

LeaderConnect Session Notes 2017

Thursday, February 23 – 1:30 p.m.

Guest Speaker - Larry Wilson (National Director of First Nations Alliance Churches for Canada)

Ken Wiedrick share some scriptures from 2 Corinthians 5 – the ministry of reconciliation, followed by an introduction of Larry Wilson to the Assembly.

This session was a get-to-know Q&A time with Larry, hosted by Ken Wiedrick.

Following a refreshment break, the tables and floor were cleared and set up in preparation for the “Blanket Ceremony” that Larry led us through. (25 blankets were put down on the floor, with a circle of chairs around the blankets. Delegates were invited to take their seats as Larry led us through the ceremony.)

Our Thursday evening banquet featured First Nations guest speaker Beatrice Wallace (Regina, SK). She shared her very moving and touching life story.

Friday, February 24 – 8:30 a.m.

Understanding Aboriginal People by Larry Wilson

Larry gave some background to his life and ministry. Following this he presented a PPT presentation.

Larry pastored a First Nations church for 16 years and then moved to director of district for 12 years. He has always been in church ministry. Currently he is involved in prison ministry with Prison Fellowship Canada.

Power Point Presentation slides:

Slides 1-4: His vision was to see 20 healthy, self-sustaining Aboriginal churches come into existence by 2020, led by 20 healthy Aboriginal pastors.

First Nations Alliance Churches of Canada. The dream never came into existence. Started in church planting in Winnipeg. God fulfilled the dream of the church plant in Winnipeg. A church planter needs the calling and has the skills to do this and philosophy, etc. Not an easy ministry but a necessary one.

He indicated that we need to have an all encompassing view of what mission is.” My home is your home...my God is your God...”

Our Kingdom theology is strong, practically it is not. We need to be intentional what it means to my neighbor...our focus needs to be the Kingdom of God. Do what God is calling you to do. Is God calling us? This is key. This has to be number one. If you do not believe God has called you into that ministry, then don't do it.

The key is the heart and to love people. We need to be in dialogue with Aboriginals. We need to talk and think sensitively regarding the Aboriginals. i.e. Stoney Mountain Penitentiary is referred to as an “Indian institution.”

The mentality has to change and change the heart - the love in the head has to hit the heart.

Step out of your comfort zone and follow God's calling you wherever you are.

Slide 5: Time for Aboriginal is Rhythmic. Time for Caucasian is Linear.

Slide 6: Thought patterns: Aboriginal – think Concrete; Caucasian think Abstract

Slide 7: Change: Aboriginal cling to traditional ways; Caucasian –expect change to take place

Slide 8: Planning: Aboriginal – focus in the present; Caucasian – Look to the Future (calendar everything)

Slide 9: Personality: Aboriginal – a bit passive; Caucasian – little Assertive (part of a dominate society makes you more dominate)

Is this an Indian issue? How we say things is really important. Is this a white man issue?

Slide 10: Influence: Aboriginal – indirect, passive and slow; Caucasian – persuasive, forceful and aggressive

Slide 11: Focus: Aboriginal – look away from another’s eyes; Caucasian – look into someone’s eyes

Eye is the window to the eyes – both ways are true – they do not want you to see what is in their soul; looking down or away is sometimes out of respect for the speaker. It’s dangerous to generalize – i.e. all natives are drunks or poor

Slide 12: Age: Aboriginal - respect for elders; Caucasian – emphasis on youth

Slide 13: Relationships: Aboriginal – extended family ties; Caucasian – few strong ties

What do you call them/us? Be sensitive...First Nations...Aboriginals or Indigenous

Keep a watch on the prejudice aspect in your soul. Aboriginals tend to have a kin group.

Slide 14: Possessions: Aboriginal – acquire and share; Caucasian – acquire and save

Slide 15: Talking: Aboriginal – fairly quiet; Caucasian – quite vocal – we struggle with silence

Slide 16: Social Sins: Aboriginal – social sins that affect relationships are bad (i.e. alcohol); Caucasian – social sins that affect productivity are bad.

Slide 17: Associational Groups: Aboriginal – person’s primary ties are to the kin group (don’t choose them - they grow up in them); Caucasian – based primarily on voluntary association.

Slide 18: Materialism: Aboriginal – material things & possessions are important for use; Caucasian – material things & possessions are valued for security.

Slide 19: Competition: Aboriginal – for the common good of the group; Caucasian – compete for the benefit of the individual.

Slide 20: Leadership/Organization: Aboriginal – simpler, loose, passive, indirect. Goodwill more important than production or results (circle of hands relationship); Caucasian – complex, highly organized, pyramid structure with intense chain-of-command (pyramid system) for accountability sake. In a congregational system there tends to be disrupted chain of command.

Slide 21: Progress: Aboriginal – The farther one family progresses materially, educationally, etc. the greater the fracture in the extended family unit; Caucasian – One person’s advance is not necessarily at the expense of another’s fall.

Slide 22: Achievement: Aboriginal – The building of relationship is of greatest importance because they are the measure of one’s success; Caucasian – Personal achievement is the measure of a person’s worth & social status.

Slide 23: Individuality: Aboriginal – individuals are a part of the whole; Caucasian – The individuality of each person is taken for granted.

Slide 24: Communication: Aboriginal - Tend to Listen; Caucasian - tend to talk

Slide 25: Two basic longings – significance & security – Dichotomy - Aboriginal (relationship); Caucasian (function)

Who is the bad guy? Neither – we develop a healthy value

Slides 26-29: Three groups of aboriginal people: Traditional 80%; 5% deny culture; 15% integrated

Slide 30 & 31: Spirituality: Caucasian – Dichotomy (Supernatural / Natural) all humanity is equal in God's sight- sees us in Jesus; Aboriginal – See me for my skin and treat us as a person made in the image of God. They never dichotomize. The Creator is entrenched in all of life. See life as wholistic.

Disciple making: live for Jesus out of who you are and try not to be somebody else. Change as God changes you. God use me – I want to be used.

Word of the Lord: 2 Timothy 1:3-7

"I thank God for you Timothy. The God I serve with a clear conscience. Just as my ancestors did. Night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. I long to see you again. (*Intimacy, relationship*). I remember your tears as we parted and I will be filled with joy when we are together again. I remember your genuine faith my son, for you share the faith you shared with grandmother Lois and mother Eunice. Fan into flame the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For God did not give you a spirit of fear, but of love, of power and a disciplined mind."

God has given us the spirit of love. God loves me and accepts me for who I am.

1. Choose to love people.
2. Read God's Word! (a journey rather than a destination)
3. Instead of working with 50 people I will focus on 1 or 2 people

The session closed in prayer, with delegates being invited forward to lay hands on Larry in corporate prayer for his continued ministry.