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Excerpt – Outline of Unbinding Process
set forth in draft version of
Unbinding Your Soul: Your Experiment in Prayer & Community
(Chalice Press, 9/09). See website for book sampler.

Tested steps for using the Unbinding the Gospel/Heart process in your congregation:

1. Pastors – read ***Unbinding the Gospel***. Do you like it? Does it feel as if it will be a fit for your people? If you're not sure, ask a key lay leader to read it and meet you for lunch in two weeks to discuss it.

*Martha Grace Reese may be available for a phone conference call
consultation with groups of pastors at this point.
To participate in a call, each pastor
must have read **GOSPEL** and liked it!
Contact us through **www.GraceNet.info** to discuss a call.*

2. If you read ***Unbinding the Gospel*** & really like it **PLEASE DON'T preach or do a newsletter article about it!** That:

- A. doesn't help &
- B. creates resistance

(Read Chapter 6 of ***Unbinding Your Soul– The Great Toxic Word***. Preaching won't help. A newsletter article won't inspire. Be quiet. Operate by stealth. Let the group process and the Spirit start working with people. You're trying to help a lay movement emerge.)

3. Read the Introduction, Chapter 1 and Chapter 4 of ***Unbinding Your Church***
4. Start a small group (8-10 people plus leaders) of your quickest adapters to do a test study of ***Unbinding the Gospel***. Ask the key leaders you think will like it best. (Order one copy per person – they contain individual prayer journals.)
5. Do the study for 8 weeks in a row (don't try it with your once-a-month church board. We're seeing that these studies are interesting, but result in disappointing statistical outcomes. This experiential process needs the intensity of weekly sessions.
 - a. Combine Chapters 1 & 2, then spend a week each on Chapters 3 through 8, combine Chapters 9 & 10.

- b. Begin the prayer journals at the back of GOSPEL the day *after* you discuss Chapter 3.

6. After the test study, read Chapter 2 of ***Unbinding Your Church***. Discuss with the group whether **GOSPEL** has been helpful with your people. If so, you could keep going.

Martha Grace Reese is available to help with your evaluation in another conference call with your group of pastors. If you are invited to form a coaching group (with church board approval), formal coaching would begin at this point.

7. Next steps are to do small group studies of ***Unbinding the Gospel*** with all of your functional leadership – at least 20% of your average worship attendance (include youth group leaders and teachers of all Sunday School classes and existing small groups).

8. If your 20% wants to keep going (keep giving them choice points!), you're ready to plan a six-week, all-church saturation study of ***Unbinding Your Heart***, the "E-vent." Use ***Unbinding Your Church***, and resources on www.GraceNet.info, including the *Unbinding the Gospel Community*.

9. We are seeing that congregations that do an E-vent on their own average 40-50% participation in the E-vent. Congregations participating in the grant-subsidized coaching in the *Unbinding the Gospel Project* average 85% congregational saturation.

10. The greater the percentage of a congregation that studies ***Unbinding Your Heart***, the greater the chance of significant congregational transformation.

11. Steps 1-11 can take 18 months. This process is organic. It requires a long runway. Don't rush it, but keep it thorough and don't lose momentum.

12. A few congregations do a beautiful job doing the full E-vent process using ***Unbinding Your Church*** (the pastor's and Leaders' Guide), but we see almost double the markers of actual personal and congregational transformation in churches that take advantage of the Lilly-funded coaching process.

Note: We see statistically significant, transformational changes in congregations in which at least 85% of their average worship attendance participates in a small group study of ***Unbinding Your Heart***. The church in Story 4, chapter 7 of ***Unbinding Your Soul*** is the world record holder so far! The church had declined in worship attendance from 275 to 110 over a 35-year period. The co-pastors are wonderful. They had served the church for five years, won trust, and they pray. They pray seriously. And they took this process very slowly, methodically, and with room for the Spirit! They began with 110 people in worship. 159 people participated in small groups. Average worship attendance for the same 3-month period a year later is 160. Ten adults were baptized. 145% of their average worship attendance participated in small groups. The congregation grew 46% in average worship attendance over the previous year. This is a great example illustrative of the pattern we're seeing. Generally speaking, the higher the percentage of people who prayerfully study ***Unbinding Your Heart*** in small groups for six weeks, the greater the impact on the congregation.