

Navigator History

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I. Introduction.

A. Why is there a Navigator movement today?

1. When God raises up a man for special service, He first places the principles in the man that He determines are required to meet a need for the world. There is a principle that God wants to bless the church and the world with.

2. Dawson Trotman extended the vision to the speaker to reproduce. The principle that God gave him was to nourish people in Christ to the point where they can repeat the process.

II. Development.

A. In Trotman's original groups the discipline he encouraged was drudgery and men dropped out. He began praying with another man for these men and their prayers began to extend to other men and eventually to the nations. He soon found a man who was in the Navy who was willing to be exposed to the discipline that he sought. The group grew so that a man from every State passed through Trotman's house.

III. Video session of interviews from the first four men of Trotman's among others.

A. Ken Waters. He was with Downing during the attack on Pearl Harbor and then went in to help during the second attack

B. Jim Haven: Trotman's first assistant. They did lots of Bible club work and lots of speaking and traveling.

C. Wayne. He served during Pearl Harbor. Now serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators and recently went into a tribe where he was the first white man to survive.

D. Roy Robertson. He was the Navigators' first missionary. He went to China in 1949. His purpose was to encourage missions and lead souls to Christ. There is an awareness of God among the Chinese and an open heart for the message.

E. Don Rosenberger. His job was to initiate classes at Northwestern with a Navigator emphasis. A man influenced through this also influenced Chuck Colson.

F. Les Spencer. The first "Navigator." He told Trotman he would give his right arm to be able to evangelize like him. When Spencer brought another man for Trotman to teach, Trotman said, "You teach him."

G. Virgil Hook. He spent ten years working among the Tibetan people. His Tibetan name given by the Tibetan ruler protected him from persecution when he evangelized.

H. Ed Goodrick. From Dan to Beersheba is the regular expression for the length of the promised land. Dan walked this length to experience what the biblical characters did.

I. John Dedrick. He was interested in celestial navigation and he taught Trotman what he had learned about it. This is where Trotman got the name for the Navigators. John is currently working with an Indian tribe.

J. Which of the basics has been the most vital of the Navigators among these men? The Word.

IV. Observations about the Navigator beginnings.

A. They were all united on the significance of the Word.

B. They did not become staff with the Navigators because Trotman did not want to build an organization. Instead until 1945 men were channeled to other organizations.

C. Trotman was a disciplemaking discipler (“Equipper”), but it never got labeled that until later.

V. Questions.

A. Keeping your desires strong in the disciplines. Trying not to be legalistic. Music like the disciplines is a matter of timing. Harmony is what one is to look for that comes out of the blend.

B. How does one make the vision his own? In finishing well, there is no furlough or retirement. We give our lives to Christ for life. (Ecclesiastes 8:8)

C. What would encourage Trotman most today about the Navigator ministry? Many are conscious of this today. Trotman’s ministry was to young people, not the military in general. Therefore, the expansion to collegiate ministry would likely please him. However, he may feel that it has become too complicated.

D. Virgil Hook really lived the theology out for the speaker. This influenced him the most. He saw the Christian life lived through his inward satisfaction despite the outward circumstances.

Application questions.

1. Briefly recount the development of the Navigator movement.

2. What impressed you about the testimonies of the Navigators’ original men? Explain.

3. What principles stood out in this message that are consistent with Navigator principles today? How have they worked themselves into your life? What can you do to encourage further development?
