

How to Use This Resource and Why We Assembled It

The mission of the Northwest Ministry Network Leadership Team is “to strengthen and develop empowered leaders and churches.” One of the primary outcomes we hope to realize from this emphasis is that leaders and churches would become increasingly “missional.”

In order to realize this goal, we are committed to placing resources in the hands of leaders and churches that will move us toward a greater understanding of what it means to be missional in the world today, particularly as it relates to contemporary evangelism. How often do we talk about evangelism, only to recognize that by-and-large Christ followers are simply not “witnessing” to others about their personal faith in Jesus? In fact, many leaders have not fully understood and embraced a missional lifestyle in this way on a personal level!

We must be quick to recognize that the mission of the church is certainly not limited to evangelism. We have other reasons to exist as Christ’s body in this world, including the call to worship (glorify God), teach (discipleship), relationship (fellowship), and compassion (service). However, missional ministry must include evangelism.

In too many instances, the task of evangelism is either ignored or carried out with reticence. When not ignored, the proclamation of the gospel may be relegated to one person who stands behind a pulpit on Sunday morning. This contrasts with the view reflected in the Scriptures that evangelism is the corporate responsibility and opportunity of the whole church. Then, too, we not only face the challenge to evangelize, but to do so effectively.

How can we better prepare “evangelists” for the twenty-first century and how can our church become more missional in its outlook? In an effort to respond to these questions, our Northwest Ministry Network Leadership Team set out to author a series of teaching and discussion guides that local church leaders could use to move their church toward greater missional awareness and effectiveness. In this resource, the emphasis is placed upon the task of evangelism instead of the other purposes of the church, although not exclusively.

We have taken time to assemble ten briefings on current ideas and issues related to missional thinking and evangelism. These are designed to inform, but perhaps more importantly, to generate awareness, discussion, and interest on the part of church leaders so that we might more fully engage in the wonderful opportunity we have been given to share the good news of Jesus with those around us.

This tool that was created for a pastor to use during a 20-30 minute training segment of a meeting with a church board, a church leadership team, or any small group of key influencers in the church.

How to Use This Tool

Each topic is presented in the form of a teaching article, with associated resources and discussion questions. It is designed to inform, resource, and prepare the leader to facilitate a focused, meaningful discussion on these key topics with other key leaders in your church.

You will want to identify other leaders on your team or in focus groups within the church who would benefit from reading this material. You are in the best position to decide how this material could be applied and with whom. Thoughtful and skillful leadership in handling the discussion questions and group interaction with the material is a key to its usefulness.

There are additional reading resources provided with each topic so that you may further your own study and seek clarification on ideas or terms that are presented.

A Challenge

We know the demands that are placed upon you and your leaders. Time is at a premium for everyone these days. We also recognize how important it is for the church to understand and embrace the mission of God in this critical hour. We are providing this tool with those realities in mind. Make a personal investment to prepare yourself each week or month to lead these valuable discussions. Influence your leaders by drawing them into these topics and, more importantly, to the wonderful opportunity that awaits us as we discover our role in the mission of God.

Northwest Ministry Network Leadership Team

