

AGWM Seminar with Melvyn Ming

June 30, 2003

Tape 2

Session 2

P.16 AGWM 1.

Ming: ... and then we start down. Now, notice what happens. Capital goes down, management goes up. The reason you can tell where an organization is, the minute in a board meeting and an executive meeting, they start to micromanage, you know they're over the top. Because that's the first reaction, that's the knee-jerk reaction. They start to micromanage. But, look what happened. The customer became less important. And then, now, you see capital becomes very important, and then finally without your monies this ministry can't continue. That's kind of what happens. See, they've lost, it's not even about vision anymore, it's about value.

You have to ask yourself where you are and what kinds of interventions are needed, because very organization, even the most healthy organization, has to do intervention. That's why you have to analyze, look, dream, to keep yourself on top of the curve. Now, for example, in consulting. If they analyze and make the change at the top of the curve, almost nobody notices anything happens. By the way, there were very few problems, and people are going to want to, "Why did you change? That was working so well," but it's still working, so fine. That's the easiest time to do it, but it takes the most faith, because we do when there's little evidence. That's where you really have to be a person of faith, because you say, "We're going to change, even though it seems to be working."

Now, if it goes down a little bit . . . You notice the turnaround time . . . The truth is once it starts down, you first have to stop it before you start up. Well, the time's a little shorter. The further it goes down, the longer it takes to turn an organization around. So, let me just show you our churches. Churches that are just a little over the top, we can turn them around in about 18 months. Once they get a little further, it's probably going to be 3-4 years. If they really get on down there, it's 8-10 years. That's how long it's going to take to bring them back up.

See, there aren't quick, easy solutions. You have to say that, okay. The missiology in your Bible school, in your field, in your area, where are you. The more . . . The sooner you bring the right intervention, the more likely it will be left disrupted. By the way, that's being a good steward of missions.

Now, to just close our time out here, if you would look on page 17. Something I hope, and I'm going to talk to them, that we can tomorrow maybe move the seating around. Really, you need to be doing discussions by field and area. Because we are not one organization, we are a series of organizations. What may be true in one place may not be true in another. So, I think that, for example, in _____ like this, if we could just ask general questions, we could be saying the exact opposite and both be correct. But, we can't bring real change without being more specific. So, I'm going to hope tomorrow we can move things a little bit where we can maybe get more area discussion.

But, I would ask you, what do you see as the top three to five organizational issues? Now, notice, organizational issues, not issues about everything, just organizational. And then look about, and I would say on number two and three, apply it to your ministry. I don't know, it might be a school, might be an area, might be a field. Where have you done the best job of transitioning and where did you need to work the hardest? So kind of do a little reflection there. I'd like to give you a couple of minutes to do that, and then I'm going to say a word and dismiss. So, take a couple of minutes and _____ that. Don't put your name on the paper.

[Break in tape.]

We grew up in one system and now we're trying to deal with a system that we don't know. A third variable is that we are sometimes ministering in cultures where this might not culturally be suitable, and those are correct observations. I hope in the session we're on right now, we're going to address that right now a little bit. Even though the two organizational patterns, models, were revolutionary between them, organization always has to be applied contextually. When I teach for American audiences on organization, and when I teach in Singapore to a predominantly Chinese audience on organization, you have to adjust it. You don't take the same stuff, because the cultural expectations of leadership are different. Even the way they do AIDS and lot of other issues there. So, we have to _____ . . . But, I appreciate the comments.

The other thing I must say I appreciate is that I sense in a number of people a real heart to do the right thing, even when it's a stretch. I appreciate that. I think that speaks volumes about the character of people, that "You know, this might be a little tough, but it's the right thing; let's look at it." I really want to express appreciation for that.

In this session here, we want to talk a little bit about organizations. This time we're going to apply it a little bit more. You have to know there are people that are leadership coaches, and there are people that are organizational coaches, and they are not the same thing. There are some who do both, but I want to talk a little bit about that in this particular session.

One of the things you have to know if you do both—you actually do them, they are exact opposites. If you are a leadership coach, if you are coaching an individual, you are coaching a person, and you are trying to teach them how to maximize their effectiveness, you will always tell them to maximize their strengths. Whatever you are good at, do it with passion. That is, almost any coaching system on individual leadership will see it that way. But, when you talk about coaching an organization, it is the exact opposite. You always coach them to strengthen their weakness. Now, here's a fundamental reason why on that. But, they are so opposite that sometimes people mix them up. Like, they will read a book on leadership coaching, and then try and apply that to an organization and wonder why it didn't work. Well, on an individual, whatever their giftedness is, they can surround themselves with a team that is strong in their weaknesses. But, they must do their strength or their team loses it. I mean, would you want, taking any sport, you are a world-class wide receiver, you do not want him playing tackle. You want him running and catching the ball. You will bring other people. If a person is gifted in evangelism, you will tell them, "Man, fan the flame; go for it." If you are gifted in management, "Go for it." But, an organization cannot bring another organization to cover their weakness so their weakness shows. If you look at any of the major books, theories, concepts, constructs of

coaching, when it is an individual, you are going to tell them, “Whatever you do, however _____, go for it.” You talk about organization, you look for the weakness, the lowest system. By the way, when you go in for your physical, they look for what is out of balance, not what is in balance, because you are a system; you’re an organization, in that sense.

Well, I want to talk a little bit about that. I have found an interesting phenomenon traveling in our Assemblies of God circles, both at the pastoral level and at the missions level. I have found a number of people who were very frustrated, some almost to the point of breaking. You know I probably have more pastors and missionaries in the last year ask me about maybe I need to get out than I probably did in the 10 years previous. Pressures are great. Times are tough. A lot of issues there. Oftentimes, in truth, they are beating themselves up. For example, I found that when I would travel around, like especially doing district councils or ministers’ institutes, that I would have these people coming up to me and almost be weeping because they are pastoring a church, and it’s not growing. They have heard all their life, if you’re just spiritual enough, it will grow. You just pray enough _____, it’s going to grow. And yet these people are spiritual giants. I mean they really are. You look at their prayer life and their devotional life and their love of God, and you look at their Bible, and there is no doubt in your mind that this is an A+ person. But they have been fed this lie that if you are just spiritual enough it will grow, and their church isn’t growing, so they figure, “It must be me,” and they’re beating themselves over the head.

Then I find another group of people out there that they’ve bought into another lie that says, “Everything rises and falls on leadership.” They say, “I’m the leader, and it’s not doing well. Man, it’s got to be me; the problem is me.” Well, I would tell you that’s not true. If it were true, Jesus failed. What about Judas? What about the crowds that left him? See, you can do everything right, and people don’t have to follow. People are free to make their own choices. Just because you do the right thing doesn’t make them automatically do the right thing.

So, I want to talk to you about a concept I have developed to help people integrate some of these complexes. I commonly call it the Cube, and you can see it on your notes there at the top. In this concept that I call an organizational, transformational model, there is a base under it. There is a foundation. It is our biblical, theological foundation. (Oh, thank you Gary. There’s nothing like friends, ain’t that something.)

There is a base that is biblical. We in Assemblies of God have a heritage. Our first doctrine, we believe in the Word, that we build ourselves on the Word, people of the Word. We get in a debate, and we say, “Show me in the Word.” We are just people of the Book. When I was a boy, my dad pastored this church, and it was called Full Gospel, because it said we believe the whole Book. That’s really what the implication of it was. Now, I say that because without the right foundation, the truth is any building crumbles. Every time we come into this building, my wife always says, “This is built just like the Hyatt in Baguio,” because, on a given day it was renovated and collapsed. Well, there was a memory of the foundation—it didn’t have enough _____ in it. In the church, in any Christian ministry, if leadership is not solid in their groundings biblically and theologically, at some point the church or organization will implode. It’s just a matter of time. At some point it will implode. Now, spirituality in this sense is a prerequisite to leadership, but no building is just the foundation. In fact, very rarely do you drive around town and say, “Oh, I love that foundation. That’s a good one.” You don’t usually even see it, but any

great building is built on a huge foundation. Well, in our ministries, I mean why did, last week, at your Pre Field Orientation, why did you spend a week talking about the mission of God? Because if we don't understand the foundation, all we are doing is running through little faddisms. But, we as leaders have to look at ourselves and see that.

Now, there are a lot of key issues to me here. I think that obviously for us, and for me, and these are probably a personal _____. I do think, "I am a person of the Book." I am really flexible on anything that I can make align to the Book. I am pretty rigid on things that don't fit the Book. I think that is critical to us. I think Christology, friends, right now the greatest doctrine being attacked is Christology. I mean there are people who are "trying to be Christian without Christ." Everything we believe, I mean if you stop to think about it, and whether you believe in this or not, but the concept of _____ is Christ the Savior, Christ the Healer, it always starts with Christology. I think that we have got to be careful that we don't become, if you will, Christ-less in our theology. I do think the mission of God . . . Why do we do missions? If it isn't because we are impelled by God to do it, it is just another program; it is just something we are caught up in. I think the church in its purposes, so many . . . By the way, surveys of churches tell you this. People in our churches do not know what the purpose of the Church is.

I had a presbyter, and I will not mention his name, although he publicly told this story. I challenge people all the time, make sure your people know the purpose of the Church. I tell them to test it. I say, "Put a 3 x 5 card in your bulletin and ask everybody to write the purposes down and collect them and look at them. No big deal!" Now, I have to tell you the background. He had just finished preaching a five-week series on the purposes of the Church. In the front of the church, there is a banner that goes from the ceiling to the floor with the key words. On the bulletin that they got the card in, on the cover are the purposes of the Church. Okay, you've got this picture. They fill out the card. The ushers collect them. He goes home for lunch. He is going through them, and in his own words, and I quote exactly, "With every card, the sicker I got." When he was done, only one person got three of the five correct—his wife." He said he was so physically disturbed by it, he could hardly preach Sunday night. He just couldn't . . . He was in crisis. He said, "I had just preached five weeks. All they had to do was look up." We laugh, but that is the American Church. We forgot why we do church, and I think if we don't rediscover it, we're just another organization. The priesthood of believers. We came out of the Protestant reformation. Salvation by faith. But one of the tenets was priesthood of believers. Do you know that much of Pentecost in American is in danger of becoming a priesthood of priests? Because we are removing the ministry from the laity. I have seen pulpits that have something that says only a clergy can speak from it. Now, where do you get that in the New Testament? And our foundation, we were built on people who didn't even have or know what clergy meant—went out and started a prayer meeting. I mean, they just felt called of God to go share, and I think we have to rediscover that in our foundation.

Spiritual gifts. I want to show you something. The largest three churches in America, none of them are Pentecostal, but all of them test their members for spiritual gifts. In 100 Assemblies of God churches surveyed, only one. Who's Pentecostal? I mean, come on, we are Spirit-filled people. We believe the Holy Spirit did not cease. What happened to giftedness? We got afraid of it in the 80s because we saw abuse. Now we just ignore it.

Understanding of the unchurched from Christ's perspective. You see, I think at times the theology of the unchurched is more similar to the Pharisees than to Christ. I think we have to rediscover the passion for those that are not in the Church. I think all of that is part of foundation for me. Now, you can decide for yourself, but what is your spiritual, theological foundation. What is it that anchors this thing that you call ministry?

Another part of this is this tube that kind of goes through the whole thing. If you look on the chart there or the diagram . . . I call this spiritual formation. Now you can call it discipleship or spiritual discipline or Christ-likeness or spiritual maturity or deeper life or living the life, whatever word you care for, but there is a great concept in Scripture that our lives are more than what we believe. It is how we behave, how we live it out. As we used to say, how do you walk the talk? Those kinds of issues there. I think that for our younger generation, this is more important than theology. You have to know that. By the way, I have done a survey of ministers in the Assemblies of God. If I ask older ministers, "Tell me about what you believe about spiritual formation," they almost always tell me doctrine, not behavior. If I ask younger, they always describe behavior. You see, in our world, the world has more respect for a bad person who doesn't claim to be good, than a good person who claims to be good and acts bad. See, that incongruity. In the Assemblies of God and Protestantism and the evangelical and Pentecostalism in America, if we don't rediscover living out spiritual formation, we will lose relevance. We were people that embraced living the life. But, it has got to be core there, and I see a number of things that go into that.

Spiritual passion. How can you be close to Christ and not have passion? I mean, that is an oxymoron to me, but . . . If you are near Christ, you are going to be infected, if you will, with the true vision.

Spiritual disciplines. You are going to practice . . . I mean, these studies that say that you have Christian ministers who don't pray three minutes a day. Now, tell me, where is that at? It takes discipline to know God, and we don't want to get into legalism, I am not talking about that.

The fruit of the Spirit—if anybody ought to preach the fruit of the Spirit, it ought to be us, because that is for everybody. I mean, Christians. It should affect or behavior, our organizations, we should reflect those things. I think understanding of age-level issues is a part of spiritual formation. I think this is why Jesus thought about children and why He let children come, _____. He was continually trying to help him understand age-level kinds of issues. I think it is an understanding of modern culture. He talked about what do people see, what do they think, what are they processing, in his dialogues with people. Part of spiritual formation is connecting theory to reality.

Humility. There really isn't much room for error in the Kingdom. What does it say about crying? I think compassion really comes out here. I think integrity and authenticity . . . We have been devastated in America in the church with what has happened in the Catholic Church, and I am not casting _____ upon the Catholic Church. I am just saying whenever there is perceived a break of integrity, credibility is lost.

Spiritual formation. Now, those two elements. Let me just stop before I go to that. You might say that those are the spiritual dimensions, and there are many issues that should be answered with spiritual answers. A spiritual answer for an organizational problem is a terrible answer. An organization answer for a spiritual problem is a terrible answer. It is having the discernment to know which is which.

Now, let's talk about the next issue, and I am talking about the two sides to this little thing. One of them I call organizational dynamics. It is what we addressed in the last session. Now, let me just show you a couple of issues. Do you know in America whether you are an Episcopal church, a Lutheran church, a Nazarene church, an Assemblies of God church, a Southern Baptist church, an Evangelical Free church, it almost doesn't matter. The average-sized church is 75. Why are they 75? It has nothing to do with theology, friends; they are organized like a mom and pop store. They grow to 75, and that is what they can handle, and they will never grow until they change the way they are organized. It has nothing to do with theology; it is an organizational problem. Why are the growth barriers in churches? Why do we talk about the 200-barrier or the 2,000-barrier? They are the same whatever your theology. They are organizational barriers. If we try and answer them by telling someone, "Well, just pray more," we are giving the wrong answer to the wrong questions. Yes, they should pray. It is foundational. But there are organizational issues that can only be answered organizationally. We have to learn how to deal with this.

Now, everybody has excess. For example, there are people that say, "If the church is spiritual, then let's just treat it spiritually. We do not have to know all this business stuff." They are wrong. But, there are other people that say, "If we just run it like a business, it will be okay." They are wrong. See, the church is not either. It is a spiritual organism that functions with natural logistical issues. Just like God can make us weightless, but I haven't been that way lately. He does tend to operate in certain natural orders.

Now, a number of issues to me there. Systems thinking—we talked about this. Mental models, functioning structures, teams, empowerment, relational and organizational structures, organizational culture, organizational lifestyle, and church health qualities. Now, those are organizational issues. We need to address organizational answers to those issues. That is important.

Contextual understanding. Now, this is the one that I just referred to. I think we need to be very sophisticated, but being right never substitutes for being appropriate. I will just tell you. I will use a simple little illustration—just keep it simple. When I was pastoring . . . I pastored in eastern Washington. My church had a number of different entities in it. The backbone of the church financially and in prayer was, honestly, people 55 and older. They paid the bills. I mean, that is why we were the number one missions-giving church in the district. They had a heart for missions, and they gave. Now, even though everybody in our church almost called me Mel, they didn't. I was always going to be Pastor Ming to them. Now, I could have fought them all day long. It would have been a stupid fight. They were trying to show honor, and in their culture that is the way they did it. Then I had another group of people—they were all these professional people who worked at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. They were engineers and physicists and geologists. I was always going to be Mel to them, and they wanted to be involved in decision-making. Then I had a group of about 25 percent of our churches that were Hispanics that were

cultural Catholics. I remember the first Sunday . . . I remember preaching, and one of them came out said, “Enjoyed the mass, Father.” Laughter) “Thank you. Appreciate it.” It took me awhile to compute and all. But, no matter how much I told them, “I want you to be part of this decision,” they would always respond, “Whatever you want, Pastor.” Because their culture . . . and please do not anybody think there is any judgment. I am just saying their culture was you defer to leadership. These were professionals. Now, that is why I come to this one here. You have to take all of this, and you have to apply it with wisdom in your context. The key, just like it isn’t for your church, isn’t to exploit the American system; it is to exploit godliness in culture. Just because it is the newest wave in America does not necessarily mean it is a wave you need to be on in some places. I think we have to have the maturity to understand, and in fact we are probably going to have to learn to operate several different ways, because it is a complex world. For example, if you bring on more young missionaries who are post-modern, who hate authority and who _____ . . . They are not part of it unless they are part of it. You will have to function that way. But, in some contexts, you are going to have to temper it to recognize the realities of where you minister. So, I think that is part of organizational dynamics.

Change process is on the other side of this. They kind of go together. See, all leaders are providing organization through change. By the way, there is nobody in the Bible you call a leader that did not bring about change. Think about it. Everybody in the Bible we call a leader brought change. Change is part of leadership. Noah—the new beginning. Moses—out of Egypt. Abram—a new land. Nehemiah—rebuilt the wall. Jesus—the new covenant. Peter—a Spirit-filled life. Paul—Gentiles in the church. All of them brought organizational change. Now, there are key issues that relate to this, and many of you, I think, have probably read Cotter and the book on leading change, but you have to create urgency. If people do not believe that people are dying and going to hell, why should they get on board with missions, if you believe everybody is going to be saved anyway? If you believe it doesn’t really matter, why are you going to sacrifice? And we have to . . . that vision-casting again. We have to communicate that.

Developing guiding coalitions. And this one is, I think, the key. In any multi-national enterprise, it is always run by a coalition. We have to put partners together who have some diversity, but can function in collaboration; not necessarily in uniformity, but in collaboration. They have to be part of the strategy. You see, one of the problems we have sometimes is we want to tell people how to solve the problem that they haven’t yet discovered. And they have to first discover the problem and be part of the discovery of the solution. This is why, I think, people resist colonialism so bad, because that is always an external answer to a question.

Communicating vision. Number one issue—communicating vision. What is the vision? In missions you run a fine line. Vision is not money. Money follows vision. But, if we are not careful, it looks like the vision is money. I go into all kinds of churches, and everything they have on the wall is about money—not about the souls being saved with the money. I mean, think about it. So, if you are a visitor, what does it look like missions is? Money. Empowering leaders, and that comes many, many, many different ways.

Creating wins. We have to have some success. The fields need to have some success. And I love this one, and this is the one . . . We have to learn to anchor chains to what has been before. Here is where you get help. There are people that were giants in their day that would not fit in this day.

But you know what, we need to connect to them because we wouldn't have this day had it not been for them. And I think we have to be careful to build this continuum. It is not that we are saying . . . We are not necessarily going to do it all the same way, but we do not have to trash what has gone before. We should actually lift up the good, sacrifice, vision, commitment; I mean the values that are transcended there.

And then leadership. I put leadership on the top. It is critical, it is vital, but it is not everything. You can find yourself in a context that you can do everything right and still lose. I mean, let's really be candid here. But, it is crucial, and good leadership is much more likely to bring good results. I think there are many things about leadership . . . I think a couple of issues, and those of you that know me, know that I kind of think there are six parts to leadership in the Christian sense. There are characters and values. If you do not live the life, you have forfeited the right to lead. You have to have integrity and demonstrate proper values. You have to be a vision caster. You have to be able to help people see what can be. By the way, very much related to faith and hope theologically, you have to have influence with people. You have to have good people skills. You have to be able to network. You have to be able to connect with people. You have to be able to draw people together in working groups. You have to have the social skills to understand cultural differences, to pay tribute to people that need it in context. Then there is the issue of style. You have to be able to adjust to style. There is an issue that . . . I am going to come back a little bit later and talk about some aids, but the way you generally lead a builder and the way you lead an _____ are not the same, even though they are both leadership. You have to be able to adjust, but most people can. And then skills or specific skills that are leadership . . . And most of you that have read in leadership know that in general speaking people think that there are only somewhere between 5 and 10. Peter Drucker thinks there are 5; Warren Dennis thinks there are 10. It is not a lot of skills, but you have to have certain skills. Those are crucial, and we have to make sure we develop them and in the shape God made you.

When you put all these together you can change an organization. But I will tell you what—take any one of them out of the equation, and you lose. It doesn't matter which one. If you cannot pull them together, you cannot move the organization ahead. It takes that integration of the five parts, and all of us lean naturally to some better than others. That is just the way we are. So that is just the kind of a question we have for you—which of those five parts is your strongest? When you look at your life, are you strongest in your biblical foundation or are you strongest in your spiritual formation or in change or organization or leadership? Just on a piece of paper there, write what you are strongest in. We are going to take a little poll here in a minute. Which one do you most need to develop—especially given your role now? Which of those five? Answer those two questions, and we are just going to find out how we surveyed.

Yes?

(Inaudible question.)

No, sorry, I am talking about the five key issues of the cube. Sorry, thank you. Appreciate that, Judy.

If you go back to the very first page, the five issues that are on that cube. Which is your strongest and which do you most need to develop of the five?

(Long silence.)

Okay, you got your answers? Strongest and most needed to develop. Okay, let's find out. We are going to do strongest first. When we name your strongest, raise your hand. Okay, how many are strongest on the biblical foundation? Okay, how many are strongest on spiritual formation? How many are strongest on organizational dynamics? How many are strongest on change process? How many on leadership? Now, if you kind of watch, really, they divided pretty evenly. That is healthy actually. It is good when you can pull that.

Now, let's see the one we most need to develop. How many what you most need to develop is your theological foundation? By the way, let me just tell you something. You will find if I do this same survey with a bunch of post-modern leaders, this will come up a lot, because they often did not grow up in the church, and they did not have the advantage of years of discipleship. They will stay strong in spiritual formation, but the weakness is here. They do not know that they are—they will tell you that. Okay, how many need to develop spiritual formation? Okay. How many organizational dynamics? Okay. Change process? Leadership? So, am I to assume that the rest of you are perfect? I mean, some of you did not vote. I have taken enough altar calls, and I can count. *(Laughter.)* Okay, think about it; think about it.

Now, I want to take you just a hair further, and on your notes on page 5, there is a statement at the top: "Many church leaders fall short of their dreams because they fail to appreciate the dual nature of ministry, that is both spiritual and natural. Many veer toward one of these extremes—either being spiritually idealistic or pragmatically technique-driven. Ministry that recognizes both the spiritual and natural dimensions is a ____." Now you see the tension here. It says some of us, when we are presented with a problem, we veer to the ____: "Let's pray about it. Let's look in the Word." Some of us, we are looking for solutions: "Okay, let's figure this out." Some of us flip back and forth, and some of us integrate. Okay, mark there which one you do. This one I am not going to ask for a show of hands, so answer with honesty, because remember spiritual formation is one of the issues. *(Silence.)* Got your answers?

Now, let me just say a word to you based on your answers. Obviously, if you always veer one way or the other or have a tendency to veer, you need to move toward integration. If you switch back and forth you are absolutely the most frustrating to the people you lead. They come thinking you are going to pray with them, and you want to work to solve it—or—they think you want to solve it, and you want to pray with them. They never know which side you are. You can always ask a presenting question to figure out which side you are leaning today, before they tell you the real question. And you need to work at integrating a little bit. But I will say this, the biblical pattern is integration. We need to work for that. We need both. We need to not lose either. It is not a matter of compromise, blending, it is both. I think that is a crucial issue.

Now, I am going to take a few minutes here to talk about something that we sometimes would not talk about, and you might be surprised I am going to talk about it in this setting. But, say what you will, our division of world missions or world ministries comes out of a church-base

here. It is easy for us to get discolored pictures or have glasses that are flawed because it is marvelous. It is unbelievable what God is doing around the world. It is. It has to bring great joy to heaven just to see the lives being changed. But, we can think that what is true there can be true here and be totally wrong. I am going to take a few minutes to talk about here. Because, whatever you want to say, you must integrate with here. Now, first off, I am doing everything within my power to shape and make this better. This is where I am giving my life, so I am not saying this to put down, I am saying to get clear. Don't anyone over-read that.

I have some very bad news for you, and it is bad news. It is bad news any way you want to talk about it. There is no way you can whitewash it or spin-control it. The church in America is not reaching the unchurched. Period. I do not have to put any disclaimers. I do not have to put any small print. I can just make the statement and let it stand and not fear contradiction. Now, are there places where it is? Yes. But, as a whole, it is not . . .

SIDE B

. . . in growth last year. That is 140 thousand churches did not THROUGH AN ENTIRE YEAR'S WORK, lead one of their children to Christ, one of their teenagers to Christ, one person to Christ. They did not have a conversion. That cannot be good; I don't care how you want to cut it. Now, some of you are thinking, "But that's not true in the Assemblies of God." Just relax a while, will you? In American evangelical circles last year, it took the combined effort of 85 Christians working a full year to win one. I mean, talk to me about multiplication—this ain't it! Eighty-five an ENTIRE YEAR to win one. It is a reasonable guess, and I would say _____ is right on it, that 100,000 to 150,000 congregations will choose the easier route of disillusion during the next five decades when confronted with the choice between change and disillusion—they will conclude it is easier to die. Now, that is 40 percent of every church existing today that is going to be gone in 50 years. That is a huge number.

By the way, I want to talk about, you gave a statistic this morning that I love, about the number of churches planted. In America, a church closes its door for the last time every hour. Twenty-four churches today will not open tomorrow. Every hour somebody is shutting the door for the last time. It will never open again. This is where we are coming from. Let's go further.

Churches are going out of business because they refuse to change. Any church that doesn't shift from a ministry of status quo to a ministry of mission outpost will die or become hopelessly irrelevant. We are not a Christian nation. We cannot act like it. We are a mission field. We are a mission field that sends missionaries. But, in every field we go to do you not encourage them to send missionaries before they have evangelized their country. See, you can be a sender and a mission field both. We are. But, we often think we are just a sender. Kenneth Callahan says the day of the church culture is over; the day of the mission field has come. Talking about _____ the church in America. We are a mission field here. We are no longer the bastion of Christianity.

Now, let's take the last decade. All Protestant denominations declined 9.5 percent, a net loss of 4,498,242 people, while in the same time period, the population grew 11.4 percent, a net gain of 24,154,000. So in ten years, we had a net loss in America of 28,651,242 people. A net loss! You cannot keep going at a net loss like that and be in existence very long. You will never have

missions support if that goes on, because there will be no churches to support you. You just cannot keep that up. Let's talk about a couple of things.

Let's talk about church attendance. Now, I am using as a point of reference, 1972. Nineteen seventy-two was the last year that by people's self-description, they said they attended church once a week—50 percent did. We were not a Christian country then, but we were a Christian culture. For example, people went to church because it was good for business. Schools did not have sports on Sunday or Wednesday—in 1972! It was a church day! Almost everybody who went to church, by the way, was going to a Christian church, not another religion. You come to the 90s, and you can just see, '91, '92, '93, '95, '97—it dropped, but the percentage is going that includes Muslims, Hindus. The percentage of those even that are Christian is smaller than it looks. Now there is not a school district in America hardly that cares what day you have church. Now they cannot put up even anything religious without a fight. We are not a Christian culture. We cannot do church like we did in 1972, because our mission field changed. I think we have to kind of deal with it.

Now, let's talk about this. The number of adults in the United States claiming identity, notice this, with no religion—they did not switch from Christianity to Buddhism or Christianity to Hindu or something—they said, “No, I am walking away from it.” The number doubled in the last 10 years. Have you ever walked up to somebody and asked, “Hey, where do you go to church?” “I don't go *anymore*.” They did not switch denominations; they did not switch churches—they switched to none. Now, this is not a problem of other religions, this is a problem of non-Christians. I will go one further . . . Not one county in America had a greater church population than it did ten years ago. Now, I do not care if you are north, south, east, or west, rural city, NOT ONE COUNTY. That seems pretty epidemic to me. The U.S. is the third-largest mission field. There are 135 million unchurched Americans. Now, you want to do your demographics and do your study, there are more lost people here than in China and India. We have to wake up to this. We are a mission field, friends, and if we don't do better at this mission field, we won't have the support for the mission field other places.

The problem is not a lack of spiritual hunger. And, by the way, it is easier to talk to people in America about spirituality right now than any time in my lifetime. You can sit down on a plane and talk to people about spirituality, nobody blinks. Ten years ago, boy that probably ended the conversation. Nobody blinks. You go down to Barnes & Noble; the spiritual section is bigger than it has ever been. It is just not Christian. People are interested in spiritual things. Their response points have changed. What worked effectively in the past does not necessarily connect with society nowadays. Yesteryear's appeal to guilt and duty does not resonate well today. Institutional loyalty is at an all-time low. Fear of dangling in hell does not impact people, because most are not even sure hell exists and are turned off by negative threats. But, they are turned on by spirituality.

Now, I am going to say something as a Pentecostal. This is our day, man. Thirty years ago, they said we were just a bunch of fanatics and emotional, and we were all, we could not prove things. Now the world is saying, “Show me and then tell me how you do it later.” This is the day of Pentecostals. If there ever was a day we ought to just be doing great at evangelism, it is our day. This is not against Christ; it is against what was the church 30 years ago. Now, this one here, by

the way, this one you might want to write—this one will preach. This is a fact. If you give each person 30 inches. You can multiply this out. Thirty inches. Now, some of you do not take it, some of them like me take more. But, you give each person 30. If you align the lost people in the United States, not Canada and Mexico, the United States, up on the equator, the line goes around the world two and a half times, the lost people in the United States. The line gets .5 miles longer every day, 3.5 miles longer every week. It is getting longer. It is getting longer. It is getting longer.

It is easy in missions to think, “But that is not our mission field.” But you are a part of this. If that line keeps getting longer, at some point we will not have a base, and in truth we better hope some of the missions we have planted send missionaries here. Huge fact.

Now, how churches are growing in America. Some are. Let’s talk about that now. Seventeen out of twenty, by most statistics, are plateaued or declined. It means they run the same or less than five years ago. Statistically the same or less than five years ago. So, in any town in America, we line up 20 churches, if they are statistically average, 17 of them are the same size or smaller than they were five years ago. Three are bigger. Now, it is interesting that the three that are bigger are bigger than the 17 that got smaller. But, two of the three grew from all the people who left the 17.

I have a good friend, I won’t mention his name, pastors one of our largest churches, and he got a huge award for growth. One year they grew 207, and by the way, I do not care what size you are, that is good growth. Then his board did a study and found that 202 of them came from other churches and only five of them were conversions. Now, can you see how different that feels? Did you have 207 growth or 5? The Kingdom only grew 5. An interesting phenomenon happens. In the 1970s, big churches fed little ones in our movement. Big churches were evangelism centers, people got saved and got tired of the bigness, and they would go to the little ones all around it. You would watch it. Look at the statistics. They fed the little . . . Now, the little ones feed the big ones. See, Sam’s Club, Osco, Lowe’s, we are a society that likes the big boxes. So, we are kind of switching that way. Only one, though, in 20 is growing my conversion growth. By the way, this one is having phenomenal growth. They are having Book of Acts growth, but only 1 in 20.

Now, I say that because you are going to work with missionaries who have to live in this. Many of the churches they go to are going to be discouraged, because they are plateaued and declining. They are going to sometime wonder, “What’s going on here?” That is the world they are living in. Also, if they have been away a long time, they are going to find that the 1 in 20 does not do church like the other 19. I ask you, which one is your model? It is an important question. The majority of the churches in America are plateaued and declining. It is the 1 in 20 that are growing from conversion growth that must be our model. You have to focus on the 1 in 20 because they are the ones doing it. They are the ones that are living out the Great Commission.

Now, let’s talk about the Assemblies of God, for all you who thought, “Oh, that’s all those other people.” Now, I am using the 2000/2001, I did not pull up the slide of last year, but it was actually a little work, but I mean, statistically this is minor. In 2000/2001 we reported 491,390 conversions, and yet in the previous nine years, we experienced 36,000 growths cumulative. Now, people always say to me, “Well, some of those were recommitments.” Okay, cut the

number in half. What happened to the other 250,000 people, just from one year? It took 100 converts to grow 7 in attendance. It took 100 converts to baptize 24 in water. In Assemblies of God, in 2001, 22 percent of our churches reported NO CONVERSION. No children, no youth, no adult. None. We did not even keep our families. That is almost one-fourth. By the way, that was the first year we had a net loss in the number of churches _____. First year ever. Net loss. I do not paint that to be negative—I paint it because we have to feel with this reality if we are going to make a difference. My friend, you are in the Great Commission business. You know, when your missionaries itinerate, they ought to be a catalyst for vision. They ought to be an instrument of God for revitalization. But they have to get the picture right.

_____ R. W. Scott said, “Unless we listen intently to the voices of secular society, unless we struggle to understand them, unless we feel with modern men and women in their frustration, their alienation, their pain, and even sometimes their despair, I think we shall lack authenticity as the followers of Jesus.” The answer is not to replicate the church, when we were a Christian fellowship. The answer is to be the church God has in this culture. I think that is the imperative. Now, I am going to play with you a little bit here for a minute. By the way, I do believe the unchurched are reachable. They are reachable today. They are interested in spiritual things. In fact . . . Look at the movies. The number of movies dealing with the supernatural right now, I mean they are having world box offices on numbers that are dealing with spirituality, and we ought to be connecting to that. Jesus came to seek and save the lost. He was a friend of sinners. You know, many of our church members know no sinners. We have a holy huddle. He wants us to be a friend of sinners and to seek out the lost. And then together I think we can grow true conversions here too. I do not think God planned it to only be everywhere else. I do not think He loves us any less here. I do not think His Great Commission was any watered down here. I think that we can focus on that.

Now, the point I wanted to make here is it is the 1 in 20 churches that we have to focus on. They are the ones growing. I can name right now a dozen churches, I believe, that have baptized over 1,000 adults in water. That is a lot of baptisms. Why are they different? Something you will find, by the way, if you travel to them. It does not matter what their denomination, they share certain things in common. Now, here is why I want to stretch you a little bit. I will move fast, so if this makes you uncomfortable just kind of grin and bear it, and we will get to things that are safer.

I am going to show you some of these model churches, because frankly missionaries can be, they can throw cold water or they can fan the flames of evangelism. If they are trying to make people do the foreign church here, it is just like us trying to make them do the U. S. church there. It is the same principle, and we would never advocate that. But often, unwillingly, they do not mean to, but missionaries do, and they do just the opposite. So, let’s talk about it. I am picking, by the way, when they started. I am doing these by when they started

Largest church in America. They have baptized over 1,000 adults every year for the last five years. They have in any given week 20,000 in small groups _____. They run 9,000 in their midweek Bible study. Any way you want to cut it. No, the point I want to make, though, they started in 1975. They were started in the new paradigm, and they were started with the intent and purpose of being a mission field. Their mission statement is to turn irreligious people into fully

devoted followers of Christ. That was day one. Now, by the way, these are going to be different styles.

The second largest church in America was started in 1980. Today they run about 17,500—Saddleback. One of the things you find about them—they average about 200 conversions a weekend. They have baptisms every weekend.

A/G. Fort Collins. Kimberly, we were talking about Gary earlier, Gary Northrup, the Assistant Superintendent of Rocky Mountain. I went there in 1988. They ran less than 200. Some would say they ran less than 100, but we will say 200. Today they run over 500. One of the fastest growing A/G churches. Why don't we have 1,000 in these? Why don't we? It's the same theology. Ministers' kids. Historic church.

Fellowship Church. Martha and I were there Saturday night. We actually went there to check it out. It started in 1990 in Grapevine. They had 16,000 this weekend. Five services. They will baptize over 1,000 again this year in water—1,000 adults there.

Fastest growing church in America in the last two years: Northpoint Community Church, just outside of Atlanta. Started in 1995. Runs 16,000. At one point, they were growing 100 a week and baptizing 70 a week in water. A week! Friends, that is Book of Acts! Come on. This is happening today. If God can do it there, why can't he do it with us? I mean, come on. God wants to see people saved. And it proves there are people out there.

New Hope Fellowship in Hawaii. Wayne Cordero—I just realized I didn't put his name up there—by the way, doing church as a team.

Foursquare Church. Church started in 1995. By the way, they still do not own a building. They meet in a school. The first four years they grew to 8,000, and 5,000 of their 8,000 came to Christ in that church. Conversion growth. No church background. Wonderful thing that God is doing there.

The fastest growing Assemblies of God church, I believe, this last year, statistically, would have been Radiant Church out of Phoenix. It started in 1997, and today is running 2,500. By the way, it was a pastor who came through Berean. He really did. Microsoft engineer, was a youth sponsor in the church, went through Berean, first church he ever pastored.

This is probably the one that staggers me the most. The _____ Bible Church in Michigan. Started in 1999. Runs over 10,000. A Bible church, man. The guy is a Bible theology preacher from the Word. By the way, when you come into the church, you are given a Bible. When you go out, you get the bulletin, because they do not want you reading the bulletin during church. It is true! Now . . .

What I want you to see. I went very quickly there for a moment, and I am glad to talk about any of that. But, I showed you Southern Baptist churches. I showed you Assemblies of God churches. I showed you Foursquare churches. I showed you Independent churches. But almost every church I showed you was having 1,000 baptized in water. What they share in common is

this—they know how to do church. By the way, they are different styles. Those are not the same style churches.

By the way, the fastest growing, if you want a traditional church, would be Southeast Christian in Louisville. Grew 8,500 in six years. Fifty percent by conversion. Strictly traditional church. So, it is not style, but there is something about it.

That is what I want to talk to you about. I want to show you that this can make a difference, and you can be a catalyst. You can help.

One of the things we do is we coach churches. That is what I primarily do. I will give you just an example. Last year. United States, 3 in 20 would be growing. In the Assemblies of God last year, 6 in 20 growing. In churches we have in _____ groups, 13 in 20 is growing. I want to show you the power of coaching. I want to show you the power of systems. I want to show you the power of profit. See, it is not an original. It has just really taken some concepts that I am going to talk about. We do that in a number of districts.

Now, I want to talk about that process. In your packet here, I am on page 6. In this packet that we are going to talk about—honestly, what I do mostly is coach organizations any more. This is the same whether you are a business, a church, or missions. I think this can be a good tool for you to adapt and adopt and use and modify, and it fits there. But, I want to talk about it.

The first thing is you have to know what you are about. What is your purpose? Do we know what is the purpose of the Assemblies of God World Missions? By purpose, we are not talking about our programs. What is our purpose? Then, core values. What are the things that we live and die for? What are the things that we say, “Nope, we cannot do it. That is not part of our value system. Yep, that is part of our value system.” We have to really have that focus there. By the way, most organizations are entities within an organization. Generally speaking, it is best if you only have five to seven. Never have more than 10. Truth is, they cease to be core values that way. And then your vision of missions. The reason I draw these vertically—in a sense, I think these are the God-breathed elements. God lets us do a lot of things, but the truth is He is the one, I mean, when He gave the Great Commission, He didn’t say, “Now, you guys can decide what you want to do.” He basically said, “Do this.” So I think those are the God-breathed kind of things, and I think that is where our biblical theology and the concept of understanding with clarity what God means for us is so critical. Then, you have to deal with your constituency reality. In truth, everybody in missions has multiple shareholders. For example, I have talked a little bit about the Stateside church. Obviously, every church I just showed you—not one of them has a Sunday night service. They are the future. How are you going to deal with missions when you do not have that? Now, I think, by the way, there are ways, in fact I think there are ways you can actually do better. The truth is, and most of you know that do itineration, if you do a small group, you have them for life. You do a crowd, you may or may not have them. People get to know you . . . People give to relationships. All of those churches that do have small groups, then you can go on your non-Sundays and hit five, six of them. It is a constituency reality. Missions money is coming from the 50-plus people, not from the 35-down. They are getting older, and their money is not always going to be there. So, we have to be able to raise funding with new constituency elements. I think that is a fact. Then, overseas, obviously you are dealing, most of

you that are areas, an area may be a geographical, I mean, we may be able to talk about something like being Southern Africa, but the truth is within that you have such diversity that they are different worlds. So, we, what are the constituency elements? And then, we deal now with so many other missions-sending organizations. I know many of you I have talked to, and in your country there are really four or five sending organizations that now have to some way get on the same page. Well, those are constituency realities. One I mentioned earlier—the expectation of the people of leadership. What do they think . . . Do they see a leader as the person up on the white charger? Well, that makes it tough for teams. It is a reality. Then, the context in terms of where we do missions.

I asked, and they provided for me, a list here, and on it are just little footnotes that say “Sensitive Country,” which basically says, “Don’t mention this country.” We live in a world that is pretty volatile. You all know that something happens, I mean we can watch it right now in the Middle East. If something happens in one country, it often has repercussions in countries that have no political identity to it. They have religious or other . . . Okay.

Now, part of being a _____ leader is being able to take those five things and pull them together. If you will, the horizontal are the man, the vertical are the God’s. Isn’t that the way ministry always is? Bringing God and man together. Isn’t that what the Cross did? It is work—hard work, but we have to wrestle with those issues. How do we bring them together? Then, we move to . . . By the way, I would consider those _____ foundational. Those are true if you are a business or a school or a whatever—they are foundational. Then, what is your focus? There are countries that in missions we have a rather narrow focus. There are other countries we have a rather broad focus. We have to figure out what is our focus going to be. For the last ten years, as a Fellowship, dealing with how compassion fits in. I think that there have been questions—not good or bad, but just kind of . . . okay, how does this work? There. Then I think our ministry model, and I think right now that is one of the most critical things for DFM to be able to broadcast. I do not think your constituency knows how you do missions anymore. Really. That is not a criticism, please; that isn’t it at all. I am just thinking the generation that knew is not there now. In our district we have many, many pastors who did not grow up in _____. This is totally foreign to them. You obviously develop strategy on top of that. Well, these elements can guide you along this process.

What I would like to do to make this more real, where we don’t . . . We cannot just have ivory tower theory, abstract . . . On page number 7 and 8, I have some questions that we would like you to answer. Tomorrow, by the way, they are going to leave the tables up after the banquet, so tomorrow we are going to be at more tables. What’s that? I think we will be able to dialogue better, you will be able to network a little better and all that. But, I would like for you to see something. See how well you can write this without looking at anything. You cannot pull out any PR work or anything else to see how well you can write it. If some person in a church asks you these questions while you are having dinner, and just write them out a little bit . . . Actually, we are going to come back and talk about them tomorrow, but I am going to give you actually 12 minutes to write. I can count, so you have 12 minutes.

(Tape shuts off for awhile.)

. . . business world right now, in these organizational issues. A hot issue is called alignment. You find almost anything you read about organizations today is going to talk about alignment, crucial alignment. Probably the best known book on alignment is the book called, *The Power of Alignment: How Great Companies Stay Centered and Accomplish Extraordinary Things*. It has kind of become the most quoted of the business books. If you have not read it, it is a very good book, but I want to summarize it for you. It fits very well with what we are about here. It is on page 9 in your notes. It is kind of giving you a summary. We do want to talk about alignment, because some things are out of alignment. So, we want to talk about how do we get back into alignment.

You will see often that they will have some kind of diagram like this. Always in the center you will have what is called the main theme. For us, it might be the Great Commission, but you could debate that. You have to balance, bring equilibrium between strategy, customers, people, processes, you know, that great businesses, companies, churches are able to bring this about. A couple of quotes there on page 9—I have tried to footnote it well for you where if you want to follow through, go there . . . “But we have learned from outstanding executives, do not simply inherit a culture, whether they proactively create a self-aligning and self-sustaining culture within their organization.” Isn’t it interesting those words from our missions parody. But, they create a culture that brings self-aligning and self-sustaining. Then below it, “Everyone should be able to articulate the broader strategy.” That is what I call ministry model and how his or her work is connected to it. The ultimate proof of vertical alignment is observation of the actions of frontline employees. It is not what you publish, not your printing, not your media campaign, it is not your spin, it is what people do on the frontline. That is really the real key.

On page 10, I encourage you to do this, by the way, with people. I do it all the time. It is called the elevator test, comes out of this. So, if somebody says this to you, “Oh, I am involved in this school,” and they name where. I say, “Oh, what is your strategy at the school?” Nine times out of ten, “Well, I am not sure if we have one.” But, if they have one, I get it, “Well, what do you do, and how does what you do connect to the strategy?” The fact is significance is only found if you can answer all three. You as area and field directors, you are helping people answer those questions. “Here is our strategy. Here is what you do, and here is how what you do fits into the strategy.” See, you ought to be making that so clear that they can answer this question on an elevator. Okay?

Then, some leadership behaviors that come up out of this book, that are just excellent here. Three primary ones. They have to create shared purpose, get commitment, and integrate the organization.

Now, creating shared purpose, look at this. “Help others understand what must be accomplished, why their work is worthwhile, and how they can accomplish their goals.” That is coaching. Then, get commitment. “Increase people’s sense of personal ownership for the work they do. Drive out fear to improve performance.” Now, if you get afraid you are going to fail, you are going to fail. Fear is a terrible thing. I do not care, any sport. You worry about not making the basket . . . You will never make it. You worry about not hitting the tee shot—just get another ball out; I mean do not even bother. Your fear will grip you. Then, help yourself and others visualize. Help them know what it is going to look like. Paint a picture for them where they can see what it is going to

look like. Then, integrate there. “Make information readily available.” We talked about empowerment earlier, to avoid the tendency to control. “Design network in relationship to promote flexibility and high performance.” “Help groups integrate conflicting views to achieve technically superior and fully-supported outcomes.” Now, that is the role of leadership in an aligned organization.

Then, if you look on page 11, there, you find that it just kind of amplifies it a little bit and shows you the inner dependency of all this stuff—how it is inner living. And then in business world, go to page 12. This shows you what happens when you get out of alignment. This is what sick companies look like, and you can apply this to churches; by the way, you can probably apply this to missions also, but we won’t. It depends on how they balance those issues. Obviously aligned companies, all the things are near the center. Because you see the last one, the dead men walking, is the worst one. They are just going through the motions.

I mention all of this stuff because what you have to do, and this is role of this room. You have to help bring alignment, and frankly alignment does not just happen. Your car does not self-align. Organizations do not self-align. They need intervention. They need leaders who help them see the alignment. I think that is the crucial issue.

Well, we are going to pick this up tomorrow. We are going to do three sessions tomorrow. The first one, which will come right out of this and evaluate your answers, we are going to talk about how do you coach or develop these leaders that are coming into missions, the national and our own, and how does coaching look in this kind of issue. Then, we will talk a little bit about strength and contribution. Then, last we are going to talk about, okay, how do we navigate change? Hopefully we can pull some of these together. I do appreciate any feedback you want to give me. If you think, “Ah, that did not make sense to me. I don’t understand this.” We do not want this to be just time spent. We want it to be meaningful and valuable to use.

(Closing prayer.)