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The Resource Page

... creative and practical ideas

Brought to you this month
by Edward Hammett



Transformed lives and churches

- How does the message of Christ enter an increasingly secular culture?
- How does the powerful and transforming message of Christ penetrate and permeate an apathetic church membership and an ill-equipped and disillusioned, if not depressed, clergy?
- What does it take to transform lives filled with shame, pain, aimlessness, loneliness, isolation and lostness?
- How long will our church leaders continue to fight to keep those things that are not transforming lives?
- Are we fighting to retain our jobs and/or comfort levels or to keep us from being intentional in taking risks, being creative, and trusting the Holy Spirit and following him into the places of brokenness in our world?
- What drives and fuels our debates or passions to preserve: transforming lives or preserving our jobs or institutions?
- What leadership skills and Christian virtues and gifts are required if we are to be about transforming lives?
- What would a church look like with a membership focused on selflessness, gratitude, obedience and love?
- What types of leaders and ministries would this kind of church have?
- What type of worship and equipping would nurture this transformation and celebrate the transforming power and presence of Christ?
- How can we move from where we are to where God would have us be?

Author Dallas Willard addressed these and other issues in a recent conference

for more information

Reaching People Under 40 While Keeping People Over 60, Edward Hammett

Reframing Spiritual Formation, Edward Hammett

Renovation of the Heart, Dallas Willard

Spiritual Leadership in a Secular Age, Edward Hammett

The Quest for Vitality in Religion, Findley Edge

www.revealnow.com

www.thecolumbiapartnership.com

www.sustainingpastoralexcellence.com

www.transformingsolutions.org

www.valwoodcoaching.com

I attended. He is convinced that transformed churches begin with a transformed pastor — a pastor who understands, models and

proclaims that the call to salvation, the call to discipleship and the call to ministry are one call. He believes that if pastors are not disciples first, they cannot and will not be disciple makers.

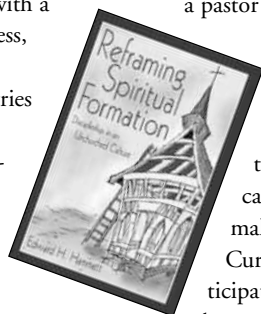
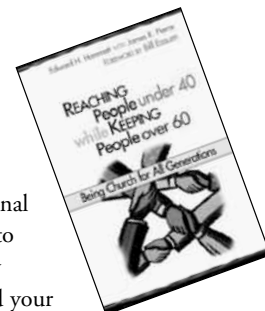
Current research suggests that participating in church activities usually does not produce healthy, mature and reproducing disciples. There is a disconnect between what the church wants to provide in programming and ministries — often based on tradition more than effectiveness — and

what people will respond to and what will transform those who participate.

Transformed churches will only come when we have leaders with transformed lives, values, behaviors, attitudes, beliefs and relationships. Discipleship permeates all of life. It's not just about what we memorize from the scriptures; it's about a shift from selfishness and self-centeredness to selflessness, gratitude, obedience and love.

For leaders and churches wanting to make the shifts of heart called for by Willard, and more importantly by Christ, consider the following:

- Set up accountability for someone to ask the tough questions.
- Enlist a professional Christian coach to help you identify needed shifts and your plans for moving through them.
- Read the work of Dallas Willard and other authors concerned about life change and becoming effective witnesses in a 21st century world.
- In consultation with church leaders, create a plan on what it will take to build a regenerative membership of disciples and disciple makers.
- Join with a group of persons on a similar journey.
- Keep a written journal about what the Spirit is saying to you, what shifts you are being called to make and your plans to make them happen. **BT**



THE RESOURCE PAGE is provided by the Congregational Life office of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in partnership with Baptists Today and for those dedicated lay leaders working in the educational ministries of local churches. This month's page was written by Edward Hammett, author, church consultant and leadership coach with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. **Resource Page Archives are now available at <http://www.thefellowship.info/Resources/Church-Resources/Baptists-Today-resource-page>.**