

Foreword (to *A New Testament Trilogy* by Tom Johnston & Mike Perkinson)

As the popular folk song reminds us, “The times, they are a-changing.” What has worked in the past, won’t necessarily work today. While writing this preface, I am reminded of how culture, society, traditions and technology are constantly shifting. Technological advances allow me to email, instant message and create a manuscript all on my wireless laptop while sitting in an airport or a local café. However, 20 years ago I would have been tied to my desk, writing on my new word processor and communicating with my publisher by phone and a two-day courier service.

Technology has also impacted our sense of community. Like many of us in today’s culture, I can go an entire day without seeing the face of anyone other than a family member. My colleagues and I at CoachNet International Ministries all work from home, communicating through email and the Internet. On some days, there is no need to venture outside or even connect with someone in person. Gone are the days when people sat on the front porch and visited with neighbors and friends. The term “community” has a different meaning in today’s society, particularly with current and future generations.

Sociologists say that the emerging generations—the Xers and Millennialists—crave community, that their commitment to one another and their bonds of friendship are unlike that of other generations. Because of technology, their community can include anyone around the world, but their need for relationships, to know and be known, is a God-given desire that He has placed in all generations.

Tom Johnston and Mike Chong Peterson address these issues and other important concerns relevant to the church and community in *A New Testament Trilogy—Our God, Our Selves and Our Community*. They are church planting and ministry leaders who I’ve known for many years. They think biblically, strategically, and practically—and they are keenly aware of the value of relationships with God, others and ourselves. This book is designed around the importance of thinking fundamentally about who God is...who we are... and how we relate to one another in community. Tom and Mike’s insights flow out of the crucible of experience, empowering readers like you to prayerfully and strategically shape your ministry in a way that will produce transformation in your life and that of those with whom you relate.

Moving into new waters takes courage and involves learning as you go. We all know that putting a band-aid on an issue does not solve the problem. Anything as important as developing community in and outside of your church needs to be thoroughly studied and examined. The questions at the end of each chapter will help you learn to think your way into a new way of acting... and act your way into a new way of thinking.

I invite you join the quest and take the journey. Read carefully, reflect prayerfully and act courageously. I am very pleased to be in community with Tom and Mike and I know this book is a very important resource that will help church leaders meet the challenge of today's world.

Dr. Robert E. Logan
Los Angeles, California