‘GETTING IN AMONGST IT’ AROUND THE WORLD

- THE ART OF KINESTHETIC LEARNING

STUDY LEAVE REPORT
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CONTENTS

Preface	3
Introduction	4
1. On the road with a free lance evangelist in the UK	5
2. Experiences of American churches and college ministry	7
3. Culture shock and short term mission in Uganda: Building Communities Together	17
4. Experiential learning at 'Group'. - why Group?	20
5. Learning styles, the teaching profession and 'worship'	25
6. Expanding the R.E.A.L. Acronym	29
7. Conclusions	42
8. Bibliography and Resources	43

PREFACE

I have been a Presbyterian minister for five years and in those years have planted and developed studentsoul, a church for students on campus in Dunedin. On exiting the School of Ministry in 2002 I was jointly awarded the Begg scholarship which was to be used for further ministry formation and education within 5 years of receiving it. So in the last semester break of 2006/7 I combined study leave with holiday and traveled overseas for three and a half months. This report which firstly details and reflects on my overseas experiences, then becomes focused around the art and value of kinesthetic learning and as such is designed to eventually be part of a much larger research essay for the MMin degree. That essay is about learning styles, in particular the kinesthetic and visual and their effect on the way we read the Word of God.

I wish to thank the Senatus and SOM for the scholarship and for allowing me to pursue this course of direction in study leave. It has greatly enriched my understanding of mission and therefore my capacity as a minister to develop a missional focus. It also allowed me a clear space of time to write and reflect on the past 5 years in studentsoul and how our outreach to the student age has developed and in some instances to make comparisons to the American experience. It also clarified for me the importance of my particular emphasis on the creative, interactive and visual.

I also wish to thank John Roxborogh for his guidance and supervision, for sharing happy memories in Cambridge at Westminster College and for believing in the creative emphasis I have pursued here.

Major thanks must go to my colleague and associate of the past 5 years, Richard Dawson, for his patience and commitment to attending to the pastoral and administrative concerns I had to leave behind for such a long time.

My grateful thanks to the wonderful people I met along the way, especially Bunty Bunce and her gracious hosting of me through the UK, introducing me to Emma who now works with me in New Zealand. Thanks to Les and Jacqui Avery in Denver who took me into their home after an email asking for accommodation and who became great friends and supporters. Thanks to the Steiners in Boulder who took us in for Thanksgiving and let us stay. And to the kiwi team who we met up with in Uganda and worked alongside to build and bring hope to some Ugandan orphans, thanks for sharing this part of the journey with me.

My thanks finally to Wayne who allowed me to go off by myself for 6 weeks and continues to believe in what I am doing and support me in every way. I was really grateful that he and Annabelle could share the second half of the journey in the States and Uganda and it enriched our family experience immeasurably.

INTRODUCTION

The study leave experience had several aims:

1. To attend a summit in Loveland, Colorado run by Group Publishing on R.E.A.L. presenting and to grow in my capacity as a speaker with an interactive style.
2. To finish writing a book on Mark's Gospel which I have been working on for the past 4 years and to establish a contact with Group Publishing in the hope that they will eventually publish it.
3. To write a report that reflects my sense of the importance of the interactive, kinesthetic and visual in Christian education and church services and a need to move away from an imbalance on the spoken word.
4. To couch this in the context of a research essay for the M Min, and begin a literature review on what can be learnt from research in secular education on learning styles so it can be applied to a Christian educative processes.
5. To gain a wider perspective on ministry to the 18-25 year old and collect useful resources and contacts.
6. To experience short term mission in an African country.
7. To have a holiday and to enrich our family experiences.
8. To find my roots in the UK, particularly in Scotland and the Orkney.
9. To experience something of the church in Britain and the work of an evangelist around the world.

This report outlines some of my travel experiences and reflects on what they meant and what learning outcomes I have drawn from them.
It also attempts to give some of the theory and introduction to wider research on learning styles and the implication of that on worship services.
Primarily in the latter part of this report, I provide some good reasons and a practical resource for ministers and leaders to move away from a sole emphasis on the spoken word to facilitating a greater range and balance of experiences within the context of our church services and youth groups and any gathering which aims to teach and speak the Gospel.

1. ON THE ROAD WITH A FREE LANCE EVANGELIST IN THE UK

From the beginning of October I spent 5 weeks in the **UK** traveling with a missionary/evangelist friend, Bunty Bunce, who I had met on a couple of occasions when she has spoken at Leith Valley and we had struck up a friendship. Knowing that I was intending to do some travel and wanted to go to Britain, she asked me to join her while she visited friends and did some ministry there. I took this to be a God thing, an opportunity I couldn't refuse and the timing was right, so I arranged to go a month early and spend this time with her. Our trip took us to Scotland and to many parts of England, was mostly holiday, but along the way I learnt a lot about mission and faith and how God can use those who surrender their lives to Him.

Bunty is a single woman who travels to countries as diverse as Malta, India, Sweden, the US, Mexico, Fiji and even NZ in her calling as a traveling evangelist. She is well known in international church circles and often facilitates individuals and teams from different countries in linking up and working together. She has a worldwide perspective, as well as a powerfully anointed ministry in deliverance and healing, evangelism, children's evangelism and intercession. She is supported solely by her home church in London and by the churches she visits and individuals who care for her. I greatly admire the faith by which she surrenders herself to God and to where the Holy Spirit directs her, and because of her availability and faithfulness the way in which God is able to use her. It was a privilege to spend such a long time with such a woman of God and to listen to her inspiring stories of the things God has done and the miracles she has seen and the thousands of men, women and children all around the world who have been saved and filled with the Holy Spirit through her obedience. She began to teach me a little of the prophetic nature of her work and how to pray in difficult situations for protection and for the pulling down of demonic strongholds. In one particular church in Skipton, I was able to pray for others with her after she had spoken and we experienced God at work in deliverance and the prophetic. It was great training.

In a resort near Bristol called Longleat Forest, I spent a week with 5 missionary minded women who are constantly ministering in 3rd world countries like India, the Phillipines, Burkina Faso or the Solomon Is. Because they are women they are deemed to be of little threat in Muslim areas and are able to accomplish much in the power of the Holy Spirit. It was a very inspirational time for me to interact with these faithful and courageous women and to be challenged into mission and evangelism myself. I also learnt about and experienced a lot of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in this gathering; was encouraged again in the particular giftings God has given me, and challenged to prepare the students for a greater understanding of and openness to the Holy Spirit in the coming year.

I also attended a one day seminar on organizing mission trips, understanding the pitfalls and joys and developing a team.

I came away from this period with Bunty and the others not wanting to be an evangelist on the road fulltime but definitely with an appetite to take every opportunity to explode my experience of the Holy Spirit at work around me and through me. I am keen to participate in future in international evangelistic and service based mission trips. Keen to get others involved and be trained in the power of the Holy Spirit to do God's will and share the gospel. Grateful for the contacts I have made and the wonder of fellowship with women from England and Wales whose faith impels them out of their environment at considerable expense and spiritual cost and who see God at work in amazing ways as a result.

I marvel still at God's provision for me to do this and for the greater perspective it gave me of evangelism, the Holy Spirit and the 3rd world. I also went with a feeling that God might lead me to someone who would be able to help in the ministry of studentsoul and this happened in

Cornwall and Longleat. Emma has been in NZ now since Easter and begun to contribute very helpfully in the area of small groups, encouraging our experience and reliance on the Holy Spirit, in prayer and worship and in the long term I hope will add to our desire to serve overseas and to stimulate us to further short term mission projects as well as evangelism within our own context, thus growing the faith and leadership of GenY.
As a further outcome of this, I have been incredibly encouraged by God's provision for me in Emma, of someone to pray for me consistently and encourage my faith and help me stretch beyond what I have been seeing. It will help take the ministry of studentsoul to a new level.

2. EXPERIENCES OF AMERICAN CHURCHES AND COLLEGE MINISTRY

The second part of my trip took me to **Colorado**, where I stayed with a retired Presbyterian minister and his wife in Denver.

- Here I was able to stop for several weeks and focus on writing my book on Mark's gospel using Interactive Drawing cues. This is currently almost ready for publication.
- I also attended a seminar at Group Publishing HQ in Loveland, Colorado, on **R.E.A.L Presenting**. This experience informs most of what I outline later in this document.
- I visited a range of churches, especially looking for what I could learn about ministry to College or uni aged students.
- My husband and Annabelle joined me in mid November, and over Thanksgiving we stayed with the parents of an American student from Boulder who has become part of studentsoul, we spent a couple of weeks staying at Iliff Seminary in Denver and a week in Colorado Springs at the World Prayer Centre, before flying to Michigan and New York.

I attended three services in one day in Boulder, Colorado. The first was a *black* **Baptist church** congregation at 8am and was very poorly attended. The format was some VERY old black spirituals, a hymn without music, a reading and a sermon which made 5 points. The second service at 11: 30 was a large **Community Church at Flatirons**, near Boulder, which had 4 services over the weekend. It looked very promising on entering the worship space because it was visually pleasing, being set up in a round and felt inviting. Nice colours.

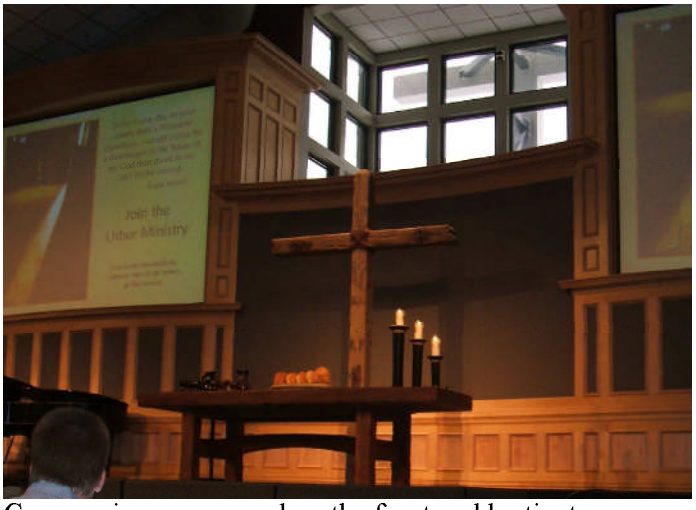
Flatirons Community Church

But after the sung worship time, we had a long sermon, the offering and one more song before it was time to go. What I could have done with that space!
The third service at 6:30 pm called itself an *emergent church* and was for College age students at **First Presbyterian, Boulder**. Once again the visual setting was attended to with PowerPoint images of Superman projected, some candles and before the sermon, a movie clip about Superman saving America. The speaker sat on a stool for most of his talk, had a great presentation manner, kept me interested, varied his speaking voice and was quite visual and dramatic in the way he communicated, but at the end of it, it was still a long talk in which I was only a listener.

The previous Sunday evening, I attended **Scum of the Earth** Church in Denver, holding some expectations simply from the intriguing nature of the name. But some sung worship and almost an hour long sermon later, for a congregation that was supposed to be aimed at 18-25 year olds, I was really disappointed.

That morning I had enjoyed a great sermon from Pastor Peter Hiett at **Lookout Mountain Community** Church, near Denver which Philip Yancey attends. It kept me interested and so inspired that I bought his books! But in the end it was still a long speech and required a lot of listening. Nice visuals, especially of the communion in the sanctuary.

Lookout Mountain Church at the foot of the Rockies

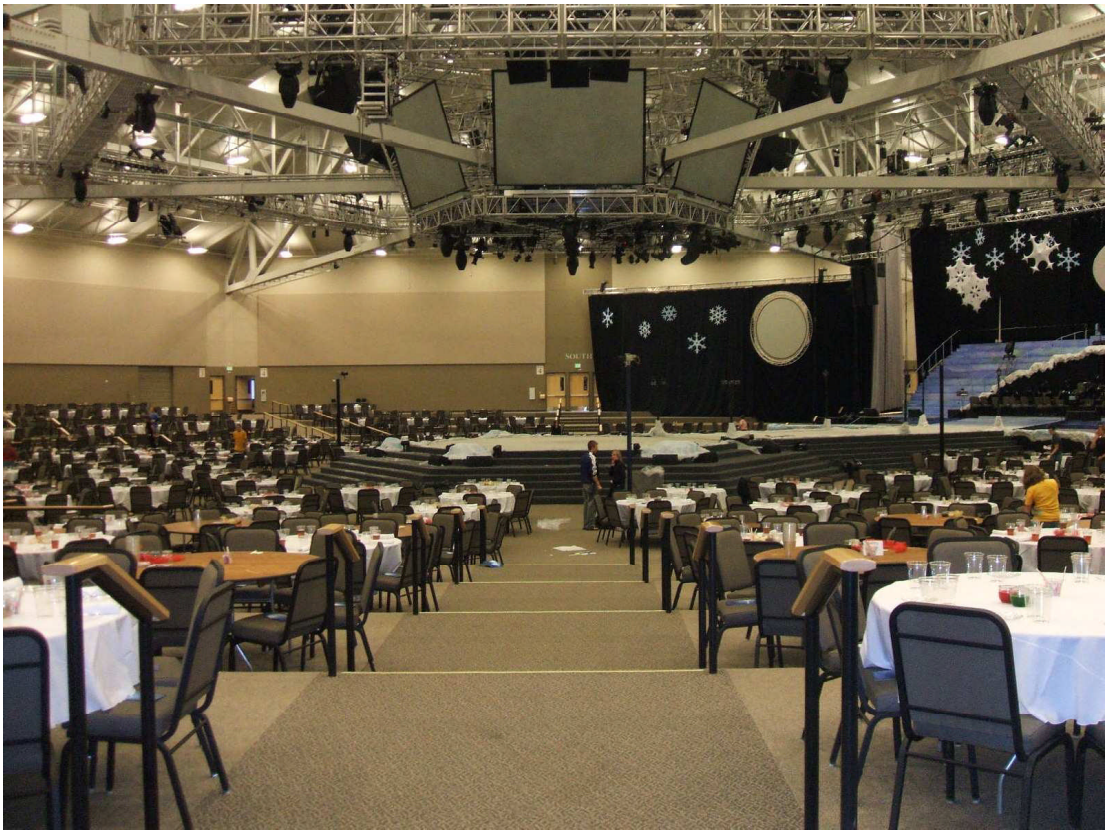

Communion was served up the front and by tincture.

New Life Church, Colorado Springs
Has a congregation of around 14,000. While I was in Denver, the pastor Ted Haggart was exposed for homosexual infidelity and had to resign. This was all over the newspapers and caused a huge stir. We visited the church a few weeks later. The complex is made up of the World Prayer Centre (the central building in the photo above) where you can stay reasonably and have a retreat. There are activities going on in the centre all the time and you can participate or pray in the main room with a huge globe suspended from the ceiling which constantly rotates. The flags which greet the entrance way to this are all from the nations of the 10/40 window. Some TV programs are broadcast from here too.

ENTRANCE TO THE PRAYER ROOM, CHRISTMAS 06

The main auditorium of New Life seats about 7,000 and three Sunday services are held, two the same in the morning and a different service in the evening. There is also a large auditorium for the High School ministry, and another for the junior high both with huge sound systems and stage facilities, plus a huge complex upstairs dedicated to children's ministry.

Carparks stretch for miles to the left! Plenty of space for expansion around here too.



The auditorium here is set up for the Christmas Musical called Wonderland, a Broadway style treat that we were able to experience. There was ice-skating on the stage and great music and dancing. The auditorium was originally in the round but the stage has been extended to cut this off at the back and create space for theatre and a choir/orchestra as needed. They don't normally have the tables! sigh

The foyer is huge and extends beyond this into a café and to the left there is a book centre. This church has approximately 900 small groups. The way this is organized, is if you want to lead a group you can and if it's a special interest group that's ok too. There is no particular qualification, you advertise it and away you go.

There is a college ministry of 1,000 students and 10 paid staff, called the Mill. We attended the Mill which is held on a Friday night. The basic format was a sung worship time and a sermon of

some length. They regularly have the same speaker as they feel that the students want to be sure of who they are bringing their friends to hear. The worship leader is always the same for a similar reason. I couldn't find anything in this ministry of great note except for their philosophy of keeping things the same and that this is a key formula to growth. They also find that running a series is a prime way to encourage growth.
I did however immensely enjoy the time at the New Life Church. Their main service and worship time was great and despite the trials of the past weeks the church will survive I think because of the huge base of prayer that it is rooted and grounded in. One of the impacts of losing their main leader is that the elder/leadership have had to become more visible and take real responsibility. The prayer centre is a wonderful commitment to the prayer needs of the world and to calling Christians to humble themselves and pray. I would go back there.

Traditional Presbyterian Church in Denver, beautifully decorated for Christmas and set up in the round. The facilities were decorated with some magnificent art pieces.

Artworks in Denver Presbyterian Church.

This was another 9,000 strong church in Denver called **Heritage Christian Centre**. It had a mostly black choir that numbered about 50, strangely led by a white woman. The pastor did not impress us with his long tailored suitcoat and the copies of the Bible with his name on the front, selling in the bookshop. The choir was great though if you were there to have a look as we were.

After leaving Denver, I made a special effort to get to Rob Bell's church in Mars **Hill, Grandville, Michigan.** The students really love the DVD's that this church has released, so I was interested to attend and see in the flesh. What surprised me about this church was its bareness. Not only was it hard to find, barely standing out in a small shopping centre, but it had virtually no visual appeal of welcome. The auditorium was bare except for chairs and a central stage, once again worship took place in the round. Their foyer was unattractive and one had the sense of the structure being overwhelmed with the 10,000 people who attend. Their service format was equally as bare, with a few songs of worship to start and then a 40 minute sermon from Rob, which, while interesting, was one I had to concentrate hard on.

Entrance and main auditorium at Mars Hill

However, I am much inspired by the philosophy of Mars Hill captured in their vision statements which match closely what we have developed at studentsoul in our vision and values

studentsoul VISION and VALUES

HELPING STUDENTS FIND WHOLENESS

VALUE 1: EVERYONE IS AWESOME IN GOD'S EYES
VALUE 2: EVERYONE NEEDS TO CHANGE
VALUE 3: EVERYONE IS CALLED TO SERVE

WHOLENESS

We believe that God wants to redeem every part of us, and that Jesus' message of salvation is holistic in nature. We believe that all of life is spiritual life, and that all of our fears, failures and broken hearts can be restored and made whole. We value the inner journey, because we want to be fully integrated people---mind, body, and soul, emotions and experiences all offered to God.

SERVING

Jesus calls His church to be a compelling force for good in this world. God uses people as agents of change, to relieve suffering ad fight injustice, living out the transforming message of the resurrected Jesus. We believe that the church is at its best when it serves, sacrifices, and loves, caring about the things God cares about. We were created to live for something larger than ourselves.

Mars Hill Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Their resources: the Nooma DVDs, Velvet Elvis and their music CDs are some of the few relevant tools available for Gen Y and studentsoul ministry.

After Michigan, we flew to New York and while wandering along the streets of Times Square happened upon this church on a Tuesday night. **Times Square Church** was founded by David Wilkerson and the night we were there they produced a musical for the Christmas season called ***The Bethlehem Diner***. It was another treat for Christmas away from home and really nice to see a church in the middle of Broadway attended by vast numbers of all kinds of people. Their advertising competed well with that of Broadway musicals.

What did I conclude from my experience of the American church?
They have some advantages.

- **More people**. When Rob Bell planted his church in Mars Hill, 1,000 people showed up on the first Sunday and in 6 months there were 4,000. In his book (Bell, 2005) he says: "you can't put a sign out front, I argued; people have to *want* to find us. And so there were no advertisements, no flyers, no promotions and no signs". [1] Maybe this explains why they still don't.
- **More resources**. These churches have buildings, space, sound gear studentsoul techies would die for and lots of paid staff and 100's of volunteers.
- **More openness**. Church in America is still ok. It's a churched nation. "Around seven in ten adults are members of a local faith community, and about four in ten report weekly

[1] Bell, R. *Velvet Ellis* (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2005), 99

church attendance."[2] Conservative Christianity is still strong; Focus on the Family head, Dr James Dobson has a strong voice in the community and in politics.

In some ways it was like reentering the NZ church of the early 90's. While they still enjoy openness to Christianity, unlike our NZ experience, it was weird to 'go back' to a worship style and an emphasis on the spoken word that studentsoul has been moving away from. I found nowhere comparable to inspire me in a creative and interactive emphasis apart from Group Publishing and this is not a church as such. My experience there is detailed below. My study leave and visiting churches in America did remind me that the Word of God is really important and I must never lose sight of it in the midst of a creative emphasis. A particularly poignant time spent in prayer at the World Prayer Centre reminded me that the call God gave me originally was *to hold out the Word of God* and I have concluded that an emphasis on the Word of God will have greater prominence for studentsoul in the coming year.

[2] Group/Gallup *Friendship, Creating a Culture of Connectivity In Your Church* (Group Publishing Inc: Loveland, Co, 2005),7

3. CULTURE SHOCK AND SHORT TERM MISSION IN UGANDA: BUILDING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

The final leg of the journey after Christmas in Heathrow airport took me and my husband and daughter to East Africa, via Dubai. There we met up with 10 others from Leith Valley/studentsoul to spend two weeks in **Uganda** joining with the Watoto project building a house for AIDS orphans. Our experiences there and the project we completed and information about this mission is available from the team in presentations and will not be written up here, except as outlined below how it relates to the emphasis of my study leave.
What I will say is how much of a culture shock it was to arrive at Entebbe airport after hours of travel and jetlag to immediately experience poverty on an unimaginable scale all along the broken, potholed road to Kampala and to know that for the time being anyway there was no way out. This was made worse for me because Annabelle had been sick since before we left Dubai and I feared ending up in a Ugandan hospital and worrying about what terrible disease she could pick up there. This situation only worsened for the next few days as she continued to throw up and as we tried to accommodate to the heat and the food and then get colds from the plane, be thrust into the various experiences of people and places around Kampala and somehow find this enjoyable.
Actually I am grateful for how hard it was because I didn't go to have a holiday or have a nice experience. I wanted to be challenged and to grow through this and I wanted to know what it was like first hand to be Ugandan. It thrust me back on God and on friends who prayed. It was enormously important time for me as a mother and for Annabelle and I together. And it brought me face to face with the normal experience of every mother in that place with uncertainty and fear and not knowing what will happen next.

In my comfortable existence in NZ, I have been largely able to ignore the needs of the world, hope that someone else would fix them and generally plead too busy to take an interest. I may not have made too much physical difference in actually going to Uganda, but what I did do was get off my bum and go there and inspire a group to raise $30,000 to build the house as well as personal airfares and accommodation. It was an important step and has changed much for me and for the outlook toward mission of Leith Valley/studentsoul.

What I discovered in the going to Uganda was the wonderful power of identification to make a difference to my understanding and empathy. I walked a little in the shoes of the people. I could not escape from their world, though after my first impressions I would have dearly loved to. (Being in Uganda was a huge culture shock and health wise at times a very difficult experience.)
On one particular occasion we were visiting the village of Buloba and were introduced to house mothers and the children they look after. The constant theme was their gratefulness for our coming and for building a house. My constant feeling was how little I had really given up to do this, how grateful **I** was for the experience and how humbled by their graciousness and gratitude. At one point I was so overcome by this and by one of the children kneeling to me and saying over and over: Praise God, that I couldn't stop the tears from flowing. The mother came to me and hugged me and there was an exchange which happened which bonded us as women across culture, across continents and time. I could not have had these experiences from my armchair in NZ.

What I have in turn learnt from this experience is the importance and the power of kinesthetic learning. I discovered that being involved, by getting my hands dirty literally, is a powerful way for me to be engaged and connected to learning, something with which I struggle normally. I learn more by doing and physically connecting than I realized and it took me by surprise. As a

result of going and *getting in amongst it* as students would say, my geography has improved. My knowledge of the politics of Africa has grown enormously, and my interest with it. I have learnt how to do some practical things like lay bricks and construct a house. Above all I now know for myself, I have seen things first hand, I understand better what it's like to live in poverty and be trapped into a cycle with no way out. I have talked to the young men who work 14 hours for less than $2 a day. I know a little better how to pray. I'm more interested in praying.
Bill Hybels of Willowcreek recently recommended that every pastor should be exposing him or herself to the realities of the poor at least once a year. I couldn't agree more. I never had this sort of interest before I left and have actively avoided trying to grapple with most of the things I have described above. These experiences have been invaluable for me in my position as a church leader, and have grown me as a person of developing interest in what's beyond my narrow and beautiful country.

My interest in Islam is another area that has been stimulated from my travels. This began in England with the obvious presence of Muslims there and hit me in Dubai quite negatively. What this has done has been to make me ask questions about what God is trying to teach me through my reactions. It has also convinced me of the need to understand this phenomenon. I left Dubai with an allergic reaction to the concrete, plastic jungle they have created in amongst the old Arabian world and some issues with the dress codes of the Islamic culture and the absence of women from anywhere but the malls, but a continuing desire to know more and to travel through the Middle East.

In terms of the short term mission experience, we were all extremely impressed with the vision of Watoto and the Kampala Pentecostal church. What they are building is one of the few things that is organized, visionary and insightful in Uganda. They hope to train the future leaders of Uganda and by 2010 to have 10,000 children being cared for in villages and houses like the one we built. They also aim to spread this model across Africa with the goal of 1 million children in homes by the middle of the next decade. This model not only provides a home for children, but gives widows a new occupation and meaning to life, as house mothers. The schools that are built in the villages are open to any child from the local community. And the project provides vast numbers of Ugandans the opportunity for reasonably well paid employment on the building sites. In this way many are benefiting directly and indirectly. In 2007 alone, 62 teams from churches around the world will raise money for a house or school and travel there to help build them. This brings thousands of people face to face with the reality of life in Africa. We found this experience of fundraising, building a committed team and going to Uganda to have been incredibly worthwhile, though costly in terms of time, money and emotional investment. We wouldn't however have wanted it any other way. Even the experience of fundraising on the streets was part of the overall call and an important sense of identification.
What I missed from this experience was the opportunity for evangelism and ministry and maybe a real on the ground living in poverty. It was a sanitized version of the experiences I heard from the missionaries in Britain and Wales. I wanted to be stretched in more than physical ways and did not encounter this as an option in Uganda. The 'hotel' we stayed in, the bus we were chauffeured around in and the care the Africans took of us, even guarding us in the markets, only increased this sense of sanitization. After we had completed the house building, we were driven to the Murchison Falls and experienced a safari on land and up the Nile River. Pretty amazing experience! Plenty of crocodiles and hippos in the water and giraffes on land and elephants with their babies. We stayed in a Lodge near where the Queen also stayed when she visited there. The food was wonderful and there was everything of a normal tourist experience, plus a pool and monkeys cavorting around it! But I found this to be a confusing experience in a country where I came to serve and not to be a tourist. It made me more aware of the vast difference between my experience and life and that of a poor Ugandan.

When I returned to NZ I found that this and the culture shock had raised many questions. Ones that I can't really solve and have to hold in tension. I can't solve even one person's lack of opportunity in comparison to mine, certainly not the mother begging for her babe in arms on the street as I drove past or the young man on $2 a day wanting a connection out of there.
To be in Africa for longer than 2 weeks and without the trappings of the sanitized conditions we were given would provide a totally different experience I am sure. This was one I could easily walk away from, though certain pictures still haunt me and the feelings of fear and distress when we arrived have taken some time to go away. Annabelle does not want to go anywhere near.

Much of the work the women in the UK had described was in planting churches, pioneering health care centres, providing medical supplies, very practical things alongside the ministry of prayer and salvation and deliverance and in areas with less of a vision than Watoto has developed. I concluded that in the future I would like to be stretched in short term mission which is less rigorously controlled and developed than Watoto, though I still support them and concur with the desire to raise funds for a further house. But I doubt that I have the guts to go long term.

4. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT 'GROUP'. - WHY GROUP?

What is it about Group's philosophy that took me all the way to Colorado and has seen me invest time and resources in their particular approach to Christian education?

Group Publishing was born 30 years ago by a youth worker called Thom Schultz in response to a need for resources to support those in Youth Ministry and working with 'groups'. Hence the name. Their goal set in the early 90's is "to reinvent Christian education"[3] and now with a staff of 350 and a huge turnover, their particular approach is clearly being appropriated by those in the know.

During my stay in Colorado I attended a Group Summit on the topic: **Becoming a REAL Presenter.** I was also privileged to interview Thom and Joani Schultz who together are the co-founders and inspiration behind this organization.

Group's headquarters are located in Loveland, about 49 miles from Denver. Their building is a multi storey complex, housing a café and book shop, many offices and studios, as well as a distribution warehouse. Many of those who contribute to Group's ministries which are now quite diverse, do not live in Loveland, but are to be found around the States contributing to magazines and in many voluntary capacities. Group produces three regular magazines: Rev! Group and Children's Mag. They produce a curriculum for children's Christian education as well as having a huge array of book and other resources for Sunday School, Youth, Small Groups and Pastors. They are the largest Christian Publishing Company for educational resources in the USA.

Another aspect of their ministry is the vast number of Work Camp experiences that they provide for young people to be actively involved in service. All over the States and in other places like Mexico, these camps usually catering for 3-400 young people at a time from several youth groups, are the means by which lives are changed and influenced. It is an integral expression of their philosophy that we *learn by doing*.

As you walk through the front door at Group Publishing you might be a little flabbergasted. For starters, a hidden speaker fills the small entryway with a round of applause, making you feel exactly how Group sees you—cherished and valuable. Enter the rustic lobby, pass the reception area, and receive another welcome—this time by a talking ungulate. Hanging out from both sides of the fireplace, "Bruce the Moose" moves his head, wags his tail, and makes dozens of funny comments and suggestions, one every five minutes. Wander past

[3] conversation with Joani Schultz

the lobby, through the bookstore, and follow the smell of homemade cookies and fresh brewed coffee until you find the Fireside Café. Weekdays from 8-4:30 p.m. the Fireside Café opens its doors to the public, whipping up breakfast, lunch, desserts and, yes…Starbucks coffees and drinks.

One of the huge things that immediately stood out to me on entering the foyer of Group Publishing in Loveland, was their wonderful attention to the visual and to the sense of welcome that this evoked. This was consistent throughout the building, and especially upstairs in the workspaces.

If you can pull yourself away from the inviting smells and warm atmosphere of the café, you'll wind up touring the Summit Room. A hand-painted, 360° Disneyesque mural fills the entire room. Whimsical characters play in the Colorado wilderness and life-sized trees break out from the scenery, creating a meeting place for 350 people that truly reflects the light-hearted nature at Group.[4]

[4] http://www.group.com/about/about_newsroom_detail.asp?ID=36

This was the room in which the Summit was held. We were welcomed with individual named blocks and red bags with all sorts of goodies for our stay. Their mural was impressive and their technology was also well set up and utilized. I kept thinking what I could do with such a wonderful space!

INITIAL REFLECTIONS ON R.E.A.L. PRESENTING.

A typical evangelical, church service in the States was comprised of sung worship and a message which was verbally driven, plus other elements with the flavour of the local community. This would be true of most NZ churches as well.

One of the main problems with the style of preaching or teaching in these services, even in those churches that might purport to be 'emergent' in some way, is that it is *teacher talk* and appeals to an auditory style of learning and a modernist, linear approach. Some characteristics of this are:

- From the front
- Too much content
- Requires only passive listening
- Exerts control over what is taught and how it is presented
- It may be thoroughly entertaining, have good stories and anecdotes, but it still requires mostly listening skills

What is the goal of this message component and the service in general?
What is success? Do our services work? How would we know?

An anecdotal comment made by Thom Schultz in terms of the mega church movements is that the pastors are saying: *We're filling the seats and people like what we're doing, but we're not seeing any spiritual growth.* What this indicates is that numbers and attendance are not the best indicators of whether ministry is successful. The tendency is to look at the outward success of big churches, or say that that person was a great communicator and I really enjoyed that message, but in the end can I even remember what was said 90 minutes later or a week later and did it impact my life in such a way as to make a change?

What if we thought about a sermon or presentation's *success* in terms of whether the learner's life was changed in some perceptible way? Thus when we are talking about presenting or speaking in a typical church service or in a Sunday school or youth group situation, the goal is not so much to be a great speaker and to star at this, the goal is to change lives and to change behaviour.

The research that Group Publishing has done clearly indicates the misguided nature of the fixation on an auditory style of presentation.

One way they tested this was by interviewing people about what they remembered from church the last Sunday, with two simple questions:

- What was the sermon about?
- Did it affect your life this week?

Nearly all of the respondents were simply embarrassed because they could not recall any of it and had no application whatsoever. "These adults simply experienced what was quite a normal loss of memory. Research shows that 40 percent of a spoken message is lost from a listener's memory after just two minutes. After a half day, 60 percent of the message is gone. And after a week, over 90 percent of the message has leaked out of the memory forever."[5]

Rev! Magazine (Nov/Dec 2006) uses this illustration:

Imagine you're the floor supervisor at a computer factory. One day you notice that nine out of ten newly manufactured computers are dropping off the end of the conveyor belt and crashing on the floor. You sprint to the emergency belt and shut down the line. "What's going on?" you scream. "Why isn't somebody doing something about this?" Since you're the factory floor

[5] Schultz, T and J *The Dirt on Learning* (Group Publishing: Loveland, Colorado, 1999), 70

supervisor, your job is to immediately identify the problems and solve them to stop this unthinkable waste of time, effort and money.[6]
Think about the people leaving church after a typical sermon. By the time they've reached their vehicles, research indicates that they've already forgotten most of what was said. Yet we continue to prop up this means of communication spending hours of time preparing and presenting, all for what!! "How can God be happy, when 90% of what we are preaching is falling off the conveyor belt and crashing to the floor in the lives of our hearers?"[7]

REAL learning or *active* learning is a way to reverse this condition.
Group's REAL acronym stands for:

Relational--because student-to-student interaction enhances learning--and builds Christian friendships. **Experiential**--because what students experience sticks with them up to 9 times longer than what they simply hear or read. **Applicable**--because connecting God's Word to learners' real world moves learning beyond information to transformation. **Learner-based**--because students learn more and retain it longer when the process is designed according to how they learn best. Put those together and you get "REAL" learning. Authentic, life-changing, long-term learning that builds Christian faith in children, youth, and adults! [8]

This concept is rooted in the principle that we learn best by doing, by active participation in what we are learning.
After 30 days, students remember:
10 % of what they hear
15% of what they see
20% of what they hear and see
40% of what they discuss
80% of what they do
90% of what they teach to others [9]

So the goal of the worship service is not to be a star as the preacher and teacher, where people listen to what you say and are maybe wowed by your profound words if you're particularly good at communicating. Even providing PowerPoint, notes, soft seating and food is still reinforcing a passive way of learning. A visual environment doesn't do it either, though it is a crucial aid. By this we are still creating consumers, spiritual spectators who just think they are participating, but really it is just cognitive exposition which leaves it up to spectators to make an application.
The goal is to engage people actively on several levels: emotionally, physically and relationally, as well as cognitively, so that they may love and worship God with the whole of their being, be transformed time after time through poignant experiences and be moved towards God in lifelong service and smaller, daily ongoing responses as a result.
REAL learning in church or youth group or whatever context, calls for a response in line with Jesus summary of the commandments in Mark 12, Love God with everything and James 1: 14, Be doers of the Word, not hearers only and Romans 12: 1-2, Present your bodies as a living sacrifice…be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

[6] Nelson, A. *Make It Stick* (Rev! Magazine : Group Publishing, Loveland, Nov/Dec 2006), 53
[7] 53-4
[8] http://www.youthministry.com/about_us.asp
[9] Schultz, 1999, 155

5. LEARNING STYLES, THE TEACHING PROFESSION AND 'WORSHIP'

I work with and minister to Generation Y, those born since 1984. They both provoke my thinking and reinforce some of my natural instincts.

George Barna (2001)[10] calls this generation the *Mosaics* because "their lifestyles are an eclectic combination of traditional and alternative activities" and " they are the first generation among whom a majority will exhibit a non linear style of thinking, a mosaic, connect the dots however you choose approach…They are abundantly comfortable with contradictions…this comfort level is partially a function of their thinking style (i.e. a nonlinear approach in which any route you take to any end point is equally valid) and partially a reflection of their comfort with diversity and inclusivity." Barna says: **"we may well be entering an age in which a more holistic right-brained ethos is taking hold."**[11]

The focus of my research and study leave and this paper arises from my natural inclination to the right side of my brain and a strong desire to be creative, relational and holistic in everything I am and do. I am inspired by:

- my instinct never to speak without a visual and to want to involve my hearers in their own learning by facilitating interaction and kinesthetic participation.
- my belief that a relationship with God can only grow well if the onus is given back to the disciples to be responsible and the tools are given to inspire them to reach God in ways that resonate with how God has made us to learn and how everyone is wired with different patterns.
- my belief that this has huge ramifications for how we worship and that the church must adjust its style of worship to embrace more holistic expressions of worship, ones that respect the diverse nature of generational and global cultures and diversity in learning.
- This is particularly crucial for those who work amongst generation Y, but it seems to me we cross all generations with the need to inspire fresh ways of learning, ones that are more resonant with the diversity put within us and the need to help deepen the spiritual maturity of those who call themselves followers of Jesus.

A balanced worship service, I believe, should feed the complexity of the human person. It celebrates the full spectrum of God-given right-brain and left-brain characteristics in all aspects of worship and involves the whole 'picture' so to speak of such dynamics as architecture, acoustics, floor plan, furnishings and the ethos of the pastor and each person in the congregation.

Yet the church continues to employ models and procedures that have changed little over time and there is little critique of the effectiveness of the **minister** as teacher or the effectiveness of preaching as one of the main tools by which spiritual education is transmitted.

LESSONS FROM THE TEACHING PROFESSION

"Up until about 30 years ago, teaching had not been systematically studied in a scientific manner."[12] It was not until the beginning of the 70's that "researchers began to look at the effects of instruction on student learning."[13] Up until this point it had been concluded that school itself made little difference in the achievement of students behind such factors as "a student's natural ability or aptitude, the socioeconomic status of the student, and the student's

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[10] Barna, G. *Real Teens: A Contemporary Snapshot of Youth Culture* (Ventura: Regal Books, 2001) quoted in Glick, Robert P. *With All Thy Mind: Worship that Honours the Way God Made Us.* (The Alban Institute Herndon, Virginia, 2006), 144

[11] 144-5

[12] Marzano, R.J., Pickering, D.J., Pollock, J.E., *Classroom Instruction that Works. Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement* (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development: Virginia, USA, 2001), 1

[13] ibid

home environment," [14] none of which a school could change. However more recent research and reinterpretation of initial findings has painted a far more hopeful picture. Researchers like Robert Rosenthal (1991) and John Hunter and Frank Schmidt (1990) showed that a student attending a 'good' school gained much higher achievement than one who attended a 'poor' school.[15] It was also shown by William Sanders and his colleagues (1994) that "an individual teacher can have a powerful affect on the students even if the school doesn't."[16] It follows that examining effective teaching practices and training teachers in proven methods will result in not only better teaching all round, but better learning overall as well.

In 1992, Tony Carvajal, director of the Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Dropout Prevention wrote:
"The students in our nation's schools are substantially different individuals from the students of 10, 20, and 30 years ago," he says, "the teaching methods of yesterday don't address the needs of today's students. But neither the public schools nor the church is left without solutions to this big problem. To reach the students of today, the curriculum must actively engage the learners and promote higher-order thinking instead of merely memorization of facts and figures. Public schools are beginning to wake up to the need for change, real change. And where they're risking new approaches to learning, they're seeing some breakthrough successes that will serve as models for schools in the coming years. In progressive schools, educators are emphasizing active learning by the students. Teachers are de-emphasizing lecture-style pedagogy, rote memorization, and textbook-based classrooms. They're teaching kids to think, to problem-solve. And students are learning." [17]

In 2006, Time Magazine[18] ran an article called: *How to Bring Our Schools Out of the 20th Century*. The writers describe how the style of education in American public schools is not keeping up with the impact and pace of change brought about by globalization. Students now need to be prepared to survive in a global economy where the skills of thinking through abstract problems and working in teams, knowing other languages and being sensitive to foreign cultures are among the most important. One provider of education says: "We try to build something called international mindedness. These are students who can grasp issues across national borders. They have an understanding of nuances and complexity and a balanced approach to problem solving."[19] "These could be called 21st century skills."[20] In this climate the ability to think outside the box and across disciplines like mathematics and art, is where breakthroughs are made. Students must be able to quickly process the vast amount of information that thrusts at them and discern what's reliable and what isn't. Core knowledge is still fundamentally important, "but portable skills such as critical thinking, making connections between ideas and knowing how to keep on learning"[21] make the difference for students who make the grade in the 21st century milieu.
Are teachers irrelevant in this kind of environment? The answer is no. But their role has changed. Instead of being the information provider, the didactic fountain of knowledge, they must put "greater emphasis on teaching kids to collaborate and solve problems in small groups and apply what they've learnt to the real world. Besides, research shows that kids learn better that way than with the old chalk and talk approach."[22] The article finishes by reflecting that in

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[14] Marzano, 2
[15] ibid
[16] ibid
[17] quoted in Schultz, T&J. *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church: And How To Fix It* (Group: Loveland Colorado, 1993 and 2004), 11
[18] Time Magazine, December 18th, 2006
[19] Time, 54
[20] 52
[21] ibid
[22] 56

spite of the way the world has changed and the need for education to catch up, a kid still needs to know how to shake your hand, be punctual and get along with others. Some things never change.

What I am left wondering when I read these articles is how the church is grappling with the implications of the changes that globalization and 21st century living has brought about, particularly in the area of learning and Christian education, let alone whether we are effectively examining our teaching techniques.

What can we extrapolate so far?

- The school and teacher have a critical effect on the quality of learning of a student.
- The goalposts in education have moved radically, not only since the 90's where teaching methods began to change to be more active-based, but also in the 21st century. Global skills and portable skills are essentials.
- An emphasis on collaboration, teamwork, and the ability to know how to learn.
- Cross cultural, cross discipline, and cross-brain skills are all important. A non-linear approach and a holistic balance of right and left brain activities is a more normal way to learn.

In terms of the church and our educative process

- Does the minister/pastor take cognizance of how critical he or she is in the influence on spiritual growth and therefore relationship with God within the congregation?
- Does the minister make any effort to critique his/her methods of teaching or preaching and does he/she find resources to make him or herself more effective?
- Does he or she know how to help a congregation to understand the educative process and how their individual learning can positively or negatively affect their relationship to God?
- Should we leave our education to the hit and miss approach of non evaluation? Auditory and linear learning continues to prevail in most church contexts. A simple questionnaire[23] will tell you that more than 75% of a typical congregation are visual and kinesthetic learners. We now live in a postmodern setting where learning does not typically happen in a linear fashion.
- How does the church become globally skilled and internationally minded?
- What impact could this have on our worship styles and ultimately on our individual and corporate relationship with God?
- What strategies can we identify that have a high probability of enhancing learning in the church context?
- Will this make the church more mature? How do you measure maturity?
- Will this increase the level of satisfaction reported with church and with individual closeness to God?
- Will this help increase the profile, relevance and attendance of church among non church goers?

These are some of the questions which motivate and drive this research and to which I believe it is crucial to have some answers for the church to gain any sort of relevancy in the next 20 years. I don't pretend to have many answers, but the experiences I have had and the reading I have done has made me determined to press on in raising the bar of how we present the Word of God when we gather together. At this point let me make clear that if I seem critical of 'preaching' it is not at this as one of the main tools by which we communicate the Gospel or by which we

[23] copies available from hmharray@paradise.net.nz

bring a motivational and exhortative message, but when we use it as a didactic tool or the only way in which we ever communicate the Word and the Gospel. For many it is the experience of the Gospel in demonstration of the love of God that has plunged them head over heels into the Kingdom of God and seared the heart forever to God, not the words of the preacher alone.

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO A WORSHIP CONTEXT?

What does it mean to learn and to worship more holistically? What would it look like?

Glick raises some important questions when he asks: What qualities would characterize a worship service that enabled us to engage God through as many parts of our brain as possible, or that similarly enabled God to engage us as a whole people? Could our failure to do so be a means by which we unwittingly quench the Holy Spirit? And failing people because they cannot relate to the style in which things are presented? How holistic are the descriptions of worship found in the Bible? What impact does culture have on such matters?[24]

Jesus said: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Christian worship today typically focuses on **words** and yet "the early Christian church was surprisingly well integrated between the logical and the intuitive, the intellectual and emotional, the verbal and the symbolic."[25] Alan Nelson writing for Rev! Magazine in the December issue, 2006 confirms this when he says: "A growing number of demographers suggest that we are moving toward a time more like that of the early church, which means communicating through story, experience and word pictures. The rise of the arts is a move toward this as well. The arts touch us emotionally, making messages and experiences more memorable."[26]

We in the church can learn and ought to learn a lot from the research that has been done in education. Without becoming school teacherish, we can apply the principles of how learning is done best to the way we approach the Bible and the way we configure our services, to the way we speak and how we say things and how we involve the congregation in the whole process.

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[24] Glick, Robert P. *With All Thy Mind: Worship that Honours the Way God Made Us.* (The Alban Institute Herndon, Virginia, 2006), 18-19

[25] 2

[26] Nelson, A, *Make It Stick* (Rev! Magazine : Group Publishing, Loveland, Nov/Dec 2006),55

6. EXPANDING THE R.E.A.L ACRONYM

R.

Every church service should have a **RELATIONAL** component.
This should happen in a vertical and a horizontal dimension.

WITH GOD

We all want to encounter God when we come together. Encountering God in a growing relationship should be one of the highest priorities in a church environment, for surely faith is a relationship, built on many such encounters which create devotion, obedience and deeply inspired worship. A service of worship should leave us moved, changed, involved and growing towards God on every level of life: heart, soul, body, mind and strength. What we learn should change our behaviour. Be transformed, not conformed, says Paul to the Romans in 12:1-2. What we need to guard against is the defaulting of church to an academic and cognitive space, where the minister is an information transmitter.

WITH OTHERS

Relational also means with one another! The Church is also about that horizontal dimension where we build relationship and community with one another. This needs to be intentional. There is a correlation between strong friendships and a strong relationship with God according to research commissioned by Group Publishing and conducted by the Gallup Organization. The results have been published in *Friendship: Creating a Culture of Connectivity in Your Church*.[27]
This research shows a direct link between human friendships and spiritual maturity. People with close friendships in their church are very satisfied with their congregation, less likely to leave their place of worship, and have a strong friendship with God.

"Church members who have a best friend at church are more likely to report attending church at least once a week and more likely to report having a strong, more active faith in God," said Michael D. Lindsay, Sociology Research Affiliate at Princeton University. "Respondents with a best friend at church were also more likely to say their faith is involved in every aspect of their lives and that they have a close friendship with God."

Thom Schultz, CEO of Group Publishing, said the research also connects faith and food. According to survey results, 77 percent of highly satisfied members have eaten a meal with people in their congregation (who are not members of their family) at some point over the last year. Only 56 percent of somewhat satisfied or dissatisfied members have shared a meal together. Hence, mealtime fellowship appears strongly correlated with high levels of congregational satisfaction. And 62 percent of those who eat meals together report regularly spending time in prayer and worship daily compared to 49 percent who have not eaten meals with other church members. [28]

ENVIRONMENT

The kind of environment created in a church also contributes enormously to relationality. What is the first impression when you come through the front door, both visually and on a horizontal basis?
Being intentionally relational involves attending to simple things like:

- welcome
- friendliness
- organization that includes rather then excludes the newcomer

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[27] Group/Gallup *Friendship, Creating a Culture of Connectivity In Your Church* (Group Publishing Inc: Loveland, Co, 2005)
[28] http://www.group.com/about/about_newsroom_detail.asp?ID=49

- facilitating a sense of belonging and acceptance through assimilating people and helping people meet one another
- helping people to get involved and committed
- Caring relationships among the spiritual leaders are also vital to the development of a culture of connectivity within the church

In my experience churches who attend to these dynamics provide more satisfying faith communities.

COLLABORATION

People generally learn best in an environment of collaboration or interactive learning. "All good learning has a social base. We often learn more by interacting with peers than we learn by any other means. Competition between learners slows learning. Cooperation among learners speeds it"[29] On the other hand there seems to be little correlation between faith maturity and leader-centred, one way communication or passive learning in Christian education. In and of itself, knowledge imparted by a minister has little impact on a person's growth in faith.[30] But if you foster an environment where people can interact with each other, a sense of fellowship and community will develop. In time this will encourage some personal vulnerability, revealing a bit of oneself to others. This is a rare opportunity for some people and develops interpersonal skills. If one of the main factors people enjoy church is because of friendships, then this kind of interactive learning will capitalize on these relational needs.

Benson et al quoted in Schultz defines **interactive learning** as:

" the processes which engage people in interaction with the leader and with each other."[31]

One simple relational tool which supports a better way of learning in church is encouraging interaction through dialogue. Learning occurs through dialogue, discussion, interaction, debate. The more people are able to talk about the topic, the more they learn and retain. This is not to pool ignorance or transfer facts, but to enrich individual understanding and thereby encourage individual application of God's word.

An empowering question enables interactive sharing which helps application in a way teacher talk cannot. This is not a closed, factual question like: What were the three things that happened? It is an open question which encourages exploration.

True interactive learning enables everyone to talk. It can be done simply in pairs or in small groups, even in pews. Ask the congregation to reflect on a statement you have just made. Or introduce a theme and then get them to discuss what their understanding is at that point. For example: What comes to mind when you hear the word worship? What does it mean?

This simple strategy gets everyone thinking about what it means, not just hearing what the minister thinks it means. Then engage them in some feedback and some interaction with your thinking and theology on the topic. Use a whiteboard or data projector to make the feedback visual. Using what they know gives the opportunity to take it a step further and then to help make some applications, like how does this affect our behaviour? The long term result of this is greater ownership and those ah ha moments of revelation which change people's thinking and behaviour.

Research shows interactive learning results in deeper learning through the impact of being able to talk about their understanding and help each other apply their faith to issues and concerns in their lives.

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[29] Meier, D. *The Accelerated Learning Handbook* (McGraw Hill: New York, 2000), 9
[30] Schultz, 1999, 54
[31] ibid

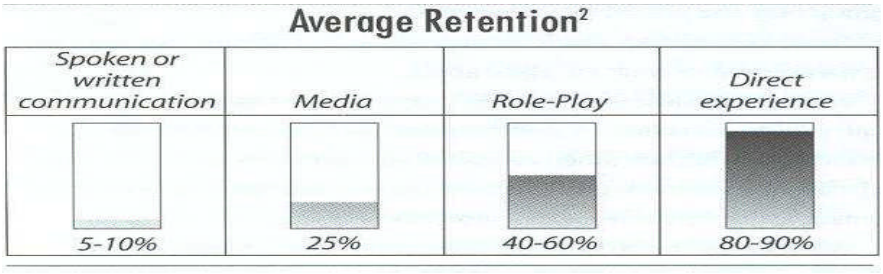
E

A church service should facilitate something **EXPERIENTIAL** and memorable.

1. When learners are allowed to make discoveries for themselves and get to experience their learning by doing something, what is retained is increased up to 90%. There is a huge difference for example between an object lesson where something is demonstrated from the front as is typically seen in a children's talk and an experience where everyone gets to participate in the object of that lesson. The energy in the room goes up, people are involved and relating to one another and the illustration is powerfully set to affect every individual on their level.

"Learning is not a spectator sport but a participatory one. Knowledge is not something a learner passively absorbs, but something a learner actively creates." [32]

If your body don't move, your mind don't groove. [33]



2. When learning is connected to something nonlinguistic such as a deep emotion, the impact is also heightened.

- **EMOTION**

How we retain information is a complex procedure. Neural networks at several different brain locations may handle a single act of memory. The content of a learning event, what happened, is processed in a separate place from the event's meaning, how it felt. The human brain does not store everything it encounters. Most of the information we receive lingers only temporarily in short term memory and then evaporates.

How do memories become permanent then? It is largely dependent on how strongly the information is registered in the first place. It is important to learn in ways that involve hearing, seeing, saying and doing and which involve positive emotions, such as when we learn collaboratively. All these are factors that create strong memories.

Emotion is what anchors our learning and its meaning into our long term memory. The hippocampus likes to associate with something it already knows, but scientists believe its other major filter is emotion. The brain is more prone to retain the sensational than the mundane. Our strongest memories are tied to strong emotions.[34] Think about the first time you kissed someone. There are more neural connections going from the emotional part of the brain to the intellectual part than vice versa.[35] Starbucks has figured out that coffee sells best with an emotional experience so they create atmosphere, an experience of a community coffee house. These are the things you remember long term and which send you back for more. [36]

So our emotions are more powerful than logic in influencing our behaviour!!

"Emotion at some level is the engine of most forms of learning."
Researcher R. J Dolan of the Institute of Neurology in London

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[32] Meier, xvii
[33] 23
[34] Schultz,90
[35] 91
[36] Nelson, 58

"We found that the sermon has less to do with their (visitor's) return to a church than their emotional experience with God and the people gathered."[37]

Emotion drives attention. I am more likely to be interested if my emotions are involved. We remember not only the emotion but the information surrounding it. Our memories are seared by fear, joy, sadness, hilarity, frustration, anger…

It's as if we have two minds. Daniel Goleman, author of the groundbreaking book Emotional Intelligence, writes:

In a very real sense we have two minds, one that thinks and one that feels…These two minds, the emotional and the rational, operate in tight harmony for the most part, intertwining their very different ways of knowing to guide us through the world. Ordinarily there is a balance between emotional and rational minds, with emotion feeding into and informing the operations of the rational mind, and the rational mind refining and sometimes vetoing the inputs of the emotions…But when passions surge the balance tips: it is the emotional mind that captures the upper hand, swamping the rational mind.[38]

1. **So design learning experiences that evoke emotional responses in individuals**. We remember long-term when we are deeply touched through our emotional minds. Ask the feeling questions when debriefing.
2. **Jesus knowingly provoked strong feelings and reactions in his listeners**. He used these opportunities to teach about the Kingdom of God. Beware of manipulation or provoking unhealthy, negative emotions.
3. **Place ourselves inside the Bible**.
4. U**se a learning game or simulation.** What is the Biblical point we wish to explore? Identify a particular emotion or empathy factor that may help solidify the learning. Build simulations around that, use debrief questions at the end.

• NON LINGUISTIC REPRESENTATIONS

These are non verbal, pictorial and sensory, kinesthetic ways of communicating information and they reinforce and deepen learning and therefore help change behaviours.

Many psychologists adhere to what has been called the 'dual-coding' theory of information storage (see Paivio, 1969, 1971, 1990). This theory postulates that knowledge is stored in two forms---**a linguistic form and an imagery form.** The linguistic mode is semantic in nature. As a metaphor, one might think of the linguistic mode as containing actual statements in long-term memory. The imagery mode in contrast, is expressed as mental pictures or even physical sensations, such as smell, taste, touch, kinesthetic association and sound (Richardson, 1983).[39]

Typically when we teach or preach we represent this in a linguistic form, talking or reading, and leave the hearer to their own devices to generate a nonlinguistic representation. However, if we used both systems of representation, the better the hearer would be able to think about and recall knowledge, with a subsequent affect on achievement and enjoyment. "It has even been shown that explicitly engaging students in the **creation** of nonlinguistic representations stimulates and increases activity in the brain (see Gerlic & Jausovec,

[37] Barna, G. *Grow Your Church From The Outside In* quoted in Schultz, 1999,
[38] Goleman, D. *Emotional Intelligence* (New York, NY: Bantam, 1995), 8-9
[39] Marzano, 73

1999)".[40] It encourages **elaborate thinking**, where the knowledge or simple fact has been elaborated on and this increases complexity and stimulation and therefore I contend depth, intrinsic ownership and involvement.
"When students elaborate on knowledge, they not only understand it in greater depth, but they recall it much more easily."[41]

Nonlinguistic representations are:

- **Creating graphic representations. E.g.** mind map, bubble chart, box diagram, arrows and circles…
  These combine the linguistic mode of words and phrases and the nonlinguistic mode of symbols and arrows to represent relationships. [42] A simple diagram on a whiteboard can cut through a whole page of notes or sermon material and will be retained much better. In IDT speak these would be called ***D*** drawings.

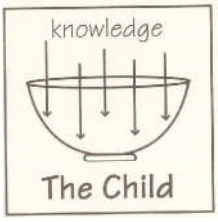
- **Making physical models**
  A physical model is an *image of knowledge*[43] in a person's mind. A concrete representation is a manipulative one, e.g. the planets, sun and moon.

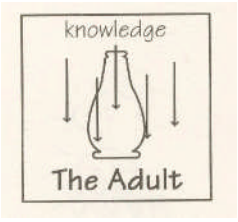
- **Generating mental pictures**
  Imagination is the tool of mental pictures, includes all the senses.

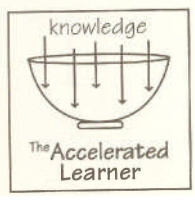
- **Drawing pictures and pictographs.**
  Draw what I am describing.

- **Engaging in kinesthetic activity.**
  This is physical movement associated with specific knowledge which generates a mental image of the knowledge in the mind of the learner. [44] E.g. Make the physical arm movements that describe what you are talking about.

3. "Learning takes place on several levels simultaneously (conscious, and paraconscious, mental and physical). When we learn we use all the senses and receptors and paths it can into a person's total brain/body system. It is not just a matter of absorbing one little thing at a time in linear fashion, but absorbing many things at once."[45] The brain after all is not a sequential, but a parallel processor and thrives when it is challenged to do many things at once."[46] A child learns like this, yet an adult has been squeezed into a certain learning mould which is controlled and structured and excessively verbal!







[40] Marzano, 73
[41] 74
[42] 75
[43] 78
[44] 82
[45] Meier, 9-10
[46] 10

"Georgi Lozanov, a seminal researcher in accelerated learning, speaks of the "reserves of the mind". He points out that rational consciousness is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of one's full mental capacity. People learn, he says on many levels simultaneously, most of which are in addition to the cognitive and verbal processing of rational consciousness."[47]

Learning happens best when there is intrinsic motivation. In other words, it comes from within the person, not from an external motivator or speaker. If someone wants to learn they will. If they are involved in their learning and it is reinforced by the sensory and nonlinguistic, and in an enjoyable environment with a relational component, it will be even more motivation for further learning.
People who get to crawl into the subject literally and ask questions and find out how it fits together and make their own connections will be excited learners and motivated for more experiences like that. Imagine a church where these things were attended to.
Many people, especially males, like to be doing something with their hands. I know this because we go through candles regularly at studentsoul. Anything gets burnt while they are listening, or manipulated in the flame in some way. A guy will pick up a kinesthetic object and play with it if one is available. Some people need to doodle while they listen or take notes. Others like to draw.
These are activities that will enhance listening, but also consider how the whole message may become experiential.
At studentsoul, I see myself as a curator of a worship experience. From beginning to end this unfolds and grows on itself, through how the context is set up, the visuals that are added, the connections that are made to objects on the table, the sung worship and prayers, the sensory aspects, the Word of God, and interaction with one another. It's a drama that requires movement and investment from each participant. It opens a space for God to be present and meet us on many levels.

Some experiential services we have enjoyed lately are:

- A Passover meal which we walked through together.
- A communion meal which celebrated the feast of Firstfruits.
- The ripping of the temple curtain with smaller pieces of cloth ripped inviting God to disturb our worship form and ritual.
- The Stations of the cross set up in a large hall

The Bible, from cover to cover, details God's use of active learning. Abraham actively demonstrated the depth of his faith by raising his knife over Isaac (Genesis 22:1-13). Jonah learned about his inability to hide from God only after spending a little time in a fish's belly (Jonah 2:1-10). God uses a variety of methods to transform our hearts. Can we break away from our less effective forms of Christian education? Can we take a hint from God himself about how we might better educate our people?
Dr. F. Earle Fox writes:
Without exception all of the successful reform movements in the church have been non-academic (not anti-academic) but rather experiential in nature - from the early desert fathers, through the Benedictines, the Franciscans, the Jesuits, the Quakers, Methodists, right down to the present day "charismatic renewal." All this was not to the exclusion of serious academic work. But it was the experience that came first which provided the fodder for the rational mind to work upon. The Judeo-Christian tradition is profoundly experiential, not to the exclusion of

[47] Meier, xxiii

reason, but as the precondition of it. That is, the material upon which reason exerts itself is precisely those experiences of ours which need ordering and coherence. [48]

Tell me, and I'll forget.
Show me, and I may remember.
Involve me, and I'll understand.

A

The end point of a message should have a discernible **APPLICATION.**

Experience for experience sake is of little value unless it is made applicable and relevant to the learner's life. There must be a point to the illustration or experience. The bottom line is will this experience bring about transformation, behavioural change? Learning must be contextualized and the connections able to be made easily, for facts and skills learned in isolation are easily forgotten. The question will be how I can get this to move from the head and the experience into something concrete and applied. If we never give the opportunity for this step to take place, there is little chance it will happen given human nature to procrastinate and the antipathy we have to doing what is intentional and good for us. Maybe this helps to explain why the church still has babies rather than spiritual giants.

- Reflecting on an activity deepens learning. One of the most valuable benefits of discussions with a partner or a small group is the insight participants gain into themselves as a result of articulating their thoughts and feelings. Putting thoughts into words requires next level thinking. How can we truly know or understand something if we can't begin to articulate it?[49] Many of our experiences "drift along unquestioned, unrealized, unintegrated or unorganized."[50] Reflecting or debriefing helps to sort and order information gathered and allow for applications and changes to be made.
- Formulating great questions is a key to facilitating making our teaching applicable. These should be open-ended and not leading, but empowering, requiring deep level thinking.

1. **Reflection:** How did that make you feel?
2. **Interpretation**: What did it mean to you? What have we learned about this topic, this principle?
3. **Application**: What will you do about it? What can I create with this new information? How can I make it part of my life and use it?
   The application stage of debriefing calls for commitment, without which nothing much is accomplished. The debriefing process creates a superb environment for this. We can ask for commitment in many ways. We can call for oral commitment. How will tonight's experience on…affect how you'll act in…from now on? Or it can come during prayer time, with each person asking for God's help in accomplishing some goal. Commitments can be written in several different ways: Write a commitment on paper and exchange it with a partner. Then each pray for the other. Sign a common commitment on a large sheet of newsprint.

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[48] Fox, F.Earle, *The Spiritual Core of Experiential Education*, in The Theory of Experiential Education (Boulder, CO: Association for Experiential Education,1983),100.
[49] Meier, 57
[50] Schultz, T. and J., *Do It! Active Learning in Youth Ministry* (Group Publishing: Loveland, Colorado, 2000), 13

L

Learner-Based. How do people learn and is this service about me imparting my knowledge or about what the congregation needs? Have we really considered who our audience is, done some research into what is hitting the mark effectively, asked the people in the pews what they remember and how the service of worship is impacting their lives?

LEARNER-BASED CHARACTERISTICS

These have a clear goal: that learners understand, retain, and apply their learning. **The focus is on the learner, not the teacher.** Success is based not on how eloquently the sower casts seeds, but on whether the seeds take root and bear fruit.

1. Learners are distinct and unique.

People don't all learn the same way. There are different learning styles and different learning intelligences and people learn best when they have a rich variety of learning options that allows them to use all their senses. Speakers all too often make the assumption that everyone learns the way they do and that is usually in an auditory and linear fashion. Some learners are analytical and others are more random and global.

Auditory learners can remember about 75% of what they hear.

But less than 30% of the population prefers this style.

Only 30% of the population is visual

Most remember what they touch, feel, handle or manipulate --- tactile

and what they experience by doing --- kinesthetic.

2. Learners should help guide the learning process.

Be allowed to make choices, follow their curiosity, explore what interests them and be encouraged to make learning relevant to their own lives.

3. Learning occurs best when learners enjoy the process.

People will learn and retain more when the material brings delight, when friendships and interactions with other learners are encouraged and when learners feel appreciated, respected and loved.

4. Learning is evaluated by what learners understand, retain, and apply.

Not merely on what's taught, or the eloquence of the preaching. It's effective when it creates an appetite for more learning, to come back and bring others. The non-learner-based teacher/preacher attempts to teach from his/her own strengths. The learner-based preacher determines the strengths of the congregation and then designs the content around them. One great result of this is that the preacher gets a different perspective and learns things too! But to do this you have to be prepared to become a different kind of teacher, leader, or preacher, one that's not as comfortable, controlled or planned. In the end, being learner-based means doing what's best for the learner, not what's most comfortable for you. For most people today that's in a non-linear, random fashion.

"I don't teach; I organize learning. I no longer write sermons, I create experiences."
Leonard Sweet

A LEARNER-BASED ENVIRONMENT

PHYSICAL SPACE

If learning is to be relational and experience-based, how does this affect the way space is arranged? How much attention is given to group dynamics and the way seating is arranged? Who is being left out by seats in straight rows? A sensible space can be reconfigured to suit the needs of the particular theme.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Have you got it yet? If you talk less, people will learn more! Start with what is going to connect with your audience.

In an educational study, during each of five different lectures, a teacher paused for two minutes at three different times during the lectures. The teacher didn't interact at all with the students during the pauses; students discussed in pairs or wrote notes. At the end of each meeting, the students were asked to write down everything they could remember from the lecture, free recall. At the end of the course, they were given a comprehensive test to measure their long term retention. The researchers also tracked a control group, which attended the same lectures but wasn't offered the pauses, and this group was similarly tested. The same research test was done twice, and the results were clear: students attending the lecture in which the teacher paused did significantly better on the free recall and test. The difference in scores between the two groups was even enough to make the difference between two grades.

Do you realize what this means? If we talk six minutes less and engage in an activity that reinforces what we teach, people will learn far more. [51]

VISUAL SPACE

People take in 70% by non verbal means. Attending to the visual presentation is very important because anything that is distracting is making a bigger impact than anything being said. This relates to the person up the front, how they present themselves, their use of the microphone and lectern as well as all the objects and icons that are in visual access and the words or images on the screen. All of these things can unreasonably or disproportionately distract a person's focus from what's really important.

By the same token a well designed artistic installation can say more than 1000 words of verbiage, and be powerfully memorable and impactful for a long time. I particularly remember a huge block of ice hanging from the roof, which we positioned in the middle of our front setting and which slowly dripped through a service because of the light below it.

Objects as mnemonic triggers: Sometimes we have objects on the tables which subtly relate to the theme of the service but which never have much attention drawn to them. These function as a subconscious connection and provide an association point for future reference. **The brain's hippocampus strives to make associations. When it encounters new information, it immediately asks, how is this like something I already know?** When it successfully finds a related link, it begins to picture and store the new information. Picture the mind as a library of books. Books are shelved together to help readers find the desired information.[52] The human brain works similarly. We are extremely good at cross indexing. Jesus used the power of association constantly in his teaching. He knew the working of the brain. For example, you are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. No one can serve two masters; a tree is recognised by its fruit. Jesus knew people would understand and retain the learning longer if he began his lessons with what they already knew. He linked the commonly known to his new concepts. To do so, he also often used objects as visual aids, such as fish, boats, sheep and coins to help people understand and remember. [53]

When attached to an experience, simple objects become mnemonic triggers. When the Israelites crossed the river into the Promised Land they took stones from the river and created a

[51] Nelson, 58
[52] Schultz, 1999, 73
[53] Schultz, 1999, 75

monument so that when future generations asked what the stones meant the people could tell them. Jesus gave new meaning to mud, bread and fish, ointment, a coin in the mouth of a fish, to water and wine, to the cross. Significance comes in the meaning attached to the physical item, not the item itself. We can create an echo effect like this with simple visual items carefully connecting to the point we are communicating. [54]

PEOPLE LOVE STORIES

Tell great stories. These start with what people already know and move from there to the surprising, the shared emotion and the sudden start or stop. The Prodigal Son is simple, suspenseful, emotion-packed and seamless, with a surprising start and a sudden stop. Jesus knew the secret of moving a story into people's long-term memories.

When a person listens to a story, both sides of the brain are working. The left brain is processing the words while the right brain is actively filling in the gaps. This is the reason why it is so important to read to children, to allow their brains to imagine the story rather than using television and films for all their learning. Good story writers carefully choose visual, auditory, kinesthetic and olfactory words to give the story depth and to stimulate the right brain to enrich the meaning of the story and store it in the memory for easy recall.

The information in the story can also be captured at the second attention level as the brain searches for a deeper meaning. At this level, the right brain is often favored as relationships and patterns are developed. Processing is an unconscious process - that is, we are not aware that we are doing it. The second attention level is where the story is reformulated to have personal relevance. Sometimes the story stays at this level and causes unconscious behavioural change, or it can rise into the first attention level through an "A-ha!" reaction.

The Basic Theory of Learning with Stories by Jan Stewart

CREATE LOTS OF ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS

People tend to remember more from beginnings and endings. First impressions are powerful, as are last ones. So plan lots of beginnings and endings within the service. Design learning in short blocks and take plenty of breaks. This can be achieved by switching teaching techniques, or throwing out lollies, humour, having a game…Time taken for well-paced breaks will increase learning.[55]

Attention spans have decreased!! According to Group Publishing research:

An activity should change every six minutes!

As I plan a service I work in small bytes:

- an introduction to the theme or recall from previous week
- some sung worship
- reading
- development of the theme via visual, drama
- discussion
- feedback

[54] 56

[55] Schultz, 1999, 84-85

- where this takes us next…theological content
- drawing
- response which is kinesthetic, active, applicable
- praying for each other, sung worship
- provide handouts

SURPRISE

The surprise factor is an important part of learning. Catching people off guard and building suspense before the point is connected all adds to the ah hah moment when REAL learning takes place. Get behind the reticular activators which block messages that are deemed familiar and non-threatening.[56]

When we have been exposed to the same material over and over again we become immune to its meaning and power to instruct us. In other words, because we have heard it all before, we screen out the information.

This is true of the Bible, in the sense that we can read and become so familiar with the story that it fails to move us. It is predictable and boring. So we have to devise ways to get behind this face, this wall of defense. We need to learn to read the Bible in new ways, employ strategies that involve us in learning on more holistic levels than simply reading it or listening to a preacher give his comments on it. People need us to do things differently so that they will learn again and their relationship to God and to the church be refreshed.

IDENTIFYING SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

"To have to generate and explain an analogy is a complex and abstract form of learning, but one basic to human thought. Indeed it might be considered the 'core' of all learning."[57]

Ways to implement this[58]:

1. If you tell a story that is similar to a problem that is to be solved, it makes the solution more obvious to the difficult problem.
2. If you present explicit similarities and differences you enhance understanding of and ability to use knowledge, this can be accompanied by rich discussion and inquiry. This approach leads to more homogeneous conclusions.
3. If you ask people to identify similarities and differences, this stimulates divergence in students' thinking.
4. If you represent similarities and differences in a graphic or symbolic form, this also enhances understanding of content.

Jesus taught like this when he used PARABLES.

Mark 4: He did not say anything to them without using a parable! But when he was alone with them he explained everything. It was fundamental to his teaching style. He also did this in **enacted parables**. He demonstrated as he taught, vis a vis the loaves and fishes, the foot washing, the death and resurrection. He is the greatest teacher of interactive learning.

Parables engage the right side of the brain in at least two ways. First they are rich in imagery. Our mind's eye is presented with intriguing vignettes of widows sweeping floors looking for coins, people burying pearls in fields, or prodigal sons slopping pigs. The pictures these vignettes produce in our minds are formulated in the right side of our brain.

[56] 58
[57] Marzano, 14
[58] 14-16

Second Jesus' parables always come with some sort of introduction. He might say: the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, and then proceed with a parable. Or the parable might be introduced with a question someone asks: Who is my neighbour?
The introduction contains clues as to how to interpret the story, and logic will not take the hearer very far in finding the meaning or the connecting links. It takes imagination to make the linkage between mustard seeds and the kingdom, and it often requires no small amount of mental energy to ferret out the meaning. Parables make us work, and the right side of the brain gets most of the workout. We are told that Jesus said nothing to his followers without this sort of right-brain gymnastics.[59]

INTERVAL REINFORCEMENT

If we want it to stick we need to keep watering it. We need to reinforce learning several times. Research shows that retention is dramatically increased by interval reinforcement, review or use of the material repeatedly over a period of time. If the brain registers information just once, less than 10% of the message is likely to be retained. But after six exposures to the information over 30 days, 90% of the message is likely to be retained. What we think of as memories are ultimately patterns of connection among nerve cells. Newly encoded memory may involve thousands of neurons spanning the entire cortex. If it doesn't get used, it will quickly fade. But if we activate it, repeatedly, the pattern of connection gets more and more deeply embedded in our tissue.
Only plant the number of seeds the plot can handle. Jesus said: I have many more things to say to you, but they are too much for you now. John 16:12 Cover less material but cover it in such a way that moves it into the long term memory. You can reinforce by: reviewing main points within each session, address the point multiple times in different ways, reinforce the key point at the end or get feedback about what the main points were. Come back to it a week, a month later…take a few key concepts and emphasize them for a year.[60]

EMPOWERING QUESTIONS

Jesus constantly asked **empowering questions**. E.g. Who do you say I am? Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to kill it?
These are questions that make a person go searching within and causes self reflection. It is a process which utterly upholds our dignity and right to self determinate.

MAKING A R.E.A.L PRESENTATION

1. Create a compelling title…What's in it for me? Stresses benefits, not features, stimulates the imagination, easy to remember, catchy.
2. Make a good first impression, the first 90 secs is crucial. Start with a punchy statement which is provocative: a story, question, humour, video clip, novelty.
3. Be R.E.A.L. Get people involved on all levels.
4. Use props and visuals well
5. Tap the emotions
6. Have questions, anticipate and prepare for questions, don't let them dominate
7. Provide useful handouts, recommend resources
8. Make a good lasting impression. Don't end a presentation with questions.
9. Have an action plan, summary, a moving story.

[59] Glick, 59
[60] Schultz, 1999, 79-82

SUMMARY

The truth is that people learn best when the whole person is attended to and treated accordingly. Facilitating this kind of environment will allow God to feed and nurture us on many levels, added to by the interactions and opinion of others and through the power of the Holy Spirit in this mix. It will include both linguistic and non linguistic approaches, coaching people to expect things to be constantly different and to trust and embrace a holistic learning environment. We should be having fun, enjoying one another and exhorting one another to love and good deeds through our interaction. As we do together, put arms and legs on our learning, this will be driven into our long term memory and spiritual growth will occur. But let's stop preaching didactically at people. It's so boring!

God desires worship that engages our whole mind.

Thus a well-tempered worship service should feed both sides of the brain in substantial ways. We need to experience **and** understand God as we come to worship. To celebrate the full spectrum of God-given right-brain and left-brain characteristics in all aspects of worship------ prayer, praise, word, sacrament, architecture, acoustics, floor plan, furnishings, drama, kinesthetic, sensory and the ethos of the pastor and each person in the congregation.[61] What strikes me after reading about the Old Testament sacrificial system, which was the centre of the Israelite worship service, is how sterile and passive our expression of worship is in comparison. God's word seems to come in 3D. Just look at the account of the building of the Tabernacle in Exodus 25-31, 35-40. One tonne of gold, 4 ton of silver…bronze…ornamentation, robes, incense, oil, pomegranates, embroidery…use skillful workers. Here is a patron of the arts God. The Israelites are to be instructed and reminded by the symbolism. To God it seems worshippers must be able to apprehend God holistically, with their entire selves, including all the senses. They hear the bells, the sounds of animals led to slaughter, the shofar and the festival trumpets, choirs and instruments, smell the blood and incense, touch the animals, share a meal with the priest. These descriptions "describe a worship experience light years away from our modern, relatively sterile, passive, word-dominated services of worship."[62]

We are overbalanced on the auditory and impoverished on everything else. Consequently I believe people are empty, bored and rarely encountering God in our church services because they are simply not engaged.

God can and does confront us through the right rather than the left hemisphere. We can have all the knowledge and understanding we like but unless it translates into action, faith and deep trust and belief, what have all the words achieved. Most of them are lost. Thus we need experiences that will take head knowledge to the heart level in God encounters and ah ha moments and actual experience on a regular basis. Those who develop both sides of the brain and who engage on all these levels, will end up with better balance and integration and dare I say wholeness. They will feel satisfied and enjoy God more. The church will grow mature people, not perennial infants who have no real experiences.

Do not hear me saying that words are not essential or that the left brain is of lesser value than the right. On the contrary, what is important is balance. We need to have both as there is no doubt that words are absolutely necessary. The Word of God is after all concrete. "The left brain is the guardian of propositional truth, whether theological, scientific or rational in general...Our left brain cross references the messages of the murky right-brain in the light of the clear, hard rigors of logic and rationality...Music can sometimes do what words cannot and vice versa. It's all about balance."[63]

Finally, Jesus IS the Word of God, made flesh, a visible sign of God's love. Jesus IS the ultimate embodiment of both the nonverbal and spoken, as is the memorial to his death and resurrection: THIS is my body broken for you, DO this as often as you meet together until I return.

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[61] Glick,138

[62] 53

[63] 76-77

7. CONCLUSIONS

As a result of my travels and research and thinking on return I make the following conclusions.

- I loved traveling but returning after so long away was difficult, especially post Uganda and has had a huge impact on how I have functioned in studentsoul this semester. The motivation to start all over again was difficult to find and I was simply not as well planned as we need to be. Having a study leave report hanging over me has not helped either despite trying to write as much of it as possible overseas. In another time I may not choose to go into a mission experience like Uganda after already being away for three months. Part of me had had enough and wanted to be on the next plane home. However I have no doubt that all the overseas experiences have greatly enriched my faith in God and my approach and contribution to ministry for the future. The opportunity to reflect on them has been a vital part of the process and I hope also helpful to those that have read it. The people I met have contributed vitally to my life and fed my need for spiritual and human nourishment after 5 years in a pioneering ministry with another generation.

- I doubt that God will call me to long term mission work but I am enthusiastic about further short term opportunities and especially about encouraging young people to have these sorts of experiences, if only to know how faithful and good God is to those who will serve Him and step out in faith. There is a huge need for young people to realize what God is doing in the 3rd world and to be trained in spiritual warfare, prayer, evangelism and practical serving. I believe I must challenge this generation to get beyond its selfishness, introversion and sense of having everything because this causes such a poverty of life with God and a paralyzing apathy and unbelief and doubt in the God who can move mountains and use me in the process. I want to grow in my dependence on God in tough places.

- Being overseas has clarified a desire to contribute by calling for a more holistic and balanced way of doing church and of being in a devotional relationship with God, one more honouring of the incredible complexity with which we are created in His image. I found American and British churches to be disappointing overall in the way church was presented. It reinforced a longing to move away from singing and preaching as the main diet of a church service. It also reinforced how different our kiwi context is and especially how different is the typical tertiary age young person. Any of the resources I found there have to be scrutinized and adapted. Nothing really fits. I long to produce a resource that is suitable for the NZ church.

- R.E.A.L. has given me a framework within which to reference what I am doing when I curate a service of worship. So I have made what is yet only a small glance at educational resources and how these can inform intentional ways of helping learning occur and root in the church setting. I highly recommend to ministers of word and sacrament and to all who teach in the body of Christ that we have the courage to move beyond the safety of word driven services to bring a respectful balance to our presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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GROUP RESOURCES

http://www.grouppublishing.com/site_index.asp
www.grouppublishing.com

www.unforgettables.org for simple take away interactive resources and ideas

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http://www.revmagazine.com/
http://www.youthministry.com/magazine/index.asp
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