

THE LEADING EDGE

The electronic newsletter of the AGTS D.Min. Program in Pentecostal Leadership
Shaping servant leaders to change the world in the power of the Spirit
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EMERGING MODELS OF MINISTRY IN THE 21ST CENTURY: AGTS will partner with the Northern California District to host Brian McLaren in a Leadership Roundtable Conference on "Emerging Models of Ministry in the 21st Century," March 4-5, 2002. Brian pastors Cedar Ridge Community Church in the Washington D.C. area and is the author of *The Church on The Other Side*, and *A New Kind of Christian*. He is a leading thinker on what it takes to develop relevant ministry in today's culture. Location: Hilton Arden West, Sacramento. Registration: \$150 before Feb. 2, and \$175 thereafter. Space is limited to 125 participants for maximum interaction. Other speakers are AGTS President Byron Klaus on "Pentecostal Theology in the 21st Century," and D.Min. Director Earl Creps on "The Emerging Church: A Video Report from the Front Lines."

Online registration at:

http://www.agts.edu/conferences/leadership_roundtable2002.html

Or call: 1-800-467-2487, ext. 1044

QUOTABLE: THE DEFINITION OF TRUE SUCCESS

"True success is achieving your purpose without sacrificing your core values."

--Robert B. Rogers

LEADERLIFE: THE BALANCED ORGANIZATION

My tires look fine until I hit the interstate at 70 mph. Only then do I discover that small imperfections in their weight and shape translate into spleen-shattering vibration.

Organizations and individuals operate the same way. The "static balance" that looks so easy in the showroom (or the pulpit) must be replaced by a "dynamic

balance" under actual performance pressure. Failing to make the transition can be catastrophic for leaders. Here's why:

1. Speed Kills: Seemingly inconsequential issues and traits can become lethal when brought "up to speed." A looming deadline, for example, can turn strained relationships in your organization into open warfare.
2. Asleep at the Wheel: Speed is also an anesthetic. When things are rolling along it's easy to go into denial about issues that need attention just because they are not a crisis *today*. Leadership is tiring, and the temptation to evade things can be powerful.

It comes down to this: balanced organizations maximize the fruit of the Spirit, while imbalanced organizations provide opportunity for the works of the sinful nature. (Galatians 5:19-23)

Achieving and maintaining dynamic balance (the ability to go fast toward an objective without shaking to pieces) begins with several key decisions:

1. The Personal Decision: I must make a commitment to God to live a balanced life myself. My organization will be influenced by who I am as much as by what I do. A frenetic leader creates a stressed-out group that lives on a spiritual starvation diet. Being the leader means influencing my organization God-ward. This is impossible if my own life is not centered in Christ.
2. The Organizational Decision: I must put the issue of "balance" on the agenda, and make it one of the criteria to which my group's life is accountable. If we're getting the job done, but everyone is going crazy in the process, is that really how we want to live together as a community? Is that the kind of Christianity we want to model as a group?

To help make these decisions, ask yourself questions like this:

1. Under pressure, how does our organization change?
2. To what extent do people in the organization trust leadership and each other?
3. If we were re-designing everything today, would our group want things the way they are?
4. Is my group more God-ward this year than we were last year?
5. What small to medium scale issues can I deal with right now that would head off larger problems when we're "up to speed?"
6. What am I doing to demonstrate love to the members of my organization?
7. What other questions would assess the spiritual state of our organization?

Balanced ministries are the ones that go the distance. They move toward their goals intentionally without compromising scriptural principles or personal values. (Hopefully, these two categories overlap 100%.)

The ability to pursue our goals through our values is the key feature. The more

congruence the organization has between these two, the more balance it has achieved. Maintaining this state means measuring the organization's performance against its values on a regular basis. If one of our values, for example, is to enjoy working together, someone has to ask whether we actually are enjoying it

However, only a leader who lives a sane, spiritual life will be able to see a value gap or have the credibility to do anything about it.

Blessings,

Earl Creps, Ph.D.
D.Min. Program Director, AGTS

DATA DUMP: WORLD EVANGELIZATION PLANS

The dream of fulfilling the Great Commission has been with the church ever since Christ first gave it on a Galilean hillside 2,000 years ago. Statisticians David Barrett and Todd Johnson estimate that 250 world evangelization plans had been proposed by the year 1900, and another 1,150 more were advanced in the 20th century.

LINKS TO THE FUTURE: WEB RESOURCES

<http://www.usatoday.com/snapshot/life/snapldex.htm>

US Today charts on lifestyle issues are a handy source of survey information that is easily translatable into sermon illustrations, PowerPoint slides, overheads, etc. A great source of statistics on how North Americans are living and feeling these days.

<http://eletters1.ziffdavis.com/cgi-bin10/flo?y=eJRj0C3C7p0EvP0KQT0A7>

A very handy site that lets you track down everything you have downloaded onto your hard drive so you can put it all into one folder, or a series of folder. A real asset if you do lots of web research.

http://agts.edu/faculty/faculty_publications/bibliographies/creps_bibliography/index.html

Follow this link to my Emerging Culture/Emerging Church Resource List. It is a free pdf download containing approximately 800 resources (with an annotated web section) on the emerging church. A revised edition will appear during November with an improved system of categories and about 1000 resources. One of many resources available free on my page.

WE RECOMMEND:

Graham Johnson's *Preaching to a Postmodern World: A Guide to Reaching Twenty-First Century Listeners* (Baker Books 2001). This book offers useful thinking on what it means to communicate to postmoderns. The brief review of postmodernism is helpful for the initiated, and the strategies suggested will be applicable both to mainstreamers trying to move with our shifting culture, and to emerging leaders who are diving right in to the postmodern scene. You can buy it at:

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0801063671/qid%3D1011484250/ref%3Dsr%5F11%5F0%5F1/103-3152735-9598202>

NEXT STEP: E-GROUP ROLL OUT IN FEBRUARY!

We now have over 100 people enrolled in our new D.Min. egroup. Sign-up was completed in December. This month we are working out the technical bugs so the group will function smoothly and be immediately useful to you. The big roll out will be during February. Watch for your email notification and jump right in!

All D.Min. participants, graduates, and faculty are included in this closed, mediated e-group. The goal is threefold: (1) Adding value: to enhance our participants' ministries through dialog on leadership; (2) Building relationship: to increase the level of contact among us by developing community in cyberspace; (3) Organizational improvement: to become a more effective D.Min. learning organization by listening consistently to our participants and faculty. Earl will mediate all postings. Discussion is limited to leadership resources, issues, and challenges. No rabbit trails (e.g., promotion, theological debates, spleen-venting, etc.) will be posted. There are many other venues for those things.

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Please feel free to forward to a friend.

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