

JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

JAC Online

Issue 105, October – November 2016

Copyright © 2016 Journal of Aggressive Christianity

In This Issue

JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

Issue 105, October - November 2016

Editorial Introduction *page 3*

Editor, Major Stephen Court

How Wolves Change Rivers *page 4*

Phil Wall

Surrendered Pathways *page 6*

Danielle Strickland

Generosity Reflection *page 8*

Phil Wall

Generosity Quadrant *page 10*

Ian Mayhew

Love Like That *page 12*

Greig Whittaker

Altered Images *page 14*

Ian Mayhew

4 - Cs *page 16*

Rob Dolby and Stephen Court

Base Network Primer *page 19*

Stephen Court

Adopt the Base Network System *page 20*

Stephen Court

Editorial Introduction

by Major Stephen Court, Editor

JAC105: The Infinitum Issue

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Mercy and peace to you from God our Father. Holy Spirit anoint all of His character He sees in you.

Welcome to JAC105 - the 105th issue of the Journal of Aggressive Christianity (est. 1999). Once, again - something new! We're talking about the INFINITUM Issue. In case you missed it, Infinitum is a rule of life crafted by Danielle Strickland, Phil Wall, Ian Mayhew, and Stephen Court with a Latin word meaning BOUNDLESS (from O Boundless Salvation fame) that features the following:

ONE Vision: follow Jesus.

TWO Virtues: loving God, loving others.

THREE Vows: Surrender, Generosity, Mission.

This is a new community of communities that is growing around the world. The website - infinitumlife.com - is registering new members and hubs regularly (800 new ones last month). The app is integrating personal schedules and priorities with Infinitum commitments and relationships. The brand new podcast debuted at #2 on the iTunes UK Christian podcast charts (ahead of Hillsong, Osteen, Meyer, Stanley, Jakes, well, everybody in the world except one!).

We are finding it an excellent means for strengthening life and warfare.

So, this Infinitum Issue is different. We're sharing some resources from infinitumlife.com (for the most part) to give you a taste of the lifestyle and the possibilities.

As well as digging in to this month's contents, we're inviting you to prayerfully consider joining this journey into depth (register at infinitumlife.com).

Godspeed.

How Wolves Change Rivers



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysa5OBhXz-Q>

I hope you all enjoyed that amazing video. ... along with the guys accent (of course we all talk like that in England!!)

What a treat to learn a new phrase 'Trophic Cascades' - (sounds like a 1980's new wave band !!) and what a cracker to bring up at a dinner party !!

Anyway I want to thank my friend Nick Coke for introducing the video and perspectives to me. The science is not universally accepted but it makes a powerful point for the people of God. Being present, just doing what you do naturally, can change things.

I write this at the heart of the finance district of Singapore and as I look around at all the different brands - these giants of commerce - I am reminded that not too long ago, large sections of the church said 'This is now a no-go area for religious types'.

Up until the pietism & puritan movements, the church had often been at the heart of all that was best in commerce, education, creativity, music, art, literature, government etc. Yet as a result of these movements, many in the church 'withdrew' from the world, fearing they may be tainted & focussed all their energies on personal piety and purity of association, elevating Christian ministry within the body to unhealthy heights. The net result of such a shift, barring a few glorious exceptions, is a church withdrawn from 'the world' and 'the world' often bereft of the church. Then we complain why so little is aligned with the things the people of faith believe.

This is not a new story in the Judeo-Christian world as Judaism had walked a similar path. Somehow the original message to Abraham, from whom God was going to raise a nation that would be a light unto the the gentile world, got lost and Israel quickly became

an isolationist race/sect believing that the blessing and choosing of God was about them rather than about 'others'.

Psalm 137 shows clearly the confusion that emerged - 'How can we sing the songs of the Lord in an alien land' v.4 - of course that's exactly the point, the songs of the Lord are absolutely to be sung in alien lands, the fact the question is asked, denotes how far from their calling they had moved.

Jesus, in his famed sermon on the mount, sought to bring clarity and a fresh edge to this message. 'You are the salt of the earth...you are the light of the world' Matthew 5:13-16. Salt preserves & stops things rotting as well as bringing good flavour, light illuminates, brings fresh sight and those things hidden into view, it lights the way. As the church grew and went out into all the world, this is exactly what we did - salting and lighting communities, cultures, relationships, belief systems and by doing so, changed the known world.

Wolves, when present, change rivers: believers, when present, change cultures - we change the dialogue, the tone, the atmosphere, the direction etc and far from withdrawing from 'the world' we should be marching on our knees into it, once again embedding ourselves in those realms of influence and dominance.

As those committed to a vow of mission, one of the questions we should consistently be addressing is 'how do we better engage in the world and how do we exert influence & embed ourselves right at the heart of our societies 'salting and lighting' wherever we go? Wolves howl & kill, followers of Jesus love and pray - time to change a few corporate rivers !

Phil Wall

Surrendered Pathways

Rick Warren says “You know you're surrendered to God when you rely on God to work things out instead of trying to manipulate others, force your agenda, and control the situation”

In this resource Danielle reflects on an event that started as a simple prayer exercise with some friends, but soon led to some poignant reminders of a disciple's surrendered life.

I went on an epic journey last week. It was with a bunch of friends and warrior women and we went back in time. Well, for many of them it was a first time look but for me it was a memory tour. I went back and remembered all that God had invited me to. I remembered some amazing stories and some sad ones too. I remembered and met people I fell in love with, who have helped shape me on my own journey while I was with women I love, who are shaping me still.

We saw and did crazy beautiful things.

One of the things we did was a prayer labyrinth. It's a huge mapped out circle with a meandering path that winds and turns, leading into the centre and then out again. It was infuriating. I'm a functional person. I like to get things done. And that path was design to SLOW PEOPLE DOWN. It's designed for reflection. It's meant to help you clear your mind. It was so frustrating. I was holding it together on the outside but on the inside I was flipping out. It was a great source of reflection in the end of course. I realized a bunch of things through that exercise I'd like to share:

#1. Advance isn't always obvious. As you wind around these tight corners you kind of snake your way forward. It actually feels like you are going backwards sometimes. You literally turn around and walk back past where you just were. Except, you aren't still there. You are following a line that is progressing forward. So, even though you feel like you are repeating and going over the same space – you are not. Can you see where this is headed? That is called progress. But it isn't always obvious. Sometimes progress is so slow and so windy that it feels like it's not progress at all. But every time I started getting frustrated I would look down at my feet. I would realize that I was further along the path than I was the last time I was here. And it got me thinking. What if I did that more in my everyday life? What if I took the time to look down at where I'm standing and even though it feels like I've been here a hundred times before I recognized that it's not the same place? What if the place I'm standing, seems familiar, but is actually farther down the path? It would inevitably lead me closer to the centre.

#2. shortcuts are cheating. I really wanted to skip some of the path. I wanted to jump the lines. It frustrated me to stay on the trail. One of my friends did. She went into a frenzy of activity trying to get to the centre as fast as she could and ended up at the start again! It was really funny. And it's also really true. I feel like our spirituality has a rhythm and when we mess with it – when we try to speed the lessons up and skip

ahead because we don't like God's timing or the long-suffering required for some deeper lessons, we actually don't end up closer to the centre – we end up at the beginning. "Let's try this again" I can hear the spirit saying. Needless to say we all laughed until we almost cried – which is what I do in real life to. How many lessons will we have to re-learn because we want to skip them altogether?

#3. it takes time. I keep learning this. I'm sure you do to. We live in an instantaneous world. If my email takes longer than ten seconds to load I open another browser window. I'm not kidding. I can't take slow. And that's a spiritual problem. Because it takes time to get to the place where we are ready to connect with God. It takes some time to empty ourselves of ourselves. It takes time to listen, to pray, to hear, to learn, to try. It all takes time. And it's worth the time too. Time is the most valuable commodity we have. I need to learn to waste it on God. It's His after all. I need to allow myself to take the time to experience God.

So, the long and winding road of prayer is frustrating and rewarding. Those things go together a lot if you think about it. Let's just say, it bothered me in all the right ways! It reminded me that we are all on a journey, all the time, with a lot of amazing people. I'm trying to pay more attention – not to just 'get somewhere' but to enjoy the path there.

Questions

1. Where are you experiencing frustration in your walk with Jesus?
2. Would you use the word "progress" with regard to your spiritual life? If so when and why?
3. What disciplines help you to not take spiritual "short-cuts?"
4. When was the last time you "wasted" time in prayer?

Generosity Reflection

Do you ever wonder why some things come quite naturally to you and other times something feels like an impossible task? Or how about the extent to which something can be learned and practiced so that you are better at it versus simply dealing with the fact that you are just never going to excel at this particular facet of life? These are the things I started to wonder when I thought about the virtue of generosity. In *Infinitem* we are committing to open-handed living in a closed-fisted culture for the sake of God's Kingdom. If you're part of a Hub group you have likely begun to reflect on the ways you are already living with a spirit of generosity and the ways that God is calling you to take a risk in your giving. We may have all noticed that some people are particularly good at being generous – whether that's in sharing time, resources, expertise, gifts, space or presence.

Case in point: my middle child. While a toddler and preschooler, I was often touched by her willingness to give up something so that someone else could have. Sometimes I would even dissuade her from giving things to her brother, knowing he was taking advantage of her kindness. Or how about her seemingly natural ability to sense the kind of help someone might need and step in to offer it? We did instruct her in our limited capacity to be kind and loving, but her gift of giving seemed to spring up out of something unseen. We can all likely also identify someone in our life that presents as self-centered or selfish. My third child seemed to be gifted with a natural sense of entitlement to just about everything and was scarcely willing to give anything to anyone. Her automatic response in life was take and hoard. Just how did this happen?

We could employ theories and psychological analyses to figure out the answers to these differences for my kids or for ourselves. No matter the outcome, we could decide "That's just the way I am" and be guided by our own thinking and propensities in life. But, we have committed to exploring the depth and breadth of life with Jesus. We're called to something far beyond our own understanding and ourselves. We can rejoice in the good news that no matter which child you identify with, in journeying with Jesus you're on a journey of transformation. This journey doesn't require that you follow an external rule but that you are willing to adventure to some place that may be unknown, with a posture of surrender to God's great love.

Giving can be scary in a world of competition for position and resources. Again, we have good news. We are part of a kingdom that does not follow the pattern of this world. In his writing on generosity Henri Nouwen reminds us "God's kingdom is the place of abundance where every generous act overflows its original bounds and becomes part of the unbounded grace of God at work in the world."

Relying on our own capacity to provide resources or help of any kind is not abundant living. Even if we're giving what seems to be something small, God's grace can magnify its effects in ways imperceptible to us. This is another reason we can trust and surrender – we're not responsible for controlling the results of our giving but can simply

obey and be free to continue giving. Jesus often spoke words that perplexed his disciples: "If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it." (Mt. 10:39) Jesus sent his apostles out with these words as a reminder that life in devotion to him is the place where we find and receive. Let Jesus speak to you about what he has in store as you hold your hands out to him – where and how does he want to receive your generous giving, and where and how does he want you to receive?

"Dear God,
I am so afraid to open my clenched fists!
Who will I be when I have nothing left to hold on to?
Who will I be when I stand before you with empty hands?
Please help me to gradually open my hands
and to discover that I am not what I own,
but what you want to give me."

Henri J.M. Nouwen,

The Only Necessary Thing: Living a Prayerful Life

From: The Henri Nouwen Spirituality Series: A Spirituality of Fundraising

(John S. Mogabgab, Series Editor)

Further reflection: Meditate on 2 Corinthians 9. Journal the encouragement and insight God gives as you listen to his Word.

Further Action:

Declare this promise to each other as you pray for one another in your Hub group:

"This most generous God who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is more than extravagant with you. He gives you something you can then give away, which grows into full-formed lives, robust in God, wealthy in every way, so that you can be generous in every way, producing with us great praise to God."

(2 Cor. 9: 10-11 The Message)

Generosity Quadrant

This graphic / audit tool is a really helpful way of exploring the issue of generosity.

Some of you love these type of things, others are kind of allergic to them.

But it is a great discussion tool for you HUB.

I am indebted to Kairos Church in Harrogate, England who are using this as a way of exploring this issue with their missional communities.

The quadrant uses “trust and discipline” as the axes.

Trust – because we believe in a God who is fully dependable and has unlimited resources at his disposal

Discipline – because we believe we are not silent or passive in our responsibility to steward what we have been given.

You may choose to place yourself in the:-

“Optimism” Quadrant High Trust / Low Discipline

This is for people who are “bucket half full” / “it will work out in the end” type people. You trust God to provide but might struggle with an actual way to structure / account for / have a system / record what you have been given. You may even be a person who wastes resources anyway because you are unaware just what you do have around you.

“Despair” Quadrant Low Trust / Low Discipline

This is the reality for a lot of people. It feels like there is no way out.

There is a need for rescue or help to get out of this space.

Some do find themselves in this place out of no fault of their own.

However, for some of us, we place ourselves here as we fail to understand who God is. We rarely take note of what is already “in our hands” and manage it conscientiously.

“Scarcity” Quadrant Low Trust / High Discipline

This is for people who are “bucket half full” / “can’t be too careful” type people.

You might actually really like Excel sheets!! (which is not a bad thing).

However we can be in this space when we lose our vision of God as provider. We can be dominated by fear and anxiety and rarely, if ever, give beyond what is controllable.

Generosity Quadrant High Trust / High Discipline

This is the space we want to exist in. It's where we have a deep-seated in faith in God as Jehovah Jireh (our provider) and take a very real responsibility to evidence and steward what we have.

If you find yourself "low" on discipline, then you may need to grow some responsibility.

If you find yourself "low" on trust, then you may need to grow risk.

You may also want to explore what "generosity" actually looks like.

Looking at these 3 words within generosity – Provision, Sharing and Contentment may actually become a very real "entrance" into this vow.

Provision – celebrating that God actually does provide. He is a "good dad" and gives good gifts. It might be important to record what you have seen him provide.

If you are in your hub, you could run a competition – the first one to write down 20 different things!!

Sharing – this is Acts 2:42-47 type stuff. We start to see that life is about "we not me!" We want to be people who hold our possessions with open hands. We are givers and receivers.

Contentment – this is about "learning" (it's not that natural) the "secret" (it's not that obvious) of being content (Philippians 4:12).

With all these things – conversation is key. The hub provides a helpful and vital place in which to explore where you're at and how you might change / grow.

Use this graphic as a regular tool.

Love Like That

Ephesians 5:1-2

Watch what God does, and then you do it, like children who learn proper behavior from their parents. Mostly what God does is love you. Keep company with him and learn a life of love. Observe how Christ loved us. His love was not cautious but extravagant. He didn't love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us. Love like that.

We don't know how to love. We don't manufacture love. We must encounter love in order to love. Love is learned. We need to observe to know, and we need to be loved in order to be love. For love is a give story, we get given love and then we give love. It's never a get story.

The world's love story is so corrupt. It's a get love NOT give love story. Most of us set out to get loved. We do whatever it takes, we pay whatever the price, we do whatever seduction technique will achieve the goal, of getting loved. For love is understood as a get story. But love that needs to be gotten is not love. We may dress it in romance, we may robe with the passion of sex, we may crown it with heroics, but any endeavour that looks to get love is NOT love. Love does not seek to get, it seeks to give.

No wonder the world is starved of love for it has propagated a get love story, but this is not love. If I am seeking love then I will never find love, for love is not a find but a give story. If I seek to get love then it is something else that I am seeking, for love cannot be sought, it can only be received. Love is NOT a get story it's a give story. Whenever you set out to get love you have destroyed the essential essence of love, for if love is aroused it's not love. If love is earned, it's not love. If love is deserved, it's not love. For if love is received based on my capacity for arousal then love is gone when my capacity for arousal fades. If love is given based on my deservedness, then love is gone when my capacity to deserve is no longer present. If love is given based on my capacity to earn, then love is gone when my earning capacity fades. No wonder so many so called love stories get cancelled.

When we ask the question - "do you love me?" And we receive the response "yes." We then ask "why?" But when there is a "why" to love then it is not love, for why denotes a deservedness, an earnedness, a response to stimulus that you have provided, and if you have done any of these things then it is not love that you have received. Love by its essential nature is without cause. "Why do I love you?" – "I choose to." This is love.

So where do I learn this new love story? *"Mostly what God does is love you. Keep company with him and learn a life of love."* The life of love is a give story not a get story. We need to relearn love, but we will not learn it from the world for it does not know it. It knows it desperately wants it, but has no clue as to how to get it. The world cannot write a great love story for its starting premise is always to cause for love. But when I offered nothing, when there was nothing but repulsiveness and filth on my life, when I was as

ugly as could be, when there was nothing about me that could arouse or stimulate love, when I was an enemy, God loved me. He was not loving to get, he was loving to give. When I keep company with him, I get the story of love. You won't learn it anywhere else. You may get a glimpse of it, but if you are going to live love then you need to keep company with love.

You see love is no two way street. It's a one way! If you have a two way love story then it's not love. Call it lust, call it passion, call it anything, but don't call it love. If it's caused, if it needs to be caused, then it's not love. If you are loving in response then you are not loving. Watch and learn, *"He didn't love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us. Love like that."*

School is in session, come and be loved, learn love, give love.

Altered Images

During Lent we have been encouraging the Infinitum community to “capture an daily image / photo”

It has been an interesting discipline.

Not least has it caused me to actively and daily think about how could I capture love, mission, surrender, generosity and following Jesus etc.

One thing that has surprised me though is the photo I take is not only shaped by where I am located physically, but also where

I am located spiritually.

In his book “Exiles” Michael Frost demonstrates that very powerfully, not with photos but paintings.

Most memorable is the contrast he unpacks between 2 paintings of the same scene from Caravaggio, a 16th / 17th century Italian painter.

One is painted in 1601, and the other in 1606.

The scene is the based on the episode at the end of Luke’s gospel where 2 confused and fearful disciples are walking towards Emmaus. The arrival of Jesus, disguised as a stranger, provides welcome relief, not least because he seems to have an amazing insight into the events of the last few days.

However it is only when the stranger breaks bread over a meal that a moment of revelation happens. At that point they see Jesus.

As Frost notes, the 2 paintings are composed in almost exactly the same way, with Jesus at the centre, blessing the food, flanked by the surprised disciples. But, it is in the slight differences that some very telling insights are revealed.

The painting from 1601 depicts the disciples as labourers who are in complete shock as Jesus reveals himself.

There is action and movement in their response.

“The light that falls from the top illuminates the scene with all the suddenness of the moment of recognition” says Frost.

It’s a powerful, engaging depiction of the supper at Emmaus.

The painting that Caravaggio creates 5 years later is entirely different. The tones, characters, clothing, table is more “reverential, less symbolic and melodramatic than the first one”.

Brilliance and boldness give way to shadows and mystery.

It appears that this second painting was created during a particularly turbulent time in Caravaggio’s life. It was created shortly after he had killed Ranuccio Tomassoni in a fight.

In an article by Thomas J. McElligott on Resurrection he says *“that the (later) Emmaus (painting) shows a definite shift in Caravaggio’s understanding of the resurrection of Jesus. The arrangement of the figures tells the story. It puts aside the confidence in the image of the victorious Christ found in the 1601 Emmaus, clothed ‘in the triumphant scarlet and white colours’, an image which breaks into one’s doubts with the certainty of joy and the lavish display of abundant life. In (this earlier painting) the bodies of the disciples are galvanised, witnessing instantly and enthusiastically to the marvellous event which surpasses all expectation. By contrast the arrangement of the figures in the 1606 Emmaus makes us aware that people need time to recognise the reality of the resurrection. The figures are in dim light, with the bearded, mature Christ becoming present only slowly to the disciples.”*

Maybe you can read too much into these things.

But... They have made me think about the photos I am taking.

Would the photos I’d have taken 5 years ago to depict mission, generosity or surrender been different to the ones I am taking now?

Not just geographically but spiritually.

Do my current photos demonstrate a deepening in my understanding of Jesus’ calling, or a diluting, dare I say departure from it?

4 - Cs

Cash, Communion, Community, Commission

We're in a hub together and we took to this whole rule of life like white on rice. We started chewing up the One Vision, the Two Virtues, and the Three Vows, and (super?)naturally extrapolated things to the 4Cs: Cash, Communion, Community, Commission. The 4Cs are a nod to the hardcore, detailed spiritual audits of some of the early rules of life in old Catholic orders.

The absence of detailed requirements in Infinitum is a plus, and opens the tent to all kinds of disciples. But we're a couple of guys who have some experience with and appreciation for specific challenges to spur one another on to love and good deeds, so maybe we're inclined to this kind of approach.

And you might be interested in test-driving it yourselves. It approaches the Vision / Virtues / Vows through the lens of the 4Cs, asking, for example, how surrender, generosity, and mission factor into cash, communion, community, and commission. Don't worry – there is still heaps of room for you to customize and personalize the whole experience...

And with the 4Cs, we play a little game, challenging each other with ratios in each quadrant. Here's a quick summary of the 4Cs and the ratio game accompanying each:

Cash - How did we use our resources to honor God this week? How is He leading us to use those resources.

These audits lead into challenges and exercises flowing from personal conviction, and then into our hub, and then through into our own larger larger networks

So, for example, in our hub we are challenging each other to give more, or practice generosity by providing a need for someone in our community, or at work, this next month. Then this grows through hub to network or beyond as Infinitum generosity spices up the lives and experience of growing numbers of people loved by the Lord Jesus

Ratio Game

Cash – 1:1 – You can make whatever ratio you want but let's say that you go for 1:1, or, investing as much money in the Kingdom as you do in your discretionary income and groceries (you can experiment with both the ratio and the bundle of personal expenses to appropriately challenge yourselves each season).

Communion - How did we invest our devotional time this week (spent with God/self/others) to honor God?

Rules of life implicitly (and, in some cases, explicitly) suggest exercises with audits. How does this work in practice? How about this? This week audit how much time you spend daily/weekly (of your expendable time) in devotions/spiritual disciplines with God vs. the amount of time with entertainment, media, to self interests, hobbies; then through that audit, engage your hub, and develop challenges which will inform the Ratio Game...

Ratio Game

Communion: 1:1 Again, you can make up any ratio you want but let's say that we go for 1:1, or, investing as much intentional time with God as we do with on recreational screens (or, depending on your habits and schedules, as much time on recreational screens as we do with God?). You can see how very quickly you may need to either bump up the one, or cut back on the other.

Community - How did we invest our expendable & relational time this week (spent with God/self/others) to honor God? (we want to be careful with this, so as not to create a separation of sacred and secular, but stay with us through this...)

We're talking about intentional time spend within the body, authentic Christian community, possibly visiting, corporate worship, weekly touch points with others, and spending intentional time in fellowship.

Ratio game

Community: 1:1. So, while you can choose any ratio, let's try 1:1, or, investing as much discretionary (i.e. outside of life responsibilities) time intentional interacting with the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ as we do on our own. You can see how quickly this might prompt schedule and habit changes...

Commission - How did we invest our relational time this week (spent with others) building the kingdom/sharing the gospel?

This applies to intentionally sharing the gospel with the 'random', 'uninvited', or pre-believers. This could be done with other community members, and not to diminish the idea of community being evangelism, but having some time specifically intended to evangelize lost people. So, hitting the streets where God has planted us and going out to pray for the sick, and raise the dead – it all works.

Ratio game

Commission: 1:1. Again, your hub gets the flexibility of creating ratios, but here's an idea to get you started – as much time in commission as in community. Test. Refine. Modify. Test. Repeat...

All of these connect to the values, virtues, vows either vertically or horizontally, faith and actions directed to God or Others or God and Others (Love God and Love Others) values, virtues, and vows of (surrender, generosity, mission).

This is all beta version, so we're looking for feedback and input to refine this tool and optimize its potential usefulness for Infinitum. Fire away.

Rob D. and Steve C.

Base Network Primer

Where do Infinitum hubs lead? What's the path to follow as your hubs prosper? Regardless of the format or organisation of your local Christian community, bases might offer a system to optimize the impact of what God is teaching us through Infinitum.

Here's a simple formula:

Base = cells + hubs.

Many Christians are familiar with various types of cell groups. And we're not prescribing any specific system (though we use Ralph Neighbour's 5-10 and multiply model) or content (though we use the free CellTalks that come out of 614 Vancouver).

But, basically, cells are open groups (in that we want new people to come) that cultivates an environment in which people can encounter God's Kingdom, the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and Christian community (among other things).

Ideally, though, cells are undergirded by hubs, the closed groups (in that Frank and I make a hub and Sue can't just come and crash our meetings) of the Infinitum rule of life which provide context for accountability and discipleship.

Together they form bases.

Together they provide the context for community and discipleship, for evangelism and accountability.

Hubs add roots to cells.

Cells add the blossom to hubs.

But by their nature, they can grow like weeds.

We're only stretching John Wesley's terminology a bit to suggest similarities between hubs and bands, between cells and classes, between bases and societies. In other words, we're not just making stuff up as we go along. Wesley's model worked wonderfully in the 18th / 19th century as he structured for the 'Wesleyan' revival. It could be that bases, simple as they are, containing the components present among healthy examples of the people of God, offer a structure that can handle revival again, today.

Adopt the Base Network System

Most people who read JAC are Salvos or related, and this article is aimed at a Salvo implementation (though it is not limited to such). We're pitching the Base Network (which is great for everybody, regardless of denominational stripe) to Salvos, here.

It is certainly A future for The Army, for the following reasons:

- historically the Army Ward System worked well;
- historically our spiritual grandfather John Wesley's class meetings worked very well;
- the 33 AD Salvos met house to house;
- the biggest churches in the world are cell-based;
- there is no ceiling on growth either with leaders or with geographic proximity;
- it is flexible, which is important with some of the last 73 or so countries left for us to invade;
- every 5-10 people get primary pastoral care from a cell leader (according to a model I employ);
- it lends itself to bi-vocational leadership and pioneering...
- this is a proven means of optimizing our resources and impact for the Kingdom.
- For expansion, it lowers the bar. That is, you don't need to find an officer and supply a quarters and source a building in which to meet. And because it is resource-light, the stakes are lower. That is, if it fails, we haven't poured tons of money down the drain and lost face in the community.

It's time to strategically advance down this line...

The Base network can become the primary strategy for world conquest. Rapidly replicable, it streamlines salvationism.⁽¹⁾

'Bases Bypass Bureaucracy'

It's a simple formula:

Base = cells + hubs.

Bases provide context for evangelism, nurturing of 'the spirituals' (spiritual gifts), and authentic Christian community- the cells; and, accountability and discipleship- the hubs.

Bases are;

- flexible: they can meet in borrowed spaces in different places at various times;
- cheap: they require no financial investment for infrastructure, facilities, or leadership;
- adaptable: rapidly replicable in their DNA, change is pretty much a constant, so they are continually adapting to new leaders, new cell-mates, new locations, new dynamics...;

- fast: that is, they multiply fast. In the model we use (cells run 5-10 people) multiplication (one cell becoming two cells) doesn't take forever;
- incarnational: they meet in homes and cafes and parks and more where people live and work;
- simple: yes, in structure, but also, ideally, in lifestyle (even providing context for extreme challenges such as a common purse!);
- extraordinary prayer- friendly: nurturing the relationships that make extraordinary prayer easier and providing the context (particularly in the hubs) for intimate intercession;
- evangelistic: the cells are perfect for net fishing (as opposed to using a pole);
- worship: stripped down (without all the production, performance quality, bells and whistles) and intimate; and more.

Now, embracing the Army Base Network does not mean in practice that we never open corps. Neither does it mean that we close all existing corps, or even morph them into bases. Here is what it might mean:

- . new initiatives begin as new bases. Some grow to outpost status. Some of those develop to corps status;
- . maybe some corps that are failing are downgraded to bases, strategically freeing up assets and personnel while deploying a financially feasible model on location;
- . all existing corps multiply bases within ultimately aimed at multiplying without;
- . existing corps can become full-service centers for new base disciples (e.g. public meetings, programs, etc.).

It's worth you testing this out where you live and fight. Let us know how it goes.

⁽¹⁾Corps and outposts requires THQ approval. Societies don't.