

# *Point of View*



A LEADERSHIP COMMENTARY ON LIFE TODAY BY BOB SHANK

## **August 16, 2010**



# Point of View

Dear Marketplace Friend,

You may be popping the corn, as you read. Tonight, Showtime is rolling out one of their autumn gifts, early; it's ***The Big C***.

Laura Linney will be a guest in millions of homes tonight – and, every week – portraying a school teacher in Minneapolis who has been diagnosed with Stage 4 melanoma, and then proceeds to live out her uncertain future on her own terms (it's labeled a “sitcom,” so, watch out). ***The “Big C.”***

If you have been around the Christian ghetto for a while, that term – the “Big C” – may require some clarification. We've been using that designation for something other than cancer, for a long time...

You've heard it, I'll bet. It shows up in shorthand, in conversation: “Is that *'Big C'* or *'little c'* church?” The question drills down to discover whether someone is talking about the edifice on the corner – the one with the steeple, and linoleum floors in the Fellowship Hall where the cheaper wedding receptions happen with sheet cake and punch instead of steak and dancing – or, about the mystical, eternal, international Body of Christ (or, as some choose to tag it, “the Kingdom”). *Big C?* or, *little c?*

Let me propose another possible use of the segmentation: when we talk about someone as “Christian,” should we gain clarity by asking, “*'Big C,'* or *'little c'* Christian?”

What's the diff? Currently, in America, the latest stats put the Muslim community at less than 2% of the populace, and over 80% as “Christian.” If you think biblically, let me ask you a thoughtful question: do you believe that 80% of Americans are listed in the Lamb's Book of Life, which is the gate-posted guest list for entrance to Heaven? *We need some better precision in our conversation...*

I propose we start thinking more about “Big C” and “little c” issues. We'll leave the cancer discussion to Showtime and Obamacare. I'm talking about the two “c's” that have eternal weight: *church*, and *Christian*. How many Americans are *christian*, but not really *Christians?*

Let me put it short-and-sweet, then tout a book. Here we go: only *Big C* Christians go to Heaven. And, *Big C* Christians are alive on Earth for one principle purpose: to glorify God by expanding His *Big C*

Church. The people tasked with overseeing that effort are the men and women who are gifted to lead... and most of them spend most of their waking hours working at a career, in the marketplace!

How can these in-high-demand leaders allocate time to this Prime Directive? What is the strategy for fulfilling the Mission? Here is the plan, laid out by the Commander of Heaven, left for us to execute until His return. Are you ready? Write it down; put it in your wallet. Don't lose this; it's crucial:

**Turn *little c*'s into *Big C*'s, and then bring them to *little c*'s that are part of the *Big C*.**

*Little c* christians are unconverted. Their biggest need is salvation; new life in Christ. The vast majority of those are also unchurched. Their next big need is to find a place where they can grow in their newly personalized faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why *little c* church is their next stop. Why? Because their value to the *Big C* Church should emerge from their *little c* church involvement.

Book of the week: ***Grow Your Church from the Outside In***, by George Barna (*Regal Books, 2002*). If you think that your pastor is the only one who needs to be thinking strategically about the growth issues, you're in a faith funk, and not grasping the full-engagement expectations God has for your life and leadership. In fact, with your cultural and professional savvy, this crucial exploration of strategies for

folding *little c* activities into *Big C* results will make better sense to you than it does to some seminary grads. Get a copy; highlight and dog-ear it, through its 164 pages... and then give it to your pastor, as you volunteer to assist him in thinking big (***Big C Christian; Big C Church***).

Bob Shank

*Bob Shank is Founder and Chief Mentoring Officer of The Master's Program (TMP).*

To read prior issues of the Point of View visit:

[www.mastersprogram.net](http://www.mastersprogram.net)

To read a Program Summary of TMP visit:

[www.mastersprogram.org/summary/](http://www.mastersprogram.org/summary/)

To learn more about TMP visit:

[www.mastersprogram.org](http://www.mastersprogram.org)

RSVP for a TMP Executive Briefing:

[www.mastersprogram.org/Briefing.aspx](http://www.mastersprogram.org/Briefing.aspx)