

Unpacking the Exhortation (by Andy Figueroa)
From “Report of the Rt. Rev. Daniel R. Morse, Bishop,
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1. Reflects on state of the REC
 - a) Not very big: 130 parishes/10,000 members
 - b) 1981 realization – failing in obedience to do as Christ commanded
 - c) Period of great sacrifice and growth leading to today

2. Mission of the church
 - a) Matthew 16:18 “I will build my Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.”
 - b) Matthew 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”
 - c) The reality: “When He commissioned His disciples to carry out their task, there were no trust funds, there was no financial support for the expansion of the Church, There were no committees or boards. There was only a vision, a Dream if you please. Twelve disciples, with a dream and they changed the then known world.
 - d) Matthew 28 outlines the process:
 - Disciples make disciples.
 - In and under “The Visible Body of Christ”
 - Integration into “The Visible Body” is the goal.
 - Precise, quantitative measures count – based on number baptized.

3. On one hand we have the great American religious supermarket:
 - a) Pick the church that makes you feel good.
 - b) Glorification of self
 - c) Entertain people into the Kingdom.
 - d) Substitution of “Entertainment Evangelism” for transcendent worship

4. On the other hand is the Biblical process:
 - a) Evangelism is NOT done in the context of worship.
 - b) Instead: Instruction leads to conversion leads to baptism, then worship.
 - c) The REC cannot become part of the religious supermarket.
 - d) Our product (transcendent worship) is not consumer-ready (assembly required – batteries not included).
 - e) The vehicle is personal evangelism.
 - f) “Eighty-seven per cent of converts to Christianity were converted through the life and witness of their family, neighbor or friends.”

5. The charge (in his own words):
 - a) “I have a great desire to see every city, in this country have more than one Reformed Episcopal congregation.”
 - b) “It bothers me right down to my shoes, that the Episcopal Church has 7000 congregations while the Reformed Episcopal Church has only 150.”
 - c) “I used to tell people that the only goal I had was to leave this Reformed Episcopal Church in better condition than I got it ... but I have been compelled to re-evaluate that goal ... it doesn’t address what God calls his people to do ...”
 - d) “ ... let’s be obedient to him and do this mission. ... I would challenge each of our parishes to develop a view of mission and ministry that envisions the reduplication of parishes. Let each parish commit themselves to add a new parish over the next five years in their area.”