

# **“PARADIGM SHIFT”**

**“In times of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act.**

**George Orwell, British novelist**

## **I. Let The Revolution Begin!**

### **A. Tough Times Call For Tough Truth**

1. Jesus told us knowing the truth will set us free, but truth has a way of confronting us and making us uncomfortable.

**“The truth will set you free, but first it will make you miserable.”**

**James A Garfield, 20<sup>th</sup> President of the United States**

2. The time has come to speak the truth, even it's not popular.
  - a. Our 33<sup>rd</sup> President, Harry S. Truman was famous for truth telling and they called him, “Give ‘em hell Harry”...to which he replied...

**“I never gave anybody hell. I just told the truth and they thought it was hell.”**

**President Harry S. Truman**

3. Truth, by nature, is *confrontational*.
  - a. Truth forces us to face the facts and deal with reality.
  - b. I weigh myself on the scales and don't like the number; I need to make a change.
  - c. I look at my bank balance and see that I need to cut back on my spending.
4. Human nature seeks to avoid the truth until the need of it cannot be ignored; and we've come to that place.
  - a. A hundred years ago, British novelist H.G. Wells was bemoaning the state of the world...

**“We have now sunk to a depth at which the restatement of the obvious becomes the first duty of intelligent men.”**

**George Orwell, British novelist**

### **B. The Truth Is...**

1. Our world is in a mess: terrorists are attacking us and nations that hate us are acquiring nuclear weapons.
2. Our nation is in a mess: the economy has never recovered from 911; racial tension has risen; we are very divided politically in the midst of one of the dirtiest and nastiest presidential contests in our nation’s history.
3. As God’s people, many of us realizing something has got to change. But what?
4. We can begin by stating the obvious fact that we need a revolution!

**“In today’s church, the obvious is revolutionary (because) the obvious restated and applied will shake the church to its foundation.”**

**Bill Hull, The Disciple Making Pastor**

5. We need a paradigm shift.

## **II. Paradigms And Worldview**

### **A. What’s A Paradigm?**

**“paradigm”**

**Your perception of how things are; the “glasses” through which you see the world; your attitude; your worldview**

1. We all have a paradigm.
2. Sometimes, the paradigm is wrong and we need a “paradigm shift”.

**“paradigm shift”**

**A fundamental change in one’s view of how things work in the world**

3. A paradigm shift changes how you see everything!

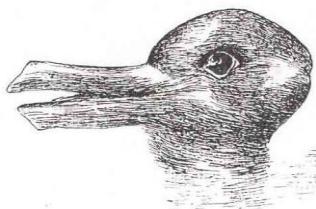
### **B. Playing With Paradigms**

1. Take a look at these drawings and tell me what you see:

a. **Do you see a rabbit or a duck?**



b. **Do you see a rabbit or a duck?**



c. **Do you see an old woman or a young woman?**



What do you see?  
By shifting perspective you might see an  
old woman or a young woman.

d. **Do you see 2 faces or a drinking cup?**



2. The 1<sup>st</sup> thing you see is a paradigm, how you view something. But when you look closer, you see it another way completely. THAT is a “paradigm shift”.

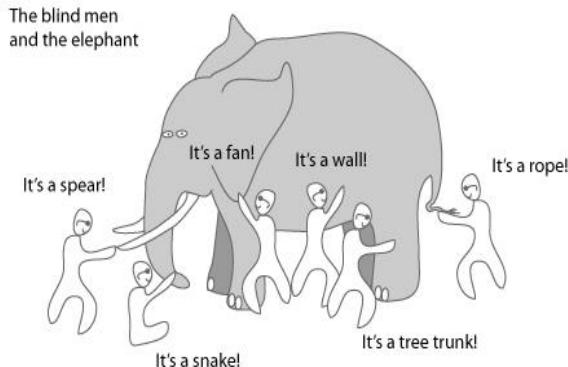
3. The old paradigm of how people see the church is not working! We need a “paradigm shift” that will bring a revolution and change everything.

4. Let me give you one more example...

### C. The Elephant And The Blind Hindus

1. There's a famous parable about bringing an elephant into the presence of some blind Hindus and then asking them to describe their view of the elephant:

2. Each makes contact with the elephant at a different place and thinks they understand it, as described in a poem by John Godfrey Saxe:



### The Blind Men And The Elephant

It was six men of Indostan, to learning much inclined,  
who went to see the elephant (Though all of them were blind),  
that each by observation, might satisfy his mind.

The first approached the elephant, and, happening to fall,  
against his broad and sturdy side, at once began to bawl:  
'God bless me! but the elephant, is nothing but *a wall!*'

The second feeling of the tusk, cried: 'Ho! what have we here,  
so very round and smooth and sharp? To me tis mighty clear,  
this wonder of an elephant, is very like *a spear!*'

The third approached the animal, and, happening to take,  
the squirming trunk within his hands, 'I see,' said he,  
the elephant is very like *a snake!*'

The fourth reached out his eager hand, and felt about the knee:  
'What most this wondrous beast is like, is mighty plain,' said he;  
'Tis clear enough the elephant is very like *a tree!*'

The fifth, who chanced to touch the ear, Said; 'E'en the blindest man  
can tell what this resembles most; Deny the fact who can,  
This marvel of an elephant, is very like *a fan!*'

The sixth no sooner had begun, about the beast to grope,  
than, seizing on the swinging tail, that fell within his scope,  
'I see,' said he, 'the elephant is very like *a rope!*'

And so these men of Indostan, disputed loud and long,  
each in his own opinion, exceeding stiff and strong,  
Though each was partly in the right, and all were in the wrong!

So, oft in theological wars, the disputants, I have seen,  
tread on in utter ignorance, of what each other mean,  
and analyze the elephant, not one of them has seen.

John Godfrey Saxe

3. Notice how their paradigm was formed by where they touched the elephant: A wall; a spear; a snake; a tree; a fan; a rope. 6 paradigms and all wrong!

4. So what if the Church is the “elephant” and we are the blind Hindus?

### **THAT WOULD MEAN OUR FUNDAMENTAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHURCH WILL HAVE TO CHANGE!**

5. There are many false paradigms most of you already know: the church is not a building, it's the people of God. It's not a social club, it's the Body of Christ.

6. But **The paradigm shift we need is to see the Church as OUTREACH more than INREACH...**

7. As Bill Hull states it...

**“The focus is not to be inward but outward...as its metaphors instruct: salt, light, leaven, army, ambassadors, pilgrims, all denote movement and penetration. The church grows when members become more effective in penetration.”**

**Bill Hull**

8. This one paradigm shift will bring a revolution to the churches of America, including ours!

9. But it might not be easy.

### **III. Confessions Of A Pentecostal Pastor**

#### **A. The Disciple Making Church**

1. 30 years ago, I experienced a paradigm shift when I read Bill Hull’s book.

2. I was convicted that we were making converts not disciples, and there’s a difference!

**Bill Hull, The Disciple Making Pastor**

**“Only one kind of person will penetrate the world, and the failure of the church to produce that kind of person is the error that has thrown it into crisis. The crisis at the heart of the church is a crisis of product. What kind of person does the church produce? The Christ-commanded product of the church is a person called a disciple.”**

3. But I got discouraged and slipped back into the old paradigms. I had “success” according to some; but it was like the beer commercial...

“Tastes great-less filling”

a. To quote Bill Hull again...

“Perhaps the greatest single weakness of the contemporary church is that millions of supposed members are not involved at all and, what is worse, do not think it strange that they are not. As soon as we realize that Christ’s intention to make His church a militant company we understand that the conventional arrangement will not suffice. **There is no real chance of victory in a campaign if 90% of the**

**soldiers are untrained and uninvolved, but that is exactly where we stand now.”**

4. God is bringing us a paradigm shift so we can change the world!

5. It's going to be as big a shift as when Copernicus discovered that the earth wasn't the center of the solar system!

**COPERNICUS DISCOVERED THAT THE EARTH AND PLANETS REVOLVED AROUND THE SUN**

6. We can't change the world until we change our paradigm...

**“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”**

**Albert Einstein**

7. This paradigm shift will change everything, including the way we keep score!

**“The test of a congregation, apart from personal holiness, is how effectively the members penetrate the world.”**

**Elton Trueblood**

8. In a word...

**“The church exists for mission. The church lives by mission as fire exists by oxygen. The church does not exist for itself.”**

**Bill Hull**

## **B. Review**

- 1. We're in a crisis because of poor paradigms.**
- 2. We need a paradigm shift.**
- 3. Are you ready for a change?**