



Tallahassee Renewal Initiative

Executive Summary

What is the Tallahassee Renewal Initiative? (TRI)

The world is in a mess and the essential problem creating it is a population which is separated from God. The only ones who have the ability to reverse this trend are Christians who are committed to intentionally taking Christ to the world. However, a uniquely Christian outcome in this arena is not automatic. In order for positive change to occur, the people in the world must be led to a genuine encounter with Jesus Christ. This will only happen when the Christian community, as a whole, actually becomes equipped to take the message into the non-Christian culture, then goes out and delivers it. Until that happens, the mess we now see will continue and even spread further. To promote an outcome which corresponds with the purpose of God, MarketFaith Ministries is promoting the ***Tallahassee Renewal Initiative***.

TRI Vision

The vision of TRI is to equip Christians, in every sector of society, to be agents of renewal and transformation in Tallahassee.

TRI Mission

The mission of TRI is to develop a local movement which will equip Christians who are interested in becoming active in penetrating the community for Christ. This equipping will be manifested in two areas: 1) foundational knowledge concerning the Christian mission in the world and 2) strategy and plan development for the purpose of actually carrying out the mission.

TRI Purpose

The ultimate purpose of TRI is to bring those who don't know God into a personal relationship with Christ and get them connected to a church family.

TRI Philosophy

1. The most effective Christian ministry possible is that which is done by everyday Christians.
2. The primary role of Christian leaders is not to be the principal ministers in society, but to equip other believers to take Christ into every part of the non-Christian culture. Actually touching the lives of non-believers in society requires a grass-roots approach and cannot be effectively done based on a "top-down" model.
3. Every believer should have, as their first life priority, to further the work of God's kingdom through their lives.
4. Every believer should have a specific plan for how they will be used by God to further his kingdom in the non-Christian culture.
5. Believers should be so well equipped to be effective agents of God in the world that they are able to handle any situation that comes their way.

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The Need for a Renewal Initiative

There are many churches and parachurch organizations dotting the landscape which are doing the work of ministry in the community. However, there is a gap in the effort because there is no mechanism which ties them all together. There are several characteristics, however, that must be a part of this mechanism.

1. First, this mechanism must take the form of a system which connects specifically with the essential beliefs ALL biblical Christian organizations hold in common. It cannot be concerned with denominational theological differences or stylistic preferences.
2. Second, it must use an approach which is based on spiritual, not organizational, unity in the body of Christ. This means focusing on a system each organization can adapt based on its own needs and desires.
3. Third, it must encourage believers to intentionally plant themselves into places in the culture outside the various religious institutions with the specific purpose of extending Christian influence, then funneling all of its results into the churches.

It has been estimated that only about 20% of people in the Tallahassee community are actively connected to a church. Along with that, the influence of existing Christian organizations is expressed primarily within the boundaries of the individual institutions themselves based on their particular program goals and institutional structure. This is normal and expected, but leaves many of the unreached 80% without a Christian witness. Many of these unreached people are also the ones who actively promote an anti-God agenda in society.

To counter this, Christians need a systematic way to penetrate and operate among the unreached 80%. Of course, Christians can and do have some influence in that space. However, it tends to be very localized and limited. There are two primary reasons for this limitation (which, by the way, has nothing to do with a lack of heart or vision). First, the primary focus of most Christian institutions is necessarily aimed at internal organizational goals and has an inward focus. Second, most institution members and affiliates are not equipped to make the kind of impact necessary to generate change in the external space.

What is needed, then, is a mechanism which promotes systematic outreach into the community by all Christian organizations. It must, however, promote this outreach opportunity in a way which encourages each organization to do its ministry based on its own style and theology, but which also includes an intentional means of extending itself into the local community to share Christ. This implies a type of coordination which helps Christians do the same “type” of outreach in the community while not necessarily being organizationally connected with one another.

There Is a Secular Precedent

There is a powerful secular influence pervading American culture, and secularists have been actively working for many years to create this result. Tallahassee’s position as a political and educational center makes our community particularly susceptible to this influence. The reason for mentioning it here is not to demonize individuals, but negative influences cannot be countered if they are not recognized.

One example of this intentional influence is the work of Saul Alinsky. He is famous for creating a methodology for breaking down traditional culture, and he actually started an educational foundation to train Community Organizers to go out and accomplish his anti-God goals.

Other examples of secularists who are deliberately working to promote a secular culture include such notables as George Soros, Warren Buffet, Michael Bloomberg, Tom Steyer, and Bill Gates. Together, these individuals have created “philanthropic structures” as a way to contribute literally billions of dollars to organizations which have as their avowed purpose to destroy the traditional biblical values which have undergirded our nation since its founding. The organizations these “philanthropists” support are dedicated to replacing biblical values with anti-God values.

All of these people realize that uncoordinated efforts of individuals and organizations do not have the power to achieve their godless purpose. They recognize that there must be an organizing principle which ties them all together, and have created the organizational infrastructure to do just that. While the goal and approach of TRI is completely different, Christians must also recognize the need for this kind of unity of purpose and make intentional and coordinated efforts to promote God’s will “on earth as it is in heaven.”

The Goal of MarketFaith Ministries (MFM)

MFM is a Christian discipleship ministry with a focus on Christian worldview training. Our function is to equip the saints for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12) in order that they may become effective in taking the gospel into the non-Christian culture. Our primary purpose, though, is not to generate cultural change in the same way as the above mentioned secularists. Temporal means alone will not accomplish an eternal purpose. Changed lives require changed hearts. As such, our desire is to prepare believers with the knowledge and skills they need to faithfully live for Christ and take the gospel into the world. TRI is one approach we will use as we seek to achieve this goal.

The Methodology of Tallahassee Renewal Initiative

TRI is based on the belief that EVERY believer should have some kind of intentional ministry which touches the lives of people out in the community. It is a grass-roots plan to intentionally and systematically penetrate the Tallahassee community with the gospel – nothing more and nothing less. The methodology for doing it will be to train Christians in the essential knowledge they need to effectively penetrate the culture, then develop methods and strategic plans to help the trained individuals actually go out and challenge non-Christian culture with the gospel.

The means for accomplishing this goal is to create a mechanism which is able to spiritually tie local Christian institutions together by promoting efforts to reach the 80% of people who are not connected with the Body of Christ. This approach, though, is based on a concept of spiritual, not organizational, unity in the Body. As such, our effort is not an attempt to elicit cooperation between various Christian organizations. Rather, it is to equip believers in and from many churches to be effective for Christ in the community while they maintain their connection to their own church fellowship. As such, MFM will not dictate or direct the specific ministry activities churches and individuals decide to engage. It will also not become a church or operate in a way which will pull people away from participation in their own local congregation. Rather, it will simply be a mechanism for training and facilitating people’s efforts to impact the culture for Christ. To accomplish this purpose, we will operate on two different tracks.

One track will be a collaboration with individual churches and parachurch organizations which would like to establish within their own program structure a means of equipping and organizing their members and constituents to actually penetrate the culture with the gospel. We will work with these Christian groups to help them create an effective and intentional means of penetrating the culture based on their own goals and strengths.

The second track will be an independent training opportunity for individual Christians who wish to become equipped in this way, but who are not connected with a church which has this vision. This track will combine training and strategic planning opportunities and will be flexible in its approach in order to accommodate the circumstances of individual participants.

Possible mechanisms which can be used in this cultural penetration effort will include such things as lunchtime Bible studies, discipleship study groups, book clubs, chaplain ministries, research forums, prayer groups, the creation of Christian activist and fraternal organizations, and other ideas which people may feel led to initiate in particular situations.

It is the commitment of MFM to plan, organize, and execute this initiative in cooperation with churches, parachurch organizations and individual believers who sense God's leading to engage this path. We will devote ourselves to providing the training and the strategic planning opportunities necessary to impact the community for Christ in ways which are difficult to accomplish using other means.

Participation

Tallahassee needs Christ! TRI is an attempt to create a means to actively take Christ into the community. As we move forward in this effort, there are actual steps you can take.

Prayer

When we ask that you pray for renewal in Tallahassee, we are requesting serious, concerted prayer. No serious renewal in history ever got off the ground without believers persistently petitioning God. Changes in the lives of those who are not believers cannot happen without God doing a work in their lives.

Church and Parachurch Participation

MarketFaith Ministries is willing to work with your church or ministry to equip individuals and establish means for helping them penetrate the community. All that is necessary is a desire to create a mechanism within the organization which is dedicated to this penetration.

Individual Participation

For individuals who want to make an impact for Christ in the community but are not affiliated with a church or other organization which shares this passion, MarketFaith Ministries is willing to collaborate in order to create a customized approach on an individual level.

Funding

MFM will not charge a fee for helping organizations or individuals develop ways to reach the community for Christ. We sense this calling from the Lord as something that Tallahassee desperately needs. As such there is no financial obligation associated with our offer to serve as an equipper or facilitator for you or your organization. For those who feel led by God to help support the ministry, we will graciously receive your gift. However, to the degree we are able, we will do this work regardless of outside factors.

If you would like to explore how you can become engaged in TRI, it would be our pleasure to work together to accomplish our shared desire to bring spiritual renewal to Tallahassee.