you, Brenda, I would have stopped long ago. Thank you, I love you.

Finally, to the one who saves us, who “is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.”(Ephesians 3:20,21)¹

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¹ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Abstract

In the life of any organization, when a significant upheaval or crisis occurs, the participants are thrown into confusion and a sense of direction can be lost. In the church the crisis is more intense simply because, not only is the church an organization, it is also a group of people who have joined together as a representation of the family of God. Thus significant upheaval and crisis can result in not only confusion and a loss of direction, but also a loss of trust in one another and the questioning of God's purpose for them as a community of faith. In spite of the disorientation and pain caused by such crises, there is an opportunity for leadership teams and congregations to take advantage of the transitional process in which they have entered and move to a missional model of the church, contextualizing the gospel for the community around them. The process of transition is simply the ending of one season in the life for an individual or organization, from which they separate themselves and the preparation to embrace a new season, usually marked by a renewed vision of ministry.

By reframing transition and the effective guidance of a spiritual director, a re-visioning of the church's mission and role in the culture can result in a more sensitive, relational approach for leaders and congregation, towards God and their community. This new approach can result in a more effective contextualization of the good news of the kingdom of God for the 21-century. This written statement will develop the framework within which transition will become a tool for such a re-visioning. Through a series of seminars leadership teams of local congregations will be offered training in the context of

spiritual direction that will enable them to better navigate future crises and re-vision the future mission of their church, especially during or following a crisis.

Glossary of Terms²

Congregation – a group of people gathered because of their relationship with God for the purpose of worshipping Him by accepting His invitation to join Him in His mission.

Contemporary Hermeneutics – is the understanding that the interpretation of scriptures involves the interplay of the text and the reader's personal worldview. The Christian's perspective is that the scriptures are the final arbitrator of truth.

Crisis – an event in the life of an individual or organization initiated by some foreign element, which results in significant change.

Governance – the framework of responsibility and accountability within which individuals work together to accomplish specific goals.

Leadership Team – The team of individuals responsible for the care and equipping to a local congregation.

Missional – is when a congregation accepts God's invitation to join Him in His mission.

Post-modern Culture – is the emerging culture that grows out of the modern culture of the west.

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² Note: these are my definitions of these terms as I have come to understand them and apply them in this written statement.

Spiritual Direction - is a continuous process of formation and guidance, in which a

leadership team is led and encouraged *by a spiritual friend*, to discern and lead a *congregation in their collective calling*, so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit *they (the congregation)* may attain to the particular end of *their calling* and to union with God.³

Spiritual Director – is a spiritual friend who walks alongside to encourage, to discern and to lead another to their calling.

Social Constructionism – is the belief that our personal knowledge of our social understand of culture is established through our interaction with others.

Transition – is the psychological process initiated by a change in our circumstances.

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³ Merton, T. (1960). Spiritual Direction & Meditation. Collegeville, MN, The Order of St. Benedict, Inc. The italicized words indicate my shaping of Merton's definition.

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Introduction

*"The issue is never the issue...the issue is power and control."
-Ron McClelland (pastor, Fort McMurray Alliance Church)*

The moment is etched in my mind. It was our Annual Congregational Meeting. The chairman of the board invited another board member to bring a report concerning the future of the church. I was caught off guard by the unexpected request. As the report unfolded, it contained allegations concerning the inadequacy of my leadership. My heart stopped. I felt trapped with nowhere to turn. A member of the congregation rose to my defence and the result was that half of the leadership team resigned that night and the church swung from one that had a bright future to one that was fighting for its life.

The congregation was split, some loyal to the pastor and some loyal to the leaders who left. Others were confused, wondering what had happened. The remaining members of the leadership team felt helpless to explain the conflict of which they were a part. The congregation shrunk from an average attendance of approximately three hundred (300) down to approximately one hundred forty (140). All hope in God's blessing on our community through our ministries died in the following months as individuals and families one-by-one disappeared and those remaining felt rejected and discouraged.

In the midst of this slow 'bleeding,' my mind and soul were bombarded with questions. What was I missing? Shouldn't I have seen this coming? I questioned my ability to lead the congregation simply because I realized that I was a part of the problem. I felt I needed to confess my part in this breakdown in leadership to those remaining and let them know how I had failed them. I was also seeking the direction of the Lord as to

what I needed to do. What was best for the church? How was the congregation to move forward? The first year was spent surviving. Year two we started to rebuild the leadership team. Late in the second year we were able to start looking forward to the possibilities of ministering to the community around us. By the middle of the third year hope and expectation started to be a regular part of our gatherings as a congregation and at our leadership meetings. Year four we were ready to take hold of the new vision of ministry that we felt God was calling us, to start to act upon it in concrete ways. Looking back, the first year following our crisis we needed trauma responses. In this paper I will not give attention to the period immediately following a crisis when a trauma team is needed, but rather I want to focus on the period when the patient needs therapy to again become a functioning part of the spiritual community, preparing to take their place in God's great mission to reach this world with His good news.

The period following a crisis feels chaotic and confusing and leadership teams have a variety of different options ranging from survival strategies to theories of conflict management to change management. Some of the options are defensive, protecting themselves from the consequences of the crisis. Other approaches are based on the leadership team's level of confidence to carry on as if nothing has happened. Sometimes the leadership team shifts the responsibility to someone else who can help guide them through the pitfalls of transition. Each of these options falls short of the ideal, which is dealing with the underlying problems and moving forward without hanging on to excess baggage. Understanding the process of transition can provide a church an opportunity to let go of the past, establish a clear sense of who they are in the present and strategically build for the future.

Defensiveness hangs on to the past and results in nothing changing. Carrying on as if nothing has happened is burying your head in the sand, believing the problem will fix itself. Shifting the responsibility to someone else by hiring a new lead pastor only avoids the problem and undermines the new leader's vision for the future by leaving the problem to fester and re-appear at a future time.

I suggest that embracing the transitional process can lead to a radical re-visioning and new birthing of Christ's Bride from a spiritual perspective. I claim that the period following a crisis holds great opportunity for the leadership of the congregation to reshape the form and vision of the church to serve more effectively the community around them. It is my desire to not only offer hope, but to minimize future damage to the church, her leaders, her people and her community.

As I mentioned earlier, the process of recovery was very slow. From the flash point of the crisis until we felt like we were able to walk in ministry again was a period of approximately four years. Because of the resulting upheaval and confusion that follows such crisis, I believe that an objective perspective from outside of the congregation would have helped us move through the time of transition and renewal of vision more quickly.

The focus of this paper is to understand the dynamics present in the period following church crisis and provide a framework within which an individual can serve and help the leadership team of a local congregation in re-visioning their ministry. I will look at the process of discerning the will of God through discernment in relationship to the culture around us, whether it be modern or post-modern. Once the vision is renewed how do we implement the change that will be required? I will look at some aspects of change management and the context for decision-making.

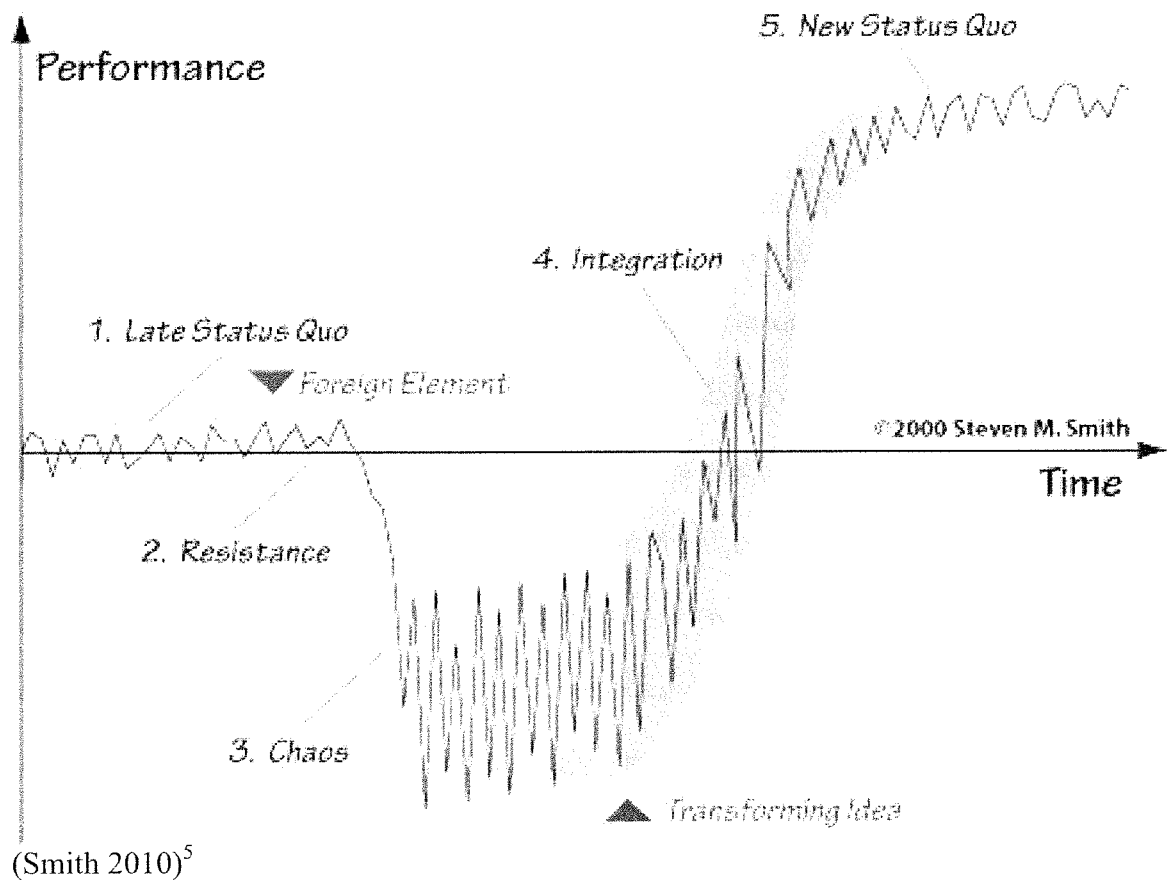
Section I, the reframing of transition, addresses the process that individuals and organizations face as they move from one season of ministry to another season. The transition can arise because of a crisis such as we experienced in our church. Other times, something as simple as the retirement of a much-loved pastor creates change that requires a process of transition.

Change and transition are not to be confused with each other. William Bridges, a consultant and lecturer in the field of transitional management, made the following comment: "Change is situational. Transition on the other hand is psychological."⁴ Situational change represents the loss of a job, the birth of a child, or the loss of a pastor. Transition however is the psychological adjustment one has to make to embrace the change and grow in the change. All situational changes involve a loss and are accompanied by patterns of grief that need to be understood so that effective steps to move forward can be determined. Virginia Satir developed a change model that illustrates the transitional process (p.11). The first phase that she describes as the late status quo represents the situation before a crisis occurs. The foreign element is the introduction into the situation of something that changes the status quo. This change results in resistance and chaos, which represents, what Bridges refers to as, the process of ending. The letting go of the old status quo and enter into a time of waiting for the transformative idea to be introduced which will open the door for a brighter future. This season of waiting or neutral zone is a season of discernment in the life of a follower of Christ. Jesus' time in the wilderness was a time of discernment concerning His ministry on this earth. This leads to the integration of the transformative idea and the entering into

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⁴ Bridges, W. (2004). Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes. Cambridge, MA, Da Capo Press. Xii.

the new status quo or the new beginning.



Another cause of change and transition is that of the corporate life cycle of organizations. As we know from our personal life cycles, physical changes in the body create a process of transition psychologically. Understanding the corporate life cycle helps us to understand what changes are occurring in the church as an organization and thus giving us clues as to what is causing the upheaval in ministry.

Chapter 1 will focus on the process of transition, outlining the steps required for an effective ending and consider the purpose of the neutral zone in preparing for the new beginning. Chapter 2 looks at the purpose and role of a spiritual director in helping a

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⁵ Smith, S. M. (2010). "The Satir Change Model." Retrieved February 25, 2010, from <http://stevenmsmith.com/ar-satir-change-model/>.

leadership team take advantage of the transitional process. It is this use of a spiritual director to navigate the process of transition that can move it from being a time of struggle and chaos to becoming a season of hope and anticipation, a time of preparing and waiting to hear from God.

In chapter 2, the shaping of a model for ministry, which acknowledges the post-modern culture, will be explored. Keeping central the spiritual nature of the church and the guidance of a leadership team in the discovery of their particular calling in their service of Jesus' commission to "make disciples of all nations,"(Matthew 28:19)⁶ this model for ministry promotes the role of a spiritual companion who provides an objective perspective without being disengaged relationally. These first two chapters are concerned with understanding the process of transition and how to re-frame it so that the process can constructively be used for the benefit of the kingdom of God and the church.

Section II will give attention to the process of discerning the will of God. Having completed an ending, the way forward is there to be discerned as God longs to reveal His purpose to us.

"Build up, build up, prepare the road! Remove the obstacles out of the way of my people. For this is what the high and lofty One says – he who lives forever, whose name is holy: I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite." (Isaiah 57:14, 15)⁷

Out of this passage it is clear that the road forward is to be cleared for the people of God and that God longs to live with and to revive the spirit and heart of those who seek Him to know Him.

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⁶ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

⁷ Ibid.

Chapter 3 will discuss the nature of leadership and the church of Jesus Christ. By doing so I want to create a framework in which a leadership team can discern the will of God for the congregation that they serve. Into this framework I want to introduce tools that can be used as a part of the discernment process. These tools will vary in their character as they have been drawn from diverse sources such as Ignatian spirituality to consulting tools such as World Café.

Chapter 4 will focus on understanding post-modern culture and the transition society is facing as it moves from modern to post-modern culture. Such cultural transition impacts the ministries of the church in two ways. First, because this post-modern era can also be considered post-Christian, the church needs to change the way in which they contextualize the gospel so that the community around it is able to receive the good news. Second, because the members of the church are a part of the post-modern culture there is a need for the leadership of the congregation to consider the internal pressures that are created by a modern institution populated by individuals influenced by the post-modern culture. Understanding the post-modern culture both within and without the congregation will enable the leadership to lead the congregation to envision more broadly how they might meet the needs of the culture and their community.

Section III will look at understanding change. Having discerned the will of God for their ministry, the leadership team will need to understand how to manage the change that a new vision brings. Chapter 5 will review guidelines for leading change that will become a part of the process of providing spiritual direction for church leadership teams.

Chapter 6 looks closely at issues around governance. Understanding governance is important because change happens in a context. A significant context is how the local

congregation is organized to make decision. In Canada, local congregations have to have governance spelled out as a requirement of the federal government to receive charitable status for income tax purposes. For the spiritual director, coming in to help a leadership team, it is important to understand the governance of the local church and not to allow personal perspectives to undermine their process of decision-making.

However, crises often arise within congregations because governance is not often talked about or understood by everyone. As a starting point, governance opens the door to discussions concerning decision-making and who has authority and thus provides an opportunity for the leadership and congregation to find common ground, particularly rooted in the biblical principles.

The conclusions of this study will be applied to seminars that will be focused on church leadership and helping them through spiritual direction. The project will be made up of five sections:

1. Understanding Group Spiritual Direction

- Why Spiritual Direction

- Framework of Spiritual Direction

2. Understanding Transition

3. Preparing for Change

- Honest relationship with God

- Wholehearted participation in the Group

- Open your spiritual journey to the consideration of others

4. Embracing Change

- Stages of Change

Congregational Engagement

5. Context of Ministry

Context Within

Context Without

Although the content of the seminars will be drawn from this study, it is the framework of the seminars that will be influenced by the applications of this study.

These five sessions can be combined into a weekend seminar, giving an overview of what a congregation would face moving through the process of transition from the ending to a new beginning. However, a weekend would not allow time for integration and application of so much information. Outreach Canada, an organization committed to helping the local church renew its vision established a process that takes approximately 37 weeks or 9 months,⁸ a very pregnant period in the life of a congregation. Keeping this in mind, I will present a weekend seminar focused on transition and the other seminar topics will be placed in an appendix, to be used as needed in the process of helping a leadership team and congregation renew their vision.

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⁸ Gibson, G. (2009) Rediscovering a Congregation's Vision. **Volume, 2** DOI: <http://www.outreachnetwork.ca/Resources/ArticlesArchive/tabid/1643/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Section I

Re-Framing Transition

Every crisis results in some type of change and every change creates some type of crisis within individuals and organizations. Some crises are minor and others are major in their impact. Change and its accompanying process of transition generally make individuals and organizations uncomfortable simply because the change directs them to something new that they have not experience or to something totally unknown to them. However, when the process of transition is seen as a tool that is used to move us forward to embrace the mission of God and for the sake of His kingdom, transition becomes purposeful and brings hope for the future of the congregation and the community around them.

Following any significant change or crisis in the life of a congregation there are two options, moving forward or giving up. Moving forward involves the process of transition. Transition is a natural, God-ordained process to facilitate the implementation of change in our individual lives. I also see that process working in the context of leadership teams and their congregations.

Chapter 1

Transition and Change

Following a crisis, individuals and groups typically are so focused on the fallout of the crisis and motivated by the desire to “get back on track” that they are unaware of the transition that they have entered into or the possibilities that it could afford them if they were to take the opportunity to reflect on where they are at in the process. Helping a church and its leadership to understand what transition is and how it impacts their forward motion is a significant starting point for a spiritual director.

A spiritual director is a person who has a mature relationship with God, loves His church and is willing to help the leadership team work through the process of transition and establish new guidelines for establishing a missional ministry. For the spiritual director, understanding what has caused the transition and then determining where the individuals and organization are at in the process of transition can provide indicators of the steps needed to move them forward.

Transition and change are related to one another, but they are not the same. Change is understood to be the outward reality that impacts lives. A couple changed the houses that they live in or their lives are changed by the birth of a child. These are changes in their lives. Transition on the other hand is the psychological reality that results in a change being accepted and embraced or rejected and pushed away.⁹ A similar relationship exists between the terms loss and grief. When a loved one dies it is understood as a loss, but grief is the process that occurs following the loss. Grief is the

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⁹ Bridges, W. (1984). Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes. Philippines, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company. xii.

working out of the implications of that loss in the whole of ones life.¹⁰ In the church change occurs when senior leadership leaves ministry, whether that be the senior pastor, a staff member or one or more of the leadership team, as was the example in the introduction.

Individuals and organizations go through times of change and every change has a resulting period of transition or psychological adjustment. It is the interplay of change and transition that creates crisis. According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary crisis is an emotionally significant event or radical change of status in a person's life; the decisive moment (as in a literary plot); an unstable or crucial time or state of affairs in which a decisive change is impending; *especially*: one with the distinct possibility of a highly undesirable outcome; a situation that has reached a critical phase.¹¹ Crisis, a decisive moment when change is impending, can spring from a number of different circumstances. Change can result because of natural patterns of growth or the conflict of personalities.

William Bridges talks about organizations having life cycles that provide opportunity for different kinds of personality types to take leadership. He was interested in the different stages of an organization's life cycle and the types of leadership characteristics that would best facilitate the growth of the organization. However he also recognized that the transitions from one stage of development to another if not properly handled could cause crises to occur that could lead to stagnation and in some cases the

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¹⁰ Joseph T Mullan, L. I. P., Marilyn M Skaff, Ed. (1995). The Bereavement Process: Loss, Grief, Recovery. A Challenge for Living. Boston, Jones and Bartlett Publishers. 231.

¹¹ (2005). "Merriam-Webster Dictionary." Retrieved October 28, 2008, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/crisis>.

disintegration of the organization.¹² Writing in a similar vein, Larry Greiner in a 1972 Harvard Business Review called his model 'evolution and revolution as organizations grow'. He went on to say "the control that is exercised in each of five periods of evolutionary growth, sows the seeds of a 'revolutionary' crisis before the next growth period."¹³ Greiner identified five evolutionary phases each followed by its own unique crisis or revolution.

Bridges and Greiner agree that organizations grow and evolve. If the growth or evolution is hindered then stagnation and possible 'death' can occur. The first phase of growth is the result of creativity. Bridges refers to this as the period in which the dream is birthed. This is usually characterized by leadership that are primarily introverted, comfortable with their own thoughts, intuitive, comfortable working with big ideas and dreams and perceiving, comfortable with leaving the process of growth open ended.¹⁴ However, as the organization grows and becomes established, a new kind of leadership is required. Bridges suggests that now that the dream or idea has become a reality the leadership has to move from being introverted to extroverted, comfortable with the world around them and from perceiving to decision-making.¹⁵ The change in leadership that Bridges directs us to, Greiner called a crisis or revolution in leadership.

Greiner identified four subsequent growth patterns or evolutions of organizations, each followed by its accompanying crisis:

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¹² Bridges, W. (2000). Character of Organizations. Mountain View CA, Davies-Black Publishing. 70.

¹³ Greiner, L. (July-August 1972). "Evolution and Revolution as Organizations Grow." Harvard Business Review. 40.

¹⁴ Bridges, W. (2000). Character of Organizations. Mountain View CA, Davies-Black Publishing. 70.

¹⁵ Ibid. 70.

1. Growth through direction accompanied by a crisis of autonomy.
2. Growth through delegation accompanied by a crisis of control.
3. Growth through coordination accompanied by a crisis of red tape.
4. Growth through collaboration accompanied by an unknown crisis.

As an organization grows and it moves through the different phases of growth, it faces different crises that are actually opportunities to refocus and strengthen their direction. As Greiner observed, each phase of growth emerges out of the crisis of the previous phases and within its own growth the potential for a new crisis.¹⁶ Consequently, each phase has a corresponding management style and the crises have prescribed actions to enable the organization to move ahead.

The crises noted thus far are the result of natural growth within organizations such as churches. However there are other forms of crises that may be rooted in natural processes, but are caused by individual choices that undermine the focus and vision of organizations. Rev. Ron McClelland said, "The issue is never the issue, the issue is always power and control."¹⁷ No matter what the crisis is, there are always choices to be made. The first choice is whether to move forward or return to the way it always has been. This choice often is between what is remembered or known and what is unknown. The second choice is to determine who is to blame or what did we do wrong. This choice is about avoiding fault or taking responsibility. The third choice is deciding between finding a new leader or working with the leader we already have. This choice is similar to choice two except it is; do we take a hand in moving forward or do we delegate the

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¹⁶ Greiner, L. (1972). "Evolution and Revolution as Organizations Grow." Harvard Business Review 50(July-August): 37-46. 41.

¹⁷ Ron McClelland was the pastor I succeeded in Fort McMurray and is a personal friend. His statement has proven to be true in my personal experience.

future to someone else? A fourth choice that actually should precede all other choices is; who does this church belong to, us or Jesus?

The field of Transitional Psychology had its starting point in the study of grief in the works of such people as Colin Matthews Parkes and Kathryn Kubler-Ross's in the area of grief and Holmes and Rahe who looked at the correlation between life events and illness.¹⁸ "William Bridges has applied the concepts of transitional psychology to organizational change, with a shorter three stage model, but describing essentially the same process."¹⁹ The three stages that Bridges outlines are very simple. Every transition starts with an ending, then enters a neutral time and concludes with a new beginning. This parallels Greiner's idea of evolution followed by revolution followed by a new evolution. In the field of palliative care and its application to the end of life a similar three categories emerge: loss, grief and recovery.²⁰ These three categories in the context of hospice care are defined as "loss as the time just before and after a death, ... recovery as the time at the other end of the line when you can re-invest your energy, love and commitment to others and grief as the time in between as you deal with the ups and downs of starting a new life without a loved one present."²¹ Again we see an ending or loss, neutral zone or grief and new beginning or recovery. The idea of change and

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¹⁸ Williams, D. (January, 1999). Life events and career change: transition psychology in practice. British Psychological Society's Occupational Psychology Conference January 1999, The Eos Life-Work Resource Centre.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Joseph T Mullan, L. I. P., Marilyn M Skaff, Ed. (1995). The Bereavement Process: Loss, Grief, Recovery. A Challenge for Living. Boston, Jones and Bartlett Publishers. 223.

²¹ Bommel, H. v. (1999). Family Hospice Care. Scarborough ON, Resources Supporting Family and Community Lagacies Inc. 140.

transition is a subset of what we know as the process of grief or a specific application of grief to the process of institutional change and/or transition.

The growth of any organization will result in some type of crises. Humans, being humans, will continue to create crises independent of the growth of the organization simply based on the desire to maintain a measure of control.

The ending refers to the conclusion of one stage of life that allows for the significant change to occur. For example, the loss of freedom with the step into a committed relationship through engagement or marriage or being fired from a job ends ones single life or employment. These all make some type of ending. Our endings are marked by the following characteristics: disengagement, dismantling, disidentification, disenchantment and disorientation. In the process of bereavement a similar movement from loss to disassociation to recovery is acknowledged.²² The characteristics to which Bridges refers represent the source of much of the unsettledness that we see in the world around us as the change continues to make its presence felt. Particularly we can see these characteristics being revealed in the modern church as the emerging culture becomes stronger and the pressure within to engage the new reality increases.

Disengagement unplugs us from our old place in the interpersonal social world with which we identified. Disengagement stops the old cues and signals from being received and opens the way for the new cues and signals. This is the starting point of transition.²³ Disengagement can be a conscious decision such as Jesus going into the

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²² Shapiro, E. R. (1994). Grief as a Family Process. New York, The Guilford Press. 22-24.

²³ Bridges, W. (2004). Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes. Cambridge, MA, Da Capo Press. 113.

wilderness to fast for forty days at the beginning of his ministry life. (Matthew 4:1-11)²⁴

At other times disengagement can be forced upon us as in the case of a lost job or a divorce. As the emerging culture strengthens many feel the modern church is becoming irrelevant and they either stop going to church all together or they leave the modern church to initiate new expressions of faith that will be relevant to their personal spiritual experience and often more embracing of the emerging culture. This is disengagement.

As a first step, disengagement opens new avenues, but does not dismantle the infrastructure of your life. In response to the cues and signals of our lives we develop thought infrastructures so that we consistently respond to the cues and signals. Disengagement can happen in a moment but the infrastructure has to be dismantled if we are to be free of our former life and prepared to embrace new possibilities. It is the process of letting go of the “we” of life and picking up the personal responsibility of “I”.²⁵

Dismantling is the process of taking apart the infrastructure of the mind or the patterns of thinking that were shaped by the interactions that are now coming to an end. In the emerging church the idea of deconstructing the church is a significant process to re-establish what the fundamentals of the church are. Understanding the fundamentals, clarifies the foundations on which one is to build a new expression of the kingdom of God; one that is true to His purposes.

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²⁴ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

²⁵ Bridges, W. (2004). Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes. Cambridge, MA, Da Capo Press. 113, 114.

The third factor in an effective ending is disidentification. This is the internal equivalent of disengagement, the letting go of the identification that the previous relationships established.²⁶ In the process of becoming a follower of Jesus Christ we see the idea of disidentification in letting go of the idea that I am a sinner and embracing the concept that I am a child of God, a saint. The significance of disidentification is that the old identity stands in the way of the transformation and self-renewal.²⁷

The next step in an effective ending is a bit harder to get a handle on, since disenchantment is dealing with our internal grasp of reality “about the way things are.”²⁸ When we dismantled the infrastructure of our mind we really do not get down to the foundations of our thinking, the things that we believe about who we are and our place in the world. Disenchantment is the attitude of mind that drives us to strip ourselves to the bone and see ourselves just as we are. Bridges says it this way: “The lesson of disenchantment begins with the discovery that if you want to change – really to change, and not just to switch positions – you must realize that some significant part of your old reality was in your head, not out there.”²⁹ In the world around us we see this played out in individuals who divorce a spouse and then get connected with someone else who is just like their now ex-spouse. They have not gone through the step of disenchantment and remain stuck with “disillusionment” not realizing the problem is deep within their own

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²⁶ Ibid. 116.

²⁷ Ibid. 117.

²⁸ Ibid. 118, 119.

²⁹ Ibid. 120.

way of thinking. In the ministry of inner healing, this step of disenchantment is dealt with in a number of ways. Neil Anderson in his book, *The Bondage Breaker*, confronts the individual's internal wrong reality by reminding them the Bible says that they are in Christ, saints and encourages them to embrace the biblical reality because it is true.³⁰ Marie Chapien and William Backus in their book, *Tell Yourself the Truth*, follow a similar cognitive approach, using the Bible as a mirror so that we can identify where our thinking is skewed by our own misconceptions and then use the scriptures to make a correction.³¹

In the church of today one area where disenchantment could be considered to help move from a modern expression of the organization to a post modern expression is in the letting go of the "CEO" view of church leadership and embrace a relational model. Our infrastructure is well established and our need for control is well developed. We need to be disenchanted with this basic belief if we are to move on to something new and relevant to the culture around us.

The final step in the ending of transition is called disorientation. After being stripped to the bare essentials, a period of loss of direction, time, and stability occurs. Disorientation is the beginning of the time of 'nothing' before we discover something new. Disorientation is meaningful because you being are prepared to embrace something new but it is not enjoyable.³² "Endings are experiences of dying. They are ordeals and

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³⁰ Anderson, N. T. (2006). *The Bondage Breaker*. Eugene OR, Harvest House Publishing.

Appendix

³¹ Marie Chapien, W. B. (2000). *Tell Yourself the Truth*. Ada MI, Bethany House.

³² Bridges, W. (2004). *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes*. Cambridge, MA, Da Capo Press. 123.

sometimes they challenge so basically our sense of who we are, that we believe they will be the end of us.³³

Disorientation is the move into the Neutral Zone, a season of doing nothing, of waiting for the revelation of something new. The Neutral Zone becomes the place of self-awareness and self-understanding. The idea is to surrender oneself to the process.³⁴ From my understanding as a Christian, this surrender is to the reality of Jesus' view of the who I am and the world around me, a surrender to the fact that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.(John 14:6)³⁵

The Neutral Zone also becomes the place from which our awareness of the world around us becomes clear.³⁶ In some ways this description carries the feel of the dark night of the soul, when one feels like they are walking in darkness and the right response is to trust the Lord to lead you through.³⁷

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³³ Ibid. 131. As I was working through this part concerning ending and Bridges descriptions of the five steps involved I saw parallels to the process that a person goes through as they leave this world of sin to become a part of the kingdom of God. These five steps could be used to describe the process of moving from sinner to saint in preparation for service in the kingdom of God. In Bridge's thought, the Neutral Zone would also fit with the Christian ideas of silence and solitude as spiritual disciplines used for communing with God.

³⁴ Ibid. 140.

³⁵ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

³⁶ Bridges, W. (2004). Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes. Cambridge, MA, Da Capo Press. 142.

³⁷ Isaiah 50:10-11 (NIV) "Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the word of his servant? Let him walk in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God. But now, all you who light fires and provide yourselves with flaming torches, go, walk in the light of your fires and of the torches you have set ablaze. This is what you shall receive from my hand: you will lie down in torment."

Finally, the Neutral Zone functions as that place where, that which has been disintegrated can now be reintegrated.³⁸ The ending now sets the stage for a period of discernment, a time where new possibilities can be contemplated. Handling the Neutral Zone correctly will encourage and entice the future into the open. Bridge's description of how to handle the Neutral Zone sounds very much like a contemplative experience as we wait for the voice of the Lord. It is a time of purposeful silence and solitude. A time to keep a journal of the journey one is on. Write an autobiography to discern the rhythm of one's personal life and reflect on areas that maybe still have energy to motivate you on your journey forward. Take the time to find out what you really like, personally.³⁹

Although Bridge's work in *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes* is focused primarily at the individual, the process of transition can be applied corporately to churches and used by leadership teams to understand where their congregations are at in moving from one season of ministry to another. When a church experiences a change, the five characteristics of the ending start to work in a church leadership team as well. Their experience becomes fallow ground in which to plant the seeds of discussion about the culture that is changing around them and the church that refuses to respond to that change.

You would think that after all the angst of the ending and the neutral zone that the new beginning you have been preparing for would reveal itself full blown, mature and exciting, but that is not the case. In the beginning stage the battle is clearly our fear of the unknown. When we are faced with an uncertain future the temptation to retreat grows

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³⁸ Bridges, W. (2004). *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes*. Cambridge, MA, Da Capo Press. 141.

³⁹ Ibid. 143-147.

stronger and stronger to move to a safe place, the way we have always done things.

Bridges suggest two actions to help us move forward:

1. Any ideas that you have for your future need to be shared with your friends or confidantes, not for criticism, but to determine whether they are new steps forward or just the same old, same old.
2. When you have identified your new future, start to identify personally with that image. Before you have accomplished your goals imagine what it would mean to be the person who fulfilled those goals.⁴⁰

Change is happening all around us and yet the problem is not the change, the problem is our own internal systems of beliefs and fears that need to be examined and reshaped to engage the change that is occurring effectively. George Barna in his book *Revolution* commented on the number of people who have given up on the visible church, but who continue in the faith.⁴¹ As I have read Meg Wheatley's *Finding our Way* and William Bridges' *Transitions* I have come to realize that many of these who have given up on the visible church have done so because they are longing for something that is more organic or they have experienced a significant transition in their lives as Christians but they have not found a faith community where their new beginning can find a home. The process of transition as outlined by Bridges gives us a frame or context in which we seek to discern our way forward in fulfilling the mission of God. Particularly, the neutral zone represents an opportune time to exercise the spiritual disciplines that are foundational to discerning the will of God. Understanding the process and navigating it

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⁴⁰ Ibid. 169.

⁴¹ Barna, G. (2005). *Revolution*. Wheaton, Illinois, Tyndale House Publishers Inc. 48, 49.

are two different things. I believe, if the congregation mentioned in the introduction would have had a person guide them through the process of transition, the time to get back on track with ministry could have been much shorter. The following chapter will look at the ministry of spiritual direction as the most appropriate approach to helping a leadership team and congregation navigate the process of transition.

Chapter 2

Spiritual Direction

A spiritual director's understanding of the purpose of the church is important in the process of helping that congregation to come to grips with whom they are and what they are called to do. Its importance is two fold, purpose is one of the casualties of crisis and they need to be reminded of that purpose and purpose brings with it expectations that become road markers for the way forward.

Approaches to helping the church through crises have revolved around the metaphors that have been used to understand the nature of the church. As an institution and a part of a denomination, denominational leadership has often used the framework of a business or a corporate view of the church. This has resulted in the help being drawn out of the experience of other institutions such as business or large not-for-profit organizations. Because churches in denominational structures have similar needs to other institutions, these consulting models have been somewhat effective but most often they miss the target simply because the church as an institution or business is not the primary metaphor to describe its role and purpose in the world.

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson discuss how metaphors are used in our lives to help us understand the character and purpose of everything around us.⁴² The metaphors that we come to accept as a part of our understanding of the church inform us or shepherd us to respond to the issues that arise within the church in very specific ways. Some of the metaphors that we have accepted are:

- The church is the body of Christ.
- The church is the family of God.

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⁴² Johnson, G. L. a. M. (1980). Metaphors We Live By. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press. 9.

- The church is the bride of Christ.
- The church is the army of God.
- The church is a business.
- The church is a team.
- The church is a community of Faith.
- The church is an organization.
- The church is an organism.
- The church is a part of the kingdom of God.

Metaphors have entailments or associated concepts that are universally understood, that help a group to come to a collective understanding.⁴³ For example, if you use the metaphor, ‘the church is a business’, the entailments could be:

- The church has employees.
- The church has programs.
- The church must be profitable.
- The church’s success is measured by budgets, growth and expansion.

Using another metaphor, ‘the church as the family of God’, the associated concepts might include:

- The church has members who lead.
- The church provides for one another.
- The church’s success is measured by loving relationships, maturing members and its fecundity.

It is the presence of the metaphors and their accompanying entailments that help us arrive at common understandings about the subject of the metaphor. However, the metaphor, that we believe represents the subject, also invites us to approach the subject in a specific way. In this paper the subject is the church of Jesus Christ and our purpose is to help the church recover from a significant crisis and find a way to re-engage with their purpose and calling in serving Jesus Christ and his kingdom.

Other metaphors that have been used are the church as a bride, a body, a team, the family of God and a part of the kingdom of God. Each of these metaphors reveals

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⁴³ Ibid. 91.

something of the nature of the church. Serious consideration of each metaphor reveals that those trying to help a church through a crisis must approach them in a different way, as a counsellor trying to understand the way the church thinks, a doctor trying to diagnose an illness or a coach helping the church to increase their effectiveness.

The use of these metaphors by those who want to help sometimes arises because the congregation and its leadership has accepted one or more of these metaphors to describe themselves and the dysfunction that they have experienced is a result of the chosen metaphor simply because the metaphor has been applied too broadly and they have lost sight of what God really wants them to be.

Two primary metaphors presented in scripture are: 1. the church as the family of God and 2. the church as a part of the kingdom of God or an expression of the kingdom of God. The first of these metaphors is rooted in God's self-expression as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The invitation to us is to join Him in life, eternal life. "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." (John 17:3)⁴⁴ Jesus revealed his preference for referring to God as "Father" when He taught the disciples to pray. (Matthew 6:9)⁴⁵ In the same prayer Jesus went on to invite the Father's kingdom to be established on earth as it is in heaven.

It is the kingdom of God that was the focus of Jesus' ministry. Jesus started by preaching, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is near." (Matthew 4:17)⁴⁶ And when he sent out his disciples to minister, he instructed them, "As you go, preach this message:

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⁴⁴ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

The kingdom of heaven is near.” Matthew 10:7)⁴⁷ One’s approach to a church coming out of crisis is tied to what they understand the church to be. I believe the framework that most effectively guides a leadership team and congregation is rooted in the ministry of spiritual direction. The starting point of spiritual direction is the belief that God is loving and strong and that he desires a relationship with His creation. It is understood that metaphors are tools of language that help us to understand what we are talking about. The metaphors of family and kingdom both direct us to focus on God’s character, His desire for relationship with His creation and His lordship in our lives.

Because God is spirit, a relationship with Him is necessarily spiritual. Growing in that relationship is enhanced by a relationship with a spiritual friend who can direct us in how to establish and grow spiritually, thus being able to know God and be known by Him. Many of the skills of spiritual direction parallel the skills of coaching, facilitating, mentoring, pastoring and leadership; however, it is the spiritual nature of the disciplines that unifies and directs those skills.

A definition of spiritual direction that I have found useful is Thomas Merton’s, in which he states, “spiritual direction is a continuous process of formation and guidance, in which a Christian is led and encouraged *in his special vocation*, so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit he may attain to the particular end of his vocation and to union with God.”⁴⁸ Henri Nouwen would add that a person who would be a spiritual director should be someone who we ask to hold us accountable for exercising the disciplines and practices of the spiritual life. He or she would not be a counsellor, a

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⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Merton, T. (1960). Spiritual Direction & Meditation. Collegeville, MN, The Order of St. Benedict, Inc. 20.

therapist or an analyst, but 'soul friend' or a 'spiritual friend'.⁴⁹ I would like to take Merton's definition and bend it in such a way that it represents spiritual direction as it relates to a group. Spiritual direction is a continuous process of formation and guidance, in which *a leadership team* is led and encouraged *by a spiritual friend, to discern and lead a congregation in their collective calling*, so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit *they (the congregation)* may attain to the particular end of *their calling* and to union with God.⁵⁰

For a leadership team or group to experience spiritual direction together there are "[t]hree conditions essential to the life of the group. Members must agree to commit themselves to 1) a honest relationship with God; 2) wholehearted participation in the group process through prayerful listening and response; and 3) opening their spiritual journeys to the consideration of others."⁵¹ I believe that for any leadership team that wants to lead their congregation effectively in discerning and actualizing their collective calling, the individuals in the team must be prepared to make these three commitments before God and with one another. But it is not just about leading the congregation; it is also about being in the place that Jesus Christ can collectively lead the leadership team.

Rose Mary Dougherty, in stating these conditions, is laying out three ways in which a group of leaders can maintain a united focus. First and foremost is an honest relationship with the living God, who is the one at the center of each leader's life. That common relationship establishes unity, not in 'the truth' but in the common desire to

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⁴⁹ Nouwen, H. (2006). Spiritual Direction: Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith. New York, HarperCollins Publishing. 22, 23.

⁵⁰ The italicized words indicate my shaping of Merton's definition.

⁵¹ Dougherty, R. M. (1995). Group spiritual direction: community for discernment. New York, Paulist Press. 36.

know the living God, to please the living God and to obey the living God. Secondly, prayerful listening and response inform wholehearted participation in the group process. Dougherty and Harlene Anderson resonate with each other at this point. In an online paper Anderson states, “We try to understand by participating in and responding to what we think the other has said. Participating and responding involve being genuinely curious, asking questions to learn more about what is said (not what you think should have been said), and checking-out to learn if what you think you heard is what the other person hoped you heard.” Anderson goes on to make a distinction between questions that are intended to participate in the narrative and help to clarify, expand, and understand and questions that are seeking out details and facts that can be used to determine things such as diagnoses and interventions or seek to direct the conversation.⁵² Listening that is intended to participate in the narrative and help to clarify creates inclusiveness and a sense of belonging that encourages and maintains unity within the group. In the same way, prayerful listening and response implies a listening that is not self serving, but rather a listening and response that find their focus outside of one’s own agenda, on the actions and purposes of the kingdom of God.

Thirdly, when one opens up their lives and particularly their spiritual journey for others to consider, they have exercised significant trust in the others and they are better prepared to experience change. In Coe, Zehnder, and Kinlaw’s *Coaching for Commitment* trust is understood as the ingredient that initiated the “coaching conversation”⁵³ or that results in agreement regarding goals and decisions concerning ways to reach those goals.

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⁵² Anderson, Harlene. 2003. “Listening, Hearing and Speaking”. url: <http://brianmft.talkspot.com/aspx/templates/topmenuclassical.aspx/msgid/135642>

⁵³ Cindy Coe, A. Z. a. D. K. (2008). *Coaching for Commitment*. San Francisco, Pfeiffer. 60.

This trust paves the way for possibilities to be discovered and commitments to be made concerning the corporate calling of the team and another aspect of unity has been established, that of a common goal.

The unity of a leadership team is established and maintained by a common relationship with the living God, an acceptance of one another through prayerful listening and response, and a commitment to support one another in the spiritual journey. It is this unity that prepares the way for a team to experience spiritual direction. Without unity, a team of leaders is just a collection of individual who each have their own opinion and have no reason to move forward together. It is clear from a biblical perspective that unity plays a significant role in the church effectively touching the world around it. Consider the following verses:

My prayer is...that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May then be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. (John 17:20-23)⁵⁴

Underlying this unity and functioning as a foundation for the unity is the idea of 'dialogue' as outlined by Harlene Anderson and Coe, Zehnder, and Kinlaw. A dialogue or conversation that creates an environment in which change happens because we are eager to know the will of God, willing to listen, hear and respond to others and open to share our own spiritual journey. This foundation that unites a leadership team opens the door for transforming dialogue with God, one another, and eventually with the world. For the individual who wants to be a part of giving spiritual direction to a leadership team these are basic principles "that help point the way and challenge us to attitudes and

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⁵⁴ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

actions that will assist in discerning and doing God's will."⁵⁵ For my purposes, it is the idea that spiritual direction is "a process of formation and guidance," related to the special vocation. This is at the heart of what I want to offer to churches seeking ways forward to effective ministry. From a biblical perspective, this process and guidance first grows out of a personal relationship between the spiritual director and the ones being directed. Jesus chose the twelve and spent three years with them before releasing them into ministry. The Apostle Paul called Timothy his "true son in the faith." (I Timothy 1:2)⁵⁶

Secondly, spiritual directors, to be effective, must function out of their personal experience. The Apostle Paul said it this way: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, *so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God*" (II Corinthians 1:3-4)⁵⁷. Others have said that the pastor you can trust is the one that walks with a limp. In these verses from the Apostle Paul, the comfort we receive from the Lord in our lives is there for two reasons: 1. He loves us because He is the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort and, 2. So that we can comfort those around us in any trouble. (II Corinthians 1:4)⁵⁸ Relationship and experience are the two primary elements that open the door for ministry with the

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⁵⁵ Morneau, R. F. (1992). Spiritual direction: principles and practices. New York, Crossroad. 78.

⁵⁶ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

leadership team of a congregation that has come through a time in which their leadership has been fractured and distrust has become a characteristic of their community.

Another practice of spiritual direction is that of cultivating and encouraging the leadership team and congregation in their special vocation. This is where the idea enters in that they are led through a process of discernment to come to understand what their role is in being a witness of Jesus Christ in the context of their community. In general, discernment is framed and established within the following contexts: scripture, prayer, community and circumstances.⁵⁹ Scripture has two different roles within discernment. First, it helps us to understand God, his character, his expectations and his mission. Secondly, the scriptures function as God's living voice speaking to us. This occurs particularly with the exercise of the spiritual discipline of praying the scriptures.

Just as scripture has a number of different functions in our lives, so also prayer has a variety of functions in our lives. As conversation with God, prayer makes way for us to solicit God's help in our circumstances and gives us opportunity to voice the questions of our hearts to Him who is able to answer our prayers. I mentioned the discipline of praying through the scriptures. This practice often leads us to take the promises of God and claim their application for our lives personally. Prayer also includes seasons of meditation and silences, putting ourselves in a place of listening after we have made our requests.

The community's role in discernment is that it often serves as the place where the spiritual gifts of words of wisdom or words of knowledge or whatever other gift the Holy Spirit wants to use finds its expression on our behalf. Community also becomes the place

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⁵⁹ Franklin, J. (2007). Right People Right Place Right Plan: Discerning the Voice of God. New Kensington, PA, Whitaker House. 42-44.

where we test the calling, because our community knows us and often has seen the calling in our lives long before we have understood them ourselves.

Generally our circumstances open the way for our need for discernment. On the other hand, circumstances can also confirm the validity of our discernment. These are the general frames of discernment. Chapter three will look at the process of discernment and how it is impacted in times of transition.

The third aspect of spiritual direction is arrived at by actually doing what has been discerned as the will of God and, just as importantly, attaining a sense of union or partnership with God. Thomas Merton carries a wonderful balance by simply hanging on to these two ideas and keeping them equal in importance, doing the will of God and being in union with God. The danger always has been, and always will be, to emphasis one perspective over the other. Personally, there are times I have found it easier to embrace the ideas of “being” related to my being a son of God and a part of his family. At other times I have focused on the idea of “doing” the will of God, getting caught up in the mechanics of doing and losing sight of the importance of relationship with God. The holding of these two ideas, doing and being in tension with one another keeps one balanced and functioning in creative ways. Roger Martin commented on this idea of holding two different ideas in tension with one another and the result: “The leaders I have studied...have the predisposition and capacity to hold two diametrically opposing ideas in their heads. And then, without panicking or simply settling for one alternative or the other, they’re able to produce a synthesis that is superior to either opposing idea.”⁶⁰ From a biblical perspective, the push and pull of being and doing keeps us moving forward in

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⁶⁰ Martin, R. (2007). The Opposable Mind. Boston, Harvard Business School Press. 6.

obedience, while resting in the relationship with God. Our obedience results in our coming to understand every good thing we have in Christ,⁶¹ and our resting in God results in our being set free from our own work so that we can enter into partnership with God and allow him to lead us.⁶²

Spiritual direction is concerned with creating an environment within which individuals and leadership teams are prepared to discern the work (special vocation) that God has prepared for them and find their place within His family and kingdom. Discernment, then, is concerned with discovering who we are to be and what we are to do. John Calvin in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* begins as follows: “Without a knowledge of self there is no knowledge of God. Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But, while joined by many bonds, which one precedes and brings forth the other is not easy to discern.”⁶³

Robert Morneau, in his book, *Spiritual Direction: Principles and Practices*, outlines principles of spiritual direction, which create an environment for discernment. These principles encompass aspects of post-modern thinking, coaching disciplines and aspects that are unique to spiritual direction. Morneau’s focus on the interpersonal

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⁶¹ Philemon 6 (NIV) “I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.”

⁶² Hebrews 4:10, 11 (NIV) “...anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.”

⁶³ Calvin, J. (1955). *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Philadelphia, Westminster Press. 35.

process of growth contains a highly communal and ecclesial dimension.⁶⁴ Anderson would say that the 'collaborative language systems' is all about the interpersonal relationship and that dialogue creates a context for change in the participants.⁶⁵ However, spiritual direction sees the interpersonal relationships as three-sided, spiritual director, directee and God and thus the dialogue must also be three-sided. The dialogue with God is the one that typically gets left out simply because it often feels one-sided. Brad Jersak in his book, *Can You Hear Me?*, speaks of meeting God "in the throne room of the heart" using one's imagination and having a dialogue with him. Jersak says, "I find it helpful...to think of prayer as a context, a venue or a place where we wait on God's presence and his voice." He then quotes C. Austin Miles' old hymn, 'I come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses, and the voice I hear, falling on my ear, the Son of God discloses...'”⁶⁶ Using our imagination to stand face-to-face with the Father or Son or even the Holy Spirit and have a conversation with them can be an effective tool in facilitating the dialogue with God.

The interpersonal nature of a spiritual director interacting with the leadership team must constantly be held in the context of the congregation that the team leads. It is a very easy thing to get caught up in the process of spiritual direction and forget the context of listening. Without context the process is orphaned and makes no sense. With this in mind, the congregation has to be made a part of the process of understanding their calling and discerning what they are to be and do. It is the congregation that becomes the

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⁶⁴ Morneau, R. F. (1992). Spiritual Direction: Principles and Practices. New York, Crossroads. 94.

⁶⁵ Anderson, H. (1997). Conversation, Language, Possibilities: A Postmodern Approach to Therapy. New York, Basic Books.

⁶⁶ Jersak, B. (2003). Can You Hear Me? Abbotsford BC Canada, Fresh Wind Press. 121,

recipient of the discernment, who are most directly effected by conclusions that are reached, because it is the congregation that will carry the load of putting “hands and feet” to the calling of God.

The interpersonal nature of the spiritual direction also involves the relationships within the leadership team. Those interpersonal relationships can become significant aspects of collective discernment or they can become hurdles that have to be overcome so that discernment is rooted in unity of purpose and mutual encouragement. Spiritual direction and coaching find they are most effective in climates of trust. Coe, Zehnder and Kinlaw see trust as the primary catalyst for effective coaching conversations. Morneau sees spiritual direction as being provided in an atmosphere of unconditional love.⁶⁷

From a coaching perspective, spiritual direction by attempting to foster a courageous discerning heart that seeks to discover and achieve God’s will.⁶⁸ creates an atmosphere of trust that encourages conversation. Spiritual direction is about helping the leadership team identify the inner resources needed to discover and achieve God’s will. These inner resources are present in each of us and are activated by the power of the Holy Spirit through our relationship with Him and our conversations with one another. Robert Hargrove talks about conversations as empowering simply because they lead people to identify those inner resources.⁶⁹

However, the uniqueness of spiritual direction is found in its focus on the spiritual aspects of life. While dealing at times with problems and crises, spiritual direction is

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⁶⁷ Morneau, R. F. (1992). Spiritual Direction: Principles and Practices. New York, Crossroads. 88.

⁶⁸ *ibid.* 81.

⁶⁹ Hargrove, R. (1995). Masterful Coaching. San Francisco, Pfeiffer. “to have an empowering coaching relationship, the coach must recognize that people have the inherent creativity, intelligence and tacit knowledge then need to succeed but may need help in gaining access to it.”

primarily concerned with integrated growth in faith.⁷⁰ In the face of problems and crises, the primary concern is the leadership's growth in relationship with God. Thus the measure of spiritual direction is found in an increase of love, fidelity and responsibility amongst the leaders and in the congregation.⁷¹ As a result, spiritual direction is about seeing the character of God established in the leadership team and flowing out to impact the congregation that they lead.

Spiritual direction is also concerned with disposition, experience and process, three factors conditioning the quality of life.⁷² The idea of disposition is focused on motivation, experience is concerned with not missing all that is around us because we have become busy living and process is about taking time to reflect on what has happened in our lives and integrating that into our own understanding. These three factors impact our quality of life, but beyond the personal aspect of life they also impact and condition the quality of life in relationship to others.

Because spiritual direction is primarily the work of the Spirit, the director must learn to facilitate and not obstruct the action of grace.⁷³ The Holy Spirit is Lord and we facilitate but we cannot direct. Our job is to guide the leadership team to the place where they meet with God and then get out of the way.

Finally, the uniqueness of spiritual direction is in fostering a vision that is global and eschatological, immanent and transcendent.⁷⁴ Morneau goes on to say, "Our vision

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⁷⁰ Morneau, R. F. (1992). Spiritual direction: principles and practices. New York, Crossroad. 83.

⁷¹ Ibid. 84.

⁷² Ibid. 86.

⁷³ Ibid. 90.

⁷⁴ Morneau, R. F. (1992). Spiritual Direction: Principles and Practices. New York, Crossroads. 95.

must not be limited to the range of our physical eyes and ears. Our imaginations must be trained to apprehend the workings of grace in the budding of a daisy, the host held high, the cup of cold water offered, the rising of the morning sun.⁷⁵ It is the proverbial balance between two competing perspectives throughout the process that keeps the leadership team walking down ‘the middle of the road’ safe from falling into either ditch.

In this chapter I have discussed spiritual direction and referred to the collaborative language system, a post-modern family therapy, and coaching. Spiritual direction finds common ground with these other disciplines in understanding the use of dialogue in the process of transition. The collaborative language system contributes an understanding of the foundations of dialogue established in a new understanding of hermeneutics and the significance of social constructionism in shaping our understanding of the world around us.

Coaching theory affirms collaborative language system’s contention that “dialogue creates a pathway and a safety zone for an open conversation in which both coach and coachee learn.”⁷⁶ What coaching contributes is an understanding of the synergy created by a trusting relationship that motivates and facilitates creativity through the coaching conversation.

Both collaborative language system and coaching resonate with the older discipline of spiritual direction. As I have shown, they both find commonality with spiritual direction and are disciplines that could help give understanding or clarity to the practice of spiritual direction.

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⁷⁵ Ibid. 97.

⁷⁶ Crane, T. G. (2007). The Heart of Coaching. San Diego CA, FTA Press. 105.

However, the collaborative language system and the discipline of coaching focus on this world and the visible relationships whereas, spiritual direction consistently reminds us of the spiritual perspective that takes into account the presence of an active, caring heavenly Father who is to be included in the discussions. There is much to be learned from these other disciplines and they are tools which help the spiritual director to *lead a congregation in their collective calling*, so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit *they (the congregation)* may attain to the particular end of *their calling* and to union with God. The primary role of the spiritual director is to encourage a conversation between the leadership, the congregation and God. It is the inclusion of the voice of God in the process that is unique to the discipline of spiritual direction.

The next section of this paper will look at the discipline of discernment and its relationship to the culture around us. Discernment is tied to the idea of waiting for God to reveal to us what He is about so that we can join Him in His mission to reach the world.

Section II

Waiting for God

*“If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”
(I Corinthians 13:2)⁷⁷*

Waiting for God to reveal His mission fits the process of transition in the neutral zone, the period between the ending and before the new beginning. It is the mission of God that the church universal has been called to fulfill on the earth. Individual congregations have visions of what they will look like fulfilling that mission. Vision is the mission of God applied to the congregation's local circumstances.

In the life of Jesus, His season in the wilderness was not only about the temptation, but was a time when Jesus entered the neutral zone, a period of discernment concerning the nature of His ministry. When He came out of the wilderness it says “he returned to Galilee in the power of the Holy Spirit” and read “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.” (Luke 4:14, 18)⁷⁸ The lenses that we use during a time of discernment are very important, because the lenses we wear colour what we see.

An illustration will help at this point. Walking down the street towards you is a six foot six inch, three hundred pound biker, dressed in leathers, tattooed and wearing rings and chain, with a scowl on his face. What do you discern about him? What if you are his parent, what do you discern? In the same way, our view of the culture around us can influence what we discern about the will of God towards that culture. D. A. Carson, in a paper presented at a conference for Christians in Science outlined his views of post-

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⁷⁷ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

modernism with the following statement; "... late modernist epistemology, by various routes, became unstable, and sired a bastard we call postmodernism. I choose the term 'bastard' advisedly: my point is that on this reading, modernist epistemology is in fact the progenitor of postmodern epistemology, even if the latter is so unlike his father that he wants to deny family likeness and commit patricide. The implication of this analogy, of course, is that thoughtful Christians should not think of themselves as either modernists or postmoderns in their epistemology. Both systems are far too unstable, far too anthropocentric – idolatrously so."⁷⁹ In the introduction to the talk he talked about "experiencing a common onslaught" and "preparing our defenses"⁸⁰, language that is adversarial. In the context of a university where philosophy is debated it is appropriate. In our day-to-day lives where we rub shoulders with our co-workers and neighbours this language creates a barrier. The opportunity that the openness of the culture affords the Christian community is unprecedented. Because relationship and dialogue are central to the cultural understand of growth, people on the street willingly engage in conversation about spiritual matters, open to learn from others.

If we are adversarial or defensive about our faith, we lose the opportunity to be carriers the kingdom of God to our communities. Jesus said, "What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough." (Luke 13:20, 21)⁸¹ We are to rub shoulders with the world around us and in doing so we will see the impact of the kingdom of God

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⁷⁹ Carson, D. A. (2001). *Maintaining Scientific and Christian Truths in a Postmodern World. Christians in Science: "Can We Be Sure About Anything?"* London. 4.

⁸⁰ Ibid. 1.

⁸¹ (1984). *The Holy Bible (NIV)*. Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

through us for His glory.

Chapter 3

Spiritual Discernment

Spiritual discernment is the result of practising spiritual disciplines that place one in a place to receive the grace of God. Spiritual discernment opens the door to see God's work in the world around us, giving us an opportunity to join Him in what He is doing. In some ways the process of discernment precedes Everett Rogers' understanding of the stages in the Innovation-Decision Process, which moves from knowledge to persuasion to decision to implementation to confirmation.⁸² The idea of discernment of God's will is primarily an individual exercise, whereas Rogers in his work is concerned with the diffusion of innovations or how ideas spread and become established in a group.⁸³ The bringing together of the discerning of the will of God and the diffusion of innovation suggests that individual discernment and the collective acceptance of innovation are complimentary processes, discernment providing the knowledge of the will of God and Rogers' diffusion of innovation provides an understanding of how that knowledge can be passed on to the congregation.

The uniqueness of discernment is tied to the belief that "[God] exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." (Hebrews 11:6)⁸⁴ Within the church of Jesus Christ, the basic elements of discernment are consistent from denomination to denomination. As one author summarized them: 1. Inner Convictions. 2. Scriptural

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⁸² Rogers, E. M. (2003). Diffusion of Innovations. New York, Free Press, A division of Simon and Schuster, Inc. 169.

⁸³ Ibid. 5,6.

⁸⁴ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Confirmations. 3. Prophetic Confirmation. 4. Godly Counsel. 5. Circumstances. 6. Peace of God. 7. Provision.⁸⁵ However each group will give discernment their personal type of expression that grows out of their traditions. As was mentioned, discernment practices are influenced by the congregation's temperament. Below are three different approaches to discernment to give some perspective as to the breadth of expression: Allelon, a movement of missional leaders; Watchman for the Nations, and Ignation discipleship within the Catholic community.

The fall of 2007 I attended a gathering of leaders from across Canada and the United States with guests from Britain and Australia. This gathering was hosted by Allelon, a movement of missional leaders⁸⁶ and was advertised as a gathering for the purpose of discernment. The four days were given context in the following ways:

1. Morning and evening prayers were held in the Celtic tradition.
2. "Dwelling in the word" was practiced six times in four days. This was a time of reflection on a passage of scripture that was significant to the vision of ministry of Allelon and their understanding of the missional church movement.⁸⁷
3. Personal stories were shared with one another concerning how each individual came to be at this gathering concerned with the topic of discernment.

The focus and framing was prayer, scripture and community. There was no singing or worshipping together and no extensive teaching.

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⁸⁵ Franklin, J. (2007). Right People Right Place Right Plan: Discerning the Voice of God. New Kensington, PA, Whitaker House. 42-44.

⁸⁶ <http://www.allelon.org/main.cfm>

⁸⁷ They used Luke 10:1-12 for each session of dwelling in the word. The passage was read aloud by one person and we were to notice when our imaginations took us away from the reading of the text to take up some wonderment in the text. Then we were to share our wonderment with another person one on one. Finally we were called back together to share what we heard each other wonder about.

In September 2006 I attended a national prayer gathering of a group called Watchmen for the Nations.⁸⁸ This gathering was also called for the purpose of discerning God's purpose and will. This group would be characterized as a charismatic group. The discernment time was framed by:

1. Extensive times of singing together and worshipping the Lord.
2. Individuals were encouraged to bring prophetic words, dreams and visions to a team for discernment.
3. There were extensive times of waiting for a sense of what God wanted us to do.

Notice the focus and framing was worship (singing), individual gifts and community. Again there was no extensive teaching.

Throughout my spiritual walk I have experienced spiritual direction within the Catholic Community. Primarily the process of discernment has been Ignatian in orientation. These times have been framed as follows:

1. Extensive time reading and praying the scripture. Through reading and prayer one becomes aware of our inner spiritual experience.
2. Active use of imagination, putting oneself within the biblical text. This active interaction with the text brings us understanding of our spiritual experience.
3. Significant times of silence and solitude exercising centering prayer. In times of reflection plans for action are formed.

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⁸⁸ <http://www.watchmen.org/>

These three steps; awareness, understanding and action are presumed, Ignatius says, about discernment.⁸⁹ Here the focus and framing is scripture, prayer, silence and solitude. This is discernment framed for the introvert.

Each of these approaches to discernment is effective in helping the individual to experience the impact of practicing the spiritual disciplines through which the grace of God can flow into one's life. Each of these approaches to discernment demonstrates the application of the foundations of discernment in a different way that can be sensitive to the temperament of those participating. Once the will of God has been discerned, then Rodger's stages of knowledge, persuasion, decision and implementation are applied to the renewal of vision.

Up until this point in this paper, I have looked at the context in which I anticipate helping leadership teams engage the transition that they are facing so that they will find a way forward to engage "their special vocation so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit they may attain to the particular end of their vocation and union with God."⁹⁰ However, they lead congregations and it is important to consider how they might engage the congregation in the discernment process.

The investment by the individual believer in the fulfillment of the missional calling of the church is very important. Because of this, the engagement of the congregation in the discernment process is important as it allows followers of Christ to individually invest in the development of the vision moving forward. A sense of the calling of the congregation is usually rooted in their DNA and possibly in the

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⁸⁹ Gallagher, T. M. (2005). The Discernment of Spirits. New York, The Crossroad Publishing Co. 17.

⁹⁰ Merton, T. (1960). Spiritual Direction & Meditation. Collegeville, MN, The Order of St. Benedict, Inc. 13.

denomination in which they are partners. The use of an exercise that engages the congregation in historic reflection can bring to the fore key elements of their calling and focus of ministry.

Engaging the congregation could happen through incorporating concerts of prayer and invitations to times of remembering the works of God, reflecting on the history of the congregation and re-visioning the future of the congregation. This could be re-enforced by the leadership team openly communicating the process that they are a part of and how they sense God has been leading them. In this way the congregation and leadership would be encouraging one another and confirming the way in which God is leading them.

A significant part of the process of discernment is understanding the culture within which the congregation is call to minister and loving the people who represent the culture. Post-modernism continues to grow in its influence as the guardians of the modern era continue to retire from leadership and a younger generation steps in to lead.

Chapter 4

Post-modern Thought

"Status Quo: Latin for the mess we're in..."
-Ronald Reagan

The change in culture that has occurred in the last forty years has been described as a cultural tsunami.⁹¹ Tsunamis are known as overwhelming and destructive. Robert E Webber in his book, *The Younger Evangelicals*, talks about the significant changes that have occurred in the latter part of the 20th century even within the context of the evangelical church. Although at present these changes do not appear to be overwhelming and destructive, the pressures that they bring to bear on the institution of the church will result in the restructuring of the evangelical church as we know it today.

He first divides the evangelical community into three categories: Traditional Evangelicals (1950-75), Pragmatic Evangelicals (1975-2000) and Younger Evangelicals (2000-). Webber presents five areas that clearly show the shift that is occurring within the Evangelical culture.

The first area that has experienced a significant shift from a Traditional to the Pragmatic to the Younger Evangelical is that of communications. The Traditional Evangelical communicated primarily through the printed word whereas for the Pragmatic Evangelical communication was based in broadcast and presentational. The Younger Evangelicals communicate through the internet, interactive experiences that might be supported by print but not exclusively.⁹² The second area is that of history. The

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⁹¹ Sweet, L. (2001). *Soul Tsunami*. Grand Rapids MI, Zondervan.

⁹² Webber, R. E. (2003). *The Younger Evangelicals*. Grand Rapids, MI, Baker House Company.

Traditional Evangelical was moving on from history, leaving the failures of the past behind, such as the two world wars and the great depression, and moving into the promising future. The Pragmatic Evangelicals were concerned with the fresh start and held an “ahistorical” perspective. The Younger Evangelical is looking to history to provide some rootedness to what they believe as well as continuity with the mission of the early church.⁹³ Thirdly, the Traditional Evangelical theologically held to a propositional or logical approach to the truth. The Pragmatic Evangelical turned theology to answer the needs of individuals, as a form of therapy,⁹⁴ whereas the Younger Evangelical wants to see truth in the context of relationship and narrative.⁹⁵ Fourthly, concerning apologetics, the Traditional Evangelical’s approach was evidential, foundational, whereas the Pragmatic Evangelicals saw apologetics as meaning-giver, experiential, a personal faith. The Younger Evangelical sees apologetics as embodied in who we are and what we do, a communal faith.⁹⁶ Finally, Webber compares Traditional and Younger Evangelicals in the area of ecclesiology, Traditional Evangelicals seeing the church as individualistic and primarily invisible to the surrounding world whereas the Younger Evangelicals see the church corporately, and tend to see the church as a visible

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⁹³ Ibid. 71.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid. 18.

⁹⁶ Ibid. 94.

confrontation of the world order of things.⁹⁷ The following table makes application of these comparisons in some additional areas.

Comparison of Traditional, Pragmatic and Younger Evangelicals

	Traditional	Pragmatic	Younger
Communication Style	Print, Verbal	Broadcast, Presentational	Internet, Interactive
Generation	Booster, traditional	Boomer, Innovative	Twenty-Something, Deconstruction/ Reconstruction
Apologetics Style	Evidential, Foundational	Christianity as meaning-giver, Experiential, Personal Faith	Embrace the metanarrative, Embodied apologetic, Communal faith
Ecclesial Paradigm	Constantinian church, Civil Religion	Culturally sensitive church, Market driven	Missional church, Countercultural
Leadership Style	Pastor centered	Managerial model, CEO	Team ministry, Priesthood of all
Education	Sunday School, Information centered	Target generational groups and needs	Intergenerational formation in community
Spirituality	Keep the rules	Prosperity and success	Authentic embodiment
Art	Restrained	Art as illustration	Incarnational embodiment
Evangelism	Mass evangelism	Seeker service	Process evangelism
Worship	Traditional	Contemporary	Convergence
Church Style	Neighbourhood churches, rural	Megachurch, suburban, Market targeted	Small Church, Back to cities, Intercultural ⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Ibid. 107.

As Robert E Webber sees it, the shift in the evangelical world, from a traditional view through the pragmatic to the younger evangelical perspective is significant and the church must respond to this change. The truth is this shift within the Church parallels the reality in the world around us. Over the past forty years the Western world has been experiencing a shift from the modern era to a post-modern era. The Traditional Evangelical grew up in the modern era and has embraced many of the modern beliefs that were prevalent then. In contrast, today, the Emerging Church is that aspect of the church that has grown up with a post-modern worldview and has responded to that new perspective. Although Webber's presentation makes it appear that the shift is strictly generational, the reality is that both modern and post-modern perspectives are philosophical positions, which generally fall along generational lines, but not exclusively. The shifts in culture are based on some keep philosophical understanding which have been developed over the past fifty some years. It is these suppositions that I will now explore.

Dr. Harlene Anderson, in her book, *Conversations, Language and Possibilities*, looked at two aspects of post-modern thinking, 'the existence and impact of cultural discourses, narratives and conventions' and 'the newness to come in dialogue.' According to Anderson, "it is this 'not yet spoken' landscape – the post-modern premises of contemporary hermeneutics and social constructionism, with its emphasis on the interrelated relational nature of knowledge and the notion of self as linguistically constructed and transformed through dialogue – that serves as the center point of [her]

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⁹⁸ Ibid.17 18. (partial presentation of Table 2).

conceptual underpinnings and provides the predominant hues in a collaborative language systems approach.”⁹⁹ Anderson, stating the center of the collaborative language system, more simply said, “[i]deas, truths or self-identities are the products of human relationships.”¹⁰⁰ These ideas that Anderson acknowledges are central to her own collaborative language system are foundational to the emerging post-modern culture as well.

Post-modernity has brought relationships into the very center of the culture and this emphasis has found a supporting voice in family therapies, particularly those established in the ideas rooted in “social constructionism.” Quoting Gergen, Anderson says, “[Social constructionism] views discourse about the world not as a reflection or map of the world but as an artefact of communal interchange.”¹⁰¹ In other words, our understanding of our world and our part in that world is established by our “communal interchanges” with others. We are shaped by the conversations that we have and our relational experiences. In other words, the individual or God or reason have been removed as the foundation of thinking and replaced by language.¹⁰² Although this perspective denies God’s authority in the life of individuals, it focuses the idea of knowing in relationships and dialogue and it opens the door for those of the Christian faith engaged with those around them in conversation and enables them to witness to the goodness of God.

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⁹⁹ Anderson, H. (1997). Conversation, Language and Possibilities, BasicBooks. 44.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 41.

¹⁰¹ Gergen, K. J. (1985). "The social constructionist movement in modern psychology." American Psychologist(40): 255-275. 266.

¹⁰² Lakeland, P. (1997). Postmodernity. Minneapolis, MN, Augsburg Fortress. 19.

The post-modern supposition means effective theology is not the result of individual study of the Bible but rises out of conversation with others. From a Christian perspective, this post-modern shift encourages the foundation for knowing God, from knowing *about* God from a biblical perspective, to knowing God *through a personal, interactive relationship with* Him with the Bible as the authoritative ‘plum-line’ of truth. In contrast, Richard Rorty believes that we do not make decisions based on principles, but rather decisions are predicated upon our personal experiences, the books we have read and the interactions we have with others.¹⁰³ The post-modern perspective of truth is not focused on propositional truth, but rather truth that arises out of our interactions with the world around us. From a Christian perspective, God has given us principles, rooted in who He is, to guide our lives and it is an understanding of these principles that is broadened through our witness to God’s working in our lives and our listening to one another. The principles are revealed to us through the Word of God through the work of the Holy Spirit.

The second premise that underlies post-modern culture is that of “contemporary hermeneutics.” The modern understanding of hermeneutics focused on a methodological understanding of the biblical text with the belief that there was a specific truth that could be discovered if one looked hard enough. However, contemporary hermeneutics realize that individuals, coming to study the text, come with their own particular lenses and that the relationship between the scholar and the text is interactive. The scholar does not approach the text objectively, but rather with a preconceived understanding of the text and what to expect. The resulting interaction is shaped not only by the written Word, but

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¹⁰³ A video clip of Richard Rorty talking about pragmatism at:
<http://brianmft.talkspot.com.aspx/templates/leftmenugreen.aspx/msgid/363795>

also by the personal perspectives the scholar brings to the study. Hans-Georg Gadamer did not see “this [as] a rejection of the importance of methodological concerns, but rather an insistence on the limited role of method and the priority of understanding as a dialogic, practical, situated activity.”¹⁰⁴ The contemporary hermeneutic view the biblical text and the scholar as equal partners in the conversation, when Christians see the biblical text as the authoritative voice of God in our lives.

Contemporary hermeneutics and social constructionism both resonate with our personal experiences in this world. Paul spoke to Timothy with regard to the scriptures said, “All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.”(II Timothy 3:16,17)¹⁰⁵ The words Paul used here imply a relationship between the scriptures and the reader. The reader approaches the Word of God seeking understanding and in reading the Word of God the individual agrees with what is said and accepts the Word as true for his own life. The scriptures are viewed as authoritative and beneficial to for the equipping of the individual. The Apostle John said, “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”(Revelation 19:10)¹⁰⁶ Again the passage implies that the revelation of Jesus is more than propositional truth, but also living message that speaks to our lives. Contemporary hermeneutics is right in saying our engagement with scripture is interactive, however the relationship is not one of equal

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¹⁰⁴ Taken from Article on the web concerning Hans-Georg Gadamer’s view of contemporary hermeneutics: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/gadamer/#2>

¹⁰⁵ (1989). Holy Bible (NRSV). Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan Publishing House.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

authority, but rather the scriptures allow for an interactive conversation between the creator God and His creation.

The writer of the Proverbs stated, “iron sharpens iron so one man sharpens another.”(Proverbs 27:17)¹⁰⁷ Social constructionism is partially true in that our interactions with one another broadens our understanding of how the culture around us views a particular truth and can help us gain a clearer understanding of the application of truth in our lives from others’ experiences.

For the spiritual director, who comes alongside the leadership team as a spiritual companion, contemporary hermeneutics encourages us to understand the context and experience of the leadership team that will give insight as to how they approach the discerning of God’s will. Social constructionism motivates the spiritual director to encourage dialogue between the members of the congregation and members of the leadership team, believing that the experience will help them to come to new understanding about who they are and what they are called to do, as they share their different perspectives of what God is saying to them.

Thus far we have considered some of the assumptions that underlie the post-modern culture which impact the ways in which a leadership team moves forward in establishing an effective ministry model for their congregation. I now want to move on to discuss the relationship out of which I propose to help leadership teams.

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¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

Section III

Preparing for Change

Having discussed the nature of transition and the opportunity that it affords the church and showing the role that discernment plays in establishing a renewed vision of ministry for the local church, this final section looks at what it takes to implement the vision once it has been identified. Chapter 5 will look specifically at change management concerns and chapter 6 will look at the context for decision, which is the governance model that the local congregation has adopted.

Chapter 5

Leading for Change

The first question that a spiritual director needs to be asked is; “Is this leadership team and congregation ready for change?” This question is focused on the thought that preparation for change can be divided into a number of stages. The stages of change that have been identified are, pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance and relapse prevention.¹⁰⁸ Depending on what stage a leadership team and congregation are at, determines how one approaches the discussion of change and how long the process of change will be. James O. Prochaska and John C. Norcross in their article looking at the application of the stages of change noted that there were two distinct opportunities that the stages of change encouraged:

1. Based on the stages of change it was found that preparations could be made to proactively encourage people to embrace the required change and,
2. Based on the stages of change the application of the appropriate process to the stage of change that the people are experiencing maximizes the potential positive outcome.¹⁰⁹

Prochaska and Norcross looked at established studies concerning the stages of change and found significant correlation between stages of change and the appropriate processes in leading people to significant change.¹¹⁰ They also took a sample of 5,000 smokers of whom only 20 percent were in the preparation stage or higher and proactively approached

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¹⁰⁸ Zimmerman G.L., O. C. G., Bosworth M. F. (2000) A 'Stages of Change' Approach to Helping Patients Change Behavior. American Family Physician **Volume**, DOI: <http://www.aafp.org/afp/20000301/1409.html>

¹⁰⁹ Prochaska J.O., N. J. C. (2001) Stages of Change. Psychotherapy **Volume**, DOI: 445-446.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. **Volume**, DOI: 446.

them using language appropriate to the stages they were in and achieved an 80 percent participation in the cessation process. From this study of the research there are three things that need to be considered when approaching an organization concerning change:

1. Where is the organization at in the stages of change?
2. What processes would be appropriate to lead them forward in change?
3. By proactively approaching organizations using language appropriate to their stage of change it is possible to simulate them to change.

“The stages of change are founded on three elements that are of equal importance—the stages of change; the processes of change; and the techniques of change. These three elements are inter-related and inter-dependent. To be most effective, someone making change in their own life, or those assisting others to make changes must focus on all three elements at once.”¹¹¹

Once a leadership team has re-established vision the next questions revolve around the process whereby the congregation is engaged in carrying forward the vision, mission and goals. In the process of leading change there are a number of perspectives to be considered. Linda S. Ackerman, in her essay regarding organizational development describes three types of change that face leadership teams. These three changes are as follows:

- Developmental Change is the improvement of a skill, method or condition that for some reason does not measure up to current expectations.
- Transitional change is when leaders decide to change what exists and to implement something new.

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¹¹¹ AFM. "The Stages of Change."
www.afm.mb.ca/Learn%20More/Stages%20of%20Change5.pdf. Accessed February 2010.

- Transformational change is the emergence of a totally new state of being out of the remains of the old state.¹¹²

Reflecting back on comments made earlier in this document, the shift from modern to post-modern thought suggests that the most likely types of changes to be effective would be transitional and transformational in nature. Developmental change would fall short of effectiveness simply because the underlying suppositions of the culture have changed and organizations rooted in the modern culture will find their ministries effective for a smaller and smaller part of the culture.

Transitional change will be effective in the near future simply because organizations will continue to serve the modern culture represented by the baby boomer generation, but be able to add to their ministries services that would start to be sensitive to the post-modern culture. However, the modern culture is slowly being replaced by the post-modern and there will come a day when the impact of modernity will have passed.

Transformational change will occur. Organizations today, including churches realize that the old ways of doing things are collapsing and the need to seek new ways forward is imperative.

Tim Conder summarized the change within the emerging church as follows:

“The emerging church seeks to be an authentic contextualization of the gospel within the values and characteristics of post-modern culture. Therefore, it envisions and expresses Christianity primarily as a way of life, rather than an adherence to a doctrinal system or organizational pattern. This does not mean the emerging church is devoid of doctrinal affirmations or structure, but the theological systems or specific ministry models are not the defining factors. Instead, emerging churches are committed to a ‘rule of life’ that includes:

- The pursuit of the gospel expressed and explained in community
- A passion for living out the values of Jesus’ kingdom in the present

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¹¹² Ackerman, L. S. (1986). Development, Transition or Transformation: The Question of Change in Organizations. Organizational Development Classics. J. C. H. a. D. C. V. E. Donald F. Van Eynde. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers: 45-58. 46-48.

- Comfort with mystery and uncertainty
- A spiritual holism that calls forth a radical and comprehensive discipleship
- A reading of Scripture that intersects with local stories and contexts
- An experiential approach to both worship and the pursuit of truth
- A ministry that honours the beauty of God's creation and the creative spirit found in humanity"

Conder uses the language of mission when he talks of "an authentic contextualization of the gospel within the values and characteristics of post-modern culture." The emerging church needs to be a missional church, seeking to be a community that embodies and supports God's mission of establishing a present and future redemptive kingdom.¹¹³ Each leadership team along with the congregation that they serve must consider the kind of changes that they are prepared to embrace, transitional or transformational. Both types can be the best choice dependent on the demographic of the congregation and the community to which they are ministering.

It is specifically the idea of helping churches transition to embrace the new missional options that is considered the focus of this work. New ministries and approaches to ministry function similarly to innovations that are introduced into business and industry contexts. Everett Rogers in *Diffusion of Innovations*, talks about a number of different aspects of introducing new ideas that are considered part of this study. Specifically, he talks about attributes of innovation and how these attributes impact the rate of diffusion of the new ideas, adopter categories which helps to identify who is likely to adopt a new idea and who is liable to resist and the pattern of diffusion which gives us clues as to how the new idea will move through the organization and the change agent

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¹¹³ Conder, T. (2006). The Church in Transition: The Journey of Existing Churches into the Emerging Culture. Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan. 25.

who facilitates the acceptance of an innovation and guides organizations in embracing the innovations.¹¹⁴

When we consider helping a congregation to revision their ministries, Roger's understanding of the attributes of innovation and how they impact the rate of adoption speak directly to the way in which the leadership team is guided in understanding their calling in God. Not only is it a guide in understanding their calling in God, but the attributes of innovation can function as an evaluation of our effectiveness in communicating the calling and vision. Rogers identifies five attributes of innovation as follows:

1. Relative Advantage is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes.
2. Compatibility is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as consistent with the existing values, past experiences and needs of the potential adopters.
3. Complexity is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as relatively difficult to understand or to use.
4. Trialability is the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis.
5. Observability is the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others.¹¹⁵

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¹¹⁴ Rogers, E. M. (2003). Diffusion of Innovations. New York, Free Press, A division of Simon and Schuster, Inc. Chapters, 6, 7, 9, 10

¹¹⁵ Ibid. 265, 266.

These attributes of innovation outline the particular ways in which the new perspectives regarding the culture and a leadership's response to the culture needs to be presented so that the congregation can embrace the change and transition to a new understanding of the vision in which God has called them to participate. They also suggest a series of inquiries that would help to evaluate the plan for implementation for effectiveness. For example:

1. Suggest three advantages of this new innovation?
2. How does this innovation express our values, fulfill our mission and make possible our vision?
3. Can this innovation be explained in 500 words or less?
4. Suggest ways that this innovation can be tested?
5. Will the results of the trials be observable and measurable?

By using questions related to the attributes of the innovation effective plans for implementation can be established and ways of measuring effectiveness can be identified.

But it is not just the attributes of innovation that make possible the acceptance of new ideas, there is also a need for a person who champions the new ideas or an agent of change. Rogers, quoting Walter Bagehot, wrote, "One of the greatest pains to human nature is the pain of a new idea. It...makes you think that after all, your favourite notions may be wrong, your firmest beliefs ill-founded...Naturally, therefore, common men hate a new idea, and are disposed more or less to ill-treat the original man who brings it."¹¹⁶

The agent of change fulfills a specific role in helping an organization embrace new forms and vision. However, the agent of change is one who must be prepared to face the challenges that come with bringing change. One of the reasons that the period following

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¹¹⁶ Rogers, 365 [Walter Bagehot, *Physics and Politics*. (New York, Appleton-Century, 1873). 169.

a crisis in a ministry is one of great opportunity lies in the fact that the way we always did ministry has just failed and the desire to become effective becomes the impetuous for change. The agent of change must be aware of where the congregation is at in the process of transition as identified by William Bridges and understand where they are at in the stages of change.

By understanding where the congregation is at in the process of transition and stages of change, the agent of change will have insight into the process and specific language, which will resonate with the congregation. Rogers identifies specific areas that an agent of change must give attention to, such as developing a need for change, establishing an information exchange relationship, diagnosing the problem, creating an intent to change, translating an intent into action, stabilizing adoption and preventing discontinuance. This outline of the responsibilities of the agent of change parallels the stages of change that are required if an individual is to be successful in embracing change. The agent of change is the facilitator of change, translating the vision of the congregation into the language of vision that the group can embrace. As stated earlier in this chapter, the agent of change must be aware of where the leadership team and congregation are at in the stages of change, be aware of the process they must engage to effect change and be able to apply appropriate techniques to see them move towards change.

Although the agent of change could possibly be the spiritual director working with the leadership team, the reality is that he or she must be some one the congregation trusts such as senior pastoral leadership or a member of the leadership team who is

trusted because of their faithful service in the community of faith and the community that they serve.

As a spiritual director, understanding change and how one can lead for change is important simply because once a congregation enters into the change process, being able to identify what is happening and why provides the spiritual director signposts as to what needs to happen next.

Chapter 6

Governance

“No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old one. If he does, he will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, ‘The old is better.’” Luke 5:36-38

Since the time of Constantine, the church has adopted much of what the culture around it has considered to be effective organizational and leadership models. In Constantinian times, the church hierarchy was established and buildings for worship were erected, becoming a part of the establishment of that culture. Thus, the church moved from being an outsider to becoming an insider in the culture.¹¹⁷ Fast forward to the twentieth century. The church continued to borrow from the world around it with the intention of becoming more effective in delivery of programs and producing excellence in worship, and thus has embraced corporate models of governance that would ensure that the church as an institution would continue to be effective.

Much of what we see in the emerging culture is a reaction to the way things were done in the latter part of the twentieth century. In this chapter, issues surrounding governance as it has evolved in the latter part of the twentieth century will be discussed particularly giving consideration to the Carver Model, the Constitutional Model and the Entrepreneurial Model and their impacts in the life of the church. Biblical evidence for governance will then be ascertained as well as how the above models of governance compare with the biblical evidence. Also to be considered is the question of how

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¹¹⁷ Conder, T. (2006). The Church in Transition: The Journey of Existing Churches into the Emerging Culture. Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan. 144.

governance impacts the character of ministry and suggest how governance and institution can be structured so that kingdom ministry can occur.

According to the online Oxford American Dictionary, governance is the action or manner of governing. And the Institute on Governance stated, “Most agree that the central component of governance is decision-making.”¹¹⁸ These statements together address the manner of governing and importance of decision-making and they hint at there being underlying motives and ethics involved in governance.

According to Ira M. Millstein the rise of corporate governance was and is based on three intersecting visions, the equality of all humankind and their inalienable rights, the market, where participants are motivated to interact by self-interest, and “the fundamentals of justice and mercy that must temper individual rights and free market, striving to do the right thing as ethical people.”¹¹⁹ Out of these basic visions, two significant principles rise to give shape to codes of conduct. The first of these is “disclosure” or “transparency.” It is this principle that insures the foundation of corporate trust. The second characteristic of corporate governance is that of “checks and balances,” particularly at the board of directors’ level.¹²⁰

The first two of the intersecting visions, equality of all humankind and the free market, were formulated in the latter part of the 18th century during the formation and establishment of the United States of America.¹²¹ The equality of all people and their

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¹¹⁸ http://www.iog.ca/boardgovernance/html/gov_wha.html

¹¹⁹ Millstein, I. M. (2006). A Perspective on Corporate Governance: Rules, Principles, or Both. Westport, Connecticut, Praeger Perspectives. 3, 4.

¹²⁰ Cadbury, S. A. Ibid. The Rise of Corporate Governance, Praeger Publishers. 27.

¹²¹ Millstein, I. M. Ibid. A Perspective on Corporate Governance: Rules, Principles, or Both. Westport, Connecticut, Praeger Perspectives. 4.

inalienable rights, along with the free market economy, gave rise to the need for governance. These two intersecting visions gave rise to the entrepreneurial spirit, which opened the way for economic prosperity for many. Out of that prosperity grew corporations and as those corporations became more complex and the relational gap increased between those who invested in a venture and those who carried out the venture, the need for clearly laid out processes of governance became imperative. "First, from the financial communities' perspective, it was prudent to establish processes of governance to maintain a climate of trust that would encourage people to invest in their ventures. On the other side of the relationship, the investors and shareholders started to take a more active role in their portfolios and were able to monitor what was happening with their investments. This dual pressure focused on accountability and put the issues of governance on the agenda of most corporations."¹²² Thus the need for transparency and disclosure became foundational tools for building trust where relationships were not well established.

The third vision, a just and merciful society, finds its roots in a much earlier time, in the Judeo-Christian heritage and is the foundation for the ethical considerations of governance. The duties and obligations are evident in the Jewish faith in the Ten Commandments, and in Jesus' summarizing of the whole law into two commandments, Love God and love your neighbour. (Matthew 22:37-39)¹²³ These are the foundations that establish the Christian's ethics in life and business.¹²⁴

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¹²² Cadbury, S. A. Ibid. The Rise of Corporate Governance, Praeger Publishers. 19.

¹²³ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publisher.

¹²⁴ Mele, D. (2006). Religious Foundations of Business Ethics. Westport, Connecticut, Praeger Publishers. 18, 19.

In the latter part to the 20th century, John and Miriam Carver's Policy Governance has dominated the discussion of corporate governance simply because it has created a model that is clear regarding the roles of board and the chief executive officer's (CEO's) in the process of decision making. Carvers' model has created a distinction between the end results and the means of achieving those results and has clearly articulated the role of the board and of the CEO.¹²⁵ "Simply put, the board exists (usually on someone else's behalf) to be accountable that its organization works. The board is where all authority resides until some is given away (delegated) to others. This simple total authority-total accountability (within the law or other external authorities) is true of all boards that truly have governing authority."¹²⁶

According to the Policy Governance Model, the board is responsible to establish the ends policies, executive limitation policies, governance process policies and board-staff linkage policies. The CEO's responsibility is to accomplish the ends policies within the executive limitation policies. The CEO is hired and supervised by the board of directors of the organization and accountable to them. The clear division of responsibilities simplifies the process of governance and supervision becomes manageable.

The problem with Carver's approach to governance is that:

1. Board and staff relations are vulnerable and disconnected because of the emphasis on separate and distinct roles.
2. The board often feels disconnected from programs and operations.

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¹²⁵ Carver, J. a. M. (2001). "Carver's Policy Governance Model in Nonprofit Organizaitons." Retrieved April 21, 2007, from <http://www.carvergovernance.com/pg-np.htm>.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

3. Staff often mistrust the board's ability to govern.
4. Boards or executives may exercise their power in overriding the other's role.
5. Finally, this model can become ridged as it assumes one vision and it solidifies the status quo through its policy framework.¹²⁷

Although the Carver Policy Governance model has had significant influence in the shaping of corporate governance, it is not the only model of governance. The following models also have emerged over the past ten to fifteen years and offer different views of the relationships in the organizations and the focus of those organizations.

The constituent model allows the owners/shareholders to have a more direct, hands-on participation in the shaping of the direction of the organization. The shareholders are a "bit more in the face of the CEO," and the lines of communication are somewhat more chaotic as roles are not clearly delineated. However, there is a greater sharing of power and therefore a greater commitment to the end goal of the organization.¹²⁸

The entrepreneurial model emphasizes innovation and often focuses on efficiency and effectiveness, thus creativity and flexibility are both highly valued. Because the emphasis is on the stakeholders' self-interest, this model does not look beyond itself.

Whatever model of governance is chosen defines the relationships between the different stakeholders (investors, owners, boards and staff) and establishes the guideline by which their goals will be pursued. The church of the later 20th century has embraced some of these governance models as a way of organizing their ministries. A number of

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¹²⁷ Pat Bradshaw, B. H., Ruth Armstrong, Johanne Levesque and Liz Rykert (1998). Nonprofit Governance Models: Problems and Prospects. ARNOVA Conference. Seattle Washington. http://www.buildingmovement.org/artman/uploads/nonprofit_governance_models.pdf

¹²⁸ Ibid. 15.

mega-churches in Alberta have embraced the Carver Policy Model of Governance partly because it is effective in situations that have a clear mandate and stable constituency. Because of the sizes of their staff the Carver model is effective in drawing lines of delegation and establishing accountabilities. A number of mid-size churches have chosen the Constituency Model of Governance that gives ownership to a larger group of people and distributes power beyond the board of elders. This model opens the door to multiple interests being brought to the table, often resulting in conflicts that do not always get resolved. "Often the tendency is to pursue self-preservation rather than shared interests."¹²⁹

The entrepreneurial model of governance is often seen in the church-planting situation. As people have become a part of these opportunities to establish something new, the model of governance is not clear and the authority held by the church planter becomes the focus of tension.

Throughout the history of the church there have been a variety of models that the church has instituted to help guide its decisions concerning the fulfillment of God's will corporately and individually. The Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church have maintained a hierarchical form of governance. Authority resided with the "pope or patriarch" and his relationship with God. This model parallels Carver's Policy Model in the way roles between the priests and laity are clearly established.

A second model of governance observed is that of the congregational model which arose out of the growth of democracy in the United States of America. Leadership and congregation together establish the calling and process of moving forward. In this

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¹²⁹ Bradshaw, P. H., Bryan; Armstrong, Ruth; Levesque, Johanne; Rykert Liz (1998). Nonprofit Governance Models: Problems and Prospects. ARNOVA Conference. Seattle Washington. http://www.buildingmovement.org/artman/uploads/nonprofit_governance_models.pdf

model authority resides with the congregation and the congregation anticipates participating in all significant decisions. This model of governance parallels the Constituent Model of Governance.

A third model of governance rose out of the Reformation, particularly the Presbyterian experience. The congregation elects a leadership to determine vision and process, and then gives them the authority to move forward as a leadership. Authority resides with the congregation, but is assigned to the leadership team. This model parallels Carver's Policy Model in the way the congregation gives the leadership authority to determine vision and the means of getting there.

The Church of Jesus Christ is the expression of the Kingdom of God here on earth. According to Jesus' instructional prayer of Matthew 6:10, "...your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven," the church is to display the evidence of the Kingdom of God here on earth. F. W. Beare commenting on this verse noted that the request was made in the passive voice in the original language making it clear that the prayer was an invitation for God to bring it about.¹³⁰ Yet Ulrich Luz commented on the open or general nature of the prayer because of its brevity. Rooted in Jewish thought, Luz suggests that, "the will of an active God is always understood as a demand of an active partner."¹³¹ Donald A. Hagner summed up the petitions of the opening of the Lord's prayer as follows, "they (the disciples) cannot bring that kingdom into existence by their own efforts, yet they are to reflect the good news of its inauguration in and through Jesus.

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¹³⁰ Beare, F. W. (1981). The Gospel According to Matthew. New York, Harper & Row, Publishers. 172.

¹³¹ Luz, U. (2007). Matthew 1-7. Minneapolis, Fortress Press. 314-319.

They are to manifest the reality of the presence of the kingdom.(Hagner 1993)¹³² The pattern of governance is to be the same as the pattern that has been established in heaven. Colossians 1:16 says, “For by him [Jesus] all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.”¹³³ Markus Barth and Helmut Blanke commenting on the perfect tense of the Greek word *ektistai* said, “it allows [creation] to continue, and thus it includes the work of the Messiah who has become man. He and his work become a part of, and the real purpose for, the act of creation by God.”¹³⁴ Jesus himself said, “...I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matthew 16:18). “The work of Jesus in the building of the church is the continuation of the Messiah’s work in creation as stated by Barth and Blanke. [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church” (Colossians 1:18). According to Colossians 2:19, Jesus as head of the body holds the church together, supporting it and causes it to grow. As the head of the church Jesus determines the focus and direction of the church. He is the one who has invested in the church. According to Alan Hirsch, “At its very heart, Christianity is ... a messianic movement, one which seeks to consistently embody the life, spirituality and mission of its founder.”¹³⁵

When Jesus had finished his work on this earth, he said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and

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¹³² Hagner, D. A. (1993). Matthew 1-13. Dallas, TX, Word Books, Publisher. 148, 149.

¹³³ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

¹³⁴ Blanke, M. B. a. H. (1994). Colossians. New York, Doubleday. 199.

¹³⁵ Hirsch, A. (2006). The Forgotten Way. Grand Rapids MI, Brazos Press. 94.

teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20). An alternate reading of verse 18 could be, “Therefore as you go about your life, make disciples....” The tense of the Greek word for “go” is in the continuous tense emphasizing the ongoing nature of living. In II Corinthians 5:11-20, the Apostle Paul, concluding a discussion on ministry, said that the church has the ministry of reconciliation and that we are called to be ambassadors of the Kingdom of God. If we were in the Carver Policy Governance model we would be talking about an “End’s Policy” with relationship to what we measure or for what we are held accountable. Hirsch states it as follows, “...the quality of the church’s leadership is directly proportional to the quality of discipleship.”¹³⁶ In other words, our ability to follow Jesus Christ is the primary factor in our effectiveness as leaders within the church.

In the letter to the church in Ephesus, Paul talks about Jesus and how “it was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up” (Ephesians 4:11, 12). Barth said the Greek word, *to prepare* “describes the dynamic act by which persons... are properly conditioned.”¹³⁷ These gifts were not given to the church so that they would *control* “God’s people,” but rather to *prepare* them. “[You] are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (I Peter 2:9). Peter made it clear that before the Lord, we all have this calling to be mediators or pro-claimers of God’s grace to all people as royal priests. In these verses the role of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers is

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¹³⁶ Ibid. 119.

¹³⁷ Barth, M. (1974). Ephesians 4 - 6. New York, Doubleday. 439.

not that of governance so much as it is that of men and women who coach, train, teach, equip others to accomplish the callings of God. Peter speaking to fellow elders said:

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away (I Peter 5:1-4).

This is the language of service; the language of a humility rooted in a personal sense of God's grace and the privilege that is leadership's to be used by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 5:1-3 states:

Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people.

As priests we have been selected to represent men and women in matters related to God, with gentleness because we can identify with them.

Finally, the underlying motivation, which gives direction, content and passion to accomplish the task, as set out by Jesus Christ is captured in Jesus' answer to the question, "What is the greatest commandment?" Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it; 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Matthew 22:37-39). The Apostle Paul made the point in this way:

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing (I Corinthians 13:1-3).

This chapter opened with a look at the beginnings of the development of corporate governance. Three intersecting visions formed the foundations of all that has been developed over the years. The first of these is the vision that “all men are created equal... endowed by their creator with... inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness [and] [t]hat to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their powers from the consent of the governed.”¹³⁸ Within the Kingdom of God, because of His Love, governance is not found in corporate institution, but the act or manner of governing is found in an intimate, growing relationship with Jesus Christ, recognizing Him as lord and saviour and willingly submitting our lives to His purposes.

The second intersecting vision is the free market where all people are free to enter in and participate, understanding that their participation is motivated by selfish interests. Because of our confidence that our God can and will supply all our needs according to his riches in glory, ideally we do not need to participate in the free market for selfish reasons. We are free to live our lives not for ourselves but for him who loves us and gave himself for us. This speaks directly to the trend of our day towards consumerism. Because God supplies all our needs, we do not need to fall prey to the enticements of our age. Ideally, we will not be distracted from the goals of the kingdom, because the things that this world offers do not entice us.

Finally, every person in Christ is a new creation (II Corinthians 5:17) and we have all become a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God. We are all equal before him, chosen, royal, holy and his people. There is no sense of

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¹³⁸ Millstein, I. M. (2006). A Perspective on Corporate Governance: Rules, Principles, or Both. Westport, Connecticut, Praeger Perspectives. p.3 (quoting from the Declaration of Independence (1776) paragraph 2-3.

hierarchy here other than experience. This results in those more experienced sharing their lives with others. Based on this vision, each person has specific rights that allow him or her to participate equally with everyone one around him or her in the process of decision-making.

The idea of personal rights and equality combined with the selfish interests of the free market create a tempting environment that needs direction. Thus the third intersecting vision is of a just and merciful society that motivates us to do right to all and create structures of governance to guide human activity. Because the world does not have a vital relationship with the living God, guidelines and laws are needed to regular the behaviour of individuals. Guidelines and laws are the very thing that becomes the foundations of institutions that move individuals from walking in relationship with one another to striving to find ways to make the guidelines and laws work to their advantage.

From a Christian perspective, in the Kingdom of God the whole dynamic around the action and/or manner of governing is rooted in who God is, and God is Love (I John 4:16). The passage goes on to say, "We love because he first loved us." Based on the idea of "love" the need for a formalizing of governance does not seem necessary. Yet, when we consider the starting point for governance within the kingdom of God it always starts with who God is and what he wants. God desires "all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4). The Lordship of Jesus Christ is the central notion of Kingdom governance.

Secondly, Kingdom governance is motivated not by the selfish interests in the free market, but it is motivated by the fact that we love him because he first loved us and we want to bring joy to his life (Nehemiah 8:10).

Accordingly, the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the invitation to walk in relationship with the Heavenly Father and the presence of the Holy Spirit enabling us to fulfill the mission of Christ does not indicate the growth of an institution but the establishment of a community of people joined together to accomplish a great task for the Glory of God. Alan Roxburgh and Alan Hirsch both refer to the community of people that grows out of the fulfillment of Christ's mission as being *communitas*.¹³⁹

This idea of community that grows out of ministry and journey has captured my imagination. The word *communitas* represents the coming together in a season of transition to discern together through God's word what he wants, leads us to share a common thread, weather the storm of transition together and see a place of love, acceptance and belonging emerge that will see a new missional church rise from the ashes of modernity.¹⁴⁰ This idea of mission as being central to the organizing of a ministry is one of the key aspects of Alan Hirsch's book *The Forgotten Way*.¹⁴¹ The Church of the Savior in Washington D.C. is one example of a church that allows the Lord to shape who they are. Alan Hirsch, referring to Gordon Crosby, pastor of The Church of the Savior, said, "He had observed no groups that came together around a non-missional purpose (e.g. Prayer, worship, study, etc) ever ended up becoming missional."¹⁴² Elizabeth O'Connor, a staff member of The Church of the Savior from 1953 until her death in 1998, mentioned a time in the life of that church when they realized that if they were to be truly missional that they would have to let go of their "fellowship groups" and

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¹³⁹ Roxburgh, A. J. (2005). *The Sky is Falling!?! Leaders Lost in Transition*. Eagle, Idaho, ACI Publishing. 102-105. Hirsch, A. (2006). *The Forgotten Way*. Grand Rapids MI, Brazos Press. Chapter 8.

¹⁴⁰ Roxburgh. 116.

¹⁴¹ Hirsch, A. (2006). *The Forgotten Way*. Grand Rapids MI, Brazos Press. 235,236.

¹⁴² Ibid. 235.

start missional groups. In so doing, these missional groups attracted other like-minded people and those to whom they ministered and eventually the groups became congregations of God's purposes.¹⁴³ To start with governance one loses the genius of the birth of *communitas*, that community that is born out of times of transition and ministry together.

For many congregations, governance is so much a part of the culture that they do not think about it; it is just the way it is. However, understanding governance can help a leadership team and the congregation overcome conflicts by bringing the governance model out into the open, discussing it and embracing the way things are. Moreover, the governance model may be out of sync with the character and nature of the church and thus hinder them from accomplishing their mission. As congregations grow in size and diversity of ministries, the form of governance must adjust to the new realities. Foundational to this process is the *communitas* out of which the ministry and congregation grow.

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¹⁴³ O'Connor, E. (1991). Servant Leaders, Servant Structures. Washington DC, Potter's House Bookservice. 21, 22.

Section IV

Conclusion and Practice Outcome

At the beginning of this paper I claimed that the period following a crisis holds great opportunity for the leadership of the congregation to reshape the form and vision of the church to more effectively serve the community around them. Crises arise out of times of change and times of change often arise out of crises. Times of change and how we respond to the resulting transitions that occur are critical to how effectively the congregation will engage restructured and renewed. Times of change and the resulting transitions that occur often are characterized by uncertainty, confusion and emotional instability. I believe congregations can be helped by the ministry of a spiritual director who is aware of the nature of transition and can facilitate a process whereby a congregation can identify who they are, what they are called to do and how they are going to move forward. The spiritual director can help the congregation understand the shifting nature of the culture around them and how their Christian faith can more effectively meet the needs of the emerging culture. More important than all of that, a spiritual director can help the congregation maintain a view of the culture of the Kingdom of God and help the congregation include God in the conversation and so facilitate their discernment of His purposes.

A spiritual director approaches his or her ministry as a facilitator of another's relationship with God, believing that He is eager to communicate His desires to His people and by the presence of the Holy Spirit capable of leading them to understand His intentions for them. Believing each Christian has the Holy Spirit present in his or her life and is gifted with a variety of spiritual gifts, the spiritual director must encourage the

community of faith to actively listen to one another's hearts, believing that God has spoken to them and collectively they can discern His will. This facilitation of the community of faith also is rooted in the belief that each individual, in their personal relationship with God, understand Him in some unique way and that a collective understanding of God, achieved through actively listening to one another's stories, can be established which would provide clues as to the focus of ministry for that congregation of people.

A spiritual director also is one who helps a congregation see their place in the plans of God, as a part of His family and kingdom, committed to seeing His purposes and goals fulfilled in this world. In this arena, a spiritual director is to help the congregation identify those hurdles that are a part of their lives that keep them from fulfilling the mission of God. Particularly, the aspects of the institution that keeps a congregation tied to man's agenda need to be removed so that the fullness of life that God promises can be realized in this life. Someone once said "the church is an outpost of heaven on earth".¹⁴⁴

I believe that a ministry of spiritual direction is the most balanced and effective approach to helping congregations come to grips with the crisis that they face and move forward to embrace the calling of God in their lives. Spiritual direction is a continuous process of formation and guidance, in which *a leadership team* is led and encouraged by *a spiritual friend, to discern and lead a congregation in their collective calling*, so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit *they (the congregation)* may attain to the particular end of *their calling* and to union with God.¹⁴⁵

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¹⁴⁴ I believe that this was a statement of Mark Twain's, however I am unable to verify this fact.

¹⁴⁵ The italicized words indicate my shaping of Merton's definition.

Chapter 7

The Seminars

The design of seminars that have been developed out of this written statement is to be facilitated over the course of a nine-month period. This short period of time does not guarantee complete transition, but is required to establish a foothold for change in the life of the congregation. The target audience is the leadership team of a local church. Following is an outline of a weekend retreat, which demonstrates the application of the written statement to the seminars.

There are two applications running through this example:

- The context of the seminars, which deals with creating the appropriate environment for spiritual direction to occur and
- The content of the seminars, which is applied to the needs of the leadership team and the congregation, which they lead.

Because spiritual direction is the framework within which this ministry will be established, the use of prayer, scripture and the discipline of “dwelling in the Word” are established throughout the weekend to bring God’s presence and influence to bear on each topic discussed. The interactive nature of the weekend is purposeful on a number of levels. As the leadership team interacts with one another and with God, through prayer and His Word, their focus will move from individual positions to corporate positions and hopefully in line with the principles of the kingdom of God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The social interactions of the weekend; everything from the fellowship times, meal times and discussions around the various questions are in place to help the leadership team strengthen their relationships with one another and be as “iron sharpens iron” (Proverbs 27:17)¹⁴⁶. The social interaction also is important in keep individuals from settling into exclusive views of what has happened in the congregation, where they are at as a congregation and where they should be going in the future. The encouraged openness and discussion can lead to a greater sense of unity in purpose as they submit to God and his purposes of the congregation.

A second aspect of the interaction during the weekend is the personal nature of the requested sharing. During the *Introduction* component of the weekend, the requested responses to ice breakers and biblical interpretations to the sharing of personal experiences with God are designed to allow for personal testimony and create a transparency amongst the leadership team and to strengthen the foundations of trust in their relationships.

The seminars are held over a period of three days, Thursday evening, through Friday evening and Saturday until 3 p.m. so that a rhythm of learning and sharing, of focus and socializing, of application and rest can be achieved maximizing the goal to have minds alert and interest engaged. By concluding mid-afternoon on Saturday the leadership can still have time together with their families that evening and still enjoy the day of rest on Sunday.

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¹⁴⁶ (1984). The Holy Bible (NIV). Nashville, Tennessee, Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Sample

Weekend Retreat Schedule

Thursday Evening		Saturday	
7:00 p.m.	<i>Introduction:</i>	8:00 a.m.	Coffee and Muffins
	<i>Opportunity Knocks</i>		(continental breakfast)
	Personal Testimony	8:30 a.m.	Time of Worship/Prayer
	Ice Breaker: Why did you	9:00 a.m.	Session III:
	join this congregation?		<i>Transition: The Ending</i>
8:00 p.m.	Session I:		Ice Breaker: Is transition
	<i>Bailey Bridge Ministries: Spiritual</i>		easy or difficult for you? Why?
	<i>Director and His Role</i>	10:15 a.m.	Coffee Break
9:00 p.m.	Conclude Session	10:45 a.m.	Session IV:
	Q&A		<i>Transition: The Neutral Zone</i>
	Fellowship Time	12 Noon	Lunch
Friday Evening		1:30 p.m.	Session V:
6:00 p.m.	Supper Meal Together		<i>Transition: The New Beginning</i>
7:00 p.m.	Ice Breaker: If you could	2:30 p.m.	Conclude Seminar
	start one ministry, what would it be?		Q&A
7:30 p.m.	Session II:		Time of Prayer
	<i>Transition and Change</i>	3:00 p.m.	We All Go Home
8:30 p.m.	Conclude Session		
	Q&A		
	Fellowship Time		

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Taking Advantage of the Hard Times

with

Jim Regehr

Bailey Bridges Ministries

2010

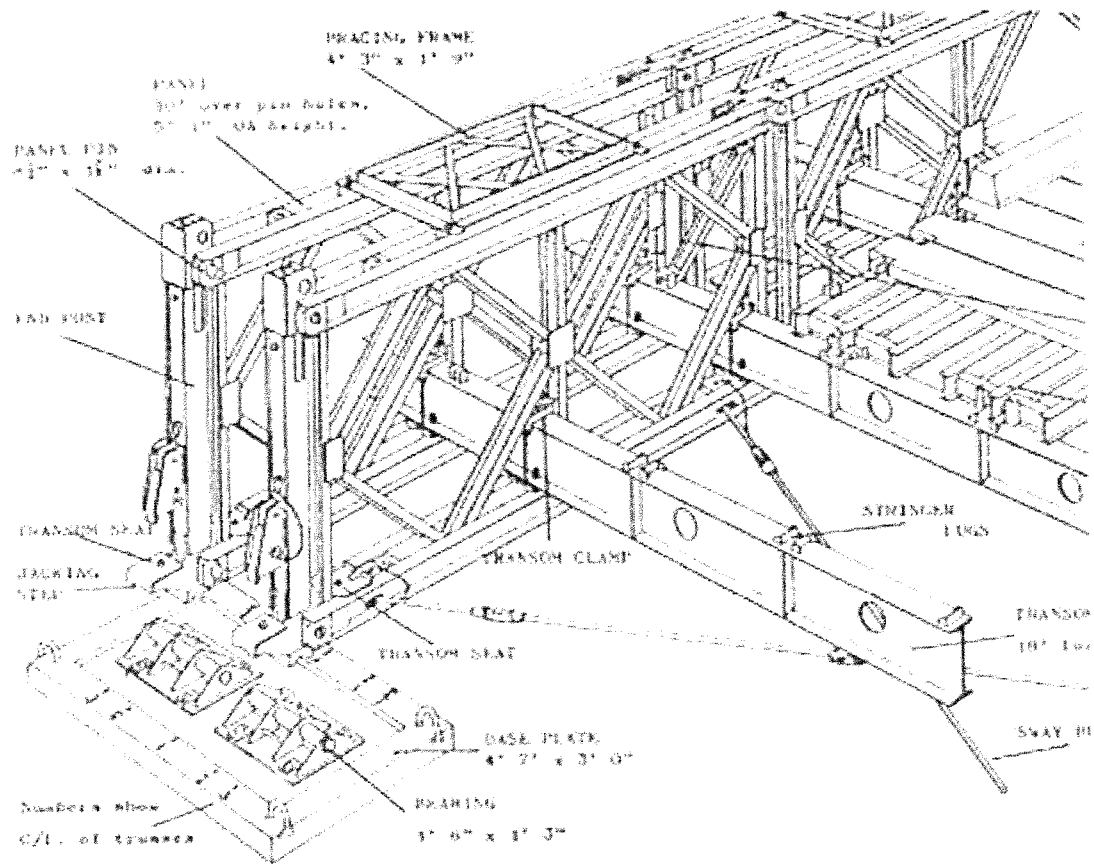


DIAGRAM OF DOUBLE TRUSS - SINGLE SYDNEY (DS)

¹ "Bailey Bridges," *Willys Military Jeeps*.

<http://www.willysmjeeps.com/v2/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=5>.

Introduction

This manual will guide you through the various sessions that we will participate in this weekend. The intention of this weekend is to provide you with a basic understanding of the transition that you are experiencing as a result of your most recent crisis. In the future when I return we will have further sessions focused on how you prepare for change, lead the congregation in embracing the opportunity and understanding the context of your ministry.

In the life of all organizations, crises occur which can delay our forward momentum. Sometimes these crises can detour us from our calling in Jesus Christ and in some cases cause us to stall completely. During the World War II, the allies were pressing forward to win the war and the retreating army was doing everything to stop their forward progress. An often-used ploy was to destroy bridges. This was very effective for a time. However, Douglas C Bailey, a civil engineer with the Ministry of Supply, for the British Government, designed a portable bridge, which changed the course of the war.²

Our ministry is to provide a temporary and portable bridge to your ministry so that you and your congregation will have a continuing sense of moving forward to fulfill your mission on God's behalf. What does it take to bridge the gap that a crisis creates in the life of a congregation? Throughout the sessions we will try to facilitate a three-way conversation between you, myself as a facilitator and God. We will do this in a number of ways:

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² T. S. Douglas, "How the Army's Amazing Bailey Bridge Is Built," *The War Illustrated* 8, no. 198 (1945). 564.

1. Throughout the weekend we will use an exercise called ‘dwelling in the word’³, to keep scriptures in the forefront of our thoughts.
2. We will start each session with an invitation for God to come and meet with us.
3. We will talk about what God has already said to you and the congregation about your ministry to this community.
4. We will plan times of prayer and discernment for you and your congregation.

As with all crises, a change occurs and that change results in individuals and groups going through a period of transition or adjustment. Our first session will focus on the Bailey Bridge Ministry and how it will come alongside you to facilitate your ministry. The following four sessions will try and help you understand the transition that you are experiencing. Transition is a variation of grief and I want to help you see how this process of dealing with transition can prepare you to embrace new opportunities. This period of transition can also be a significant time of self-discovery and of renewing the vision of the congregation.

Session II then will focus on giving you a perspective of transition and its relationship to change. Session III will focus on the first phase of transition, the ending of the way things were. The ending is really about how we let go of the past so that we can prepare for what God has for us in the future. Because Session III is so long, it might spill over into Session IV which will look at the second phase of transition, the neutral zone. This is the period of transition in which you prepare to meet with God, face to

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³ Dwelling in the Word is an exercise I experienced while doing a weekend with Allelon Ministries. Allelon is a resource group ministering to missional churches. You can get more information on this group at: <http://allelon.org/>.

face. Finally Session V will look at the final phase of transition, the new beginning. In this final session we will also look at applying the process to the congregation you serve to identify where they may be at in the process.

Schedule Of Seminar

Thursday Evening

7:00 p.m. *Introduction: Opportunity*

Knocks

Personal Testimony

Ice Breaker: Why did you join
this congregation?

8:00 p.m. Session I: *Bailey Bridge*

*Ministries: Spiritual Director
and His Role*

9:00 p.m. Conclude Session Q&A

Fellowship Time

Friday Evening

6:00 p.m. Supper Meal Together

7:00 p.m. Ice Breaker: If you could start
one ministry, what would it be?

7:30 p.m. Session II:

Transition and Change

8:30 p.m. Conclude Session Q&A

Fellowship Time

Saturday

8:00 a.m. Coffee and Muffins

(continental breakfast)

8:30 a.m. Time of Worship and Prayer

9:00 a.m. Session III:

Transition: The Ending

10:15 a.m. Coffee Break

10:45 a.m. Session IV:

Transition: The Neutral Zone

12 Noon Lunch

1:30 p.m. Session V:

Transition: The Beginning

2:30 p.m. Conclude Seminar

Q&A

Time of Prayer

3:00 p.m. We All Go Home

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OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

Session

I

In this first session we will share a personal testimony with you to give you a bit of perspective as to where I have come from. There will be opportunity for you to share aspects of your own life so that we continue to get to know one another better. I will also give you a bit of perspective concerning Bailey Bridge Ministries and how we come along side you to help you continue to move forward in fulfilling God's purposes for you your church and community.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

BAILEY BRIDGE FOR MINISTRY

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

The moment is etched in my mind. It was our Annual Congregational Meeting. The chairman of the board invited another board member to bring a report concerning the future of the church. I was caught off guard by the unexpected request. As the report unfolded, it contained allegations concerning the inadequacy of my leadership. My heart stopped. I felt trapped with nowhere to turn. A member of the congregation rose to my defence and the result was that the half of the leadership team resigned that night and the church swung from one that had a bright future to one that was fighting for its life.

The congregation was split, some loyal to the pastor and some loyal to the leaders who left. Others were confused, wondering what had happened. The remaining members of the leadership team felt helpless to explain the conflict of which they were a part. The congregation shrunk from an average attendance of around three hundred (300) down to approximately one hundred forty (140). All the hope that we had that God would bless our community through our ministries died in the next months as individuals and families one by one disappeared and those remaining felt rejected and discouraged.

In the midst of this slow 'bleeding' I questioned my ability to lead the congregation simply because I realized that I was a part of the problem. I needed to confess my part in this breakdown in leadership to those remaining and let them know how I had failed them. I was also seeking the direction of the Lord as to what I needed to do? What was best for the church? How was the congregation to move forward?

What followed was two to three years of transition, as we rebuilt the community of faith, the leadership team and the vision for ministry. What followed was an opportunity "get it right" and lay down the foundation that could sustain a new vision.

Bailey Bridge for the Spiritual Journey

- The spiritual life is a journey
- Washouts delay the journey
- Washouts detour the journey
- Bailey Bridges facilitate the journey

BAILEY BRIDGE FOR LIFE

The spiritual life often is described as a journey having a starting point and an end point. The famous allegory, Pilgrim's Progress, is an example of this journey. A crisis in the journey of our spiritual lives is like a washout on a road. The washout, changes the journey by delaying the trip or causing a person to take a detour so that they can continue the journey. October 1974 heavy rainfall caused significant flooding in Northwestern BC. A number of bridges between Hazelton and Prince Rupert were wiped out and access to the part of the province was closed. The answer, bailey bridges, temporary military bridges were brought in to span the washouts so that access for food and fuel could be restored. Transitional ministry is a bailey bridge for the spiritual journey,

Bailey Bridge for the Spiritual Journey

Characteristics of Bailey Bridge

- Temporary
- Portable
- Can carry the traffic
- Simply constructed

In the same way that a Bailey Bridge is temporary, portable and able to carry out the tasks so the role of a spiritual director is the same. A spiritual director is a...

Bailey Bridge = Spiritual Director

A spiritual director is a friend who facilitates a process of formation and guidance between a congregation and their leadership team to discern and lead them in their collective calling so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit, they may attain to the particular end of their calling and union with God.

Spiritual direction is a continuous process of formation and guidance, in which *a leadership team* is led and encouraged *by a spiritual friend*, to discern and lead a congregation in their collective calling, so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit *they (the congregation)* may attain to the particular end of *their calling* and to union with God (taken from the works of Thomas Merton and Henri Nouwen and adapted for a group situation)

Spiritual Director

- Temporary
- Portable
- Can carry the traffic
- Simply constructed

A Spiritual director is temporary in the sense that he has no long term role in the life of the church other than to facilitate the process of formation and discernment. Just like a bailey bridge, he is able to do the job, but in the end he really doesn't fit the environment.

A Spiritual director is portable in that he comes to you in your context.

A Spiritual director can carry the traffic simply because he has experience and is willing to carry responsibility for facilitating the transition.

A Spiritual director is simply constructed because he is human just as we all are and has experience the same human weaknesses as the rest of us.

Dwelling in the Word

- Listen
- Reflect
- Share one-on-one
- Share with the group

HEBREWS 5:1-10

Listen to the reading of the word

Share with one other person what caught your attention during the reading

Share with the group what was shared with you

Your ideas and thoughts will be captured on a white board or large sheets of news print.

My Longing

That the church

- become an outpost of heaven on earth
- be unite with one another locally, regionally and globally
- actively participate in the mission of God
- worship God in all His GLORY

I want to help your church in this adventure simply because I believe that the community we know as the church is the most effective testimony of the work of God in this world and God's chosen tool to accomplish his mission on this earth.

Jesus in his direction to his disciples in John 13:34-35 commanded His disciples "to love one another" and in his prayer from John 17 we learn the unity is one of the longings of his heart. Unity always has been fundamental to accomplishing a task...Genesis 11:6 God said so and in these verse from John's gospel it is emphasised that to accomplish the mission of God unity is required.

These last two points are the same...to obey God is to worship God...so actively participate in the mission of God and to worship God in all His Glory is to obey God and to celebrate His goodness to mankind...

CONCLUSION

1. OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS IN EVERY CRISIS
2. MOST WASHOUTS CAN BE OVERCOME WITH A BAILEY BRIDGE
3. I WANT TO HELP YOU ESTABLISH THE BAILEY BRIDGE FOR YOUR SITUATION

This weekend we will be covering the following topics as outlined in the manual you received:

Session I: Understanding the Mess We're In

Focus: Understanding the Process of Transition and the opportunity it provides.

Session II: Understanding Your Team

Focus: Helping you to work together as a team, together with God. This is a two part session.

Session III: Engaging the Congregation

Focus: How do you help the congregation see transition as a opportunity and engage them in the process.

Session IV: Understanding the Context of 21C Ministry

Focus: Seeing the shifts that have occurred in the culture around us and how we adjust to properly contextualize the message of the kingdom of God.



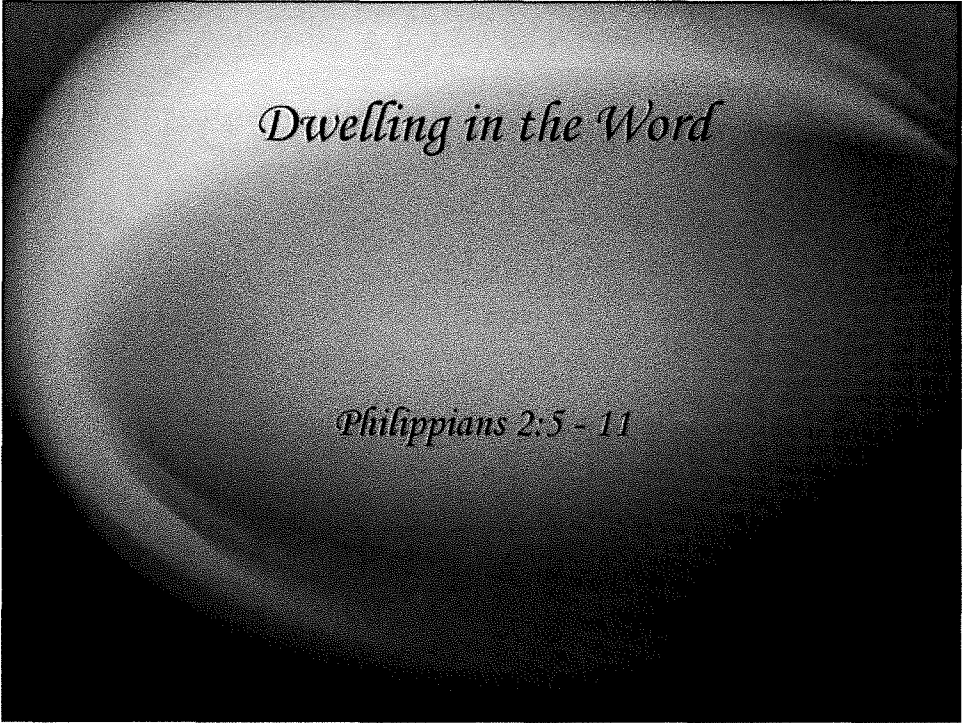
Understanding transition is very important to the process of re-visioning a church because the steps of transition help us to let go of what we have always done, put us in a place to hear God and then give the new vision the best chance at success. Over the next four sessions we will unpack transition and help you to see how its process works and is a God-given gift to help us move forward.

*TRANSITION
IS
MESSY*

UNDERSTANDING
THE MESS WE ARE IN

The transition that occurs following any form of crises always feels messy. The primary reason this is so is because we typically do not understand what is happening and we would prefer things to go back to normal - whatever normal is. And this is one of the more significant dangers to moving forward into what has call you to do, wanting normal, sometimes at any cost and tied to that is the fear of the unknown which crises can precipitate.

In this session we will look more closely at the characteristics of transition to see the possibilities and opportunity that are before you. Transition is an exciting doorway into God's purposes, particularly if we invite Him in to the process.



Dwelling in the Word

Philippians 2:5 - 11

Hebrews 4:15 says that Jesus was tempted in every way, just as we are -yet without sin. Jesus faced transition just as we do. Philippians 2 talks about Christ's transition from heaven to earth.

Listen to this passage.

Share with one other person what caught your attention in the reading.

Share with the larger group what you heard shared with you.

TRANSITION and CHANGE

- ♦ Change is circumstantial
- ♦ *Transition is psychological*
- ♦ Change is an analytical decision
- ♦ *Transition is emotional*
- ♦ Change is external
- ♦ *Transition is internal*

Transition and change are siblings that work together to cause us all kinds of discomfort and yet if we are going to move on in our lives we have to accept both of them, loving them and just like our children, mold us into the people God wants us to be.

Change and Transition

eg. Your family moves from one province to another,

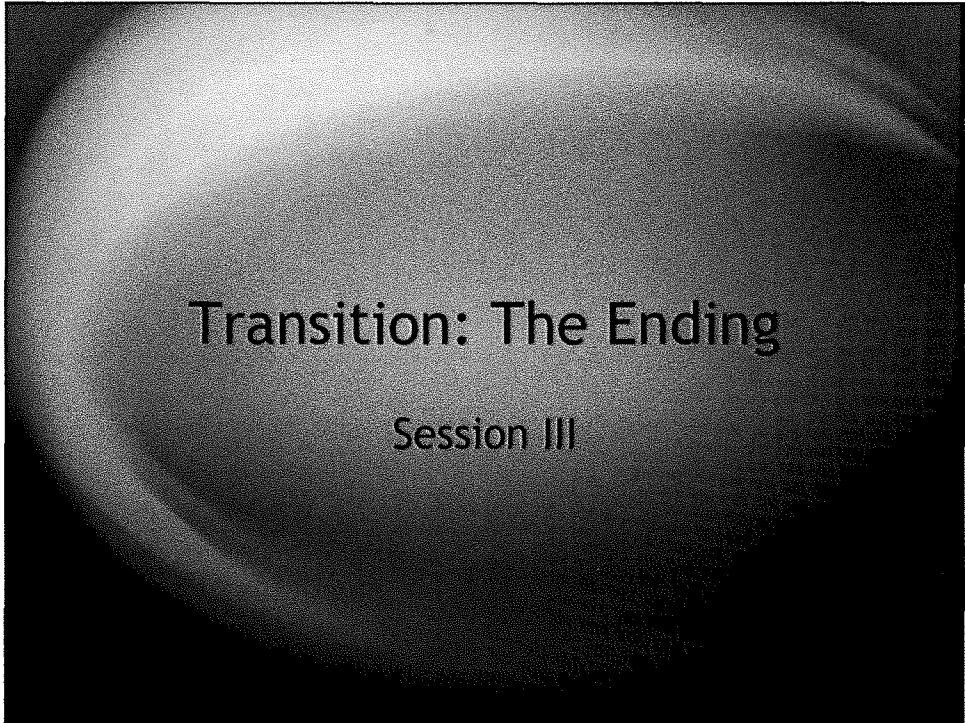
What are the changes that they
experience?

What are the transition they must deal with?

- Change

- Transition

Take this scenario and in pairs describe the changes that your family would have to make and the transitions that they would have to face...



Transition: The Ending

Session III

Transition: The Ending

- ♦ *Disengagement*
- ♦ *Dismantling*
- ♦ *Disidentification*
- ♦ *Disenchantment*
- ♦ *Disorientation*

Transition has three parts: The ending, the neutral zone and the beginning. It may seem strange to start with the ending, but in real life this is the truth. Transition starts when something ends, a relationship, a job, a season of sports or a really good movie.

The ending is the quite complex because to be effective it must include these five steps. To ignore any of these steps is to rob yourselves of the opportunity that the crisis and the subsequent transition affords you.

Transition: The Ending

- ♦ Disengagement unplugs us from our old place in the interpersonal social world with which we identified.

When we do not engage the transition, our ties to our interpersonal social world keep us in that world and we are unable to let go. Whatever is happening in that world will keep our attention and our sense of self tied there and thus we will not be entirely free to enter into what God has prepared for us moving forward. When someone loses their job and then do not disengage, what does that look like?

Transition: The Ending

- Dismantling is the process of letting go of the “we” of life and picking up the personal responsibility of “I”.

If we do not let go of ‘we’ and embrace ‘I’ what would be the consequences? Think about someone who has experienced divorce and they do not make this transition, what does that look like?

Transition: The Ending

- ♦ Disidentification is the internal equivalent of disengagement, the letting go of the identification that the previous relationships established.

My primary gift is 'teaching' but my last role was 'pastor'. If I were to hang onto my identification as pastor I would be limiting the possibilities that lay before me. If I hung on to that identity how would my future be limited? How is it limited by my saying my primary gift is teaching?

Transition: The Ending

- ♦ Disenchantment begins with the discovery that if you want to change - really to change, and not just to switch positions - you must realize that some significant part of your old reality was in your head, not out there.

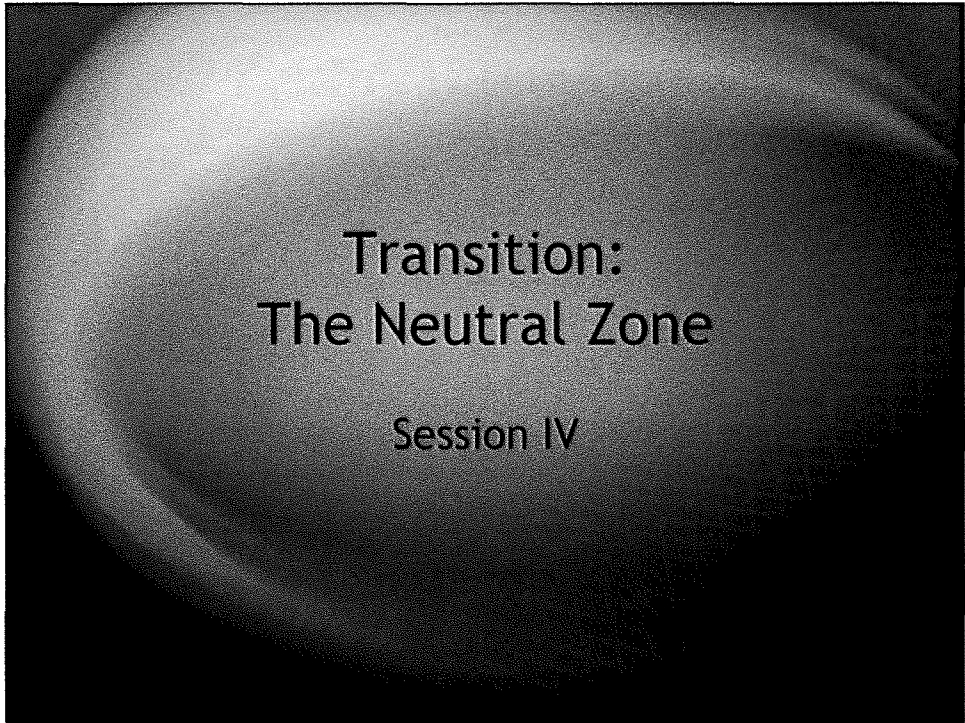
In this discussion about transition and the opportunity that is before you, disenchantment is a very important step in the process of ending what was and preparing to take hold of what will be. It is the process of stripping away everything that is not true so that the foundation you build on will be real. To not do so is to possibly condemn yourself to repeating the same mistake over and over again. This aspect of transition is the hardest to get at because it is dealing with the wrong thinking that goes on because of what we have come to believe about ourselves. Can you think of any examples of individuals that see themselves in some way that limits their possibilities? What would help them?

Transition: The Ending

- Disorientation

After being stripped to the bare essentials, a period of loss of direction, time, and instability occurs. Disorientation is the beginning of the time of nothing before we discover something new. Disorientation is meaningful because you are prepared to embrace something new but it is not enjoyable.

Disorientation is the entrance into the next phase of transition and that is the neutral zone.



Transition: The Neutral Zone

Session IV

Transition: The Neutral Zone

- *A season of waiting*
- *A season of clear self-awareness and self-understanding*
- *An awareness of the world around us becomes clear*
- *A season when what has been disintegrated can be reintegrated*
- *A season of discernment*

The neutral zone is that time when it is just you, your God and the world around you. You have separated yourself from everything that would hold you back and now you begin to contemplate the possibilities and dream the dreams that have been tucked away and dream new dreams that God may plant in your heart.

The Neutral Zone is a season of discernment and journal keeping can become a significant tool for keeping track of all the impressions, scriptures, dreams and spiritual gifts exercised in the process.

This also a season in which you need to have those around you who will challenge you if it looks like your going back to the same-old-same.

If you could start over in life with no excess baggage, are there alternative choices that you would make? Where would they lead you?

Looking at this slide, what scares you on it and what excites you?



Transition: The Beginning

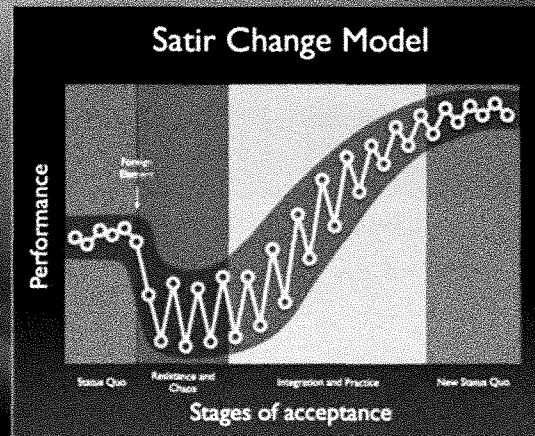
Session V

Transition: The Beginning

- ♦ *Dealing with the fear of the unknown*
- ♦ *Two steps to help keep moving forward:*
  - ♦ *Identify with the new role*
  - ♦ *Enlist the help of your family and friends*
    - ♦ *To identify regressions*
    - ♦ *To ensure a new direction*

The Neutral Zone draws to a conclusion when a sense of anticipation start to rise in your heart and something new begins to emerge... the most fearful thing at this point is the unknown. This is where a sense of God's hand in the process becomes so significant, because "perfect love casts out fear". (I John 4:18)

TRANSITION VISUALIZED

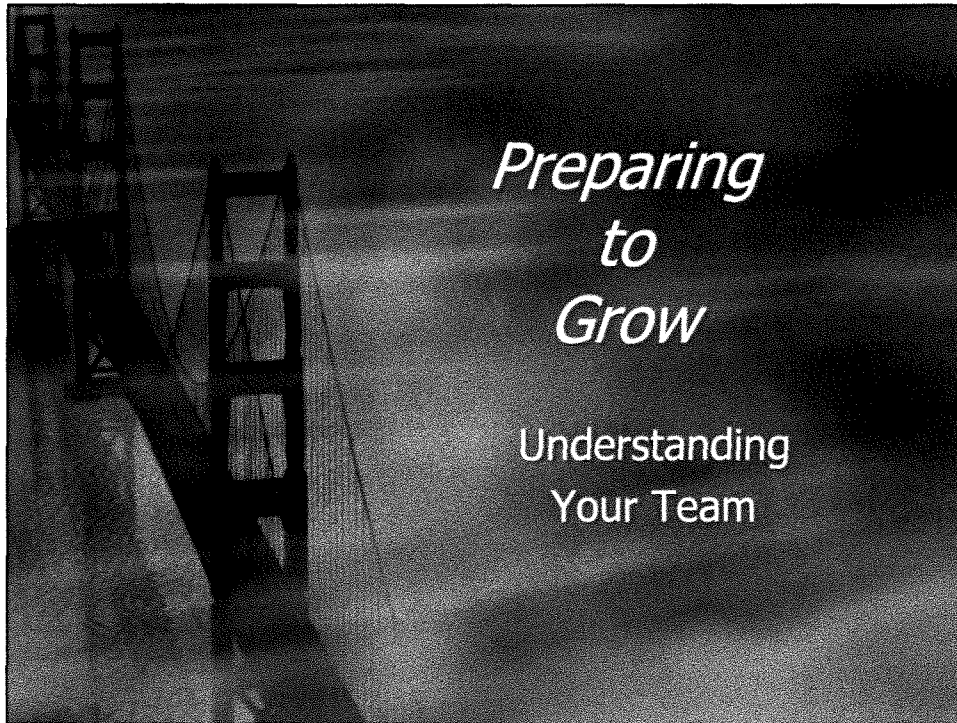


Virginia Satir's Change Model taken from a website:
www.davecheong.com/category/entrepreneur/page/2/ and accessed January 8, 2010.

TRANSITION

- ♦ Having described the process that is transition:
  - ♦ What aspects of the process resonate for you?
  - ♦ Where would the congregation be in the process of transition?
  - ♦ How can you help them to move forward in the process of transition?

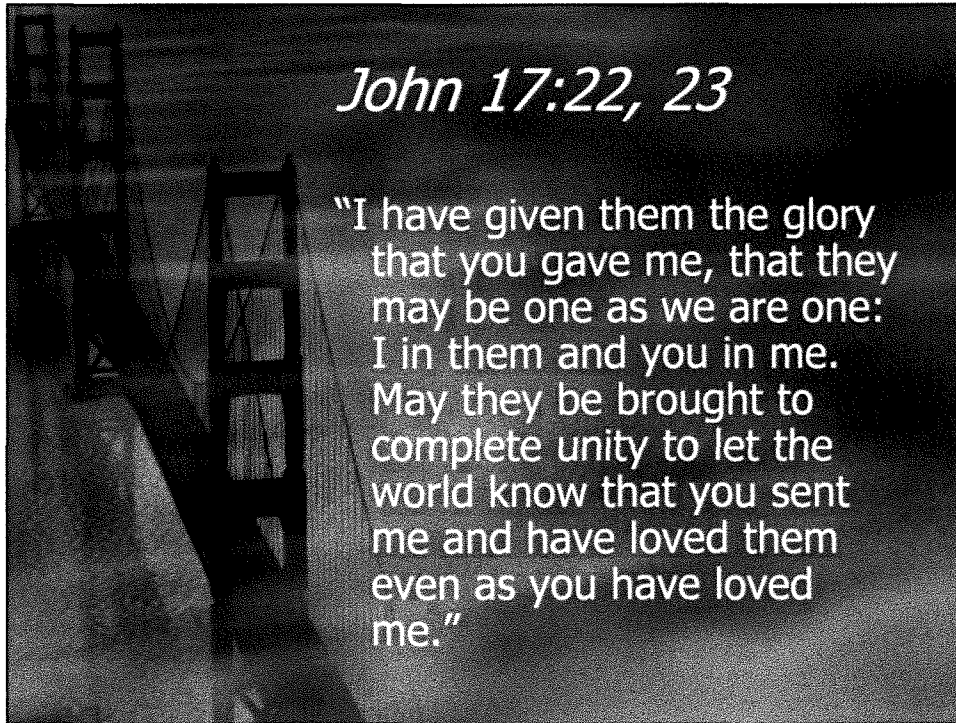
As a conclusion to this session let us answer these questions...



In this session we are going to touch on some personal aspects of your lives that are significant for you as a leadership team to understand.

First, we will look at you as a team and how you can most effectively function together as under-shepherds of our Lord Jesus Christ. Secondly we will look at the process you individually use to make decisions and how you as a team can take advantage of your unique contributions.

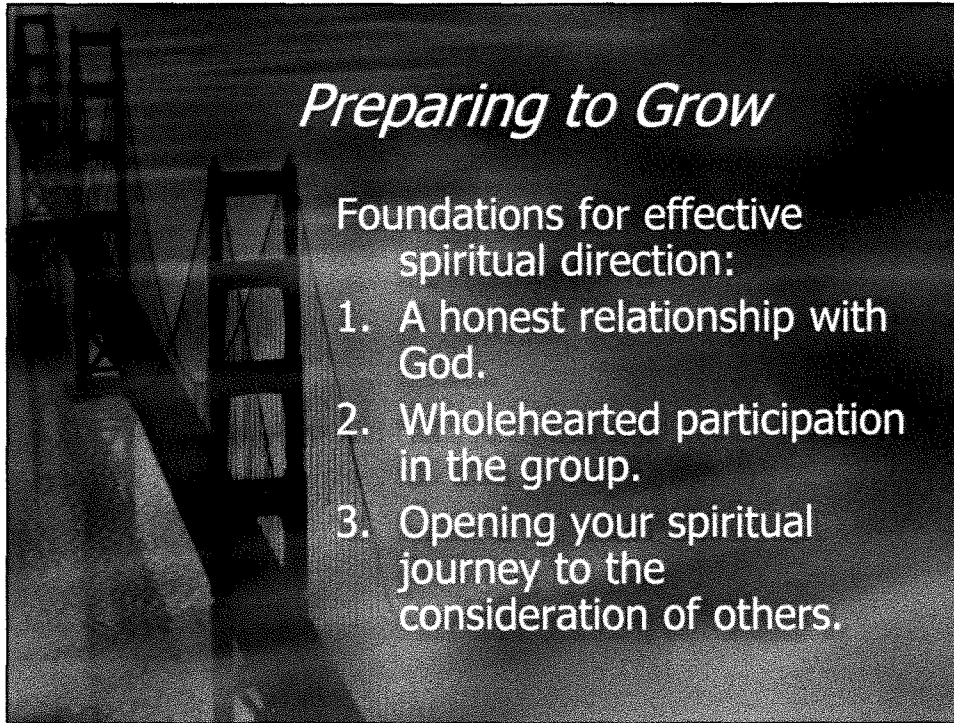
Jesus speaking with His Heavenly Father said, “



John 17:22, 23

"I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

To lead with authority, particularly in a time of transition requires an openness, transparency and unity of heart. According to John 17:3 the glory that Jesus gave to his disciples was embedded in the eternal life or relationship that He made possible for us with His heavenly Father. Our fulfilling God's purposes here on earth brings Him glory. When we walk in obedience to God we walk in unity with one another and this is the grounds of our authority in ministering to the world around us.

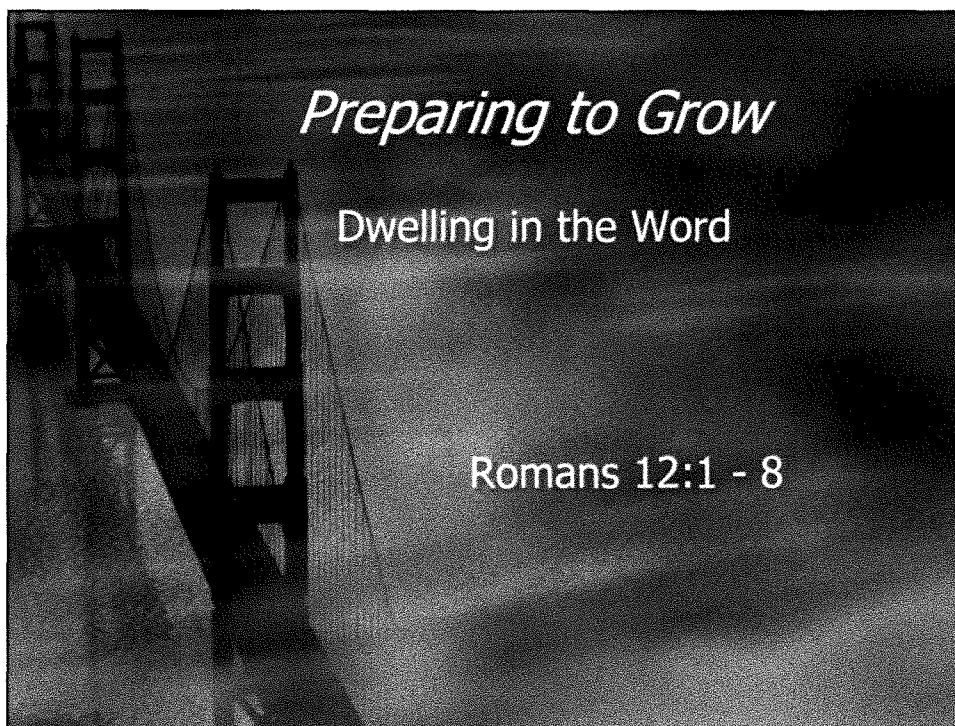


Preparing to Grow

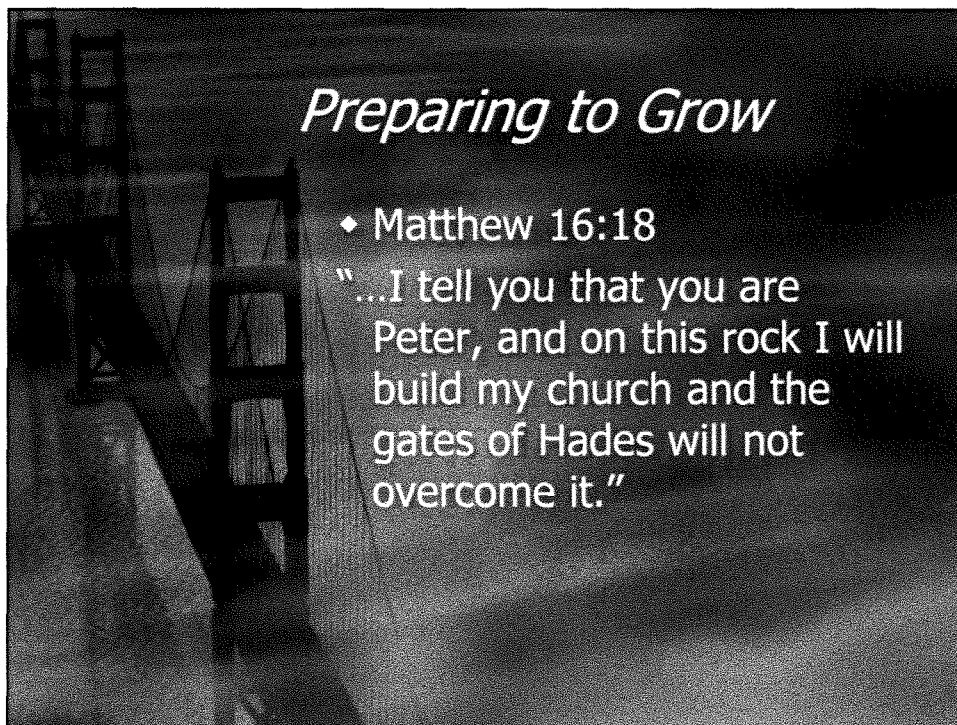
Foundations for effective
spiritual direction:

1. A honest relationship with God.
2. Wholehearted participation in the group.
3. Opening your spiritual journey to the consideration of others.

This unity prepares us for spiritual direction. Rose Mary Dougherty wrote a book called **Group Spiritual Direction:Community for Discernment**. In it she talked about what was required for a leadership team to experience the benefits of spiritual direction. There are three conditions essential to the life of the group. Members must agree to commit themselves to 1) a honest relationship with God; 2) wholehearted participation in the group process through prayerful listening and response; and 3) opening their spiritual journeys to the consideration of others.



One aspect of your team is the mix of spiritual gifts that you represent. This passage from Romans 12 puts your gifts in a context for ministry. As this passage is read, note what stands out for you. When the reading is completed turn to one other person, different than the last time and share what stood out to you. When that is done you will be asked to share with the larger group what was shared with you.

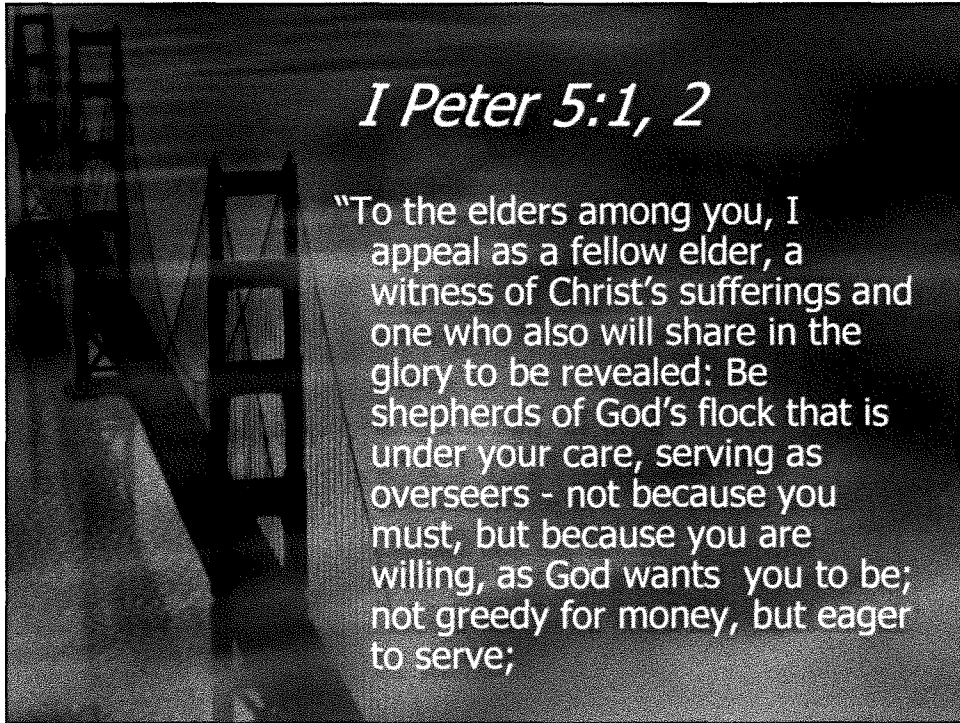


Preparing to Grow

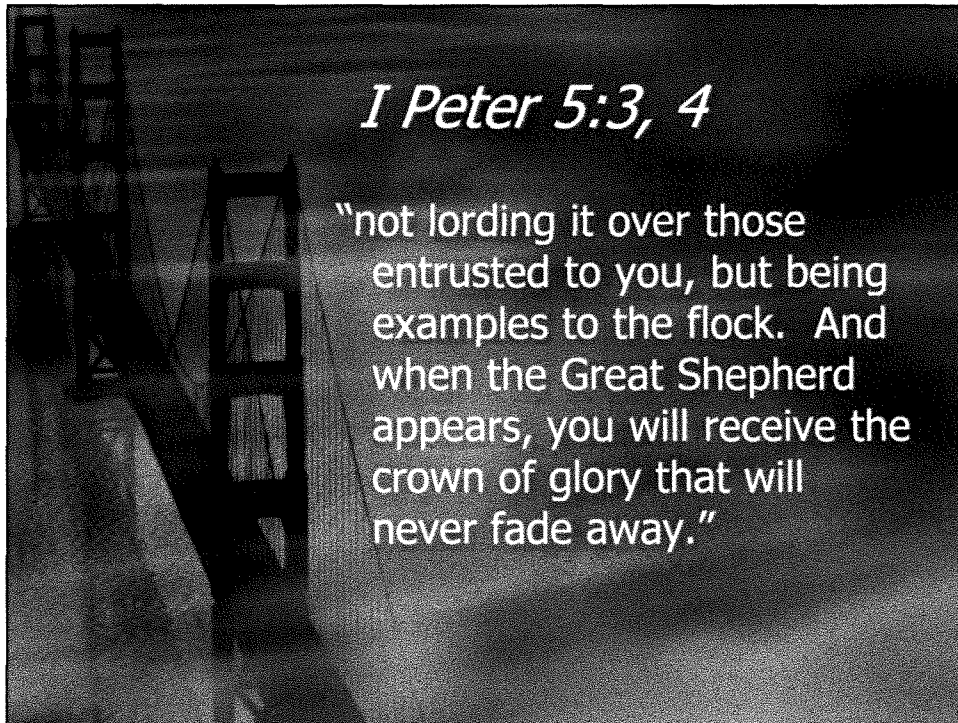
♦ Matthew 16:18

"...I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

Why is our relationship with God so significant if you are to be leaders in your congregation. Consider Matthew 16:18 - what is it about the your relationship with God that impacts your leadership in the congregation?



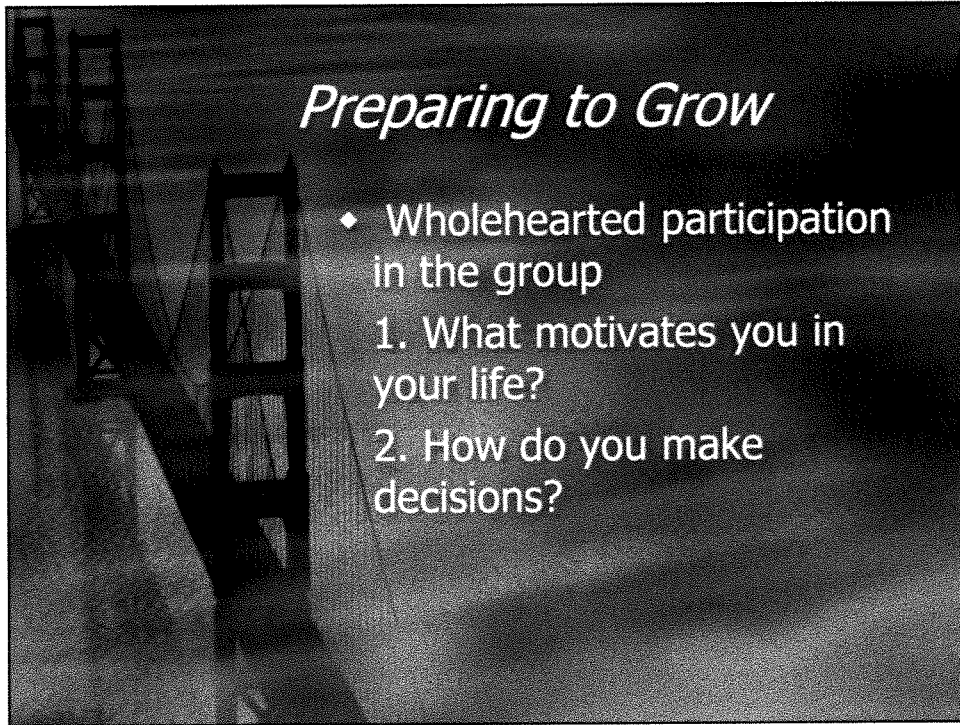
In 1 Peter 5:1-4 the apostle speaking to elders, about their role as elders. Listen to these words...



I Peter 5:3, 4

"not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away."

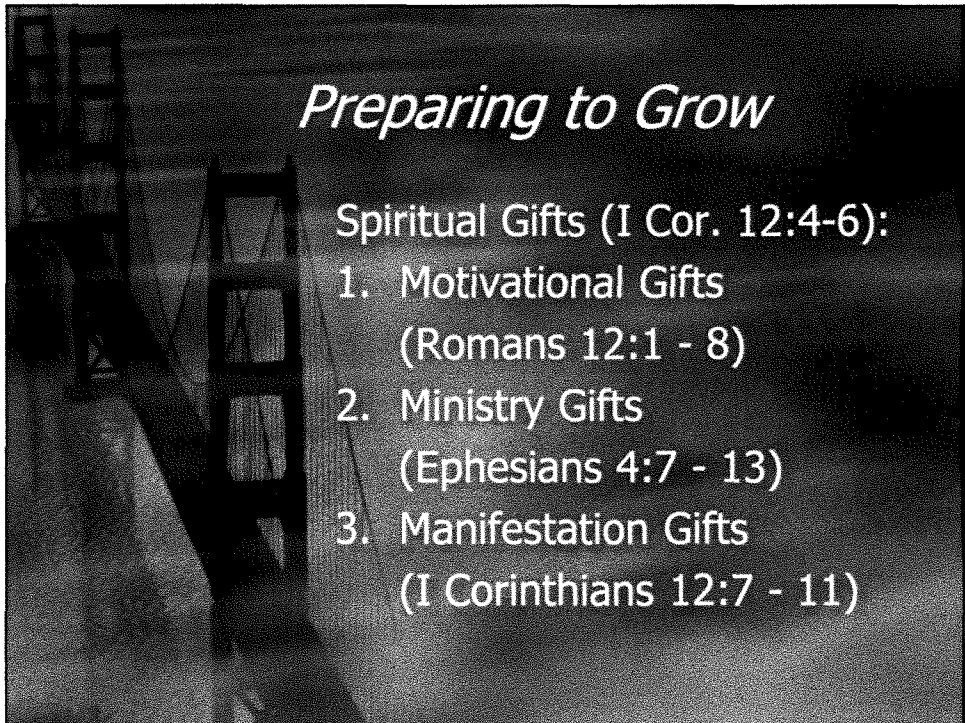
...what stands out to you? Why is an honest relationship with God so important to your leadership of His flock?



Preparing to Grow

- ♦ Wholehearted participation in the group
  1. What motivates you in your life?
  2. How do you make decisions?

Trust in the group comes from an openness and knowing one another...the two inventories I had you do are meant to help you understand one another and thus strengthen you as a team.

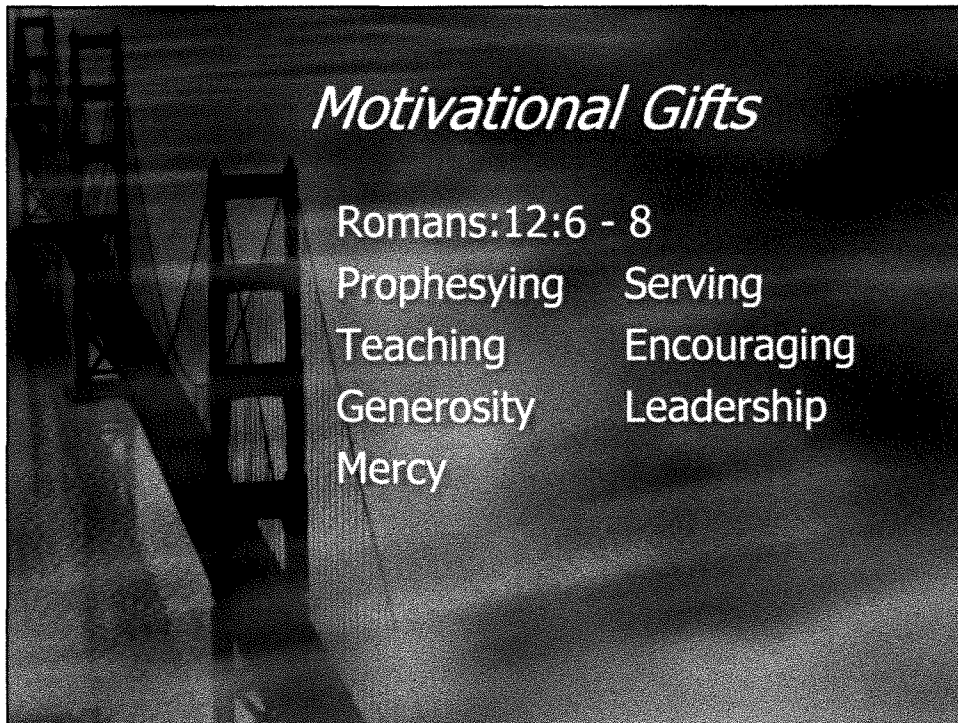


Preparing to Grow

Spiritual Gifts (I Cor. 12:4-6):

1. Motivational Gifts
(Romans 12:1 - 8)
2. Ministry Gifts
(Ephesians 4:7 - 13)
3. Manifestation Gifts
(I Corinthians 12:7 - 11)

There are different kinds of gifts (manifestations), but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service (ministry), but the same Lord. There are different kinds of workings (motivational), but the same God works all of them in all men. I Cor. 12:4-6. The passage we used for Dwelling in the Word this session is the list of the motivational gifts that God the Father works in all men, Christian and not Christians. Let's look at these gifts...



Motivational Gifts

Romans:12:6 - 8

Prophesying	Serving
Teaching	Encouraging
Generosity	Leadership
Mercy	

Prophesying is the ability to put a situation into the big picture and know the right way to go. Serving is the ability to serve others. These people are the 'doers'. Teaching is the ability to research and communicate truth. Encouraging is the ability to help people live positive lives. Generosity is the ability to give of ones time, talent, energy and resources for the benefit of others. Leadership is the ability to organize, lead or direct. The Greek word in this passage refers to a "ship's pilot" who guides a ship through a difficult entrance to a port. Mercy is the ability to show compassion, care and love to those in need.

[Taken from: Don and Katie Fortune. Discover Your God Given Gifts. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York. 1987. 17, 18.]

A bus boy taking a load of dirty dishes to the kitchen and goes through the wrong door. Just as he met the door, a waitress going the right direction pushes the door open and the dirty dishes are every where. A group of observes jump up to be a part of the situation:

Prophetic person says, ok, everyone take note what happened, how this impacts our service of our customers, the atmosphere of the restaurant has been disturbed and our efficiency has been effected.

The Serving person says, "let me help you clean up this mess."

The teacher says, "young man, take a moment to look around, which door were you approaching? Which door should you have used?"

The Encourager says, "young man, you are getting real good at clearing the tables and you can handle quite a load of dishes. You just need to get the traffic flow right and you'll be great.

The Generous person may say, "young man your uniform is a mess, here's some money for you to get it cleaned."

The Leader may say, "You get the mope, you help him clean up, the rest of you get back to your job.

The Merciful person may say, you poor young man, you really didn't mean to go that way, that's all right, we can sort this out.

Each of us has a primary motivational gift, but we also have secondary gifts also. In other word we are not one dimensional, but complex beings created in the image of God.

Break into groups of three, then one of you sit quietly while the other two share the evidence they see in your life as to what they believe your motivational gifts are. After two minutes you will change roles and repeat the process. When every one has had a chance to sit quietly, you will then share the results of the Fortunes' 'God Given Gifts Inventory'.



Prepare to Grow Part II

The MBTI instrument

- Is a *self-report instrument*
- Is *nonjudgmental*
- Indicates *preferences*
- *Sorts* instead of measures
- Deals with everyday behavior of *normal* people

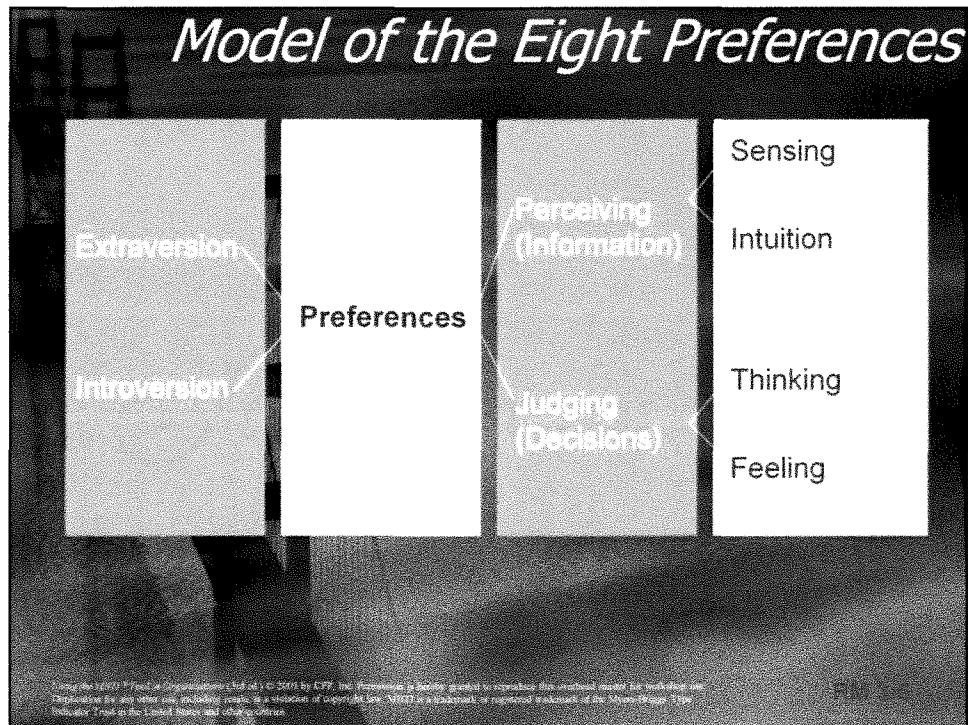
Just as God created each of us with a particular motivational gift to guide us in our lives, so He also established in each of us preferences concerning our interactions with the world around us and how we make decisions. The Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator is an instrument that is used to identify those preferences in our lives. The inventory is self-reporting, in other words, it is your perception of yourself that the indicator reveals.

-It is nonjudgmental, meaning there are no right or wrong answers and one type is not better than another, they are just different.

-As mentioned, it indicates individual preferences

-It does not measure as on a scale but rather sorts the answers into categories

-It deals with everyday normal people in normal circumstances



The eight preferences are focused on four dicotomies that define how we make decisions:

Perceiving and Judging deal with our preference for the process of deciding or for the moment of decision.

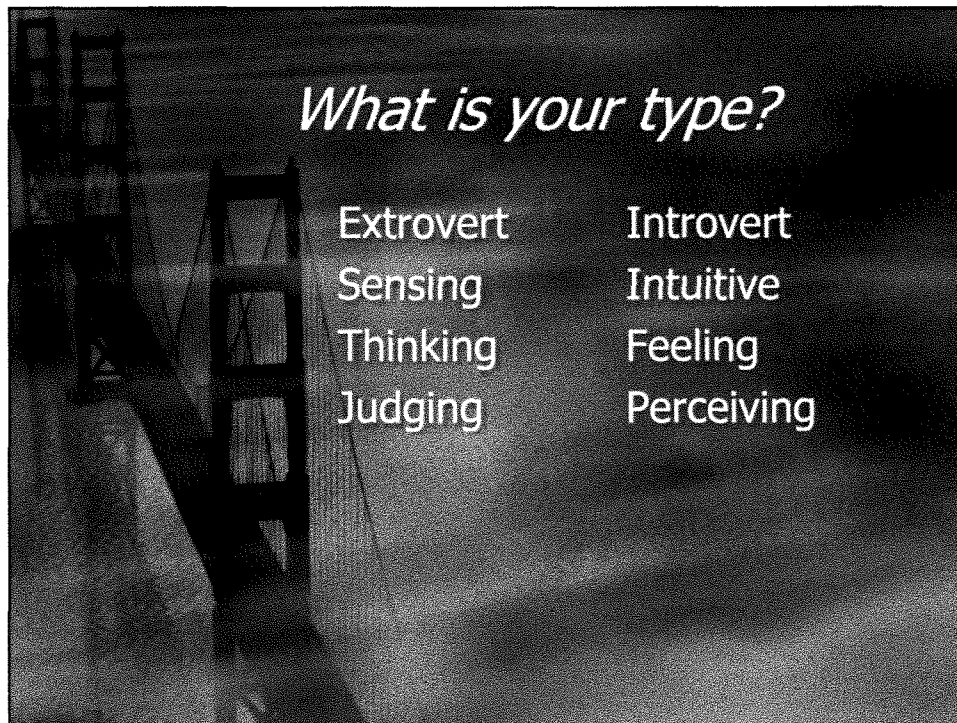
These are general categories with specific preferences related to each one...

Perceiving is the gathering of information, we either gather information by looking for facts or seeing relationships in the information. These preferences are known as sensing (seeing the facts and details) and intuition (seeing ideas and relationships in the information).

Judging is the decision making preference such as judges who make decisions in a court of law. There are preferences related to judging also, analysis and relational preferences. Those who make decisions based on thinking and analysis deal with the facts in an impersonal and fair manner.

Those who make decisions based on relationship deal with the facts in a personal and values. They want to have harmony. These preferences are known as thinking and feeling.

Finally these preferences are all impacted by the individual's preference for life, externally interacting with the world around them, drawing energy from the interaction, internally interacting with within themselves, sorting the information and drawing energy from their own communion. They are known as extroverts and introverts.



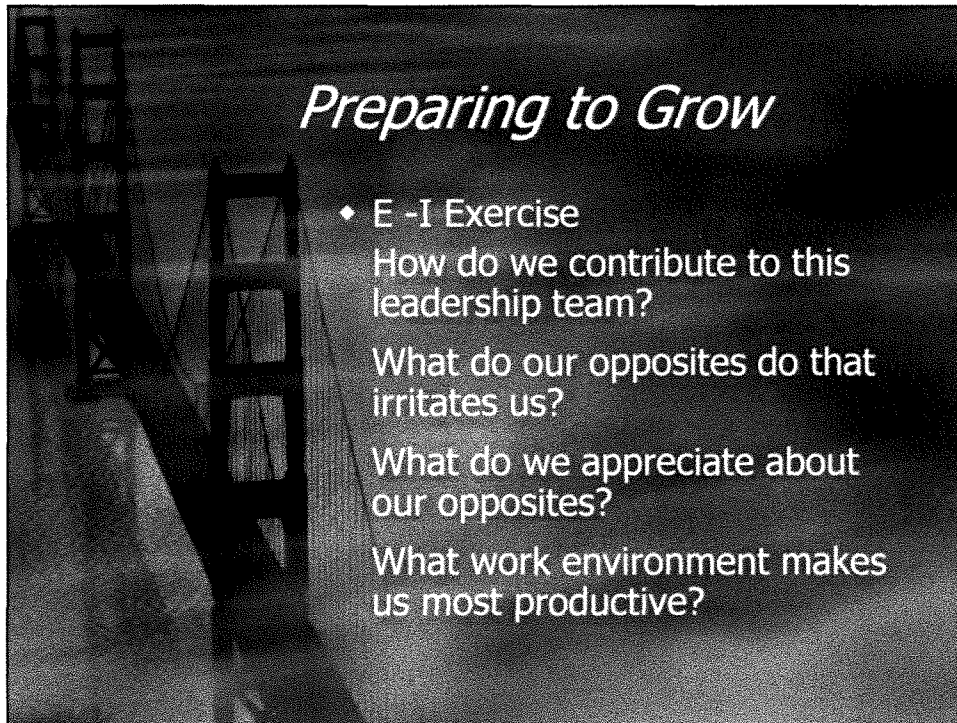
Make your choices between these examples:

Extrovert is the person who is tired at the end of the day and still wants to go out with a large group of friends. Or. Introvert is the person who comes home from work and prefers to relax, read a book or just sit and think.

Sensing person when describing an apple will give you the facts re color, shape, taste, smell and the dietary benefits. Intuitive person might start with descriptions but often move to telling a story about mom's apple pie or stealing apples from the neighbours tree as a youth.

Thinking people pride themselves on their impartial and fair decision making based on analysis. Feeling people pride themselves on their compassion in decision making based upon their heart's response. Eg. My wife firing an employee and my considering their family situation. Brenda is a thinking person and I am a feeling person.

Judging people like to get to the decision so that they can move on to the next project. Perceiving people like to leave their options open and delay decision so they can continue to gather information. In college the judging people usually had their assignments done days before the dead line whereas perceiving people usually burned the midnight oil to get it done at the very last minute.



Preparing to Grow

- ♦ E -I Exercise

How do we contribute to this leadership team?

What do our opposites do that irritates us?

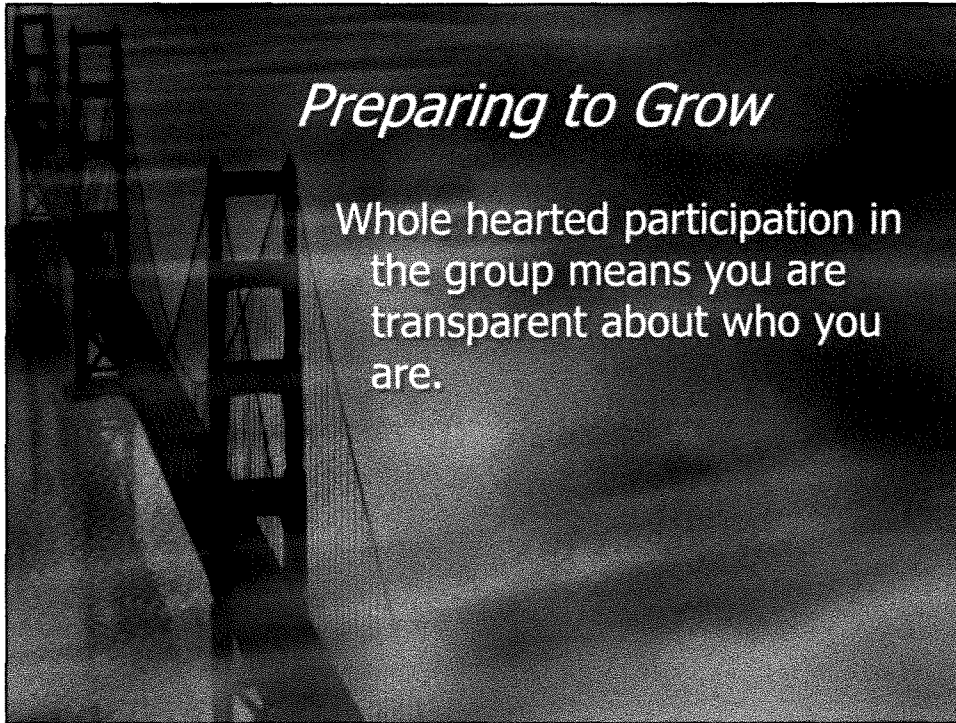
What do we appreciate about our opposites?

What work environment makes us most productive?

I want you to divide into your types at this point: Extroverts to one end of the room and Introverts to the other end of the room.

Now discuss the questions on this slide.

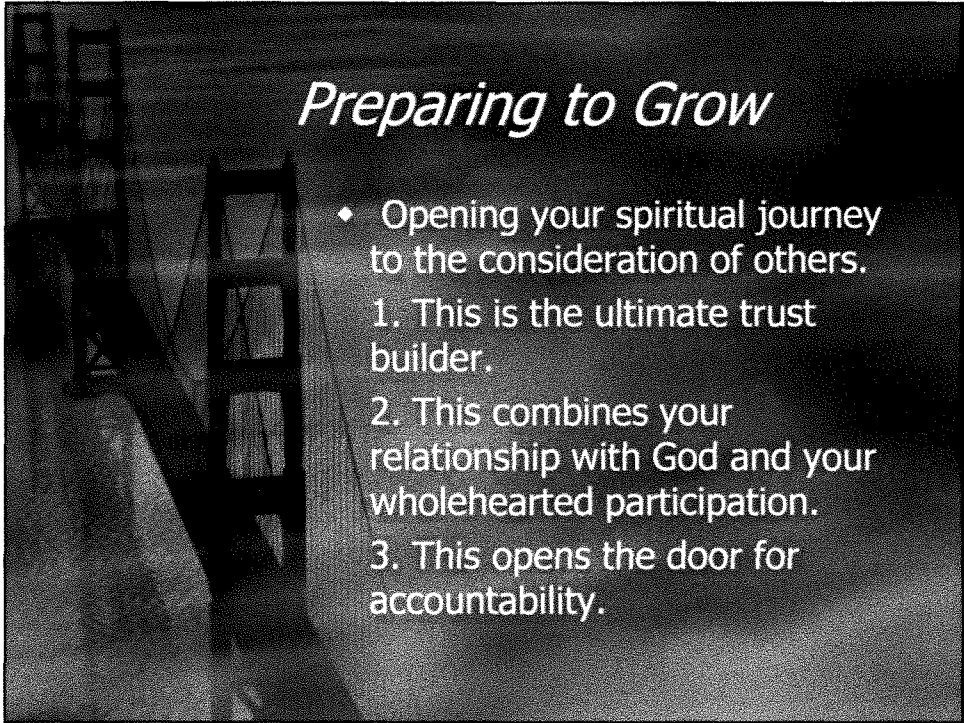
Now lets share with one another...



Preparing to Grow

Whole hearted participation in the group means you are transparent about who you are.

These two inventories that we just took a peek at are tools that can help us understand one another and through that understanding we can become a more effective team.



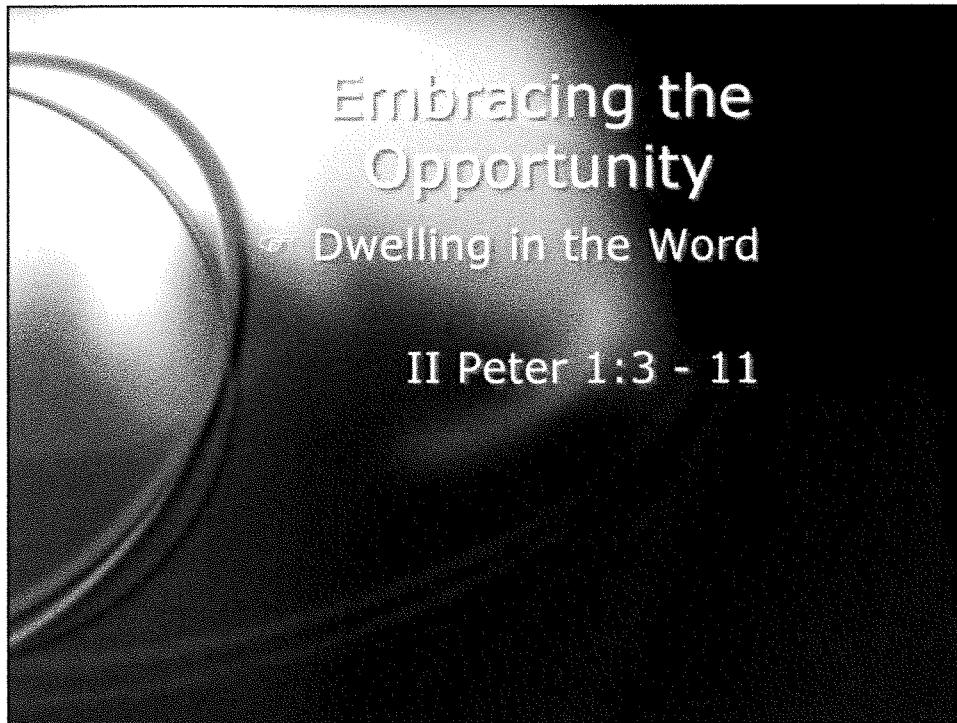
Preparing to Grow

- ♦ Opening your spiritual journey to the consideration of others.
  1. This is the ultimate trust builder.
  2. This combines your relationship with God and your wholehearted participation.
  3. This opens the door for accountability.





Everyone responds to change in a different way. Some embrace change and others flee from it. Some acknowledge the need for change and accept it grudgingly and others acknowledge the same need but not on their watch. As a leadership team you must lead your congregation in embracing the opportunity before you. The question we need to ask is, do you accept the need to change? Dwelling in the word this session is focused on the promises of God and how these promises support and encourage us to change.



II Peter 1 is a great passage concerning the way in which God works in us and for us. It is a passage that shows us that change is at the root of salvation. A change of heart, a change of focus and a change of foundation.

Listen as this passage is read and take note of those aspects of the scripture that stand out for you.

Share with one other person that you have not shared with yet.

Share with the group what was shared with you.



The questions on the next two slides will help you as a leadership team sense for yourselves if you thinking about change and how far down the road are you in wanting to change.



Embracing the Opportunity

1. Have contemplated making changes?
2. Have you been making preparations to change?
3. Have you taken action to change?

On a sheet of paper, place the numbers 1-6 down the side of the page, In answering each question rate them 0 for no, 1 for a little, 2 for some and 3 for yes. The first question that your answer is no, stop. Then hand your piece of paper in to me.



Embracing the Opportunity

4. Have you been maintaining the changes you started?
5. Have you experienced a relapse in your experience of change?
6. Do you feel the change is accepted in the culture of your congregation?

In answering these questions rate each question 0 for no, 1 for a little, 2 for some and 3 for yes. The first question that you answer no, stop. Once you have completed the questions hand in your papers without putting your names on them. We will tally your total scores as a team to determine your preparedness to embrace change.



These stages of change were identified in the area of dealing with addictive patterns such as smoking and alcoholism. By identifying which stage you are at gives you a starting point as to where you need to start to move forward with change or what the next step you need to prepare for.

Based on how you answered the questions on the previous two slides, where you put yourselves individually in these stages of change?

Based on your group score, where are you at as a leadership team?

Having worked with the stages of change where would you say your congregation would be at?



Embracing the Opportunity

- ☞ What steps do you need to take to move forward with embracing change?
- ☞ How can you help the congregation be prepared to start to move forward?

Having helped you determine what stage you are at as a leadership team, what steps do you need to take to move forward to the next stage? (This will be a discussion that starts the leadership team thinking about how they will move forward themselves and then translate what they have learned into how they will lead the congregation to understand transition and where they are at in moving towards their calling in God.)



A key part of embracing the opportunity is to make the congregation a partner in the process of change and transition. In this next section we want to consider a number of ways to engage the congregation in the process: The process of transition can be used as a way of explaining the changes that occur in us as we die to "self", the world and the devil. The Sunday morning messages can be used as teaching times to help the congregation understand the transition they are experiencing and the opportunity that it affords them if they will embrace it and seek the Lord in discerning their calling and vocation in the Lord.



.Surveys are an effective tool that allows a large number of people to respond to the same set of questions and in the process give you, the leadership team, a sense of the diversity that makes up the congregation that you serve.



The concert of prayer is one of the key aspects of the process of engagement that you and your congregation can engage it simply because you are coming together before your God and inviting Him to direct you in the way that you should go. It is a public act of submission to his will and a public display of your partnership with the congregation in facing this time of transition together.



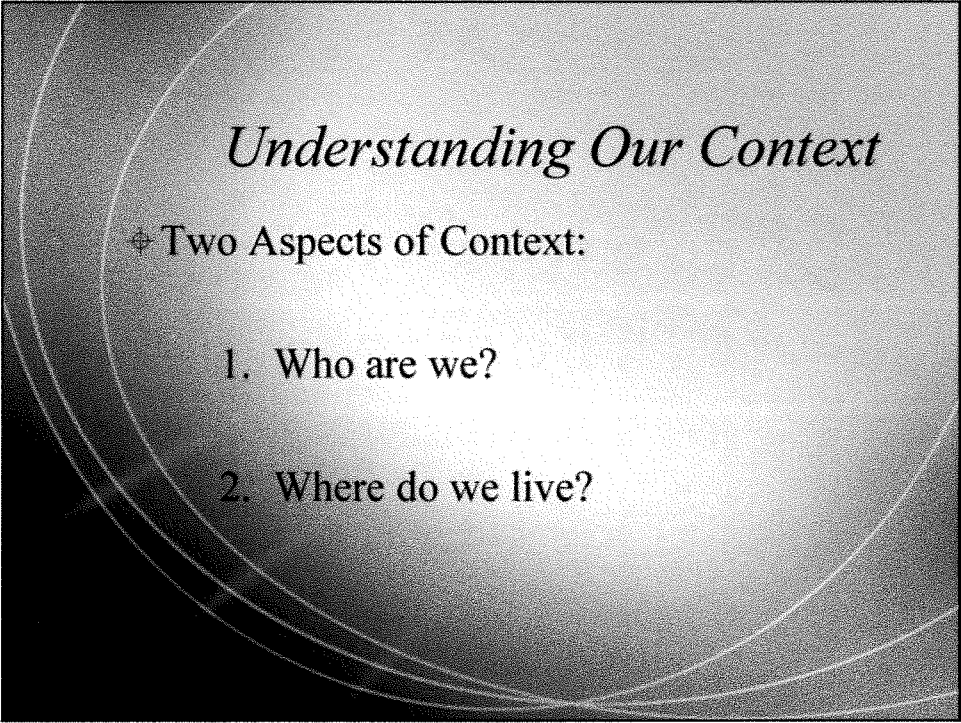
These evening can be so much fun. Times of remembering the works of His righteous right hand build your confidence in what God can do in the future. Reflecting goes beyond remembering to understanding what has happened, what God is doing and where He wants you to go and then re-visioning is capturing all that has been discerned and applying it to the context of your ministry to consider the possibilities that could be established as your way forward.

The engagement of the congregation become the ground in which the seeds of vision germinate and growth starts to occur.



Resources

- Natural Church Development Survey
- Online Survey for free
  - www.surveymonkey.com
- World Cafe



Understanding Our Context

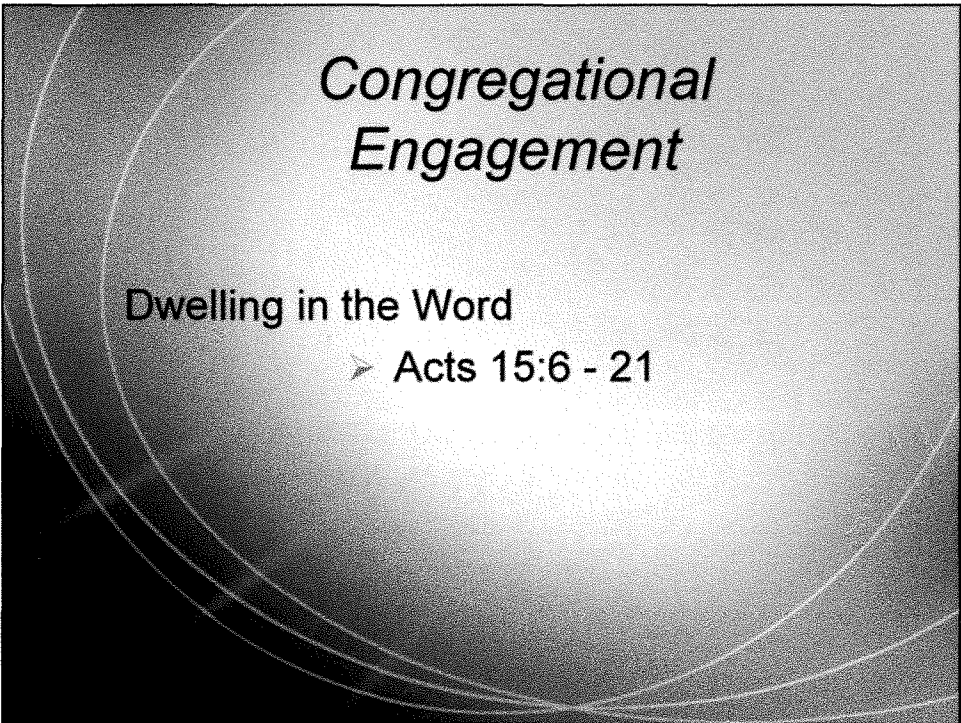
✦ Two Aspects of Context:

1. Who are we?
2. Where do we live?

Ministry of any kind always happens in a context. There is an environment within which ministry grows and there is an environment within which ministry must take place. These two questions capture these perspectives:



The environment within which ministry grows is your own hearts. It is the community of faith that you have become.



Congregational Engagement

Dwelling in the Word

➤ Acts 15:6 - 21

A dispute was raised in the early church and a meeting was called to deal with the conflict. As we read this passage from Acts 15, listen and observe what aspect of the meeting stands out to you. When the reading is complete, please share with someone you have not share with as yet. When that is completed, we will ask you to share with the larger group what was shared with you.

Congregational Engagement

Three questions:

- ❖ *How did we get here?*
- ❖ *What is happening today?*
- ❖ *What is God saying to us as a congregation?*

These questions help you to discover the history and context of your congregation today.

Congregational Engagement

Let's take these three questions and discuss the following questions:

1. Who should answer these questions?
2. What context would be most appropriate?

What is the best way to ask these questions?

Using a white board or newsprint facilitate a discussion around these three questions:

Goals related to this discussion:

1. Determine who to engage with concerning these questions.
2. Establishing congregational meetings.
3. Developing strategies for engaging as many people as possible.



Congregational Engagement

Context has two perspectives:

- within
- without

Within is the community of the church, its climate and culture or DNA. What makes this group of people sing the Hallelujah Chorus?

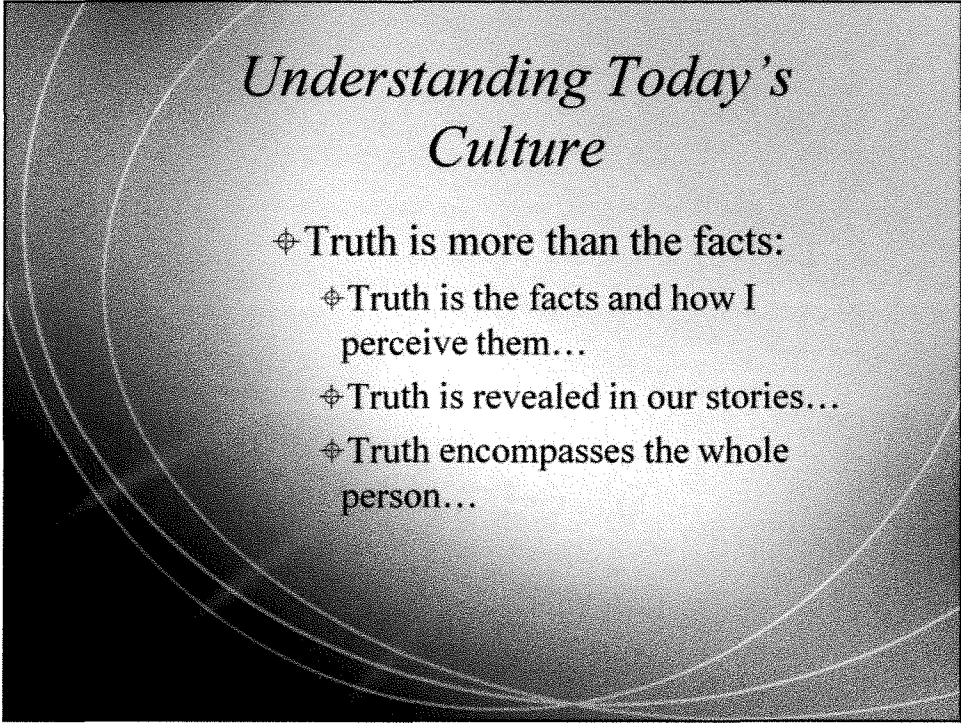
Without is the community that surrounds you, where you work and play and where your children grow up. The second half of this session is concerned with the context outside and around the church.

Understanding Today's Culture

- ✦ Basic Premises of our post-modern culture:
  - ✦ Relationships are vitally important because:
    - ✦ Together we can grasp the truth...
    - ✦ We grow together because of our interaction...

Provide evidence from your lives and those of youth around you that would confirm these ideas.

Is there evidence that this is not true?



Understanding Today's Culture

- ⊕ Truth is more than the facts:
  - ⊕ Truth is the facts and how I perceive them...
  - ⊕ Truth is revealed in our stories...
  - ⊕ Truth encompasses the whole person...

Again, what evidence is there for or against these ideas related to truth?

Comparison of Traditional, Pragmatic and Younger Evangelicals

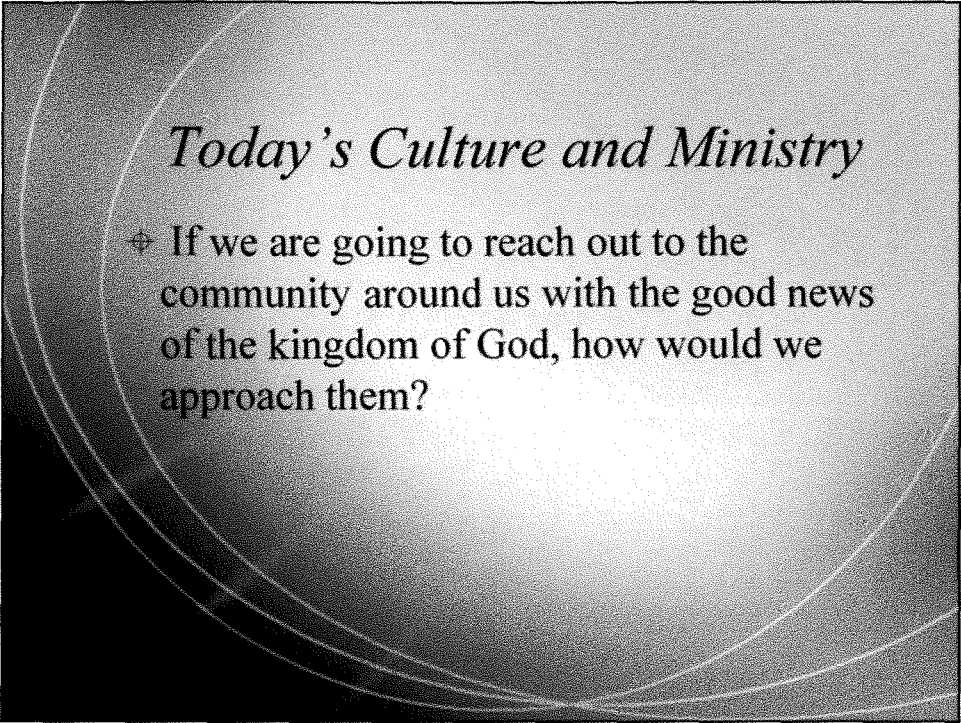
Area	Traditional	Pragmatic	Younger Evangelical
Communication Style	Print/Verbal	Broadcast/ Presentational	Internet/ Interactive
Generation	Boomer, Traditional	Boomer, Innovative	Twenty-something, Deconstructive/Reconstructive
History	Maintain distinctives of 20C fundamentals	Get a fresh start Ahistorical	Draw from the wisdom of the past. The road to the future runs through the past
Apologetics Style	Evidential Foundational	Christianity as meaning-giver, Experiential, Personal Faith	Embrace the meta-narrative, Embodied apologetic Communal Faith
Evangelical Paradigm	Constantinian church, Civil Religion	Culturally Sensitive church, Market driven	Missional church Countercultural
Church Style	Neighborhood churches Rural	Megachurch Suburban, Market targeted	Small church, Back to cities, Intercultural
Leadership Style	Pastor Centered	Managerial model CEO	Team Ministry Priesthood of All
Education	Public school Bible College	Target generational groups and needs	Intergenerational formation in community

1. Review the Chart
2. In what areas is this chart true of your congregation?
3. In what ways are the three categories represented in your church?
4. What kinds of ministries would capture the imagination of the younger evangelicals?

[Taken from: Robert E. Webber. *The Younger Evangelicals*. Baker Book House Company. Grand Rapids MI. 2002. 17,18.]

Comparison of Traditional, Pragmatic and Younger Evangelicals

Area	Traditional	Pragmatic	Younger Evangelical
Theological Commitment	Christianity a rational world view	Christianity as therapy, answers needs	Christianity as a community of faith Ancient/Reformation
Youth Ministry	Church-centered programs	Outreach programs, weekend fun retreats	Prayer, Bible Study, worship, social service
Spirituality	Keep the rules	Prosperity and success	Authentic embodiment
Worship	Traditional	Contemporary	Convergence
Art	Restrained	Art as illustration	Incarnational embodiment
Evangelism	Mass Evangelism	Seeker Service	Process Evangelism
Activists	Beginnings of evangelical social action	Need-driven social action (i.e. Divorce groups, etc)	Rebuild cities and neighbourhoods
Cultural Situation	Modern Worldview, industrial society, post-war	Transitional Paradigm, technological society, Vietnam War	Post-modern worldview, Internet society, War on terrorism



Today's Culture and Ministry

- ✦ If we are going to reach out to the community around us with the good news of the kingdom of God, how would we approach them?

To answer this question let us consider the resources that we have amongst us. Take a look at the generations of Christians represented in your congregation. As leaders, these are the people that you are called to equip to do works of service. (Ephesians 4:11-13)

This is where the context within meets the context without. The context within is impacted by the context without and visa-versa. It is the synergy between the two contexts that offer the greatest opportunities for ministry.