



## ABOUT FQ

[WHO WE ARE](#)
[IS FQ FOR YOU?](#)
[ORIENTATION EVENTS](#)
[FAQs](#)
[SPANISH FQ](#)
[ORDER FQ](#)

## FQ HELPS

[LEADER'S GUIDE](#)
[LEADER RESOURCES](#)
[LEADER E-LETTER](#)
[NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE](#)

## FQ HOME

## ARTICLE

### Session 1: A New Paradigm

#### PREPARATION

Read Scripture and background information. Reflect on the questions in the participant book. Review links suggested in the lesson outline below.

#### Train of Thought

The *FaithQuest* journey begins with an examination of the first nine chapters of the Gospel of Luke. Jesus brought a new paradigm to the people of his day, and the gospel account tells of the massive resistance this paradigm shift sparked.

#### Desired Outcomes

As a result of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify the current reality in which we exist as a church.
- Understand that change is a process that can be understood and managed.
- Realize that new information is a tool that has great potential for improving our lives.

#### Lesson Supplies

- Copies of handout "[A Partial List of Inventions, Discoveries, and Changes](#)"
- Extra Bibles for participants who have not brought one
- Worship center (include candle and matches)
- Newsprint or chalkboard
- [Posters](#) defining key concepts

#### EXPLORATION AT GROUP SESSION

*Total time: 50 minutes*

Open by praying together the prayer printed on page 9 in the participant's book. Light the candle to remind all of God's presence during the group meeting. Ask if anyone would like to share insights and surprises that arose from individual preparation of daily reading and background information about Jesus. Learn more about [Jesus' world](#).

#### Bible Study Focus Verses: Luke 6:20-26

Direct the group to the focus verses. Review the scene described in verses 17-20. Ask them to imagine being an individual in the midst of this noisy crowd. Make suggestions of the roles individuals might take on: curious; in need of healing; supportive; suspicious; and so on. Pause while each one settles into a role, and then read Luke 6:20-26. Ask participants to respond to questions about reaction to the message from the point of view of their first-century character. "How did you feel when you heard Jesus' words?" List the feelings on newsprint as people name them. Save the list as you continue the lesson.

#### Transition to Our Time

Direct attention to "A Reflective Moment Along the Way" on page 12. Pause for individual responses and reflections. Distribute the handout "Discoveries and Inventions of the Past 50 Years." Ask participants to recall their reactions to things introduced in their own lifetime. At the end of the discussion of contemporary paradigm shifts, return to the list of reactions to Jesus' words. Ask participants for their observations about the way people react to change. Our first reaction to change is usually on an emotional level. [Click here for more](#)

[information and examples of change.](#)

## **DISCOVERY – APPLYING IDEAS TO THE CONGREGATION**

*Total time: 45 minutes*

### **Discussion Questions** (30 minutes)

The questions on page 15 of the Bible study are important to help the group fully grasp the concepts of paradigm shifts and dealing with change. During "A Reflective Moment Along the Way," members talked about their personal experiences with paradigm shifts.

These questions move the discussion to the congregational sphere. Remember that the paradigm shifts named in this study stress the emerging realities of mainline Protestant denominations across North America. The discussion is not centered on whether or not we want to change, but on how we might respond to the changing paradigms in our church, society, and world.

### **Feedback & Evaluation** (5 minutes)

As the session time concludes, ask participants, "What have we learned from Session One and from our time together?"

### **Sending Forth** (10 minutes)

In closing, ask participants to name one thing others in the group can pray for for them. As leader, note these requests so you can follow up appropriately. Send people forth with the following Scripture reading. Remind participants that Moses led the people of God at a time when they were on the move and the future seemed uncertain. Numbers 9:21-23 tells us how they moved into the future. "Sometimes the cloud would remain from evening until morning; and when the cloud lifted in the morning, they would set out, or if it continued for a day and a night, when the cloud lifted they would set out. Whether it was two days, or a month, or a longer time, that the cloud continued over the tabernacle, resting upon it, the Israelites would remain in camp and would not set out; but when it lifted they would set out. At the command of the Lord they would camp, and at the command of the Lord they would set out. They kept the charge of the Lord, at the command of the Lord by Moses." (New Revised Standard Version)



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**BUILDING LEADERS FOR TODAY'S CHURCH**

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# A Partial List of Inventions, Discoveries, and Changes

## 1950's

Credit cards	Microchip	Brown vs. Board of Education
Polio vaccine	Pop-top cans	Modem
Super Glue	Hula hoop	Ultrasound
Rock and roll	Fiber optics	Electrocardiograph
DNA	Computer hard disk	Pacemaker
Radial tires	Integrated circuits	Power steering
Teflon™	Phone answering machines	Mr. Potato Head™
Oral contraceptives	Dodgers and Giants move to West Coast	

## 1960's

Artificial heart	Computer mouse	Instant color film
Audiocassette	Ibuprofen	Astroturf™
Lunar landing	Miniskirts	Nutrasweet™
Breast implant	John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr. assassinations	Coronary bypass
Word processor	The Beatles	Civil rights
Videodiscs	Liver, lung, and heart transplant	Permanent-press
Acid rain	Touchtone phones	Hologram
Valium		Virtual reality
Soft contact lens		

## 1970's

Floppy disk	Personal computer	Space stations
Test-tube baby	Computer/video games	Gene-splicing
Compact disc	Kevlar™	Post-It™ notes
Daisy-wheel, dot matrix, inkjet, and laser printers	Watergate and Nixon's resignation	Synthetic blood
Ethernet	OPEC oil embargo	VHS video
Neutron bomb	Disco	
	Food processors	

## 1980's

Cloning of fish	Random Access Memory (RAM)	Doppler radar
MS-DOS	AIDS identified	Disposable contact lens
Cellular phones	Berlin wall falls	Microsoft Windows
Computer viruses	Chernobyl	Desktop publishing
Digital audiotape	Prozac™	Fetal surgery
CD-ROM	Soy milk	World Wide Web
Rubik's Cube	Computer animation	
Macintosh computers	Stealth bomber	

## 1990's

End of apartheid	The Chunnel	HIV protease inhibitor
Instant language translators	Cloning of sheep	Break-up of the USSR
Pentium processor	Web TV	Anti-matter created in controlled setting
"Intelligent" metal (hardens under stress)	Commercial electric car	
	Java computer language	

# **PARADIGM**

***A set of assumptions,  
rules, opinions, and ideas  
that define reality***

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**SESSION 1**

# RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

- **Change is inevitable.**
- **Resistance is a normal response of all life forms.**
- **There are skills we can learn to live with and through change.**
- **“A leader is someone you choose to follow to a place you would not go by yourself.”**

— *Futurist Joel A. Barker*

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**SESSION 1**

# **NEW INFORMATION**

- ... is central to emerging paradigms.**
- ... is increasing in quantity and complexity.**
- ... is vital for decision making by leaders.**

**“See, I am making all things new.”**

*— Revelation 21:5, NRSV*

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**SESSION 1**



## CHANGE! CHANGE! CHANGE!

*Some words from the Bible\* about change:*

“When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was nearer; for God thought, ‘If the people face war, they may **change** their minds and return to Egypt.’”

*Exodus 13:17*

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should **change**...”

*Psalm 46:1*

“‘Therefore wait for me,’” says the Lord. ... ‘At that time I will **change** the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call on the name of the Lord.’”

*Zephaniah 3:8,9*

“Truly I say to you, unless you **change** and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

*Matthew 18:3*

“For we have heard him [Stephen] say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will **change** the customs that Moses handed on to us.”

*Acts 6:14*

“Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be **changed**...”

*1 Corinthians 15:51*

“Change is disruptive. It may be uncomfortable and unpleasant. even necessary change is hard. The truth, though, is that change is inevitable.”

*FaithQuest Bible Study, Session 1*

\*New Revised Standard Version

.....

“We respond to change in one of three ways – ignore, embrace, or resist.”

*FaithQuest Video, Session 8*

An acronym:

C hrist  
H as  
A llowed  
N ew  
G ifts to  
E merge



## **RESISTANCE – What is it?**

### **Resistance Is:**

- A predictable, natural, emotional reaction against **growing**
- A necessary part of **maturing**
- Something that has the **value** we give it.
- Something that can delay **growth**
- Something that can keep us **safe**

### **The Message of Resistance for Leaders**

1. Resistance is a sign that people are interested in what you are saying.
2. Do not take the expression of resistance personally or as an attack on your competence.
3. Resistance calls for the courage to be open and vulnerable to other people's ideas.
4. When we take time to reflect on great resistance and frustration, we have the opportunity for great learning.
5. Slow down when there is resistance! Take time to listen to people; coach them to listen to one another.
6. Know when to ask for help in dealing with resistance.



## Some Signs of RESISTANCE

“Give me more detail.”

“How did you come up with that?”

“The time is not right.”

“This would never work in reality.”

“We’ve never done it like this before.”

A flood of details

Silence and passivity

Intellectualizing, theologizing, and moralizing

Quick agreement

*“The temptation of resistance is to avoid it by ‘doing’ something.”*

### Some Underlying Concerns When There Is Resistance

Desire to maintain control ... influence ... authority ... power ...  
rewards of the status quo

Vulnerability of being dependent and asking for help

Fear of the unknown

Desire for validation and confirmation rather than change

### Three Major Steps in Handling Resistance

1. Identify the form the resistance is taking. Watch especially for nonverbal messages; put into words what you observe. Be aware of your own resistance as you lead.
2. Name the resistance that you observe and check your observation.
3. If the group (or individual) confirms your observation, be quiet and let people talk/respond.