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## “Re-Tooling The Church...Summit ‘95”

Summit ‘95, held May 21-25 in Fort Lauderdale, FL, was a conference for pastors and church leaders that addressed the theme of “re-tooling the church for the 21st century.” Sponsored by Nehemiah Ministries, the conference focused on the issues of mission, prayer, outreach, assimilation, disciple-making, worship and vision. For more information on the conference, which was both audio and video taped, contact Nehemiah Ministries at 1-800-634-4659. The following are highlights of the sessions on assimilation, disciple-making and vision.

### Vision: “The Church at History’s Hinge”

**Leith Anderson, Senior Pastor, Wooddale Church, Eden Prairie, MN**

We are living in a time unprecedented for its change, a time when “the rules of yesterday have been replaced.” Three specific shifts that are impacting the church in North America are: (1) the entry point being a relationship, not a program; (2) the quest for experience before understanding and the desire for connection to God as expressed in the increasing interest in spirituality and the supernatural; and (3) the rise of non-denominationalism in favor of people’s desire for essential Biblical Christianity regardless of the denominational label. Churches that reach people in the 21st century will have four characteristics: (1) spiritually focused; (2) “socially permeable,” that is, they must be open, rather than closed to newcomers; (3) culturally relevant; and (4) outreach oriented.

### Assimilation: “Snapping People to the Church” Leith Anderson

(1) Recognize the shared responsibility of the person as well as the church for assimilation. (2) Recognize the variety of people and customize appropriate assimilation efforts. (3) Snap people together like “legos” which have 1-8 attachment points. Snap newer members with newer members, not older members. (4) Connect people like “velcro.” Have more than a single connection point. (5) Recognize that for many people today, church is a stop-over, not a destination...you will have them for a short period of time. (6) Intentionally prepare and equip those who leave to assimilate in their new church.

### Disciple-Making: “The Church as a Spiritual Fitness Center”

**Randy Frazee, Senior Pastor, Pantego Bible Church, Arlington, TX**

Using a systems approach to life transformation and a segmentation model of a diamond, the idea is that at each stage the Believer will exhibit demonstrable life transforming behavior. Stage One is Believer (establishing a relationship with God); Stage Two is Worshipping Believer (putting God at the center of my life); Stage Three is Growing Believer (applying God’s principles to my life); and Stage Four is Serving Believer (making an impact with my life). Appropriate goals for each stage were also identified.

### Disciple-Making: “Leading the Journey”

**Michael Foss, Senior Pastor, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Burnsville, MN**

“Discipleship begins on the inside of the leader...it is not an outside deal...you cannot give what you do not already have...the Great Commission does not say make members.” His church has been re-organized in a leadership matrix focused on the mission of welcoming, equipping, and sending which flows out of their core values and beliefs. The end goal is ministry teams of equipped disciples that are sent into the world. “My primary role is to replicate myself in the lives of our leadership...leaders produce leaders...a lot of pastors have left this out of their job description...it is not to manage ministry or the church machine. To be truly effective, we have to be developing leaders.”

