

# Navigator History

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## I. Introduction.

## II. Origins.

A. Dawson Trotman, the Navigator's founder, came to Christ as a result of memorizing Scripture.

1. A church group asked him to memorize Scripture to win a party.
2. Trotman was the only one who memorized the Scripture, but it led him to Christ.

## B. His early work.

1. His first Christian work was in boys groups and men's teams.
2. One of his earliest groups was the Minute Men. For one week they were supposed to read a Bible book, memorize major verses in the book, touch someone for God and pray one hour a day. Projects increased as time went on.
3. People eventually dropped out of the Minute Men likely because of the rigid discipline of Trotman who was often disillusioned with the church's lack of it.
4. Trotman began praying for the nations because of a burden placed on his heart. Soon afterward a young sailor was placed in his life so that he could incorporate some of Trotman's discipline.
  - a. Trotman led another to personal faith in Jesus Christ in this man's presence.
  - b. Spencer, the man who was with Trotman, said he would give his right arm to be able to do the same and began meeting with Trotman regularly to developing these principles.
5. Meetings began to develop in Trotman's home where Sailors were being disciplined from every State in the US. The work of Trotman began to spread through these men.

## III. Present outreach.

A. Today Navigators have a presence in the Middle East, Latin America, the Philippines, Japan, Vietnam, New Zealand, Australia, Germany, Korea, Okinawa, Hawaii, in all the major military institutions in the US and many of the colleges.

#### IV. Scriptural principles.

A. The gospel had at one time been preached to every creature under heaven. (Colossians 5:6)

1. Josephus said in the first century that there was not a nation that was not offering up prayer to Jesus Christ.
2. Tertullian said in the second century that the Christians were in the majority.

B. The secret of the first century Christians. (John 17:21,23)

1. Christ's goal was that the world would believe and know.
2. He was saying that he had finished the work through raising up disciples.
  - a. Jesus gave the disciples the Word.
  - b. He then sent them out.
3. What the disciples went through in the three and a half years that Jesus was present with them was an impartation of knowledge, skill, and character.
  - a. Normal classes do not give disciples the experience they need.
  - b. But when one takes a man and develops him personally, he reproduces the same character in him.

C. Paul dealt with the Thessalonians one-by-one just as a father does his child. (1 Thessalonians 2:11)

1. The pews are filled with people every morning who have unanswered questions. The only way they will bring up that question is through an individual spiritual conference.
2. Group development can hinder spiritual growth.
3. There is not that much growth where there is not individual spiritual attention.
4. You can determine the importance of the task by the amount of attention given to it. There is no greater task than spreading the gospel. This is done through the development of people.

D. Christ had to use an approach that would not fail knowing the limits of His stay. He concentrated on a few and it worked.

Application questions.

1. What aspects of the Navigator origins caused the spread of its principles so quickly?

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2. What is the Scriptural principle that describes the heart of the Navigator movement? Why is should Christ's model in this area be reproduced?

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3. Have you been convinced of the effectiveness of these principles? If so, how will you carry on these principles in your own life and ministry? If not, explain what you think might be more effective.

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