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Missional Leadership

*Mark Zuckerberg* is a name that will go down in history. Through his leadership and ingenuity, Zuckerberg played a significant role in changing the world as we know it. Through his technological advances, he made it possible for connection to happen in a new way. It even could be argued that Zuckerberg is a modern day version of Alexander Graham Bell. Bell changed history in giving an alternative for communication in his creation of the telephone. Mark Zuckerberg changed the norms for communication in his creation of Facebook.

What are the origins of Mark Zuckerberg? It is interesting to see how a person's upbringing can play a significant role in making that person who they are. It is safe to say that Zuckerberg grew up in a well-educated family. His father was a dentist and his mother was a psychiatrist. As a child, Mark was somewhat of a prodigy when it came to his knowledge of computers and technology. When he was just 12 years old, he created a system called "Zucknet" that was used as somewhat of an intercom system. His father would use the Zucknet system in the dentist office in order to communicate things across the office. The same system was also used in their home when they had to say something to someone in another room

([www.biography.com](http://www.biography.com)).

Zuckerberg's parents played a significant role in making sure his skills with computers continued to develop and grow. They got him a computer tutor when he was very young and his skill level quickly was surpassing all of the things that he had been learning from his tutor. He was so advanced when it came to computers that he even started taking graduate level courses at Mercy College even before he was finished with his High School career. He was offered a career

with AOL and Microsoft even before he finished High school, but he didn't accept their offers. Even though all of this sounds wonderful, it was during his time in college when he really began with the genesis of what we know to be Facebook today.

Mark Zuckerberg attended Harvard University, a prestigious Ivy League institution. That in and of itself speaks to how brilliant and intellectual he is. As a college student, he then created what was then known as "thefacebook.com" ([www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com)). The original purpose of the website was to connect fellow Harvard students to each other through this platform. How interesting it is to learn the Facebook (as we know it today) has taken a major turn. It was created as a tool to connect students with each other. How innovative that was! Originally, it was created to be a directory where students could find information about each other. In the same way that a directory is a book full of pictures and people's contact information, this was the original vision behind "thefacebook.com". This was a great idea when it comes to recycling. With the original purpose for this platform, they would've saved so much paper.

As time moved on, students from Harvard were signing up, learning how they could upload their pictures and learning how they could use this platform. This platform was used mostly for networking among the Harvard students. In little time, it seemed that about half of the student body was signed up to use "the facebook" as a social networking platform. The platform was growing at such a rapid rate that institutions around the country were hearing about "the facebook" and trying to find ways to use it for their own networking needs. It was slowly becoming a phenomenon about college students that were looking to connect with one another ([www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com)).

As time would have it, Zuckerberg got to a point where his work with "the facebook" was getting too large and he decided to drop out of Harvard to place more attention on his

Facebook development that was growing rapidly. By 2005, Zuckerberg officially became the CEO and President of the company and things were looking on the bright side for him and his company. The Facebook team received their first large portion of revenue with the Facebook development in the amount of 12.7 million. High school students were allowed to sign up, university students from all around to sign up, and Facebook was continuing to see rapid growth. Around 2006, anyone with an email address was able to sign up to use Facebook. That was the point in time when Facebook was beginning to look like what it is today ([www.brittanica.com](http://www.brittanica.com)).

Zuckerberg made this profound statement: “We may not have the power to create the world we want immediately, but we can all start working on the long term today” ([www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com)). This statement was profound because He truly lives that out. He didn’t know that this would be the case when he created Facebook, but through his leadership, he created a prime communications tool that would be utilized to carry the world through a pandemic where people were not able to physically gather ([www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com)). Facebook has become one of the most helpful ways to keep in touch with family, co-workers, classmates, church members, and the list goes on and on. Musical artists were able to utilize Facebook to their advantage during the pandemic by having virtual concerts when concert halls were not able to be used. Business men and business women were able to use Facebook to remain connected to their clientele.

Zuckerberg’s quote rings true. He did not have all of the answers to all of life’s issues, concerns and problems. There are many things that cannot be changed immediately, but where would the world be if Facebook was never created? What would a pandemic have looked like if people weren’t able to go outside and people didn’t have the ability to stay connected with the people that they care about? The pandemic was hard enough *with* social media being in place. However, without it, it is unimaginable to even consider where people would have been.

Through his leadership, Zuckerberg was able to create a way for people to stay connected. Of course, his original idea may not have necessarily been for Facebook to become as large as it became. Although, Mark Zuckerberg saw a need and addressed it. He saw that there was a greater need for connection and networking, and so he created a platform for that to be able to take place virtually.

Some lessons that can be taken away from Mark Zuckerberg and his leadership is to look for a need and start there. What I appreciate about Zuckerberg is that he did not start off with a vision that was too large or unattainable. He did not start out with him trying to make a platform that is global and worldwide. He addressed the need that was before him. There was a need on his college campus for networking and he found a way to make networking more of a possibility. It just so happened that there was a similar need shared among individuals from all around the world.

In closing, what this teaches me as it relates to my ministry is that I shouldn't be afraid to start small. There are a lot of issues in the world. Regardless of how anointed a person may be, they are not able to solve all of the problems of the world all at once. One thing that Zuckerberg modeled very well that especially stands out to me is offering a solution to a problem. When a single problem is addressed, sometimes it may have larger or even global implications. For example, God could have an individual mentoring a couple of young kids. Focusing on this particular task could explode and could eventually turn into a non-profit organization and ministry of helping young kids to know God and to grow in valuable life skills. Starting small could very well cause a person to see a greater need and eventually address that as well. It is so vital to always take that first step. That first step can take a person anywhere!

## **Bibliography**

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