

Mark Driscoll's Australian Message

Sept 2008

By gathering together a report and a interview a picture emerges of the message Mark Driscoll has for Australian evangelical churches on his inaugural visit to Sydney in August 2008. The first is Gordon Cheng's notes on two Ministry Intensive talks Mark delivered in Sydney and the second is an interview conducted in the U.K by Adrian Warnock on the missional church. –Editor



Gordon Cheng's notes are at <http://ingmarhingwah.blogspot.com/2008/09/notes-i-took-on-mark-driscoll-other-day.html>

On Monday I went to St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney to hear Don Carson, Mark Driscoll and Kent Hughes at a training session put on by the Ministry Training and Development people of the Anglican Church in Sydney. It was a good day.

Here are my notes on Mark Driscoll's 2 talks, with the disclaimer that they are essentially unedited, unchecked, unfiltered and virtually un proof read. They are what flowed from my fingers as I sat listening. If you happen to have been there too and know that I've made a blunder in my typing, please use the comments section of this post to note your reservations, qualifications and corrections. If it doesn't flow, please blame it on my failure to type fast enough as Mark spoke, rather than assuming confusion on his part. If I'm convinced I've made an error, I will correct what follows and note it in the updates at the bottom of this post.

My favourite point was point 16 in talk 2. How deeply true it is.

Talk 1. Acts 17

We have a problem. We are biblically centred, but not missiologically focussed. The thousand year era of Christianity has come to an end. Christendom has come to an end.

Now, places like Sydney, we have a post-Christendom mindset.

We now minister in Athens and not Jerusalem. Result is that one of 4 kinds of churches and ministry philosophies exist.

First. Church as bomb-shelter. Church is the place where Christians huddle together and preserve their values under the assault of secularism. Theologically faithful, culturally irrelevant.

Second. Church as mirror. This is liberalism, e.g. emerging church. The church exists to reflect culture back at the world, and so they will see God. Homosexuality. Universalism. Etc. Done in the name of relevance, so irrelevant. There is capitulation.

Third. Church as parasite. Uses the city, uses the tax breaks. But does not have a Jeremiah 29 concern and love for the city. Church as parasite is despised by the community.

Fourth. Church as city within a city. Mt 5:14 a city on a hill. This is the church

envisaged by Jesus.

Acts 17; Paul goes into a culture much like ours. Homosexuality, pluralism, worship of false gods, perversion akin to our own day.

You need to know that missiology precedes evangelism. Church not informed by missiology does not see many converts. We see both missiology and evangelism in Acts 17.

Acts 17:16 Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.

Acts 17:17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there.

Acts 17:18 Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbling wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

Acts 17:19 And they took hold of him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?"

Acts 17:20 For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean."

Acts 17:21 Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.

[he means bloggers]

Acts 17:22 So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious.

Acts 17:23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

Acts 17:24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man,

Acts 17:25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

Acts 17:26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,

Acts 17:27 that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us,

Acts 17:28 for

" 'In him we live and move and have our being';

as even some of your own poets have said,

" 'For we are indeed his offspring.'"

[that's a quote from Epimenides]

Acts 17:29 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.

Acts 17:30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,

Acts 17:31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

Acts 17:32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this."

Acts 17:33 So Paul went out from their midst.

Acts 17:34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

[reading ends]

Paul does 4 things, missiologically speaking, which MD is now going to look at.

Go.

See.

Feel.

Do.

This is the basic framework for missiology.

1. Go.

Our problem is that most of what we do in our churches is attractional. But in addition to this there needs to be missional ministry. 'Come and see'. But Jesus not only taught 'Come and see', he taught 'Go and die'. You need to have both 'Come and see', and 'go and die'.

Paul does this strategically. Cities are of strategic importance, because this is where culture is made. Therefore you need to have gospel ministries in the heart of major cities. You see this in Paul, who goes primarily from city to city. Paul nearly completely ignores the suburban and country areas. Cities are more strategic.

2 sociological variables. Density and diversity. Sydney is reasonably dense, the densest in all Australia, therefore the most strategic. 250+ languages are spoken in Sydney, 25% born O/S, therefore diverse. Cities are upstream, culturally speaking. Christians tend to live downstream and complain about what is flooding in. The stream is being polluted much further up. Bankers, politicians, musicians, fashion designers, cultural gatekeepers reside in the city. It is not the number of people who are Christians. James Davidson Hunter—the position of Christians in cultural creation is what affects change.

If the gospel does penetrate a major city it will then work itself out into suburbs etc into the rest of the world. MD thinks the same sort of people live in major cities. Younger, educated, mobile. So major cities linked by commerce, etc. The major cities are a nation unto themselves. People who live in Seattle are much more like people who live in Sydney than in they are like those in surrounding areas.

300AD half the people in major Roman cities were Christians. This is where Christianity started—in permissive, urban environments among young people.

By 2030, 60% will live in cities. In Australia 2/3 live in cities.

Paul goes, and he

2. Sees

Paul sees that the Athenians are very religious. Pluralism, many gods. Historically, there is a reason for the unknown god. Sheep lay down in various places, those following them sacrificed to the god in that area, assuming that the sheep lying down in the area meant that this god needed to be appeased. Epimenides said this—one of the people Paul quotes.

The sheep lay down in one place, the people didn't know who was god there, so they built the altar to the unknown god.

You need to be familiar with the culture. You need to be familiar with T.V. In watching T.V, you want to know what people are watching. Pay careful attention to the advertising, this is what people are interested in. There is an addiction to reality TV, because people value authenticity. Don't read from a manuscript if you're a preacher, you won't get through.

People are focusing their energy into what they control: house, garden, clothes, weight. This is a response to an overwhelming world. See TV as a sermon that is being preached. Listen to the radio. Be a cultural observer, carry a camera with you.

Magazines. Pay careful attention to what is on the rack in the newsagent, for they are gospel sermons (false gospels) with visions of heaven and hell and there is a functional saviour. Various versions. It's all religion. Surf the net. MySpace and facebook are the equivalent of old Roman Catholic confessionals.

Go to new places, places you would normally never go. Women's teen clothing stores. Go in and ask questions. Mark Driscoll goes into teen women's clothing stores and says "Got anything in my size". This breaks the ice and starts a conversation. Then he asks lots of questions about what people are wearing and why.

Go to the grocery store, see what is on sale and what the new sections are, when you see the organic section you are seeing a whole new world of people. Go out at midnight and see what people are doing. Look at your church website; if it is full of happy families you are alienating half the people who come to look at it.

Go to places and ask questions. Look for obstacles and opportunities for the gospel. What Paul sees is idolatry. Think of functional saviours.

Rom 11:36-12:1

Rom. 11:36 ¶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. Rom. 12:1 ¶ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Worship has glory and sacrifice. It is the thing which you live for more than anything else. Worship occupies the highest position. We are in image and likeness of God, therefore we are unceasing worshippers. Everyone is pouring out their lives for someone or something. The opposite of Christianity is not atheism but idolatry. What are people making sacrifices for? Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris and such—atheism—is an act of worship of the mind. That is where faith is being placed. What is in the position of glory, and how are sacrifices being made?

The key is to find what is occupying the position of glory. This is what David Powlison and Tim Keller have said, and it's helpful. Ask: What are people most afraid of? What do people long for most passionately? What do people go to for comfort? What do people complain about most? What makes people happiest? How do people explain themselves to others? The way people define themselves is usually an indication of what is most

important. For those who believe in God, what makes them angry at God? Usually, people get angry at God because he fails to provide them with their idols. What do people brag about?

MD thinks that Sydney is an exceedingly selfish society, and that which is worshipped is comfort. There is no sense of good beyond me, or of social obligation. What do people make the most sacrifices for in life?

Whose approval are people seeking? Parents? Boss? Themselves? Paul went into the culture: “Go”! Hermetically sealed world. Leave your culture and come into our subculture is what we tell people.

3. Feel

All evangelistic strategy is worked out of emotion. Our theology, yes, of course, but that leads us to an emotional response.

Acts 17:16 “his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.” You should see the idols and be provoked. Like Jesus who saw the crowds and felt compassion. When we see the suffering of this world, we should feel compassion.

E.g, Young women who have been bruised as they grow up, and now are living in intimate relationship—they are worshipping and serving a man, rather than the Lord Jesus. (76% of Australians live together before marriage). We should feel anger and compassion. The issue is not evangelism, the issues is emotion. If your church is not evangelistic, is because they don't see or feel the need. Evangelism is the result of passion. Passion is the result of sight. Sight is the result of going out and seeing and feeling.

4. Do

Contending and contextualizing. We evangelicals are good at contending not contextualizing. Liberals are good at contextualizing not contending. So the two groups fight against each other, while overlooking the lost people in the middle. Paul is contending against pluralism and hedonism.

Paul is taken to the cultural gatekeepers in Athens. Necessary to get their approval. But Paul informs them that they are the ones under judgement.

The entire Athenian court (which is what the Areopagus was—their permission was required to start a new religion) is built on the denial of the resurrection.

Controversy. Better to be hated than ignored, and more exciting.

The entire Athenian court is built on emperor worship. Paul contends against the basis of the court.

Paul also contextualizes; quotes their rock stars. Aretas and Epimenides. In order to get a new religion started (at least as far as the Athenian court, the Areopagus was concerned) you need land, a temple, and an annual feast. But Paul claims that the whole earth belongs to God, and claims the temple ‘to the unknown God’.

Also, we don't need a feast, because our God is not hungry. Paul is simultaneously contending and contextualizing. Historically speaking, the weakness of those who believe the Bible is that they become sectarian.

In closing.

MD is not talking about being seeker-sensitive, but being seeker-sensible. Seeker sensitive means polling the people you are trying to reach and preaching their topics. This is bad.

One generation preaches, next generation assumes, third generation denies.

4 horsemen of the evangelical apocalypse = Jim Packer, John Stott, Billy Graham, Francis Schaeffer. They preached the message of the gospel with great effect. Next generation after these men assumes this and has its basic message not the gospel (which is assumed) but rather "you can have your best life now."

Now, there is a whole generation who deny. Sin, Jesus, hell, preaching, penal substitutionary atonement. They are only doing contextualization.

We should be Seeker-sensible, not seeker-sensitive. Our doctrine is not flexible, our methods are. You need to explain what you are talking about, and assume nothing. This is not about being relevant. The gospel is not to be altered or adjusted. Galatians. A false gospel is demonic.

The 4 gospels are demonstrations of contextualization. We have 3 options. Syncretism; sectarianism; or what Paul does in Athens, which is subversion.

Martin Luther got it right when he began the 95 theses by saying that the whole of the Christian life is one of repentance.

Fruit of gospel preaching: Contempt, or conversion. (There was a third C but I missed it)

TALK 2. 18 OBSTACLES TO EVANGELISM

[Mark promised at the beginning of his two sessions to use the first session to gain our trust, and the second to assault us about all the things we were doing wrong. In love, and as a friend, and said with affection.]

I have 18 points to make.

I begin with the assumption that the gospel is the power of God. If you are not seeing a fervour for evangelism, and a harvest, you must not work harder but ask what you are doing wrong.

Sometimes there is need for pruning. If a tree is not pruned it will stop bearing fruit and die. Time to get back to your church and prune wisely. Doctrines (false ones), staff, rectors, programmes. We must not simply preach repentance but also practise it. We too sin and fail and make mistakes and we must be willing to change. So here are 18 things I've seen in my month in Australia that need to change.

1Cor. 9:19 ¶ For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.

1Cor. 9:20 To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law.

1Cor. 9:21 To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.

1Cor. 9:22 To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.

1Cor. 9:23 I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

1Cor. 9:24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.

1Cor. 9:25 Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

1Cor. 9:26 So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air.

1Cor. 9:27 But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

The heart: "I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings." If you are too busy to do this, you need to prune.

1. The Bible guys are not the missional guys, which leads to proud irrelevance. What can happen is that we believe that if our theological systems are faithful, then we will be fruitful.

2. Your culture struggles with a lack of entrepreneurialism. 2 things are wrong here. One is socialism. The other is the influence of Great Britain. They are the main migrant group in Australia, they are not entrepreneurial. Aussie culture is not very entrepreneurial, as a result. The concept of socialism means that we fail to prune what we should. We are sending resources to poor churches and poor pastors, on the grounds of social equality. We are not sending resources to new buds.

3. There is a lack of reward based on merit within denominations. You are rewarded for tenure, not fruit. There needs to be a system that a man can be demoted or even taken out of the ministry for reasons other than things to do with money or sexual impropriety. Jobs should not be guaranteed, just because a person spent four years in a college.

4. Australian men are immature. Christian Australian men are immature. Lack of entrepreneurialism, systems which discourage initiative. The average Australian male lives with his mother until 25, he is married at 32, and delays the taking of responsibility as long as possible. Denominational systems encourage this immaturity. Training begins at age 28 in our denominations. What if a young man wants to get married young, plant churches, have families—there is no way that our denominations allow this. The longer you delay responsibility, the longer you delay manhood. The indefinite Peter Pan lifestyle. That is a sin. Jesus Christ had atoned for the sins of the world by the time most pastors take up their first associate pastorship. There are churches in the US with megachurches run by men in their 30s. You don't have them here, so you fly them in to give talks.

5. Church planting is not welcome. Sydney is one of the weakest cities I have visited with regard to church planting. With church planting, the skill sets needed are different, and institutions here don't appreciate them. There are few independents, because of socialism. There is not widespread opportunity for men to start new things. This leaves a terrible dilemma. Work through the system, and either destroy it or blend in. Both are bad options. MD has had 300 people come up to him and say they want to plant churches but they can't.

6. You suffer from tall poppy syndrome. You need to work this into your preaching and teaching so that people see that the tall poppy syndrome is a sin. Thinking that 1000 people in church is a high-water mark is unhealthy. The culture generally chops down people who rise up, and the church does the same. That's a sin. My church gives 10% to plant churches, 1.2 million dollars this year.

7. The preaching here lacks three things: apologetics, mission and application. Apologetics means anticipating and answering the objections of those who are listening. If you do this it will encourage people to bring friends, and it will train them. Second, your preaching lacks mission. What are we here to do? Thirdly, your preaching lacks application for the church as a whole and for individuals. It is not just enough to give doctrine. Paul tells Timothy to watch life and doctrine. Application is where you connect them.

8. Many of you are afraid of the Holy Spirit. Your trinity is Father, Son and Holy Bible. Because you are too reactionary against prosperity doctrine, you have reacted badly against all things charismatic. Holy Spirit calls people into ministry and empowers people for ministry. You don't have to be charismatic. But you should at least be a little bit charismatic, and worship God with more than your mind. Pentecostals plant churches, care for the poor, and sing well, and they are more fervourous in their service for God. What I have found is that the word charismatic means different things in different places.

Here it means prosperity, bizarreness. In London, it means you're not liberal. Don't get hung up on the terminology. There is a fear about the Holy Spirit, there is an uncertainty about the Holy Spirit. Do you love the Holy Spirit? Jesus says the Holy Spirit is a he, not an it. The Holy Spirit is sent to anoint the church for her ministry. Ministry is not possible without Holy Spirit. Do you love the Holy Spirit? This in part is leading to the lack of entrepreneurialism and innovation, because if it is not written down, it is not trusted.

9. Many of you are Anglican. The parish system works for some, but not all. The parish system was built for when people lived in community. But today, less than half of the people who live in this city own their own home. So they are mobile, and network online.

In addition people have 3 places; 3 place they work, the place they live, and the place they play. The parish system says lets draw boundaries and stay here. But all your people are going to move, and they all have 3 places. People no longer organize themselves by geography but by affinity. The concept was invented before cars. The parish system makes church planting very hard. The senior overseer can deny it if they feel threatened by it or if they have a different churchmanship.

10. Denominations are built on a paradigm that young men don't understand. Denominations are built on control. Young men operate by influence. Control systems: we control your wage, we control your work place, etc. Young men don't understand these systems. Some young men are disrespectful and need to be rebuked. Other people are not disrespectful, just don't understand control, they understand influence. Which operates up close, through teaching, rebuke, instruction, example. The old culture is of control, the newer economy is of influence. Young men will find new ways to avoid the system, working alongside it so as to be influenced but not in it, so as to not be controlled by it.

11. There is a propensity to call the trained rather than train the called. Ultimately it is God the Holy Spirit who calls people to ministry. There should be an innate sense of desire. "If anyone desires..." (1 Tim) Moore College: the 4 years of residency only works for some, not for all. 4 years with insufficient practical experience leads to idealism and a tendency to criticize others who are doing something. People are writing papers to criticize those who are doing something, and this gives them the false impression that they are doing something. I planted my first church at the age of 25, and by God's grace I finished my theological education last year. You learn as you do, because that is when you are most teachable.

12. All leaders are undershepherds under Christ: prophets, priests, and kings. Prophets. Priests love hospital visiting, small groups. Kings love control and systems. There is a shortage in Sydney of Prophets and Kings. The system discourages kings because it doesn't allow people to set up their own systems and structures. [GC note: I believe MD is using the categories 'prophet, priest and king' as 3 broad categories of leadership style exemplified by Christ, rather than in any strict theological sense. That was the vibe, anyway.]

13. There is a lack of missiologists; people who discern what is going on in the culture, find the idols so that the missionaries can be found and deployed. What there are plenty of are theologians. They are incredibly important. They defend truths. Missiologists put the truths into practise. Penal substitutionary atonement can get nailed down, NT Wright can get nailed up—and lots of people still don't know Jesus.

14. There is a proclivity to try and raise ministers before making them husbands and fathers. This is about the immaturity of Australian men. Many people delay marriage and children in order to go to college. But if people are shepherding their little flock of home, then you test them to see whether they can be elders of the church. So much of ministry deals with marriage, sex, gender, responsibility and children. Being a husband and a father trains you more for ministry than any college. To love, to serve, to evangelise, to disciple, to endure, to organize. You should really press young men to take responsibility earlier to be good husbands and fathers. Once they have some success at that If they do this in the wrong order, then their priorities, I fear, will be God ministry wife children. But it should be God wife children ministry.

15. There is the doing of evangelism but not mission. But does the church see itself as the primary evangelistic tool that God has used to reach the city? It is not good enough to just go and share the faith, as important as this is. The church needs to use every means at its discretion to reach its culture. What does a faithful missionary of the gospel look like in Melbourne/Perth/Brisbane/Sydney? Start a new church from nothing.

Churches need to be missional.

16. There's a lot of number 2 guys in number one slots. Number 2 guys are not bad guys, they are just not good number one guys. Number one guys are teachers, leaders, innovators; but because of the system of tenure, number 2 guys stay in number 1 slots. Number 2 guys in number 1 slots need to step back like John the Baptist with Jesus. It requires humility, a devotion to see all things, all means, for the salvation of some. When a number 2 guy is in a number 1 slot, a church will survive but it will not multiply, and so there is no sense of necessity to do anything with any haste.

17. There is not a great sense of urgency. Cultural values, not biblical values.

18. Movements have become institutions and museums. A movement is where God does what he always does, only more so. Greater sense of urgency. Puritans. Methodists. Charismatics. Not all movements are good. Every movement has its strengths and weaknesses. Young people are the key. I'm an old guy, but around here I'm a young guy. The puritans were roundly criticized for just being children. Jonathon Edwards, 19 years old. D.L. Moody was 21. Charles Haddon Spurgeon was 19. Billy Graham was 19. Statistically it takes 25 years or more to build a megachurch. If you don't even give the leader the keys until he's 40, he'll run out of gas before he gets there. Humility—young men don't have it. So God moves to plan B, which is humiliation. In movements, there are converts. They are marked not just by birth but by new birth. New movements include church planting. What happens next with a movement is that supporting organizations come along to support it. Theological colleges, publishing houses, recording houses, hymnody. Usually movements come into existence when there is new technology.

Protestant Reformation came into being with printing press. Billy Graham comes along when there is electricity, radio. Now, the invention of the internet has changed everything. Because the old systems were built on control, and now there is no control. Communication is instant, permanent, global. You can communicate to the world. That changes everything. People spend more time looking at a screen than at a human being. New technology provides new opportunity. MD's sermons get downloaded over 10 million times a year. That's crazy. We could never have a meeting with 10 million people, we'd call it a country. The person who comes at the head of the movement puts the movement into words, but is generally not appreciated until they are dead.

Over time the movement becomes an organization. The organization becomes an institution dedicated to preserving the institution of a prior movement. Institutions are marked by a fear of failure, a preservation of accomplished wins, founders, friends, those with tenured leadership take their place at the table. Eventually the young people realize it is too crowded and leave and start their own thing. The older people feel a sense of disdain; the younger people leave because there is no room for them. Movement→Organization→Institution→Museum. A museum exists to preserve the memory of the good days.

What are you? Do the most innovative, exciting, aggressive men want to become part of what you represent? Or do they want to walk alongside and be influenced. What we need? Pruning, pruning, pruning.

5 things which we can go off track with.

1. Doctrinally. We allow false teachers and bad doctrine.
2. Relationally. The people in leadership really love each other and want to work together, so they don't want to walk away because they feel they would betray. So there is eventually no room at the table
3. Control: Too much or too little. Too much means too many hoops, doctrinally, organizationally. Or too little, and false teachers etc. come in.
4. Pride. 'Not invented here' syndrome. We don't do it or consider it unless it was invented by someone on our team.
5. A movement gets off course when it fails to honour either its founders or its future. Some will honour their founder by just doing exactly what they said. Some will honour future by dismantling things in order to innovate. We must do both—faithfully serve.

Questions

How do we change and start movements and revolutions and the suffering that will come with that?

Older men think that young men are arrogant. Younger men think that old men are compromised and defensive. The key is humility. Young men, be humble. If you are proud you will have no progress. If you are a young man who wants to innovate, come humbly with a plan. If the older people say there is no place for you, leave humbly and graciously. A lot of this comes down to how the young men conduct themselves. Prophet priest and king. Do you think it's possible to do all three, or should you choose one.

That's just my way of talking about spiritual gifts. We all have different abilities. Romans 12, think of yourself with sober judgement. Staff your leadership team in the area of your weakness. Like tends to attract like. Build a team of people who are different from you. How do you hold together the ideas in Corinthians about weakness with your ideas of strategy?

Holy Spirit includes gift of administration. Paul is broken before God and very strong before people. This is how it needs to be. Strong before people, but the strength comes out of weakness before God. Paul talks not just about saving grace but empowering grace. It is the grace of God that enables us to work. Paul is broken before God, but he is strong before people—it is the grace of God that enables him to be strong. God's grace enables us to work in spite of our weakness.

What do you think my role as a woman is in making this come about, obviously I'm not a church planter?

My position is that there are male elders, and male and female deacons. We have women on full-time staff who lead areas of ministry, get trained theologically etc, but not the office of elder. What this looks like depends on your gifts.

In light of your comments on contextualization, how do you encourage the arts in your church? We in Seattle are a highly creative city, and we have by God's grace reached a lot of people. You don't just reach out to people, you reach out from them, that's the key. So we unleash the people you have including new converts to reach others. The leaders equip people and release them for ministry, they will then get out and do

creative things.

We don't network by geography but by affinity. That's true. It's hard to reach out. So how do you structure your church to reach people when they're not building community in your community? You're single, aren't you. In your community, there is a lot of families with kids and they do have social circles. You are just not in them because you are not married. For you, as a single person, it may well be different. People who are married with kids, you do have opportunity.

Spend a bit of time expanding point 17 about our lack of urgency. Pastors report that they don't see many non-christians coming along, and that's kind of it. Young people in churches say they can't get support and permission for new church plants. Why not? The sense of urgency is shown in planting new churches. Lack of innovation. Cultural variables that are affecting urgency that are not biblical? Yes, for example freedom; which basically means I serve myself and don't obey authority. That is a cultural value that is in my culture but not biblical. In this culture, not getting married and not having kids.

Oh my goodness, I have become institution man. How do I learn entrepreneurship? It is a gift that God gives. If you are in an institution, you have the opportunity to allow experimentation. Not talking about subtraction. Most institutions say, this is how we do it, and if you don't, goodbye. That's a problem. A church planting movement is not something I've seen. Advice? How to encourage it? I'll be back in 18-24 months and see what we can find. Assessment is key, if you send the wrong person, you're sunk. If you want to plant, you have to pay a price. You can't look at the old people and ask for money. Church planting is a poor person's game. If you can lead enough people to Christ to tithe and pay your salary, you get to go full-time. That separates the guys who are just rebels, as against those who are actually able to do the job. The converts and core fund. Doesn't matter how much money you give to a church planter; the only variable that tells you whether it will survive to year five is the passion and commitment of the senior leader. The more money, the less freedom. The more freedom, the less money.

What to do with anger? Ephesians 4, I personally worked out that the root of my anger was bitterness. There is a holy, righteous anger.

Singleness—what is the role of single men and women, given what you say? It is suicide for a single man to plant a church. In the US, I can't remember a single case where they haven't fornicated and gotten fired. Single people, like Jesus and Paul, should be in high-risk of death ministry.

When do you say that someone has failed in ministry? Is a number two person better than no-one? Keep looking for the number one person.

UPDATE I: Blog reader John via Mark corrected point 11 in talk 2, saying Small thing. Point 11 should say "there is a propensity to call the trained rather than train the called." His point was that we think a four-year Moore College grad is suitable for the ministry; he rejected that, insisting that one's calling is primary and precedes any such training, and may even be independent of it.

Driscoll's definition of the Missional Church

*Notes by Adrian Warnock on an interview with Mark Driscoll on the missional church.
Editor*



http://adrianwarnock.com/2006/04/interview-with-mark-driscoll_02.htm

Here, then, is Driscoll's eight-point definition of the Church. Some of these constitute the being, and others the well-being of the Church.

1. Regenerated Church Membership

· · Qualified Church Leadership

This is, he believes, THE strength of Newfrontiers based on what he has seen. In particular, Driscoll said it is very important to hold the line on male eldership. To oppose this position is very popular among those who are not successful. You have to approach the Scriptures differently to come to the opposite position. One of the reasons Newfrontiers is strong, argues Driscoll, is because of our commitment to male elders. If we ever compromise on that issue, we will find our blessing will diminish. Continue to hold that line. To change it changes everything—how families are organized, etc. Church life sets the pattern for home life. We need pastor-dads who are shepherds to their own flock at home. Keep holding that line!!

· · Gathering Regularly for Preaching and Worship.

He feels he is learning a lot from us on worship. (See also what he said on his blog about Newfrontiers.)

· · Rightly Administered Sacraments

· · Unity and Affection, which is evidence of the Holy Spirit

· · Discipline for Holiness

Church discipline is critical. Church discipline is correction, not retribution, just the same as in the family. Not to destroy someone, but to persuade them not to continue in sin. Don't preach one thing and fail to enforce it.

· · Obey the Great Commandment to Love—Church and Neighbor

· · Obey the Great Commission to Evangelize and Make Disciples If definitions 1 through 7 are not present, you cannot do mission because unity isn't there. Prayer and worship and fellowship can be so much loved that we somehow just trust that the work will get done. Since we also believe God is sovereign, we tend to let him figure it out. Because we are charismatics, we tend to think the Spirit will figure it out. Truth is, we need a plan, and a more intentional one. We will see some growth without an intentional plan because we're healthy, but if we are intentional about it we will grow faster.

God will be glorified by making disciples. Don't have a branch of church called the "Mission Department." We have to have ALL branches of our churches being missional. So kids work is about discipleship of kids, etc. We want our children to be on a mission with us, too.

There was a missionary in India, and he discovered upon his return that London had become just as pagan as India was. He realized that the churches didn't think they needed to be missional themselves. If you are a Christian, you tend to become assimilated into the subculture of the church. Take all our missional thinking and be missionaries in the West.

Some people think of church as a bomb-shelter. You can identify this by lots of “we and them” language. Here you will find lots of preaching against the culture, not engagement with it. You will find people who share your values and protect your kids. There is no attempt to evangelize. This is classic fundamentalism. Other people see church as a mirror. This is classic liberalism. Gender issues is a classic current example. If the culture is for an issue, the church then compromises and mirrors what is in the culture. No attempt is made to redeem the culture. They may be more aware, but in the end they are less helpful. Some see church as a parasite. They enter the culture to take out of it for themselves. There is no real giving. They want to benefit from what happens, but not do for them. Ask non-Christians what they think of the church. Their answer will be—no serving the poor, no helping, no doing good, and taking, not contributing.

Some see church as a city within a city—a city on a hill. The Church is the city of God within the city of the world. Here the Church loves Jesus, believes the Bible, practices grace, and the power of God is made known. The people live differently within the culture. They are not antagonistic or negative, but live an alternative life style. They invite others to join in this life style.

Driscoll then began to identify the twelve aspects of a missional church.

First, a missional church sees the church as a missional outpost—with a view for growth. We have a weakness in Newfrontiers, in Driscoll's view, which is a fear of multiple services. More options means more people can be reached. Multiple services should become a goal. People can tend to define the church by the number of people in a room at one time. But it should be defined by the number of people on a mission, even if they are never in a room together. Can have multiple campuses. Can have one church in more than one location as a second form of church planting. A missional church does church plant. We should set aside money specifically for church planting. At least 10 per cent of church funds at Acts 29 churches go to church planting.

Second, a missional church sees every Christian as a missionary. Cares for those with whom they come in contact. Pays attention to getting out and reaching out. Needs their people to be good theologians and good apologists. Sets things up so people naturally bring their non-Christian friends to church. Shares the gospel every single Sunday. If you think that they are all Christians, they are not! If, for example, you want men, preach to men, even if there are none there because their wives will get them to come. It can't be a goofy presentation of the gospel, it must be a relevant one.

Every week train them to recognize how everything relates to Jesus, e.g. marriage, parenting, etc. Mark shared an example of a couple in the church who couldn't understand why they shouldn't sleep together outside of marriage. He told them, "You are preaching a false gospel." He asked them if their friends knew that they were Christians and were doing this. If so, he explained, they were saying the wrong thing with their lives. Jesus has a bride, not a girlfriend.

If people know that there will be preaching about Jesus and the gospel every week, they will bring their friends. It won't matter what week they come. Mars Hill has a group that discusses what he has preached. Those who come don't have to be Christians and can ask questions. Most people will allow you to pray for them, even if they are atheists. As soon as you get cancer, you become an agnostic. "Would you mind if I pray for you right now?"

Bring converts on stage. Let them tell their story. Tell them to share their stories before you baptize them. Stories drive us to being missional. A church is cursed when there are no converts or babies.

Daniel and his contemporaries weren't just in Babylon to be punished, but to be a missionary to share the knowledge of God to all those kings. Driscoll again said that in watching Newfrontiers, it was his observation that we are devoted to the Lord. But we must be more of a witness to those around us.

Third, a missional church is keenly aware of the local culture.

(Acts 17—He SAW that the city was full of idols.) We must be greatly troubled. We are too submerged in our Christian subculture. We need to ask ourselves, "What is going on in the world? What is popular? Which shows are women watching? Which are men watching?" He watches teenage girl shows because he wants to know what they are thinking! He wants to get ahead of his daughter. Fast-forward them. Ultimate fighting is the fastest growing sport in the USA, for example. TV shows the different gods, whether sports, fame, sex, money, etc. Look for the idols.

Watch it missiologically. Don't be naïve. Stop the movie and discuss it with them. Where is the Dad? Dad is an idiot, but the dog is smart. What are they trying to tell us? That if you can't trust Dad, you should do it yourself. TV shows are sermons. Watch Extreme Makeover. Ask yourself, "What is missing? Why does this family need this house?" None of the families have a Dad!

Where's the Dad? Use the examples that are out there. Work illustrations into the preaching. They know who Posh Spice is, or whoever! I pay attention to your world; now let me tell you about the culture of the Bible. Listen to radio/drive time TV. Know what people are talking about. See who are the teams and tribes. Find your kids My Space page! Find the teens in your church. Facebook and My Space are like a Catholic confessional. Pay attention to the students lives in the church. What are your people reading in blogs?

Magazines have on their cover someone's definition of heaven. Car heaven, sixpack heaven, stereo heaven, photography heaven, etc. Visions of heaven. If you buy the magazine can be delivered from your hell and give you your heaven. Do these things and you will get there. It's evangelism. How does this work with the

Bible? Is that view of heaven they are offering false? Why? What is the underlying need the magazine is trying to address?

People are devoted religiously to hobbies, sports, etc. Go to the mall before the kids do! If shopkeepers are working in the middle of the afternoon they are bored. See what they are selling and buying. Ask questions of the bored store workers. He walked into a teenage girls' clothing store. He said, "Do you have anything in my size?" He told her the truth, that he is a pastor always looking to learn, who has a daughter who is almost a teenager. "Who shops here? What do they buy?" He walked out understanding more of why girls feel pressured to look a certain way. Grocery store. Go with the intent of looking at everything. What's there? What does it tell you? Big organic section means there are more green people. They believe in justification by recycling so you need to have recycling bins at church! Good to learn.

First place—where do they live? Second place—where do they work? Third place—where do they play? Go to where they play. Where they would live if they could afford it! Where do they really want to be?

Do you have a total routine? Repent and stop doing it. Leave early and use it to look around. There are multiple ways to do church work—see what is happening in your neighborhood. His wife asks, "Where are we going?" He says, "Don't worry, we will get there. I'm not lost I am missiological. Interesting! There's new businesses going in here, young families moving in. Pull over and start asking people questions.

This is not British, but that is why the UK is so non-Christian. Building works asked the foreman, "What's going on?" Oh, couples leaving, so we're tearing down some homes and building condos. That's more people. Start a new community group there and welcome them into the neighborhood. What is happening?

Speak to parents. What is happening to the kids? Talk to the people who talk to the people. Ask the cashier questions. Who comes in here? Who's the weirdest person who ever comes in here? Talk to the people in service economy. They see hundreds of thousands of people all week. They see the real deal!

What's going on lately at the bank? Was told people are freaking out. Checks bouncing. Well, maybe we should do seminars on money then! Always look for new opportunities.

Start an evening service for new people. They had five services where he preached live, but that felt like being hit by a truck. So they went down to four services, which now feels like being hit by a car! Services at 8:30 at night are packed and people even show up late! People who are out last night won't get up for a 9 a.m. service. He pastors people publicly by text message, i.e. asks questions anonymously. Someone once asked, "I have been raped, can I get an abortion?" Consider everybody in your church. It's okay to be family friendly, have a great kids program, help your marriage. But if you're not careful, singles may get the

impression that you don't want them, don't need them, don't like them. Now there are more unmarried than married people! These days being married to a woman and having children is countercultural. If someone who is the product of an abused home walks in, etc., it's not about trying to maintain a good family.

When preaching through the book of Ruth, Mars Hill showed great growth at that time. They had to turn 300 people away from one of their services! Is your church welcoming, friendly, a hospital to those people? Or is it all married couples and families?

Missional church contends and contextualizes. Jude says "Contend for the faith." What are we going to fight over? What's in the closed hand? You guys love the Bible, Jesus, the cross, the resurrection, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the poor, the lost, church planting. Keep that! Fight for them! But also contextualize. By ALL MEANS save as MANY people as possible. Do it for the sake of the gospel. Open the door to your church as broadly as you can without compromising. Use technology, etc.

We are NOT trying to make Christianity relevant, but rather are showing that it IS ALREADY relevant.

If a teenage girl tells you she lost her virginity to her father, the gospel IS relevant to her, but she needs to be shown HOW it is. So said I need to speak to you about expiation. "I've no idea about what that means!" Took some time, showed her that what was done to her the Bible calls a sin, a horrific evil. Fathers are privileged to carry the name father and carry it with nobility and honor. What has happened to you is shocking. What did you do afterwards? Took a shower because I felt dirty. You were defiled. The Bible says there is sin that is done by us and against us. And sin does make us dirty. "I will always feel dirty." Jesus is God.

He came to earth, was abused and beaten and tormented and shamed. He was humiliated and tortured. He can sympathize with you. God was sinned against. Jesus went to the cross and they killed him. But he forgives our sin AND cleanses us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1). She said, "I feel totally ashamed." Jesus endured the cross and scorned its shame. Jesus died not only to forgive you, but to cleanse you from the sins against you. That shower was an effort for you to cleanse yourself, but it can't cleanse your soul, your identity, your femininity. The gospel was relevant to her! She responded immediately. Driscoll said to her, "Choose to see yourself as Jesus does. You need Jesus so you can be cleansed, pure, and wear white!"

We don't MAKE Jesus relevant; we show how he already IS relevant.



Mark Driscoll