

Commissioning

THE PROMISE AND THE POTENTIAL

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To learn more about plenary speaker, Dr. Janeen Davis, visit www.PurposeAndPeace.com

The Commissioning *Service*

1

Affirm
missionary's calling
to full time service

2

Cement church's
commitment to
engage in this
missionary's
ministry

3

Lead congregation
in **rejoicing** and
thanksgiving for
what God has
done and will do

4

Help church and
missionary **say**
goodbye to one
another well

<https://globalmissionstoolbox.com/pastor-resource/planning-a-commissioning-service/>

According to the Global Missions Toolbox, every commissioning **service** should aim to: affirm, cement commitment, worship, say goodbye

The *Implied* Promises of Commissioning

1

Authority to affirm their qualifications and calling into the new ministry role.

2

Commitment to partnership in the ministry in a variety of ways, including **consistent communication** with the individual about their **wellbeing** and **progress** in the ministry, **financial support** as needed, sending **people** to help with short-term projects, and regular, ongoing **prayer**.

3

Demonstrate a **sincere desire** to hear reports about their ministry and personal updates whenever they visit.

4

Read their newsletters.

5

Help them when it gets hard.

6

Don't forget them

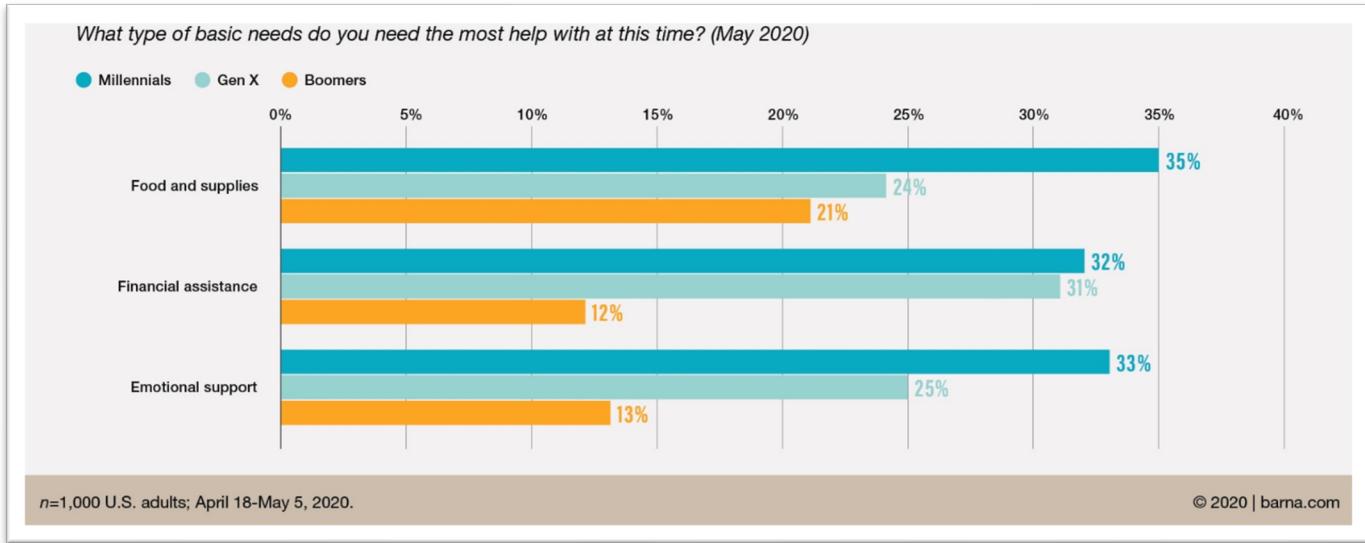
3 Consistently Unaddressed Needs of M's

1. Emotional support
2. Spiritual support
3. Decommissioning

Emotional Support for Christians

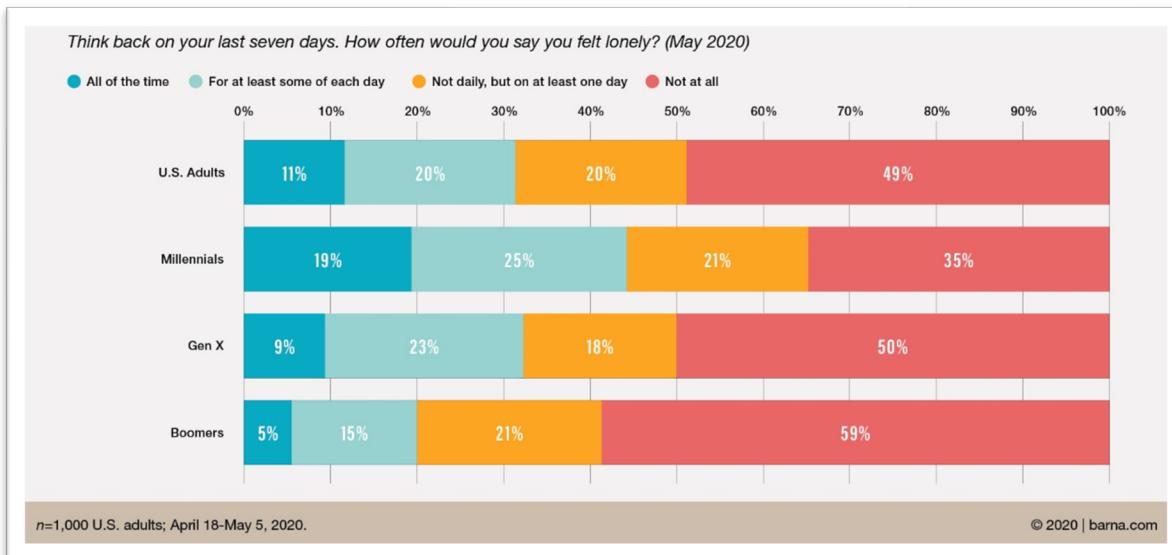
Even in their home culture....

- ▶ 33% of Millennials, 25% of Gen X, 13% of Boomers reported being **in need of emotional support**
- ▶ 19% of Millennials said they **feel lonely** “all the time”, 25% said they feel lonely “at least some of each day”
- ▶ 65% of Millennials, 50% of Gen X, and 41% of Boomers reported **feeling lonely** at least once, daily, or all of the time during the past week.



<https://www.barna.com/research/five-themes-to-frame-next-gen-discipleship/>

As of late May, 2020, one in three Millennials reported being **in need of emotional support** (33% vs. 25% Gen X, 13% Boomers).



<https://www.barna.com/research/five-themes-to-frame-next-gen-discipleship/>

One in five (19%) Millennials said they were **feeling lonely “all the time,”** a quarter (25%) for at least some of each day and 21 percent at least one day a week. Only one in three (35%) hadn’t faced loneliness as opposed to half of Gen X (50%) and Boomers (59%).

Spiritual Support for Christians

Even in their home culture....

- ▶ 56% of Christians believe their **spiritual life is entirely private.**

This belief is directly correlated with **generational groups:**

- ▶ 63% of **Boomers** believe spirituality is private, and are LEAST likely to be in a discipleship community
- ▶ 46% of **Gen Z** believe spirituality is private, and are TWICE as likely as Boomers to be in a discipleship community

<https://www.barna.com/research/discipleship-friendship/>

56 percent of Christians feel their **spiritual life is entirely private.** Boomers are the generation least likely to be part of discipleship community and are also the generation most likely to believe their spiritual life is entirely private (63%). **Gen Z**, meanwhile, are more than twice as likely as Boomers to be part of **discipleship community** and are the least likely generation to believe their **spiritual life is private** (46%).

Spiritual Support for Christians

Even in their **home** culture....

- ▶ 39% of Christians are not engaged in any form of “**discipleship**”: relational investment in **spiritual growth**.
- ▶ Of these, 38% say they’ve never even thought about it. 35% say they don’t know of someone with whom they want to engage in pursuing spiritual growth.

<https://www.barna.com/research/christians-discipleship-community/>

Discipleship: relational investment in spiritual growth. In our increasingly individualized culture, 56 percent of Christians tell Barna that their spiritual life is entirely private. Researchers identified Christians who were both *being discipled* and *discipling others* as those who are fully engaged in discipleship community. Just over one in four U.S. Christians (28%) falls into this category. Another 28 percent are being discipled, but are not helping others grow closer to Christ, and a very small percentage (5%) is *only* discipling others. By these definitions, this means the plurality of Christians (**39%**) is **not engaged in discipleship**, in any direction. Similarly, when Christians don’t have a relationship that provides accountability, support and spiritual growth, the main reason is that they either haven’t thought about it (38%) or they haven’t found someone with whom they want to have this type of relationship (35%).

The Potential of Commissioning:

Monitor and address ongoing needs of M's for **emotional support** and **spiritual growth**.

If those commissioning a brother or sister into missional ministry
don't develop and ensure an intentional, ongoing plan
to SHEPHERD THEIR SOUL.....

then who will?

The Potential of Commissioning

2 COMMON ASSUMPTIONS:

Assumption 1: M's on the field will care for each other well and naturally grow in holiness.

Assumption 2: Mature believers like M's do not need someone to exercise spiritual authority in their lives.

Who is shepherding their soul? Often: no one.

The Potential of Commissioning

Decommissioning: putting just as much thought, prayer, and oversight into the process of bringing someone HOME as we put into sending them out.

Beginnings and endings matter!

Decommissioning ceremonies for battleships honor the legacy of the lives, the values, and the nation defended by that ship over the years of its service.

What is implied when we celebrate and honor people as they are commissioned into ministry but offer no similar celebratory acknowledgement when they return from the battlefield?

<https://thetoughtender.com/uss-shenandoah-ad-44/history/destroyer-tender-ad-44-decommissioning/>

“Today’s decommissioning ceremony is a solemn occasion on which we honor the men and women who have given their time, their energy, their talents and for some, their very lives to fulfill and surpass the hopes and dreams of those who stood at the commissioning ceremony in San Diego, California, on 15 August 1983; who have been “entrusted with the challenge to make SHENANDOAH the best ship possible”, and have risen above and beyond to meet all expectations.”

The Potential of Commissioning

Decommissioning: putting just as much thought, prayer, and oversight into the process of bringing someone HOME as we put into sending them out.

Beginnings and endings matter!

Primacy and recency effects help explain why supportive gestures along the way might be forgotten if the final memories of missional ministry and the transition back home are painful and disappointing.

Research about Recency Effects on Memory and Autobiographical Narratives:

Greene, A. J., Prepscious, C., & Levy, W. B. (2000). Primacy versus recency in a quantitative model: activity is the critical distinction. *Learning & memory (Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y.)*, 7(1), 48–57. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC311322/>
Following a single exposure to learning, recall is better for items at the beginning (**primacy**) and end (**recency**) of a list than for middle items. Behavioral and neurobiological evidence shows that primacy and recency are subserved by memory systems for intermediate- and short-term memory, respectively. A widely accepted explanation of recency is that in short-term memory, **new learning overwrites old learning**.

Rubínová, E., Blank, H., Koppel, J., Dufková, E., & Ost, J. (2022). Repeated recall of repeated events: Accuracy and consistency. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*, 11(2), 229–244.
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1016%2Fj.jarmac.2021.09.003>

Recall of specific experiences is difficult, as the similarity of each experience to one another makes it challenging to distinguish between them. However, participants were **more accurate in their recall** of the first and **final instances** and more confused in their recall of the middle instances. These **primacy and recency effects** for accuracy and consistency were stable across delay. The result is low consistency, which should be considered in settings where repeated reports of repeated events are required.

Rubínová, E., Blank, H., Koppel, J., & Ost, J. (2021). Schema and deviation effects in remembering repeated unfamiliar stories. *British Journal of Psychology*, 112(1), 180-206. <https://bpspsychub.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/bjop.12449>

In today's globalized world, we frequently encounter unfamiliar events that we may have difficulty comprehending – and in turn remembering – due to a lack of appropriate schemata. In recall with delays increasing up to 1 month, quantitative measures indicated **forgetting** while **distortions** increased. It seems that in unfamiliar repeated events, a complex new schema is in the early stages of formation, where the lack of attentional resources **limits active processing** of deviations.

Williamson, J. B., Drago, V., Harciarek, M., Falchook, A. D., Wargovich, B. A., & Heilman, K. M. (2019). Chronological effects of emotional valence on the self-selected retrieval of autobiographical memories. *Cognitive and Behavioral Neurology*, 32(1), 11-15. <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/wk/cbn/2019/00000032/00000001/art00002>

Salience of **emotional autobiographical memories** may have temporal patterns associated with valence. Recall of negative emotional memories is often important in survival and well-being. Self-selected free retrieval of autobiographical happy and sad emotional memories reveals a time bias. Although the reason for this temporal dichotomy is unknown, it may be that engaging systems involved in defense and survival alters the encoding and/or retrieval characteristics of the memory that modify salience.

The **Promise** of Commissioning

Determine what is being promised

Communicate the promises clearly

Identify committed individuals who will ensure promises are kept

The **Potential** of Commissioning

Shepherd their soul

Oversee and ensure ongoing emotional health, with support as needed

Oversee and ensure ongoing spiritual health and growth

Oversee, guide, and celebrate decommissioning when the time comes

Commissioning

THE PROMISES AND THE POTENTIAL

If not YOU, then **WHO?**