



CNBC Report for 2015 Annual Convention

Church Strengthening/New DiscipleMakers

Team Leader • Paul Johnson

In January/15 Gerry reshuffled CBNC team leader assignments. In addition to the New DiscipleMaker team leader position, he assigned the role of Church Strengthening (CS) team leader to me, a position our convention has not been able to fill for some years. It's important for CNBC churches to know that CS is a priority of the convention.

The CS team addresses a broad area of ministry pertaining to both established churches and church plants. The ministries would include SS/small groups, age-group ministries (children's club, youth group, men's and women's ministries), discipling, leadership development, preaching, worship, pastoral search and church conflict. This is not a definitive list – there would be more. Visitation, ESL...

The two priorities in CS are small groups and DiscipleMaking. Both of them are critical to the growth and health of our churches. Both require constant learning and motivation in order to work well. It's easy to get discouraged in small group ministry and in life-on-life DiscipleMaking. I've begun to research small groups. I led one seminar in Edmonton on the topic, and send a weekly email to various churches and individuals on small group dynamics.

Gerry also gave me the overview of E-quip, our conventions online training website. E-quip has recently been redesigned and made more user-friendly. There are now more than 1500 presentations available to our churches and CNBC constituency, organized in courses, channels and programs.

Gerry asked that I use the CNBC e-blast communication network to promote topics that will strengthen churches. I've begun to send out an e-blast each Tuesday in areas like preaching, small groups, youth ministry, etc. I've tried to use e-blasts to drive traffic to the e-quip site by recommending training videos for the weekly e-blast topic. I'm interested in any suggestion for future topics, and welcome feedback as well.

I've begun to relate to other conventions in the CS ministry areas – I have personal experience in many of the areas, but not enough expertise to be a strong resource. In mid-May I attended a SS directors' annual conference in



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Chicago to get insights from more established leaders in the field. As well, it was a good exposure to the complexity of LifeWay's many materials and curricula in SS/small groups.

I haven't yet formed a CS team yet. I hope to in the coming year.

I was absent from the last NLB meeting in Nov/14, because of my 3 month sabbatical. I found it restful and invigorating. My most valuable, stretching time was a one-month experience in Wuhan, a city of 10 million in China. Through connections there with Salt's "Company" I quickly got involved with Christian leaders, churches and ministries. Since November a number of Wuhan students have come to Christ. Others have been open to the daily KeyVerses for Seekers I send them. My thanks to Gerry and the NLB for policies that let me take the sabbatical.