



**The Vine Project**  
**Tony Payne & Col Marshall**

Phase 3: Loving, Honest Evaluation

Overview Summary:



### **Evaluation Exercise 1: Getting your heart ready for evaluation**

What's this evaluation exercise all about?

How does it accomplish it?

What do you like about it?

What don't you like about it?

What would you change?

How can you use it?

### **The Eight Sins of Evaluation**

	The Particular Sin	Ranking Order of Predisposition
1	Being overly pessimistic or negative about particular ministries and people	
2	Being unrealistically optimistic or positive about particular ministries or people	
3	Scoring points or settling scores to prove that we're right and they were wrong	
4	Getting personal satisfaction from pointing out the failings or shortcomings of others	
5	Becoming defensive or resentful about any perceived criticism of ministries and activities you're involved in	
6	Wanting to avoid tension and conflict at all costs and so not being willing to express a negative or a criticism	
7	Getting bogged down in detail (discussing all the administrative	
8	Talking only in generalities and being unwilling to discuss concrete examples and specifics	

## Evaluation Exercise 2: Where are your people up to in learning Christ?

What's this evaluation exercise all about?

How does it accomplish it?

What do you like about it?

What don't you like about it?

What would you change?

How can you use it?

### Chart 1: People Progression

Stage	Description	People
Don't know	No one on the team knows them well enough to comment	
Engaged	Non-Christian people who have come into contact over the previous 12 months through a personal relationship with one of your church members	
Evangelized	non-Christian people who, in the last 12 months, have come into contact with the gospel and heard the call to repentance and faith	
Established - New	Someone who, in the last 12 months, has come to saving faith in the Lord Jesus and is being established in the Christian faith	
Established - Stagnating	Someone who has been a Christian for some time but whose Christian life doesn't appear to be going anywhere, they're showing no obvious signs of growth in understanding or godliness	
Established - Growing	Someone who has been a Christian for a while and shows signs of ongoing growth and development in godliness and understanding including a willingness to help others grow in maturity	
Equipped - Ad Hoc	Someone who shows evidence of helping others progress through the stages towards maturity but who hasn't received any specific training to do so	
Equipped - Trained	Someone who has or is receiving specific training to fulfil a ministry role to help others move toward maturity	

## Analytical Questions

- Where do people end up? Where are you strongest? Weakest? Where are the gaps?
- How many people have moved one stage to the right in the last 12 months?
- How did those people move to the right? What methods or activities helped them to do that?
- What are the significant barriers preventing people from moving to the right?
- What does stagnating look like in your context? What are the tell-tale signs of them being spiritually stuck?
- What percentage of people are there in the don't know category - why is that the case?
- Are there people who are equipped who are also established- stagnating? What issues or problems might arise here?
- Looking back over the who exercise, what are the three most important lessons you've learnt about your church?

**Evaluation Exercise 3:** How effective are your regular programmes and activities in moving people to the right?

What's this evaluation exercise all about?

How does it accomplish it?

What do you like about it?

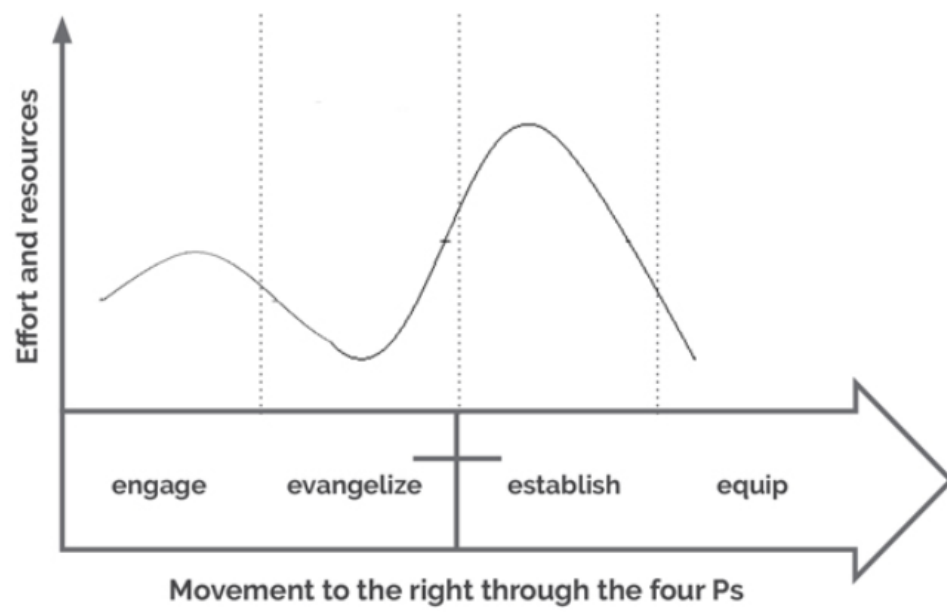
What don't you like about it?

What would you change?

How can you use it?

Ministries	Engaging	Evangelizing	Establishing - New	Establishing - Growing	Equipping	Notes
Equip						
Small Groups						
Door Knocking						

Awkward Question	Honest Evaluation
Which are your most effective ministries or programmes for moving people to the right?	
Which ministries or programmes do you think have the most potential to be effective with a bit of tweaking and refocusing?	
Which ministries are least effective and will be the hardest to improve?	
If you had to choose some ministries or activities to scale down or close down in order to free up resources for more effective ministries, which would they be?	
Which stage or category is your strongest? Where are you weakest?	
What does the graph look like for your church plant?	
What are your conclusions from this exercise?	



**Evaluation Exercise 4:** How effective are your Sunday gatherings in moving Christ learners to the right?

What's this evaluation exercise all about?

How does it accomplish it?

What do you like about it?

What don't you like about it?

What would you change?

How can you use it?

Engage/Evangelize	
Awkward Question	Honest Evaluation
Were there any examples of jargon or information or practices that would be confusing or alienating to non-Christian people who had been invited to church, but which could have been phrased or introduced in a way that made them more intelligible? Were there times when you would have wanted to lean over and explain what was meant or what was going on? Were there times when you would have felt awkward or embarrassed for them?	
Was there any welcoming or introductory speech that made non-Christian people feel at home or explained what was going on?	
Was anything said or done during the meeting that would help a non-Christian visitor know what they could do next in order to learn more about Christ?	
Did anything (testimonies, news, prayers, interviews, sermon content etc) demonstrate or communicate that your church was actively committed to engaging and evangelizing non-Christians?	
Can you think of anything that would have led visitors to feel that your church community lives in the real world of work, relationships, pain and disappointment (rather than in some kind of rosy paradise)?	

Establish - New	
Awkward Question	Honest Evaluation
If Christian people were visiting your church, was anything said or done during the meeting to make them feel welcomed and valued?	
Were there examples of rituals or traditions or practices that might be unintelligible or confusing to a new or young Christian, or to a visitor or newcomer?	
Was anything said or done during the meeting that would help someone new to Christianity know what to do next in order to become part of your community, or grow as a Christian?	

Establish - Growing	
Awkward Question	Honest Evaluation
Were there any examples of ‘transformational learning’ - of the Bible being taught openly and clearly so hearts and lives could be changed by the work of God’s Spirit?	
How much time in total was spent in prayer?	
Which aspects of the meeting gave an opportunity to people to respond to God’s word - in prayer, thanksgiving and praise?	
What time was given for people to reflect on their lives, confess sin, seek forgiveness and change their ways?	

Engage/Evangelize	
Awkward Question	Honest Evaluation
Were there any examples of jargon or information or practices that would be confusing or alienating to non-Christian people who had been invited to church, but which could have been phrased or introduced in a way that made them more intelligible? Were there times when you would have wanted to lean over and explain what was meant or what was going on? Were there times when you would have felt awkward or embarrassed for them?	
Was there any welcoming or introductory speech that made non-Christian people feel at home or explained what was going on?	
Was anything said or done during the meeting that	



would help a non-Christian visitor know what they could do next in order to learn more about Christ?	
Did anything (testimonies, news, prayers, interviews, sermon content etc) demonstrate or communicate that your church was actively committed to engaging and evangelizing non-Christians?	
Can you think of anything that would have led visitors to feel that your church community lives in the real world of work, relationships, pain and disappointment (rather than in some kind of rosy paradise)?	

Equip	
Awkward Question	Honest Evaluation
Did anything (testimonies, news, prayers, interviews etc) showcase or communicate that it is the joy and privilege of all of us to be involved in 'moving people to the right'?	
To what extent did the sermon help the congregation learn how to read the Bible for themselves (ie to what extent did the preacher show how he had drawn his message from the text of the Bible)?	
To what extent did the sermon stretch those present to think hard about biblical truth and how it applies to major issues in the church and the world?	

Overall Impression	
Awkward Question	Honest Evaluation
Would a visitor to church that day have come away with the strong impression that prayerful reading and teaching of the Bible is your main game? Why? Why not?	
Would you have been glad to have a non-Christian friend sitting next to you during that particular meeting? Why? Why not?	
Would you have been glad to have a Christian friend who was considering joining your church sitting next to you during that meeting? Why? Why not?	

### **Evaluation Exercise 5: What happened with your newcomers?**

What's this evaluation exercise all about?

How does it accomplish it?

What do you like about it?

What don't you like about it?

What would you change?

How can you use it?

What's the pathway for newcomers into the heart of church life?

Describe what you think ought to happen from the moment someone walks into church to the point at which they're being established in the faith!

#### **Analytical Questions**

	<b>Awkward Question</b>	<b>Honest Evaluation</b>
1	How effectively are new people welcomed when they first walk into your meeting?	
2	Is anything done to try to obtain their contact details for follow up?	
3	What happens to newcomers straight after the church meeting? Do they tend to hang around for refreshments? Do people talk to them? What's it like for them?	
4	Is any information conveyed to newcomers about your church? Is there a welcome pack or information leaflet?	
5	What follow up happens in the week immediately after their visit? Do they get an email, a call or a personal visit?	
6	What would a newcomer experience in the first three months following their visit? Would anyone, in particular, look out for them, or keep in touch with them? Is there a clear next step for them to learn more or to become a part of things?	

### Evaluation Exercise 6: The numbers

What's this evaluation exercise all about?

How does it accomplish it?

What do you like about it?

What don't you like about it?

What would you change?

How can you use it?

WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	
Awkward Questions	Numerical Answer
What are the trends?	
What progress can you give thanks for?	
If there is a decline in numbers, what factors do you think have contributed to this?	
Are some of your meetings/services doing significantly better than others? If so, what are your reflections on what that might be?	
If the trends of the past five years continue, what will your numbers be in five years' time?	

CONVERSIONS	
Awkward Questions	Numerical Answer
How many individuals can you name who have become Christians in the past 12 months?	
Is this more or less during the previous 12 months?	
What are your reflections about this?	
Where and when is 'engaging' and 'evangelizing' taking place in your church life? What has been effective or is worth building on? What has been ineffective and why?	

EQUIPPING	
Awkward Questions	Numerical Answer
How many people undertook some form of intentional development or training in the past 12 months that prepared them to move other people to the right, in the following areas?	
Sharing the gospel with a non-Christian person	
Reading the Bible one to one with someone else	
Following up with a new Christian to help establish them in the faith	
Leading family Bible and prayer times	
Leading in children's or youth ministry	
Leading a small group Bible study	
other	

What are your reflections on this?

## Evaluation Exercise 7: Roadblocks

What's this evaluation exercise all about?

How does it accomplish it?

What do you like about it?

What don't you like about it?

What would you change?

How can you use it?

### The 14 Common Obstacles to Change

	Obstacle Description	Notes
1	Church members have a variety of ways of thinking about church and ministry and they're not all on the same page. We're not united around a common set of convictions	
2	Church members are spectators or passengers and not active participants	
3	Church members see their role as serving on a roster in a logistical capacity rather than moving people towards maturity through the word and prayer	
4	Many of our church members don't have active friendships or engagement with non-Christian people	
5	Our church members lack the loving sacrificial spirit that's needed to get alongside people and encourage them towards Christ, we're all a bit consumed with our own problems and challenges	
6	Our church members are anxious and broken and barely able to survive in life and faith day by day. How can we ask them to think about helping others learn Christ when they are barely hanging on themselves?	
7	Our church members are too busy in life. There's a feeling that getting everyone involved in ministry is something that might work for the youth or young adults or empty-nesters, but not for busy people like us.	
8	Because of our particular demographic, many of our people do not see themselves as initiators or leaders or contributors in any sphere, let alone as people who could help others know Christ.	
9	Many of our members feel inadequate in knowledge and skills to minister to other people	
10	Our church members have no expectation that God will use	

	them in another person's life to see that person grow in Christ	
11	Our local communities are very complex and seem out of reach. There is a huge social and cultural gap between our church members and our neighbours. We're not sure where to start in connecting and engaging with our community.	
12	There are some very strong personalities in our church who are invested in things remaining the way that they are. They are likely to oppose any efforts to change things.	
13	Our keen members are already busy serving in various ministries and rotas for various tasks. It's hard to see how they could find time for anything else.	
14	Our church program is very full. It's hard to see any space (in time or in people's energy) for anything new or different.	

### **The Seven Cs Church Description - with an Eighth!**

Title	Description	Notes
Confused	We have no clear sense of who we are and what we're trying to do	
Conflicted	There are competing ministry philosophies and priorities competing for prominence	
Comfortable	We know who we are, we like it that way and we're in no mood to change!	
Cluttered	There are lots of committed people contributing to lots of ministries but there's very little progress in terms of growing maturity	
Cynical	We're a bit jaded and sick of new programs and fads	
Consumer	Our church culture is built around providing an enjoyable spiritual experience for those who come	
Caring	There's a warm sense of looking out for and looking after one another but no one's really making any progress in their Christian maturity	
Competent	We're actually doing alright, it's not going as fast as we want but we're going in the right direction!	

## Activity

Awkward Question	Honest Evaluation
Which three areas or ministries within your church have the most potential? In other words, by investing in them you would change the whole church culture	
If you had to scale down or close three activities, ministries or programs, which would they be?	
What are the top three obstacles or potential roadblocks that are likely to stand in your way?	
What are the top three things that you'd like to improve about your Sunday meetings?	