

MISSION MODELS IN CONTEXT



OBSERVATIONS

RE: COMMUNICATION

- Generally the agents needed for spiritual transformation of a people group are cultural insiders (change agents)
- Most people transformed by the Gospel will speak that Good News to their own kind
- People tend to listen to those having cultural/social credibility (cultural insiders)

OBSERVATIONS

RE: COMMUNICATION

- Who? (Communicates)
 - When? (It happens)
 - Where? (It happens)
 - What (is the starting place)?
-
- These questions are answered by cultural insiders.

PRE-CHURCH

- Church has no identity, thus no credibility
- Gospel communicators will at the start be cultural outsiders (having no personal credibility)
 - The Missionary is a cultural outsider
- A critical first step in reaching the culture is to diminish as many "foreign" or outsider elements as possible
 - Learning the Language and culture of the insiders
 - Sharing life experience
 - Getting to know and be known.

PRE-CHURCH

- It is critical to recognize that the missionary may never become a cultural insider
- Thus it is essential to outreach to get Gospel communication into the hands of cultural insiders ASAP.
- Focus on the multiplication of cultural insiders who speak the Gospel
- ***Key is that each person who speaks the Gospel is still considered a cultural insider by those hearing it***

PRE-CHURCH

- Focused on the unchurched
 - High engagement with the unchurched
 - Porous boundary between church and unchurched
- Several Word gifts operating (Ephesians 4)
 - Unchurched → evangelist
 - Church → pastor/teacher
 - Both → apostle, prophet
- Little structure
 - Vocational
 - Organizational

PRE-CHURCH

- Potential impediments
 - developed church
Professionalizing the witness
 - Over structure
- The porous boundary between church and community thickens, eventually becoming impermeable.
- Cultural “insidership” of the unchurched community gives way to the cultural “insidership of the church community

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CHURCHED CONTEXT

- The church is an essential part of the community
 - Church has great credibility
 - Central to the shared history of the culture
- Strong institutional loyalty (cultural value)
- The churched are now the cultural insiders.
 - Know (even shape) the language and the culture
 - Unchurched are attracted (cultural pull) to the church

CHURCHED CONTEXT

- Who? (Communicates)
 - When? (It happens)
 - Where? (It happens)
 - What (is the starting place)?
-
- These questions are now answered by the church.

CHURCHED CONTEXT

- The unchurched are cultural “outsiders”
 - Their relationship to the church
 - Share the church influenced language and culture
 - Value the church’s role in the society
 - Church’s relationship to them
 - The unchurched are Invisible (assumption that everyone is a Christian)
 - Possibly suspicious (those who are not Christian hold something against the church or God)

CHURCHED CONTEXT

- Pastor is a cultural insider (holds high credibility)
 - Knows the language and cultural at a high level
 - Considered the guardian of the culture
 - Local outreach (Jerusalem, Judea) is the vocation of professionals
- Respected by unchurched

CHURCHED CONTEXT

- Focus on churched people hearing the Good News
- Focus on building permanence (structure)
 - Structured social systems
 - Structured vocations
- Word gifts (Ephesians 4)
 - Unchurched atrophy
 - Churched consolidate → pastor/teacher

CHURCHED CONTEXT

- Potential impediments to Gospel spread
 - Increased professionalization of the witness (only the pastor can do this)
 - Preoccupation with church permanence (structure)
 - Increased concern for the needs of the already "churched"; decreased concern for the lost

MISSION MODELS IN CONTEXT



POST-CHURCH

The community around the church is increasingly unchurched, more and more reflecting the "pre-churched" context of ministry.

At the same time, the church continues to operate with the assumptions of a "churched" society or context.

POST-CHURCH

- Church and community
 - Assumption: The church (as social institution) is an essential part of the community
 - Reality: Church has little credibility because it is considered irrelevant or problematic to the society. Worse, it may simply be invisible.

POST-CHURCH

- Church and culture
 - Assumption: Churched are key cultural insiders
 - Reality: The churched are now cultural outsiders
 - Assumption: Strong institutional loyalty (cultural value)
 - Reality: Weak loyalty, even among the churched
 - Decreased investment in the institution
 - Increased investment in personal relationships

POST-CHURCH

- The unchurched and the church
 - Assumption: The unchurched know and share the church's influenced language and culture
 - Reality:
 - Assumption: The unchurched value the church's role in the society
 - Reality:
 - Assumption: Unchurched are culturally attracted to the church
 - Reality:

POST-CHURCH

- The churched and the unchurched
 - Decreasing assumption: Everyone is a Christian
 - Increasing suspicion: The world's a scary place

POST-CHURCH

- Pastor and community
 - Assumption: The pastor is a cultural insider (has high personal credibility in the community)
 - Reality:

POST-CHURCH

- Other holdovers from the church culture
 - Local outreach (Jerusalem, Judea) is the vocation of professionals
 - Focus is on other church people hearing the Good News
 - Focus on building permanence (structure)
 - Structured social systems
 - Structured vocations
 - Word gifts (Ephesians 4)
→ pastor/teacher

CHURCHED POST-CHURCH

- What contextual conditions are assumed in your congregations future planning?
 - Pre-Church
 - Churched
 - Post-Church
- How would your congregation look at itself if it were a New Testament congregation– a lone small church located in a preChristian community possibly hostile to the Gospel?

CHURCHED POST-CHURCH

- What are our assumptions about our congregation's place and role in our community as we look at our vision and values?
- Do we *primarily* determine who we are and what we are about (vision) in relationship to
 - Other Lutheran churches in the LCMS?
 - Other Christian churches in our community?
 - Those who do not yet know their Savior?

CHURCHED POST-CHURCH

- What pastoral roles are assumed in our vision and values?
- What lay roles are assumed in our vision and values?