



Evangelization of the United States: *Workshop for Mission America 2000*¹

Ted Ward

Focus of the Consultation

Six criteria for the focus of this consultation on Christian evangelization follow: Every matter introduced for presentation, discussion, and conclusion of this consultation is intended to be concerned with

1. EVANGELISM,
2. NOW UNDERWAY,
3. IN THE UNITED STATES,
4. USING DISTINCT AND DESCRIBABLE PROCEDURES,
5. NOT HELD AS A "POSSESSION" OF ONE ORGANIZATION,
6. IN WHICH THERE IS A VISION FOR BROADER OUTCOMES THROUGH COLLABORATION.

Key Assumptions Underlying the Consultation

1. Evangelism is the frontier of God's work in the world, at home and abroad. It is the rightful work of all of God's people.
2. Much more can be accomplished for the glory of God through cooperation and sharing, especially sharing what has been learned in recent experiences and sharing the tasks of harvest, than by competitive and selfish promotion of evangelistic strategies as if they were private property.
3. Christ-honoring collaboration will require that evangelical organizations, people, churches, and affiliations of churches come together to listen to each other with respect, avoiding displays of possessiveness, boastfulness, and exaggeration.

¹ In 1995, Ted Ward served as a workshop clinician for Mission America 2000: Consultation on the Evangelization of the United States.

WORKSHEET—Network Planning Session

A. **Status** of the Network for Evangelization which you are identifying or proposing:

Mark one or two:

ALREADY ACTIVE _____

READY FOR MORE PARTICIPANTS _____

STILL AN IDEA _____

Describe the nature of the network:

How many collaborating organizations NOW? _____

How many more could be added? _____

Describe the on-going or intended activities:

B. **Statement of purpose** for your Network for Evangelization:

In a minimum of words, what is this network intending to accomplish?

What does it hope to accomplish that would be less likely accomplished by organizations working alone?

C. **Procedures** which you recommend for the Network (in order that it be effective in helping its member organizations and persons):

List the most important things that the organizations will do *together* as a result of the network:

1.

2.

3.

D. What is your best estimate of a **Time line** or **Sequence** of activities for the Network? (Give approximate dates if possible.)

Every member of the Network is encouraged to sign the back of this worksheet.

Problems, Solutions, Sharing, and Networking for Evangelization.

WORKSHEET—Second Round of Discussion Groups

Please circle the topic of your group's assignment:

- A. Media-Based Evangelization
- B. Community-wide Evangelization
- C. "Affinity Evangelization" of Unique Sectors of the Adult Population
- D. Church Mobilization for Evangelization and Assimilation
- E. Evangelization of Children
- F. Evangelization of Youth
- G. College and Graduate School Evangelization
- H. Evangelization through Preaching
- I. Evangelization through Small-Group Studies
- J. Evangelization through Ministry to Special Needs
- K. Ethnic-group Evangelization
- L. Evangelization of Women
- M. Evangelization of Men
- N. Lifestyle Evangelization (Christian Reproducers)
- O. Evangelization of Unreached People Groups
- P. _____

Choose a reader who will also serve as the leader for this group. You will also need a recorder to take a page or two of notes.

Reader: We can assume that each of us has a strong interest in the matters associated with this category of evangelization. In less than 2 minutes each, we should each tell what we are now doing in regard to this topic. Our Recorder should make a list as we go around: note who is here, from what organization, and whether or not already engaged in work which relates to this topic.

Reader: Ask your group to consider these questions. Keep moving so that each of the three questions will be discussed within the time remaining before 3 pm.

(Recorder: Make notes of major agreements and disagreements on each of these questions.)

1. To what extent is this topic a significant focal point for inter-agency collaboration?
2. What might be the major values in working together?
3. What difficulties are likely to occur if we think of this topic as the focal point of a network of cooperating organizations ?

WORKSHEET—Discussion Groups Now Convening as Network Members

Each person needs to keep notes on an individual copy of this worksheet.

Assume that you are moving toward the establishing or expanding of an inter-agency network for collaboration in evangelization.

Leader: This is a short session (45 minutes), so divide the discussion time nearly equally for the two following matters:

1. What could (or should) a network for evangelization do? What does networking suggest about the best style of intergroup interaction?
2. How can we move beyond this consultation to engage in network-building that will stimulate evangelization in both our own organization and for others in the network?

Planning Next Steps

Christian ethical principles which should be respected in an inter-organizational collaboration for evangelization:

A. Matters of respect for each other across organizations: Among Christians, what Biblical principles are involved in matters of *respect*?

1. What is required of Christians who work together?
2. How should Christians look at sharing—especially sharing *initiative, credit, and blame*?
3. What Christ-honoring statement can we make about *respect*?

B. Matters of confidentiality: In general, Christians tend to value privacy. What does the Bible say about *accountability*? To what extent does *accountability* come into conflict with *confidentiality*? To what extent does our *de facto* competition for support, personnel, and funds relate to the issue of confidentiality? What sort of information should not be public?

1. How can we share information without “leaks”?
2. How can we work together without interfering?
3. What Christ-honoring statement can we make about *confidentiality*?

C. Matters of mutual benefit (for all organizations in the Network): Collaboration for mutual benefit is important to the extent that it furthers the cause of Christ in the world. We make assumptions about the importance of our own work in terms of how it relates the work of Christ. Should we seek to make new assumptions about the importance of collaboration?

1. Should we develop a higher regard for things we accomplish together? Implications?
2. Should we try to agree on goals? Implications?
3. What reasons do we have for valuing *collaboration*?