



Kia ora pastor / key church leader

We're near the end of our 'topical outreach' series.

This month we look at an often overlooked building block - this being the need of a minimum standard for the outreaching focus and equipping of local churches. (Next month we look at youth outreach - and then the series is completed.)

> To note it, the full series of these topical updates can be read [here](#).

> This month's topic ('The need for a minimum standard') is below - *but we have four other quick updates first.*

Four quick updates

1. Hope Project Easter online media campaign - Reporting

The online media campaign is run to keep Christian messages in the public view during the most important seasons of the Christian faith. This Easter's campaign focused on these 3 areas:

1. **TO MAKE EASTER VISIBLE** ...Through images and a poem to highlight the cross as the central symbol of Easter, to help people be aware of the Christian message.

2. **TO PROMPT ACTION** ...Encouraging attendance at a local church during Easter
3. **TO RETHINK THE STORY** ...Inviting people to question the secular narrative through prompting the thought that there might a God who has revealed himself to us through history.



It was a very successful campaign:

- **1.9 million** different people reached via Meta alone (FaceBook/Instagram)
- **7.4 million** views of our content
- **22,000 interactions** on these posts

In addition a separate Google/YouTube campaign was run - *with data still pending*.

Full reporting will be out approx. August

2. For interest - new social media resources re Christianity in our history

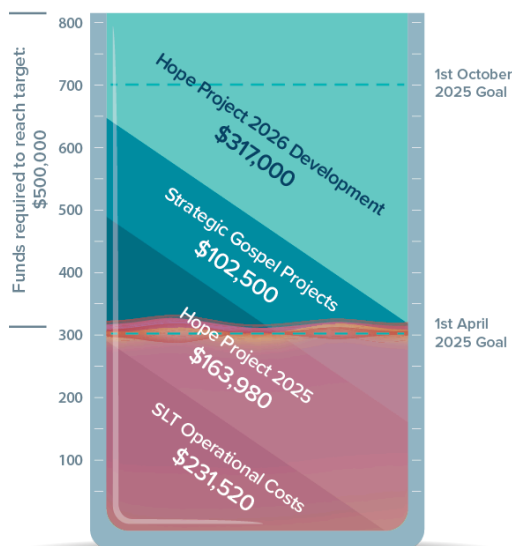
- While Dave's face is intentionally invisible in Hope Project's Easter and Christmas media - for the other months we're now repurposing a wide range of history and apologetics content he's created.
- The purpose is to get CHRISTIAN content in front of NON-CHURCH audiences.
- Here are some online media samples (these collections will continue to grow week by week)
 - ...of ['NZ values history' shorts.](#)
 - ...of ['Why Christians believe' shorts.](#)

3. Hope Project 2026 - 2033: in the planning

- A fresh plan is taking shape for Easter 2026 and the next decade - booklets included.
- However, the primary goal continues to be aiding an increase in the outreaching focus and temperature of NZ churches, small groups, youth groups and pastors' groups.
- Toward this end we will be in touch with city/town pastors' groups in the second half of this year.



2025 Fundraising Budget Summary \$815,000



4. Funding update:

With some strategic changes made by the board to how we manage finances through these larger media events, managing risks, a new funding barometer is attached.

- New management protocols now include an amount to be raised by about October for expenses incurred early in the new year.
- The gospel needs communicating. Ongoing funding for this diverse gospel work is invited.

AllTogether.co.nz/donate

Topical update: The need for a minimum standard

We now come to what is almost a concluding challenge to our topical series (with 'youth outreach' being the only topic remaining in the series).

If we don't establish a minimum standard for our outreach equipping and focus as churches, the natural tendency will be toward not having a standard. This has significant present implications.

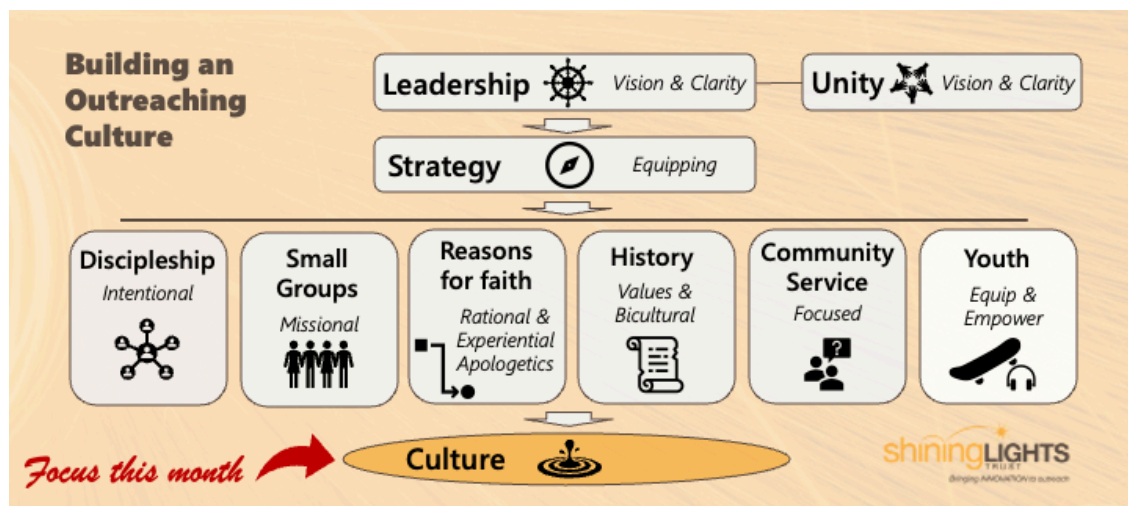
A strange note: A minimum standard doesn't necessarily mean good

What if the standard we set for our churches is too low?

For a comparison, what might a 'good' or 'great' standard look like?

- In leadership, we get what we promote.
- The point of this update is that most churches and movements don't have even a minimum standard defined. What follows is a lack of action.
- This explains why the 'gospel temperature' of so many churches, ministries and church movements is so low.

>> ***What if we were to all now define at least a minimum standard - even if not yet a good or great standard?***



A possible minimum standard for local church leaders

What if we were to agree together that the mission of the Church itself should get at least a month of focus by way of outreach motivation and equipping through every pulpit, small group and youth group - every year?

- This is one of the simplest possible standards.
- What might happen if this were done?

Until tried, many would likely not actually guess correctly.

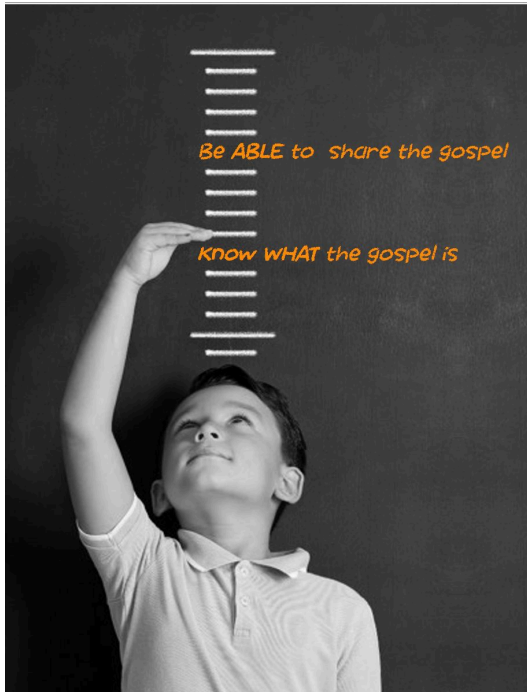
What might this starting 'minimum standard' catalyse?

This has been done. If a first year of focus served to equip members on some basic gospel and conversational skills - *and if sensible educational approaches were used in this, therefore achieving a measurable learning outcome* - a second year would logically revise that content quite quickly - *resulting in the discovery that considerably more content is needed!*

- So, what could be taught in the second year - or third, or fourth?

What cannot be understood until tried is just how much can be learnt *if discipleship is intentional, and done with awareness of learning theory.*

If applied, this can literally TRANSFORM the outreaching focus of a church.



A possible minimum measure for members

What about the very simple idea that every church member (maybe considering age 8 up) know **WHAT the gospel is** and **be ABLE to share it** within one minute or less?

I personally think we could do better than this, but this is already a higher standard than most churches have.

...and what if our church movements / denominations were also to consider this - bringing leadership to our 'corporate' culture?

If a first standard could be accepted... ...what might we teach next?

A curriculum quickly falls into place.

If the above minimum standard were applied, many would quickly discover that the capacity of their members for learning across the 5 year period was far greater than they realised. Intentionality is the key!

As a framework

- a. Gospel skills
- b. Conversational skills

c. Storytelling (evidence) skills

For a wider picture

d. Teamwork (and associated invitational) skills

Data: Our own surveys of NZ churches have evidenced that intentionality in outreach equipping isn't yet the culture or practice of most NZ local churches. There isn't yet a shared view of a minimum standard.

STORY: A NZ church that set a minimum standard

A local pastor took on the challenge of ensuring every member, age 8 and above, could explain their faith in simply language. A minimum standard was needed.

So, one Sunday (this is about 10 years ago now) he demonstrated how to share the gospel message in 90 seconds with a drawing. (To note it, even without whiteboard or paper, if the drawing is remembered it prompts a person who is speaking with what to say - like [here](#)).

On that very day he got someone aged about 80 – and someone aged about 8 – to come onto the stage to demonstrate. This showed that anyone could do this.

Knowing there would be no memory or sustained application without **REPETITION** he then prompted the same demonstration the following week – and a few weeks later – and a few weeks and months later... **ACHIEVING A MEASURABLE RESULT!**

The wider results that followed:

- There was now a context for wider learning.
- This church went on to become more outreach focused at every level.
- Their community engagement efforts increased.
- The engagement of the community with these efforts increased.
- The number of stories of conversations increased. Then the number of new believers increased.

The change wasn't dramatic, but the change was clear and evident – and it started with an acceptance that a minimum standard was needed.

IDEA #1:

What if every church, denomination and local pastors' group adopted this most basic of minimum standards?

(Freely choose a higher standard if you desire.)

RESOURCES:

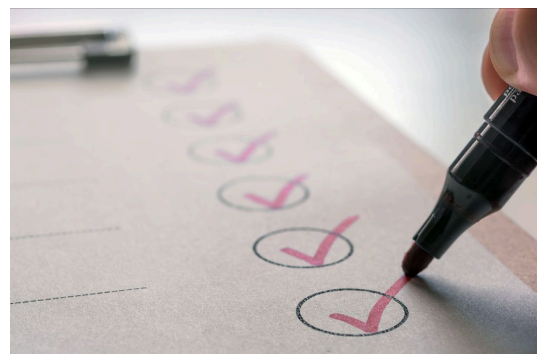
- Our February topical update was titled **‘Reviving the Art of Gospel Preaching’**. It clarified WHAT the gospel is in very simple terms - [HERE](#) (This brings motivation and vision.)
- The **Because We Care** 5min outreach equipping video series has two relevant videos. These suit play during Sunday church services like during offering time – or in small groups using the provided discussion guides.
 - **Series 1 – Video 2 – “This is the gospel”** (Four points – explain them each in a sentence, and you have the message summarised in 30 seconds).
 - **Series 1 – Video 4 – “How to share the gospel”** – with a simple drawing that can serve as a memory tool, enabling a simple message in about 90 seconds. Find these videos [HERE](#)
- A wider-looking 'cultural building' approach for local church leaders, including sermon / powerpoint / small group and other resources, see AllTogether.co.nz/pastors (The five habits outlined next draw from this resource).



FUTURE-LOOKING HABITS FOR THE INTENTIONALLY-OUTREACHING LEADER:

If the idea of an 'outreaching culture' is of interest - which goes beyond the above minimum standard - here are some longer-term suggestions for visionary leaders.

Of note, everything suggested here sits within the scope of what a church leader does on a weekly and monthly basis. The key here is in bringing greater INTENTIONALITY to what we do - and through HABITS, knowing habits invariably out-perform programme-based models.



LEADERSHIP HABIT #1 – EVERYONE HAS THEIR “5”

Five people are identified by each believer who they desire to encourage toward faith. Concurrently their interests and possible hindrances are listed.

- Interests are listed to note possible connection points for individual and small group/youth group efforts to connect with them.
- Possible hindrances to faith are listed for both prayer and conversation.

This isn't a difficult habit. (How many churches consistently do this?)

LEADERSHIP HABIT #2 - PULPIT:

[Goal] With a desired minimum standard embraced that (a) everyone can share the gospel concisely and also (b) communicate evidences through stories and testimony, while (c) then asking some good questions to open a conversation

[In the programme] ...the habit of **ONE MONTH** of the *pulpit* being given to an outreach equipping annually is embraced. We are choosing to ensure our members are equipped for their mission - as our habit.

LEADERSHIP HABIT #3 - SMALL GROUP:

All church small groups and youth group are then concurrently asked to give that one month to discussing our sermons / to an outreach equipping focus – intentionally deepening the learning, while also engaging in ‘role play’ activities so things taught can be practiced. This is done knowing people remember about 10% of what they hear, 40% of what they say and 60 – 70% of what they do.

LEADERSHIP HABIT #4 - TESTIMONY:

While this habit is often overlooked because it seems too simple, it is vital to SUSTAINED RESULTS. The habit is of a *testimony* being found and released every single month through both weekend Sunday services and in each small groups / youth group is highly powerful. The desired testimony is one either of someone engaging a witnessing type of conversation – or of someone telling of their own coming to faith (and of the person who witnessed to them).

A wise leader then leverages the ‘good vibe’ created to reiterate points or skills taught earlier in the year. The purpose is therefore two-fold. (1a) The outreach focus is encouraged, (1b) as also prayer for each person's ‘five’, while (2) lessons earlier taught about conversational and other outreach skills are SHIFTED INTO LONG-TERM MEMORY AND APPLICATION through their intentional repetition.

LEADERSHIP HABIT #5 - MODELLING:

The local church leader then models good gospel preaching – with simple explanations, stories and evidences at least TWICE each year through the pulpit. (The good leader also

shares some of their own witnessing stories / testimonies, so their own example can speak - even if likewise struggling in witness at times, as many church members are also.)

The same gospel focus/preaching is likewise expected of the leaders of each small group and the youth group – communicating the gospel with testimony in support at least twice a year at their own events. With gentleness, wisdom and creativity this can be widely achieved.

THE BIG PICTURE: When we don't have a minimum standard we inadvertently tell our church's leaders or church members that these things aren't actually that important.

- In leadership, we always get what we promote.
- In all things, we always have time to promote what we value.

Were we to set a minimum standard, it would change things!



A BRIEF NOTE ON EDUCATIONAL THEORY - RELEVANT TO PULPITS

A measurable equipping standard (with basic gospel, conversational and storytelling skills included) is **UNLIKELY to ever** be achieved through a pulpit or seminars alone. It needs leadership - which requires intentionality and habits!

- Repetition is necessary for **LEARNING** to take place.
- *Intentionality in this single thing is the primary learning point of this update.*
- **HABITS** create culture *because habitual repetition and encouragement alone catalyse actual learning and sustained application.*

APPLICATION

People need Jesus! What could you now do?

>> For our full resource for pastors see 'Outreaching Culture' videos at AllTogether.co.nz/pastors

May God make us effective in making our MEMBERS effective!
