

## Leadership Development – 1.2 Evangelism Approaches

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### A) The birth of any individual or organization includes 4 common elements:

1. **Personal Vision & Ministry Call is a Process** – and the time it takes to pass through each phase depends on the person, situation, and the ongoing work the Spirit is inviting us into. All organisms and organizations move through this process:
  - a. **Inception** – or the initial awareness of the beginning of the process is the work of God’s Grace in missional calling in the heart/mind of an organism or an organization.
  - b. **Conception** – is human response in cooperation with what God has done in Grace, and with the Spirit’s activity in our life. As the vision begins to take shape we start to understand its nature, then we start to actually buy into it, and finally we believe it sufficiently that we begin to act upon it.
  - c. **Gestation** – is the period of time it takes for the seed that God has planted in our heart/mind to be nurtured and grow. Think of this in terms of when an organism or organization is in the early developmental period before the birthing process.
  - d. **Development** – is the work that ensues when by faith we cooperate with God and the organism or organization grows in strength and stature.
  - e. **Fruition** – is when the greatest results of the ministry ensue in the organism or organization. These are the days when Grace flows outward and engages the missional calling with results in advancing the Kingdom of God.
  - f. **Maturity** – is when the organism or organization has entered into its sunset years where the best years are now behind and the vitality is waning.
  - g. **Death** – when the organism or organization can no longer sustain itself. Its strength is spent and it fades from life into history.
2. **When a vision is given it is always a gift of Grace** – and inception is always one of both revelation and illumination. It is usually something that starts as small as a seed. It must be planted and allowed to germinate, before it may grow into the full potential God intended. If we don’t plant it and also allow the seed to die, it will never germinate.
3. **When a calling is received** – it is generally understood as an invitation rather than command. Occasionally God will command us to do something necessary, but more commonly it is an invitation that we can embrace or reject. Some of the most wondrous works started from the simplest and most humble of beginnings... and that’s one test that God is in it.
4. **It is common to want to bypass the necessary work of the small things and rush into the full maturity.** But when we do things in our own strength and wisdom it is only natural and not supernatural – being merely of human effort and not the Kingdom of God. Natural things may be good and they may accomplish good results. However, the Kingdom is always supernatural... where we do the small stuff and see how God does the amazing stuff... where He takes the seed, develops it, and completes what He wants to accomplish and we are caught up in the process and can marvel at the greatness of God.

### B) The Kingdom of God Developmental Process involves:

1. **Vision and powerful moments with God** – again whether as an individual organism or a collective organization, life necessarily starts with God. We need to make room for Him to engage and act and cultivate and nurture the things He asks of us. One of the most common mistakes is for people to

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receive a vision from God and then act upon it in their own strength. We need to be patient and dependent and watch how God begins to work and organize it. The circumstances are always where God has to work, and we have to wait. Mentors and Spiritual leaders are helpful advocates to allow us to see where and how God is working and to get caught up with His plan.

2. Cultivation and nurturing involves diligently showing up... we keep coming before God in dependent prayer because the dreams we have are often birthed only to die and be resurrected again over time. It is imperative to note the changes in this process and learn what God is doing both in us and into the situation we're called into.
3. Consistently making progress requires having a strategic plan and noting development and growth. Good intentions will usually not result in great returns without great effort and persistence.
4. Deliberately looking for God and watching for His presence and confirmation – this is probably one of the least practiced but most important aspects of ministry development.
  - a. Look for where God is at work and catch up with what He is doing.
  - b. Fan the flames of the Spirit where He is burning brightest.
  - c. Allow God to lead you and your efforts and continually recalibrate in obedience to God.
5. Vigilantly guarding my heart and fanning the flames of the Spirit – is crucial for all disciples and their organizations. Again, if we are working in our own strength we may see some results, but the best results are when God is active and we're walking with Him... being His voice in a lost and confused world.
  - a. Life and Grace flow only from the Spirit – watch closely for the flow, catch up with it and allow it the opportunity to turn into a stream, and God willing progressively into a torrent.
  - b. Realize we have an enemy – and his desire is to:
    - i. Render us ineffective
    - ii. Render us numb and unresponsive
    - iii. Kill our hope and ambition, or just kill us outright

### C) Discipleship and Evangelism –Spiritual Growth Development:

1. Spiritual Growth always involves discipline – being a disciple is necessarily learning and becoming disciplined... in the image of your master. Paul was a Jewish Rabbi and disciple of the renowned Jewish scholar and Rabbi Gamaliel. Paul was already steeped in Jewish Law and Scripture, and then spent 3 years being disciplined by Barnabas in Antioch before they ventured out on their 1<sup>st</sup> missionary journey.
  - a. Supernatural guidance [as with Paul] involves planning on what to do by God's grace. Paul heard God's call and responded to it, but was also patient and diligent as he was developed into the man God needed to complete the work He called Paul into.
  - b. Natural guidance has to do with our own choices in pursuit of God's call, and often as a result of our being prevented from moving at the pace we desire. Watching and waiting is critical! Then when Paul and Barnabas had responded and were in motion, they decided to go another place but God intervened and they realized there were being prevented. Then, Paul had a powerful vision of being called to go to Macedonia, and they acted upon that. If they were

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- not in the place God intended for them, and if they were not open and seeking God's guidance and strength, they probably miss the call to Macedonia.
- c. **Miraculous occurrences abound even in the natural events of our life... because God resides within and He is always in us and speaking to us; He is able to make the natural supernatural if we are open to see it. It is imperative that we take time to seek God and His leading and promptings in our life. Take time to pay attention and respond to Him... this is a habit all Spiritual leaders must develop.**
2. **Evangelism is always supernatural – God speaks through various vehicles – revelation, illumination, and reason. We have no idea how much work God has been doing in the situation God moves us into... but we can take the time to seek and find out what God's been up to.**
    - a. **Jesus encounter with the woman at the well is a paradigm:**
      - i. **Worship is not at a particular place.**
      - ii. **Worship is always in a supernatural form.**
        1. **Worship is Spirit – Spiritual revelation, wonders, illumination, guidance, etc.**
        2. **Worship is Truth – Spiritual objective reality engaged in Scriptural reason and thought.**
      - iii. **It is obvious that the woman at the well knew about the Messiah and was excited about His coming. When Jesus revealed Himself to her, she accepted His Word and everything changed for her and her community. This is how supernatural activities work.**
    - b. **Guidance is the result of years of thought development – of study, thousands of encounters with God, thousands to engagements with other people.**
    - c. **The miraculous occurs, but it is usually built in the fertile hubris of the mundane and ordinary.**
    - d. **Eph 5:26 – God will sanctify and cleanse the Church through the washing by the Word. We need to know the Word... we need to be bathed with the Word so that it works deeply into us before it can break out freely from us.**
    - e. **We in America are a fast food generation – we want results immediately, we want shortcuts... we are not wanting to do the menial work in preparation for receiving the results. The results are built through persistence and diligence, this means doing the grunt work and constantly looking for God on the way.**
    - f. **We are guilty of wanting to make a deal with God – we want the feelings defined by our own expectations, with results also defined by our own expectations – rather than standing before God in simple obedience in humility in diligence in the small things... then seeing the wonder of the miraculous as the Kingdom results while God works in us and through us.**
    - g. **THERE ARE NO GOOD SHORT CUTS. Efforts that result quickly in extraordinary results never last... and worse we blame God for being unfaithful for not meeting our expectations. This is a great evil.**
3. **Evangelism and Discipleship is the Great Commission:**
    - a. **Engagement – we need to reprogram of thinking... we should be counting conversations not converts. It begins with identifying with God and then identifying with His mission:**

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- i. Engagement is seeking to save that which is lost... God will identify who is lost if we are listening observantly.
  - ii. The lost are those who don't know they are lost. It includes all sinners, and even those who think they are not lost, and also involves those who think they're found. There are many many people who have "received Jesus" in an altar call, who never really responded to His Heart; who never had a change of mind, values and morals; whose only real desire is to avoid hell rather than falling in love with God and longing for His Kingdom. Introductions to Jesus are important, but without discipleship and an expectation of a transformed life they may mean very little.
  - iii. Jesus rubbed shoulders with the unclean and the disgusting of His society. He was not unwilling to smell the smells of urine, excrement, death, and corruption... He was not unwilling to smell like those who frequented these places of corruption.
  - iv. In the Jewish world view, Rabbi's shunned anything that was impure because it rendered them impure. Instead, Jesus purified the impure through His personal involvement in the life of the lost. Those who responded were transformed... they were not merely healed in worldly standards, but more importantly they were transformed in terms of eternal Spiritual Life.
- b. Theology is not the path that necessarily results in evangelism fruit.
  - i. Life experience and change is far more compelling than a disembodied tract or argument. All too often if you can talk someone into something, then someone else can talk them out of it. Without transformational life change no real love of God develops. This is what Jesus was saying to Nicodemus in needing to be born again.
  - ii. A reasoned approach is always personal and relational. It is the deliberate building of bridges through our common humanity. And a wise and thoughtful listener will always benefit from hearing words of life and grace.
  - iii. Theology may also be useful with those who think they know God, but whose life doesn't necessarily reflect His Presence. Christian theology is necessarily transformational in engaging the entirety of an individual... mind, heart, life, community, etc.
  - iv. An authentic disciple cannot long live as an unbeliever... the Spirit will convict and compel the disciple into personal transformation, not merely behavioral conformance.
- c. Engagement is an entry point – it is something that is particular to the person we encounter. It may be meeting an initial physical need that opens the opportunity to dialogue.
  - i. Diatribe [a reasoned argument or lecture] never opens that door to transformational life – preaching at someone who may believe but is yielding little or no fruit of the Spirit may respond to the conviction of a well presented diatribe sort of argument. But this will rarely prove helpful with the lost... especially not with the persistent lost.
  - ii. Dialogue on the other hand, will often open the opportunity to a relational as well as a reasoned discussion, and a reasoned discussion in a relational context may develop into an apologetic dialogue or discourse. Apologetics – a reasoned explanation or defense of your faith is one way to plant seeds.

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- iii. Apologetics is the discipline of reasoned approaches to engage people where they live and in what they believe with the counter-cultural Christian message of eternal life. Ultimately Imago Dei and Imago Christi are the ultimate common denominators with humanity. All humanity are made in the image of God [Imago Dei], and all born again Christians indwelt by the Spirit and actively being sanctified by Grace are being progressively transformed into a reflection of Jesus [Imago Christi].
- d. Engagement is almost always unique to the individual person and encounter – different approaches include:
  - i. Friendship evangelism – winsome discussion of who you are and what you believe in a non-threatening and conversational approach that encourages discussion rather than challenging to make a decision.
  - ii. Apologetic reason – involves a well-developed understanding of who God is, who humanity is and how we interact. It is a reasoned defense of faith and a compelling witness of God’s life in individuals.
  - iii. Life connection – social bridges developed between people of differing backgrounds or even of differing cultures. The world tends to devolve into “us/them” social distinctions, and it is easier to marginalize someone different as somehow being less worthy or capable of relational intimacy. Life connection breaks the hold of such distinctions and differences, and builds bridges to relational connections.
  - iv. Physical need – when people know they have a need and someone steps in to help meet that perceived or actual need, the opportunity for connection is open. It is important that people operate under the understanding of the universal value of individuals as important to and loved by God. This helps to build genuine relational connections which then opens the door to personal responses with each other and with God.
  - v. There is no one size fits all in evangelism – The more detached approaches rarely bring results... we need to be real and look for a way to engage and find a relational foothold. We earn the right to engage by first being real.
- 4. How do people come to Christ and get saved? Mark 4:26-29 - the Parable of the growing seed:
  - a. Peter Engel - conversion is a process that requires the growth of the planted seed so that it may yield its fruit... salvation must result with the growth of Spiritual Fruit – Galatians 5:22-25.
    - i. The Engel scale – involves the degree of impact Scripture can be expected to have had on a social group... the more distant from a Christian understanding or identity the lower the number:
      - 1. Unreached with no connection to Bible. They have no Biblical context with who God says He is or who He says we are.
      - 2. Partially reached group who knows of another group with some sort of connection. I know some people who know about this stuff.
      - 3. A group that has some concept of God, but it is not Christian. They may be merely culturally or actively participating in another faith expression.
      - 4. A group who have heard something about Christ.

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5. A group that have heard the gospel.
  6. A group that knows and has responded to the Gospel... but has not engaged in more active missional or discipleship activity.
  7. A group that can articulate the Gospel and engages meaningfully with other groups.
- ii. Thoughts on the parable of the growing seed:
1. Spermolagas – the seed was spread, but it sprang up all by itself due to the life-giving potential which is in the seed itself. This would infer that soil preparation, cultivation, nourishment, watering, etc. – is not as necessary as the value that is present in the seed. This is not what Scripture teaches! Scripture teaches that all aspects of soil prep, seed cultivation, watering, etc. are critical aspects we need to be engaged in to further the Kingdom.
  2. Evangelists really shouldn't do what we call "hit and run evangelism" – some sort of event where Jesus is preached, altar calls given and received, but no follow up discipleship offered. Introductions to Christ have some value, but planting the seed well and caring for it properly is far more important. Introductions without follow up are dangerous as people often will blend their own pre-existing faith concepts with this new Christian faith they've heard of resulting in spiritual confusion.
  3. To be disciples of Jesus... meaning being God's offspring and growing seed – people need to be followed up upon, invested in over time, and encouraged.
  4. The seed is the Gospel & the earth is the person's heart – Gestation takes time for people to come to a saving faith. As with planted seeds, the conditions need to be right for the seed to germinate and grow. It would seem clear that people in groups 1-3 on the Engel scale would not result in fruitful growth spontaneously, and that groups 4-5 could yield fruit.
  5. It has been deduced through extensive polls and questionnaires that the average person who comes to saving faith has had 5.6 connections challenging them to faith before they receive Christ. Recurring engagement is a key factor in saving faith.
  6. Many who have responded to Jesus will struggle and fail if not upheld and investing in – the goal is not a profession of faith but rather the development of mature discipleship.
- b. The job of the evangelist is not to lead people to Christ... instead our job is to communicate the Gospel in a meaningful way that they can engage and understand. The job of the witness is to make the Gospel clear by finding a way to make the Gospel real and relevant. The Gospel is the power of God that brings people to faith... God brings people to faith, not the witness.
- i. To a Buddhist – life is all about suffering and death is the end of suffering. Therefore to engage this group in presenting Christ as a way to avoid perishing in John 3:16 **MEANS NOTHING**. If you are attempting to reach a particular culture or faith group,

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- you need to bring in those from the culture you're reaching who can make faith real and engaging.
- ii. To a Greek – the material world is worthless; it is the spiritual life that is meaningful. The bodily resurrection means nothing to the Greek. When Paul started speaking to the Athenians about resurrection they all laughed and walked away. But they did hear Paul articulate his notion of God in the context of the unknown god on Mars Hill – Acts 17:2-34.
  - iii. To a Jew, Muslim or Japanese – their culture and tradition is what is imperative to them. Their personal identity is caught up with their social/cultural identity. If you become a Christian in these cultures you are excommunicated and cut off from them... they treat you as dead. The complete separation from everything of enduring value is a difficult problem to bridge. Persuasive words won't cut it, but one among them who has taken that road and can speak of their own experience can be what moves them.
- c. If the conversion is the result of our own effort, it won't be real and it won't be lasting. Only God's converts really matter.
- i. The challenge of the great commission is to make disciples... not converts. Evangelism is more than a get out of hell free card... to be engaged in real discipleship must be the result. Real disciples have a transformed life that evidences the life of the indwelling Spirit. They will then engage their sphere of influence with their new life.
  - ii. John 6:44 - "no one can come to me unless the Father draws them." John 16:8 - "when the Spirit comes He will convict the world of Sin." We can point to God and we can speak about Him, but we cannot draw people to God... and we cannot convict people of sin, only God can.
  - iii. Without a revelation of the bad news in "sin conviction"... there can be no real revelation of the Good news of the Gospel. A person needs to realize their need through conviction before they will accept a rescue. Matt 16:17 - "who do you say I am" - "You are the Christ" – blessed are you because reason did not reveal this to you, but God did. God is always the active agent in salvation.
  - iv. Compelling someone to repeat the sinner's prayer is not useful and may actually be harmful if God hadn't called them, and/or if they are not engaged in some Christian community that will support them. In most cases this acts as a Christian "Inoculation of Grace" – they may accept the promise of life without any real understanding or love of God.
  - v. The Great commandment is evidence of true conversion – "love God with all your heart, all your mind, and all your strength." And "love others as you love yourself" is evidence of discipleship maturity.
- d. Bottom line on evangelism – everyone is at some place on the Engel scale... and we know that God won't waste our witness but will bring fruit it His time. We need to be patient and wait on the Spirit to do His work, and then follow up in some meaningful way.
- e. Cultural Evangelism - is complicated because we employ the same words but they are filtered through different world views, different theologies, and different grids of viewing "One God."

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- i. Don't allow certain cultural disagreements to create a stumbling block to bringing people to the cross. This is what Paul meant in becoming all things to all men.
    - ii. Winning a battle in preaching the gospel, and then losing the soul because of no further interaction or follow up is a poor transaction.
5. People coming to a saving faith will have taken different tracks to get there – the issues that result in a compelling faith include:
  - a. The recognition of personal human need
  - b. The awareness and conviction of sin and need of forgiveness
  - c. Fear of hell – the rejection of hell has made this less relevant
  - d. The Hope of heaven – the draw to eternity is more effective than the fear of hell
  - e. Christian friends – Is the #2 reason for people who have come to church or to a Faith organization such as YWAM, Youth for Christ, or Campus Crusade.
  - f. Christian parents – Is the #1 reason for people who have come to YWAM
  - g. Desire to know who God is – seekers and searching souls are out there but not in the numbers known in the 60's and 70's.
  - h. Hot Spirit filled church – is a draw as people see authentic discipleship and a vital faith lived out. Similarly is the draw of an on fire Spirit filled person. In both cases you cannot give what you don't have... a vital faith that is caught up in the wonder of God is very attractional.
  - i. Signs and wonders – this is very big in India... they are open to the supernatural but most of their misplaced faith in pantheism results in fear and bondage. Release from physical pain & suffering, fear and bondage is an evidence they welcome and is probably why the Spirit employs it there so frequently.
  - j. Apologetics – reason is a low yield effort, but often brings a few large fruit like a Chuck Colson, or a Josh McDowell, or a Dr William Craig.
2. There are different Scriptural approaches to different cities that were used to reach the audience – thus it is always wise to know as much as possible about the people you hope to reach.
  - a. Athens – explaining the god they worshiped but didn't know.
  - b. Creation was useful in several cities
  - c. The attraction of God and the rejection of hell was not particularly helpful to Paul in Macedonia as their world view didn't make death bad or something to be afraid of.
  - d. Luke 4:17-18 – there is the more attractional approach to people as being victims of the powers and principalities of evil as opposed to being enemies of God. We are obviously both and both need to be dealt with at some point, but one may have better traction than the other depending on who you're speaking to.
  - e. Acts chapter 2 would be the best way to salvation – an inspired preacher speaks and God calls people into the Kingdom... this still happens but not as often as it did in Biblical times. Today evangelism is definitely all over the board.
  - f. God in His mercy and grace accepts people from a variety of approaches... there is no one-sized-fits-all programmatic approach. Unfortunately, many evangelicals still insist on one approach, but there are ultimately many issues that need to be addressed that are dealt with during the discipleship development.

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- g. The Great Commission - is going on in evangelism and training up in discipleship... the two are necessarily joined. The call of the commission is to discipleship, not decisions. Evangelists need to be far more involved in discipleship.
  - h. Getting people engaged with God and with the Church is critical. Mass evangelical approaches like “Global Media Outreach” have categorically failed to bring people into transformational life or even to engage people in Christian community... the percentage has responded and engaged been roughly 3%. Very low returns because these meetings are not relational, and people need the relational connection.
  - i. Similarly, the old church approach of asking their believing congregants to “bring their friends here and we’ll get them saved” doesn’t work well in our changing culture. Those who insist in remaining in the past approaches will likely find themselves becoming irrelevant.
  - j. Humanity is slow to learn and often even slower to transform –It takes time for discipleship to occur. And we need to be comfortable about taking the time to invest in people.
  - k. The Master Plan of Evangelism is a study of the Gospels on how Jesus and His disciples impacted the world. Lauren Cunningham the founder of YWAM could have been a mass evangelist and would have been successful, but instead he took a different leading... a more integrated approach of evangelism, community, and mercy. These three need to go together... and with God’s blessing YWAM has become an international force with 1,000’s of schools around the world and tens of thousands of missionaries engaged.
  - l. Jesus gave the Great Commission - evangelism and discipleship is foundational, and meeting real personal needs in mercy are a means of integrating these three approaches.
3. A Tale of Three Cities – note the approach Paul used and the results:
- a. Paul in Thessalonica - he reasoned with them from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah, and they rejected Paul’s preaching and drove him out.
  - b. Paul in Berea - he reasoned again from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah, and they searched diligently to prove out Paul claims.
  - c. Paul in Athens - he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, and then he went to the market-place and witnessed to all who would hear.
4. Knowing the group you’re reaching and their underlying philosophy, theology, and world view are critical:
- a. If God puts you in a situation, it makes good sense to use the opportunity as one God has given to witness to the truth we know.
  - b. Paul also went into the Synagogues and preached to them... he spoke with confidence as only a Jewish Rabbi and insider could.
  - c. The Stoics [thinkers] and the Epicureans [feelers] called Paul a “babbling” - a type of bird known as a “seed-picker.” They accused Paul of “faking his way through” as being a phony... advocating “foreign gods” - because he was preaching Jesus and His resurrection. Paul’s message was not being received, because it was not engaging in their life in any meaningful way.
  - d. The task of the missionary is not to take God to the people, but to recognize what God is already doing. Paul’s “unknown god” and references to the Greek poets Homer and

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- Mestaptapolis were employed as resources to make his message relevant. The market-place direct approach didn't impact.
- e. Acts 17: is a case study of how one approach failed, and he retooled and found a run-way to land the God-plane. Preaching Christ and Him crucified to those who have to no context for Messiah of the cross is fruitless. We need to employ different witnessing approaches and different ministry styles.