

MELTDOWN

The Decline of the American Church

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MESSAGE 4: RE-DISCOVERING & RE-IGNITING

Change is risky!
Action is risky!
But failure to act
is even riskier.

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SIX FACTORS OF DECLINE

1. **Inflated**: The Church is smaller than we think.
2. **Hated**: Accelerating anti-Christian culture.
3. **Dividing**: Splitting on politics & social justice.
4. **Bankrupt**: Dependent on decreasing dollars.
5. **Bleeding**: Young people & others are leaving.
6. **Sputtering**: Not reaching new people.

*“What is truly remarkable is that even with **loads of money** being **deposited** into the evangelical **movement**, it hasn’t kept the evangelical **church** from **shrinking**. Despite the **billions** of dollars **invested** in churches and ministries all **across** our **nation**, evangelicalism has not **kept pace** with the population **growth**. Why is that when evangelicals in the U.S. have more **wealth**, **assets** and **technology** than the evangelical church has **ever had** in history, the church is **declining at home**? Somehow our **employment** of this **wealth** has not been fruitful enough to **hold our ground at home**.”*

John S. Dickerson

The Great Evangelical Recession (2013)

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WHY?

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*“At any given time, a **majority** of **believers** do not have a **specific** person in **mind** for whom they are **praying** in the **hope** that person will be **saved**. ... Most “**churched**” Christians **believe** that since they are not “**gifted**” in evangelism such **outreach** is not a significant **responsibility** of theirs.”*

George Barna
Revolution (2005)

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ZERO-DOLLAR SOLUTION

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JESUS: THE **PLAN** & THE **POWER**

*“Therefore, **go** (in my power & authority)
and **make disciples** of all the nations, **baptizing** them ...
Teach these new disciples to **obey**
all the **commands** I have given you.”*

Matthew 28: 18-20 NLT

*“But you will receive **power**
when the **Holy Spirit** comes upon you.
And you will be my **witnesses**, telling people about me ...”*

Acts 1:8 NLT

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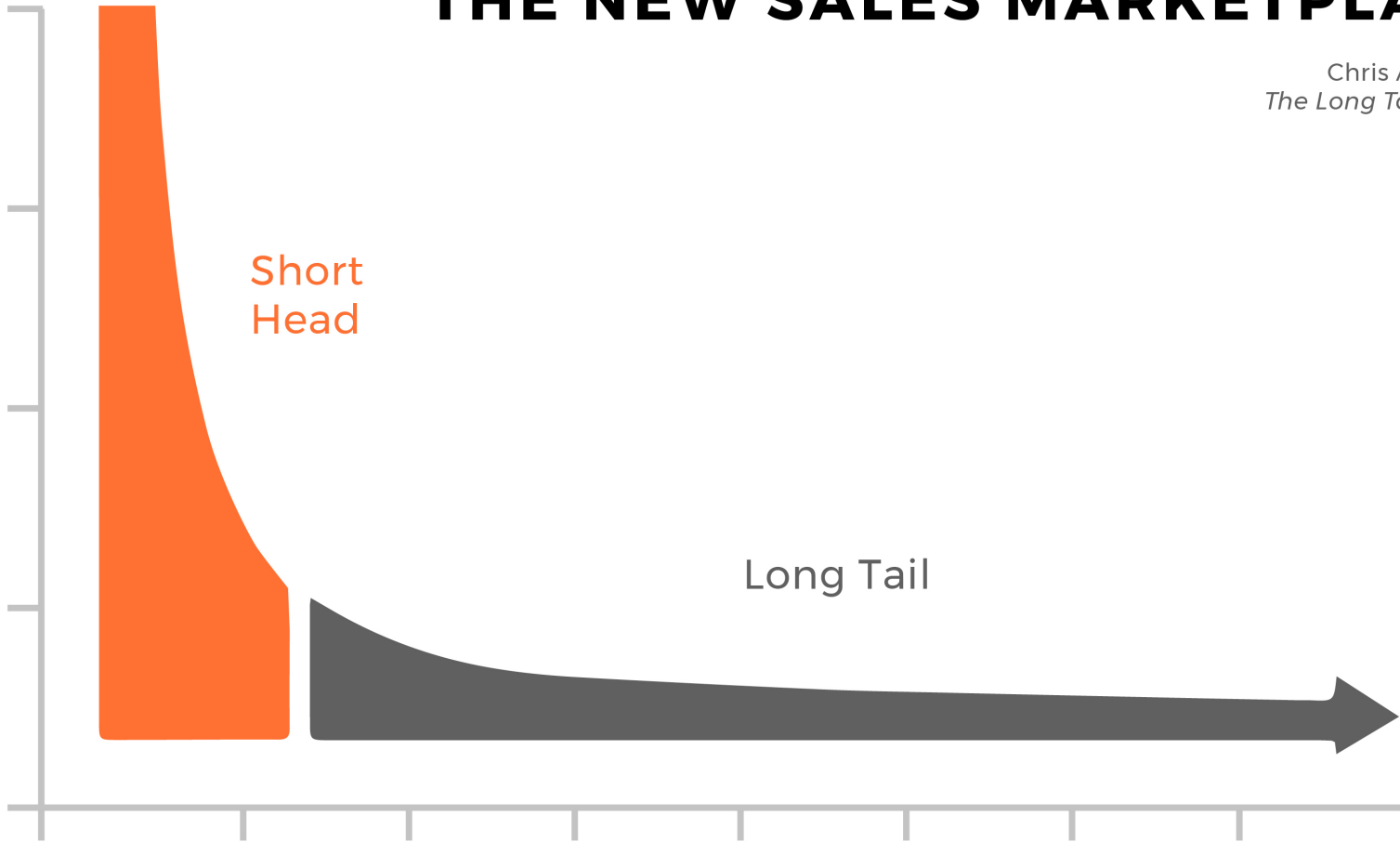
Understanding the Long Tail

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THE NEW SALES MARKETPLACE

Chris Anderson
The Long Tail (2006)

POPULAR "HIT" BRANDS



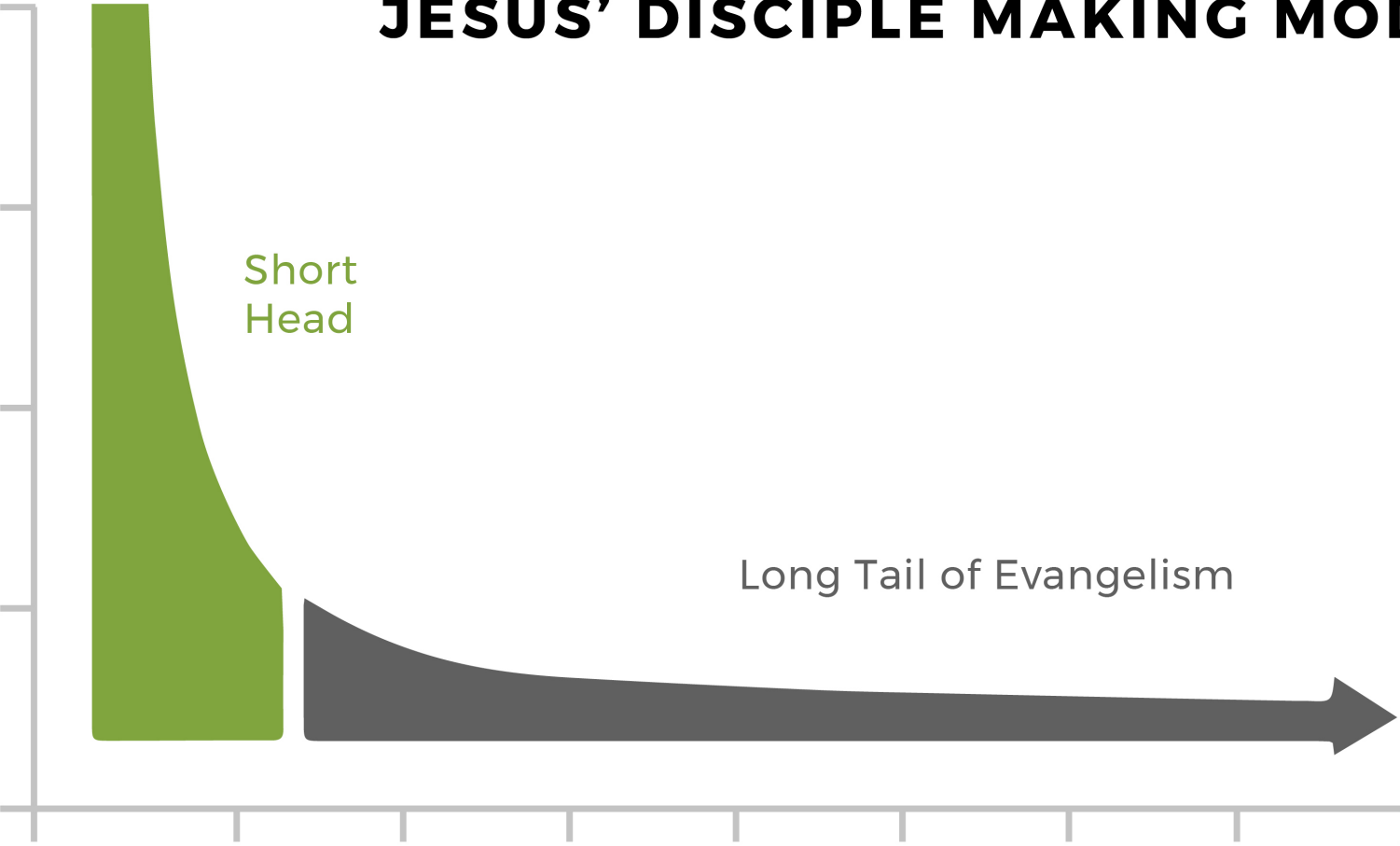
Short
Head

Long Tail

INFINITE "NICHE" BRANDS

JESUS' DISCIPLE MAKING MODEL

INVITING CHURCH MODEL



Short Head

Long Tail of Evangelism

"ALL IN" SENDING CHURCH MODEL

The “Mindset” of Paul

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God *always* makes his grace *visible* in Christ (*Jesus*),
who includes us as *partners* (captives)
in his endless *triumph* (triumphal procession).
Through our *yielded* lives he *spreads* the *fragrance*
(aroma) of the *knowledge* of God everywhere *we go*.
We have become the *unmistakable* (sweet) *aroma*
of the *victory* of the Anointed One (*Jesus*) to God –
a *perfume* of *life* to those being saved
and the *odor* of *death* to those perishing.
... And who can *rise* to this *challenge*?

2 Corinthians 2:14-16a TPT

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*For your very **lives** are our **letters** of recommendation,
permanently **engraved** (written) on our **hearts**,
recognized and **read** by everybody (**all people**).
... you are **living letters** written by Christ (**Jesus**),
not with **ink** but by the **Spirit** of the living God
- not carved onto **stone** tablets
but on the **tablets** of tender **hearts**.*

2 Corinthians 3:2-3 TPT

*Even if our **gospel** message is **veiled**,
it is only **veiled** to those who are **perishing**,
for their **minds** have been **blinded**
by the **god** of this **age** (Satan),
leaving them in **unbelief**.*

*Their blindness **keeps** them from **seeing**
the **dayspring light** (flame of the **good news**) ...
Since we are **those** who stand in **holy awe** of the Lord,
we make it our **passion** to **persuade** others to **turn** to him.*

2 Corinthians 4:3-4a; 5:11 TPT

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*If we are **out** of our **minds** ..., it is **for God**, ...
For it is Christ's (Jesus') **love** that **fuels** our passion
and **motivates** (compels) us, because we are absolutely
convinced that he (Jesus) has given his **life** for **all** of us.
This means **all died** with him, so **those** who **live**
should no longer live **self-absorbed** lives
but lives that are **poured out** for him
- the one who **died** for us and now **lives** again.
Now (**Therefore**), if **anyone** is enfolded into (**in**) Christ
he has become an entirely **new creation**.
All that is related to the **old order** (**identity**) has **vanished**.
Behold, **everything** is fresh and **new**.*

2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 17 TPT

And **God** has made all things **new**,
and **reconciled us** to himself, and **given us** the
ministry of (reconciliation) reconciling others to God.
In other words, it was **through** the Anointed One (**Jesus**)
that **God** was shepherding (**reconciling**) the world (**all people**),
Not even keeping **records** of their transgressions (**sins**),
and he **entrusted** (committed) to us the ministry
(**message**) of opening the door of **reconciliation** to God.
We are **ambassadors** of the Anointed One (**Jesus**)
who carry the **message** of Christ (**Jesus**) to the world, ...
"Turn back to God (**repent**) and be **reconciled** to him."

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 TPT

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And **who** can rise
to this **challenge**?

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3 QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. What are the current **standards** for **success** in the American Church model? Do these standards **align** with what Jesus said in John 13: 34, Matthew 28: 19-20 and Acts 1:8? What should we be **measuring** according to **Jesus** commands?
2. Are you “**winning**” as many as possible?” Do you have specific **people** you are **praying** for with the **hope** they will be **saved**? Are you a minister of **reconciliation**?
3. Read **Acts 2:42-47**. What was the first century church **model** they adopted following the **outpouring** of the **Holy Spirit** and **3,000 believers** being added to the **120** who **prayed**?

**FOOTBALL
SUNDAY**

UNSHAKEN

HOSTED BY:
**COACH TONY DUNGY
& BENJAMIN WATSON**

2.7.2021



Carson Wentz | Brandin Cooks | Sam Acho