

**"The Morphing Church"**  
**mPact Conference Pastors Breakout**  
**11/16/12**

**Intro:** We are in an unusual period of time – things are shifting all around us and the church is right in the middle of this. There is more change happening in the world today than in the entire history of man, and the church is in a massive state of flux.

The way we communicate (Nepal – everyone has a cell phone, The U.N. telecom agency says there were about 6 billion subscriptions by the end of 2011 – roughly one for 86 of every 100 people. More people in the world have cell phones than can read! 82% can read.), the way we use money (scan check on smart phone – no cash), the way we fight wars, the way we start or put fire on revolutions (3 revolutions started on social media – China shut down its internet to prevent upheaval).

I mentioned this in the first talk I gave on mPact a little over a year ago. Retail is polarizing toward smaller specialty shops with unique products and higher prices and huge stores offering lower quality and lower prices. Wal-Mart and Target at one end and the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue shops and specialty stores at the other end (Abercrombie & Fitch, Urban Outfitters, Trader Joe's, etc). Target is trying to do both. Have you seen their commercials about "the Shops at Target?" One company tried to buck the trend and stake a claim on the middle – neither discount, so no more sales, nor specialty. They offered inventory like the discount stores and higher quality items at higher prices like the specialty shops (no sales) and they are getting killed, they're in trouble – JC Penney.

There will always be room for the hometown department store and there will always be room for the hometown community church. But the trends are toward the edges – bigger and smaller.

Attractional  
Missional

And models to embrace those directions are changing – more than ever.

Used to be traditional, charismatic, Pentecostal ... period

Now – ARC model, Fellowship church attractional model, seeker-targeted, seeker-sensitive, missional, emergent church, micro-church, multisite model, emerging church, Purpose driven, organic church, and on and on.

Lots of people are asking some very good questions – prophets asking, how do we fit in? Pastors, more than ever, wondering who to follow because the models are not philosophically congruent.

Liberty grads (Fallwell) in a cigar shop in Wilmington going to plant missional communities in Tidewater area.

A friend who helps mentor leaders - 35,000 House churches in Nepal (mid-1990's 236 believers), 40,000 house churches in 13 middle eastern countries, in 22 languages and multiplying.

No one know where all this is headed, where all this will turn out. So what do we do to navigate these waters?

1. Hold on to your vision. (The "what")
2. Include others in the process. (The "How") (talk to other leaders inside and outside the house)
  - A. Message – the same (communicate it more creatively)
  - B. Models – they are morphing
  - C. Methods – they WILL need to change (if you plan to grow or stay even)
3. Lean Young
  - A. Build young
  - B. Train young
  - C. Learn young (technological natives and technological immigrants)
  - D. There is a place for those of us who are older – mentors, etc. And there is always a place for the old guy who listens to the young guy!
4. Run from the religious!
5. Key Traits to reach the generation
  - A. Builder generation – hard work (if you're old, you're respected)
  - B. Boomer generation – creativity (if you're old, you're out)
  - C. Generation next – community and cool (if you're old, you're not cool)
  - D. Millennials – honesty (true), authenticity (real) (age doesn't matter)
6. Interface with society (3 key attitudes)
  - A. No seclusion – stand up and stand out
  - B. "Giving back" is a responsibility
  - C. Social justice is the Gospel in action
7. Cluster and Learn
  - A. Stay connected to like-minded people
  - B. Embrace humility (Your way IS NOT the only way)
  - C. Be willing to change
  - D. Build relationships with brothers