



Greater Sydney SDA Conference

Deep and Wide

Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend

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Words Matter - Definition of Church

- What words come to mind when you church members think of the word 'church'
- Story of Constantine and the early church
- 'ekklesia' ceased to be a movement. It had become a location.
- The word church is not a translation from the Greek. It is a substitution for the Greek. The term 'kirche' and the Greek term ecclesia refer to two very different ideas.
- This shift in vocabulary signalled a dramatic shift in emphasis and direction.
- Whoever controlled the church building controlled the church and the scriptures.
- "What began as a movement, dedicated to carrying the truth of Jesus Christ to every corner of the world, had become an insider-focused, hierarchical, ritualized institution that bore little resemblance to its origins. This shift led to an era of church history that can only be described as horrific. The atrocities carried out in the name of the church would be considered terrorism by modern standards." p63
- Tyndale's translation. Instead of kirche he translated the term ecclesia as congregation.
- Thanks to men like Tyndale, Huss, Luther and others the ecclesia of Jesus became a movement once again.
- From the first century through the twenty-first century there has always been a remnant.

Questions:

- Are we moving or simply meeting?
- Are we making measurable differences in our local communities or simply conducting services?
- Are we organised around a mission or are we organised around an antiquated ministry model inherited from a previous generation?
- Are we allocating resources as if Jesus is the hope of the world or are the squeaky wheels of church culture driving our budgeting decisions?
- Are we ecclesia or have we settled for kirche?

- Who is the church for? Who get's to be part of the Jesus gathering?
- Embrace both Grace and Truth. The Glorious Mess. (Reaching Jews and Gentiles)
- The tension between Grace and Truth should not be resolved but managed.
- Let nonbelievers serve in as many roles as possible but not everywhere.
- In regard to charity - Find "superstars" in our communities and support them with financial resources and volunteers. Builds incredible goodwill.
- Baptism is central to our worship and arguably our most powerful evangelism tool. Must have a video story for each baptism.

Make Disciples

- What do you do to ensure that new believers, as well as seasoned believers, continue to mature in their faith?
- The answer is not simply a program, curriculum or series of classes. Classes do exist for theological education however education and spiritual maturity can be mutually exclusive.
- Pour your life into a group.

The Five Faith Catalysts:

Practical Teaching

- What do you want them to know?
- What do you want them to do?
- What can we do to create next steps?

Private Disciplines

- Pray, Tithe. When people experience God's faithfulness their faith expands.
- What age to you begin teaching the importance of private spiritual disciplines?
- How and how often is this value reinforced with your students?
- What devotional and personal Bible study resources do you make available?
- When is the last time you did a message on spiritual disciplines?
- How could you reinforce this value on a regular basis? What could you to do prioritize this in the mix of everything else you are doing?
- Are spiritual disciplines a priority in your life?

Personal Ministry

- How easy is it for new people and non-members to get involved in ministry in your model?
- Does your approach to equipping and training keep people out of ministry environments longer than necessary?
- Are there areas where nonbelievers could be encouraged to serve?

Providential Relationships

- How do you connect people into significant relationships?
- You can't programme it
- Create environments that are conducive to the development of these types of relationships.
- Move people into groups (they have 2 year closed groups)
- In children and student ministry, keep group leaders with their small group for as long as possible.
- Premarital Mentoring
- Get non and new believers onto service teams.

Pivotal Circumstances.

- Teach how to interpret pivotal circumstances.
- Our worldviews (everything belongs to God and that God uses bad things to strengthen faith)
- Who are we doing life with at the time (friends, family, mentors, teachers)

Environment Matters

- Environments are the message before the message.
- The sermon begins in the parking lot.
- Rule: Time in erodes awareness of...
- Is the setting appealing? Message – you are important to us.
- Is the content helpful?
- Help people think biblically
- Help people behave biblically
- Help people contextualize biblical teaching.
- Engage, Involve, Challenge
- Dual audience, Single Agenda.
 - Let them know you know they're out there
 - Begin with the audience in mind
 - Pick one passage/idea and stick with it
 - Give them permission not to believe
 - Avoid "The Bible Says"... cite the author
 - Acknowledge the Odd
 - Don't go mystical
- What's your mission and model for achieving it? (In many churches the mission is pay the bills)
- Mission – Vision – Model – Programming
- Culture Questions: (p302-304)

Let's go deep - but let's be wide.