

# Church Leadership in Rural America - March 2014

## Leadership into Uncharted Territory

God promises uncharted territory throughout the Bible.

GEN. 5-6, Noah built a boat for the great flood. He was 500 when his children began to be born and they were married when the flood came, in Noah's 600th year. Still a long time of uncharted territory to deal with.

GEN. 12, Abram was instructed to leave his family and his land to go to a land God would show him.

GEN. 37-47, Joseph spent from age 17 to age 30 wandering and likely wondering concerning the uncharted territory he was in. Sometime into the seven years of famine his dreams began to come to pass.

EXO. 2 & ACTS 7, Moses spends 40 years in uncharted territory.

DAN. 1, 3, 6, Daniel was tested by the king's food, the fiery furnace, and the lions.

JON. 1-2, Jonah and the fish adventure.

MATT. 14, feeding the 5000 and Peter walking on the water.

ACTS 8 & 9, Paul finds his uncharted territory by following closely in the "charted territory" he knew.

**Jer 33:3**, " 'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.' "

**Isa 43:19**, "Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness *And* rivers in the desert."

### NAVIGATION PRINCIPALS OF UNCHARTED TERRITORY - NUM. 13

#### FIND THE LEADERS - NUM. 13:1-3

In every case of navigation into uncharted territory is the idea that leaders will be a part of the process. Moses, Caleb, and Joshua were the ones who were evidently trusting God. 10 of the 12 lacked the vision to follow the path into the Promised land.

Leaders help in the transition from small to large.

Robin Dunbar, anthropological rule of 150.

Destination disease.

Dream reality: why do we think it will come to pass.

Leaders help in the transition of ministry pathways.

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## Leadership into UnChartered Territory

Same results through same ways. Uncharted by trying and failing before.  
Same results through new ways. Uncharted by being successful but stopping.  
New results through same ways. New leadership brings new life.  
New results through new ways. New direction with new tools.

Leaders help in measuring ministry milestones.

Input - numbers and dollars into the church.

Output - numbers of salvation, baptisms, missions, witnessing...

Impact - positive difference from influence.

### SEE THE TERRITORY - NUM. 13:17-25

See the people equation - who is there?

See the culture equation - why are they there?

See the fruit equation - what is there?

### SEE THE VISION AS RESULTS - NUM. 13:26-33

The land truly flows.

We are able.

Expect opposition.

Expect the bad report. These are facts that are less true than God's Word to us.

Expect improper perspective. This land "devours" its inhabitants and "grasshoppers" in our own sight.

### NAVIGATION PRINCIPLES OF UNCHARTED TERRITORY

Moving into uncharted territory always provides for opportunities for a ministry calibration.

**The power of unlearning** - unlearning occurs when a new idea, concept, or method appears to contradict what you've already accepted or learned. We cannot solve the difficulties we've created without the possibility of considering the need for unlearning.

- ☞ You may need to unlearn your skill at avoiding or ignoring challenges. Learning is an active engagement experience.

<p><b>Phil. 4:9</b>, "The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you."</p>
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- ☞ You may need to unlearn your skill at self-imposed deception.

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**James 1:22**, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

- ☞ You may have to question "who" you learned from.

**2 Tim. 3:14**, "But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*,"

**The power of communication standards** - the standard may need to be reset! The status quo of your church may not embrace the uncharted territory discussion. Fear and concern may very well stop some from considering what is possible.

**Remember the status quo is largely an illusion - yesterday's results held at the expense of today's reality and tomorrow's revelation.**

- ☞ If the standard of communication is talking about what God has already done while longing for yesterday, we will be feeding ourselves the seeds of stagnation directly into our soul.
- ☞ If the standard of communication is talking about what God has not done or what we are waiting on God to do, we will feed ourselves the seeds of offense directly into our soul.
- ☞ If the standard of communication is talking about what He is doing and promising we will feed ourselves the seeds of creative miracles directly into our soul.

**Spiritual decline comes when memories of the past are communicated and embraced more than the vision for the future.**

**1 Cor. 2:9-10**, "But as it is written: "EYE HAS NOT SEEN, NOR EAR HEARD, NOR HAVE ENTERED INTO THE HEART OF MAN THE THINGS WHICH GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." **10** But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God."

**The power of leadership** - leadership is the capacity to guide complex people groups through uncharted territory where exciting or unusual activities of uncertain outcomes live.

- ☞ Insist on the careful, prayerful and organized process of face to face leadership.
- ☞ Insist on the discussion to honestly assess key results compared to expectations or assumptions.

**John 10:4**, "And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice."