

THE PRAYER TOOL - A Spiritual Discipline of Preventive Grace

The Four Cornered Room identifies four levels of spiritual maturity as lambs become sheep; the prayer tool is a process to create and maintain relationships of spiritual nurture which help people to grow to become disciples makers. *“We are a functional family of God, where Jesus is Lord and people grow.”*

Parent &
Grandparent
Level

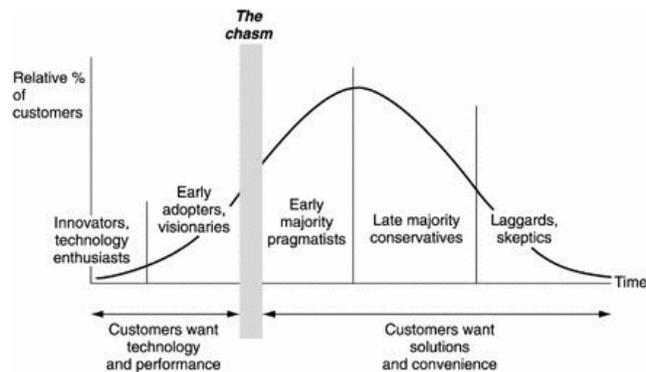
Reading #1. A Review of Five Basic Principles

#1. If the research of missiologist Donald MacGavran and sociologist Rodney Stark is correct, *the gospel spreads from person to person ONLY through social networks of caring relationships.* Your social network is a micro-mission field; *your neighbor is your mission.*

#2. If the research of Robert Putnam is correct, *we are living in a century that is destroying those social networks, and the church with it.* In order to make disciples it is absolutely essential that we *understand our own human networks, how to rebuild them, extend them and increase the positive influence* we have with the people around us; the Prayer Tool helps us.

#3. The plan is very simple: *Obey this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* (Mat 22:39)

#4. Improving institutions is ineffective *compared to loving your neighbor.* If the research of the Diffusion of Innovations is correct, *adoption of an innovation across the chasm happens because of the influence of a trusted peer.* The value of innovation for church growth is deceptive.



Reflection Question: What if 84% of the unchurched are not interested in innovation?

Innovative Minority 16% - Pragmatic Majority (84%)

Reflection Question: What if the primary reason the gospel doesn't penetrate into 84% of a population is because very few of them have a close, peer relationship of trust with anyone who is a serious follower of Jesus Christ and where honest and regular dialogue happens?

#5. Ministry that does not create a network of healthy relationships (i.e. that does not “build up the body of Christ” - Ephesians 4:12) *is a poor method for making disciples.* You can do both.

Reflection Question: As you Serve, do your peer relationships, trust & influence increase?

Reading #2. There are two basic Harvest Worker Strategies:

HUNTER-GATHERER: *Let's go outside and see what we can find that's ripe.*

FARMER: Let's manage the environment *so that a harvest can happen.* Let's take care of the soil, *sow the seed, weed and feed, then reap ...* The Goal is this: *Farm Your Neighborhood.*