EVANGELISM BASICS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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RADICAL OUTREACH THAT COUNTS
TYPES OF CHURCH GROWTH

BIOLOGICAL - church members from existing families in the church
TYPES OF CHURCH GROWTH

TRANSFER - members come from other churches
CONVERSION - people become new Christian and join the church
TYPES OF CHURCH GROWTH

Which Type Of Growth Occurs Most In Your Church?
The truth is most of us don’t take kindly to challenges as to how we do church. Take the charge that 80 percent of the 360,000 churches in America are stagnant or declining and most of the remainder grow mainly by shuffling believers from one congregation to another.
When it comes to the call of Jesus to be “fishers for men and women,” most of our congregations are content to wait for the “fish” to find us.
Less than 1% percent of churches grow substantially by “conversion growth” as people come to Christ out of the unbelieving majority. Only these churches can properly be described as “apostolic”.
Evangelism.... What’s That?
EVANGELISM DESCRIBED

“Those sets of church ministries in which people are initiated into the Kingdom of God for the first time.”
EVANGELISM DESCRIBED

Evangelism is more……
“relational than confrontational”
“communal than solitary”
“a beginning point than an end.”
EVANGELISM DESCRIBED

That set of loving, intentional activities governed by the goal of initiating persons into discipleship in response to the reign of God.
Evangelism is...the holistic initiation of people into the reign of God as revealed in Jesus Christ.
The proper context for evangelism is “authentic Christian community, where the expression of loving community is the greatest apologetic for the gospel”.

EVANGELISM DESCRIBED
THE "EVANGEL"
GREEK DEFINITIONS
The “Evangel” Defined

In the early church, three Greek Words Described “The Evangel”:

Euaggelizesthai – to tell good news
Marturein – to bear witness
Kerusseuein – to proclaim
Culture is the shared assumptions, values, and beliefs of a group of people which result in characteristic behaviors.
Culture is like an iceberg: partly visible like behaviors and substantially invisible assumptions, like values and beliefs. It also so that, very frequently relationships between the part under the surface and the things on the surface relate.
INSIGHTS SUPPORTING CULTURALLY RELEVANT APOSTOLICITY
10. Cultural relevance is the rationale for contemporary worship.
9. Contrary to what most leaders have heard, all worship services are contemporary.
8. Cultural relevance is one way we extend Apostolicity. His Body, the church, is called to adapt to the tongue and culture of the people beyond the Church’s walls in every generation.
7. Employing culturally relevant forms is desirable because God’s revelation usually, and best breaks through to people through their own language and the other forms of their culture.
6. When congregations express the gospel in the cultural forms of the community, the community is much more likely to perceive that church is for “people like us.”
5. Most traditional churches in the U.S. have already come a very long way in agreeing that ministry in the people’s language is necessary to reach the community.
4. Traditional churches have not discovered that culture is the “the silent language.” The strategic church will learn to use time, space, symbols, music, architecture, the arts, and even play to communicate Apostolic meaning to all the senses.
3. Traditional churches do not yet perceive how deeply culture shapes personality and worldview, that culture is no less than “the software of the mind.”
2. Church leaders do not yet know that culture is the “the silent language” and the software of the mind, they usually resist making the changes needed to “do church” in ways that fit the culture of an unchurched population.
1. Most culturally irrelevant churches cannot reach, and retain, pre-Christian people in significant numbers. Most traditional churches are not open to the changes necessary to reach outsiders but they are open to the changes necessary to keep their own youth. Our youth are washed by the same culture sea changes that influence secular people.
REACHING THE UNCHURCHED THROUGH SMALL GROUP DEVELOPMENT

BEST KEPT SECRETS ABOUT LARGE GROWING CHURCHES
IN ALL THE APOSTOLIC MOVEMENTS WE HAVE STUDIED, PEOPLE ARE REACHED, SUPPORTED, DEVELOPED IN AND DEPLOYED FROM SMALL GROUPS.
1. Churches grow larger by growing smaller. That is, as the church multiplies small groups and other small faith sharing communities, and as it involves more and more of its people in small groups, and as it involves seekers in small groups before they ever believe or commit to the growth of the church.
2. Small group experience develops people for ministry. The genius of the small group koinonia is that people minister to one another within the small grouped experience. As we support one another, pull for one another, hold one another accountable, rejoice with one another, weep with one another, and intercede for one another the Holy Spirit helps us become “members of one another.”
3. The small group functions as a laboratory of ministry, a setting in which we observe lay ministry being modeled over and over, in which we learn approaches to caring ministry from one another, and in which we make our first attempts at ministering to someone else.
4. The small group also functions as a laboratory for the witness of the laity. Churches grow larger by growing smaller. That is, as the church multiplies small groups and other small faith sharing communities, and as it involves more and more of its people in small groups, and as it involves seekers in small groups before they ever believe or commit tribute to the growth of the church.
FIVE QUESTIONS FOR A CONGREGATION CONSIDERING RADICAL OUTREACH
1. DO WE WANT TO KNOW THEM?

John in his letter (John 4:9) stated that: “Jews do not fraternize with Samaritans”. Likewise, most of our Apostolics do not fraternize with really unchurched people. They often experience the suggestion as “strange” that we are called to follow Jesus who was “the friend of sinners.”
2. ARE WE WILLING TO GO WHERE THEY ARE?

Jesus went to the town of Sychar, to Jacob’s well, then to other gathering places in the town. But most churches avoid their city’s gathering places, where people engage in conversation and look for Life, lest believers be offended or even “tempted”!
3. ARE WE WILLING TO SPEND TIME WITH THEM?

When Jesus saw how receptive the town’s people were, he stayed for two days with the people. As a result, John tells us, “many more believed because of his word” (John 4:31). Outreach involves scheduled time and sweat equity. Do we believe that “people matter to God” enough to invest our time.
4. DO WE WANT SECULAR AND OUTSIDE THE ESTABLISHMENT PEOPLE IN OUR CHURCHES?

Some churches answer yes to the first three questions but hesitate at this one. At least 80 percent of our churches fail ever to reach out to two groups of people: (1) people who are not “refined” enough to feel comfortable in church; (2) people whose lifestyles are too different from ours, or whose lives are too “out of control” for us to feel comfortable with them.
5. ARE WE WILLING FOR OUR CHURCH TO BECOME THEIR CHURCH TOO?

Even more churches hesitate here. As first century Judaism was glad for Gentiles to adopt Jewish culture, twenty-first-century churches are glad for “outsiders” to become “like us” and do everything “our way”.
FIVE APPROACHES TO REACHING PEOPLE LIKE THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

JOHN 4
1. Jesus began where she was, rather than where he wanted her to be.....
2. Jesus engaged in the ministry of conversation............
3. In the conversation, every word Jesus used was within her recognition vocabulary......
4. Jesus treated her with respect.....
5. Jesus listened, responded, and related to the Samaritan woman with understanding........