



HELPING CHURCH LEADERS TRANSITION FROM THE PRESENT TO THE FUTURE

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YOUNG LEADERS DISCUSS POSTMODERN TRANSITION

Two weeks ago, over 500 young leaders met near Santa Fe to discuss ministry in the postmodern transition. They came from all areas of the country, representing a broad diversity of churches, denominations and ministries. Some were church planters, others are engaged in starting churches within existing churches that are reaching younger generations. Still others lead existing ministries to younger generations. Over a four-day period in small groups, plenary sessions, worship and informal conversations, they exchanged ideas and resources related to the opportunities of ministry in the postmodern transition.

Convened by the Young Leader Network of Leadership Network, the national Re-Evaluation Forum followed several regional forums and ongoing conversations by young leaders over the past year.

One of the journey session leaders was Jimmy Long of InterVarsity, who led a discussion of the need for new wineskins in which to contextualize ministry in a postmodern world. He identified three important shifts in perspective reflected in our transition from a modern to postmodern world: from the autonomous self to tribalism or a new emphasis on community; from the assumed truth of the Enlightenment to preferences; and from a belief in human progress to a recognition of human misery.

He outlined nine elements of these new wineskins. (1.) *a welcoming environment* because people are looking for a place to belong; (2) *a place of intimate community* where people find God and each other; (3) *narrative evangelism* that listens to their story and connects them with God's story; (4) *an embodied apologetic* that begins with preference, not proclamation; (5) *self disclosing relationships* that allow people to unpack the pain and hurts of their lives; (6) *Kingly worship* centered on Christ that begins with the heart and experience rather than rational proclamation; (7) *interactive learning* because that is how younger populations have been taught to learn; (8) *nurturing leadership* focused on mentoring and raising new leaders; and (9) *a saving hope for the future* that looks at life in the present from a future perspective.

Audiotapes of major Re-Evaluation sessions and journeys can be ordered through Grace on Site at 800.468.3316.

A forthcoming special edition of *NEXT* will feature coverage of the Re-Evaluation Forum. To obtain a free subscription to *NEXT*, call Leadership Network at 800.765.5323.

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