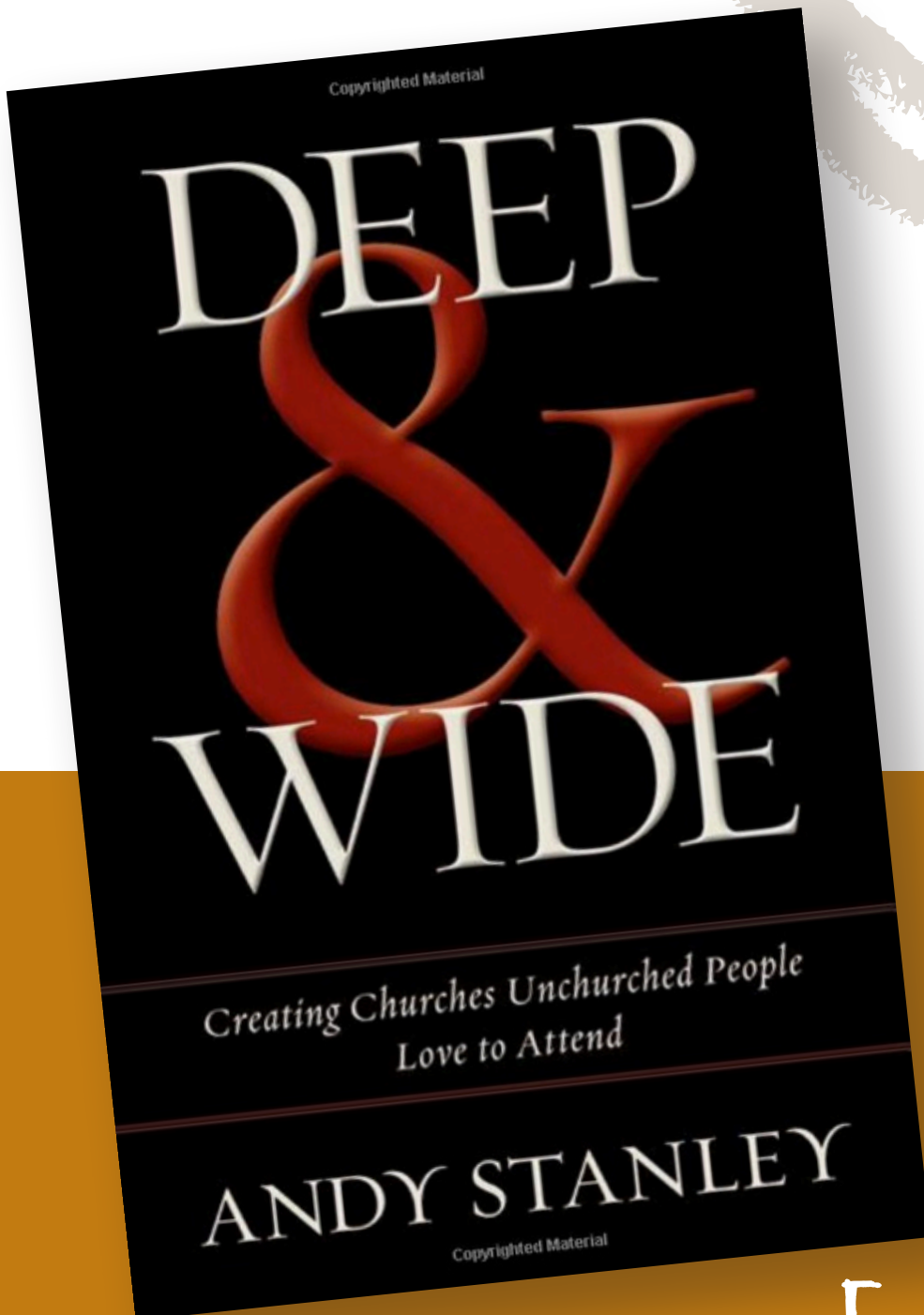


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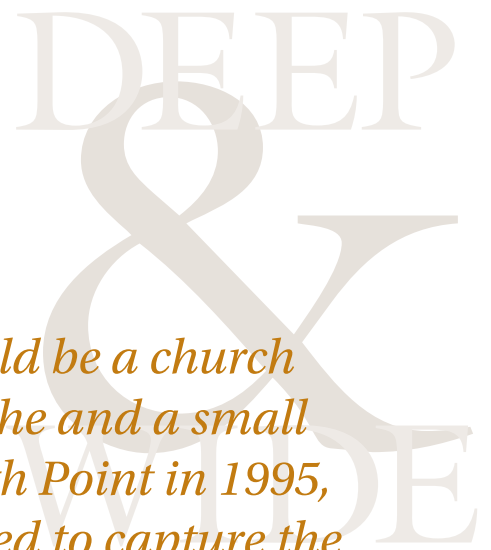
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Deep and Wide | *Andy Stanley*

Deep and Wide: Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend
Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI, 2012. 350 pages.

Andy Stanley thinks every church should be a church irreligious people love to attend. When he and a small group of dedicated leaders founded North Point in 1995, they were the only church around designed to capture the imaginations of unchurched people.

Deep and Wide: Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend is not just the story behind North Point. It's a book that will make church leaders like you ask, "What if?"

Deep and Wide is organized into five sections:

Section One My Story – *Starting Up and Starting Over*

Section Two Our Story – *Walking Toward the Mess*

Section Three Going Deep – *Rethinking Spiritual Formation*

Section Four Going Wide – *Why They Love to Attend*

Section Five Becoming Deep and Wide – *Transitioning a Local Church*

1

Section 1: My Story – Starting Up and Starting Over

Growing up in a pastor's family, there was never a time when Andy Stanley was not involved in church. Along with many good memories, he remembers several painful times as well – even a physical incident in which a church board member punched his dad in the face.

At thirteen, I saw firsthand that the local church was a big deal. It was worth fighting for. It was worth risk, sacrifice, and even physical pain. I saw my dad turn the other cheek, but he never turned tail and ran. He did the right thing. He obeyed God and God honored it.

Deep and Wide | *Andy Stanley (cont'd)*

In 1987, First Baptist Atlanta voted to relocate from downtown Atlanta to the suburbs. The church purchased property with warehouse space north of town. Church leaders asked Andy if he would consider holding services there, relieving crowding downtown and establishing a presence on their future site. Within a few months, they had added a second service and overflow space at the warehouse – but trouble was brewing downtown.

Eventually, people began to compare and contrast. The we/they talk began. Things became competitive. It was old versus new, traditional versus contemporary. In spite of all that, we managed to function as one church in two locations. That was in large part to the fact that my father and I refused to allow anyone to get between us. We had no tolerance for father versus son. We knew that as long as we were on the same page, we could hold out until the two congregations came back together on the new property.

What Stanley couldn't foresee was that there was one thing that would drive a wedge between him and his dad. That event took place in June 1993 when Andy's mother filed for divorce.

While most of the congregants at FBA stood by the elder Stanley, there was a group that insisted he take some time off to work on his marriage. There was another element in the church that thought he should resign immediately. One day the elder Stanley asked Andy what he thought.

My advice was for him to walk into the sanctuary the next Sunday and read a letter of resignation. Then, after everybody got over the initial shock, I suggested he tell the congregation that he was willing to continue preaching as long as they wanted him to. I assured him that the congregation of FBA was not about to let him go anywhere. They loved him too much. Unfortunately, my dad didn't hear anything past the word resign.

For the next two years, father and son met together with a counselor every week. The elder Stanley continued to be suspicious; the younger Stanley just got mad. Meanwhile, they were both getting up in front of their respective congregations acting like everything was fine. In November 1995, Andy led an organizational meeting about starting a new church north of Atlanta. Here's what he said:

Atlanta doesn't need another church. Atlanta needs a different kind of church. Atlanta needs a church where church people are comfortable bringing their unchurched friends, family members, and neighbors. A church where unbelievers can come and hear the life-changing truth that God cares for them and that Jesus Christ died for their sin. We've come together to create a church unchurched people will love to attend.

Deep and Wide | *Andy Stanley (cont'd)*

*Andy Stanley never intended to start a church.
God intended otherwise.*

That's what the rest of Deep and Wide is all about.

2

Section 2: Our Story – Walking Towards the Messes

In this section, Stanley gives the biblical justification for their approach to church. North Point is unapologetically attractional. In their search for common ground with unchurched people, they've discovered that, like us, they are consumers. North Point leverages their consumer instincts.

One of the perplexing things we face as church leaders is that most church people don't know what the church is or why it exists. I'm convinced that the current confusion over the purpose and mission of the church stems from a dearth of knowledge regarding the history of the church. The story of the birth and global expansion of the local church is fascinating and inspiring. More to the point, the birth, survival, and growth of the church is unexplainable and undeniable.

Unfortunately, just a few decades after the birth and explosive growth of the church, the movement sparked by Jesus' resurrection became institutionalized and eventually culturally marginalized.

In those early years, that movement was called the ekklesia in Greek, translated as church in the English translations of the Bible. An ekklesia was simply a gathering of people for a specific purpose; it never referred to a specific place. Over the next several centuries, the German word kirche (meaning house of the lord) began to be substituted for ekklesia. The word church is not a translation from the Greek; it's substitution for the Greek.

A kirche is a location. An ecclesia is a purposeful gathering of people. This shift in vocabulary signaled a dramatic shift in emphasis and direction. What began as a movement dedicated to carrying on the truth of Jesus Christ became a hierarchical, ritualized institution.

If you know your church history, you are painfully aware that once the church was legalized, it got organized. What began as unexplainable became institutional. The church would find itself wrestling with a question we continue to wrestle with today:

Who is the church for?

Stanley found that when reading the Gospels, it's hard to overlook the fact that Jesus *attracted* large crowds everywhere He went. He was playing to the consumer instincts of his crowds. Let's fact it: It wasn't the content of his messages that appealed to the masses. Most of the time they didn't even understand what he was talking about. People flocked to Jesus because he fed them, healed them, comforted them, and promised them things. Should our churches today do the same things?

Deep and Wide | *Andy Stanley (cont'd)*

We believe the church is most appealing when the message of grace is most apparent. We are equally as convinced that God's grace is only as visible as God's truth is clear.

It's a shame that so many churches are married to a designed-by-Christians-for-Christians-only culture. These are often the same churches where members talk about grace, sing about how "amazing" it is, but create graceless cultures where only those who play by the rules feel welcomed.

Stanley wants churches to get rid of anything that makes it difficult for those who are turning to God. It's time to get comfortable with the tension, the inconsistency, and the messiness that comes with being the church.

3

Section 3: Going Deep – Rethinking Spiritual Formation

Section Three is the deep part where Stanley reveals the "secret sauce" at North Point—their spiritual formation model. From the very beginning, Stanley and the original staff wanted to create a model that would actually facilitate spiritual maturity.

To make a long series of conversations short, we determined that faith is what grows in a growing relationship. Specifically, a person's confidence in God. Confidence that God is who he says he is and that he will do what he has promised to do.

From those conversations the Faith Catalysts were developed.

- **Practical Teaching**
- **Providential Relationships**
- **Private Disciplines**
- **Pivotal Circumstances**
- **Personal Ministry**

We are absolutely convinced that these five things reflect the way faith is developed. I'm convinced that this is how God works in spite of how we organize and program our churches.

Everything North Point does programmatically points people to or engages people with these five faith-building dynamics. Programming is done with the assumption that growing faith, which translates into obedience, is the catalyst for personal growth. And personal growth will eventually result in personal maturity.

Your church's spiritual growth model is perfectly designed to produce the results you are currently getting.

North Point's goal is to build a church full of men and women of great faith, men and women whose lives, and responses to life, cause the community to look up and take notice.

4

Section 4: Going Wide – Why They Love to Attend

According to Stanley, if you are involved in service programming for any age group in your church, Section Four, the wide part, was written with you in mind.

Deep and Wide | *Andy Stanley (cont'd)*

*Every ministry environment communicates something.
There are no neutral environments.
Environments are the messages before the message.*

In the beginning, the North Point staff began talking about creating irresistible environments for ministry. The result was a simple tool that ministry leaders can use to evaluate the effectiveness of all ministry environments. **They identified three essential ingredients that are used in the form of a question by every ministry leader every week.**

- 1** Is the setting appealing?
- 2** Is the presentation engaging?
- 3** Is the content helpful?

*If you want your environments to be great, you've got to define great.
Every staff and every volunteer in your church will know what great looks like and they will show up determined to work toward that predetermined end.*

According to Stanley, the environment that defines your church more than any other is the weekend worship service. Nothing is more mission critical than the weekend service.

That being the case, it is imperative that our service programming team be aligned around a common purpose as well as an approach. As in all things, purpose should determine approach.

Stanley and the North Point team designed a template to create a journey for their attendees from the parking lot to the worship service. It includes three large pieces with several incremental steps within each. **At the macro level their goal is to engage the audience, involve the audience, and finally challenge them.**

| Engage | Involve | Challenge |
|-------------------------|---------|---------------------------|
| Pre-service experiences | Singing | Title package and message |
| Opener | Baptism | Closer |
| Welcome | Special | |

*A template provides your more creative types with a canvas – parameters.
But creativity is never the goal of a service programming team. The goal is to leverage creativity for the sake of the win.*

Deep and Wide | *Andy Stanley (cont'd)*

The final piece of this section is the weekend message itself. Stanley thinks that if you are going to create a church unchurched people love to attend, then unchurched people need to love the weekend message.

The key to successfully engaging unchurched people in a weekend message has more to do with your approach and your presentation than your content.

When people are convinced you want something FOR them rather than something FROM them, they are less likely to be offended when you challenge them.

Stanley acknowledges that there won't be agreement about the importance of preaching to unchurched people, but begs pastors to look for common ground around the passion to recapture the attention and imagination of a generation of kids that is growing up in church but that can't wait to leave.

*Every Sunday people walk onto your campus and determine whether or not they will return the following week before your preacher opens his mouth. And that's not fair. But it's true. The moral of the story: **Environment matters.***

5**Section 5: Becoming Deep and Wide – Transitioning a Local Church**

Stanley ends with Section Five, containing three chapters on leading a local church through change, about creating a ministry culture that embraces rather than resists change.

Every innovative ministry approach has an expiration date. At some point, new isn't new anymore, regardless of what the package says.

The resistance to change experienced by leaders in all disciplines is best summarized by James Kouzes and Barry Posner when they write: "Any system will unconsciously conspire to maintain the status quo and prevent change." To move forward, leaders must come to blows with the status quo.

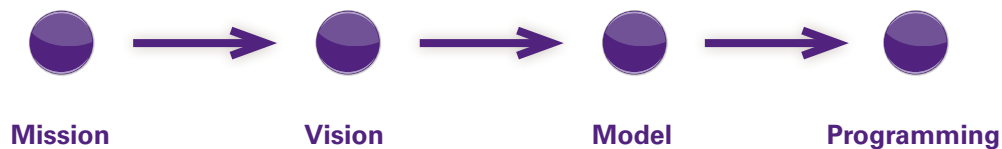
The catalyst for introducing and facilitating change in the local church is a God-honoring, mouthwatering, unambiguously clear vision.

Vision is not only the starting point for any discussion about change; vision also fuels organizational focus and momentum going forward.

Ministry models that don't support the mission of the church eventually impede the mission or become the mission.

Stanley has found that in the church world, resistance to change occurs primarily around any attempt to modify or eliminate programming. In order to move past this roadblock, North Point developed four components of church ministry.

Deep and Wide | *Andy Stanley (cont'd)*



Along with these components, the church developed a single catalytic question to facilitate their messaging: “What is the best way to _____?” The best context for discussing programming is to think of each program as the answer to the question.

Approaching programming from this angle is one of the best ways to ensure alignment between vision and activity. Because questions, unlike mission statements or value propositions, demand a response.

According to Stanley, the primary reason churches cling to outdated models and programs is that they lack leadership. Vision-centric leaders need to create a culture of questions—hard questions that demand honest answers.

Asking the right questions (and asking them over and over) will ensure that the vision of your church remains paramount while your programming remains subservient.

As the title *Deep and Wide* indicates, Andy Stanley thinks that a healthy local church can be, and should be, both *deep* and *wide*. It’s not *either/or*. It’s *both/and*. Local churches should be characterized by deep roots *and* wide reaches. Church should be theologically sound *and* culturally relevant. The church should be bold in its proclamation *and* winsome in its approach. In the Gospels, we find in Jesus the embodiment of both. As his body, we should be as well.

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Deep and Wide | *Andy Stanley (cont'd)*

Recommended Resources

1. **View** a brief video of Andy Stanley introducing his new book *Deep and Wide*.
2. For a unique comparison of Tim Keller's *Center Church* (a previous Sums book) and Andy Stanley's *Deep and Wide*, **read** the story from Christianity Today magazine.
3. **Read** Auxano founder and team leader Will Mancini as he takes a closer look at the strategy imagery that North Point uses to describe its 3 environments.
4. **Read** why Rich Birch says that Andy Stanley's *Deep and Wide* is "required reading" for pastors today and is a "perspective-shaping" experience.

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Go Ahead Actions for Vision Clarity

by Mike Gammill

Vision Clarity Connection

As leaders, we are never responsible for filling anyone else's cup. Our responsibility is to empty ours.

In *Deep and Wide*, Andy Stanley does just that.

Deep and Wide is a book about how to make your church more appealing to the people who are put off by all the shenanigans that give church – big churches in particular – a bad name. It's the story of how Andy Stanley and North Point reach people who know there's more to life than what they normally experience, but who can't imagine that the church holds any clues.

How to Go Ahead

1. Decrease Kirke; Increase ekklesia

In chapter, 3, *Words Matter*, Stanley explores how our understanding of "church" has been more influence by the German *Kirke* (sacred place) than the Greek *ekklesia* (gathering). Rather than being a place with doors and a religious hierarchy keeping out the non-religious, *ekklesia* refers to the purposeful gathering of people on mission for Jesus. Invest an hour asking the following questions and pick one to discuss at length with your leadership team to catalyze ekklesia in your congregation.

- Are we *moving* or simply *meeting*?
- Are we making measurable difference in our local community or simply conducting services?
- Are we organized around a mission or are we organized around an antiquated ministry model inherited from a previous generation?
- Are we allocating resources as if Jesus is the hope of the world or are the squeaky wheels of church culture driving our budgeting decisions?
- Are we *ekklesia* or have we settled for *kirke*?

2. Identify your Audience and Create a Regular feedback loop

North Point has identified the unchurched (defined as those who haven't attended a church in five years) as their target audience and they regularly survey new guests and members evaluate their effectiveness. Identify your target audience and create a regular feedback loop that can help you measure, and learn from, the effect of your ministry. Check out North Point's congregational survey card (pages 320 and 321) for a proven and adaptable example.

3. Lead with Visionary Questions

Asking the right questions (and asking them over and over) will ensure that the vision of your church remains paramount while your programming remains subservient. Stanley shares the seven questions (pages 302-305 for full details) that his leadership team returns to every year. Invest 10% of your meeting time exploring these questions:

1. Do we have a transferable mission or vision statement?
2. What have we fallen in love with that's not as effective as it used to be?
3. Where are we manufacturing energy?
4. If we all got kicked off the staff and the board and an outside group (fearlessly committed to our vision) took our place, what changes would they introduce?
5. What do we measure?
6. What do we celebrate?
7. If our church suddenly ceased to exist, would our community miss us?



More About Mike Gammill

As Lead Navigator for Auxano, Mike Gammill is passionate about using Vision Clarity to help the local church find its unique place in the Kingdom of God. Mike has fifteen years of experience serving the local church in multiple capacities and has a demonstrated ability to walk alongside pastors and leaders to uncover innovative ways to strategically implement vision through Christ-like leadership.

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