

Conversations for the Church [loosely based on Ephesians 4:11-16] **By Bob Young**

*What is normal, what is normative? What is “normal” in your church?
Notional vs. nominal

*What is our mission? What will advance our mission?
--Not meet needs, turn life upside down, then they mature
--Become disciples, model, so others will follow

*Today, belonging leads to knowing.
Formerly, the process was that knowing led to belonging.
Different world, most of you are from my world.
Not many here from the developing model: Intellectual vs. experiential.

*Come and See. What will be our come and see events? What will they see?
Come and see is not Sunday morning worship in most places.

*This will lead us to think about church with different measures? Not attendance, dollars. Not budgets, buildings, baptisms. Not in bricks and buses and # on benches. We must establish challenging standards of what we will do/be. Churches face difficulties when “they fail to establish clear and meaningful performance demands to which they hold themselves accountable.” Universal weakness of churches. What are we trying to do? Are we doing it? How can we do it? Most churches keep a limited number of measures. What matters? —what do you count? Churches that identify a shared vision and establish corresponding standards create a dynamic for learning and growth that is potent. But establishing such standards is not easy—it takes thought, prayer, input, correlation with the dream (more than with personal preferences, past actions, the routines, etc.)

--Example

We exist to make as many disciples of Christ as possible using the most effective means available. Making disciples means winning the lost to Christ; baptizing new believers and assimilating them into the local church; teaching, training, nurturing, and equipping all believers for personal growth and for ministry; and sending out believers to be reproducers in the world.

Now, what will we measure? Attendance at events, attendance at disciple-building, disciple-making, discipleship-training courses? How will we assess whether what we are doing is fulfilling our intended purpose?

We could dialog and come up with a set of indicators of mature disciples.

Behavior regarding (1) corporate worship, (2) personal daily worship, (3) daily prayer life, (4) financial stewardship, (5) service in a specific ministry, (6) involvement in meaningful fellowship or small groups, (7) relationships with unchurched persons.

Alternately, in thinking about other behaviors or factors:

How many of our first-time visitors return a second time? Can we increase the percentage?

How many quality contacts does this church have with non-Christians or outsiders in a typical week?

How many evangelistic contacts do we have, where one of us actually shares our faith?

How will we do ministry?

Will we be coercive, work by force?

Charlemagne, forced baptisms, be baptized or we will kill you.

Lamb vs. Lion [Rev. 5]