



GREENHOUSE
CHURCH

CORE DOCUMENTS

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

To help ordinary people become passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

VISION

We see... churches of real disciples, not part-time believers ... people that love God as Father, follow Him as Rabbi, and honor Him as King ... people that give themselves for one another, and the cause of the lost and the least.

Churches of passion ... people who stand so amazed at God's grace that they can't help but live lives of adventure and generosity. We see God leading us to spend ourselves for those who could never pay us back ... strong with children, students, missions, and the poor. We have been sent.

Churches where people feel like they can belong before they believe and believe before they behave. We also see bodies with too much brown to be called a white church, and too much Hispanic to be called a black church; with too many kids to be called an old church, and too many wise ones to be called a young church – churches that model the diversity of God's kingdom.

Congregations that love God with more than Sundays and care for people with more than words. We see characteristically Spirit-filled churches that move in undeniable power yet stay non-religious and creative. We see churches where people become whole – in spirit, soul, and body.

Communities where the potential of all the members get realized, as people recognize that they are called, whether they work in a church building or the marketplace. We see teams that are led by people who are greater on the inside than they are on the outside.

A movement of disciples who reorient their lives around Jesus' call to make more disciples. We see a multiplying network of churches and microchurches that unashamedly and fiercely love their neighbor both locally and globally. We see ordinary people mobilized to go and change the world.

... mentoring churches and missions outposts, worshipping families and authentic communities. We see houses of prayer.

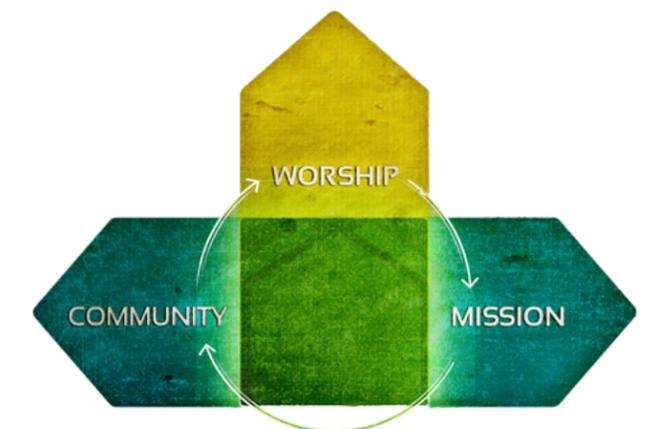
We see churches as supernatural as their Master ... because He promised nothing less.

WHAT'S THE GREEN ABOUT?

There are many ways to describe church. The people of God. Two or more gathered in His name. The Bride of Christ. The Body. Yet our ecclesial minimum, and our discipleship approach is *worship, mission, and community*.

We envision our devotion toward God with the color yellow, and we call this *worship*. We envision our devotion toward people with the color blue, and we call these *mission* and *community*. Yellow and blue make green. Loving God and loving people makes disciples.

“Green” is about true discipleship and true church. We call people to live in this green reality of the Kingdom of God. We measure the health of our families and microchurches and discipleship by whether or not we are living in the green.



It's vital to get the order right. Worship is first. We are not fully ready to “go blue” until we have first “gone yellow” in relationship with God. But once we have connected to God in worship we cannot help but receive his heart for a lost and suffering world. This leads us into mission. As we engage in mission with the people of God, community is the natural result. It is vital to realize that we do not encounter authentic community by looking for community; it is the result of encountering God and getting on mission – *together*. It is also curious and beautiful to watch how biblical community causes us to hunger and connect with God.

And that is what makes Greenhouse tick. Only God can make things grow, but we try provide an environment where he can work his wonders.

It may seem odd, but it's actually more essential to our mission to change what people care about than to change what they believe. Statistics prove this to be true. It is not what we call beliefs, but our values and emotions that influence the way we live. No wonder Jesus said to love God with all of our mind and strength as well as our heart. He wants our feelings. Our soul. Our passion. Our ethos.

Ethos is like a tribal fire. It's the fuel of our caring and heat of our passions. Erwin McManus describes it as the "e-motion of a community. The fundamental character or spirit; the underlying sentiment that informs the beliefs, customs, and practices of a group or society ... To simplify, an ethos is expressed through spontaneous, recurring patterns." Keep this in mind and think *culture*. Here are our passions.

JESUS-CENTRIC

Scripture makes it very clear: It starts with Jesus. It ends with Jesus. It's all about Jesus. And that means it's not about us. Everything we do is to point people to Him. We long to embrace both individually and as a church body John the Baptist's prayer: "You must become greater; I must become less". In preaching, microchurches, ministry, and anything we do, we seek to exalt the name of Jesus as the name above every name. We can't help but draw attention back to the one who has loved and done so much for us.

GOD-SEEKING

We long to be God-seekers. We seek first. We dream of ministry defined by it's pursuit of God, so that it is so very clear that He alone is glorious. We see no need for

another successful, natural church characterized by business principles, human striving, and natural talent – with a Jesus label attached. At the center of our leadership is a leveraging of our influence to cause people to radically seek God. Scripture is saturated with promises for those who respond to God in prayer, thus we respond. We have discovered that holistic mission and true community are the natural outgrowth of an organic pursuit of God. So this is first. The first command is our first priority.

BIBLE

We are utterly committed to the authority of the Scriptures and believe that God's ability to preserve His Word is greater than humanity's ability to corrupt it. God has spoken. We agree with Spurgeon: the Bible is like a lion. It needs no defense; just open the cage. We take a redemptive-historical approach to Scripture with a mind for both the specific teachings & stories as well as the ultimate teaching & story of Jesus and His redemption. We do not approach the Bible as a moralistic self-help exercise centered on us, but God's revelation centered on Him.

HOLY SPIRIT

It's tragic. The world has gone spiritual while most churches have gone secular. We are convinced that the fruit, power, and gifts of the Spirit must be the regular experience of the church. The contemporary church has neglected the Spirit. Although we cannot predict or control how the Spirit may move, we pray for and open ourselves to His promptings. We strongly encourage regular infillings & the stirring of every member's gifts (especially in their microchurches).

DISCIPLE MAKING

"Go and make disciples." These were the final words of Jesus and encompass our call and purpose here on earth. We take this very seriously; it is the Great Commission, not the Great Suggestion. We are called to baptize and teach everything Jesus has commanded us and so we have made this our life pursuit because it was His life pursuit when Jesus was here on earth. We willingly sacrifice our time, our agendas, and our lives for the purpose of disciple making.

MICROCHURCH APPROACH

In the Bible "church" was not a weekly service; it was the reality of God's people gathered. Where you find true worship, community, and mission, you find "church", whether in a group of 5000 or five. Especially inspired by the book of Acts, we value both the large and micro expressions to make true disciples. But both are "church". Because spiritual formation happens in the process of doing, not just hearing, we see the need for real people making face-to-face and heart-to-heart contact with other believers in safe and authentic ways. Thus we call people to re-orient their lives around Jesus and His community in order to live a biblical lifestyle of discipleship.

BIBLICAL JUSTICE

We hear the call of God to make a prophetic stand against all forms of evil in our city and our world. Because Jesus made our problems His problems, we make this world's problems our problems. We intend to take action where we have power: giv-

ing a voice to the voiceless, empowering the downcast, and helping the oppressed both locally and globally. We seek to combat injustice and poverty at every level as a church body, as microchurches, and as individuals.

THE POOR

We remember the poor because God does. Because all of us are poor in some way. We believe the poor are central to God's mission in the world. Scripture simply does not allow us to divorce God's heart from the plight of the poor. There are also elements of Jesus that are only experienced and revealed through the shared brokenness with the poor and poor in spirit. God has stood with and advocated for the poor throughout the ages, and we simply find ourselves following Him in that pursuit.

HARVEST, SOULS, EVANGELISM

Lost souls matter to God, so they matter to us. We try to create environments that are non-threatening, open to questions, and saturated with love; yet we do not run from the call to bring the great news of Jesus to every person in our lives and in this world. We expect all microchurches to equip their members to love others enough to invest in their lives and then invite them to faith. There is a prophetic call on our church for harvest, so we will go after the lost with not only a fierce and tenacious love but with the confidence that we have been set apart by God to do so.

GENEROSITY

In a culture held captive by greed, we renounce the idolatry of materialism and embrace the call to give of ourselves and our possessions. Our goal is 51% of all expenditures to go toward missions and the poor. We will share because it promotes relationship and breaks the bondage of possessiveness. In sharing what we have with others we confess that God is the true owner and that we are only stewards in his vineyard. We will pursue relentless generosity and the holding of all things in common.

DIVERSITY

We feel passionately about being a church that reflects the beauty of God's mosaic. Despite the challenges we hear the call to demonstrate the power of the Gospel through reconciliation and unity in a world of hatred and division. We value every people, language, class, and culture in our city and in the world. We believe that the church is meant to demonstrate the power of the gospel through reconciliation, unity, and the beauty demonstrated when dissimilar people become one in the name of Jesus. For that reason we do not just admire multi-cultural communities, but purpose to become one.

REAL

We are tired of the superficial. Because the way of Jesus cannot be lived alone, authentic community must saturate every part of our congregation's life. Nothing hinders such community like the mask-wearing, image maintenance now famous in organized religious circles. We endeavor to create environments that encourage the genuine sharing of life, as well as an organizational culture of humility.

HUMILITY

We commit to pursue humility as one of the chief virtues. We expect it in leadership, in community and relationships, in our theology, in our prayer, and even in our appraisal of ourselves and others. We are convinced that humility is necessary for following Jesus as an individual and as a church body. We believe in the living prophetic word of God, that it can be heard and obeyed, yet we also believe that we are flawed listeners and should always listen and follow with humility.

MULTIPLICATION

Every living thing on this earth is designed to reproduce. Trees reproduce more trees. Fish reproduce more fish. Humans reproduce more humans. Life gives birth to new life. It reproduces. It multiplies. In the same way, disciples reproduce disciples. Multiplication is the natural by-product of growth and the way DNA is transferred from one generation to the next. We see this as no different regarding spiritual DNA. We strive to impart what Jesus has entrusted to us to the next generation, who will then reproduce that into the next generation with everything we do: from the individual, to microchurches, to large group gatherings. We want to make disciples that make disciples and have a passion to do this at every level.

FIRST VIRTUE

We are a movement of the first love. The first command is our first priority: Love the Lord your God. Here is an excerpt from a journal entry that frames our starting place of passion:

Your face O Lord we will seek. Our deep desire is not ministry growth or success. We want You, Father. Whatever we do in ministry, may it be the result of this experiment: what happens when a body of people set apart their lives to seeking You? The outgrowth of that then, is to seek the lost, the least, and the true Church. But this is our ultimate dream: to pull off a ministry *defined* by its pursuit of You, so that it is so very clear that You are glorious. This is *first*. Primary. The center.

So we pray for harvest, innovation, leadership, power encounters, supernatural provision, gifts of the Spirit, creativity, powerful sermons, inspired Bible studies, unity, resources, divine appointments, expanded vision, physical strength, open doors, great management, protection for our people, incredible times of worship. But what we most want is *You*. To know You. To be found in You. We want to do what we do – not out of an achiever need to accomplish, not out of a driven need to compete, not because it's what everybody else is doing – or because nobody else has done it yet ... we want to live the natural outgrowth of our relationship, intimacy, and friendship with You. Thus, our main thing is not leadership or preaching; it is seeking You. This is our life. We are God-seekers.

Save us from the nonsense of “doing our devotions” or some kind of minimum requirement attitude in seeking You. Jesus, our whole lives are Yours, and we set them apart to seek You.

The need of our day is not another successful church. The need is a work characterized by You, not by business principles, hard work, brainstorming sessions, and natural talent. We seek You. We are defined by You. Your face O Lord we will seek.

We are not to take this for granted with our people or our leaders. This is not merely one of our activities; this is the main thing. No minimum requirement mentality. At the center of our leadership is leveraging every bit of our influence to cause people to seek You. This is our call: to make people thirsty enough to drink living water and woo them by the Spirit to seek Your face.

For the unregenerate we call this evangelism. But there is another form of evangelism needed for the believer. We get lost too. We lose our way. But this we know, because we have done the experiment a million times: our call gets rediscovered in the pursuit of God. Vision becomes sharp in the Secret Place. Mission comes alive when our hearts are set on seeking You. Leadership is amazing when the leader brings direction that came from hours spent burning in Your presence. Words have authority when the tongue has been silenced in a time of listening. Hope is rekindled, faith is stirred, peace is obtained, promises are embraced, fears are stilled, opposition is exposed. Draw us in O Lord!

We don't just need another good church. Or another missional movement. Or another group of natural Christians. What we bring to the table is a God-obsession that translates into a God-pursuit, and then leads us to a radical mission and radical community. Amen.

Every leader in Greenhouse needs to possess certain “fluencies”. This is beyond a creedal affirmation; it is the competency and the ability to reproduce a reality. You are fluent when you can flow, which is why fluency is rarely acquired unless you immerse yourself in the culture. The key word here is culture.

culture: *the art of developing the intellectual and moral faculties especially by education; expert care and training; the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon man’s capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations.¹*

We are trying to create a unique and passionate culture, a kingdom of Jesus kind of culture. We do not want liberal or conservative, progressive or traditional; we want the Church. We want the kingdom of God. We want an alternative, inclusive culture, much like what we discover in the book of Acts. They were far from perfect, but they were very alive. And they turned their world upside down. Note the following:

Eph 4:20: *but you have not so learned Christ.*

2 Tim 3:14, 2:2: *But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them ... and the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*

We aren’t kidding ourselves into believing that our native culture does not influence the way we view reality. We recognize that every person brings a certain bias to their study of Scripture and their pursuit of God. Yet we find ourselves captivated by the possibility that God Himself is able to influence us more deeply than our earthly culture, and the book of Acts seems to show such an object lesson. God wants to create a culture that corresponds

to a prayer that says, “on earth as it is in heaven.” What is the Church? It is God’s way of answering this prayer.

Those who try to exalt one culture at the expense of another might be ignoring the fact that Scripture shows the devil to be the ruler of this world. We may be from one part of the world or another, but the *defining* cultural influence on our lives must become the Kingdom of God. The Church is God’s way of *passing on the Kingdom culture*. This is the essence of discipleship, which is why our leaders must be fluent.

We want an authentic community of passionate Jesus-followers that are more influenced by Kingdom culture than any other. We intend to build a tribal fire that resists unnecessary dogma – yet acknowledges that God has spoken and He has not stuttered. A culture has its songs, tells its stories, and creates its aroma. If you are a part of this leadership team it is for the purpose of helping to generate a distinct flavor and extraordinary influence in the world to which God is calling you.

What follows are specific fluencies we require.

¹ Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 1998

1. GREEN FLUENCY

There are many ways to describe the Church. The people of God. Two or more gathered in the name of Jesus. The Bride of Christ. The Body. Yet at the functional level, our ecclesial minimum, and our discipleship approach looks like this: When you find a group devoted to *worship, mission, and community* you find the Church.

The implications of this are profound. This means there are many religious buildings and Christian groups that sing songs, facilitate monologues, and call themselves “church” – but that does not make it so. This is why there are huts and caves and homes all over the world that look highly plain on the outside, but on the inside you find a worshipping community on mission. And that is Church.

When the yellow of our devotion to God (worship) meets the blue of our devotion to people (mission and community), we reach the deep green of the Church. The kingdom of God comes to earth.

We call people to live in the green. We scrutinize the health of our families and microchurches and discipleship by whether or not we are living in the green. We recognize and resist the dangers of organized religion to complicate the simplicity of our call.

Note the order. *Worship* is first. There is a reason that the first of the Ten Commandments involves worshipping only God. The second involves idols, a function of worship. All of the other commands - most involving people - will be an outgrowth of these first commands. You never break commandments 3-10 unless you

have first violated number one and two. Indeed, our lives flow out of our worship. We absolutely must disciple people and lead churches with this truth in mind.

Yet part of the litmus test of true worship is *mission*. Once we connect to God in worship we cannot help but receive his passion for a lost and suffering world. He gives us a new heart, and this new heart leads us into mission. People who worship God begin to care about what He cares about. We always embrace the interests of the people with whom we share our heart.

When we worship and engage in mission with other people, *community* is the natural result. We see this with soldiers in battle. Diverse men and women, who possibly would have never come together, become a band of brothers and sisters uniting around a mission. This is how God has wired us. And this is why we call people to realize that in a world where people are afflicted with loneliness, we do not encounter authentic community by looking for community; it is the result of encountering God and getting on mission – *together*. Don’t “go to church” looking for friends; go to church looking for God and mission, and you’ll always have friends. That’s why you can’t really “go” to church; you have to “be” the church.

And that is what makes Greenhouse tick. Only God can make things grow, but we provide an environment where he can work his wonders.

2. GRACE FLUENCY

We are *justified* by grace through faith. And we are *sanctified* by grace through faith.

Perhaps the greatest theological contribution of the Protestant Reformation was the second of these two statements. And perhaps the greatest theological challenge of most believers is precisely this: although they believe that the grace of God is enough to justify, forgive, and pardon them, they functionally believe that future growth and progress will be the result of their hard work and striving. In other words, Jesus got this ball rolling, but I'll have to take it from here.

Please don't miss this; when we allow our *sanctification* (ongoing progress) to feed on our *justification* (finished work), we thrive. But when the opposite occurs, we base the stability of our justification on the instability of our sanctification, and we fall deeper into sin and despair. It was the unmerited favor and work of Jesus that saved us, and it is the unmerited favor and work of Jesus that grows us. This is why Paul said that all he talked about was Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2). Apparently, every word of wisdom and moral exhortation was directly tied back to the Gospel of grace.

This means the key to *growing* in the Kingdom is the same key to *getting* in the Kingdom: a life-altering encounter with the amazing grace of God. Good news. It is the good news (about what Jesus *has done and is doing*), not the good advice (about what *we do*) or the bad news (about what we have or have not done). Our teaching will clearly involve moral imperatives and instruction, yet it must find its roots in the finished work of Jesus on the Cross and the ongoing work of

Jesus through His Spirit. Gospel freedom – not legalistic guilt - is the fuel for every call to obedience and mission.

Thus, we acknowledge that transformation is not the result of trying harder, but beholding more deeply the grace and person of Jesus. Just as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, when the people gazed upon it, they were changed. When we gaze upon Christ and Him crucified, we are transformed.

We do recognize that the Gospel of grace is a challenge for non-first-century people to comprehend. *Substitutionary atonement* is a Jewish concept. Words like *propitiation*, *adoption*, and *covenant* require explanation. Yet we affirm these truths, and consider the effort to explain them well worth the energy.

We need to be fluent in life-altering thoughts like these. Jesus took my place (substitution) and covered me (atonement) by exhausting all the wrath against me (propitiation). He lived the life I should have lived, and died the death I should have died. He took what I deserve, and now I get what He deserves. I never have to wonder what I did to deserve this; Jesus took what I deserve. Therefore, I am His.

If we will lead people to know who they are, they will increasingly act out of that identity.

Suggested books:
The Prodigal God, The Gospel for Real Life

3. GOD-SEEKING FLUENCY

Ministry *for* God without intimacy *with* God is a dead work. Mission to the world without a connection with the God who loves the world is a filthy rag. Anything of eternal consequence flows out of our relationship with Father. Far too much of the ministry being attempted today is deprived of the soul-morphing effect of an intimate encounter with God.

David said, “The intimate friendship of the Lord is reserved for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant.” (Psalm 25:14) His response? “My eyes are ever towards the Lord.” (25:15) This fluency speaks to the need for intimacy with God.

This lack of intimacy is a fundamental problem for so many Christians in general and leaders in particular. It's like a travel agent selling time-shares for a property she's never seen. Or a vegan waiter pushing meat loaf he's never tasted. The pictures look good and the food smells great, but the experience is second-hand. Far too many believers are bored with their relationship with God. Like spiritual pornographers, they attend (and lead!) religious gatherings to watch other people encounter God, while they themselves are lifeless and dull, wearied by the “duties” associated with “serving” God.

Spiritual leaders *must* have first-hand experiences with God in order to lead people to have first-hand experiences with God. We intend to mobilize movements of people who will make the first commandment their first priority. We love God. And how does this manifest in the real world? We begin by seeking God.

Our eternal *position* changes the moment we

reorient our trust from our righteousness to Jesus'. We change. We are born from above. But we still have an ongoing need for this same kind of reorientation at the *practical* level. This involves our activity, attention, and energy. The human soul is a fickle thing. Nothing short of direct abiding in Jesus and allowing His words to abide in us will do the trick.

“And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.” (Mark 1:35)

If we want to reflect our King, and represent our King, we must *imitate* our King. And before the sun had even risen, He would find a solitary place – a place to shut the door on distraction. To shut the door on temptation. To shut the door on all competitors for his attention. Because behind the shut door Father gets the monopoly. In fact, this is precisely how Jesus taught us to seek His face:

“Go, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is in secret.” (Matthew 6:6)

We challenge people to be extravagant in their devotion. We equip people to move from duty to delight. We expect every leader to spend the first fruit of their day in the Secret Place. We expect every pastor to commit two hours per day in the Secret Place. We call people to the place of encounter with God.

Suggested books:
Why Revival Tarries, Secrets of the Secret Place, The Hour that Changes the World, The Praying Life

4. SCRIPTURE FLUENCY

The role of Scripture cannot be overstated. One of Jesus' very definitions of a disciple points directly to his word: "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32)

Disciples are people who abide in the Word of God. They prioritize hearing, reading, studying, meditating, memorizing, and applying the words of Scripture.

We absolutely affirm the Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Covenant and the 27 books of the New Covenant, as God's written revelation to humanity. It is the indispensable and infallible record of God's self-disclosure. The Bible is the authoritative and normative rule and guide for the Christian life, conduct, and doctrine. Greenhouse leaders are expected to rightly handle the word of truth.

At the concrete level, this means we encourage leaders, teachers, and students to be able to study Scripture with an inductive approach.

This begins with **observation**. Start with prayer. What is happening in this passage? Ask the who-what-when-where-how-why questions. Note key words, thoughts, etc.

Then move into **interpretation**. What does this passage mean? How does this line up with other scripture? Each book is to be studied diligently and handled faithfully, within both the immediate context and ultimate context. We are to always ask, *what was the original human author's intent in writing this?* But then we recognize the invisible divine Author and ask, *what is His intent in including*

this passage in Scripture? The idea is not to read our opinions and biases into the passage; what does the Holy Spirit mean?

Finally, we move into **application**. We recognize the danger of being "hearers only." Therefore we approach the Scriptures with a heart to go deeply enough to put these words into practice. Jesus warned of the leaven of the "doctrine" of the Pharisees (Matt. 16:12). He would go on to claim that their preaching was right, but their practice was wrong (Matt. 23:3). According to Jesus, the doctrine that matters is the doctrine you actually *put into practice*. Hence, fueled by Gospel grace, with eyes for Jesus, every sermon, study, and teaching leads to response. We must always ask, what are we going to DO about this?

In the end, we call people to a Jesus-center. If we read the Bible, but fail to arrive at Jesus, we have engaged in vain religion. We remember that this faith is not just a belief in a book, but a living trust in a Person. Thus we read the Scriptures with eyes for Jesus. We embrace a Christo-centric, redemptive-historical approach to Scripture. The Bible is not a just book full of teachings with stories thrown in to illustrate the points. It is one glorious story of redemption, with teachings and principles thrown in to tell the story.²

Suggested books:
How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth

² Adapted from Soma Church training materials

5. SPIRIT FLUENCY

Greenhouse leaders are expected to be both biblically grounded and practically-experienced in the activities of the Spirit.

The prophets said the sign of the end times was legitimate but widespread Holy Spirit activity (Joel 2). Jesus promised His ongoing work would be through the Person of the Spirit. The early church made decisions with statements like, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us..." (Acts 15:28) Seemed? How could they make such a claim? Because, as Paul would say, they "kept in step" with the Spirit (Galatians 5:25). Paul would go so far as to say we "live by the Spirit." While most Christians functionally minimize this to mean "living biblically", the book of Acts presents a much richer experience.

And herein lies the fluency challenge: experience. Most cessationists (those who believe that the miraculous gifts and manifestations of the Spirit have ceased) argue that Spirit-filled believers base their theology on experience. While many do, the reality is that many cessationists base their theology on *lack* of experience. Thus, we begin with the Bible. We conclude that the gifts and power and presence and guidance of the Spirit *is* abundantly available in our day, *and we draw this conclusion from Scripture*. Not subjective and unbiblical mysticism. Every leader must be ready to teach and lead people in things of the Spirit. This will often mean asking good questions.

"Did you receive the Spirit when you believed?" (Acts 19:2) These were Paul's opening words upon meeting a new group of disciples in the city of Ephesus. If the

Gospel of grace was his first priority, one could make a strong case for the reality of the Spirit as his second. Why was this so? Because, if you read the first 18 chapters of the book, you find a church that seemed obsessed with a very direct and constant relationship with God the Holy Spirit.

Positionally, we know that every believer has the Spirit living in them. Yet every believer is not always "filled" with and encountering the Spirit. There truly are experiences with God subsequent to salvation. It's not that Jesus is not enough; it's that we need to go all the way with the Jesus who is enough. We agree with Martin Lloyd Jones: "There is nothing, I am convinced, that so 'quenches' the Spirit as the teaching which identifies the baptism of the Holy Ghost with regeneration ... Got it all? Well, if you have 'got it all', I simply ask in the Name of God, why are you as you are? If you have 'got it all', why are you so unlike the Apostles, why are you so unlike the New Testament Christians?"

Thus, we call our people to both understand the blessed reality of being eternally *sealed* with the Spirit, while being called to continually be *filled* with the Spirit. In practical terms we "ask for the Spirit" in prayer, "earnestly desire" spiritual gifts in our gatherings, and make room for such a reality. We then "test the spirits" (1 John 4:1) and "weigh what is said." (1 Cor 14:29) 1 Corinthians 14 is a gold mine for biblical order.

Suggested books:
Paul the Spirit, and the People of God, 1 Corinthians 12-14

6. DISCIPLESHIP FLUENCY

We make disciples. Not religious services. Not song lists. Not interesting sermons. This is the Great Commission.

On the day of judgment, we will stand before God and give an account for this command. Are we bringing disciples with us into eternity? It is beyond tragic that the average Christian has never “made” one disciple.

The church does not move forward without an intense commitment to discipleship. This was Jesus’ final command - to go and make disciples. There is no such thing as a discipleship formula, but the fundamental components Jesus gave us to make disciples can be summed up in these two mandates: *baptizing them* and *teaching them* to observe. (Matthew 28:19-20)

It is vital to understand that, according to Jesus, leading people to faith and going all in through baptism is one part of the discipleship process. He did not separate evangelism and discipleship, like most Christians do today. That said, we will discuss evangelism in a fluency all its own. You might say that discipleship requires two types of immersion; the first is in water. But the second is in one another’s lives.

Discipleship requires face time, real relationships, and life lived together. We need leaders who are living lives worth imitating and who then allow others to live life with them in a way that affords them opportunities to imitate what they see. “Follow me as I follow Christ.” (1 Corinthians 11:1) This is the crux of teaching them to obey, because the doctrine that matters is the doctrine you *do*. It takes a doer of the

Word to reproduce a doer of the Word. We are not looking for Bible trivia, but lives centered on and transformed by the Word and Spirit of God... and the best way to have that take place is to first see that lived out by others. Intimate imitation is key to cultivating a culture of disciples who make disciples.

Yet the Word is key. “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.” (John 8:31) Disciple makers are shooting for Word-abiding. Accountability to train is absolutely vital: reading, study, memorization, preaching, meditation are all pivotal ingredients. For concrete ideas on discipling people, check out ***Key Elements of a Discipleship Model*** below.

We also recognize biblical stages of faith and expect leaders to develop a fluency in identifying a disciple’s level of maturity. 1 John seems to indicate that people progress from being “little children” to “young men” and finally “grown men”.

Suggested books:
Building a Discipleship Culture, The Trellis and the Vine.

7. MULTIPLICATION FLUENCY

As leaders, multiplication must be at the core of everything we do: discipleship, apprenticeship, microchurch, macrochurch, teaching, family life, etc. The entire movement stops if our leaders do not understand, fully embrace, and live out this call to multiply themselves at every level. We are not spiritual mules; we take seriously the call to be fruitful and multiply and expect our leaders to give themselves to this endeavor.

Part of multiplication is the result of simply *being*.

Like reproduces like. Fire will not produce ice, and distracted Christians will not produce focused disciples. Thus we need to live a life that is truly worth following since so much of what we reproduce will be done accidentally. God will not be mocked, a man will reap what he sows. If we sow seeds in prayer and generosity, for example, we will reap a harvest of prayer and generosity.

Once we live a life worth following, we must embrace the *with*-factor.

People must be invited to be WITH us to varying degrees. Much of our discipleship is the result of people being consistently exposed to the intangibles of our lives. Herein lies the fluency challenge. Most Christian ministry seems to expect multiplication to be the result of good, solid Bible teaching. Indeed the apostle Paul included this in his approach with Timothy: “You, however, have followed *my* teaching...” But notice that he did not stop there: and also “my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my

persecutions and sufferings that happened to me...” (2 Timothy 3:10-11) Timothy got to see how Paul responded to victory, or defeat, or infirmity. He was able to observe what would thrill the soul of Paul. He got to hear him pray and watch him wait.

Sages have pointed out that we can teach what we know, but we reproduce who we are. Yet this only happens if we become intentional. Thus, we must invite people into our lives and cast a vision of multiplication. Multiplication is the result of an intentional pursuit to reproduce yourself as a leader, even desiring your apprentice to do greater works than you. Sounds like Jesus.

In microchurches this starts from Day 1. If there is not a vision for multiplication from the very beginning, then it will not happen. Leaders need to have 2 Timothy 2:2 eyes to see spiritual giftings, leadership potential, and disciple-making ability in everyone around him/her. We do not want one-generation leaders; we want exponential disciple-makers who are looking to leave lasting discipleship legacies that continue from generation to generation.

Leaders need to own discipleship and see it in others. But it cannot stop with the person in front of you; exponential leaders look and see multiple generations of disciples coming from a single person and do what it takes to make that a reality.

8. MICROCHURCH FLUENCY

Taking our cue from the early church, we embrace a both/and approach to Church.

In the book of Acts we encounter a community of disciples who met together in *both* the large group gathering (e.g. “in the temple”) *and* in the small group gathering (“from house to house”). “Church” was both organized and scheduled as well as fluid and spontaneous. It was not limited to weekends in a building. Discipleship was not limited to once a week in a home. These happened every time believers came together in the name and power of Jesus. It is vital to recognize that these first believers gathered constantly and made use of any and every environment to do so.

While we have been heavily influenced by the house church and organic church movements we do not share their disregard for the large-group gathering. Thus, we utilize large groups to bring the apostle’s teaching, clarify vision, stir faith, build culture, worship passionately, tell our stories, etc. Yet we recognize that there are so many parts of discipleship that will never occur within the macrochurch alone. We need the microchurch expression.

Microchurches are where we gather intimately and equip more specifically to do the work of the ministry and “be” Church. Microchurches are where people are personally pastored. There are many gifts that do not have as much place in a macrochurch gathering, but are vital and essential for the church to be fully expressed in a microchurch setting. There are many prayers to be prayed, specific needs to be met, burdens to be carried, questions to

be asked, and homes to be opened – all of which require the microchurch expression.

One of the stunning teachings of the New Testament is found in Ephesians four. Paul claims that the Church will build itself up in love when every part contributes. The context is explicit (and subversive to modern readers) as it specifically refers to five gifts or roles to be played: apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers. It is our experience that when a microchurch has each of these roles represented, that becomes a healthy group. Greenhouse leaders need to be fluent and competent in looking for, identifying, and releasing for ministry each of these gifts.

From a leadership standpoint, we have to be honest: not everyone is called to lead to 50, 100, 1,000 or 10,000 people. But there are many followers of Jesus who are called to lead smaller expressions of 5, 10, or 30. Our brothers and sisters in the Chinese and South Korean churches have tapped into this truth, as they have seen hundreds of thousands of microchurch expressions multiply and flourish in the past century.

We do not consider our “Church” to simply be a gathering of individuals. Greenhouse is a family of microchurches.

Suggested books:
The Green Book. Houses that Change the World.

9. EVANGELISM FLUENCY

We absolutely expect harvest. In the book of Acts the Lord added to their numbers regularly those who were being saved. We must make disciples who understand that soul-winning is the normal Christian lifestyle.

The first part of discipleship is *baptizing*. We are to lead people across the line of faith. We fully recognize that salvation is of the Lord, and yet we know that He uses vessels. While there is nothing wrong in leading people to repent in prayer, the clear pivotal moment for the early church (as seen in Acts) was baptism. Baptism is clear: there is an outward response to an inward reality, and that inward reality is this: I am all-in. I repent from my sin and repent toward my Savior. It is on Jesus’ terms not mine. His righteousness, not mine. I trust Jesus.

We do not believe that the joy of harvest is reserved for the small minority of Christians with a talent in persuasion. While everybody is not an *evangelist*, every Christian is called to be *evangelistic*. In God’s sovereignty every believer has a network of relationships and neighbors that nobody else will ever touch. We believe every disciple has certain evangelism “styles” that should be discovered and practiced. But we must teach people that we never get good at things we do not practice. Thus, we call all believers to begin like this: Intercede, invest, and invite. We start with intercession (prayer). We invest in the relationship. And we look for the opportunity to invite the loved one to an appropriate God setting (dinner, activity, microchurch, macrochurch, etc).

Every disciple should be taught to share their testimony and be fluent enough in the Gospel

to share the good news with the people in their lives.

He who wins souls is wise. It requires a measure of wisdom to set up our ministry in ways conducive toward soul-winning. Our corporate gatherings, whether macrochurch or microchurch, must be places to build up the faith family. Yet, just like any godly family, we open our home to people outside the family. Then we practice hospitality while they are with us. This means that are forever mindful of the outsiders among us and communicate in ways so that they do not feel left out. Our teachers are to communicate as if there are lost people in the room. If we will, eventually there will be. We also encourage our pastors and leaders to regularly speak and listen to unchurched voices, to be able to effectively answer questions real people are asking.

We do not believe somebody “making a decision” saves a person; Jesus does. It is the work of God. And yet we recognize the mandate to call people to faith. Upon hearing Peter preach, the hearers asked, “What shall we do?” Peter did not say, *well there is nothing you can do; any response would be works-salvation*. Rather, he told them to respond: *“repent and be baptized.”* We “proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins” (Luke 24:47). The only way to follow up with a new believer is to know who is a new believer. Thus, trusting God’s sovereignty to call people to Himself, we invite people to act on the grace of God.

Suggested books:
Becoming a Contagious Christian, Reason For God, Mere Christianity

10. DIVERSITY FLUENCY

Leaders must become fluent in working toward the vision of a diverse, integrated and interdependent church. Jesus' mandate goes like this: on earth as it is in heaven. What is it like in heaven? "Worthy are You ... for You were slain, by Your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign..." (Rev. 5:9-10) Different tribes. Varied languages. Diverse peoples.

Diversity is not easy. It is not natural. But it is absolutely glorious when it occurs. Jesus goes so far as to pray, "that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me." (John 17:21) There is a direct correlation between our fluency in unity and our mission to this world.

Here is the fluency challenge: Part of "the world" system is a gravitational pull toward *homogeneity* (sameness). While we are in the world, we are not of the world. Social scientists tell us that we tend to like people who are like us. We are naturally attracted to people with similar attitudes, customs, backgrounds, and preferences. Churches are particularly prone to becoming gatherings of people who do little more than reinforce our personal status quo. And yet the Church is God's challenge the status quo.

Because we have been given the ministry of reconciliation, we are to regularly communicate the call to build churches and micro-churches of unity in diversity. We recognize and verbalize the truth that the "kingdom" presented in Scripture is made up of a very diverse group. Multi-racial, multi-ethnic,

multi-national, multi-lingual, multi-generational. The greater the diversity, the greater the ability to manifest this kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. It is like a sign and a wonder in the hands of God. It is also a tool through which God reveals parts of His kingdom that do not manifest through one culture or perspective by itself.

We acknowledge that there is a 100% chance that we will be offensive, and we will be offended. We expect it, and choose this path anyway.

This fluency requires great wisdom. We do not call people to cease being who they are. We do not command people to give up their culture to be like another earthly culture; we call them to submit their culture to the kingdom of Jesus. We resist the temptation to lean politically left or right, understanding that each perspective comes with both insights and blind spots. We admit the temptation to believe that "they" are all the same, but "we" are unique. We recognize that all dark people, light people, eastern people, western people, old people, young people do not think the same. We cannot approximate their viewpoint. There is a diversity and fullness even among culturally similar people. We think through preferences (like music). We think carefully about the sensitivity of our language. And we prepare to repent regularly.

Ultimately we realize the temptation to exaggerate our differences and ignore our commonalities. And here is our supreme commonality: Jesus. We adore and seek and experience Jesus. Together.

11. HUMILITY and LEADERSHIP FLUENCY

It's not enough to be good; we need to be wise. It's not enough to seek God; we need to mobilize people to seek God. It's not enough to do the works of the ministry; we need to equip the saints to do the work of ministry. This requires leadership.

Max DePree describes it well. The first job of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. And in between the two the leader becomes a servant.

Defining reality requires *vision*. What is vision? Bill Hybels describes it as a picture of the future that produces passion. Martin Luther King described a future where children of different races would run around and play together as equals. JFK spoke of a future when humans would walk on the moon. While leaders come in many shapes, sizes, and personalities, what the great ones have in common is this: they define reality.

For the Greenhouse leader, vision is not just about what *could* be; it is a matter of what *should* be. Proverbs 29:18 says, "Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint." This is huge, because without direction, people lose heart. But not just any direction will do. We recognize the "prophetic" nature of the vision required. We take our cues from God. What has He said in His Word? What is He *saying* through His Spirit?

Once the vision is clear, it must be communicated. And then re-communicated. Because we are all like sheep; we go astray. Vision leaks. Our leaders are to set priorities, clarify direction, and hold us accountable to live up to our vision, purpose, and values, as they are also accountable. As the vision becomes reality, it is then the job of a leader to speak like Jesus: *Well*

done. "Thank you." The leader is to encourage, inspire, and connect the dots back to the church's efforts and the vision presented.

This is a serious call. Leaders and teachers will receive a stricter judgment, which is why we are very committed to "knowing those who labor among us."

"Leadership, as understood in modern western popular culture, is not reflected with any real definition in the New Testament; it is not a New Testament word. There are clearly leaders who function as prophets, apostles, teachers, deacons, elders, etc., but none who fit the present-day secular model marked by a combination of individualism, self-dependence, task-orientation, supposed objectivity and personal ambition. We have therefore a significant problem. How can we develop leaders who are going to be rooted in biblical revelation unphased by the requirements of popular western culture?" (Viv Thomas) It's all about following the example of the servant King Himself.

Humility.

We are not running a business; we are servants – toilet cleaners - in the Lord's church. We are tired of watching people enter church leadership full of passion and humility, only to come out standardized and prideful. Jesus was so different. Oh, He had power, but He only used it to serve. Never to strut. Never to boast. Never for personal gain. If you are considering leadership in Greenhouse you are not being invited to a place of power, you are being invited to be crucified with Christ and serve. What an honor.

Suggested books:
Courageous Leadership, Spiritual Leadership, Tale of Three Kings

12. MISSIONS-GENEROSITY FLUENCY

We are a movement of generosity.

Therefore every microchurch and local church should adopt an open-handed extravagance approach from day one. We recognize the subversive nature of extravagant generosity in a culture of greed. The average American church member gives 2.58% of their income. Once it makes it into the hands of churches, only about 2% makes it to missions and poor. That means Christians are only giving about two percent of two percent.

Our goal is for 50% of our funds to go to missions and the poor. This requires *faith*.

But we are also a movement of *wisdom*. We give first, save second, and spend third. We avoid debt, and do not spend the money we do not have. We are willing to wait for the provision of the Lord, and lead our churches to learn how to function in times of plenty or times of less.

When choosing how to give and where to partner, good intentions are not enough. We recognize that it is possible to have good intentions about helping people, relieving the afflicted, sending out missionaries - but if it is not done in wisdom - we harm the very people we want to help. What does this missional wisdom look like?

We begin by praying through and identifying the actual needs of an individual or community before moving into the realm of helping. A misdiagnosis of the problems related to poverty or brokenness results in remedies that are ineffectual and sometimes even harmful.

Next, we strive to partner *with* people, and

not do for them what they are capable of doing for themselves. This avoids the danger of creating dependence and exacerbating feelings of inadequacy and shame to those in need.

Finally, we embrace a holistic approach to missions. Justice without Jesus is never true liberation. We desire to reach out to the whole person, meeting both spiritual and physical needs, and then connect that person to the local church so they can continue to grow as a disciple.

Here are the questions we ask in identifying the ministry we undertake and with whom we partner (each of these is explained with more detail in the appendix):

- *Does this “remember the poor”?*
- *Does this reach the lesser reached and unreached?*
- *Does this include indigenous partnership?*
- *Is this work sustainable and reproducible?*
- *Is this ministry prayer saturated?*

Suggested books:

When Helping Hurts, Toxic Charity, The Hole in our Gospel

13. WHOLENESS FLUENCY

We long for people to be whole, in spirit, soul, and body.

Central to wholeness is a passion for *integrity*. We are to recognize the pitfalls of spiritual leadership. Leaders are particularly vulnerable to pride. This is why we are reminded not to place people into leadership too quickly. It is extremely possible to be more gifted than godly – and this is a dangerous reality. We are to remember the long list of gifted men and women who possessed great ability with faulty character. Their ministries came tumbling down.

Hence, we call for leaders who are greater on the inside than on the outside. We take our cue from the apostle Paul: “Therefore, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2 Corinthians 12:9) Because a leader’s strengths will automatically be on public display, it requires intentionality to honestly communicate weakness and vulnerability. This demands courage and inner strength to help foster a culture where people can come just as they are, without being judged.

Authenticity, however, is not enough. Jesus did not come to make us real; He came to save His people from their sin.

Wholeness also demands *holiness*. We must be fluent in dealing with darkness in biblically effective ways. We will not gloss over the seriousness of sin or the constant temptation to religious pride. This means we deal with both legalistic self-righteousness and lawless unrighteousness. This means we look at fruits, but we deal with roots. We follow the fruit trail to the bottom of a pile where we find our idols. We ask questions

about our sin: Why are we lying? Why are we giving into sexual immorality? Why do we overwork for money? We recognize that all sin problems are worship problems, as we set up some functional lord and savior instead of the true Lord and Savior Jesus.

Wholeness also demands *freedom*. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. Scripture presents a description of our problems that go beyond mere sin struggles. There are bondages to overcome. The Lord’s prayer teaches us to pray for deliverance from the evil one. Demons cannot “possess” a child of God, but a child of God can surely have demonic problems in need of freedom. And the Gospel is good news for those in need of liberty. Disciples are to recognize the sobering reality that, until the Lord returns, we have a spiritual battle on our hands. Demons are like rats; sin and soul darkness are like trash. Thus, disciples must be alert and competent to regularly “take out the trash” as well as “dealing with the rats.”

Thus, leaders must live lives of wholeness, and then be able to effectively lead others to do the same. Ongoing wholeness will ultimately be the result of beholding and abiding in Jesus (see *Morph* in the appendix).

Suggested books:

The Dark Side of Leadership. Counterfeit Gods, The Pursuit of Holiness, The Spirit of the Disciplines. Victory Over the Darkness. I Give You Authority

KEY INGREDIENTS OF A DISCIPLESHIP MODEL

Start and End Date

- Nothing is worse than miscommunication or unmet expectations. While there are some instances where discipleship happens over a lifetime, the majority of the time discipleship is done in seasons. Like Jesus and his few years with the disciples or Paul raising up elders in a city for a few months and then leaving, discipleship happens for a duration of time and then the disciple becomes the disciple maker.
- This model of discipleship has a clear beginning and end. We suggest meeting for a span of 3-4 months. At the end of this time, ideally the person being disciplined is then launched out and becomes a disciple maker himself or herself.

Small Core, Strong Commitment

- If you as a disciple-maker are willing to give your attention, energy, and your time to people you are discipling, then you should expect the same kind of commitment from them. Have them commit to meeting weekly and making that time a priority.
- Strong discipleship happens within the context of a small core. Jesus had 12 disciples, but spent focused time with 3. Focus this discipleship time on 3-5 people to maximize your focus and efforts.

Green Emphasis

- We want our disciples to be green: worshipping, on mission, and in community. While we do give a variety of options for materials to study with the people you are discipling, one non-negotiable is that the resources you are using are green, meaning they focus on God and living a lifestyle of worship (spiritual disciplines, theology, etc.), community (authenticity, accountability, etc.) and mission (evangelism, justice, generosity, etc.) We want green disciples!

Scripture Memorization

- Man does not live on bread alone, but on every Word that comes from the mouth of God. We believe this and believe that disciples need to have not only a daily intake of the Word, but the Word written on their hearts. Scripture memorization is a way to ensure the Word is permeating our worldviews, beliefs, and lifestyles at the deepest level.

Seeking the LORD (together)

- Imitation is embedded in us biologically and theologically. We imitate and learn from those closest to us, and this is no exception with spiritual disciplines such as prayer and Bible study. People need to see mature believers praying, interceding, and interacting with the Word. Having space each week to learn and sharpen one another spiritually is a huge part of becoming a strong disciple!

Multiple Touches a Week

- Discipleship is caught not taught. It is hard to condense true discipleship into a once a week classroom style meeting. Discipleship truly takes place when life is lived together and new disciples are able to watch it lived out. Watching a disciple maker live a green lifestyle speaks volumes, and that can't just happen once a week. Pray together, eat together, talk about the Bible together, witness together, party together... let your disciple see every aspect of your life!

Disciples Who Make Disciples

- Disciples are not disciples if they are not reproducing other disciples. Part of the commitment of discipleship is that the person being poured into is willing to make the commitment to turn right back around and be the one who in turn pours into someone else. This isn't optional. We don't want to transfer knowledge: we want what is learned to be put into practice and to fulfill the command to go and make disciples, not just be selfish, consumer Christians...

The most effective disciple-makers bring people along to things they are already doing.

As a disciple maker, you don't necessarily have to add anything to your schedule... just be more intentional about getting the people you are discipling actively involved in what you are already doing. Bring them along as you seek the

Lord (you're already doing that). In a microchurch? Bring them along. Going witnessing? Bring them along. Having dinner with your family? Have them join you once a week to see how you interact as a husband and father. These are things that don't add anything to your schedule but add life giving discipleship to those you are discipling.

Here's a sample week of what bringing someone along to what you are already doing could look like:

The Night of your MC:

Have disciples come early and touch base with you about MC, pray with them, and then actively participate and help lead microchurch.

Thursday Morning:

Have disciples join him in seeking the Lord from 6:00 – 7:30am at a specific location (his house, the church, a park, etc.) and share some thoughts about discipleship during this time (Ex. the Gospel, seeking the Lord, etc.)

Sunday Lunch After Church:

Meet at a restaurant after church and go over Scripture memorization for the week, do some accountability, and review an aspect of the green curriculum while sharing a meal.

MISSIONS PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES

When we receive missions requests and partnership opportunities, we run them through the following lenses, asking these five questions:

1. Does this “remember the poor”?

(Galatians 2:10)

Jesus and his followers declared the good news of the kingdom through both words and deeds to the blind, the lame, the deaf, the mute, the leper, and the poor (Luke 7:18-23; 9:1-2; 10:9). Multitudes of biblical passages make clear that God measures cultures and peoples by what they do about the poorest among them. As the body of Christ, we are to create an alternative culture that declares this kingdom in both words and deed – especially to the least of these. We believe embracing our own mutual brokenness is central to poverty alleviation so that we can truly help others without hurting them and ourselves.

2. Does this reach the lesser reached?

Jesus was quite clear in his command to bring the news of His kingdom to every single human on the planet. We are troubled by the incredibly high volume of missions dollars spent to reach the *already reached*, while the lesser-reached people groups remain untouched. We embrace the call to give of ourselves and go where others are not going, and reach out and love the isolated, unreached, and those deemed untouchable by society. Thus, we are particularly interested in partnering with ministry committed to bring the Gospel where it is not already common.

3. Does this include indigenous partnership?

We recognize that good intentions are not enough, and working *with* people rather than

for them is often the best avenue for helping that helps and does not harm. It is empowering, mobilizing, and dignity-laden. Working with local churches and local resources creates lasting change. Missions without indigenous partnerships communicates that solutions to the community’s problems must come from outside of that community, instead of recognizing and affirming the God-given gifts and assets within every individual and community.

4. Is this work sustainable and reproducible?

We want to set up systems that are easily reproduced and maintainable so that every good work we put into practice does not create dependency on us. Disciples reproduce who they are, so we want our efforts, skills, and talents that we bring to the table to be reproduced and carried out in others after we are gone.

5. Is this ministry prayer saturated?

“As long as they sought the Lord, God made him prosper” (2 Chronicles 26:5). We desire to partner in mission with those who radically seek the face of God. We want every mission endeavor to be covered in prayer and fasting so that everything we do flows out of seeking the Lord. We want to partner on earth with where we see His Spirit moving. Only by first seeking Him will we be able to move in His power, speaking for the voiceless, empowering the downcast, and helping the oppressed.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

What’s the point of church membership? If someone belongs to Jesus and is committed to the church, why add another requirement?

1. Covering and Authority

There really is something about a spiritual covering. Scripture indicates that each local church body has a governing authority. We notice in Matthew 18:15-17, that “the church” is the final court of appeal for issues that need to be decided. Surely “the church” is some definable group, much more than an abstract spiritual idea. As pastors and elders Hebrews 13 describes a responsibility of watching over the souls of those within their care “knowing they are accountable to God.”

Every elder should read those words with a healthy dose of sobriety. Exactly who is an elder to cover, oversee, and lead? Those people that have committed to that flock and submitted to that leadership.

Obviously, many of us have experienced the dark side of spiritual leadership when it has been abused. Authorities have used their position for personal gain, control, and self-indulgence. Yet the aberration does not make void a legitimate need: spiritual covering.

Acts 20:28 says to “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit made you overseers.” 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 describes our need to respect those who “labor” and “lead” us. 1 Timothy 5:17 references the elders “who rule well.” Clearly the office of an elder is of paramount importance. When someone joins a body, they recognize and affirm the biblical form of organizing and leading. Without membership it is difficult to see how eldership would play itself out.

2. Accountability to a body

Lasting spiritual growth always takes place within the context of accountability.

Furthermore, the purity of a community depends upon an accountability structure in place to deal with problems as they arise. We see just such a scenario in 1 Corinthians chapter 5 regarding an unrepentant brother. Paul asks, “Why haven’t you removed this man from your fellowship?” (5:2) The very possibility of being removed infers that a joining took place. Notice that Paul appeals to the entire body to hold the man accountable. Later in the same chapter he exhorts the Corinthian believers to withdraw fellowship and contact with believers that walk in willful disobedience to God.

Conclusion:

“Membership” is not an American church concept; it is a biblical concept. We have certainly seen the concept abused, misunderstood, and under-utilized. Yet the solution is not to neglect it, but to do it right.

A MOVEMENT OF TRANSFORMATION

Dead religion does not change people. It's a neutered version of Christianity that sounds like it belongs to Jesus, but never seems to resemble the Jesus we read about in the Bible. It over-promises and under-delivers. It teases the hungry soul but always leaves it dry. Like a cheap piece of candy, your mouth waters only to dig in and discover it was hollow all along.

We don't want shallow. Or empty. Or hollow. The soul can only tolerate so much disappointment. Is the way of Jesus actually weak and ineffective, or have we too often settled for some cheap version of the real thing? A form of godliness that denies the transformative power thereof. Let's be honest: most Christians just don't change very much.

But there is another way. And we're invited, if we want it. We have become convinced that transformation is utterly possible because we have watched it time after time in the lives of 15 year-old young people. And 21 year-old college students. And 45 year-old doctors. And 75 year-old widows. And single moms. And church ladies that were stagnant for 30 years. When ordinary people say yes to the discipleship invitation they change.

Disciples are people of transformation.

They are people that have been - and *are being* - changed by Jesus. Morphed. Let's spend a little time thinking about what happens when people transform.

Foolish disciple-makers and pastors tend to spend the majority of their time trying to convince unmotivated people to do what they really don't want to do. Why? Because they have not really changed. The way of Jesus was never meant to be the compilation of a long list of new year's resolutions. It's a whole new way of living.

Some of these transformation-deprived "Christians" are actually not true Christians at all; they need what we call *justification*. They need to be born from God. But many more really do belong to Jesus, yet desperately need to experience what theologians call *sanctification*. They need soul-transformation.

So what's the key to true transformation?

We become like what we behold. "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Corinthians 3:18). "... looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." (Hebrews 12:2)

The key to transformation is gazing at, looking upon, beholding Jesus. Encountering the glory of Jesus. We don't transform by trying harder; we change when our soul's gaze turns to Jesus. We don't need new information nearly as much as we need to go all the way with the One we already have. Let's break this down with several thoughts that have dramatically affected our thinking and approach in discipleship.

FIRST OBSERVATION:

People change when focused on Christ and Him crucified.

It is interesting that the apostle Paul claimed that all of his teaching and disciple-making could be summed up in these words: "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1 Corinthians 2:2)

The point is this: there is a way that gazing upon the finished work of Jesus on the Cross changes us like nothing else can. This is the Gospel. Revealing vividly the saving work of Jesus and emphasizing the centrality of believing it. Really believing it in every area of our lives. I perceive this to be a challenge for many of us so I'll spend a bit more time on this subject.

By grace through faith. Chew on those words.

We are not only justified by faith (not works), but we are also sanctified by faith (not works). Most Protestants would say they believe this and yet very few disciple-makers recognize how the finished work of Jesus relates to the ongoing work of the Spirit. The reformers taught that not only was justification by faith in Jesus' work alone – not ours, but sanctification is *also* by faith in Jesus' work not ours.

If we are honest, most believers actually believe that: 1) we are justified/saved/adopted by faith in Jesus work, but then, 2) we are sanctified by trying really, really hard to live out biblical principles. The results are tragic.

We need to think about the relationship between justification and sanctification.

True transformation rises or falls on our alignment toward the Cross. The danger is to see our human effort as the functional means of transformation, as if we only needed the Gospel to get through the front door of the Kingdom, but now that we're in, we can take it from here. What a mistake. Transformation is not really about something brand new, but rather connecting deeply with the same Gospel that brought us in. We don't need a new seed; we need to take THE seed deep. We never move past the grace of God; we only take it deeper.

It is a mistake to try to "move on" from imputed righteousness (our adopted position in the spirit realm) to practical righteousness (the actual way we live on earth). We never move on. Any breakdown in our practical righteousness is the result of a breakdown with our connection toward our imputed righteousness. Feed on your salvation! Leaders must point people to the Cross and what Jesus has done!

Here is the point. The real deal is *living faith*. All of this sanctification thinking does not mean

that there is no place for devotion and good works. But *at the deepest level*, the root problem is never just lack of moral effort. Or lust. Or greed. Or worry. Our root problems are always related to the fact that we are not living *by faith* in Jesus as Savior, in some particular area of our life.

We tell people that they are saved by grace through faith. Trust Jesus. Believe in Him. Come into a relationship with Him and you will be eternally changed. But then when it comes to addictions or porn or anger or depression we jump ship and put the weight on our actions and boundaries and will power.

We need to connect the dot that if we are initially saved by a grace-faith-trust-relationship ... then we will be *continuously transformed* by the same reality: a grace-faith-trust-relationship.

So if I am discipling you and you have a lust problem I will indeed give you moral counsel (e.g. flee youthful lusts, give no place to the devil, set nothing wicked before your eyes, download accountability software, etc.). But the *primary* counsel needs to be an exhortation to faith: truly trust Jesus in this particular area of your life.

Tim Keller asks this question: Everybody sins in a general way because we are all sinners. But why do we sin in any particular instance? Any sin is rooted in the inordinate lust for something which comes because we are trusting in that thing rather than in Jesus for our righteousness or salvation or completion or fulfillment. Therefore, in our sin we are always *forgetting* what God has done for us in Jesus and instead are settling for some idol.

When we lie we somehow believe that a person's approval can make us complete. When we act on our sexual lusts we somehow believe that a moment of pleasure or an experience will

satisfy our soul. When we get into relationships that are not in God's will we convert a person into a functioning savior and believe that they can deliver us from our loneliness of hell and bring us to a heaven of companionship. When we long for a job or money or house or promotion in a way where we soul-gaze upon it in the morning and evening we set up functional saviors in whom we "believe" for our functional "salvation".

It's really a form of practical faith.

If our Christianity is all about avoiding scandalous sin, then we can find a way to behavior-modify ourselves into a form of virtue and cleaned up living. But that is not transformation. Appealing to someone's sense of dignity can shame them into virtue but it's not transformation. Telling a leader that adultery will ruin their ministry will scare them into external virtue. But it's not transformation.

When we look to "Christ and Him crucified" we engage in one of the ways the soul can behold the glory of Jesus. We remember what Jesus has accomplished; we remember that it is finished (so we cannot improve upon it); we remember that we are accepted (so human approval is less influential); we remember that the ultimate enemy of death has been defeated (and that is the very worst blow this life can give us). When we remember the Gospel we "lift Jesus high" and, like the Israelites with the brazen serpent, we are helped and healed. And changed from the inside out.

Why do I sin? Because I forget Christ and Him crucified. My anger problems are belief problems. My greed problems are belief problems. I was saved by looking to the Cross in general. And I am sanctified in specific areas by looking to the Cross in that specific area of challenge.

Will power can *restrain* the heart, but it will

not *change* the heart. And God wants changed hearts. I hope you see the concrete application in disciple-making. I cannot make myself change; but I can make the decision to look to Christ and Him crucified in any circumstance of my life. The lonely single woman needs to learn to preach the Gospel to herself. Disgruntled marriages need to learn to do the Gospel on each other. Porn-addicts need to look to Christ and Him crucified.

You have to get this first point to really move on to the next one. Until you know you're utterly accepted right now because of what Jesus did, you cannot do any good work. Faith deeds never start until you look to His deeds as utterly sufficient.

SECOND OBSERVATION:

We need to train

If you want to grow, you need to train. Transformation comes by gazing at Jesus. But how do you put yourself in a position to gaze at Him?

You train.

Dallas Willard, Richard Foster, and John Ortberg are some of the authors in recent years that have written on the subject of spiritual formation and the spiritual disciplines. John Wesley was a good historical influence.

The great news for ordinary people is that Jesus is still taking students in His school of discipleship. The kingdom is now present and available and Jesus wants apprentices that are willing to learn His yoke. His way of life. Not only is Jesus our Savior; He is also our Teacher and our Leader. He teaches us how to live in His now-accessible kingdom where He rules.

He was, and He is, and He is to come.

When we "look unto Jesus" we gaze upon the Suffering Savior on a Cross, but we also dial into the reality of the living Lord who has eyes

that are like a flame of fire. We look to what He accomplished on the Cross, but we also ask, "What is Jesus doing now? How can I join Him? How can I follow in His steps?"

Abraham was righteous because He believed God would interact with Him – right now. This is eternal life, according to John, that we may "know" God (John 17). And now that we know Him, we can do life with Him. Having grasped the implications of the Cross we now have the power to take the words of Jesus seriously. *Now* we can do good works. *Now* we can take His yoke.

Of course, our problem is that, although we may want to do right we are prepared to do wrong. This is where training comes in.

Disciples are *disciplined*. They exercise themselves unto godliness (1 Timothy 4:7). They embrace a faith that works through love. They embrace a lifestyle of ongoing "training."

Disciplines like prayer, fasting, solitude, worship, Bible reading, study, memorization, confession, simplicity have been nothing less than revolutionary in our lives, because they enable us to gaze at Jesus.

Journaling does not change me; but what it can do is help me get into a position where I am gazing. The macro goal is not to pray for 60 minutes per day; it's to know Jesus. But prayer puts me in a position to know Him, so I might set micro-goals in prayer. There is nothing virtuous about reading a religious book. But when I chew on the Scriptures in a way that I interact with God, transformation starts to happen. Meditation without Jesus may actually be dangerous. But meditation with a gaze toward Jesus will change your very destiny.

Only Jesus can clean my house; but through training I open the door to let Him in. Only living water can quench my thirst; but the spiri-

tual disciplines act as "straws" that help me gain access to that precious living water.

You don't need new information nearly as much as you need to go all the way with the information you already have. When you train, you heat up your soul with Father's love.

Too many believers are stalled in their transformation because they are waiting passively for some internal sense of peace or wholeness. They become idle as they wait for further transformation. It is a warped discipleship. Train! I'm not talking about striving in self-effort, but true training in faith. Put yourself in position to be amazed with grace and warmed by the love of Christ.

Enough behavior modification. Enough dealing with branches. Let's go to the roots and faith-gaze at Jesus.

THIRD OBSERVATION:

We need the Holy Spirit experience. The key to transformation is gazing at Jesus, but this is more supernatural than we might imagine. We need the Spirit of Jesus to point us to Jesus. He Himself taught us that the Spirit bears witness of Him. Sometimes people make contact with a Spirit-filled church and worry that Jesus will not be lifted high. No worries! The Spirit always points to Jesus.

In Acts 8 there is a fascinating story of a man named Philip going to the city of Samaria to preach the Gospel. The results are dramatic: people believed, many were baptized, healings and miracles took place, evil spirits came out of people, and "there was great joy in that city."(8:8)

You'd think that when the apostles back home heard about everything going on, they would be content. But something crucial was missing.

As soon as they heard the reports, an alarm

went off in their brains. All of this kingdom activity was amazing; just not enough. Immediately they sent Peter and John to Samaria to complete what was lacking in order to set these new believers up for victory. What did they do?

They “prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” (vv. 15-16)

A quick reminder: Every believer “has” the Holy Spirit living inside of them. “Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’” (Galatians 4:6) *However*, every believer is not always “filled” with the Holy Spirit. This is why Paul says in Ephesians 1:13 that all believers “were sealed with the Holy Spirit” but then four chapters later he says to “not be drunk with wine ... but be *filled* with the Holy Spirit.” (5:18).

The apostles knew what they were doing in Acts 8. It is entirely possible to be forgiven, baptized, and on your way to heaven – but still remain unfilled. *Be filled*. Paul compared it to coming under the influence of alcohol.

This is why in Acts 19 Paul’s opening question to a group of disciples was, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” (v. 2) Think of the questions you hear from other Christians when they first meet you. I’d bet you rarely hear this question asked. If we are honest, 21st century Christians have drifted quite a distance from the approach of those in the 1st century.

We want what they had.

Are you living out a life in the Spirit?

Just surf through the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans some time. Right there in the middle of Paul’s theological masterpiece we find a man obsessed with the work of the Holy

Spirit. Why? Because we are wired to follow Jesus. And Jesus did everything in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Follow Him!

I’m an expert in chocolate milk. I make it from scratch. I know how to mix in just the right amount of cocoa with just enough sugar. But there is one more crucial step: you have to stir it up. If it just sits there, all the chocolate settles at the bottom. When you get filled, the Spirit is stirred.

It’s a tragic thing; while the world has become spiritual most Christians have gone secular. We were never wired to be satisfied with a purely natural life! There’s so much more. We were made to experience God. Don’t settle for a natural Christian life. We absolutely can (must!) be filled with the Spirit.

Jackie Pullinger saw results with heroin addicts on the streets of Hong Kong that blew people’s minds. Lives were being changed. Transformation was taking place. Lost causes were being resurrected to hope. What was her secret? She would get the addicts filled with the Holy Spirit ... every single day.

It’s amazing what happens to a soul that spends regular time under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

What could be more futile than a church that makes its plans for the future in the flesh? Natural thinking, human reasoning, leaning on its own understanding. We weren’t made to live naturally; we were made to follow Jesus. And He lived in the flow of the Spirit.

So how do we do it? “How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who *ask Him!*” (Luke 11:13). *Ask*, and then keep on asking. Expect the power and presence and manifestations and fruit of the Spirit.

FOURTH OBSERVATION:

We need to engage in mission Which came first, the chicken or the egg? This is a fascinating dynamic that we must not ignore: when we engage in the mission of God we behold a side of God that we do not encounter anywhere else. And we are changed.

We sometimes think that we are supposed to wait for an inner sense of change before we branch out to change the world. I often buy into the lie that unless my heart feels soft I am not ready to touch a needy world. Yet my experience has been that many times it is in the process of leaving my comfort zone that my heart softens.

Augustine said the poor are sacramental. Something happens to your soul when you begin to walk and talk among the poor, the afflicted, and the needy. But Jesus Himself reminds us that judgment day itself will be scrutinized under the light of this question: what did we do with the least of these? (Matthew 25)

The same could be said about the lost, because they are truly “poor” in spirit.

There is a way in which Jesus reveals Himself to us among the lost and least, that we will not experience anywhere else.

When we step out of our normal “safe” places of convenience and comfort we discover a world that desperately needs our Father. And He desperately loves this world. And He has wired the universe so that some transformation only happens when we are on mission.

Some parts of God’s glory don’t show up in prayer meetings; they show up on the streets. Some aspects of God’s glory will never manifest in a church gathering, no matter how large or small; they manifest when we look in the eyes of spiritual orphans. I have never ceased to be amazed how God changes people who it seemed

would never change - when they get on mission. There are some parts of transformation that will never happen with another Bible reading, prayer, or Christian meetings. We have to get up and do what we were made to do. And Jesus meets us there every time.

It really is mysterious. On one hand I need an internal change to prompt me to go do mission in faith. On the other hand there are times when the internal change never occurs until I get active. To use James’ vocabulary, sometimes faith precedes works, but sometimes my faith follows my works.

The call is to love God and love people. Not just church people. Not just people you already like. *All* people. Lost people. Dirty people. Sick people. The people no one else wants. There is a part of your soul that is ignited when you become a co-laborer with Jesus in pursuing the people who Jesus is longing to be with. We are not bringing anything new to the table. We are simply joining God in what He is already doing.

IN CONCLUSION:

If we do not provide churches that produce true transformation, we have not accomplished anything of eternal significance. So we commit ourselves to plant churches, do ministry, and multiply disciples in ways where true transformation takes place. And then we will change the world.

Not by trying harder, but:

- *Trusting more deeply in the sufficiency of Christ and Him crucified*
- *Training more wisely*
- *Encountering the Spirit*
- *Engaging on mission*

STANDARDS FOR ELDERS AND MICROCHURCH LEADERS

The roles of the elder include: *shepherding* God's people (Acts 20:28-31, 1 Peter 5:2-4, John 21:15-17, Hebrews 13:17), *ruling* or leading (1 Timothy 3:5, 5:17, Titus 1:5), devotion to *prayer* (Acts 6:4, James 5:14), and ministry of the *Word of God* (Acts 6:4, 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9, Acts 15:6).

Rarely is the Bible so practical and specific as it is in the case of choosing elders. God seems to be very serious about elders having certain qualities. This standard serves both as qualifications for consideration and appointment of an elder as well as an ongoing expectation.

1 Timothy 3 - *Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to rule his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.*

Titus 1 - *An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless - not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.*

Ephesians 4 - *He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*

1. Calling and Desire

A potential elder must have a healthy desire to serve others in this role of leadership. The reality of this calling should be detected by the candidate and confirmed by those in authority.

2. Reputation

Although imperfect, an elder must have a solid reputation (above reproach or blameless). This is built by a lifestyle of consistent love for people and obedience toward God. This includes dealings with both believers and non-believers, where both community and commission are embodied.

3. Proven Leadership

The elder must have a proven track record of both faithfulness and fruitfulness in his or her areas of responsibility. There must be both competence and diligence on display. The first and most important of these areas is the family (including both the marriage and children).

4. Personal Character

Elders must live moral, godly lives. Scripture suggests that his or her life should be exemplary, as the call to make disciples is to "follow me as I follow Christ." This indicates both the rejection of sin and worldliness and a lifestyle characterized by love. Sexual and material lusts must be dealt with.

5. Maturity

An elder must have made progress in his or her faith. There is no substitute for spiritual experience. He or she also needs enough knowledge and understanding to teach the foundations of the faith.

6. Hospitality

An elder must be ready to house (spiritually, emotionally, physically) the needy. Their life and their home should be available to the kingdom of God for making disciples.

7. Humility

Although an elder has authority, he or she must be a person under authority. Elders are submitted. While teachers, they must be perpetual learners, and humble in all things. Notice the following characteristics: not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not violent, not quarrelsome, and temperate.

STANDARDS FOR DEACONS

The roles of the deacon is that of a servant. Obviously, the call to follow Jesus is the call to serve. In one sense then, every believer should play the role of a deacon. Yet Scripture is clear that there is an office to which people are called.

Again, the Bible is very specific about the policy or description of what is required of deacon. We take these requirements very seriously. For this reason we will try to be as literal as we can be to the 1st-century standards set by the early church. This standard serves both as qualifications for consideration and appointment of our deacons, as well as an ongoing expectation.

Acts 6:3 - *Seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.*

1 Timothy 3:8-13 - *Deacons are to be worthy or respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.*

1. Spirit-fullness

A potential deacon must live in the reality of the Spirit experience. In our context this suggests the need for the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), and the activity of gifts of the Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 12 and 14, as well as Romans 12).

2. Reputation

Although imperfect, a deacon must have a good reputation among the people of God. This built by a respectable lifestyle of consistent love for people and obedience toward God.

3. Proven Service

The deacon must have a proven track record of both faithfulness and fruitfulness in his or her areas of responsibility. "Let them first be tested" speaks

volumes to the need to fully examine a candidate before allowing them to serve. Faithfulness is key.

4. Personal Character

The deacon must have a proven track record of both faithfulness and fruitfulness in his or her areas of responsibility. There must be both competence and diligence on display.

5. Family in Order

A deacon, his spouse, and their children must be led in a way that shows effective servant-leadership and kingdom values in action.

6. Firm Foundation

A deacon must have a firm grasp on the deep truths and foundations of the faith. He or she must not be made to stumble by every new wave of doctrine or teaching.

7. Wisdom

In order to truly serve, a deacon will need to be endowed with wisdom from God to carry out his or her responsibilities. This implies the need to make decisions pertaining to church business, as clarified by elders. It seems to especially involve judging the occasional disputes of church members in conflict (1 Corinthians 6:5 may serve as a good example).

8. Willingness to Serve

The deacon is not assigned the task of ruling; he or she is assigned the privilege of serving. In Acts this meant serving food and acting as peacemakers between disputing believers. While the role will manifest differently in every age, this charge remains constant: Serve the body by relieving elders of church business so that they may be separated to the Word, prayer, and leadership.

APPENDIX

BOOKS WE LOVE

Knowing God, J.I. Packer (Discipleship)

Reading the Bible for All it's Worth, Gordon Fee (Bible)

Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God, Gordon Fee (Holy Spirit)

The Prodigal God, Tim Keller (The Gospel of grace)

Counterfeit Gods, Tim Keller (Gospel freedom)

The Gospel for Real Life, Bridges (The atonement)

The Trellis & the Vine, (discipleship)

Building a Discipleship Culture, (discipleship)

The Spirit of the Disciplines, (training, not trying)

Secrets of the Secret Place, (God-seeking)

Divine Conspiracy, Willard (The kingdom of God)

Tale of Three Kings, Edwards (Submission and spiritual authority)

When Helping Hurts (Doing mission in sustainable, effective ways)

Microchurches, Matt Ulrich (Microchurch wisdom)

Houses that Change the World, Simpson (Microchurches)

Courageous Leadership, Bill Hybels (Leadership)

Mere Christianity, Lewis

I Give You Authority, Charles Kraft (Freedom)

The Hole in Our Gospel, Richard Stearns (Justice & the Poor)

7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Covey (Leadership)

What's So Amazing About Grace, Philip Yancey (Grace)

Church-Planting Movements, (Multiplication)

Good News About Injustice, Haugen (Justice)

Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger, Ron Sider (Poverty)

That None Should Perish, Ed Silvoso (Evangelism)

