



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

**Phase 4: Innovate and Implement**

Summary: to present a picture of a genuine transformative learning community



Phase 1: clarification of core values

Phase 2: application of convictions to personal culture

Phase 3: evaluation of current ministry culture

Phase 4: implementation of proposed changes

Focus Area 1: Make Sundays a Flagship

Focus Area 2: Design Pathways That Move to the Right

Focus Area 3: Plan for Growth

Focus Area 4: Create a New Language

**Focus Area 2: Design Pathways That Move to the Right**

Pathway Stage 1: Engaging

Pathway Stage 2: Evangelizing

Pathway Stage 3: Establishing

Pathway Stage 4: Equipping

## Four Key Caveats

1. Pathway is a convenient word but it's not set in stone
2. Avoid the extremes of scorched-earth reinvention and fiddling while Rome burns neglect
3. There's obvious overlap between the categories or stages
4. Vine ministry trumps trellis structures only ever dismantle one of them!

## Key Questions

1. What existing ministry structures or groups can we improve or what new things do we need to launch in order to more effectively conduct 4P ministry in this area?<sup>1</sup>
2. What's the next step for people who have been ministered to in each phase? (How does someone move from being engaged to being evangelized? Or from being evangelized to being followed up and established in the faith?)
3. Who is going to lead these new or improved ministries or groups? What sort of equipping or training is going to be needed? You're going to need leaders to make the proposed changes.
4. What is actually being taught at each stage in our different groups and ministries? As important as the structures and leadership are, content is just as vital.
5. Is it a single pathway we're talking about or multiple pathways?

### Pathway Stage 1: **Engaging**

'As we've talked over many years with pastors around the world about ministry and evangelism, one theme has been distressingly common: most evangelical churches in the Western world have little or no engagement with their local communities'. P 245

## Three Contexts for Engagement

1. Personal relationships: church members at the forefront of community engagement
2. Teams and groups: existing small groups or purposeful small groups
3. Specialized ministries or groups or events: Mums & Toddlers, TEFL, Holiday Bible Club, Sports' Teams etc

## Be wary of

1. Resource heavy
2. Thinking that it replaces the work of people contact
3. Thinking that this outreach is evangelism
4. Making sure there's an obvious 'next step'
5. Introducing intentionality in your set up to actually engage
6. Shaping your ministry to whom the Lord has given you

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<sup>1</sup> Proclamation, Prayer, People, Perseverance

## Discussion

What do you know about your local community?

Who lives there?

What is the demographic profile for age, religious affiliation, ethnicity, socio-economic background and so on?

Are there some obvious contact points between the nature of your surrounding community and your congregation - in the kind of people you are or in the kinds of needs you could easily meet?

What kind of engaging are you currently doing?

What's working well and could be built upon?

What new ideas come to mind?

Without setting anything in stone, what do you think could be the three most important moves you could make as a congregation to engage more with the people around you?

## Pathway Stage 2: **Evangelizing**

### Contexts for Evangelizing

- a. Personally and in small groups: people need to grasp & embrace the convictions, become equipped and trained to know the gospel clearly and then receive encouragement and help to keep on doing this
- b. Evangelistic programs or courses

### Six Advantages of Evangelistic Courses

1. They're enjoyable: the relaxed group context and interaction is conducive to participation
  2. They're invitational: they're the kind of thing that Christians can bring their friends to
  3. They're flexible: they're the kind of thing that can be run in a number of locations in a number of ways
  4. They're repeatable: they're the kind of thing that can happen regularly and so they keep evangelism in the church news cycle
  5. They're available: they're the kind of thing that's always there and so they provide the obvious next step
  6. They're educational: they're the kind of thing that inevitably has a training element to it
- c. Church: see Sunday as a Flagship

- d. One-off events or missions

### Three Benefits of One-Off Events & Missions

1. They can serve as a focus and rallying point for evangelism
2. They can gather a crowd to funnel into evangelism courses
3. They can reveal where we are as a congregation

### Discussion

Look back over your evaluation exercises from Phase 3. What do they tell you about how evangelism is happening (or not) in and through your church?

What is working well or has the potential to be built upon? What new ideas come to mind?

Without setting anything in stone, what do you think are the three most important moves you could make as a congregation to see the gospel shared more with non-Christians?

### Pathway Stage 3: **Establishing**

'By establishing we mean that phase in the growth of a learner after they have repented and turned to Christ, where they increase in knowledge and understanding, send down deep roots of faith, and learn to grow in godliness of life as they 'keep all his commandments'. It's the maturation process of the Christian life, and thus it is lifelong. It includes following up a new believer, helping a solid Christian grow further in understanding or deal with a particular sin, encouraging and strengthening believers as they deal with hardship and suffering, and so on' p264

This is where the bulk of the existing effort goes!

### Two Significant Issues Churches Face

1. There's a lack of actual fruitfulness or observable results in many of these ministries - no one is really being moved to the right
2. A whole heaps of effort into manning and maintaining these ministries that very little happens in other areas

'A lack of engagement and evangelism, which is usually paired with a lack of people wanting to be equipped and supported to do this, is usually symptomatic of a spiritually immature, underdeveloped congregation', p265

### Three Aspects of Establishing Ministries

- a. Establishing new believers: They're converted but what happens next? How are they followed up? Crucial time and vulnerable post new birth.

- b. Establishing newcomers in church: Where do we direct newcomers once they arrive at church? What's the newcomers course? Is there a Get To Know Course?<sup>2</sup>
- c. Establishing growing believers: One to One, Small Groups, Larger Groups (seminars, conferences, teaching nights on eoff courses etc)

Discussion p 272

What aspects of establishing do you think you're doing well at?

What could you build on or improve?

Talk about your small groups (if you have them)

What are the issues?

What could you do to improve them as effective learning communities?

Which new groups could you start?

How could this central structure in your church be used better to equip disciples who make disciples?

See Appendix iii Rethinking Small Groups

Talk about your adult Sunday School (if you have one).

How effectively is it teaching sound doctrine?

What could you do to improve it?

Which new classes might you need to start?

How could this structure in your church be used to equip disciples who make disciples?

### Pathway Stage 4: **Equipping**

'...nearly everything that you might want to initiate or improve at every step of the process requires people who are motivated and available and equipped to be involved '

Three Roadblocks to Changing Church Culture

1. Unwillingness to change
2. Difficulty of raising up and developing lay leaders
3. Busyness of church members

Leaders and co-workers don't grow on trees, but they do grow'

The equipping stage is perhaps the most important in designing pathways to move people to the right.

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<sup>2</sup> Get To Know: The Church, The Pastor, What We Stand For, What We Do, Why We're Here etc

## TRAINING IN THE ENGINE OF GROWTH

- a. Level 1: the penny dropping

We need to get people to see and embrace this: 'I am a disciple making disciple of Jesus Christ'

- b. Level 2: learning some basic skills

### Seven Necessary Basic Skills of Congregational Members

1. Able to read and understand the Bible for themselves
2. Able to explain the gospel to others
3. Able to answer common questions about Christianity
4. Able to read the Bible with someone else
5. Able to follow up a new or young Christian personally
6. Able to encourage and minister to others on a Sunday
7. Able to minister to their spouse and children

- c. Level 3: learning some specialist skills

- 1. How to Lead a Small Group**
2. How to Lead in Children's Ministry
3. How to Lead and Minister in Youth GRoups
4. How to Give Bible Talks or Sermons

Prioritise small group training since these have enormous potential to move people to the right.

- d. Getting started with equipping

Level 1 leads to Level 2, leads to Level 3. It's not rocket science!

Training precedes growth. So get equipping.

### How to Get Equipping

1. Recruit a team and train them to become trainers of others
2. Go deep with a few over the course of a year
3. Embed the teaching in the structures by giving them opportunities to lead in level1 & 2 equipping
4. Parachute in an intensive teacher-trainer from time to time to provide intensive training to supplement what groups are getting already from their leader
5. Have a two year programme in mind to take 10 people, spend a third of the year training in level 1,2 & 3 with the aim that six will be ready to equip others by the end of the year. Provide mentoring support in year 2.
6. Provide supplementary teaching material for all the groups eg a Lent Course, Autumn Bible School

7. Provide intensive training for emerging leaders from eh groupseg Gospel Ministry Training like Leadership Project
  8. Continue to meet regularly with leaders, at least quarterly to instruct, encourage and mentor
  9. Get the best to step away and to become leaders of leaders
- e. Equipping leads to Exporting

## Discussion

What equipping are you currently doing at the three levels mentioned?

Do your church members feel that they have a sort of ministry career path in your church, to learn and grow in ministry leadership? Or do they get stuck in the same roels?

For level 3 equipping (specialist skills)

For your church is the leadership bar too high or too low?

Do your leaders embody the vision and culture you are creating?

Is leadership in your church seen as a burden or as a motivating challenge?

What will be the main obstacles in your church for training new leaders effectively? How will you overcome these?

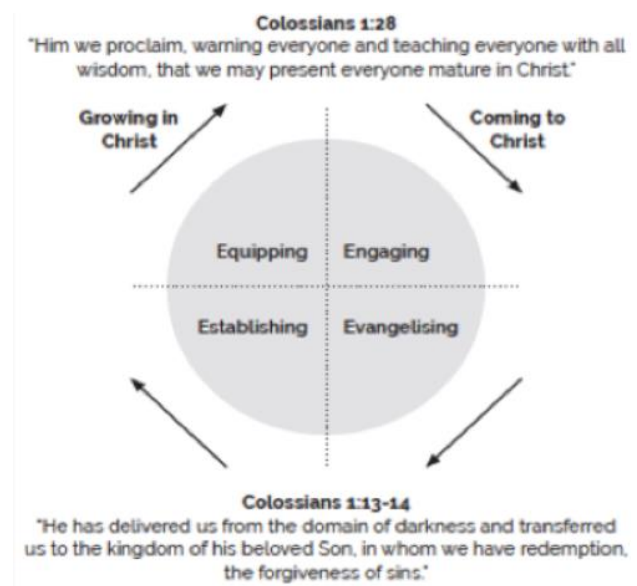
Identify by name your current level 3 leaders

Identify by name your potential level 3 leaders

Evaluate the effectiveness of your current leadership training processes. What leadership training programs need to be created? Who will form and lead these?

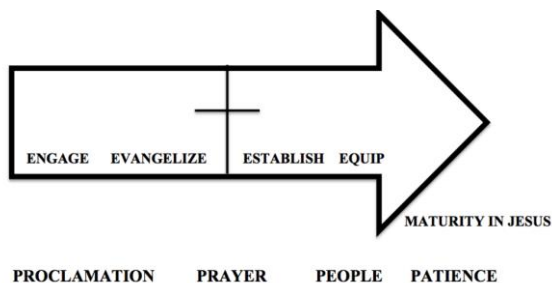
How will you embed a coaching culture in your leadership development? What will be the benefits?

If you had to choose just three important initiatives or improvements to your equipping, what would they be?





<https://www.leadershipresources.org/tag/the-trellis-and-the-vine/>



	Engage	Evangelize	Establish	Equip
	Personal relationship Teams & Groups Specialized Ministries			
What are you doing in the following area?				
What could you do in the following area?				