

How the Church Can Bridge These Critical Gaps

Since I have been serving God in leadership since 1980, I have observed serious gaps in the church in at least seven major areas. If not corrected, these seven areas will greatly limit the ability of the church to fulfill the Great Commission, which is preparing us for the bodily return of Jesus.

To deal with this issue, the national organization I lead () has an annual Bridge Summit conference that brings significant leaders together from every facet of society to help bridge these gaps.

The following are these gaps and what must be done to correct them:

1. The gap between church place and work place leaders

Since only about 2 percent of the typical membership of a church will ever go into full-time church ministry, discipleship should be focused more on bringing the gospel to the workplace than preparing people for the church place. Unfortunately, we have trained the typical Christian to bring their friends to church to be saved instead of equipping them to make disciples outside of the four walls of the church.

Christ followers have to stop depending on a Sunday service in a building, so they can take the whole gospel to the whole world. Furthermore, workplace believers need to view themselves as ministers of the gospel in the same way that church place leaders are viewed as ministers. The primary purpose for the church place should be to equip the saints for the workplace—unless this shifts, the church will have more influence on Sunday than on Monday, and our society will continue to decline.

The issues raised in this point is the primary reason why our organization (The United States Coalition of Apostolic Leaders) has a large percentage of workplace leaders serving on our national council with many of them serving as presenters in our annual Bridge Summit (which takes place this coming June 11-13, go to for more info).

2. The gap between younger and older leaders

Without getting into all the details of this point—there is a huge gap between Baby Boomers and Millennials and Generation Z. They speak the same language but have different connotations attached to the words they utilize to communicate.

Much dialogue and new partnerships are necessary between these three groups if the baton is going to be successfully passed to the emerging leaders of the church. It would be a shame if the younger generation goes without gleaning from the wisdom and life experience of older leaders and an equal shame if older leaders refuse to learn from younger leaders and adapt to a multi-generational approach to ministry. This is why our coalition () formed the Futures Alliance () and highlights amazing Millennial leaders as presenters in our Bridge Summit (this coming June 11-13).

3. The gap between different ethnic leaders

Sunday morning is still perhaps the most segregated two hours of the week due to the fact that there are still huge ethnic gaps separating His Body. This gap may have even worsened during the past two administrations of the USA as ethnic relations started declining even further starting with the election of President Obama down to the present administration of President Trump. One of the goals the leaders of the United States Coalition of Apostolic Leaders have is to bridge the gap between ethnic leaders, which is why our events are ethnically diverse and replete with robust fellowship to

engender relationship building.

4. The gap between the word and the Spirit

Oftentimes I have been in gatherings that have either been hypercharismatic with virtually no theological substance—or been in theologically centered events with no room for the Holy Spirit to move.

Jesus told us to worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth (John 4:23,24) and told the Pharisees that they were in error because they knew not the Scriptures nor the power of God (Matt. 22:29). If the church is going to be effective in reaching the world, we have to mimic the church of Acts that had a great handle on the Scriptures (as we can see from examining all the sermons of this book) as well as moving in the demonstration of the power of Jesus to convince unbelievers of the reality of Jesus's resurrection.

In our annual Bridge Summit () we have rich theological content in our teaching along with giving the Holy Spirit the opportunity to move through prayer and prophetic ministry. This is another reason why this gathering is so unique!

5. The gap between male and female leadership

The conservative evangelical church has often overlooked the important role women have in extending the influence of the kingdom of God. As we can see in both testaments of the Bible, women have played a significant role in leadership and in influencing not only their families but the nation of Israel and the church. (The biblical examples are too numerous to cite in this brief article.)

Unless the broader body of Christ recognizes the role of women in leadership, we will continue to underutilize the majority of Christ-followers in our churches—thus, greatly limiting our capacity to spread the gospel and extend His kingdom influence. In our Bridge Summit, we highlight several

extraordinary women as presenters so we can contribute to closing this huge gap in the church.

6. The gap between revival and reformation

I have observed that often those who are proponents of prayer and fasting for revival don't associate with Christian activist and reformers who deal with politics, policy, and cultural issues and vice versa. However, looking through both testaments of the Bible illustrates the fact that we need people involved in both prayer and policy. (See, the book of Esther, Nehemiah, Ezra and Daniel as well as the Book of Acts, where we see high-level leaders like Cornelius, Sergius Paulus, Manaen and others coming to Christ and helping to spread the gospel.)

Our national organization is comprised of leaders focused on prayer and revival along with those focused on reformation and policy. Both these components of the church will be represented as presenters in our Bridge Summit this coming June 11-13.

7. The gap between serving God with the heart and the mind

The Lord Jesus told His followers to love God with all their heart, mind, and soul (Matt. 22:37-40) which is the first and foremost commandment of the law. In the charismatic and evangelical church of America the past few generations—we often by pass the mind and merely connect with the emotions of Christians. Consequently, there has been a dualism regarding the application of the Bible to human life in that the church has only focused on spiritual things and disregarded the other aspects of the created order regarding politics, economics, education, and all the sciences.

When Jesus said that He is the truth (John 14:6), He was saying that in Him is all truth—not just bible truth or spiritual truth. Truly, in Him all things of the universe hold together (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3), all things and not just

spiritual things. Until Christ followers embrace the fact that the word of God contains a biblical world and life view applicable to all of life on the earth, our effectiveness in attracting and equipping the next generation of world changers will not be realized. As a consequence—instead of being on the leading edge that helps formulate cultural values—the church will merely respond to culture and try to attract people by being relevant, often resulting in acquiescing and accommodating to culture instead of transforming it with the truth of the gospel.

In closing, at the Bridge Summit, significant leaders from various sectors of society grapple with all of the seven issues articulated by the seven points above. The result is a symphonic experience in which there are more than 50 voices with one conversation throughout the three-day experience. Truly, it is more of an experience than a mere event!

For more information and or to register for the Bridge Summit (June 11-13) go to .